

Hegemony and African Agency in Liberal Peace Interventions

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Declaration

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Babatunde Obamamoye

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To the glory of GOD

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Abstract

African regional actors have been notably active in the modern practice of liberal peace intervention. From Somalia to South Sudan to The Gambia, these non-Western actors prioritised creating a liberal form of order (where democracy, the rule of law and human rights are guaranteed) as a central methodological approach for reconstructing peace in (post-)conflict societies. This phenomenon presents a paradox since the liberal peace intervention is (often recognised as) a Western neo-imperialist undertaking. Informed by this puzzling empirical development, this thesis asks the central research question: why did African interveners activate their agency in liberal peace interventions?

The 'neo-imperialist intentionality' explanation offered by the critical IR intervention literature for expounding why international interveners prioritise liberal peace intervention could not provide a satisfactory answer to why African interveners – as a group of non-Western actors – committed to the creation of liberal order in their peace interventions. As revealed in the mainstream intervention literature, the shortcoming of this framework centred on its primary and exclusive aim to explicate the interventionist actions, intentions and agency of Western interveners. This thesis ascribes the foundation of this weakness to how the extant critical IR scholarship on liberal intervention fails to accord any form of relevance to the non-Western agency in the methodological study of contemporary peace interventions.

As a way of responding to this shortcoming, this thesis recasts African interveners as subjects whose agency in liberal peace intervention is worth exploring by focusing on their interventions in Somalia, South Sudan, and The Gambia. It draws and builds on the neo-Gramscian theory of hegemony to offer a more comprehensive lens for delving into the agency of African actors in the reproduction of the liberal normative order through peace interventions. The application of this explanatory approach led to the central finding of this thesis: that African interveners activated their agency in liberal peace intervention because they consented to common sense of the hegemonic Western liberal order as the only ideological paradigm suitable for inventing and sustaining peace.

The neo-Gramscian analysis offered by this thesis recognises that African consent to the liberal order was the outcome of a specific, complex interaction. This thesis develops a neo-Gramscian explanatory framework to elucidate how a group of nonhegemonic actors may respond to common sense of hegemonic ordering. The framework makes a case that a set of non-dominant actors with ownership of a coherent alternative ideology, historical empowerment, and commitment to counterhegemony are more predisposed to resist the social forces of hegemony and its common sense. Within this purview, this thesis finds that because African actors were historically disempowered due to prolonged colonial subjugation and are neither presently laying claim to a coherent alternative ideology nor committing to counterhegemony, they could not resist the structural forces of the liberal order that recently pervaded the global society. The major implication of these findings is that notwithstanding the Western neo-imperial character of the liberal peace, the end is not in sight for its operationalisation in (in some parts of) the global South.

List of Abbreviations

ACDEG	African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance
ACHPR	African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
APRC	Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
ARCSS	Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan
ASF	African Standby Force
ASI	African Solidarity Initiative
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUCISS	African Union Commission for Inquiry on South Sudan
AUHLCCSS	African Union High-level Ad Hoc Committee for South Sudan
AUTSTG	African Union Technical Support to The Gambia
CEWS	Continental Early Warning System
CMPCRD	Conflict Management and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Division
CMs	Coordinating Mechanisms
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
ECOMIG	ECOWAS Mission in the Gambia
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EUTM	European Union Training Mission
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
FMS	Federal Member State
HCSS	Hybrid Court for South Sudan
ICU	Islamic Courts Union
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IGASOM	IGAD Peace Support Mission in Somalia
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	International Relations
NDP	National Development Plan
NSA	National Security Agency
NSSP	National Security and Stabilisation Plan
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PC	Police Component
PCRD	Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development
PF	Peace Fund
PoW	Panel of Wise
PSC	Peace and Security Council
R-ARCSS	Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RM	Regional Mechanisms
SNA	Somali National Alliance
SNA	Somali National Army
SNM	Somali National Movement
SNSF	Somali National Security Forces
SPF	Somalia Police Force
SPLM/A	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army
SSA	Somali Salvation Alliance

SSDM	Somali Salvation Democratic Front
SSLS	South Sudan law Society
SSR	Security Sector Reform
SSRC	Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council
TC	Trilateral Commission
TCCs	Troops Contributing Countries
TFC	Transitional Federal Charter
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TFIs	Transitional Federal Institutions
TGoNU	Transitional Government of National Unity
TNC	Transitional National Charter
TNG	Transitional National Government
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNITAF	Unified Task Force
UNOSOM	United Nations Operations in Somalia
US	United States
USC	United Somali National Congress
WWI	First World War

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Chapter One: Introduction

This thesis explores and explains the agency of African interveners in the modern practice of liberal peace intervention. It opens up a conversation for elucidating a broader conundrum in International Relations (IR)¹ scholarship on why some non-Western international actors operationalise their commitments to the liberal peace project despite its Western neo-imperialist character and functionality. This chapter introduces the subject matter of this thesis. It identifies the puzzle, research question and shortcomings of the literature that animated this thesis. It equally discusses the conceptual and methodological approaches of this thesis, its findings and argument, as well as its structural layout. As a starting point, in what follows, I briefly present the empirical developments that gave rise to the focus of this research project.

More prominently since the last decade of the twenty-first century, African regional actors – through their institutional mechanisms² – have been active in their collective engagement in the practice of international intervention for the main purpose of restoring stability and forging peace in (post-)conflict societies. Within the context of this undertaking, these postcolonial African interveners are found to be prioritising the creation of a liberal order (i.e., where democracy, the rule of law and human rights are guaranteed) as an elemental way for forging enduring peace in conflict-affected countries. In Somalia, as a means of devising lasting peace, African regional actors are dislodging a non-liberal order, promoting democracy, and carrying out security sector reform. In South Sudan, they are facilitating the promotion of a culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law through a transitional justice project as a mechanism for advancing peace in the country. In The Gambia, they are consolidating democracy and effecting liberal social engineering with the aim of preventing the country from relapsing into crisis (AU CMPCRD, 2018).

Taking everything into account, the above interventionist activities reflect the conceptual resolution of the intervening African actors to operate within the purview of the liberal peace paradigm, which advocates for the invention a liberal form of society as the only means of forging sustainable peace.³ This development, however,

¹ Following its conventional disciplinary usage, *International Relations* (IR) is used in this thesis to denote the discipline of *international relations*.

² These institutional mechanisms are the Organization of the African Unity (OAU)/African Union (AU) and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

³ This, among others, prompted the argument by Curtis (2013, p. 89) that African institutional mechanisms (like the AU) are not conceptually equipped more than their Western counterparts to offer new approaches to peace reconstruction.

presents a puzzling reality because the ‘liberal peace project’⁴ has been spotted in the mainstream critical intervention scholarship as a neo-imperialist project of the West (see, for instance, (Chomsky, 1999; Ignatieff, 2003; Wai, 2014; Taylor, 2010). Being a set of postcolonial non-Western actors that literally abhor Western domination and avow African solutions to African problems, one would ordinarily expect that African regional actors would counteract and resist the Western liberal peace project. However, contrary to this linear logic – as it would be further shown in this thesis –, this was not precisely the case.

It is this commitment of postcolonial African actors to the liberal peace project in their practice of peace interventions that underpinned the central puzzle of this investigation.⁵ In what ways have African regional actors specifically practised liberal peace interventions? What has propelled them to activate their agency in promoting liberal peace during their exercise of peace intervention? Why do African interveners share the notion of ‘African solutions to African problems’ and yet not practising interventions within an epistemic framework that is starkly different from the Western liberal conception of peace? How do we explain the basis for African actors’ agency in the liberal peace project despite its Western neo-imperial instrumentality?⁶

1.1 The Research Question

A desire to closely interrogate the above puzzling development in order to offer a comprehensive explanation for the agency of African regional agents in liberal interventions – even in the face of its functionality as a Western neo-imperialist scheme – motivated this study. To this end, the central research question guiding this thesis is:

⁴ To be more specific, ‘liberal peace project’ as used in this thesis refers to an agenda of spreading the liberal order through the promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in the course of peace interventions. See, for instance, Jabri (2010), Wallis (2018, p. 83), Newman, Paris and Richmond (2009, p. 3), Jabri (2007, p. 124), Lemay-Hébert (2013b).

⁵ As far back as 1985, for instance, the representative community of African intellectuals – during a seminar that was organised by the United Nations University on ‘peace and regional security’ in Addis Ababa – converged on the point that what constitutes peace (and invariably peace reconstruction) for Western actors which they termed “the establishment perspective” was different from the African perspective. For more on this early analysis, see Hansen (1987). In a way, this earlier conceptual discourse on peace corroborates the argument of critical intervention scholarship on why postcolonial African actors could have conceptualise peace differently rather than from the standpoint of Western liberal ideology.

⁶ Looking at liberalism from being a Western project, for instance, Canovan (1990, p. 16) argues that liberalism has ‘never been an account of the world but a project to be realized’. For further account on this liberalism as an Enlightenment project of the West, see Young (2002).

Why did African interveners activate their agency in liberal peace interventions?

As the boundaries of this research project are directly configured by this guiding question, its primary objective is straightforward. More specifically, it aims at probing, dissecting, and explaining the contextual and conceptual underpinnings under which African regional interveners committed to a peace interventionist undertaking that foregrounds the transformation of (post-)conflict societies according to the assumptions of the liberal ideology. Two caveats are, however, necessary before I proceed. First, even though the focus of this thesis is categorically centred on why African agents collectively operationalised their agency⁷ in the liberal peace interventionist project, I specifically concentrate my attention in this regard on their intervention activities through the institutional frameworks of the African Union (AU) and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs). This is in line with the apt argument by Tieku and Gelot (2017, p. 120) that, being an institutional mechanism created to speak and act on behalf of the entire African community, the AU constitutes an important lens for probing common African positions on salient global issues. This is further reinforced by Williams (2007, p. 257) when he reckons that a focus on the mechanism of the AU is central in any attempt to understand the modern intervention undertakings of African actors in the realms of approaches to peace and security.

Second, following Chomsky (1999, p. 2) and Chandler (2010, p. 13), it needs to be emphasised that the aim of this thesis is not to provide a *normative* analysis as to the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the methodological approaches deployed by postcolonial African interveners in their practice of peace interventions in (post-)conflict societies. On this basis, because this research project is “not meant to be policy prescriptive” (Willett, 2005, p. 570), it, therefore, “take[s] a step back from the [prevailing] problem-solving approaches” (Chandler, 2006, p. 6) that usually prioritise “what should be, or should have been, done” (Chomsky, 1999, p. 2). Along these lines, it is *not* within the remit of this study to analyse or elucidate the challenges confronting African international actors in their attempts to carry out collective peace intervention.⁸ Rather, what this thesis focuses on, as specified above, “is to examine the [ideological] framework in which events proceeded” (Chomsky, 1999, p. 2) in the course of African

⁷ For clarity, following Hobson and Sajed (2017), my conception of ‘agency’ (and, therefore, African agency) as used in this thesis does not exclusively mean acting freely without any form of restraints. What is important in my conceptualisation of agency is acting in a particular way, whether is freely chosen or structurally engendered.

⁸ For some analyses on challenges confronting the African agents in their peacemaking and peace-mediation efforts, see Feldman (2008), Williams (2013) and Williams (2018).

peace interventions. In this case, it aims at providing a detailed contextual, conceptual, and theoretical analysis on how and why African international interveners are *not* approaching peace in a way that resists the value system and fundamentals of the Western liberal order. Hence, this research project is about interrogating a *why-question* within the context of liberal intervention by a group of non-Western international actors.

1.2 Shortcomings of the Literature

The choice of investigating the above research question is an attempt to respond to certain inadequacies in the extant critical IR literature on international intervention. As I hinted in the background of this chapter, the empirical aspect of what motivated this thesis is directly connected to specific shortcomings associated with the current mainstream critical scholarship around the subject of liberal intervention in the discipline of International Relations. To be more specific, these shortcomings revolve around the Eurocentrism of the ‘liberal peace debate’⁹ and the inability of the existing critical intervention literature to help us make sense of the agency of international interveners from the global South in the whole enterprise of the liberal peace project whenever it is spotted. In what follows, I *briefly* discuss this gap before presenting its more comprehensive account in Chapter Two of this thesis.

The voluminous discourse on international cooperation for conflict management and peace formation in trouble spots since the end of the Cold War has brought the theme of ‘international intervention’ to the limelight as a subfield in the discipline of International Relations. This is not entirely surprising as it is against the backdrop of the post-Cold War collapse of many states in the global South and the corresponding diverse collaborations within the international community to assist the affected states in (re)creating workable domestic orders and stability. The nature of these peace operations across different parts of the world, which involved different actors and agencies, generated intellectual discussion along two broadly categorised camps, namely problem-solving camp and critical camp. While the scholarship in the problem-solving camp is policy-oriented and generally focuses on how to improve international peace operations, the analysis in the critical camp – *which stimulates this thesis* – concentrates on unpacking the prevailing framework of peace intervention, who

⁹ For short reviews on this debate, see, for instance, Cooper (2007) and Lemay-Hébert (2013b).

engages in this line of thinking and why actors are prioritising such an epistemological and ideological approach.¹⁰

Essentially, the mainstream critical IR scholarship on international peacebuilding interventions has recognised the 'liberal peace' as the orthodox intellectual framework through which international peacebuilders are approaching the subject matter of post-conflict stability and peace reconstruction (see Paris, 1997, Paris, 2004, Duffield, 2001, Richmond O. P., 2004). This approach is found to rely on the ideological assumption that the elemental foundation for establishing sustainable peace and stability in any country emerging from conflict hinged on creating a liberal society where democracy, a market economy, respect for human rights and the rule of law are guaranteed (see, for instance, Paris, 1997; Paris, 2004; Zaum, 2013; Richmond O. P., 2006, p. 292; Newman, Paris, & Richmond, 2009, 3; Jabri, 2007, p. 124).¹¹ From the perspective of this analysis, the liberal peace model foregrounds the transplanting of the Western system of political, civil and economic governance into post-conflict states through the agency of international intervention as a way of creating lasting stability in the post-civil war period (Paris 1997, Jabri 2007, 124).¹² In this case, critical scholars who are researching peace interventions are not only maintaining some sort of convergence that the source of this liberal peace approach is Western but that the international actors deploying it during interventions are equally Western (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2007, p. 491; Richmond O. P., 2010, p. 667; Lehti & Pennanen, 2020). Accordingly, some of these scholars further argue that the fundamental underpinning why Western interveners are deploying this liberal peace framework for peace intervention is because of their *deliberate intention* to invent a new phase of Western liberal imperialism and, therefore, their strive for hegemonic ideological control over the non-Western recipients, who are located in the global South (Chomsky, 1999; Wai, 2014; Ignatieff 2003, 3; Pugh 2006, 271; Robinson 1996, 6, 7; Randazzo, 2017, p. 26).¹³ Even though this 'neo-imperialist intentionality' explanation has been ongoing for more than two decades, there has been no 'decisive' study that invalidates or

¹⁰ In this regard, for genre of problem-solving work, see for instance, Dobbins, Jones, Crane and DeGrasse (2007) and Ghani and Lockhart (2009), and for samples of critical work, see, for instance, Duffield (2001) and Chandler (2006).

¹¹ For the re-articulation of the interstate aspect of this liberal peace theory, see Doyle (1983).

¹² Based on its emphasis on liberal state-building as peacebuilding, some scholars equally termed this peace reconstruction framework as an institutional approach (see Lemay-Hébert, 2009; Lemay-Hébert, 2013; and Richmond, 2007).

¹³ As Duffield (2001, p. 32) elucidates, the premise of this 'new imperialism perspective' is that Western actors are deliberately utilising the liberal peace project to "disqualify Southern [or none-Western] political projects" in the overall configuration of the global society.

neutralises its ontological and epistemological basis.¹⁴ In Chapter Two of this thesis, I focus in great detail on this mainstream critical discourse on liberal intervention and show the gap which this thesis seeks to bridge.

However, while this ‘neo-imperialist intentionality framework’ may provide an important theoretical lens for thinking about the choice and actions of *Western interveners* in the context of their predilection for liberal peace intervention, the same is not the case when actors involving in this exercise are non-Western agents. First, as an explanatory lens, it forecloses the possibility of overt non-Western agency in liberal statebuilding interventions. Second, it does not offer any analytical lens for understanding *why* non-Western international peacebuilders may equally put a premium on the same liberal peace framework as a mechanism for forging domestic peace in the aftermath of war. Thinking through the lens of this neo-imperialist teleological explanation, one would expect African actors who are located in the non-Western ex-colonial world to categorically denounce and resist every manifestation of the liberal peace project in their peace operations. But on the contrary, as it would further be demonstrated in Chapters Five, Six and Seven of this thesis, African regional interveners are unapologetically practising liberal peace ordering in their collective efforts to find durable solutions to peace in (post-)conflict societies in Africa. As leading non-Western actors in the realm of peace intervention with more than ten years of experience, African international interveners have not demonstrated any move that suggested their abhorrence to the fundamental assumptions of the liberal peace.

Because this ‘neo-imperialist intentionality framework’ constitutes the only notable conceptual standpoint for dissecting agency in liberal intervention in the mainstream critical intervention literature, the spotting of African agency in the promotion of liberal peace intervention, rather than resisting it, created a conundrum that the extant critical scholarship finds it difficult to grasp. One of the analysts that express and asseverate astonishment over this phenomenon is Roger Mac Ginty. In a succinct recount, he notes that “*Rather than* provide a counter-hegemonic force against dominant Western approaches to peacemaking, the African Union and its leading members largely conform to the Western [liberal] peace-making template” (my emphasis) (Mac Ginty, 2008, p. 144). The deep underlying underpinning for this puzzling phenomenon which negates the prevailing binary narrative of *Western liberal agency* versus *non-Western liberal resistance* has rarely been closely interrogated or accounted for in the

¹⁴ For more on this neo-imperialist account of liberal interventions, see, for instance, Cunliffe (2012), Wai (2014), Ignatieff (2003) and Chomsky (1999).

mainstream critical IR literature on interventions; a development that animated this thesis.

Of course, the key issue in this regard is not unconnected to how the existing mainstream literature on the theoretical practice of liberal international interventions has excessively prioritised Western agents as subjects of analysis to the exclusion of non-Western subjecthood.¹⁵ A few scholars, particularly those from postcolonial and decolonial schools, have pointed attentions to this reality. It is in this context that Lottholz raises the concern that the “absence of non-Western subjects [in peace formation research] limits... critical peacebuilding scholarship” (Lottholz, 2017, p. 42). Sabaratnam points attention to a similar issue in her contention that international “intervention scholarship was characterised by varied manifestations of Eurocentrism – the tendency to mark the West as the... [only] subject of political analysis” (Sabaratnam, 2017, p. 38). Richmond and Mac Ginty further buttress the same point in their assertion that “the regional [or non-Western] aspect of liberal peace interventions has been under-researched” (Richmond & Mac Ginty, 2015, p. 183). While a few of these analysts have responded by reconstructing the non-Western targets of interventions as subjects of liberal peace discourse,¹⁶ yet no explicit attention has been paid to recognising and accounting for the agency of non-Western *interveners* in the modern practice of liberal peace intervention. Consequently, the instances of non-Western involvement in the liberal re-ordering of post-conflict societies in the global South are marked with an absence of explanation since the existing ‘neo-imperialist intentionality’ framework is not suitable for navigating it.

The two other IR theoretical approaches (i.e., constitutive localisation and world polity) for understanding normative practices that could have helped us make sense of this development are equally fraught with shortcomings. The explanation of the constitutive localisation framework for this phenomenon would have been that non-Western actors are perpetuating liberal interventions because of their local and regional initiatives (Acharya, 2004, p. 250; Acharya, 2009, p. 14). This exclusive focus on the constitutive desire and initiative of regional actors while neglecting the role of historical and structural forces (Zimmermann, 2017, pp. 38, 44) makes this approach inadequate as a tool for exploring the subject of this thesis. For the world polity framework, the explanation for this non-Western agency in liberal interventions is a

¹⁵ In Chapter Two of this thesis, I attempt to illustrate this methodological exclusion more clearly in Table 2.A.

¹⁶ For instance, see Sabaratnam (2011).

function of the world culture's causal factor (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000, p. 100; Lechner & Boli, 2005). However, when relating this explanation to the subject of this thesis, it became evident that it brackets a number of things by not helping us take note of the diversity of civilisations and why the normative practices of a particular social group became the prevailing way of doing. In this regard, both approaches cannot individually account for why a group of non-Western interveners may not bother about the Western neo-imperial character of the liberal project and, therefore, commit to its promotion. It is only by investigating specific cases of such non-Western participation in this liberal interventionist project that its driving force could be unravelled. To respond to this gap in order to articulate a coherent framework for answering the question that I broached in this thesis, I recast postcolonial African interveners as subjects whose agency in liberal interventions is worth exploring.

1.3 The Argument of the Thesis

In answering the central question of this thesis based on my empirical findings, I draw and build on the **neo-Gramscian theory of hegemony**. The 'neo-imperialist intentionality' framework that is often used in critical intervention literature to dissect agency in liberal peace intervention is encumbered with its sole focus on the *intention* and *agenda* of Western agents. To this end, whenever the intention and agenda of Western actors are not at the centre of analysis, like the case of the subject of this thesis, its explanatory potency is inhibited from offering nuanced analytical clarity. On the contrary, the neo-Gramscian approaches I build on in this thesis allow the deconstruction of commitment to the liberal hegemonic project from both the standpoints of Western and non-Western agents. It allows the combination of structural and historical forces to be invoked in the analysis of 'agency' in contemporary liberal interventions. In this case, as I discuss fully in Chapter Three and deploy across the empirical chapters, the neo-Gramscian theory of hegemony helps to circumvent the shortcomings of the intentional empire-building approaches by offering a more nuanced and comprehensive lens for delving into the agency of nonhegemonic actors in the reproduction of the liberal peace order.

While applying this neo-Gramscian analytical framework, the main argument of this thesis is that African interveners activated their agency in liberal peace intervention because they consented to the Western liberal order (in the context of its recent hegemony) as the *only* ideological project suitable for inventing and sustaining peace, particularly in (post-)conflict contexts. As I demonstrate in Chapters Four, Five, Six

and Seven of this thesis, this consent occurred at two levels. At the regional level, gradually since the triumph of Western liberal capitalist democracy over communism in the late twentieth century, African regional actors have collectively agreed on liberal (re)ordering as the only undertaking suitable for (re-)inventing lasting peace in domestic polity. Also, despite its variations, there is a degree of local consent to the same liberal peace project in the three cases I investigated. Informed by this consent which occurred at the realm of cognition, African actors no more worried about the genealogy and Western neo-imperialist implications of promoting the liberal order through peace intervention. Rather, they have taken the ideas of liberal re-ordering of post-conflict societies during interventions for granted and, therefore, common sense which needs “no deep study into their origins and consequences” (Augelli & Murphy, 1988, p. 18). As such, in the matrix of things, African interveners are less concerned about the neo-imperialist functionality of liberal peace interventions, which increasingly stifle non-Western political projects and reproduce Western ideological hegemony.

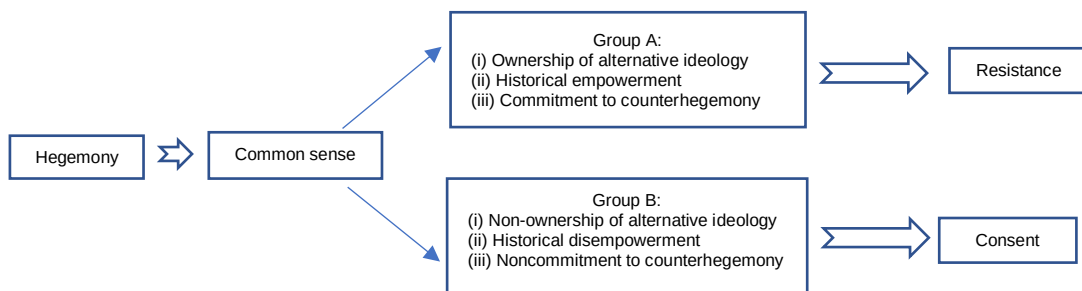
Since “we do not live in a world without alternatives” (Kurki, 2011, p. 146), why then is the case that African interveners are no more concerned about the neo-imperialist character of promoting the liberal model of peace? As I elucidate in Chapter Three and further demonstrate in the empirical chapters, the key causal factor in this regard is consent to **common sense**. By common sense, I mean the way of thinking about the world, which has become prevailing in a given time.¹⁷ With the end of the Cold War, the Western liberal ideology became hegemony in the ideological configuration of the global society. It, accordingly, transformed into common sense, which birthed the liberal peace common sense – the prevailing notion that it is only a liberal society that can create sustainable peace. Consenting to common sense as historically invented by the Western historic bloc “is not without consequences” as “it influences moral conduct and the direction of will” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 33). It serves as both material and social force for disorganising alternative ideas. It constitutes the main mechanism for stimulating the agency of nonhegemonic actors in the reproduction hegemony, both in the realms of thinking and practice (Taylor, 2010, p. 166). Like many other non-Western actors, African regional interveners consented to the liberal peace common sense. It, therefore, impeded their critical reflection about the Western neo-imperialist character of liberal peace interventions and stimulated their agency in its practice.

¹⁷ The conceptualisation of common sense I put forward here is derived from the ideas of Antonio Gramsci. See, Gramsci (1971, p. 322). For further reading on conceptual elucidation of common sense from neo-Gramscian perspectives, see Hopf (2013), Augelli and Murphy (1988), Crehan (2016).

The neo-Gramscian framework, which this thesis draws and builds on, recognises that despite the shared structural influence of common sense within a society, “[c]onsent for an [hegemonic] order is never universal” (Lehti & Pennanen, 2020, p. 2). Even though the social force of common sense is, of course, at the heart of the mechanism(s) for enforcing the reproduction of the prevailing Western liberal order, it does not *alone* make sense of the *local* dynamics that determined why (or why not) some non-Western actors acquiesced to its hegemonic prescriptions. The question then is: why does common sense of a hegemonic order generate the consent of some nonhegemonic actors and not the others? Or, to put it differently, why did African actors succumb to common sense of the Western liberal peace, unlike some other non-Western actors? In Chapter Three of this thesis, I develop a neo-Gramscian explanatory framework that speaks directly to why some nonhegemonic actors are susceptible to hegemony than others. The model further sheds light on the basis for African interveners’ agency in liberal peace interventions.

The three salient determinants in this model on whether common sense will resonate with a group of nonhegemonic actors are *(non-)ownership of coherent alternative ideology*, *historical (dis)empowerment*, and *(non)commitment to counterhegemony*. These determinants work with or against common sense to facilitate or hinder nonhegemonic agency in perpetuating the prevailing ideological order as created by the historic bloc. How these determinants collectively interact with common sense to produce a specific outcome is shown in figure 1.A below.

Figure 1. A: A Neo-Gramscian Explanatory Model for Variations in Nonhegemonic Response to Common Sense



The model recognises the importance of ownership of alternative ideology, historical empowerment, and commitment to counterhegemony in nonhegemonic actors’ resistance to hegemony and its common sense. It argues, therefore, that a group of nonhegemonic actors who do not possess a coherent alternative ideology, who were once disempowered, and who presently do not have a commitment to

counterhegemony are likely to consent to common sense of hegemony. This was the exact internal reality that African regional actors found themselves with respect to the liberal peace hegemony. Because they were historically disempowered due to prolonged colonial subjugation and they neither presently lay claim to a *coherent alternative* ideology¹⁸ nor commit to counterhegemony, they, thus, find it uneasy to resist the structural forces of the liberal peace common sense that pervades the global society more significantly since the end of the Cold War.

The key point here is that the neo-Gramscian explanatory approaches that I deploy and advance in this thesis help me resolve specific short-sightedness of the 'neo-imperialist intentionality framework' which is often utilised in the critical intervention literature to dissect agency in liberal interventions. It allows the spotting of the liberal peace as a domineering Western project and why the project could elicit the endorsement of some non-Western agents. It offers a crucial vista for delving into local realities that allowed the success of common sense – as an invisible social structural force – in reinforcing the practice of liberal peace intervention beyond the agency of Western international interveners. On the whole, by enabling the recognition of intentionality and passive consent in hegemonic practices, it provides an explanatory lens through which this thesis navigates the puzzling agency of African interveners in the Western liberal neo-imperialist project.

1.4 Research Design, Case Selection and Methods

As disclosed in the opening paragraphs of this chapter, this inquiry is a direct response to the puzzling involvement of African international actors in the exercise of liberal peace reconstruction in (post-)conflict societies. Notwithstanding the increasing spotting of the liberal peace as a neo-imperialist project of the West, African interveners are found to be operationalising their agency in its undertakings across a number of (post-)conflict African societies. Because the 'neo-imperialist intentionality framework' that is often deployed by the critical IR intervention literature cannot explain the practice of liberal interventions beyond Western neo-imperialist intentions, this thesis was formulated to explore the central research question: *Why did African interveners activate their agency in liberal peace interventions?* Thus, the central

¹⁸ Of course, as I will show in Chapter Four, this is not to argue that African actors don't have their own unique idea about societal relations. An instance is their traditional commitment to collectivism rather than individualism as obtainable in a typical liberal society. What is lacking, however, is that African interveners have not developed a *coherent alternative ideology* from this unique worldview to guide their actions at the broad policy level.

methodological goal of this thesis was to broach and explore a why-question within the context of the agency of non-Wes African actors in the liberal peace project, which does function as a devised scheme for Western ideological neo-imperialism. Coming from this premise, this research project was originally designed to offer a profound explanation for the causes of a puzzling real-world event as Goertz and Mahoney (2012, p. 42) note that qualitative researchers “often start with events that have occurred in the real world and move backwards to ask about their causes”. In other words, following Day (2017, p. 12), this thesis aimed at finding a coherent answer to causes of a perplexing empirical incident rather than looking for its effects or appropriateness. In what follows, I detail how I conceptually and methodologically approach the subject of this thesis as well as the cases I focus on to provide a coherent explanatory answer to its central research question.

In my methodological interrogation of the question of this thesis, I adopt a *qualitative research design* that combines the use of *critical discourse analysis* with *historical analysis*. The reliance on a qualitative research design in this regard is underscored by its suitability when conducting a rigorous explanatory inquiry in small number of cases that allows direct interactions between the researcher and written or spoken evidence for the purpose of teasing out complex realities amidst gathering of “enormous amounts of information” (King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994, p. 4). As a methodological approach, designing a research project based on qualitative tradition is expedient for delving into historical and contemporary causal factors that are necessary for making a reliable theoretical inference. It is from this standpoint that Lamont (2015, p. 78) avers that qualitative research designs “are useful in order to better understand how we make sense of the world around us”. I find this approach suitable for this thesis since its main concern is to unearth causal realities in the realm of practices of international intervention while relying on a small number of cases.¹⁹

At the level of analysis, my decision to combine critical discourse analysis with historical analysis is informed by the subject of this thesis. On its own, critical discourse analysis constitutes a valuable analytical tool for navigating “between a focus on structure and a focus on action” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 124) in the process of unpacking and “showing... causes which are hidden” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 9). I find this strength useful for this study as it allows me to explore and deconstruct the *hidden* causes of African agency in liberal peace project within the context of the global social structure.

¹⁹ Of course, with varying degree of success, it is worth noting that many scholars have previously deployed the same qualitative methodological framework for studying international interventions. See, for instance, Wilén (2012), Badmus (2015) and Lefebvre (2017).

Its weakness, however, is that it does not provide a clear analytical path for paying attention to historical context(s) of discourse. Fairclough (1995, p. 19) recognises this limitation when he asserts that “[c]ritical discourse analysts sometimes fail adequately to *historicize* their data”. It was an attempt to avoid this shortcoming that prompted me to incorporate historical analysis in my approaches to this study, which among other things, allows me to foreground “the historical dimension of discursive actions” (Wodak, 2001, p. 65) of African actors within the realm of their agency in liberal peace interventions. By methodologically relying on these approaches, it paves the way for a critical discourse dissection of the subject of this thesis while locating it in a specific historical context.

To apply the above methodological approaches, I employed two key concepts that guided me in this investigation. These concepts are *intervention* and *liberal peace intervention*. It is worth clarifying what each of these concepts denotes in this research project as Chandler (2010, p. 11) has rightly advised that there is a “need to reflect on the meaning of concepts and to consider their use within specific... contexts”. The conceptual frame of ‘intervention’ as used in this research project is within the context of its broad sense and, therefore, not restricted to the conventional IR thinking of *(uninvited) use of force by state actors*²⁰ “to bring about changes within the boundaries of another state” (Mitchell, 2014, p. 3). Rather, it is conceptualised in this investigation as a range of actions carried out by external actors, either state or non-state actors, aiming at effecting changes for ending existing conflict or building lasting peace in the territorial space of a sovereign state. Therefore, undertaking intervention can occur through different mechanisms ranging from speech acts to external coordination of domestic policy, cross-national mobilisation of reformist experts and cross-border deployment of troops.²¹ Thinking about intervention from this methodological standpoint allows me to identify different ways through which African regional actors are collectively undertaking interventions in the three cases of this study. On its own, *liberal peace intervention* as an analytical category in this thesis is conceptualised to mean an interventional action carried out by a group of external actors for ending conflict or building peace *but* through the promotion of liberal values such as democracy, human rights and/or the rule of law.²² In this case, my conceptual

²⁰ While critiquing this restricted perspective of intervention, some analysts have argued that it does not fit for the contemporary discussion of practices of intervention. See, for instance, Reus-Smit (2013) and Mitchell (2014, pp. 3-9).

²¹ For other scholars who share this conceptual characterisation of intervention, see Mitchell (2014, p. 3), Autesserre (2014, p. 10) and Wodrig (2017, p. 3).

²² For similar delineation of liberal peacebuilding [intervention] from this broad analytical stance, see Jabri (2007), Newman, Paris and Richmond (2009), Mac Ginty (2011), and Wallis (2018).

approach to African actors as liberal peace interveners in this study does not lie in the extent of their direct administration of a conflict-affected state, but instead the extent to which they commit to the promotion of the liberal normative order in the course of their peace intervention. Setting my investigative gaze at these conceptual frames of 'intervention' and 'liberal peace intervention', offers me a methodological opportunity for more in-depth engagement with how and why postcolonial African interveners are empirically undertaking liberal peace interventions.

To operationalise the above methodological and conceptual frameworks in this thesis, I specifically focus on three cases of African peace interventions. I take this path of concentrating on definite cases because the in-depth interrogation and probing of how and why African actors engage in liberal peace intervention can rarely be accomplished without zooming in on specific empirical cases. It reinforces the assertion by Gillham (2000, p. 15) that one of the necessary preliminary actions for qualitative researchers is "*getting to know your case[s]*". Making a decision that is aligned with this necessity of case[s] in qualitative research was not difficult for me because African actors have increasingly been involved in peace interventional practices across different (post-)conflict states since the end of the Cold War. For a robust empirical analysis in this thesis, I focus on the cases of African interventions in Somalia, South Sudan, and The Gambia.²³ The criterion for selecting these cases is based on the premise of what Seawright and Gerring (2008) characterise as the 'typical case'. First, they all demonstrate cases where African actors – through their institutional mechanisms²⁴ – play a leading role in interventions designed for restoring stability and durable peace. Second, these cases embody where African regional interveners expressly rely on liberal ideological assumptions for devising lasting peace (as shown in Table 1.B below). Within this context, I find these cases appropriate for this study since they jointly provide a testing ground and a vista for interrogating what underpins the agency of African interveners in liberal peace interventions. Methodologically, what I was looking for across these cases are historical, textual, and verbal evidence that reveal why African interveners find liberal peace assumptions unproblematic in their interventional peace practices. Looking at it from a broad view, therefore, the selection criteria for cases in this thesis yielded to the advice of Yin

²³ For a thorough empirical discussion, each of these cases is assigned one chapter in this thesis.

²⁴ As I will further illustrate in the empirical chapters, these African institutional mechanisms are the African Union (AU) and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs) such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

(2018, p. 65), who notes that researchers “should choose the case(s) that will most likely illuminate... [their] research questions”.

Table 1. A: Case Selection in Summary

Case	Key Peace Interventional Undertakings	Discussed in Chapter
Somalia	Inventing a liberal order by dislodging a non-liberal system, building security institutions, and promoting democracy.	Five
South Sudan	Inventing a liberal order by prioritising human rights and the rule of law issues, facilitating the development of liberal peace frameworks, and committing to a transformative transitional justice project.	Six
The Gambia	Inventing a liberal order by consolidating democracy and effecting social engineering.	Seven

In collecting primary data for this study, I employed two major methodological approaches. In the first phase, following Wodrig (2017, pp. 39-44), I concentrate on compiling a *text corpus* for each of these cases of intervention. Because a text material is often “embedded in its social conditions... [and] linked to ideologies and power relationships” (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 279), Fairclough (1992, pp. 226-228), for instance, has argued that assembling a text corpus is a reliable source of generating primary data, particularly for any research project that embraces (critical) discourse analysis. This perspective was equally reinforced by Mautner (2009, p. 34) when she notes that gathering relevant and sufficient corpora is central to enhancing critical discourse, especially when a hidden ideological cause is the subject of investigation. The written documents I gathered in this process are the ones that allow me to have access to the conceptual thinking of African actors about peace and intervention as well as their corresponding empirical actions on the ground in (post-)conflict African societies. The content of the corpora, which I compiled, ranged from archival materials to official regional resolutions, communiqués, statements, press releases, (progress) reports, speeches, policy frameworks, peace agreements, transitional constitutions and interviews given by regional and national officials. While I gathered a *few* of these

text materials from the Internet, their major sources are physical and online archives of the AU as well as the online depositories of some of the AU's Regional Economic Communities (REC), such the ECOWAS and IGAD.²⁵ Altogether, as Figure 1.A below shows, the text corpus I amassed for each of these cases amounted to more than 100 texts for Somalia, 95 texts for South Sudan, and 70 texts for The Gambia. I also compiled a corpus of more than 150 texts on the historical and contemporary discourse of African actors on peace and peace intervention at the AU level. To corroborate the assertion of Mautner (2009) on the usefulness of corpora compilation for critical discourse research, my access to this textual evidence provides me illuminating information on the often-hidden drivers of African agency in the Western liberal peace project.

Figure 1. B: Summary of Gathered Text Corpora



The second phase of my data gathering approach for this thesis centred on the use of elite interviews.²⁶ As Fairclough (1992, p. 227) reckons, elite interviewing constitutes a “widely used way of enhancing a corpus”. This is because it is useful for delving into in-depth realities beyond written text and for interrogating issues without being restrained by unnecessary predeterminations (Bailey, 1994). The data I obtained through elite interviewing were particularly helpful in bringing forward my findings from

²⁵ The reason for this is simple: these regional institutional mechanisms constitute the key platforms through which African actors are concertedly approaching the subject of peace intervention, including that of the three cases of this study.

²⁶ Some crucial materials that guided my preparation and approach in this regard include Richards (1996), Aberbach and Rockman (2002), and Harvey (2011).

the corpora for further discussion with both ‘practitioners’ and ‘observers’ of African peace interventions in the three cases I examined. To apply this data gathering technique for this study, I conducted 38 semi-structured interviews²⁷ with experts who are either participants or observers of African peace interventions.²⁸ Three categories of experts were chosen through a combination of purposive and snowballing samplings in this process.

The first category of these respondents consists of AU officials, the second category consists of government representatives of some African states, and the third category consists of scholars and analysts who are well knowledgeable about the African approach to peace intervention. My focus on this set of informants was informed by their wealth of knowledge of the subject of this thesis. My selection criterion for the first group of respondents prioritises the AU officials who are directly involved in the operations and decision-making processes of African peace intervention practices. In this regard, I chose my AU interviewees within the organisation’s Peace and Security Department – being the unit of the AU in charge of matters relating to the promotion of peace, security, and stability on the African continent. However, I had two instances when I was referred to interview AU officials outside this Department for more information on a particular subject. It is worth noting that in this process, I prioritise talking to a mix of junior and senior officials within the Department regarding the AU peace actions, particularly in the cases I investigated. Also, because this study treated the ‘representativeness’ of the second category of respondents as very important, I paid attention to the issue of ‘spread’ when selecting them. Hence, I ensured that at least one of the government representatives I interviewed came from one of the five African regional zones. In a way, this allowed me to gather and incorporate perspectives from across African regions on how and why African regional actors activated their agency in liberal peace interventions.

Overall, as shown below in Table 1.C, I interviewed 38 respondents: 20 officials of the AU, 7 representatives of African states and 11 academics and analysts. While some of these interviews were conducted through face-to-face interactions, others were carried out via Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp or emails. I transcribed most of these interviews, particularly those that are directly relevant for my empirical analysis. As a way of observing the ethical issue of confidentiality that guided the data collection

²⁷ I would like to note that the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic in late 2019 prevented me from conducting more than this number of interviews. Although, this does *not* in any way affect the findings of this thesis.

²⁸ The administration of these interviews was guided by the Protocol Number 2019/361 as approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee.

exercise for this study, the identities of the participating interviewees are anonymised in my analysis in the empirical chapters.²⁹ Because I transcribed most of these interviews, it was easy for me to utilise the illuminating responses from my respondents while drafting the empirical chapters of this thesis. As Waltz (1979, p. 4) notes that “data never speak for themselves” unless they are properly used, I deployed critical discourse analysis with historical analysis in analysing these data.

Table 1. B: Distribution of Interviewees

Category of Interviewees	Distribution
Officials of the AU	20
Representatives of African states	7
Academics and Analysts	11
Total	38

Wodak (2001, p. 65) has argued that a salient “methodological way for critical discourse analysis to minimise the risk of being biased is to follow the principle of triangulation”. This assertion was equally echoed by Checkel (2008, p. 119) who argues that triangulation becomes necessary because “one should never simply rely on what people say”. As a strategy for strengthening the reliability of the findings of this thesis, I triangulated my interview data and the corpora I previously compiled.

1.5 Findings of the Thesis

The dogged application of the above methodological approaches in this research project yielded a positive outcome. At the heart of this outcome is the uncovering of the central causal factor propelling the agency of African interveners in the practice of peace interventions that relied on the assumptions of the liberal ideological paradigm. As a way of reinforcing the connection between evidence and argument in social science research, these findings serve as the empirical pillars for supporting the theoretical argument of this thesis (which I already summarised in one of the sections above). Before discussing these findings more elaborately in Chapters Four, Five, Six,

²⁹ This particularly turned out to be the case as there was no contrary request by any of my respondents.

and Seven of this thesis, it would be in order to provide their concise versions at this juncture.

The idea of collective conceptualisation of 'peace' and 'intervention' solely from the purview of liberal ordering of society by African interveners *was never* a long historical tradition. As my findings show, it is a development that has a recent history. It started mainly in the last decade of the twentieth century when the liberal ideological order, as consciously championed by Western actors, gained traction and unparalleled hegemony in the global society. During this period, the idea that it is only a liberal democratic polity that is capable of sustaining domestic stability became prevailing in the global society. As its assumptions were appearing as ahistorical, natural truth in the configuration of the global society and African regional actors were eager to tame the tide of unrest and conflict in Africa, they 'collectively' consented to its structurally prescribed fundamentals as the framework for peace reconstruction. From that very historical moment, they incrementally institutionalised this liberal paradigm to guide their actions in the realm of intervention. In this case, they prioritised and placed emphasis on liberal values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in their conceptual thinking about peace. Thus, because African interveners consented to this prevailing liberal conception of peace creation, they were less concerned with its origins or the neo-imperialist implications of promoting it. This post-Cold War development subsequently shaped how African interveners carried out their peace interventions, as demonstrated in the cases I investigated.

In Somalia, the pursuit of liberal peace project by African regional actors is within the broad context of their consent to the idea that the only (post-conflict) society suitable for lasting peace is the one where there is a liberal democratic order. With this in mind, the very first task they carried out in the course of their intervention in Somalia was the dislodgement of an already established non-liberal political authority known as the Islamic Courts Union (ICU). They planned and executed this ousting based on the thinking that such an unconventional political system would only create further unrest. To therefore advance their liberal standpoint on Somalia's peace process, African interveners concentrated their efforts on two cardinal projects, namely rebuilding security institutions (for promoting the rule of law) and facilitating a democratic political order. Somalia's leading national actors equally shared this line of thought on the need to create a liberal democratic order while effecting security sector reform as a prerequisite for lasting peace.

In South Sudan, even though African interveners' liberal peace actions were different from that of Somalia, the key driving factor remains the same. Because they have cognitively endorsed a conception of peace based on the sanctity of liberal ideological values, African actors were concerned when they realised that human rights and the rule of law were violated during a violent conflict in South Sudan. Their initial intervening actions, therefore, prioritised the investigation of these human rights violations for the purpose of making recommendations on how to prevent such an occurrence in the nearest future. The findings of this investigation were subsequently embedded in the peacebuilding framework they negotiated for South Sudan. Stemming from this cognitive consent to the positive correlation between the existence of liberal normative order and lasting peace, African interveners collectively committed to a transformative transitional justice system in South Sudan that would not only punish those who previously violated human rights but would also firmly engrain the liberal culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law in South Sudan's polity. This liberal transformative agenda resonates with local actors, except those national actors who were trying to evade its punitive consequences.

The same consent to the liberal peace served as the overarching driving force that propelled the African liberal intervention in the Gambia. When African regional actors realised that President Yahya Jammeh was unwilling to commit to the advancement of democratisation in The Gambia during the 2016 political crisis in the country, they acted speedily to stop such an 'aberration'. One of the immediate intervening actions they took beyond verbal condemnation and speech acts was the deployment of military force into The Gambia to enforce uninterrupted democratic transition in the country. After they have achieved their goal in this regard, they took a step further and mobilised security, human rights and the rule of law experts for liberal social engineering of the country's polity. As my findings further substantiate, this engagement was within the broad thinking that realisation of sustainable peace in The Gambia depends on the country's political liberalisation. However, it is equally worth noting that this approach resonates greatly with the preponderance of local and national actors in The Gambia.

1.6 Research Contribution

This thesis extends the frontiers of knowledge in the study of International Relations. It makes a substantial and original contribution to the critical IR scholarship on the practice of international intervention. Its contribution in this regard could be

categorised into *methodological*, *empirical*, and *theoretical* components. With respect to its methodological contribution, this thesis presents an innovative exploration of liberal intervention that does accord relevance to the agency of non-Western interveners. As I will further elaborate in Chapter Two of this thesis, the methodological design of previous liberal intervention research exclusively concentrated on Western actors' intervening role and their varying agencies. Richmond and Mac Ginty (2015, p. 183) were very unequivocal in nailing down this exclusion when they assert that the non-Western feature of liberal interventions has been under-explored. Of course, this is partly based on an erroneous assumption that Western actors are the only agents of the modern liberal project and that non-Western actors are *always* resisting the contemporary liberal order. It embodies the often-recognised Eurocentrism in IR scholarship, which allows exclusionary privileging of the 'West' as 'subject' of social and political inquiry (Sabaratnam, 2011a; Hobson, 2007). As a way of contributing to the rectification of this methodological bypassing and delving into uncharted territory in liberal intervention research, this thesis innovatively commits to a social inquiry that places an important emphasis on the non-Western agency as a subject of liberal intervention discourse. By doing so, it contributes to the recent intellectual and disciplinary advocacy of the global IR.³⁰

From the empirical purview, this thesis makes a novel contribution to knowledge in IR intervention discourse by uncovering how African interveners are perpetuating the Western project of liberal normative ordering that prioritises the necessity of democracy, individual human rights and the rule of law. Nearly all the *major* empirical studies that were previously projected to critically discuss and analyse the practice of liberal intervention in the mainstream IR intervention scholarship, from Paris (1997, 2004) to Chandler (2006) and (Mac Ginty 2011), direct the focus of their analytical gaze towards the undertaking of liberal interventions in the context of the Western agency. Even though the recent commitment of African interveners to this liberal project dates to more than two decades, there has been no conscious scholarly attempt to explore and underscore their perpetuating agency. A few scholarly analyses that recognise the absence of African regional resistance to this Western liberal paradigm of peace intervention fail to provide concrete empirical evidence to buttress such a claim.³¹ Consequently, it is often difficult to characterise the ideological and epistemological standpoint through which this set of actors are undertaking peace interventions. As a pathway to advancing scholarly literature in this regard, this thesis

³⁰ For some ideas on global IR, see, for instance, Acharya (2017) and Acharya and Buzan (2019).

³¹ See, for instance, Mac Ginty (2010, 154) and Obi (2014, 62).

provides a detailed empirical account that uncovers how African regional interveners are promoting, undertaking, and perpetuating liberal intervention, which has its historical origin in the global North.

Finally, this thesis makes a theoretical contribution to the IR critical debate on intervention practices by introducing and foregrounding a 'neo-Gramscian perspective' (Bieler & Morton, 2014) as a useful theoretical lens for unpacking the driver of non-Western liberal interventions. As I have previously emphasised and will further elaborate in the next chapter, the earlier attempts to explain and account for the underpinning of modern liberal interventions relied heavily on the neo-imperialist intentionality theoretical framework. Notwithstanding the illuminating lens offered by this framework, however, it is not suitable for making sense of liberal intervention beyond Western interveners' agency. This, in part, inhibits the critical IR intervention scholarship from presenting a more comprehensive theoretical analysis of what motivates contemporary liberal interventions. This thesis extends the frontiers of theoretical knowledge in this regard by introducing neo-Gramscian thoughts to this discourse. It demonstrates the usefulness of neo-Gramscian approaches to the IR liberal intervention debate. It shows how concepts of hegemony, common sense, and consent are useful analytical categories for offering insights into non-Western (African) agency in the modern liberal intervention project. It builds on neo-Gramscian thoughts to develop an explanatory model for understanding variations in non-Western actors' response to common sense of the liberal hegemonic order.

1.7 The Structure of the Thesis

With respect to structure, this thesis consists of eight connected chapters, including this introduction. It is the combination of all of these chapters that makes this thesis a whole. Chapter Two, which directly follows this introduction, presents the literature review section that situates this research project within the broad IR literature of international (peacebuilding) intervention. It reviews relevant scholarship as a way of showing the gap that animated this study, particularly at the realm of theoretical debates on the drivers of liberal peace intervention. More specifically, the chapter uncovers how the mainstream critical scholarship on international intervention has advertently or inadvertently neglected the agency of non-Western actors in liberal intervention *research* and how the 'neo-imperialist intentionality framework' that is often deployed by critical analysts to dissect the underpinning of liberal intervention could not make sense of the agency of non-Western actors in liberal peace project

whenever it is spotted. In other words, this chapter constitutes the section that connects this research project to the current IR discourse on intervention and provides rationales for its necessity.

Chapter Three introduces the theoretical framework through which I answer the central research question of this thesis. In this chapter, I dissect the conceptual and theoretical content of the theory of hegemony as advanced by Antonio Gramsci in his 1971 *Prison Notebooks*. As an important concept within the framework of hegemony, I also discuss the role of common sense in creating and sustaining the popular reproduction of hegemonic normative order within a given society. As a way of bringing nonhegemonic actors to the discourse of hegemony, I build on these neo-Gramscian ideas to identify three major internal factors for determining the extent to which a group of nonhegemonic actors would commit to the normative prescriptions of hegemony as created by the historic bloc. On this basis, I argue that unlike the neo-realist, constitutive localisation, and world polity approaches, the neo-Gramscian approach to hegemony provides an important theoretical lens for dissecting not only why hegemony is perpetuated by the dominant social, but also why nonhegemonic actors may activate their agency in promoting the hegemonic normative order without questioning its origins and implications. To take this further in this chapter, I draw on this neo-Gramscian theoretical thought to deconstruct liberalism as both a Western ideology and a Western hegemonic project in the modern global society. In this regard, I showed how the liberal ideology, which was initially advanced by a few Western states and later by the West historic bloc, has currently become a single dominant ideological hegemony driving the modern world order. I argue in this process that the legitimisation provided for liberalism at the level of the global superstructure had configured its values as ahistorical, natural standards of reasoning and acting in world society. I, however, conclude that the only set of non-Western actors that may likely operate contrary to this liberal hegemonic way of thinking are the ones who maintain ownership of coherent alternative ideology, escape historical disempowerment and consciously commit to counterhegemony to engage in a war of position.

Chapter Four unpacks the role of consent to common sense of liberalism in shaping the institutional commitment of African regional actors to the liberal peace project. In this chapter, I trace the modern historical evolutionary process through which the liberal hegemony gained traction as common sense within the institutional space of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)/AU, which in turn influenced African actors' conception of peace solely from the lens of liberal epistemology. I, however, argue

that what was at play in this process was not solely about the external forces of common sense but also internal realities, which created a favourable atmosphere that allowed the liberal common sense to fully unleash its impact. I discuss the external and internal social forces that interacted in practice to develop a situation whereby African regional actors became uncritical and aligned to the course of the Western liberal project and, by implication, thwarted their commitment to any alternative thinking. Moving beyond the causal influence of common sense to incorporate its interplay with local forces allows the analysis presented in this chapter to avoid a reductionist approach that may focus on the structure while neglecting the agent or vice versa. My argument in this chapter is that while there are evolving local realities, the consent of African actors to common sense of liberal hegemony played a crucial role in the institutionalisation of their agency in the liberal peace project within the institutional space of the OAU/AU.

Chapter Five delves empirically into the agency of African interveners in liberal intervention in Somalia. This focus of my empirical discussion here primarily centred on exploring the commitments of African interveners to the liberal project of order as a means of approaching sustainable peace and stability in Somalia. I focus on the period between 2007 and 2020 during which African regional actors, via the mechanism of the AU, deployed the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for the stabilisation of Somalia. Methodologically, the analysis I presented in this chapter is neither intended to uncover the peacekeeping or counterterrorism aspect of the AMISOM's mandate nor aimed at analysing the contributions of Western actors towards the operational activities of AMISOM. Of course, this is not to be oblivious of the involvement of non-African international actors in the project of crafting peace and stability in Somalia, but mainly because the key concern of this thesis is fundamentally on the undertakings of African agents. In presenting a detailed analysis in this regard, this chapter draws on relevant archival materials and official documents of the AU both broadly and the ones that have to do with African international undertakings in Somalia. It equally relies on interview data, Somali policy documents, and speeches delivered by regional and national actors on Somalia's peace process.

Chapter Six presents the second empirical discussion that forms an integral part of the foundation upon which the central argument of this thesis is based. In this chapter, I interrogate African agency in liberal intervention in South Sudan by focusing on African actors' commitment to liberal transformative forward-looking transitional justice. In this respect, I illustrate how African intervention in South Sudan focuses on creating a

liberal democratic polity, bringing violators of local and international law to book, and entrenching a culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law. To methodologically foreground my analysis in this chapter within the context of empirical evidence, I draw on relevant interview data as well as text materials, particularly the ones that are directly related to African interventionist actions on South Sudan. I argue in this process that the consent of African regional actors to common sense of the liberal peace – which premised on the creation of liberal democratic polity as the surest pathway to forging sustainable peace – played a central causal role in animating their agency in liberal peace intervention in South Sudan.

Chapter Seven presents the third empirical analysis that contributes to the drawing of inference for this thesis. In terms of specificity, in this chapter, I dissect and anatomise the intervention of African actors in The Gambia in the wake of the country's post-election crisis. I focus on narrating the peace undertakings of these non-Western actors with respect to this country and what precipitated the pattern of their intervention. As a clarification, therefore, following Chomsky (1999, 2), my main aim in this chapter is *not* to focus on ethical analysis of “what should be, or what should have been, done” in The Gambia, but rather on “the framework in which events proceed” and why. Witt (2020, 13) has argued that the previous African intervention in Madagascar was an attempt “to restore the ideal of a liberal polity”. This chapter demonstrates that such an experience is not limited to Madagascar. It shows how African approaches to peace and stability in The Gambia were directed in accordance with the dictates of the liberal peace epistemology as they attempt to devise stability through consolidation of democracy and liberal social engineering of the country's polity. In my analysis in this regard, I argue that African actors committed to a liberal transformative project in The Gambia because they consented to common sense of liberal peace framework as the only ‘objective’ pathway for creating sustainable peace.

Chapter Eight presents the concluding discussion of this thesis. In this chapter, I re-articulate the essence of this thesis, the central research question it sought to investigate, its methodological approaches, and what constitutes its empirical findings. I equally make use of this chapter to reflect on the main contribution of this thesis to the critical IR scholarship on international intervention and the implications of its findings. I end the chapter with a suggestion for future research.

Chapter Two: Critical Liberal Intervention Discourse: Eurocentrism, Neo-imperialist Intentionality, and Puzzling Non-Western Agency

In the previous introductory chapter, I introduced the subject matter of this thesis. Among others, I presented the puzzle and central research question that animated this research project. In this chapter, I take a step further by reviewing the relevant IR literature on international intervention to situate the necessity for this research project within the broader critical theoretical and epistemological debates on liberal peace intervention. I specifically uncover how the mainstream critical scholarship on international intervention has advertently or inadvertently neglected the agency of non-Western actors in liberal peace intervention *research* and how the 'neo-imperialist internationality framework' that is often deployed by critical analysts to dissect the underpinning for practising liberal interventions could not make sense of the agency of non-Western actors in the liberal peace project whenever it is spotted. I demonstrate that this invariably turned out to be the case because the IR critical disciplinary debate on the liberal peace project is fundamentally centred on the West as the subject of analysis and the local/hybrid turn component of this critical scholarship that tends to advance this discourse also focuses on Western liberal agency and non-Western resistance without paying attention to how and why some non-Western interveners are empirically advancing the liberal peace project in (post-)conflict societies.

In the course of this survey, I present two key arguments that reinforce the necessity and significance of this thesis. First, I argue that despite the increasing involvement of some non-Western actors in the liberal peace project, there is a 'methodological bypassing'³² wittingly or unwittingly directed at their agency in liberal intervention research. Second, I contend that the 'neo-imperialist internationality framework', which is principally deployed in the critical intervention literature to explain the basis for Western liberal peace intervention, cannot offer any explanatory lens when the involving intervention agents are non-Western. Rather, when placing such an explanatory framework side by side with a non-Western liberal agency, it became evident that the existing critical literature on international intervention is not equipped for navigating why a group of non-Western actors may be in the vanguard of liberal peace interventions.

³² The concept of 'methodological bypassing' as used here is derived from the framing of Meera Sabaratnam. For more on this, see Sabaratnam (2013, 263).

For an orderly presentation of this review, this chapter is structured into four main sections. In the first section, I survey how the earlier analyses unmasked the practices of liberal peace intervention. In the course of this, I take stock of the discovery and features of the liberal peace as a paradigm for reconstructing peace in post-conflict societies and show how the extant literature attributes the practitioners of this peace model solely to Western actors. In the second section, I appraise the critical intervention scholarship and highlight how it characterises the *motive* driving the commitment of Western actors to liberal peace intervention as utterly *neo-imperialist*. In the third section, I assess the local turn and hybridity component of critical intervention literature and illustrate how it equally categorises Western actors as practitioners of liberal peace interventions and non-Western actors as mainly resistant agents. Finally, in the fourth section, I identify the gap in the mainstream critical intervention literature that motivated the central research question, which this thesis explores.

2.1 Unmasking Liberal Peace Interventions

Only a few subject matters, if any, in the IR peace and security subfield have generated intense scholarly attention and debates more than the issue of approaches to peace during international interventions in recent times (Newman, Paris and Richmond 2009, 3). As a matter of fact, this academic and policy discourse on approaches to statebuilding and peace in post-conflict societies has evolved tremendously over the last 20 years, both from problem-solving and critical perspectives (Chandler 2017). At the heart of this scholarly discourse on contemporary peace intervention is the growing focus on the combination of *how*, *what* and *why* questions. How do international interveners approach peace reconstruction in practice? What are the epistemological and paradigmatic assumptions underpinning each of these approaches (Paris 2004, 4)? Why do international interveners prefer a certain model of peace instead of the others? The intellectual curiosity that led to the broaching of this set of questions is not entirely surprising to many intervention analysts as it was a product of specific historical development. I will briefly elucidate some of the post-Cold War developments that set the stage for this epistemological dialogue before reviewing the contemporary analysis that uncovers and characterises the liberal peace intervention.

The recent events that triggered this discourse could be broadly compartmentalised into two phases. The first in this category could be attributed to the sudden end of the Cold War, which witnessed the dangerous collapse of many independent countries

and thereby created untold humanitarian crises across many regions of the world. Countries like Sudan, Cambodia, Rwanda, former Yugoslavia and Liberia could no longer, at this point, maintain internal cohesion and orders in the face of significant or total withdrawal of Western and Eastern financial and technical supports and the resultant outburst of uncontrollable civil unrest (Paris 2004). It was a development that was described as “a [post-Cold War] disturbing new phenomenon” (Helman and Ratner 1992-1993, 3), which signalled the reality of what some commentators delineated as failed or collapsed states (Ghani and Lockhart 2008). This prompted many scholars and analysts to call the attention of the international community, particularly the United Nations (UN), to the need for corresponding actions and intervention. Notably, in this context are Gerald Helman (a retired US Ambassador) and Steven Ratner (who was then an international affairs fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations). In their seminal and famous attention calling article titled *Saving Failed States*, they argue that “[t]o prevent future conflict, the international community must create a new political, economic and social environment for states riven by war” (Helman and Ratner 1992-1993, 8). Whilst reinforcing the necessity of such an intervention, Sonia Han contends that “we can only expect the demand... to “Build peace” to grow” (Han 1994, 840).

The second phenomenon worth emphasising during this period was the increasing recognition by the global policy-making actors that international peace and security would not be maintained and preserved when war-torn countries or countries emerging from war are not consciously and adequately. In his 1992 *An Agenda for Peace* Report, for instance, Boutros Boutros-Ghali who was the then UN Secretary-General, projects post-conflict peacebuilding as one of the cardinal action plans for the UN, and the international community at large, in the attempt by the international organisation to reactivate global commitment to sustainable peace (Boutros-Ghali 1992). The combination of these two developments, among others, gave rise to the proliferation of peace interventions, particularly from the last decade of the twentieth century (Newman, Paris and Richmond 2009, 4). These operations, which involved the participation of different international actors, were earlier carried out in places like Cambodia, Rwanda, Namibia, Mozambique, Bosnia, El Salvador, Croatia, among others (Paris 1997, Han 1994).

It was this growing operationalisation of peace interventions in conflict-affected societies that activated the inquisitiveness and curiosity of some scholars on the need to study, identify and conceptualise the ideological assumptions and intellectual

frameworks under which international actors and agencies are approaching and reinventing peace in the environment that is bedevilled by fragility due to the destructive effect of civil violence. Such an intellectual interrogation of the ideologies and methodologies of peace interventions was considered imperative for various reasons. Central to these rationales, however, is the realisation that except the epistemological and theoretical approaches to peace are thoroughly dissected and anatomised, the contradiction of building peace without a clear existence of positive peace would be difficult to deconstruct. This particularly becomes vital as international peace efforts in many conflict-affected societies have reportedly ended up in paradoxes, contradictions and futility (Zaum, 2012, p. 122; Paris & Sisk, 2009a). It prompted the argument by Bellamy and Williams that “[r]eflecting upon the epistemological assumptions behind current peace operations is thus a necessary part of thinking anew” (Bellamy and Williams 2004, 7).

The recent scholarly overture into the theoretical analysis of paradigms of peace intervention, rather than weaknesses or strengths of peace missions, was consciously pioneered by Roland Paris, particularly in his seminal article *Peacebuilding and the Limits of Liberal Internationalism*.³³ In this article, Paris examines the conduct of post-Cold War post-conflict peace operations to understand their conceptual foundations and underlying assumptions as being deployed by international peacebuilding interveners. In order to make a coherent argument in this context, Paris draws on empirical evidence from eight post-civil war cases, namely Angola, Bosnia, Namibia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Mozambique and Rwanda, where Western actors operationalised peace interventions (Paris 1997, 62, 64). It was in this context that Paris argues that “[a] single paradigm – liberal internationalism – appears to guide the work of most international agencies engaged in peacebuilding” (Paris 1997, 56).³⁴ According to him, the elemental credo of this liberal paradigm is based on the presupposition that “the surest foundation for peace... is market democracy, that is, a liberal democratic polity and a market-oriented economy” (Paris 1997, 56). Apart from the fact that Paris further corroborates and substantiates this argument in his later work,³⁵ many other analysts subsequently acknowledge this liberal model as the

³³ By specifically focusing on the ideologies underpinning peace interventions, Paris seminally opens up the scholarly space for the recent, burgeoning scholarship on how international interveners are theoretically conceptualising peace creation in post-conflict societies. Of course, this is not to suggest that there were no scholarly analyses on post-conflict peace interventions before this time. But they rarely delve into the *ideologies underlying peace interventions*. For a set of work on peace intervention before this time, see, for instance, Han (1994) and Weiss (1994).

³⁴ In his subsequent analysis, Paris later delineates the concept of ‘market democracy’ as an internal governance system that foregrounds periodic elections, the rule of law, human rights and market economy (Paris 2002, 638).

³⁵ See, for instance, Paris (2004).

primary ideology shaping modern peace interventions (see, Duffield 2001, 11, Lake 2016, 6, Richmond 2004, 84, 85, Jabri 2007, 124).

It is worth noting, however, that since Paris' publication in 1997,³⁶ liberal peace intervention as a peace operation that relies on the assumptions of liberal ideology has become a major starting point for mainstream debates within the IR subfield of international intervention (Duffield 2001, Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam 2011, Campbell, Chandler and Sabaratnam 2011, Tadjbakhsh 2011a). There is hardly any paradigmatic analysis on international interventions projected in modern times without engaging first with the very basics of the liberal design of peace intervention. Not surprisingly, Nicolas Lemay-Hébert posits that "[t]he literature on contemporary peacebuilding is increasingly being framed by the liberal peace debate" (Lemay-Hébert 2013b, 242). To further attest to its centrality in the contemporary analysis on peace intervention, Richmond and Franks (2009, 4) posit that the liberal peace has increasingly become "a discourse, framework and structure with a specific ontology and methodology".

Informed by the expansive nature of the discourse on international intervention, extant scholarship attempts further elucidation of *what* constitutes and *who* practises liberal peace intervention. The broader analysis of liberal peace intervention, from both the political and economic spheres, has been identified to involve the forging and orchestration of peace by external agents through the conscious promotion of multi-party elections, the rule of law, human rights, civil liberty, freedom of speech, open-market economy, and right of private investment (Paris 2004, 5, O. P. Richmond 2006, 292). In the account of some scholars, liberal peace have not only different dimensions of 'the victor's peace,' 'the institutional peace,' 'the constitutional peace,' and 'the civil peace' (O. P. Richmond 2007, 462, O. P. Richmond 2005, O. P. Richmond 2006, 293, Richmond and Franks 2007, 29), but also different graduations of "conservative, orthodox, and emancipatory" (O. P. Richmond 2006, 300), as well as different structural positions of 'peacebuilding-via-democratic reform,' 'peacebuilding-via-civil society,' and 'peacebuilding-via-statebuilding' (Heathershaw 2008, 604). Mac Ginty (2011, 37) notes, in this regard, that "there is much variety within the liberal peace."

From the perspective of some analysts, liberal peace intervention is nothing more than a top-down, Weberian 'institutional approach' to domestic peace (Lemay-Hébert,

³⁶ It was not a surprise, therefore, that David Chandler's (2017) twenty years' appraisal of the contemporary thinking and discourses on international peace intervention referenced 1997 as the commencing year.

2013a; Lemay-Hébert, 2009) that prioritises “secular authority, capacity-building, centralized governance and institutions of justice” (Newman, Paris and Richmond 2009, 12). Just as Mac Ginty notes that “liberal peace interventions... revolves around statebuilding” (2011, 40), Randazzo contends that institution-building as a mechanism for building peace is a dimensional characteristic of liberal peace (Randazzo 2017, 54). This increasing elaboration, interpretation and disaggregation of what embodies liberal peace intervention have propelled some analysts to raise concerns on the intellectual dangers of delineating “the ‘liberal peace’ [intervention] too broadly” (Paris 2011a, 42). In spite of this attempted broadening of its scope, liberal peace intervention is generally known as an externally-coordinated top-down peace exercise that prioritises the promotion of liberal values such as democracy, a market economy, the rule of law, and human rights in post-conflict societies as focal foundations for forging durable peace (Duffield 2001, 11, Mac Ginty 2006, 45, Newman, Paris and Richmond 2009, 3). This was further emphasised by Lemay-Hébert (2013b, 242) when he notes that liberal peace intervention generally involves “democracy promotion, the rule of law and good governance, promotion of human rights, economic reform and privatisation.” As a result of these growing conversations, it is not a surprise that the mainstream IR scholarship on intervention has foregrounded liberal peace as the primary framework through which (some) international interveners are responding to the subject of peace reconstruction (Quinn and Cox 2007, 500, Mac Ginty 2006).

In the realms of the origin and ‘who’ practices liberal peace intervention, there is a somewhat convergence in the mainstream intervention literature that the liberal peace ideology originated from the West and that Western actors are the *sole* practitioners of liberal peace interventions. To underscore the Western origin of the liberal peace project, extant intervention scholarship spares no effort in delving into its historical evolution. While the root of this peace project is traced, in some instances, to the intellectual writings of Immanuel Kant (Paris, 1997, p. 59; Richmond O. P., 2005, p. 25; Willett, 2005, p. 571), in other instances, it is linked to the philosophical thinking of Woodrow Wilson in the aftermath of the First World War I (WWI) (Paris 2004, 6-7). Within the same purview, some other analyses connect its resurgent operationalisation to the by-product of post-Cold War victory of Western liberal capitalist ideology as well as the contribution of the US foreign policy to the conduct of peace reconstruction (Quinn and Cox 2007).

Arguing from this context, Paris (1997, 56) notes that liberal peace intervention embodies a practice of “transplanting Western models of social, political, and

economic organizations into war-shattered states”.³⁷ Mac Ginty (2006, 36) further puts this straight in his analogical contention that: ‘liberal peace’ and ‘Western peace’ are just mere alternative concepts. As a way of connecting the source and the orthodox practitioners, while Richmond (2010, p. 667) asserts that “liberal peace [intervention is] directed by a Western core of states and international organisations”, Mac Ginty (2011, 41) contends that it “is directed from the global north and attempts to reproduce forms of peace and governance that mirror expectations from the global north”. In other words, extant literature characterises liberal peacebuilding interventions within the sole agency of Western actors (Zaum 2012, 121, Paris 2002, Mac Ginty 2011, 20).³⁸ Just as the discursive framing of ‘who’ carries out liberal peace interventions is *wholly* centred on Western actors, in what follows, I show how the mainstream *critical* analysis of the rationale for this undertaking is also centred on Western actors and located within the purview of their neo-imperialist endeavour.

2.2 Critical Scholarship: Liberal Peace Intervention as a Western Neo-imperialist Project

The unmasking of the liberal paradigm as the single dominant framework guiding the operations of Western actors in their practice of peace intervention in the post-Cold War era has led to the rise of *critical scholarship* in the IR disciplinary debates on liberal peace intervention (Newman 2009, 38). This set of literature, which has increasingly become more prominent in the IR intervention literature for the last twenty years, could be placed within the analytical lens of what Robert Cox referred to as ‘critical theory’. According to Cox’s conceptual framing in his seminal article *Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory*, critical theory “is directed towards an appraisal of the very framework for action... which problem-solving theory accepts as its parameters” (Cox 1981, 129). To this end, as Cox further maintains, it is a theoretical approach that stands “apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how that order came about” (Cox 1981, 129).

In line with this perspective, the critical intervention school³⁹ presented a direct critique of the epistemological basis, assumptions and intentions shaping the practice of liberal

³⁷ For Chandler (2006, 9), these war-shattered states are usually categorised as ‘non-Western Others’.

³⁸ In buttressing this point, Zaum (2012, 121) argues that one of the basic characteristics of liberal peace interventions in the literature is that “they are conducted by liberal, Western states”.

³⁹ It is worth noting, nonetheless, that this set of critical scholarship partly flourishes because of the unintended consequences and untold contradictions that followed the application of liberal peace prescriptions in many conflict and post-conflict societies (Randazzo 2016, 1352). As pointed out by Edward Newman, the “critical approach to [liberal] peacebuilding raises questions about existing policy

peace interventions as well as their immediate and long-term implications for local and global normative ordering. It does “not accept existing [liberal] policy parameters as a given” but instead questions “the interests they serve” (Newman 2009, 38). In an attempt to question and unpack the subject of liberal peace intervention as often being practised by Western actors, the focus of the IR critical intervention scholarship has taken two broad pathways of what Chandler (2010, pp. 24, 27) described as “ideas-based” and “power-based” critiques.⁴⁰ This is partly to demonstrate that critical voices on liberal peace intervention are far from being homogeneous concerning their concerns and perspectives about liberalisation as an approach for devising peace during interventions (Tadjbakhsh 2011b, 3). The set of critical literature that focuses on the ‘ideas-based critique’ of Western liberal peace intervention gives a coherent critique of its excessive external colouration and insensitivity to what ‘peace’ might mean to ordinary local actors in a given post-conflict environment (Zaum 2012, 122). Arguing from this point, Richmond (2011b, 9, 10) maintains that liberal peace intervention is noted for “denying self-determination and self-government” which, according to him, makes the peace model “exceptionally abrasive when transplanted”.

However, the key focus of the survey here is majorly on the ‘power-based’ critical reading of liberal peace intervention that attempts questioning “the underlying mindset which informs [its] international practices” (Lemay-Hébert, 2015, p. 95). This set of mainstream critical literature characterises liberal peace intervention as a political project of Western actors motivated by their neo-imperialist ambitions. It contends that Western interveners primarily rely on the liberal peace framework in the course of their post-conflict peace intervention based on their calculated intention to invoke neo-imperialism in the modern global society (Chandler, 2010, pp. 24, 25).⁴¹ While contributing to this analysis, Paris (2002, 653, 654) maintains that the contemporary practice of liberal peace intervention constitutes nothing more than a *mission civilisatrice* through which the *Western* core tends to dictate the liberal system of governance to the non-Western periphery of the global society. According to him, to the extent that the undertakings during liberal peace interventions “reflect the ideological predilections” of Western actors, liberal approach to peacebuilding is “a new phase in the ongoing and evolving relationship between the core and the periphery... with the core continuing to define the standards of acceptable behaviour”

assumptions” which invariably “encouraged new controversies and debates that question the relationship between the peacebuilding community and “local” actors” (Newman 2009, 38).

⁴⁰ It is a scenario that Paris refers to as “a different set of critiques” (Paris 2011a, 35).

⁴¹ Of course, for some analyses that support this liberal approach to peace interventions, see Paris (2010) and Fukuyama (2004b).

(Paris 2002, 653). Sharing a similar perspective, Pugh (2006, 271) asserts that the impulse driving the political economy of liberal peace intervention in the war-shattered societies transcends a simple goal of promoting good governance and stability to include a deliberate endeavour by Western interveners “to sustain [their] hegemonic power over the global economic future” of these societies.

While drawing on the cases of nation-building in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan, Michael Ignatieff contributes to this mainstream discourse that characterises liberal peace intervention as a project motivated by the neo-imperialist intention of Western actors. Arguing from this purview, Ignatieff (2003, 3) maintains that the nation-building engagement of Western interveners in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan, which relied on liberal epistemology, was “for imperial reasons: to consolidate... [their] global hegemony, [and] to assert and maintain... [their] leadership” through a re-ordering political project. For him, the “ostensible motive that sustains these [liberal] nation-building projects may be humanitarian, but the real principle is *imperial*: the maintenance of [Western] order over [non-Western] barbarian threat” (my emphasis) (Ignatieff 2003, 22). What constitutes neo-imperialism and empire-building in this regard is, according to him, “the desire [by these Western agents] to imprint... [their] values, civilization and achievements on the souls, bodies and institutions of another people” (Ignatieff 2003, 42). The new empire which Western actors are trying to build through this interventionist process, according to Ignatieff (2003, 17), is the one “held together by common elements of... the idea, if not the practice, of democracy; the idea, if not the practice, of human rights; the idea, if not the practice, of equality before the law”. In his final analysis, he believes that this neo-imperial driver “needs to be stressed, because the usual way of describing Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan, as wards of the ‘international community’, obscures the [Western] imperial interests that brought them under the administration of the United Nations in the first place” (Ignatieff 2003, 110).

Following the same line of thought, Clapton (2014) also contributes to this discourse by emphasising that the recent undertaking of peace interventions by Western actors, which valorises the promotion of liberalism and democracy, is not without a specific motive. According to the reading of Clapton:

Promoting liberalism and democracy is nothing new – the foreign policies of most Western governments have long featured democracy promotion as a key objective. *What is unique, however, is the rationale and motivation behind recent attempts to spread liberal values.* Interventions to promote liberal values have not been

undertaken simply for the sake of these values themselves, nor have they been entirely motivated (though they may have been in part) by an altruistic desire to bring freedom and prosperity to oppressed peoples. Rather, *Western* attempts to promote liberalism and democracy in the post-Cold War era constitute a *self-interested* and utilitarian mechanism of risk management (my emphasis) (Clapton 2014, 51).

Lehti and Pennanen (2020) also advance a similar standpoint which attempts to uncover liberal peace as a project designed by Western actors to promote a new wave of imperialism in the global society. In their reflection, they note:

But if we shift our focus from liberal institutionalism to the idea of liberal peace, we find that it not only operates as an ordering principle, it is by its essence liberal, and in a sense, Western. It provides the main legitimizing narrative and a source of consensual legitimacy for Western/US hegemony and order. The paradox, however, is that liberal peace also creates fundamental dichotomies and hierarchies between the “civilized” and others, and thus, it stands for a *liberal empire* (emphasis in the original) (Lehti and Pennanen 2020, 34).

This critical analysis of liberal peace intervention, which tends to underscore its neo-imperialist driving force, also received the contribution of Noam Chomsky. In the process of his contribution to this critical deconstruction of the underpinning for Western liberal peace intervention, Chomsky (1999) draws on the case of Western intervention in Kosovo. Arising from his analysis of “the framework in which events proceeded” in the course of this intervention, Chomsky (1999, 2, 11) contends that the commitment of Western actors to the enterprise of liberal peace project is “under the cloak of good intentions *but in pursuit of interests* that have a very familiar ring outside the realm of enlightenment” (my emphasis). As a way of furthering this point of view, for David Chandler, the invasive form of liberal statebuilding intervention that is often practised by Western actors is a manifestation of “Empire in Denial” which allows these Western actors to regulate non-Western societies and at the same time deny such a practice (Chandler 2006). In the conscious reading of Wai (2014, 483), the increasing operationalisation of liberal peace intervention by Western interveners, particularly in Africa, is “a *neo-imperialist posture* by a *Western will* to domination and *desire* to restructure the world in line with the ideological preferences of liberalism” (my emphasis). This account of neo-imperialist “intentionality [which is believed to be] driving the [Western liberal peace] project” (Randazzo 2017, 26) is also shared by Michael Dillon and Julian Reid, which prompted them to characterise it as “a deliberate

policy of... power projection" (Dillon and Reid 2000, 119). To Pugh (2004, pp. 39, 49), therefore, Western liberal peace operations primarily aim at advancing a narrow goal of "superiority of [Western] liberal ideology" within the broad "framework of liberal imperialism".

The main point here is that this critical scholarship converges on one point: that the rationale behind the commitment of Western actors to the practice of liberal peace interventions in conflict or post-conflict societies is because of their *deliberate intention* to advance neo-imperialism that "tended to disqualify Southern political projects as inadequate, lacking or backward" (Duffield 2001, 32).⁴² This 'neo-imperialist intentionality framework' has, of course, become the dominant explanatory lens through which critical intervention scholarship often elucidates the basis why Western international interveners primarily committed to the liberal peace project in the course of their peace interventions in global South trouble spots (Chandler, 2010, pp. 24, 25). It is worth noting that the expansive nature of this discussion has further given rise to the local/hybrid turn scholarship. In what follows, I review this set of literature and show how it is equally framed around the Western agency of liberal peace intervention while presenting non-Western actors as merely resistant agents.

2.3 Local Turn and Hybridity Scholarship: Western Liberal Peace Agency and Non-Western Resistance

Beyond the spotting of the liberal peace as the primary paradigm through which Western actors undertake peace intervention and the corresponding analysis of their agency within the confines of neo-imperialist intentionality, the critical scholarly analysis on contemporary peace intervention has further been advanced to incorporate how non-Western local actors are conceptualising peace formation, and in fact, reacting to the liberal peace project. This component of intervention literature which is lately becoming burgeoning in IR debates on peacebuilding could be categorised under the broad frame of 'local turn and hybridity scholarship' (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013, Leonardsson and Rudd 2015, Mac Ginty 2011, Tom 2017) or 'post-liberal peace scholarship' (O. P. Richmond 2011b). The emergence of academic analysis around 'the local'⁴³ in the operationalisation of international peace intervention

⁴² In the reading of Autesserre (2014, p. 52), this critical analysis foregrounds the viewpoint that "[liberal] peace interventions are "neoimperial"... endeavors that enable major [Western] powers to perpetuate hegemony".

⁴³ The conceptual notion of 'the local' in this set of scholarship has been recognised by analysts as complex and contested, without a rigid meaning, but which its description demands a conscious analytical

was the upshot of an attempt to reflect and recognise different methodological thinking about how to build sustainable peace which cannot be conveniently situated within the purview of the Western liberal hegemony paradigm. Unlike the liberal peacebuilding that valorises liberal universalism as an approach to every peace reconstruction exercise, the emphasis of the local turn literature portrays an analytical premise that foregrounds and prioritises local contexts and their varying emancipation agencies in the orchestration of post-conflict peace reconstruction, both in terms of design, implementation, and consolidation (Randazzo 2016). In other words, the scholarly turn to the local as an analytical category in international peace intervention is aimed to address the challenges associated with the orthodox Western liberal perspective about peacebuilding by emphasising the centrality and significance of bottom-up approaches, a local agency, local culture, local knowledge and local expertise in peace formation processes (Simangan, 2017, p. 39). It was a deliberate endeavour to position the non-Western local agency strongly within the epicentre of peace reconstruction, both in theory and practice (Randazzo 2016, 1354).

In addition to its advocacy for, and emphasis on, emancipatory local actors as the most salient drivers of peace agenda, the local turn scholarship also explores and deconstructs the interplay and encounters between the international liberal power (the international) and local resistance (the local) (Paffenholz 2015, 857) in the peacebuilding sites which therefore permits the emergence of what is often conceptualised as 'hybridity' or 'hybridization' or 'infrapolitics' of peacebuilding (Graef 2015, 24, Richmond 2010, 670, Richmond and Mitchell 2012, 7, Richmond O. P., 2011b, p. 13). The unpacking of the non-Western local lens to peace formation was a development that thrives amidst the continuous questioning of the records of Western liberal peace intervention (Randazzo 2016, 1352), and more importantly, because of its often-recognised characteristic that tends to promote the predetermined interests of Western external interveners while simultaneously displacing local ideas and interests about peace creation. It is in this context that Mac Ginty and Richmond contend that "[t]he local turn can thus, in one analysis, be seen in sympathy with the trimming back of the liberal peace" (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013, 779).

The first phase of this scholarship, which foregrounds non-Western local actors in peace transformation processes, emerged in the 1990s as analysts began searching for a new perspective in the thinking and practising of peacebuilding in divided

delineation (Hughes, Öjendal and Schierenbeck 2015, 818). However, it is often conceptualised as locally based non-Western actors (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013, 769, Richmond 2011b).

societies (Paffenholz 2015, 857). The basis for searching for fresh ideas in international peacebuilding engagement at this time stemmed from the inability of the Western international actors to successfully respond to the crises that evolved in places like Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia (Leonardsson and Rudd 2015, 826). The pioneering engagement within this local turn debate is attributed to the work of Lederach (Paffenholz 2015, 858). In his expository categorisation and elaboration of the crucial resources that are needed for devising sustainable peace in conflict-affected societies, John Lederach posits that global policymakers must think of the actors who are located in the post-conflict settings as “*resources*, not *recipients*” (Lederach 1997, 94). According to him, therefore, “[t]he greatest resource for sustaining peace in the long term is always rooted in the local people and their culture” (Lederach 1997, 94). Another contributor to this discourse is Adam Curle. Informed by his accumulated experience on how conflict mediation and peacebuilding by outsiders have proved largely ineffective in recent years, Curle reinforces a similar line of thought and argues for the need to prioritise and harness “the peacemaking potential [of local people] within the conflicting communities” (Curle 1994, 96). In his analysis, peacebuilding operations tend to yield maximal outcomes when ‘local peacemakers’ are strategically positioned and empowered as experts and initiators of peace processes (Curle 1994, 103). As articulated by both Lederach and Curle, what is expressly clear in these analyses is the effort to present a new model of theoretical reasoning about peace reconstruction that provides an alternative to conventional practice while building on conflict resolution theory (Paffenholz 2015, 587).

However, a (more) critical component of this scholarship, which vigorously foregrounds local epistemology of peace, emerged in the first decade of this century, particularly with the expansion of post-structuralist and postcolonial studies that question the motive and epistemologies of Western liberal peace intervention (Paffenholz 2015, 857, Graef 2015, 22). It specifically thrives as critical researchers continue to unravel the contradictions and everyday non-Western resistance that are noted to be confronting Western initiated liberal peace interventions across many (post-)conflict contexts (Randazzo 2017, 165). It is in this context that Mac Ginty and Richmond argue that the recent turn to the local in peace intervention discourse “is based on reactions to real-world events” (Mac Ginty and Richmond 2013, 766). While projecting analysis from this standpoint, Lemay-Hébert demonstrates how the exclusion of non-Western local actors in the practice of liberal peace reconstruction by the international officials precipitated “a wave of popular opposition to the international administration” in Kosovo and Timor-Leste (Lemay-Hébert 2012, 467).

In the same vein, Edelstein shows how the intrusive and liberal US-led intervention for state and peacebuilding in Iraq met local “costly resistance that has made the tasks of postwar statebuilding more difficult” in the country (Edelstein 2009, 93). Of course, these are just a few among many scholarly analyses that are committed and inclined to reveal not only how liberal peace intervention *often marginalise non-Western local agency* but also how these non-Western local agents are consciously *resisting* the liberal peace project as well as activating their agency in *alternatively* shaping the approach and outcomes of peace reconstruction exercise. As argued by Richmond, “[l]ocal agencies... have begun to find ways of claiming ownership of a politics that responds to needs and identity issues, [by] appropriating liberal peacebuilding, ignoring it or modifying it” (Richmond O. P., 2010, p. 669). In the process of researching and elaborating the assertiveness of the non-Western local emancipatory agency in peace intervention operations, ‘the local’ has been cemented as a distinct epistemological constituency for analysing non-Western peacebuilding that serves as a counterpoint to Western liberal peace epistemology (Graef 2015, 22, Randazzo 2017, 145).

This analysis has further been expanded to unpack the interactions that are taking place between ‘the local’ non-Western actors and ‘the international’ Western actors in the context of liberal peace intervention. This discourse is projected to capture the emancipation of the local and ‘everyday’ forms of peace and their encounters, dealings or coexistence with the ‘international’ in liberal peace intervention practices (see, Mac Ginty, 2011; Richmond O. P., 2010). This encounter between the Western international liberal power and the non-Western emancipatory agency is usually being analysed under the conceptual framing of ‘hybridity’ (Graef 2015, 24, Peterson 2012) or infrapolitics of peacebuilding (O. P. Richmond 2011b). Although some analysts prefer the term ‘post-liberal peacebuilding’ which depicts a scenario where what constitutes peacebuilding can no more be determined by the sole prescriptions of Western liberal agents but only in conjunction with non-Western local actors (O. P. Richmond 2011b, 18). According to Mac Ginty, “[t]he lens offered by hybridity allows us to more easily recognise the agency... of local actors in peace and conflict situations” (Mac Ginty 2011, 10). For Björkdahl and Höglund (2013, 293) hybrid peace is the upshot of the interaction between the liberal and local peacebuilding epistemologies. To this literature, hybrid peace, as a new reality in peacebuilding exercise, represents the outcomes of the interactions, interplay, clash and/or coexistence of the top-down liberal international agency and bottom-up ‘illiberal’ non-Western local agency in the operationalisation of peace formation. It demonstrates the

active presence of Western international liberal agency in post-conflict peacebuilding processes and the inability of the same Western liberal power to completely silence or dislodge the everyday activism of the alternative local agency in determining the modalities for peace transformation. Some existing analyses have empirically uncovered how this hybridity plays out in different conflict and post-conflict intervention sites across the global South (see, for instance, Boege, 2012; Sandstrom, 2012). According to Mac Ginty, what creates a scenario that produces hybridity during liberal peace interventions is the combination of the inability of 'the international' Western actors to successfully incentivise the non-Western local actors to accept the liberal peace as well as the inability of 'the local' non-Western actors to completely reject the liberal peace project (Mac Ginty 2011).

What is very clear in this set of intervention literature, which constitutes what this review seeks to uncover, is that the conventional reading of *international interveners* who practice liberal peace intervention is solely within the purview of *Western actors* as non-Western (local) actors are commonly seen as resistant agents (Richmond O. P., 2011b, p. 18; Paffenholz, 2015, p. 862; Peterson, 2012, p. 18). In other words, the local turn and hybridity literature does not provide insight into 'agency' in the liberal peace project beyond the remit of Western interveners, and when non-Western actors are brought into this discourse, they are primarily discussed as antagonists of the liberal peace agenda. While recognising and pointing attention to this phenomenon, Paffenholz (2015, 862) asserts that the "local turn scholarship identifies the international [agency in liberal peace intervention] within a monolithic West" which accordingly leads "to a blind spot when it comes to [the agency] non-Western international actors" in the practice of liberal intervention. At this juncture, one may need to pause, reflect and ask: what does the current state of the literature on liberal intervention mean for the necessity of this thesis? In what follows, I summarise and identify the knowledge gap in the mainstream critical intervention literature that animated this thesis.

2.4 Embodiments of Eurocentrism in Critical Liberal Intervention Research?

Identifying the Gap in the Literature

As I have demonstrated in the above review, the IR subfield of intervention has attracted massive scholarly attention in recent times. This has specifically allowed the critical scholarship on the contemporary practice of liberal peace intervention in (post-)conflict societies to flourish than what could have been imagined during the Cold War

(Da Costa and Karlsrud 2012, 54). As highlighted in the preceding survey, what the mainstream critical intervention literature has helped us to know so far include how the liberal peace paradigm has become the primary framework through which *Western actors* are carrying out peace intervention and how the rationale for deploying this framework by these Western actors is based on their intention to pursue a neo-imperialist agenda. In an attempt to bring non-Western actors to this discourse via the local turn and hybrid scholarship, extant critical literature further demonstrates how non-Western local actors are responding to the liberal peace project through *resistance*. Notwithstanding the rigour and meticulousness of this mainstream critical scholarship in deepening debates on liberal peace intervention, there is a specific knowledge gap. This gap which invariably underpinned the basis for this thesis, could be highlighted under two connected premises: methodological bypassing of non-Western agency in liberal intervention research; and absence of explanations for the non-Western agency in liberal peace interventions.

2.4.1 Methodological Bypassing of Non-Western Agency in Liberal Interventions Research

The first component of this shortcoming as associated with the critical study of liberal peace intervention in IR is mainly methodological. In this case, the mainstream critical scholarship on liberal intervention neglects to accord any form of relevance to the non-Western agency in the methodological study of the contemporary liberal peace interventions. This methodological bypassing manifests within the context of scholarly *inattention* to the disposition of (some) non-Western interveners to the liberal peace project (that prioritises democracy, the rule of law, and human rights as a way of building peace in post-conflict societies). Looking at it holistically, it is a scenario that resembles what Sabaratnam (2013, p. 263) considers as “methodological exclusion” in IR peace intervention research. Nearly all the *major* empirical studies that are projected to critically discuss and analyse the practice of liberal intervention in the mainstream IR intervention scholarship, from Paris (1997, 2004) to Chandler (2006) and (Mac Ginty 2011), direct the focus of their analytical gaze towards the undertakings of Western international actors.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Reflecting on this exclusionary methodological approach as manifested in the mainstream intervention literature, Autesserre (2014, p. 52) maintains that liberal peace interventions often “enjoy much more [non-Western] agency than the research on the liberal peace implies”.

Informed by this exclusionary research design, not only that the key international actors whose interventions are subjected to critical analysis within the purview of liberal peace debates are Western, the peace operations that are equally explored in this process are the ones orchestrated by Western actors or agencies such as the UN, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), European Union (EU), Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), *inter alia* (see, for instance, Paris, 1997, 2004; Chandler, 2006; Mac Ginty, 2011; Richmond & Franks, 2007). See table 2.A below for a summary of this methodological exclusion. A very few exceptions, like Richmond and Tellidis (2014), that attempt to highlight the uncritical dispositions of some non-Western donors to the praxis of liberal peace interventions never, in any coherent and comprehensive manner, unpack *how* these non-Western actors are empirically operationalising their agency in such a liberal project. A minimalist analysis of that nature is, at best, hanging at the level of theoretical conjecture and, therefore, may not project any analytical potency.

Table 2. A: Selected Work on Liberal Peace Interventions and Agents in Focus

<i>Author(s), Date</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Case(s)</i>	<i>Agent(s) in Focus</i>
Noam Chomsky 1999	The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo	Kosovo	US, NATO
Michael Ignatieff 2003	Empire Lite: Nation-building in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan	Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan	US
Roland Paris (2004)	At War's End: Building Peace After Civil Conflict	Angola, Rwanda, Cambodia, Liberia, Bosnia, Croatia, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Namibia, Mozambique	UN, IMF, World Bank, NATO, OSCE, EU
David Chandler (2006)	Empire in Denial: The Politics of State-building	Bosnia	EU
Mark Duffield (2007)	Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples	Mozambique, Afghanistan	UN, UK
Oliver P. Richmond and Jason Franks (2009)	Liberal Peace Transitions: Between Statebuilding and Peacebuilding	Cambodia, Bosnia, East Timor, Kosovo	UN, EU, NATO, OSCE, World Bank
David Chandler (2010)	International Statebuilding: The Rise of Post-liberal Governance	Bosnia, Kosovo	EU

Roger Mac Ginty (2011)	International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance	Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Lebanon	US, UK, NATO, EU, OSCE, IMF, World Bank
William Clapton 2014	Risk and Hierarchy in International Society: Liberal Interventionism in the Post-Cold War Era	Iraq, South Pacific	EU, US, Australia
Patrick Tom (2017)	Liberal Peace and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa	Sierra Leone	UN, UK, World Bank, IMF, EU

When coming to the empirical work that is specifically directed towards liberal peace intervention in Africa, such a methodological evasion is also very pronounced. Many analyses in this regard seem to overlook the liberal interventions that are orchestrated by African interveners and instead directed the gaze of their analysis on Western interveners. A few of these works are worth identifying. Tom's (2017) *Liberal Peace and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in Africa*, for instance, explores the practical interactions between liberal peacebuilding and 'everyday' experience of peacebuilding by focusing on the case of Sierra Leone. It is, however, worth noting that his analysis on actors that operationalised liberal peace intervention in this country, wittingly or unwittingly, concentrates mainly on Western actors such as the UN, United Kingdom (UK), World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). Informed by this methodological choice, Tom provides no insight into the contributions of African interveners to the overall liberal projects in the country.

Similarly, in their endeavour to look into the challenges confronting post-conflict liberal peace reconstruction across Africa, Englebert and Tull (2008) recast Western international donors as the overarching subject of analysis without engaging the role of African agency in this respect. In the same vein, while contextualising liberal peace intervention in South Sudan, Da Costa and Karlsrud (2012) focus on the UN and its mission in the country, and by implication, bracket the efforts of African agency in this process. A similar exclusionary trend applies to many other empirical works in this regard as the extant intervention literature seems to avoid talking about non-Western involvement in the liberal peace project. These are not necessarily a mistake or accident but rather a reflection of the enduring intellectual preoccupation with the Western agency as the subject of research in IR discipline. The need to respond to this Western dominance at a broader level led to the development of the global IR framework by Amitav Acharya and Barry Busan, which expressly challenges this

Western primacy in mainstream IR historical and theoretical analysis (Acharya & Buzan, 2019; Acharya, 2017).

Beyond the above, it is therefore not surprising that the overarching conception of 'the internationals' in critical local turn/hybridity debates vis-à-vis the liberal peace intervention is conventionally portrayed as Western actors (Peterson, 2012, p. 18; Richmond O. P., 2011b, p. 18); a development Paffenholz argues could lead "to a blind spot when it comes to [the practice of liberal intervention by] non-Western international actors" (Paffenholz 2015, 862). By and large, this points attention to a new form of 'coloniality' (Quijano 2007) in the IR intervention research, which, on the one hand, portrays Western actors as the only international peacebuilders whose intervention is worth exploring and, on the other hand, positions non-Western international actors as lacking agency in the modern liberal peace project (even when this is not the case). While this exclusionary privileging of the 'West' as 'subject' of analysis has always been noted as an enduring issue in social, political and theoretical inquiry in IR (Sabaratnam 2011a, Hobson 2007), the continuity of such a practice in liberal intervention research will only yield a partial, incomplete and monological analysis of realities.

By *non-Western agency* in liberal peace interventions in this thesis, I mean the *active involvement* of non-Western actors (i.e., a group of actors located outside the global north) in liberal interventionist projects. Non-Western agency in liberal interventions could be unpacked conceptually without subsuming it under the broad categorisation of Western liberal international interventions. Once the centre of the key decision-making in a liberal intervention is outside the West, and the leading actors involved are non-Western agents, then it became an instance of non-Western agency in liberal (re-)ordering of peace. Of course, this positionality of differentiating the non-Western agency from the Western agency in the application and enforcement of liberal governance programmes is not necessarily contradicting the existing analysis that cautions against the thinking of a detached binary division between 'Western approaches' and 'non-Western approaches' (Bilgin, 2017; Harrison G. , 2004). In other words, such a standpoint is not in any way objecting the argument raised by Bilgin (2008, p. 6) that "'non-Western' ways of thinking about and doing world politics are not always devoid of 'Western' concepts and theories." The reality of co-constitution does not negate the possibility of disentangling a non-Western agency from its Western counterpart within the context of a conceptual analysis. By seeing this as not conflating, for instance, Hobson and Sajed (2017, p. 547) assert that "non-Western

agency needs to be taken seriously as an ontologically significant process in world politics... [which] needs to be explored in its complex, manifold dimensions.” However, notwithstanding this call for the necessity for IR scholars to recognise “multiple forms of agency, including the agency of non-Western actors” (Acharya, 2016, p. 5), such a focus has not garnered any significant attention in the mainstream of liberal intervention scholarship.

Within the realm of peace intervention research, a few scholars have recently recognised this shortcoming. Zaum (2013, 106), notes in this regard that “there is a paucity of rigorous empirical research” on peacebuilding practices, particularly the ones that take cognisance of actors in the global South. In the account of Wodrig (2017, 4), she notes that the peacebuilding “intervention scholarship has not yet specifically discussed the increasing number of interventions conducted by [non-Western] regional organisations.” In the words of Peterson, “it appears that one of the main problems is that nearly all of the current [peace intervention] analysis continues to put... ‘the West’ at the centre of analysis” (Peterson 2012, 18). For Sabaratnam (2017, 38), peacebuilding “intervention scholarship was characterised by varied manifestations of Eurocentrism – the tendency to mark the West as the... [only] subject of political analysis”. The same standpoint was further reinforced by Richmond and Mac Ginty (2015, p. 183) in their contention that “the regional [and non-Western] aspect of liberal peace interventions has been under-researched.” The above observations, among others, demonstrate the extent to which a set of analysts have previously attempted to underscore this lopsided liberal peace intervention research design which accords primacy to the Western agency.⁴⁵

A key question that needs to be broached at this juncture is: have these observers responded in any way that bridges this gap? The answer is no when discussing non-Western actors as *interveners*. While this development has generated scholarly responses from some of these analysts (particularly those advocating for ‘decolonial’ approach to peacebuilding research), they have not in any holistic manner interrogate the agency of non-Western actors within the confines of liberal intervention. Within the purview of post-liberal peace research, analysts like Bøås and Tom (2016) and Belloni, Kappler and Ramovic (2016) have attempted to unpack the resisting non-Western local agency in contemporary liberal interventions. This, however, does not help us to comprehend the agency of non-Western *international* interveners in facilitating the

⁴⁵ Along these lines, some scholars have begun to call for the need to decentre the study of peace interventions. See, for instance, Schroeder (2018).

liberal peace project. In her attempt to contribute to decolonial peace research while exploring the liberal intervention in Mozambique, Sabaratnam (2017) designs the targets of this intervention as subjective interlocutors in her analysis. Although this revealing, unconventional approach is commendable, yet the concentration of Sabaratnam is more on the local people's experience of such an intervention and, therefore, could not offer any insights into the under-researched agency of *non-Western interveners* in the liberal peace project. Lottholz (2017) also draws on a decolonial framework to examine the role of local actors in re-shaping the direction of post-liberal peace in Kyrgyzstan. Like Sabaratnam, his analytical gaze is on non-Western *local* actors located in conflict contexts. Wodrig (2017, 6), who endeavours to interrogate the efforts of non-Western regional actors towards the restoration of normalcy in post-conflict societies, only focuses on how such 'interventions shape the interveners'. In a nutshell, the ontological positioning in these cases could not resolve the methodological exclusion of non-Western agency as the *subject* of liberal intervention analysis.

The need to respond to this methodological bypassing by paying attention to the *non-Western turn*⁴⁶ in liberal intervention is particularly imperative as actors engaging in the liberal peace project are increasingly becoming heterogeneous (Heathershaw 2008, 603, S. P. Campbell 2018, 9, Newman 2009, 46). In other words, the act of building liberal peace in post-conflict societies is no more an exercise conducted solely by actors in the global North. In the contemporary exercise of peace intervention, some non-Western actors are increasingly becoming more visible in their commitment to the liberal peace project. As I will further show in the empirical chapters, African regional actors are the leading examples. However, *how* these African interveners activate their agency in liberal intervention is under-explored in the mainstream IR discourse on liberal intervention. Bridging this gap is imperative to create a comprehensive explanatory analysis that would allow deconstruction of the points of convergence and divergence between the Western and African practices of intervention. As a way of taking a somewhat unconventional direction, but salutary, in international intervention research, this thesis follows the path of *critical social inquiry* that emphasises the non-Western (i.e., African) agency as a *subject* of analysis in the discourse of liberal intervention.

⁴⁶ 'Non-Western turn' in liberal intervention as used in this dissertation is not the same as the local turn or indigenous turn as used in the local turn peacebuilding literature. Unlike the local turn that is concerned with the exertions of the people in post-conflict environments, non-Western turn in liberal intervention emphasises practices of the liberal peace project by *international* actors who are located outside the global West.

It is worth noting that some recent efforts have been made to discuss African agency in international relations and global politics. Works such as Brown (2012), Brown and Harman (2013b), Fisher (2013), Tieku (2013), Beswick and Hammerstad (2013), Bah (2017), Munyi, Mwambari and Ylönen (2020), and Olonisakin and Tofa (2020) attempt a direct exploration of African agency in global politics. They also unpack why such a research focus is imperative for underscoring multiple sites and dimensions of the activism of African (international) actors on different global issues ranging from governance to politics, security, trade, development and normative practices. At the heart of this literature is the analysis of the nature and reality of African agency and whether the agency operates freely or within the structural constraint of the institutions historically designed by (Western) great powers (Fisher, 2013; Tieku, 2013; Beswick and Hammerstad, 2013). Unsurprisingly, an aspect of this analysis has equally been extended to the sub-field of humanitarian and security intervention, particularly to demonstrate how African regional actions do involve and play a prominent role in the modern global liberal governance. A good example is Bah (2017), who shows how African regional interveners developed a set of institutional mechanisms after the Cold War to operationalise their agency in the global practice of liberal humanitarian and security interventions.

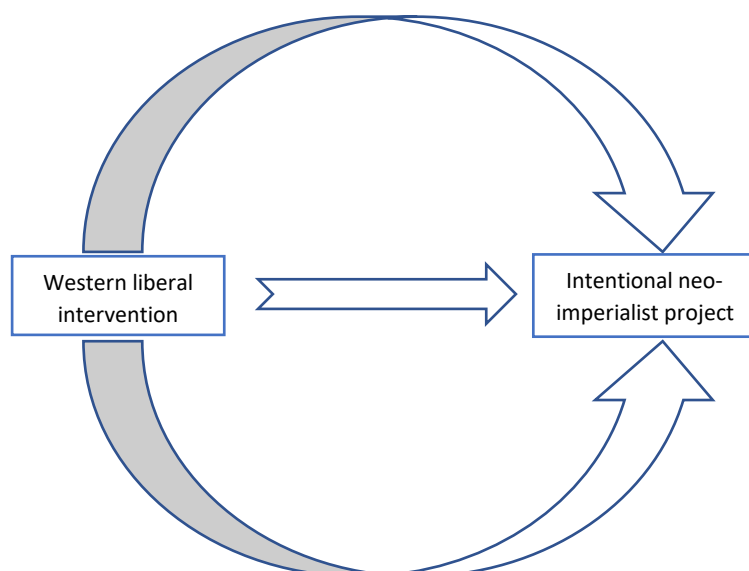
It cannot be overemphasised that this is a pivotal research terrain that is worth exploring. However, this set of scholarship is also with a shortcoming concerning the focus of this thesis. In this case, it presently does not help us uncover and make sense of African agency in the modern liberal project – within the context of the increasing characterisation of the same project as a Western neo-imperialist scheme. For instance, Bah (2017, pp. 148, 151) unearths how African actors were worried about the Western neo-colonialism of the practice of global liberal governance and how they equally “assert[ed] African agency in the application of [the same] global liberal governance in Africa.” This development sounds contradictory and puzzling, and yet the present scholarship on African agency in international relations has not offered any coherent, analytical explanation for its underlying driver. Informed by this gap, this thesis builds on this set of literature to explain the underpinning of African agency in modern liberal peace interventions.

2.4.2 Absence of Explanations for Non-Western Agency in Liberal Intervention

The second component of this shortcoming, which is particularly central as a basis for this thesis, has to do with how the prevailing *explanation* in the mainstream *critical*

intervention literature on *why* Western actors are practising liberal peace intervention could not help us to make sense of the driver of such practice when the international interveners are non-Western actors. As I previously pointed out (and will equally show in Figure 2.A below), the overarching explanation in this regard is placed within the explanatory purview of the *neo-imperialist intentionality framework*. In this case, the critical intervention scholarship has maintained that the rationale behind the commitment of Western actors to the project of liberal peace intervention in post-conflict societies is because of their deliberate intention to advance neo-imperialism that “tended to disqualify Southern political projects as inadequate, lacking or backward” (Duffield 2001, 32). As Sabaratnam (2011b, 245) re-echoes, this neo-imperialist explanatory framework has become the dominant lens through which critical scholarship often elucidate Western agency in liberal peace intervention. Of course, following Sabaratnam (2011a, 796), the cardinal goal of this thesis is not to challenge this explanatory standpoint. In fact, it is a “plausible and useful” analytical lens (Sabaratnam 2011b, 249) as there has been no ‘decisive’ study that invalidates or neutralises its ontological and epistemological basis.

Figure 2. A: The Orthodox Critical Explanation for Western Liberal Intervention



However, the key point here is that, while this neo-imperialist intentionality framework may offer an important analytical lens for deconstructing and thinking about the agency of Western actors in liberal peace intervention, the same is not the case when the subject of analysis is the agency of non-Western actors. Thinking from the lens of this neo-imperialist teleological analysis, for instance, one would ordinarily expect non-

Western actors, particularly those located in the ex-colonial world, to categorically denounce and resist every manifestation of the liberal peace project in their peace operations. To this end, just as Cox (1981, 128) argues that “theory is always *for* someone and *for* some purpose”, it is the argument of this thesis that the mainstream critical intervention scholarship presently has no explanation for making sense of the agency of non-Western actors in liberal peace intervention.

It became imperative to point attention to this shortcoming as some non-Western actors are now conveniently designing and operationalising liberal peace intervention. African actors, who are positioned as the subject of analysis for this thesis, are non-Western actors who are abhorrent to neo-imperialist undertakings (Williams 2007, 260). Yet, as I will further show in the empirical chapters, they have been active in exercising liberal peace intervention. Even though a *direct comprehensive study* has not been conducted on African agency in liberal intervention, a few scholars have recognised their proclivity for the liberal project. Obi (2014, 62) points attention to this reality when he notes that promotion of liberal democracy is “a critical aspect of... [African] peace, governance and security project” and that it “largely reflect[s] neoliberal perspectives”. Mac Ginty (2010, 154) asserts that the African peace interventions “have reinforced rather than challenged the liberal peace”. Willet (2005, 573) describes this development – in which African interveners are approaching peace reconstruction in a way that buttresses the interest and prescription of Western actors – as “liberal peace[building] by proxy”.

Nonetheless, this is not without generating surprise to some of these observers. One of the analysts that express and asseverate astonishment over this phenomenon is Roger Mac Ginty. In a succinct recount, he noted that “[r]ather than provid[ing] a counter-hegemonic force against dominant Western approaches to peacemaking, the African Union... largely conform[s] to the Western [liberal] peace-making template” (my emphasis) (Mac Ginty 2008, 144). This development further builds up a surprise for some scholars based on the existing arguments that the African perspective of peace is at variant with the Western perspective of peace (Hansen 1987) and that the liberal peace project is incapable of creating sustainable peace in African (conflict) societies (Willett 2005). Yet, of all the empirical studies conducted on the African peace operations (See, for instance, Franke, 2009; Williams, 2009; Dokken, 2008; Murithi, 2013; Jeng, 2012; Zondi, 2017; Curtis, 2013), none of them bothers to explore the underlying basis for African agency in liberal interventions. By connecting this to the shortcoming of the mainstream critical intervention scholarship, it, therefore, elicits

a fundamental question: how do we explain the basis for African actors' agency in the liberal peace project despite its characterisation as a Western neo-imperialist scheme? Surprisingly, the current critical intervention literature does not have a comprehensive answer to this question. Having a detailed explanation for this development is specifically important for problematising and advancing the critical IR discourse on liberal intervention beyond the confines of the Western agency.

2.4.3 Other Possible Explanations and their Shortcomings

Stemming from the shortcoming of the neo-imperialist intentionality framework – and thinking broadly within the IR theoretical discourse – two possible approaches might offer a perspective for grasping African agency in the Western liberal peace project. These approaches are *constitutive localisation* and *world polity*. However, as the review below will show, both approaches are also not theoretically sophisticated to help us deconstruct and navigate nonhegemonic agency in hegemonic normative ordering. In this regard, they cannot individually account for why African interveners are not bothering about the Western neo-imperial character of the liberal peace project but instead committed to its promotion in the course of their peace interventions. In what follows, I briefly appraise constitutive localisation and world polity theory to show why they are respectively inadequate for delving into the African agency in Western liberal peace interventions.

(i) Constitutive Localisation

Amitav Acharya advances constitutive localisation as an analytical tool for unpacking practices of foreign ideas in his attempt to conceptually elucidate “why [actors in] any given region may accept a particular [foreign] norm” (Acharya, 2004, p. 269).⁴⁷ As a framework, constitutive localisation contends that practising foreign normative ideas may become a reality in a context where local, regional agents consciously engage in the (re)construction and refinement of external ideological practices in a way that resulted in the conformity with their local beliefs and practices. In this case, the approach presents a dynamic process by which local actors respond to external ideas through a conscious adaptation procedure without neither completely displacing

⁴⁷ I equally recognize that there is ‘constructivist socialization framework’ for explaining causation for practicing new normative ideas, but I don’t bother to discuss this framework here because I know is not just suitable for making sense of my central research question.

existing local normative practices nor embracing foreign ideas without a conscious refinement (Zimmermann, 2016, p. 105).

The framework offers three key perspectives as to “why ideas travel and produce change across cultures and regions” (Acharya, 2004, p. 245). The first factor identified by this framework is local initiative – rather than an external initiative – that may involve cultural selection. The second factor concerned the likelihood of deliberate attempt by a set of local actors to make a foreign idea compatible and harmonious with their existing ideological beliefs and normative practices. The third factor involved the propensity of such an adaptation to create a desired positive effect, such as consolidation of legitimacy or authority. The framework attempts to further elaborate these causal variables by probing “why the demand for new norms lead to their localization” (Acharya, 2004, p. 267). In this analysis, constitutive localisation identifies four key underpinnings that are fundamental in determining the success of localisation of foreign ideas in practical terms (Prantl & Nakano, 2011, pp. 209-210). The first factor is if the local actors shared the cognitive position that new foreign norms could be deployed to strengthen their existing institutional activities and practices. The second factor is the existence of cherished and stronger local norms that cannot be outright displaced. The third factor is the availability of credible and influential local norm entrepreneurs that are promoters of local ideas (Acharya, 2004, pp. 248-249). The last key factor is the extent to which regional norm-takers possess a sense of unique cultural identity.

What is evident in the explanatory analysis presented by the constitutive localisation framework is that the agency of local actors is very fundamental in determining why there may be changes in the realm of normative practices and ideological preferences within a given regional domain. The framework places overarching emphasis on the role of local insider norm entrepreneurs in dissecting the diffusion of ideas and a particular way of doing within a locale (Acharya, 2009, p. 14). To this end, for constitutive localisation, what explains the basis for the embracement of external practices is entirely about the activity and agency of the local, regional actors as it reckons that the “initiative to seek change normally belongs to the [dynamic] local agents” (Acharya, 2004, p. 250). This exclusive focus on the constitutive desire and agency of regional actors while neglecting the role of structural forces (Zimmermann, 2017, pp. 38, 44) makes this approach inadequate as a tool for exploring the subject of this thesis. Thinking from its lens, for instance, one may conclude that African actors are practising liberal peace intervention because they localise the norm. However,

such an explanation does not tell us anything about the hegemonic, historical and structural forces that interact with local realities to invoke this development. As the findings of this thesis revealed, the evolutionary developments that led to the activation of African actors' agency in the liberal peace project is not without specific historical and structural contexts.

(ii) World Polity

The other framework through which analysts usually explain the underpinning for actions is the world polity.⁴⁸ This approach, which is traceable to the writings of John Meyer and his colleges, has its foundation in sociology. The growing interdisciplinary analysis and borrowing of conceptual models across social sciences have informed IR scholars' interest in this framework to explain contemporary normative practices. The development of this explanatory paradigm dates to the 1970s in the context of scholarly dissatisfaction with the reductionist behaviouralists' account that considers collective actions as a mere aggregation of rational choices of component agents (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). In this case, the framework portrays 'a rejection of rational-actor [explanatory] models..., a turn toward cognitive and cultural explanations' and structural analysis of events that is not reducible to the aggregation of agent's motives (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991, p. 8).

As an analytical approach, the world polity framework is particularly concerned with why similar actions are carried out by dissimilar actors and why actors may embrace practices that negate the logic of rationality and utility-maximisation. At the heart of its argument is the premise that: the modern world is a society, and that this society is with a specific operative culture (Meyer, 2009, pp. 36-38). Lechner and Boli (2005, pp. 20, 21) argue in this regard that world polity posits a "conceptual vision of the world as a single social system, an encompassing "society" involving all of "humanity"" that is embedded in "the correlative concept of cultural universalism". For this framework, it is the cultural configuration of the global society that endows varying global actors with specific agentic properties and determines the direction of their actions and practices (Meyer, 2009, p. 38). As proponents of this school, Meyer and Jepperson (2000, p. 100) contend that the global society's culture "constructs the modern actor as an authorized agent for various interests". Reinforcing similar determinant power of the world culture, Lechner and Boli (2005, p. 28) argue that "[w]ithout grasping world culture we could not understand the direction of world affairs". This was further

⁴⁸ This approach is also known as sociological institutionalism or world society.

emphasised by Boli and Thomas (1997, p. 172) that the “world polity is constituted by a distinct culture” which acts decisively in “defining the nature and purposes of social actors and [their] action[s]”.

To summarise the explanation of the world polity school, therefore, it is to conclude that the framework puts a premium on the world culture as the driving force of actions carried out by varying actors in the global society. However, when relating this analysis to the subject matter of this thesis, it became evident that it brackets a number of things by not helping us take note of the diversity of civilisations and why the normative practices of a particular social group became the prevailing way of doing. Putting it differently, the world polity approach does not tell us how the Western conception of the world metamorphosed into the prevailing way of doing and how non-Western actors’ agency in its reproduction came about. Arguing from this standpoint, for instance, one might conclude that African interveners are perpetuating the liberal form of order in the course of their interventions because such an order is the culture of the world. Of course, this is far from being the case as Canovan (1990, p. 16) once reminded us that “liberalism never has been an account of the world but a project to be realized”.

2.5 Conclusion

As Sabaratnam (2011c, 84) once reminds us, the debate on liberal peace has become an important theme in the discipline of International Relations in modern times. In this chapter, I have reviewed relevant IR literature on international intervention to situate the necessity for this within the broader critical debates on liberal peace intervention. This survey was inevitable. It served as a means for pointing attention to a gap in the mainstream IR critical intervention scholarship and creating a broad picture of the existing critical analysis that this thesis wants to build on. For a systematic assessment of the state of the literature in this regard, I started with how the extant intervention literature unmask the liberal peace as the primary epistemological framework guiding Western peace intervention in the aftermath of the Cold War. I demonstrated how the critical intervention scholarship explains the agency of Western actors in this regard from the purview of their neo-imperialist ambitions. Subsequently, I discussed how the local turn and hybrid literature that tends to advance this debate also focuses on the Western agency of liberal intervention and non-Western resistance.

Drawing on this evaluation, I have argued that the critical IR intervention scholarship has methodologically bypassed non-Western interveners in the discourse of liberal

peace intervention and its current neo-imperialist intentionality framework is not suitable for dissecting the spotted non-Western agency in liberal peace intervention. I have also demonstrated how two other approaches – constitutive localisation and world polity – that could have helped us to delve into the agency of African interveners in liberal interventions are not analytically sophisticated to dissect the development. As a way of advancing a seamless analysis in this thesis, in the next chapter, I bring in a neo-Gramscian thought as a different tradition of critical thinking to elucidate the agency of African interveners in the practice of liberal interventions. To demonstrate its suitability as an analytical tool in this process, I deploy this neo-Gramscian framework across the empirical chapters of this thesis to navigate why-questions.

Chapter Three: Gramsci, Hegemony, and Contemporary Liberal Ordering

In the previous chapter, I have reviewed the extant scholarly literature on liberal international interventions, which have become a subject of discourse in IR more significantly since the end of the Cold War. In the process of this survey, I have argued that the existing analyses on liberal interventions are fraught with exclusionary focus on Western subjectivity and, therefore, do not help to understand the agency of non-Western actors in the overall project of liberal interventionism. The mainstream conceptual framework of 'neo-imperialist intentionality' that is often used to deconstruct Western engagement in this regard is not apropos to unpack the involvement of non-Western agents in liberal interventionist undertakings. Of course, as I have earlier pointed out, the necessity to extend this analytical discourse beyond the subjecthood of Western agency cannot be over-emphasised as some non-Western actors – particularly African interveners – are increasingly involved in the practice of liberal ordering interventions. In the latter part of the previous chapter, I have also demonstrated that both constitutive localisation and world polity approaches (that could have helped clarified African interveners' agency in liberal interventions) are equally not analytically adequate to dissect its underpinning.

In this chapter, I discuss and build on the neo-Gramscian theorisation of hegemony and show how it offers a useful analytical lens to understand why a group of nonhegemonic actors could commit to the hegemonic and dominating project of the dominant social group without bothering about its genealogy and overall power-structural implications. Within the confines of this neo-Gramscian analysis, I delve into the normative ordering potency of Western liberal ideology in the contemporary global society, particularly concerning the passive consent of nonhegemonic actors. I engage this theoretical discussion because it provides a nuanced theoretical tool for making sense of the agency of postcolonial African regional interveners in liberal interventions as exemplified in Somalia, South Sudan, and The Gambia – the three cases of this thesis. Therefore, this chapter aims to elaborate on the theoretical and conceptual foundation upon which the subsequent empirical analyses are based.

To achieve the goals set out for this chapter, I divide the chapter into three main sections. In the first section, I elucidate the conceptual and theoretical content of hegemony from a neo-Gramscian perspective. As an important conceptual category within the framework of hegemony, I also explicate the role of common sense in

creating and sustaining voluntary consent for reproducing hegemonic normative practices within a given society. In section two, as a means of bringing nonhegemonic actors to the discourse of hegemony, I build on these neo-Gramsci thoughts to identify three major internal factors for determining the extent to which a group of nonhegemonic actors would commit to the normative prescriptions of hegemony as created by the historic bloc. On this basis, I argue that the neo-Gramscian approach to hegemony, unlike its neo-realist counterpart, provides an important theoretical lens for dissecting not only how and why hegemony is perpetuated by the historic bloc but also why nonhegemonic⁴⁹ actors may activate their agency in its promotion without questioning the (historical) power structures that produced such practices.

To take this further, in section three, I draw on the neo-Gramscian theoretical literature to deconstruct liberalism as the hegemonic ideological project of the Western historic bloc in the modern global society. In this regard, I show how the liberal ideology, which was initially advanced by a few Western states and later by the Western historic bloc, has currently become a single dominant ideological hegemony driving the modern world order. Informed by this development, I argue that the legitimisation provided for liberalism at the global superstructure had configured liberal values as ahistorical and natural standards of reasoning and acting in world society. I, however, conclude that the only set of nonhegemonic actors that may likely operate contrary to this hegemonic liberal ordering principle are the ones that maintain ownership of coherent alternative ideology, escape historical disempowerment, and consciously commit to counterhegemony to engage in a war of position.

3.1 Hegemony and Structural Normative Ordering

3.1.1 *(Neo-)Gramscian Theorisation of Hegemony*

One of the contributions of Antonio Gramsci to modern political thought is his theorisation of hegemony (Short 2003, 24).⁵⁰ Gramsci's theoretical analysis of hegemony is a dialogical extension of the Marxist theoretical perspective on structural leadership (Taylor 2000, 51). It provides an important critical theoretical lens for

⁴⁹ This thesis is not the first to use the term 'nonhegemonic' in describing some specific actors (or their interactions) in global society. For a few previous works that employed this term, see Higgott (1991), Hveem (2003) and Acharya (2008). However, for the very purpose of this thesis, 'nonhegemonic' is used to describe a group of global actors (or their agency) that are not part of the historic bloc or dominant social group. It could be equated with Gramsci's usage of the concept 'subaltern'.

⁵⁰ For some works on the genealogy of hegemony in the context of Gramsci, see, for instance, Mouffe (1979b); Femia (1981), Bates (1975), Woolcock (1985), and Stoddart (2007).

delving into the top-down normative ordering of practices within the world society. In Gramsci's theorising, hegemony occurs in a situation where the ideological, political, moral and intellectual values and norms held by a particular social group turned out to be the prevailing ordering principle that is eventually widely accepted and embraced not only by the same social group but also by other (nonhegemonic) groups that are located within the same society (Morton, 2007, p. 113). In this case, hegemony entails the creation of a set of constitutive political, economic, cultural, and moral normative standards by a particular social group in a way that such standards become diffused as a 'taken-for-granted' natural way of thinking to the extent that they shape (in)actions of different other social groups (Femia, 1981; Mantzari & Georgiou, 2019, p. 73; Eagleton, 1991, p. 116).

For Gramsci, the operative reality of hegemony is advanced, radiated and projected within the confines of the superstructure of civil society.⁵¹ It allows the perpetuation of unifying thinking and, therefore, creating a domineering normative order with the consent of nonhegemonic actors (Mouffe, 1979, p. 197; Femia, 1981, p. 29). Gramsci notes in this regard that the invocation of hegemony at the level of ideology is a crucial instrument in the hands of the dominant historic bloc to exercise consensual control throughout society (Gramsci 1971, 12). This is particularly because the cluster of ideological hegemony entails a practical manifestation of intellectual and moral leadership of a particular historic bloc (Mouffe, 1979a, p. 181). Accordingly, the operation of hegemony is not basically within the realm of *political society*, which is directly controlled by 'the State' but rather within the confines of the *civil society*, a different superstructure that involves the larger public. Even though there are operational and organisational interconnections between the two superstructures (Morton 2000, 257), the expression and evidence of hegemony are mainly within the latter's domain (Gramsci 1971, 12).

While the leadership in political society is ordinarily maintained via coercion, hegemony within the civil society is invoked through the construction of passive consent (Gill 1986). Therefore, the act of maintaining hegemony by a social group is not merely by exercising political and economic coercive power, but more importantly by adding the creation of consent that foregrounds its "intellectual and moral leadership" (Gramsci 1971, 57). The point here is that even if a social group can (or does) exercise material power via the state apparatuses based on its economic and

⁵¹ As a note, Gramsci's conception and usage of civil society is different from the general conception holds about the same term. He conceptualizes civil society as the "political and cultural hegemony of a social group over the entire society" (Gramsci 1971, 208).

political capability, such a practice alone does not constitute hegemony. For hegemony to take place in an actual sense, such a dominant social group must demonstrate leadership across the combination of social, moral and cultural realms in a way that its ideology becomes generally accepted (Taylor 2000, 51; Mouffe, 1979a, p. 181). Hegemony is, thus, only attained by a social group at a point when its conception of the world “transformed into an intersubjectively constituted reality” (Cox R. , 1994) by appearing to embody “an expression of broadly based consent” and a universal aspiration of all (Morton, 2007, p. 113).

The articulation and maintenance of hegemony at a given time often involve the agency of a group known as organic intellectuals. The role of these intellectuals in the process of transforming a group’s vision of the world to a universal way of thinking cannot be overemphasised. These intellectuals constitute the theoretical engine of hegemony as they provide philosophical and intellectual direction for the historic bloc in a way that “help[s] to cement the [needed] links between structure and superstructure” (Gill 1986, 211). In this case, this group of actors are very much into the business of articulating and fine-tuning the ideological aspiration and worldview of the historic bloc (i.e., the dominant social group). Gramsci asserts in this regard that:

“organic” intellectuals, [are] the thinking and organising element[s] of a particular fundamental social class. These organic intellectuals are distinguished less by their profession, which may be any job characteristic of their class, than by their function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong (Gramsci 1971, 3).

What needs to be emphasised at this juncture is that once hegemony is operationalised within a given society, it commonly acts as a *social force* for legitimating a particular set of normative values, standards and practices. It works as a kind of ‘invisible’ structural force for creating intersubjectivity of meanings around the norms historically presented by the dominant social group in a manner that empowers these norms to prevail as the natural standards defining acceptable practices. It creates moral and institutional structures that command conformist behaviour and practices across diverse civilisations through the enforcing instrumentality of supposed consensus (Femia 1981, p. 38; Cox 1983, p. 164). Cox (1992, 179) argues expressly in respect of this that hegemony as a reality which constitutes “the nature of [the] order that permeates a whole society... [often] frames thought[s] and... circumscribes action[s]”. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the manifestation of hegemony in a given society is always a function of continuous (re)construction

(Adamson, 1980, p. 174). This is because the prevailing dominance of a particular mode of thinking as historically invented by the historic bloc is not the same as the absence of alternative worldviews and civilisations. Rather, it is merely a reflection of the current capacity of the prevailing normative ordering in hampering the widespread acceptance of alternative ideologies and civilisations.

Gramsci originally espoused this theory of hegemony to explain structural realities within the context of national societies (Cox 1983, 162). Nevertheless, his theorisation provides a useful lens for making sense of different realities and developments in the world society,⁵² particularly as affecting the historical invention and sustenance of the current world order.⁵³ Gramsci points attention to this suitability when he notes that hegemony “occurs not only within a nation... but [also] in the international and world-wide field” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 350).⁵⁴

In explaining the basis for contemporary practices and, therefore, hegemonic normative ordering, the neo-Gramscian perspective offers a more compelling vantage point than its counterparts and rivals. For the neo-realist school, the situation of hegemony only occurs when a powerful state or an alliance of powerful states are able to exercise material and coercive control over others. Kenneth Waltz, as a leading neo-realist theorist, makes this clearer when he contends that “[i]f states wished to maximize power, they would join the stronger side, and we would see not balances forming but a world hegemony forged” (Waltz 1979, 126). Within this context, the neo-realists’ analysis on hegemonic ordering centred on states’ preponderant control over material resources such as military capability, raw materials, sources of capital, markets and means of production (Keohane 1984, 32). The issue with this neo-realist analysis, which the neo-Gramscian perspective helps us to overcome, is that it does not offer a means to understand hegemonic practices beyond the use of coercive powers where the unit of analysis is not limited to state actors (Gill, 1986, p. 206;

⁵² As a way of maintaining conceptual clarity, world society as used in this study is different from international society as elucidated by Hedley Bull (1977). Unlike international society that predominantly involves interactions between/amongst states, world society is essentially normative, and it involves humanity more broadly (Lees 285-311). This distinction was aptly set by Barry Buzan in his analysis that “[w]hile international society is focused on states, world society implies something that reaches well beyond the state towards more cosmopolitan images of how humankind is, or should be, organised” (Buzan 2004, 1).

⁵³ Following Cox (1981, 152), the concept of ‘order’ is used in this thesis “in the sense of the way things usually happen (not absence of turbulence)”. And following Taylor (2000, 62), the idea of ‘world order’ as used in this study is certainly not the same as ‘international order’. Unlike the latter that involves the interactions *between and among states*, the former involves *normative* configurations at a particular historical period.

⁵⁴ Of course, the introduction of Gramsci’s theoretical thought of hegemony study of international relations since the late 1980s gave birth to the neo-Gramscian theoretical school in IR (Bieler & Morton, 2014, p. 215).

Dirzauskaite & Ilinca, 2017). On the part of the world polity school, what determines the resemblance of normative practices across civilisations is the world culture (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000, p. 100; Lechner & Boli, 2005). However, the shortcoming of this explanation, which the neo-Gramscian approach helps to navigate, is its bracket of how this 'so-called' world culture was historically produced and how it acts to sustain a specific ideological order based on the vision of the dominant social group. As concerning the constitutive localisation school, its limitation lies in focusing exclusively on the local and regional initiative when explaining normative adoption (Zimmermann, 2017, pp. 38, 44). The neo-Gramscian theorising of hegemony equally presents a suitable insight for overcoming such an explanatory weakness.

It is not a surprise, therefore, that "thinking in a Gramscian sense", to use the framing of Morton (2007), has become an admirable critical approach for unpacking and dissecting the prevailing global normative practices in the disciplinary field of IR. The neo-Gramscian theoretical approach provides a useful critical framework for understanding "the development of hegemony historically" (Bieler & Morton, 2014, p. 215) and for uncovering, characterising, and deconstructing the dynamics of ideological power formation at the level of the global superstructures that conveniently "frames thought[s] and... circumscribe action[s]" across civilisations within the world society (Cox 1992, 179). As a critical heuristic tool, the neo-Gramscian discourse of hegemonic ordering empowers analysts of global relations to "take a more nuanced understanding of dominance and power in politics" (Taylor, 2000, p. 51) and allows them to stand "apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how that order came about" (Cox 1981, 129). Moreover, it helps IR analysts to make sense of the existence of hegemony as not only a function of what transpired between states but also the popular acceptance of a particular set of ordering principles as historically devised by the historic bloc in the course of passive revolution (Lehti and Pennanen 2020, 29). From this context, this thesis finds the neo-Gramscian framework useful as a tool for navigating the historical and modern developments that triggered African interveners' agency in the hegemonic project of liberal intervention. The structural ordering analysis of the neo-Gramscian approach gives a potent and fascinating glimpse for understanding the commitment of African regional actors to the liberal intervention project despite its Western neo-imperialist character. However, as a caveat, deploying this neo-Gramscian theorising of hegemony as the framework for this thesis is *not* to ontologically submit that structure does not open up certain spaces for human agency. As Payne (1998, 266) pointed out, a structural context often serves "as the source of both opportunities and constrains, [and] as being both enabling and

binding”. Cox (1981/1996, p. 97) makes this connection more unambiguous when he argues that “structures do not determine people’s actions in any mechanical sense but constitute the context of habits, pressures, expectations, and constraints within which action takes place”. Following this line of thought, my drawing on the neo-Gramscian framework of hegemony in this thesis is with the understanding that even though a hegemonic structure does constrain and provide the context for specific practices, it equally does allow space for ‘agency’ (Taylor 2000, 59).

Certainly, this thesis is not the first to substantiate and apply this neo-Gramscian thought on hegemony for studying and explaining practices in the global society and, therefore, in IR discipline.⁵⁵ What is apparent in this process, however, is that the previous deployment of this approach in IR has mainly been done for explicating transnational institutions, world order or international political economy – rather than normative practices of intervention.⁵⁶ The recent few attempts to appreciate this neo-Gramscian perspective in the (IR) intervention scholarship either aim to discuss *Western* liberal hegemonic intervention or non-Western *resistance* against Western liberal interventions.⁵⁷ As a reflection of the novelty and originality of this thesis, it draws and builds on the neo-Gramscian framework to elucidate the African interventionist agency in reproducing Western liberal hegemony. What then makes it possible for hegemony to “win the active consent” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 224) of nonhegemonic actors? In the following section, I discuss common sense as the social force for diffusing and reproducing the dominant social group’s hegemony.

3.1.2 Common Sense and Structural Reproduction of Hegemony

The central mechanism in (neo-)Gramscian reading through which the dominant social group maintains the continuity of its hegemony and, therefore, its leadership of the society is by remodelling its ideological vision of the world as *common sense*.⁵⁸ By definition, common sense here represents the engrained, prevailing assumptions and beliefs shared by the generality of actors in a given historical period (Gramsci, 1971, p. 323). It constitutes the “way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become “common” in any given epoch” (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 322, 323). It embodies a

⁵⁵ For a brief overview of different readings of Gramsci’s hegemony in the discipline of International Relations, see Fusaro (2019).

⁵⁶ See, for instance, Cox (1983), Gill (1986), Augelli and Murphy (1988), Rupert (1995) and Morton (2007).

⁵⁷ See, for instance, Short (2003), Dodge (2009), Taylor (2010), and Lefebvre (2017).

⁵⁸ This invention of the unity between the historic bloc’s ideology and common sense is similar to what Joseph Nye (1990, pp. 31-32) ‘recently’ describes as *soft power*. Unlike neo-Gramscian approaches, however, Nye focuses only on state actors as his unit of analysis.

prevailing way of thinking at a given time and, thus, a taken-for-granted truth (Hopf 2013, 321). It represents the folklore of philosophy and takes manifold forms (Gramsci 1971, 419). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the operating evidence of common sense in a societal formation is altogether a constraining development for nonhegemonic social groups on at least two major grounds (Green and Ives 2009). First, such a prevailing way of thinking and doing that manifests as taken-for-granted common sense is usually imposed by the dominant social group (Gramsci 1971, 323). It is, on the whole, a “syncretic historical residue” (Rupert, 2003, p. 185) and “a conception of the world mechanically imposed by the external environment, i.e.[.] by one of the many social groups” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 323). Second, despite its incoherent attributes in many contexts, the operative reality of common sense does not allow critical thinking on the part of nonhegemonic actors. This is because of its attribute as the “philosophy of non-philosophers” and “spontaneous philosophy of the multitude” (Gramsci 1971, 419, 421).

The emergence of common sense in a given societal formation is a product of a specific historical evolution (Crehan, 2011, p. 286). As a remnant of what is being “inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 333), the ability to dissect the historical evolution of modern common-sense practices is central for understanding and uncovering how it is connected to the hegemony of the historical bloc. The metamorphosis of the dominant social group’s conception of the world into present common sense is not without a historical trajectory. Therefore, the deconstruction of that transformation could hardly be done without invoking a historical analysis underpinning it. In other words, to locate the modern taken-for-granted practices as the representative world vision of the dominant social group is to unpack the historical process that produced such a development. On this note, Gramsci asserts that:

But this elaboration must be, and can only be, performed in the context of the history of philosophy, for it is this history which shows how thought has been elaborated over the centuries and what a collective effort has gone into the creation of our present method of thought which has subsumed and absorbed all this past history (Gramsci 1971, 327).

This centrality of historical methodology in analysing common sense within the context of a hegemonic undertaking is further narrated by Gramsci when he contends that:

[T]he unity of theory and practice is not just a matter of mechanical fact, but a part of the historical process, whose elementary and primitive phase is to be found in the sense of being "different" and "apart", in an instinctive feeling of independence, and which progresses to the level of real possession of a single and coherent conception of the world. This is why it must be stressed that the political development of the concept of hegemony represents a great philosophical advance as well as a politico-practical one. For it necessarily supposes an intellectual unity and an ethic in conformity with a conception of reality that has gone beyond common sense and has become, if only within narrow limits, a critical conception (Gramsci 1971, 333, 334).

However, what needs to be emphasised at this juncture is that the historical transmutation of the ideology of the dominant social group into common sense often acts as a functional social force for creating and reproducing widespread passive *consent* that supports the group's intellectual leadership and hegemony.⁵⁹ It constitutes an elemental structural force that affirms and spread hegemonic practices and at the same time ensures uncritical conformity on the part of nonhegemonic social groups. Gramsci contends in this regard that "[t]he "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group" usually unleashes hegemony that "presupposes a certain collaboration" (Gramsci 1971, 12, 271). This is because the key function of common sense centred on gaining conformist consent at a large scale for nurturing the hegemonic practices and for presenting the ordering project as an intersubjective, 'consensual order' (Morton, 2007, p. 113). As Hopf (2013, p. 323) reminds us, "for any hegemonic project to succeed it must make compromises with common sense". Common sense works as widespread, easily available knowledge that frequently shapes the direction of everyday normative practices (Hall & O'shea, 2013, pp. 9, 10). In this regard, common sense is serving as a social and structural force for sustaining and fortifying hegemony and preventing nonhegemonic social groups from operating within the milieu of alternative socio-political ideologies. Therefore, whenever the ideology of the dominant social group metamorphosed into common sense and a set of nonhegemonic actors consented to its natural truth, it often prevents them from operating outside the hegemony's prescriptions (Taylor 2010, 166). While rereading Gramsci, Augelli and Murphy (1988, 20) contend that "clutter of common sense makes

⁵⁹ Passive consent or consent as conceptually deployed by Gramsci refers to a set of meanings ranging from "tacit agreement," to 'passive acceptance,' to 'indifference,' and perhaps even, 'unexpressed dissent'" (Augelli and Murphy 1988, 22).

critical reflection difficult". In corroborating the same point, Green and Ives (2009, p. 9) argue that consenting to common sense is a social factor that "hinders the ability of subaltern groups to assert political autonomy and to overcome their subordination".

In essence, the need to place *consent to common sense* at the centre when analysing the hegemonic ordering cannot be overemphasised since such a development plays a crucial role in reproducing domineering hegemonic practices and in preventing nonhegemonic actors "from acting as effective political agents... [towards] overcoming their subordination" (Green and Ives 2009, 8). Putting it differently is to maintain that the act of focusing on the agency of 'consent to common sense' when dissecting structural ordering practices is not mistaken insofar as it embodies the major social force for remoulding conformist interests of nonhegemonic actors and for making the hegemonic order "appear[ing] to most [nonhegemonic] actors as the natural order" (Cox R. W., 1992/1996, p. 151). It is on this premise that Gramsci submits that the pathway to elaborate the sustenance of the historic bloc's hegemony "cannot but start in the first place from common sense" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 425). Having an idea about how common sense works structurally to prescribe normative actions within the framework of hegemony is specifically elemental for making sense of the central question of this thesis. Within the realm of modern African regionalism, there is a reality of African actors' consent to the prevailing thinking that foregrounds the reinvention of Western liberal normative order as the only pathway for forging a sustainable society. How can we then further explain and cast light on this granting of consent? In what follows, I extend the frontiers of the neo-Gramscian discourse to account for three salient determinants of nonhegemonic agency in hegemonic domineering ordering.

3.2 A Neo-Gramscian Framework for Explaining Nonhegemonic Agency in Hegemony

Throughout the previous section, which comprises two subsections, I have elaborated the theoretical idea of hegemony from a neo-Gramscian standpoint and how its reality within a given social space allows structural and systemic control of practices favouring the ideological project of the dominant social group. I have also discussed how common sense (which embodies the prevailing way of thinking but altogether a residue of the historic bloc's ideology) plays a key role in constructing popular consent for sustaining and reproducing the hegemonic order as historically invented by the historic bloc. In this process, as it would further be demonstrated across the empirical

chapters, I argued that deconstructing consent to common sense (being the “terrain for political struggle” (Rupert, 2003, p. 185)) is particularly relevant for unpacking African interveners’ commitment to liberal interventionist project despite its Western neo-imperialist character. However, while consenting to common sense is at the centre of how the historic bloc (re)produces and sustains its established world order, it *does not solely* help when making sense of the local dynamics that determine whether or not a particular set of nonhegemonic actors would succumb to, and embrace, the hegemonic way of doing as presented by the structural force of common sense.

The embracement of hegemony and compliance to its prescribed normative standards on the part of nonhegemonic agents do not automatically happen at the level of structural causation. Analysts like Cooley (2019) and Goh (2019) , for instance, have shown how a few non-Western actors are consciously resisting the present hegemonic liberal order. Lehti and Pennanen (2020, 29) assert in this regard that “[c]onsent for an order is never universal”. Cox (1994, p. 366) buttresses this point in his contention that “[t]here is always some opposition provoked by a hegemonic order”. Beyond the instrumentality of common sense that generally presents and legitimates the hegemonic way of doing, what explains the differential consent to hegemony on the part of nonhegemonic actors? How do we concomitantly account for both the external and local elemental forces that determine whether or not a set of regional actors would accept or resist the common sense of hegemony? Why does hegemonic normative order generate conformity on the part of some nonhegemonic actors more than the others? Even though neo-Gramscian approaches often pre-occupied with structural analysis, they equally offer an analytical lens for responding to this set of questions. Gramsci recognises the necessity of broaching and interrogating questions of this nature when he notes that:

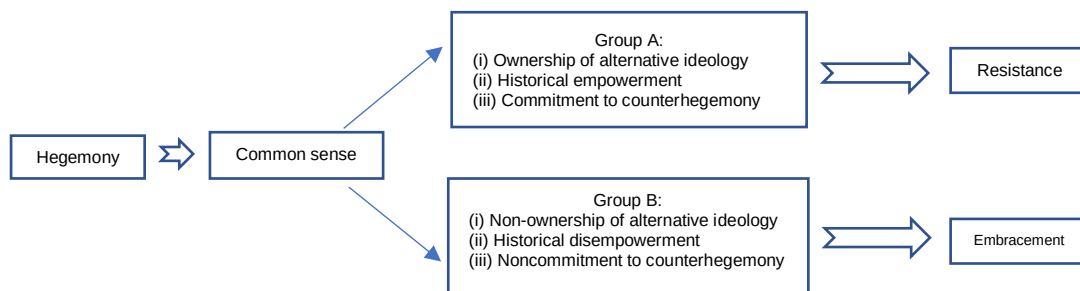
What must next be explained is how it happens that in all periods there co-exist many systems and currents of philosophical thought, how these currents are born, how they are diffused, and why in the process of diffusion they fracture along certain lines and in certain directions (Gramsci 1971, 327).

There are at least two salient reasons for elucidating this side of analysis in this thesis. First, it would strengthen the explanatory analysis of neo-Gramscian approaches when exploring causality around the reproduction (or otherwise) of hegemony in different nonhegemonic (regional) contexts. Second, as it would be shown in chapter 4, such elucidation is needed to make sense of the consensual commitment of African

regional actors to the Western hegemonic project of liberal ordering. On the whole, such a devotion to articulate causal explanations beyond the singularity of the forces of common sense would strengthen neo-Gramscian theorising of nonhegemonic agency in hegemony's reproduction and provide a more illuminating perspective for understanding the present submission of African interveners to Western liberal hegemony. This corroborates Cox's (1981, p. 129) advice that "critical theory must continually adjust its concepts to the changing object it seeks to understand and explain".

In the section below, I discuss three salient determinants of nonhegemonic agency in hegemonic ordering. These are: *(non-)ownership of coherent alternative ideology*; *historical (dis)empowerment*; and *(non)commitment to counterhegemony*. These determinants work *with* or *against* 'common sense' to facilitate or hinder nonhegemonic agency in the historic bloc's hegemony. How each of these determinants interacts with common sense to produce a specific outcome is shown in figure 3.A below. These factors must move in the same direction to produce some sort of embracement or resistance. When moving in different directions, they either give rise to partial embracement or partial resistance. This explanatory model is suitable for a general neo-Gramscian analysis of why some non-Western actors resist the present Western liberal order and why others consent to its normative prescriptions. By and large, this side of analysis constitutes where this thesis extends the frontiers of the neo-Gramscian theoretical discourse of nonhegemonic agency in hegemony.

Figure 3. A: A Neo-Gramscian Model for Variations in Nonhegemonic Response to Hegemony



3.2.1 (Non-)ownership of Coherent Alternative Ideology

Notwithstanding its frequent deployment as an analytical lens, there is no consensus in the field of International Relations on the definition of 'worldview'. In (neo-

)Gramscian sense, however, worldview could be conceptualised as “one’s conception of the world” (Gramsci 1971, 324). Van Langenhove (2004, 96) notes in this regard that it can be described as “a certain ‘lens’ used to look at the world”. Every individual has his (or her) specific conception of the world. Gramsci notes in this context “that everyone is a philosopher... since even in the slightest manifestation of any intellectual activity whatever, in “language”, there is contained a specific conception of the world” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 323). Whether explicit or implicit, this ownership of a specific worldview by every individual is also applicable to every categorised social group in the global society. Thomas Tieku ‘recently’ brought attention to this issue of divergent worldviews in the global society. In his contribution titled *Collectivist Worldview: Its Challenges to International Relations*, Tieku (2012) argues that there is a distinction between individualist worldview and collectivist worldview. In his account, while political actors in North America and Western Europe hold an individualist worldview that prioritises individuality in social relations, African political actors hold a collectivist worldview that puts a premium on collectivist social and political practices (Tieku 2012).

What needs to be pointed out here, however, is that a worldview is not necessarily the same as coherent, articulated ideology. While an ideology could be derived from a specific worldview, its articulation constitutes the highest and coherent expression of one’s ideas in both theory and practice. The starting point for a nonhegemonic group in elaborating its own (counter-)ideology is the deliberate commitment to critical consciousness and conception of its historicity (Gramsci 1971, 324). While trying to elucidate the connection between one’s conception of the world and ideology, Gramsci argues that:

One might say “ideology” here, but on condition that the word is used in its highest sense of a conception of the world that is implicitly manifest in art, in law, in economic activity and in all manifestations of individual and collective life (Gramsci 1971, 328).

In this regard, an ideology demands a clear conceptualisation, articulation and elucidation with potency to be manifested in the owners’ ways of thinking and doing across the realms of art, law, economics, and politics. This invariably makes it the “science of ideas” or “system of ideas” (Gramsci 1971, 376).

It is in this context that Gramsci moves away from the earlier analysis of Marx and Engels and contends that ideologies are not only ‘real’ – as against illusion – in the

configurations of societies (Taylor 2000, Woolcock 1985), but that they constitute 'material forces' for shaping the conventional way of believing, thinking and acting, particularly about how to proffer solutions to socio-political and economic problems of the society (Gramsci 1971, 165). He specifically contends on this basis that:

[t]o the extent that ideologies are historically necessary they have a validity which is "psychological"; they "organise" human masses, and create the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc. (Gramsci 1971, 377).

In every context of a dominant mode of thinking, there is always room for somewhat alternative viewpoint(s) which Gramsci categorises under the conceptual rubric of 'good sense'. Cox (1994, p. 366) has argued that "[t]here is always some opposition invoked by a hegemonic order". Maintaining a similar point, Im (1991, 142) notes that "[f]or Gramsci, moment of hegemony is always contested by alternative hegemony". By its very nature, while counter-hegemonic thinking usually expresses "a criticism of the "common sense"" (Gramsci 1971, 330), it does not necessarily need to maintain a stark opposition to *all* the ideas ingrained in the hegemony, but mainly as an expression of the necessity to rework the dominant ways of thinking and doing (Hunt 1990, 313). In the words of Gramsci, having an alternative ideology "is not a question of introducing from scratch a scientific form of thought... but of renovating and making "critical" an already existing activity" (Gramsci 1971, 331). Such an alternative way of imagining, practising and conceptualising the world is usually unpopular and likely to have limited advocates, but this does not mean it is inferior compared to the hegemony in solving human problems. It is on this premise that Gramsci argues that "to believe that one particular conception of the world, and of life generally, in itself possesses a superior predictive capacity is a crudely fatuous and superficial error" (Gramsci 1971, 171).

In essence, when a group of actors maintains ownership of a distinct, coherent ideology that is properly articulated, it has a way of shaping their everyday normative practices. How this is related to the propensity for the commitment of a set of nonhegemonic actors to the hegemonic ideological project of the historic bloc could be consciously elaborated. One of the key factors for determining the extent to which a set of less powerful actors would embrace or repudiate the ideological normative prescriptions of hegemony at the level of world society is a function of *whether or not* such a group of actors (still) have a *cherished, surviving and coherent alternative ideology*. Nonhegemonic actors that tenaciously hold on to a cherished and *coherent*

alternative ideology are likely to repudiate or contest the ideological standards of the dominant social group when presented to them by the superstructure of the global society. Such a repudiation, or perhaps contestation, is likely to be maintained even in the face of common sense that frequently works as an external social force for mobilising and moulding consent to diffuse hegemonic practices.

On the contrary, however, this is not the case in an instance where a group of nonhegemonic actors lacks any internally generated *alternative* ideology that is coherent enough to “self-consciously... [guide] their own economic-political-cultural relations and practices” (Rupert, 1995, p. 29). In contemporary times, hardly any global actor operates in a vacuum without, consciously or unconsciously, following the scripts and prescriptions of a particular ideological paradigm or a set of ideological paradigms. Informed by this premise, a set of nonhegemonic actors who cannot lay claim to their own (howbeit unpopular) ideology will likely join the bandwagon and embrace the hegemonic-inspired order, both in theory and in practice. To put it differently is to argue that when a set of nonhegemonic global actors lacks the ownership of “a viable *counter-hegemony* [that] draws together subaltern social forces around alternative ethico-political conception of the world” (Carroll 2006, 21), such a group of nonhegemonic agents would not be able to resist the reception of the hegemony by the time common sense exerts its external pressure. The propensity for endorsement of common sense and, therefore, the hegemonic order in this circumstance is premised on the fact that “the philosophy of common sense... is the “philosophy of non-philosophers”” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 419). A grasp of this contention is very central to understanding why some non-Western actors like Russia and China are in different ways resisting the present rules-based liberal hegemonic order as historically prescribed by the Western historic bloc.

While identifying the implication of non-ownership of coherent ideology from an individual point of view, Gramsci notes that “[w]hen one’s conception of the world is not critical and coherent but disjointed and episodic, one belongs indigenously to a multiplicity of mass human groups” (Gramsci 1971, 324). This is also analogous to actors in the global civil society, where ‘dialogue, debate and struggle’ about worldviews and ideological standpoints are explicitly and inexplicitly invoked (Kenny and Germain 2005, 1). Global actors with no different ideological standpoint, particularly when placed side-by-side with the conventional way of reasoning, would find it uneasy to resist the orthodox normative practices, as created by the historic bloc. Because the complex reality of hegemony embodies an active process of

construction and reconstruction of voluntary consent (Hunt 1990, 311), working away from its spontaneous common sense may entail intentionality and agency. To make this point salient, Hall (1988, 9) argues that “No social or political force can hope to create a new type of society... without first becoming the leading cultural force and in that way providing the organizing nucleus of a wide-ranging of new conceptions”. This is because, overcoming the limits of normative prescriptions by hegemony “requires a critical, intellectual effort to understand the world better and, in doing so, to develop new aspirations” (Augelli and Murphy 1988, 92-93).⁶⁰ On the whole, the existence of such a development is one of the key determinants in the matrix of whether some nonhegemonic actors would consent to or resist hegemonic-inspired practices.

3.2.2 Historical (Dis)Empowerment

Another key determinant, which is to a large extent connected to the one discussed above, is the question of whether a group of nonhegemonic actors have experienced historical disempowerment or not in the course of their modern history.⁶¹ Reminding us about the historical underpinning of today’s realities, Gramsci argues that any attempt to study a person’s conception of the world should not forget that every individual is “a product of the historical process to date” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 324). Actors operating in the global society are with divergent historical experiences. While some are privileged to undergo self-evolution and indigenous modernity without a direct devastating penetration of external impingement, others were historically dehumanised and disempowered with respect to their civilisations by external forces of imperialism. In the latter case, it is an experience that allowed untold subversion and subjugation of the affected actors’ ways of doing across the realms of cultures, politics, art, economics, institutions and civilizations. A group of nonhegemonic actors who suffered disempowerment due to prolonged foreign intrusions is more susceptible to endorsing the hegemonic normative order (as consciously designed by the historical bloc) than other nonhegemonic actors who escaped such a horrible and obnoxious experience.

Historical disempowerment of some actors’ endogenous value systems is particularly applicable to *many* postcolonial societies and peoples who are mostly located in the

⁶⁰ In this case, to claim ownership to a coherent alternative socio-political and cultural ideology that foregrounds the criticism of hegemony is a conscious intellectual and philosophical project that may demand bringing one’s history to bear.

⁶¹ By historical disempowerment in this thesis, I mean the act of denying a group of actors the opportunity of engaging in doing and thinking on the basis of their indigenous cultures and civilizations through a direct destructive foreign interference.

global South. Postcolonial literature has been vocal in narrating both the horror and the enduring impact of colonialism on the global positionality and agency of the colonised non-Western states and their people. This set of scholarship is so illuminating for deconstructing and understanding the Western colonisers' intrusion on the civilisations, institutions and cultures of the colonised peoples. What this indicates is that both neo-Gramscian and postcolonial approaches could work cooperatively to unearth the historical creation of the present Western liberal hegemony. Fanon (1963, 210) asserts in this regard that "colonialism is not simply content to impose its rule upon the present and the future of a dominated country... [and] not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain... [but it also] turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it". Reinforcing the same contention, Mwaura (2005, 5) argues that even though many African countries have reclaimed their political independence since a few decades ago, their contemporary postcolonial practices are far from reclaiming independence. This, in essence, allows a situation of 'postcolonial neocolonized world' with "the inscription of hegemonic Western forms of knowledge... [that pushes] African forms of knowledge into the barbarian margins" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, pp. 3, 38).

Similarly, while focusing on the case of India, Nandy (1983, 2) shows and argues that the "psychological contours of colonialism in the rulers and the ruled" rarely "end with the departure of the alien rulers from the colony". In his account, Pasha (2013, 147) argues that "[n]o aspect of the postcolonial world has remained untouched by the dialectic of colonial domination/subordination". Aside from its disruption of different non-Western civilisations, colonialism functioned in a way that the supposed organic intellectuals of many nonhegemonic colonies were to a greater extent disoriented and co-opted in the face of the externally configured education system and imposed socio-political systems. One of the postcolonial consequences of such disempowerment is the inability of many of these actors to produce a set of organic intellectuals committed to articulating coherent alternative ideologies.

The conscious assimilation and imperialist policy embedded in colonialism cannot be neglected in the holistic analysis of the contemporary liberal hegemony. Worrying about how the variable of colonial encounter may be neglected in the modern analysis of nonhegemonic agency in hegemony, Prakash (1995, 3-4) argues that "[p]laced against the background of colonialism's functioning as a form of relocation and renegotiation of oppositions and boundaries, the colonial aftermath does not appear as a narrative framed by the hierarchical knowledges and subjects instituted by

Western domination.” The importance of bringing history into the analysis of nonhegemonic actors’ agency in the reproduction of hegemony cannot be overemphasised. Gramsci recognises its imperativeness when he notes that:

But this elaboration must be, and can only be, performed in the context of the history of philosophy, for it is this history which shows how thought has been elaborated over the centuries and what a collective effort has gone into the creation of our present method of thought which has subsumed and absorbed all this past history (Gramsci 1971, 327).

The point here is that history matters in the overall deconstruction of who participates in or rejects the hegemonic way of doing in the global society. The history of a group of nonhegemonic actors determines the extent to which they would be committed to the ideological projects of the dominant social group. This, in part, explains why there are variations in the consent to hegemony. The nonhegemonic actors who are disempowered at one point or the other, perhaps based on colonisation, are more likely to find it unproblematic to embracing the historic bloc’s ideological order. In Chapter Four of this thesis, I demonstrate how this was applicable in postcolonial African interveners’ agency in the Western liberal hegemonic project.

3.2.3 (Non)Commitment to Counterhegemony

When the questions of disempowerment and ownership of alternative ideology are sorted out in the puzzling nonhegemonic agency in mass production of the historic bloc’s hegemony, the next fundamental factor that is worth consideration is the disposition of a group of nonhegemonic actors to counterhegemony. In neo-Gramscian theorising of the structural ordering of normative practices, hegemony (cum its reproduction) is not the only possible reality in society but also the tendency for conscious counterhegemony on the part of nonhegemonic social groups. It may be asked, what constitutes counterhegemony, and how is it related to hegemony? To simply use the words of John Holloway (2002) – who draws on autonomist framework – is to argue that counterhegemony entails a struggle to set free power-to (nonhegemonic agency) from power-over (hegemony) in the complex web of global society. Arguing from a neo-Gramscian perspective, Im (1991, 148) asserts that every counterhegemonic project is not a mere coming together of different subaltern social actors with diverse ideas, but rather a unified project that combines different alternative viewpoints into a single integrated social vision in the process of reconstructing the hegemonic way of doing.

As Gramsci reminds us, countering hegemony involves an attempt by nonhegemonic actors to articulate and advance an alternative way of doing that constitutes a revision and reformation of the existing, dominant ideology of the historic bloc (Chalcraft and Noorani 2007, 4). It does not necessarily demand a direct assault or violent encounter with the historic bloc, but a gradual and long-range ideological struggle through a 'war of position' (Cox 1983). At the same time, it may not represent a complete overturn and reversal of all the elements of the existing, prevailing order as devised by the fundamental social group, but rather the reformation of the hegemonic order. To use Mouffe's (1979a, 197) framing, therefore, counterhegemony entails the 'disarticulation-rearticulation' of the elements of the hegemonic ideology by nonhegemonic actors through the agency of their raising organic intellectuals. The starting point in this process of counterhegemony is the invocation of critical consciousness through a gradual criticism of the dominant ideological order and prevailing normative practices (Chalcraft and Noorani 2007, 4). Gramsci attempts to expatiate this process from the vantage point of class struggle when he notes that:

What matters is the criticism to which such an ideological complex is subjected by the first representatives of the new historical phase. This criticism makes possible a process of differentiation and change in the relative weight that the elements of the old ideologies used to possess. What was previously secondary and subordinate, or even incidental, is now taken to be primary-becomes the nucleus of a new ideological and theoretical complex. The old collective will dissolves into its contradictory elements since the subordinate ones develop socially (Gramsci 1971, 195).

Gramsci further reinforces the necessity of criticism of, and critical mindset towards, common sense in the activation of the process of counterhegemony (for the remaking of the hegemonic order) when he contends that:

First of all, therefore, it must be a criticism of "common sense", basing itself initially, however, on common sense in order to demonstrate that "everyone" is a philosopher and that it is not a question of introducing from scratch a scientific form of thought into everyone's individual life, but of renovating and making "critical" an already existing activity (Gramsci 1971, 330-331).

For a favourable nonhegemonic disposition to counterhegemony to take place in the context of a global ideological struggle, it demands intentionality and critical consciousness. Jean-Paul Sartre insightfully argues in his preface to Fanon's (1963,

17) *The Wretched of the Earth* that, “we only become what we are by the radical and deep-seated refusal of that which others have made of us”. While (re)reading Gramsci, Hunt (1990, 315) notes that “the realisation of counter-hegemony is necessarily a ‘project’ involving intention and agency”. Buttressing a similar point, Cox (1983/1996, p. 140) argues that “only a [conscious] war of position can, in the long run, bring about the structural changes, and war of position involves building up the sociopolitical base for... the creation of new historic blocs”. In other words, the act of thwarting a group of nonhegemonic actors’ consent to the present hegemonic order demands a level of critical agency and intentionality.

In the modern global society, however, nonhegemonic actors are not committed to counterhegemony in the same way. While some of these actors deliberately activate their agency in disarticulating and countering the today’s hegemonic ideology, others have (already given up and, therefore,) taken it for granted as the natural ahistorical vision of the world. In this case, a group of nonhegemonic actors who commit to the enterprise of countering the historic bloc’s hegemony are more likely to resist their agency in the practices that would reproduce it than those that have abandoned such a project. This is because conscious commitment to the discourse and undertaking of counterhegemony is a social force capable, to a certain extent, to repel the full operation of common sense. It takes a conscious war of position to subvert the operation of common sense that upholds structured hegemonic practices (Grovoqui and Leonard 2008, 170). The absence of a countering, critical mindset works to sustain nonhegemonic reproduction of the modern hegemonic order.

Is there any specific notable hegemonic project in the contemporary global society? In the following section, I draw on neo-Gramscian theoretical literature to deconstruct liberalism as the Western historic bloc’s hegemonic ideological project in the modern global society. A theoretical and historical foregrounding of liberalism as the present-day hegemonic project would offer insights into its current operative structuring forces that collaborate with local realities to gain the consent of some non-Western actors that further reproduces Western liberal hegemony.

3.3 A Neo-Gramscian Deconstruction of Western Liberal Hegemony

“Does Gramscian analysis have anything to offer to this globalised world of... liberal dominance?” and “[c]an terms such as ‘hegemony’ and ‘passive revolution’ be legitimately developed as critical concepts in this area...?” (Schwarzmantel, 2009, p. 6). These questions as broached by John Schwarzmantel have preoccupied the

attention of many neo-Gramscian IR scholars in recent times. This is partly because it is becoming more clearer that the neo-Gramscian perspective offers a more nuanced analytical lens compared to its counterparts (such as neo-realist and world polity schools) for elucidating how the contemporary global liberal hegemony is historically constituted and what underpins its present continuity. Except this analytical strength of neo-Gramscian approaches is taken seriously, it would be difficult to really underscore the modern coexistence of 'dominance' and 'intersubjectivity' (Cox R. , 1994, p. 366), its 'vertical dimension of power' (Cox R. W., 1981/1996, p. 95) and why it reproduces in certain ways. As a way of responding to these questions to uncover the modern Western liberal hegemony in this thesis, this section dissects the creation of the current global liberal hegemony. In the first part, I draw on Gramsci's thoughts to elucidate liberalism as an ideology. To complement this discourse in the second part, I narrate how this ideology evolved and transformed from being a Western social vision to becoming the hegemonic social vision in the global society.

3.3.1 *Liberalism: An Ideology from the West*

A meaningful way to understand liberalism is to interrogate it as an ideology from the West. To successfully carry out this exploration in an insightful manner, it is necessary to invoke a (neo-)Gramscian theoretical conception of ideology and how it is related to a given society's superstructure for creating a dominant way of thinking that diffuses in a historical context. What then is the (neo-)Gramscian conception of ideology, and how does liberalism fit into this conceptual framework of analysis? As Hall (1986, p. 29) reminds us, *ideology* could be defined as a mental framework (often) deployed by a social group to "make sense of, define, figure out and render intelligible the way society works". To put it more clearly in Gramsci's framing, it simply means a "science of ideas" but which could be developed into a "system of ideas" in the historical process of passive revolution (Gramsci 1971, 376). Ideology could, therefore, manifest in two key forms: either as a distinct social vision of an individual (or a group) which typifies 'philosophy' or as a superstructure that embodies the philosophy of praxis (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 376, 377).

To underscore the link between the two phases of ideology is to emphasise that they represent two different historical moments. In its first form, it represents a moment when an ideology manifests as a conception of the world held by just a social group. The second form denotes a moment when the world vision of a social group

metamorphosed into the prevailing mental framework for organising societal actions (Woolcock 1985). While clarifying this connection, Gramsci notes that:

[I]t is useful to make a "practical" distinction between philosophy and common sense in order to indicate more clearly the passage from one moment to the other. In philosophy the features of individual elaboration of thought are the most salient: in common sense on the other hand it is the diffuse, unco-ordinated features of a generic form of thought common to a particular period and a particular popular environment (Gramsci 1971, 330).

It gets to a point when an ideology may transcend the level of conception and polemics to becoming the societal superstructure and philosophy of praxis with material forces for shaping generally acceptable practices (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 165, 376-7). This constitutes an epochal period of unity between the structure and superstructure (Woolcock, 1985, p. 205) and when a specific ideology transforms into common sense, which in the process organises human and institutional conducts in certain ways (Augelli and Murphy 1988, 16). However, this historical transition is not without a passive revolution carried out by a historic bloc with its organising intellectuals who serve as the intellectual agents for “elaborating and spreading organic ideologies” (Mouffe, 1979a, p. 187). This marks the interface between the operative ideology that appears as a natural ordering principle and the historic bloc in a historical moment of hegemony. While the contents of the historic bloc are material forces, its forms are ideologies (Gramsci 1971, 165).

This conceptual elucidation offers a useful toolkit for dissection “[l]iberalism... [as] a distinct ideology” (Doyle, 1983a, p. 206).⁶² As an ideological vision of the world, liberalism valorises individuality and anatomized society (Berkowitz 1999, Hallowell 1946[2002]) on the basis that the society is a sum total of individuals (Augelli and Murphy 1988, 26). It advocates for a society where individual rights, individual will, and individual liberty are guaranteed. It envisions a societal governance system where the rule of law is allowed to regulate day-to-day activities, and political leadership is based on the people’s consent. Within this context, normative principles such as democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights become integral elements of the liberal ideology as it seeks to “promote social outcomes that are... the result of free individual

⁶² Following Augelli and Murphy (1988, 25, 26), however, the analysis of liberal ideology puts forward in this thesis focuses mainly on its socio-political component and therefore not aiming at dissecting details of its economic dimension.

choices” (Charvet & Kaczynska-Nay, 2008, p. 2). The system of ideas advanced by liberalism is encapsulated by Doyle (1983a, pp. 206-7) thus:

Liberalism has been identified with an essential principle – the importance of the freedom of the individual... [As] a threefold set of rights forms the foundation of liberalism. Liberalism calls for freedom from arbitrary authority, often called "negative freedom," which includes freedom of conscience, a free press and free speech, equality under the law, and the right to hold, and therefore to exchange, property without fear of arbitrary seizure. Liberalism also calls for those rights necessary to protect and promote the capacity and opportunity for freedom, the "positive freedoms." Such social and economic rights as equality of opportunity in education and rights to health care and employment, necessary for effective self-expression and participation, are thus among liberal rights. A third liberal right, democratic participation or representation, is necessary to guarantee the other two. To ensure that morally autonomous individuals remain free in those areas of social action where public authority is needed, public legislation has to express the will of the citizens making laws for their own community.

This liberal framework of ideas, however, originated from the West, for it has never “been an account of the world but a project to be realized” (Canovan, 1990, p. 16). As Charvet and Kaczynska-Nay (2008, p. 1) remind us, “liberalism is a fairly new and certainly radically different conception of social and political order from its predecessors and subsequent rivals”. It specifically started during the Enlightenment era when a few Western philosophers such as John Locke and Immanuel Kant articulated new philosophical conceptions of the society that were altogether liberal (Fierlbeck, 1998, p. 57; Hallowell, 1946[2002]). John Locke, for instance, in his 1689 *Two Treatises of Government* had espoused and defended the natural and inviolable right of individual to life, liberty and property and that government would only exist by the consent of the people to protect these individual rights (Locke 1980) (Locke, 1947). In a similar way, Immanuel Kant, in his 1795 *Perpetual Peace*, had espoused that a condition for world peace premised on global practices of a republican (i.e., democratic) governance with the primacy of the rule of law and individual equality (Kant, 2006).

This liberal conception of the world also first gained traction in the global West.⁶³ By 1850, for instance, all the eight countries recognised to be practising this liberal socio-political governance were all located in the West (Doyle, 1983a, p. 209).⁶⁴ Taking cognisance of this historical evolution, Friedman, Oskanian, and Pardo (2013, 1) had argued that liberalism was “the Western paradigm of thought”. Making the same point, analysts have asserted that liberal ideology was invented in Europe (Amin, 2004, p. 53) and, therefore, it is a ‘European product’ (Charvet & Kaczynska-Nay, 2008, p. 19). In the section below, I discuss the hegemonic ascendancy of liberalism in modern world society.

3.3.2 Liberalism: From Being a Western Project to Becoming Hegemony

One of the major developments in contemporary world society is the emergence of liberalism as the hegemonic ideology that shapes and influences actions, practices and patterned behaviour. In this case, the liberal vision of the society that was initially a corporate interest of the Western historic bloc has turned to a taken-for-granted model for (de)legitimising normative practices across different parts of the world. This ascendancy of liberalism to the realm of global hegemony is not ahistorical (Taylor 2010, 166) but rather a product of historical (re)constructions that demonstrated the ability of the Western historic bloc to bring forth harmony among the global material “power, ideas and institutions” (Cox R. W., 1981/1996, p. 104). By thinking from a neo-Gramscian purview, it is attainable to put this transition into a historical perspective, uncover its (re)productive diachronic process, and shed light on how its outcomes often disguise as natural and, thus, lacking historical contexts.

As the commitment to a liberal socio-political vision achieved critical mass in the West, a number of Western actors progressively designed it as a project that needed to be realised globally.⁶⁵ This globalising liberal world vision project notably commenced *on the global stage* in the aftermath of the First World War (WWI) (Paris, 2004, p. 41). While reflecting on this development around this time, Toynbee, Chelwood, Lothian, and Butler (1938, p. 329) argued that after the end of the WWI, “a new common

⁶³ The attempt to trace the Western origin of the liberal ideological practices here is not say that non-Western societies are historically illiberal, but rather to draw critical attention to how the Western historic bloc historically invented the present liberal world order.

⁶⁴ These countries, according to Doyle (1983a, 209), are: Swiss Confederation, the United States, France, Belgium, Great Britain, Netherlands, Piedmont (Italy) and Denmark.

⁶⁵ Charvet and Kaczynska-Nay (2008, p. 1) characterise this ‘liberal project’ as the effort to promote a new world order where there is a general acceptability of liberal principles of individuality and respect for human rights. In other words, this Western liberal project historically “has as its aim the transformation of the basic structure of the separate modern societies and of the international society they together constitute, so that they all come to express liberal values” (Charvet & Kaczynska-Nay, 2008, p. 5).

ideology for a Liberal world order” materialised. The first key Western actor to press for this liberal world vision using a global platform was the then United States (US) President, Woodrow Wilson (Smith, 1999, p. 177). Wilson’s central postulation during the Versailles Peace Conference that marked the end of WWI centred on the need for a global commitment to creating a world order based on liberal ideological principles. Wilson specifically noted in this regard that “[w]hat we seek” as a way forward “is the reign of law, based upon the consent of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind” (Hofstadter, 1948[1964], p. 269). In other words, Wilson’s travel to France during this epochal moment was partly to rally support for a global project aiming at making the global society safe for liberal democracy (Dueck, 2003/2004, p. 2; Huber, 2015). This is because, for Wilson, the liberal democratic order “is unquestionably the most wholesome and livable form of government that world has yet tried” (Notter, 1965, p. 109).

As time passed by, this project of making the liberal democratic vision acceptable globally became a joint pursuit of both the US and Western European state actors (Huber 2015, 14). This phenomenon invariably birthed the Western historic bloc in the advancement of the global liberal project. Cox (1981/1996, p. 99) asserts that “institutions reflect the power relations prevailing at their point of origin and tend, at least initially, to encourage collective images consistent with these power relations”. When this Western historic coordinated the creation of the United Nations (UN) and some of its agencies in the 1940s, they designed these institutions to promote liberal ideals for restructuring the world. The 1948 UN Declaration of human rights, for instance, was part of the efforts devised to legitimise liberal normative values such as the universal necessity of respect for human rights, the rule of law and periodic elections.⁶⁶ Charvet and Kaczynska-Nay (2008) argue in this context that the liberal world project is at the heart of the UN human rights mechanism. Despite the sophistication of Western actors’ material and institutional capabilities to enforce this liberal vision on the global stage, the project nonetheless confronted a strong opposition during the Cold War that lasted between 1945 and 1989. During this epochal moment, the Eastern bloc under the leadership of the defunct Soviet Union vigorously contested the Western liberal agenda and, in the process, presented a communist vision of the world. As a result of this intense rivalry, the liberal world order

⁶⁶ For details of this Declaration, see the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948.

created through the Western liberal project around this time was far from being hegemonic (at least in a neo-Gramscian sense).

However, with the defeat of Eastern Communism and the subsequent end of the Cold War, liberalism emerged as the single dominant ideology that shapes thoughts, collective actions and practices across the global society (Babic, 2020, p. 770). At this historical juncture, liberalism gained the status of hegemony on the world stage and could no more be easily resisted by many nonhegemonic actors located in non-Western societies.⁶⁷ Its varying normative principles transmuted into common sense and disguise as natural, ahistorical principles for addressing local and global problems. This development corroborates Gramsci's assertion that hegemony (at the level of ideology) would rarely occur without a historical context (Gramsci 1971). Recognising this historical transition, Francis Fukuyama notes in his 1989 *The End of History* that "[w]hat we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War... [but] the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government" (Fukuyama 1989, 4). This assertion is based on Fukuyama recognition that "the victory of liberalism has occurred primarily in the realm of ideas and consciousness" (Fukuyama 1989, 4).

Cox (1983, p. 172) has argued that international institutions are the major mechanisms through which hegemony is expressed and legitimated. One of the key global institutions where this liberal hegemony was immediately announced is the UN. This global institution became the platform for authenticating the hegemony of liberal normative ordering as the single solution to mankind's challenges. Only in a few areas had this phenomenon played out like in the sphere of international interventions. In his 1992 *An Agenda for Peace*, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who was then the Secretary-General (and by implication the Chief Administrator) of the UN, announced the triumph of liberal democracy as the single global hegemonic ideology before emphasising that its ideological premises would underpin the subsequent global peace interventions. While recognising the end of the Cold War and the last man standing of liberalism, Boutros-Ghali notes that:

Authoritarian regimes have given way to more democratic forces and responsive Governments. The form, scope and intensity of these processes differ from Latin

⁶⁷ As I discussed previously in this chapter, this is mostly applicable to the non-Western actors that were historically disempowered, lack ownership of a coherent alternative ideology, and have no clear commitment to counterhegemony.

America to Africa to Europe to Asia, but they are sufficiently similar to indicate a global phenomenon (Boutros-Ghali, 1992, p. para. 9).

Boutros-Ghali moved on to proclaim the UN's readiness to play an active role in the socio-political transformation of the countries emerging from civil violence to build sustainable peace. He equated the creation of a liberal democratic order with forging sustainable peace. In this regard, his description of the UN's new approach to domestic stability was premised on entrenching a liberal democratic order. In the words of Boutros-Ghali:

There is a new requirement for technical assistance which the United Nations has an obligation to develop and provide when requested: support for the transformation of deficient national structures and capabilities, and *for the strengthening of new democratic institutions*. The authority of the United Nations system to act in this field would rest on the consensus that social peace is as important as strategic or political peace. *There is an obvious connection between democratic practices – such as the rule of law and transparency in decision-making – and the achievement of true peace and security in any new and stable political order* (my emphasis) (Boutros-Ghali, 1992, p. para 59).

This act of thinking about peace formation solely from the liberal purview at the UN's level is not limited to the UN under the leadership of Boutros-Ghali. It is an entrenched mental framework that thrives ever since then. While enumerating how best to approach the (re)construction of lasting peace in 1998 as the Secretary-General of the UN, Kofi Annan further affirmed this invention of liberal democracy as the central solution. According to his words: “[d]emocratic government helps to guarantee political rights, protect economic freedoms and foster an environment where peace and development can flourish” (Annan, 1998, p. 85). For him, “[r]espect for human rights and the rule of law [as the integral norms of liberal democracy] are necessary components of any efforts to make peace durable” (Annan, 1998, p. 83). As a way of upholding the liberal framework for UN's interventionist action, Annan (2002, p. 135) submits that:

Democracy as an international issue goes far beyond its direct connection to international peace. Where domestic peace has broken down, the international community must be able to assist in its restoration. In this work, democratic governance, and the realization of human rights, are essential. The United Nations (UN) not only can offer essential help in repairing democratic

breakdowns in domestic peace but also must explore democratic principles at the global level.

The key point to make here is that the post-Cold War era ushered in a popular acceptance of the liberal vision of the world that prioritises the necessity of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law (Ikenberry, 2011, p. 61).⁶⁸ It connected liberalism to common sense and birthed social forces and structures for enforcing commitment to liberal values across many non-Western societies. This development acted to gain widespread consent that legitimises recent liberal interventionist practices (Paris, 1997). On the whole, the invisible social forces of appealing common sense replaced the material substance of power in the last decade of the twentieth century as the *major* mechanism through which the Western historic bloc enforces non-Western commitment to the liberal world order (Deudney & Ikenberry, 1999, p. 193).⁶⁹ Informed by the “material forces” of this liberal common sense (Gramsci, 1971, p. 165), many non-Western actors have consented to this liberal vision of the world and abandoned any attempt to question its constitutive neo-imperialist character and implications.⁷⁰ Even though the intensity of this liberal hegemony is recently declining (Acharya, 2014; Alcaro, 2018) and some actors are newly contesting its universality (Lehti and Pennanen 2020), some of its normative values such as – democracy, human rights and the rule of law – appear to be more resilient as they still constitute “the hallmarks of modernity and the global standard for legitimate governance” (Ikenberry, 2011, p. 62). In Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven of this thesis, I demonstrate how the common sense created by liberal hegemony influences African interveners’ agency in liberal interventions.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed and built on (neo-)Gramscian thoughts to offer analytical insights into the normative ordering of hegemony and to uncover the construction and reality of Western liberal hegemony in the contemporary global society. This analysis

⁶⁸ Narrating this development, Chandler (2002, p. 1) asserts thus: “[t]oday, governments and international institutions claim human rights as one of the essential pillars of the international system, and they are proclaimed in the same breath as peace, democracy and the rule of law as a universal value of the highest order.”

⁶⁹ Robinson (1996, p. 2) narrates this phenomenon thus: “The end of the Cold War has opened up new possibilities. Mass movements striving for democratization and social change have proliferated at this time of momentous political changes, accompanying disruption, restructuring and even the complete collapse of national and regional economies. From Nicaragua to the Philippines, from Haiti to Eastern Europe, Southern Africa, and the Middle East, diverse forces battle to reshape political and economic structures as a “new world order” emerges.”

⁷⁰ The non-Western actors I am referring to here include states, international organisations, professional bodies and individuals.

is vital for this study as it elucidated the theoretical standpoint through which this thesis delves into the historical and modern contexts that precipitated African interveners' agency in liberal re-ordering of (post-)conflict societies (despite its Western neo-imperialist character). To make my neo-Gramscian approach in this thesis more intelligible, I have divided the chapter into three main sections. In the first section, I explicated the neo-Gramscian theorisation of hegemony and how such a development epitomises the transformation of the dominant social group's ideology into common sense, which gains consent for reproducing hegemonic normative practices. In the second section, I built on neo-Gramscian ideas to develop a framework for determining the extent to which a group of nonhegemonic actors would embrace or resist the hegemonic order as created by the fundamental social group (i.e., the historic bloc). Finally, in the third section, I deployed this neo-Gramscian analytical tool to unpack the creation and reality of Western liberal hegemony in the modern global society.

On the whole, the central argument of this chapter is that the neo-Gramscian approach to hegemony is more equipped conceptually and theoretically compared to its counterparts for dissecting how the historic bloc historically invents hegemony at the level of ideas and why some nonhegemonic actors may commit to its reproduction and not bother about its domineering functionality. In other words, thinking from a neo-Gramscian standpoint provides a suitable theoretical lens for navigating the dynamics of ideological power formation at the global superstructure that informs African interveners' agency in liberal interventions, which in turn reproduces domineering Western hegemony. It, therefore, helps us to address the concern realised by Lehti and Pennanen (2020, p. 28) when they note that: the "resilience of Western hegemony has been too often explained from a state-centric, and also Eurocentric, perspective, while ignoring the non-state actors as well as non-Western actors." From this point onwards, I adjust my analytical gaze from theoretical discussion to empirical analysis. In the next chapter, I explore how African regional actors consented to the liberal order within the context of Western liberal hegemony.

Chapter Four: Liberal Hegemony, Liberal Peace Common Sense and African Consent

In Chapter Three, I discussed the neo-Gramscian theoretical thought on hegemony and common sense and show how it offers an important theoretical and analytical lens to understand why a group of nonhegemonic actors may commit to the hegemonic and dominating ideological project of the dominant social group without reflecting on its (neo-)imperialist consequences and implications. Drawing on this neo-Gramscian analytical tool, I further discussed liberalism as both a Western ideology and hegemony in the contemporary global society based on the historical construction of the Western historic bloc. I argued from this premise that due to the interconnectedness of the global society, this transformation of liberal fundamentals into common sense was not without consequences on what constitutes the appropriate way of thinking in recent global history.

In this chapter, I explore how the transmutation of the Western liberal value system into hegemony and common sense in the late twentieth century gained the consent of African regional actors and how this, in turn, informed their endorsement of the liberal ordering of peace. In this regard, I trace the evolutionary, monumental changes in the disposition of African regional actors – within the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)/AU – towards the liberal normative order. I show how what was at play in this process was not solely about the structural force of the liberal common sense but also internal realities within the African region. I further discuss how these structural and local forces interacted to produce African actors' unambiguous acquiesce to the liberal vision of order. Overall, my argument in this chapter is that while there were local issues, the hegemonic status of the liberal ideology in the late twentieth century played a dominant role in the development that led to African actors' acquiesce to the liberal epistemology (within the institutional space of the OAU/AU).

As informed by the objective I set to achieve in this chapter, I divide the chapter into four main sections. In the first section of this chapter, I explore the evolution of postcolonial pan-Africanism from the OAU to the AU. In the second section, I analyse how and why African actors develop a continental security framework for African collective intervention. In section three, I interrogate the evolutionary process through which African regional actors consented to the liberal normative order. Finally, in

section four, I discuss the liberal peace character of the African conception of peace intervention.

4.1 Postcolonial Pan-Africanism: The Journey from the OAU to the AU

The evolutionary process that led to the invocation of African collective consent to common sense of the liberal ideology cannot be properly understood without unpacking the creation of the OAU and its transformation to the AU. This will constitute my starting point for this chapter. My argument for this section is that the preoccupation of African leaders in the wake of decolonisation was not about the legitimacy of a particular ideological worldview but the need to devise a functioning unified platform for African unity and solidarity. To make this analysis lucid in what follows, I draw on the historiography of postcolonial African institutions.

The winding down of colonialism across different parts of Africa from the late 1950s invariably rekindled the spirit of Pan-Africanism across the 'new' states on the African continent. While this pan-Africanist solidarity movement had been in existence for decades before this epochal time, the realisation of the aspired political independence further revived the interest of African leaders on the need to unified efforts for the collective realisation of common African dreams, particularly in the areas of socio-political and economic development. By its very conceptual characteristics, especially from a more political perspective, pan-Africanism is a conceptual framework through which African peoples pursue African solidarity, cooperation, and unity for all-encompassing emancipation of the African continent and its people (Badmus, 2015, p. 56; Mathews, 2018, p. 16). This reinforces the assertion by Edozie and Gottschalk (2014, xxvii) that pan-Africanism is "an ideological vehicle for cultivating the common efforts of African... peoples to advance their political efforts globally". During its heyday, it was the major anti-colonial instrument that African nationalists collectively deployed against the very agency of colonial authorities. Informed by its essence, the ethos of pan-Africanism facilitates cooperation among postcolonial African states. It encourages them to draw on their collective internal strength as a way of pursuing concerted self-assertiveness in the modern international system (Murithi 2005, 8). It is this spirit of pan-Africanism that serves as the driver for rekindling the collective African solidarity and cooperation to project and protect the interests and aspirations of Africans. In this sense, while African nationalists deployed the theoretical substance of pan-Africanism to wage war against the practice of colonialism during the period of colonisation, it equally turned to become a crucial framework that the postcolonial

African states drew on from the late 1950s for mobilising a collective African voice in their attempts to invoke African solutions to African problems (Badmus 2015, 56).

However, the *most* workable mechanism for the activating postcolonial pan-Africanist project created a kind of disagreement between two opposing African groups in the early period of decolonisation. Tieku (2017, 61) considers this development as the 1950s and 1960s pan-Africanist grand debate. The first group in this context is known as the (radical) Casablanca bloc. It was actively supported by a few African leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Sékou Touré of Guinea and Modibo Kéita of Mali.⁷¹ This strategic African bloc advocated for an immediate political, economic and military *union* of Africa as a way of inventing the prosperity and emancipation of Africa's future (Badmus 2015, 56). The second group of this pan-Africanist constellation, known as the (moderate) Monrovia bloc, was supported by leaders of Nigeria, Liberia, Senegal, Ethiopia, among others.⁷² This bloc was against the notion of a continental government for all African states and instead advocated for a gradualist approach that prioritised incremental unity and continuous solidarity among different African political units to actuate the common goals of the African community (Murray 2004, 3). In other words, rather than advocating for a radical immediate political union, the leaders of the Monrovia bloc proposed 'a loose intergovernmental organisation' that would involve the coordinated participation of all independent African states.

What is clear from these two pan-African standpoints is that they shared a common point: the idea that African peoples and states must work closely together to guarantee the prosperous future of Africa. In this case, there was a kind of consensus that "after independence[,] regional cooperation would be essential to the utilization of the continent's vast potentialities and the preservation of its freedom" (Saenz 1970, 206). These symbolic divides were monumentally resolved on 25 May 1963 when the African leaders converged in Addis Ababa and established the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) (Murithi 2005, 2). The resolve on the creation of the OAU sounded to "appear that... the wishes of the Monrovia group dominated" (Murray 2004, 4) as the Casablanca bloc's quest for a political union of Africa or an African High Command was - for different reasons - rejected (Legum, 1975, p. 209; Elias, 1965, p. 245). Despite the rejection of the major propositions of the Kwame Nkrumah-led bloc, it is

⁷¹ Other African countries that supported the ideological aspirations of the Casablanca bloc include Morocco and United Arab Emirate (Egypt).

⁷² Other African countries that were involved in Monrovia bloc included Togo, Ivory Coast, Niger, Serra Leone, Congo, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Somalia, Gabon, Tunisia, Dahomey, Upper Volta, Libya and Chad. See Murray (2004, 3).

not incorrect to contend that the OAU was a product of compromise, particularly as reflected in the nomenclature of the pan-African organisation (Tieku, *Governing Africa: 3D Analysis of the African Union's Performance 2017*, Badmus 2015).

The eventual creation of the OAU as the continental organisation for responding to African issues was regarded as a necessary monumental development in the historical evolution of African international relations. Legum (1975, 208) notes that “[t]he OAU was born on May 25, 1963, out of historical necessity”. In Murithi’s (2005, 26) account, the establishment of the OAU represents the very historical efforts devised for the institutionalisation of the ethos and ideals of pan-Africanism and African regionalism. From the perspective of African leaders, the formation of the OAU was welcomed with a high degree of enthusiasm and optimism as they conceptualised the pan-African organisation as the cardinal vehicle for actualising common African aspirations across different realms. A critical look at the basic objectives and overarching mandate of the OAU would reveal its instrumentalist attributes. As highlighted in Article II of the OAU Charter, four out of its five constitutive purposes are specifically worth emphasising. The legal framework of the OAU unambiguously stated that the organisation was designed to: (1) to promote the unity and solidarity of the African States; (2) to coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa; (3) to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and independence; and (4) to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa. What is expressly clear in the above mandate is that the creation of the OAU was not to sanction a particular ideological standpoint of African leaders. Rather, it was designed as a central mechanism for responding to both the internal and external challenges that were confronting the African continent during the Cold War. To this end, the framing of the OAU was largely influenced by the bipolar character of the international system under which the organisation was founded (Sesay 2008, 9).

By the end of the twentieth century, it became evident that the OAU was able to record a few achievements, particularly based on the objectives that were expressly set before it. First, it succeeded in facilitating the protection of the sovereignty and statehood of different African states by foregrounding the norm of non-interference in Africa’s international relations. Second, it served as a concerted agency in ensuring the complete political decolonisation of all African territories by the end of the twentieth century.⁷³ However, beyond these two major realms, it became difficult to identify what else constituted the elemental accomplishment of the pan-African organisation by the

⁷³ The only African territory that had not attained political independence at this time was Western Sahara.

end of the twentieth century. Tieku (2017, 70) emphasises this reality when he notes that at a time when African political leaders were marking its tenth anniversary, “the OAU had become nothing but an institution for the promotion of statehood and decolonisation”. In this respect, from the end of the Cold War through the beginning of the twenty-first century, it became evident to African leaders that while the usefulness of pan-African cannot be over-emphasised, the functional relevance of the OAU to evolving African challenges had become a subject of doubt (Packer and Rukare 2002, 367). A decisive factor in this regard was the sudden demise of the Cold War, which invariably caught many African countries unawares and, by implication, changed what constituted the major problems facing the African continent at large.

One of the reasons is the inability of the OAU to respond to grave *internal security* concerns and issues that evolved in some African states in the post-Cold War era. To highlight this point differently is to assert that no other area this weakness showcased like in the domestic African security sector. Murithi (2005, 212) contends that the most central deficiency of the OAU is uncovered “when it comes to dealing with serious internal [security] problems of its member-states”. From Liberia to Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and Somalia, it became conspicuous that “the demise of the Cold War was also synonymous with state collapse, and the fragmentation of social communities into smaller units” in Africa (Sesay 2008, 14). In spite of the re-echoing need for the OAU to be at the forefront of responding to these civil crises, the organisation turned out to be infective in assisting its member states in finding a lasting solution to their debilitating security problems. This is partly against that background that the OAU in security-wise was originally framed, at best, to respond to the cold War challenges of external aggression and interstate conflicts within the context of its commitment to the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of its member states (Badmus 2015, 68). Even though the organisation adopted *Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution* in 1993, it could not effectively activate its conflict management mechanism in this respect, as demonstrated during the 1994 Rwanda genocide and subsequent instances. Informed by these developments, African leaders eventually realised that for there to be a potent collective pan-Africanist action in post-Cold War Africa when new complex security realities have suddenly replaced the old ones, a new continental political mechanism must be designed, invented and empowered.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ It, however, needs to be emphasised that the manifestation of the OAU’s dysfunctionality is not only in the realm of African security, but also applicable in other realms.

With this realisation, African leaders engaged in a new round of pan-African debates in the late 1990s on the constitutive nature of transformation required to make the continental organisation more effective as a vehicle for realising the aspirations of African people. The three key African leaders who were at the forefront of this reform process, with their respective ideas and interests, are Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and Muammar Ghaddafi of Libya (Tieku 2004).⁷⁵ At the fourth Extraordinary Session of the OAU Assembly in Sirte, Libya, which took place from 8 to 9 September 1999, African leaders agreed to create the African Union (AU) to replace the AU. The *Sirte Declaration* that served as the official communique of the Summit provides a brief background of the circumstances that led to this decision:

It is also our conviction that our continental organization needs to be revitalized in order to be able to play a more active role and continue to be relevant to the needs of our peoples and responsive to the demands of the prevailing circumstances. We are also determined to eliminate the scourge of conflicts which constitutes a major impediment to the implementation of our development and integration agenda... Having discussed frankly and extensively on how to proceed with the strengthening of the unity of our continent and its peoples... we decide to: (i) establish an African Union (African Union 1999).

This process eventually culminated in the official inauguration of the AU as a replacement of the OAU on 9 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa. It was a historical development that was welcomed with high optimism across the African community. It was considered a new phase in the institutionalisation of postcolonial pan-Africanism. To sum the above evolutionary account together is to maintain that the OAU, and later AU, emerged in the process of postcolonial pan-African discourse and synergy for the (re)invention of an assertive, integrated, and prosperous Africa. In this case, as I further demonstrate in the subsequent sections, the issue of collective legitimisation of a particular ideological order was less concern for African leaders, at least until towards the end of the twentieth century. In the section below, I discuss how the need to devise a distinct African agency for peace intervention also constituted an integral focus of African leaders in creating the AU.

⁷⁵ For more details on the clash and accommodation of key interests in the process of overhauling the institutional framework of the OAU, see Tieku (2004).

4.2 Towards a Pax Africana: Inventing African Collective Intervention

In the process of replacing the OAU with the AU as a 'new' unified platform for African activism, African leaders found it necessary to design a continental architecture for collective intervention into conflict spots on the African continent (Chandler, 2010, p. 140). I concentrate on discussing this development in this section. My argument here is that this turned out to be the case because of the realisation by African leaders that conflict constitutes a major setback to progress and development in Africa.

One of the key reasons that led to the replacement of the OAU with the AU was the necessity to activate an effective pan-African institution that would harness African responses to internal crises that were rocking and destabilising societies across the African continent. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the argument for a unified defence or security framework for the African community had been in existence even before the creation of the OAU in 1963. As far back as 1960, Kwame Nkrumah, who was the President of Ghana, had argued expressly for an African High Command that would oversee the defence and security of the entire African continent (Nkrumah 1963, Imobighe 1980). African leaders nonetheless rejected this position during the creation of the OAU. In his 1967 seminal work *Towards a Pax Africana*, Ali Mazrui introduces the ideological concept of 'Pax Africana'. According to him, "Pax Africana asserts that the peace of *Africa* is to be assured by the exertions of *Africans* themselves" (Mazrui 1967, 203). The author envisioned a 'continental jurisdiction' in which African actors would assume the responsibility of intervening in the trouble spots in Africa through their own mechanisms to create the type of peace they want without waiting for or inviting Western imperialist countries for the same exercise. He contends in this regard that "the old idea of imperial pacification had to end before a new African peace could assert itself" (Mazrui 1967, 211).

Some years later, while advancing the same line of thought, but from the vantage point of what constitutes peace, Emmanuel Hansen notes that even though peace is a 'universal desideratum,' African perspective about what embodies peace, and by extension, how to build peace, differs from the perspective of their Western counterparts (Hansen 1987, 2). According to Hansen, this contention was based on the consensual position of African scholars who gathered during a seminar that the United Nations University organised on 'peace and regional security' in Addis Ababa in January 1985. What could be derived from this narrative was the salutary conviction on the part of African intellectuals on the imperative for African states to collectively

commit themselves to a self-sustaining and independent practice of peacebuilding even before the end of the Cold War.

Notwithstanding this burning desire, the operationalisation of such an idea before the end of the Cold War was largely encumbered because of many factors, including the absence of institutional structures that could effectively support and harness necessary resources for the actualisation of such a project (Williams 2009, 97, 98).⁷⁶ However, as the idea of 'African solutions to African problems' became resurgent towards the end of the twentieth century (Adebajo, 2002, p. 1; Deng, 1993, p. 3) in the contexts of deteriorating 'African security landscape' and waning interest of Western powers in committing to peace interventions in Africa (Franke 2009, 64), African leaders set in motion their interest in developing a continental mechanism that would respond to conflicts in Africa. Hence when the AU was created in the early 2000s, one of the elemental tasks assigned to the organisation was to promote peace, security and stability within the African continent (Badmus 2015, 85). It propels the contention by Dersso (2012, 25) that the major game-changing African effort towards the idea of Pax-Africana – in which the peace of Africa is assured and maintained by Africa – was the establishment of the AU. The Constitutive Act that established the AU clearly shows this security agency of the pan-African organisation. Article 3 (f) of the Act unambiguously states that one of the objectives of the AU would be to 'promote peace, security, and stability on the [African] continent' (African Union 2000). To this end, whilst acknowledging the sanctity of the sovereignty of African states in term of non-interference, Article 4 (h) of the Act empowers the AU with the rights to intervene in the internal affairs of any of its member states in the instances of 'war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity'. This principle of non-indifference was a major shift from the previous non-intervention provisions of the OAU Charter.

This provision was revised on 3 February 2003 to allow African intervention when there is 'a serious threat to legitimate order' (African Union 2003). In Article 4 (m), the Act equally allows the AU to intervene and restore peace and stability in any African state when the country in question requests for such an intervention (African Union 2000). As informed by these specific assignments, the Constitutive Act that established the AU creates a legal and institutional foundation for the agency and actorness of the AU

⁷⁶ Although it must be stated that there were instances of African interventions for peacemaking or peacekeeping before the creation of the AU. Examples in this category include OAU intervention in Chad in the early 1980s, and the deployment of the OAU military observers to Rwanda and Burundi in 1991 and 1994 respectively (Williams 2009, 97). However, activities carried out in this realm at the continental level before the formation of the AU were purely ad hoc, impotent and lacked clear institutional support (see Adebajo, 2002, p. 3).

in security engagements within the context of Africa's modern international relations (Makinda and Okumu 2008, 76). As noted earlier, it marked a paradigm shift from the old non-intervention to the new principle of non-indifference. This design of the AU as an interventionist security actor is far away from being a mistake. Besides the issues of Western abandonment of Africa in the immediate post-Cold War and the spate of internal conflicts in Africa, the devising of the AU as the central African security mechanism reflected the relevance of common threats in African regional security community. In this regard, member states of the AU share the conceptual notion that the (in)security of one African state is inseparable from the (in)security of other African states and therefore the need for an institutional mechanism that would coordinate response when the need arises (Touray 2005, 642).⁷⁷

To, therefore, facilitate effective operation of the AU in discharging this security responsibility, the Assembly of the AU adopted *the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union* in July 2002 – the same period that the AU was officially inaugurated. Through the Protocol, African actors set in motion the institutionalisation of the AU's African security regime (Engel and Porto 2009), which is commonly referred to as the 'African Peace and Security Architecture' (APSA) (see, Vines, 2013; Kingebiel, 2005). As structurally designed in the Protocol, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU is positioned as the main organ saddled with the responsibility of coordinating concerted African actions in the realm of peace and security interventions in Africa. It is the AU's "standing decision-making organ for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts" within the confines of Africa (African Union 2002). As spelt out in Article 6 of the Protocol, seven functions were set out for the PSC. These include 'promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa', 'early warning and preventive diplomacy', 'peace-making', 'peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction' and 'humanitarian action and disaster management' (African Union 2002). As a way of facilitating its operations, enormous powers in Article 7 are granted to the PSC in conjunction with the Chairperson of the Commission. Some of these powers include the authority to initiate peace interventions, to undertake peace-making and peacebuilding operations, set agenda for peace support missions, approve modalities for the AU's intervention, institute sanctions against any member state in the event of unconstitutional change

⁷⁷ For further details of the relevance of this notion in African regionalism, see the Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy that was adopted by the AU Assembly in 2004.

of government, among others (African Union 2002). For checks and balances, the PSC is, however, expected to report its activities to the Assembly of the AU regularly.

With respect to its membership composition, the PSC has fifteen members elected based on equitable regional representation, with ten of these members elected to serve on two-year terms and the other five members elected to serve on three-year terms. While the Protocol allows for immediate re-election of any PSC member – and unlike the UN Security Council – it does not grant veto powers to any member. The members of PSC meet in continuous session, and decisions are made by consensus. But in an instance where this is not possible, resolutions would be determined by either a simple majority or a two-thirds majority (African Union 2019a, 71). In the last two decades, the PSC has become an undisputable crucial arena for decision-making in African security regionalism (Engel and Porto 2009, 85).

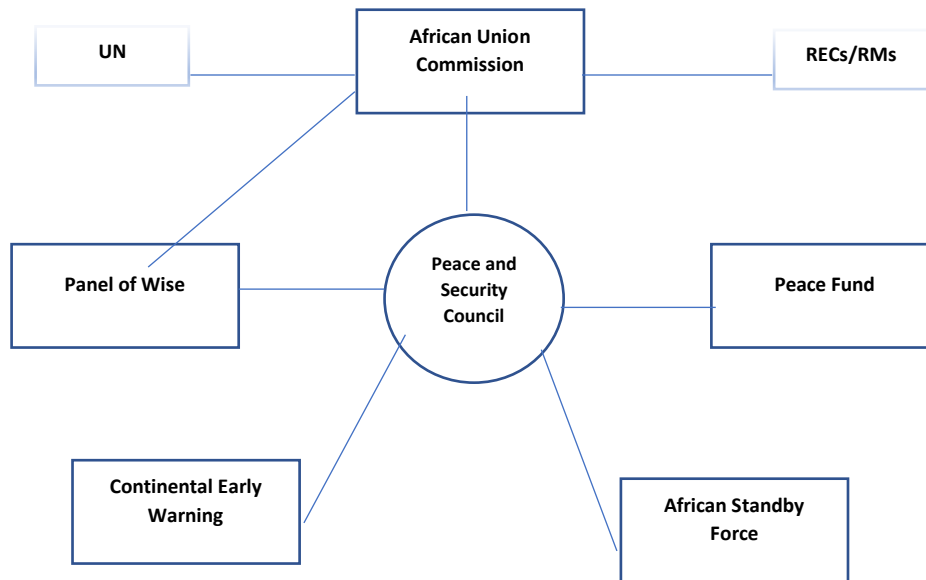
As stated in Article 2 (2) of the Protocol – to facilitate its effectiveness in carrying out peace and security functions in Africa – the PSC is institutionally supported by five bodies: African Union Commission (AUC); Panel of the Wise (PoW); Continental Early Warning System (CEWS); African Standby Force (ASF); and Peace Fund (African Union 2002). A diagrammatic structure of the AU's APSA that shows how these bodies are connected to the PSC is presented in figure 4.A below. On its part, the AUC, through its Chairperson, shall regularly inform and advise the PSC of any situation that is liable to threaten peace and security stability in any part of Africa. At the same time, as provided for under Article 10 (3) of the Protocol, the Chairperson of the AUC is in a position to ensure a comprehensive implementation of the PSC's decisions and at the same time regularly report corresponding developments to the PSC. Within this complex security structure, the PoW, which is composed of five highly respected African personalities, functions as an advisory body to the PSC and Chairperson of the Commission on matters relating to the maintenance of peace, security and stability on the African continent.⁷⁸ It is a body mainly designed for an innovative conflict preventive diplomacy in the AU's African security regime. As regarding the CEWS, it is the body assigned with the responsibility of collecting and analysing relevant data on potential threats and conflicts within the African continent. The information gathered by the CEWS is used by the Chairperson of the AUC to offer important advice and early warning to the PSC on how to consciously respond to potential security threats before they become full-blown conflicts.⁷⁹ The CEWS operates in the form of a warning

⁷⁸ See Article 5.

⁷⁹ See Article 12 of the Protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC.

system with different centres – national, regional and continental – of information gathering.

Figure 4. A: The Structure of the AU's African Peace and Security Architecture



The fourth supporting pillar for the PSC in this category is the ASF. As outlined in Article 13 of the Protocol, the ASF is designed to implement the decisions of the PSC upon the recommendation of the AUC in the areas of compliance monitoring, peace support intervention, prevention of conflict/dispute escalation, peacebuilding, and humanitarian assistance. With both civilian and military components, ASF is a standby force readily available for deployment from their countries of origin. Since September 2018, however, “the ASF was composed of pledged capabilities in five Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs)” (African Union 2019a, 80).⁸⁰ Last but not least, in this supporting structural chain is the Peace Fund. Based on its essence, the Peace Fund is meant to provide needed financial resources for PSC to undertake peace support operations and other related activities on behalf of African actors. According to Article 21, the major source of financial resources to the Peace Fund is from the regular budget of the AU as contributed by member states. The PF, however, accept voluntary contributions from member states, from non-state African actors, as well as from sources from outside Africa (African Union 2002).

⁸⁰ The five ASF RECs/REMs are Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Standby Force; Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF); North American Regional Capability (NARC) Standby Force; Southern African Development Community (SADC) Standby Force; and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Standby Force (African Union 2019a).

Because of the inefficiency of the Fund in achieving its mandate, its overhauling process was invoked in January 2016 when Donald Kaberuka was appointed as the AUC High Representative for the PF with the basic task of identifying and mobilising the capacity of the AU to finance at least 25% of its peace support operations. This mandate was expanded in April 2017 strengthen the PF's capacity for overall the financing of the AU (African Union 2019a). This led to the AU Assembly's adoption of the *Instrument Relating to the Enhanced Governance and Management of the Peace Fund* that allows the PF to be used only for three windows of activities: mediation and preventive diplomacy; institutional capacity; and peace support operations (African Union 2018). A senior AU official disclosed to me in September 2019 during my interview conversation with him that the Fund was then boasted of about 130 million US Dollars due to the increased financial commitment of African states.⁸¹

The African security architecture for interventions is institutionally sophisticated as it created room for the principles of complementarity and subsidiarity and, to that extent, allows robust interactions between the AU and Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) within Africa on the one hand and the AU and extra-regional international organisations like the UN on the other hand. With regard to the first, AU's African security regionalism is framed and structured in a way that allows the active involvement of the RECs/RMs in Africa. The foundation for this AU-RECs/RMs partnership on peace and security practices is laid and articulated in Article 16 of the Protocol Relating to the establishment of the PSC. The AU and RECs/RMs are partners with regular communication, and they have a *sameness of objectives and approaches* in promoting peace and security in Africa. Their interactions are determined by the *comparative advantage* of each, depending on the prevailing circumstances.⁸² To this end, even when a REC/RM is at the forefront of a particular intervention in Africa, it does not dispel the active involvement of the AU. The operationalisation of this AU-RECs/RMs interconnection for peace and security purposes has evolved. In 2008, a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation between the AU and these RECs/RMs/Coordinating Mechanisms (CMs) was agreed. Among others, the MOU institutionalises the processes and practices of "the principles of subsidiarity, complementarity and comparative advantage" as affecting the interactions between the AU and RECs/RMs/CMs in the sphere of peace and security, which by implication brought all sub-regional African organisational structures into the broad AU's continental security regime (African Union 2008). The

⁸¹ AUO#12 (Appendix 1).

⁸² See Article 16 (1) (a) and (b) of the Protocol.

elemental basis for the incorporation of the RECs into the AU's African security regime is not unconnected to how these sub-regional organisations have some specific advantages over the AU in the realm of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and state/peacebuilding intervention (Badmus 2015, 103, Aning and Atuobi 2009).

Within the context of global security relations, African regional actors recognise the UN's centrality in the maintenance of international peace and security and therefore embraces the need to cooperate and work closely with the global organisation in its effort to foster peace and security on the African continent. To this end, the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the PSC, which serves as the key framework for African action in the realm of peace and security, clearly states that the AU's PSC shall work closely with the UN's Security Council in carrying out the AU's peace and security mandate in Africa. Article 17 (2) of the Protocol further emphasises the resolve of the AU to request for the UN's support where necessary in the course of discharging the AU's security responsibility in Africa as provided for in the UN Charter. In a practical sense, the strategic interaction and partnership between the AU and UN in the realm of security has evolved dramatically in recent time (Williams and Boutellis 2014). In 2006, the Secretary-General of the UN and Chairperson of the AUC signed a Declaration titled *Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation: Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the African Union*. The Declaration was meant to strengthen the partnership between the two organisations and the UN to assist over ten years in enhancing the capacity of the AU for discharging, *inter alia*, its peace and security mandate. This strategic partnership was further enhanced in April 2017 when the Secretary-General of the UN and Chairperson of the AUC signed the *Joint UN-AU Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security*. It was a framework that further deepened the AU's engagement with the UN within the context of African state/peacebuilding intervention.

As the account presented above has shown, African regional actors through the institutional mechanism of the AU have progressively (re)invented their agency for peace and security interventions since the late twentieth century. Above other causal forces, this development was informed by the increasing African characterisation of conflicts as the major impediments preventing the stability and prosperity of Africa. In the section below, I dissect the nature and personality of the AU as an African continental security actor.

4.3 African Union as an African Security Actor

Since the creation of the AU, the continental body – while working with its RECs – has been at the forefront of African involvement in peace and security interventions on the African continent. The organisation has become the overarching continental mechanism through which African regional actors collectively play a leading role in conflict resolution, crisis management, peace mediation and security intervention. What then is the personality of the AU as an African security actor, and to what extent does it operate in accordance with, or independent of, its Member States' interests? A direct response to this two-fold question would help us unearth how African actors beyond African national governments (i.e., AU Member States) contribute directly and indirectly to the AU decision-making process concerning its regional security mandate.

As a security actor, the AU has a combination of intergovernmental and supranational personalities (Tieku, 2017, pp. 34-46). Within the context of its intergovernmental identity, African governments – as the Member States – are directly involved in determining and deciding the operations and actions of the AU pertaining to its peace and security interventional activities across different societal spaces in Africa. This allows both the individual and collective interests of African governments to be reflected in the actual peace undertakings of the AU. In this regard, the continental body would only initiate and undertake a peace and security project that received the approval and endorsement of political authorities in different African states. This intergovernmentalism in the AU affairs is foregrounded through the direct representation of African governments in the AU key decision-making organs, as in the case of the AU Assembly, Council of Ministers, and PSC.

As I pointed out previously in this chapter, for instance, the AU PSC comprises 15 members, who are representatives [i.e., Ambassadors] of African governments. This is the same organ of the AU vested with powers to authorise peace interventions, set agenda for peace support operations, and approve necessary modalities for AU peace missions (African Union, 2002). The only organ that the PSC is expected to report to for checks and balances is the Assembly, which has the power to give final directives “on the [AU's] management of conflicts, war and other emergency situations and restoration of peace (African Union, 2000, p. 9). Of course, the same Assembly is equally an intergovernmental arena where the most senior political figures from African countries often censure the activity and policy direction of the AU. What this intergovernmental character of the AU conveys is that one can empirically delve into African governments' collective practices of peacekeeping and peacebuilding

interventions by focusing on AU's peace actions on the ground. However, it needs to be acknowledged that the formal monitoring power of African governments over the actual peace policy of the AU is not always effectively enforced (Tieku, 2017, pp. 33-37).

Beyond its intergovernmental identity, which permits governments of Member States to control its peace operations, AU also has a supranational personality when discharging its day-to-day activities as a security actor. This supranational aspect of the AU image allows individual African citizens whom the AU directly employs as regional bureaucrats and consultants to contribute to and incorporate their interests in the decisions of the AU as a security actor. As Tieku (2017, p. 38) pointed out, the 2002 Statute of the Commission of the AU, for example, states that the AU Commission staff are not required to "seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Union." This supranationality is normally operationalised through the day-to-day workings of the AU Commission. The African regional bureaucrats working within the AU Commission enjoy a level of autonomy in carrying out their assigned peace and security tasks, notwithstanding the overall control of the AU intergovernmental organs.

The existing scholarship on African security regionalism has been very unequivocal in pointing attention to this facet of the AU personality. Tieku (2011, p. 193), for instance, designates the AU Commission staff as 'Africrats' and notes that they "have shaped African [security] regionalism in a fundamental way." He further emphasises in this case that the AU Commission is more than a mere servant of African governments as it plays a key role in AU's security decision-making processes and rule-enforcement (Tieku, 2011, p. 193). Echoing a similar point, Engel and Porto (2014, p. 137) contend that the AU Commission "has grown into an actor in its own right... [by] becom[ing] the driving force behind the implementation of the AU's peace and security agenda." Hardt (2016, p. 168) shares a similar perspective when she contends that "the AU Commission shares decision-making responsibilities with member states [in practice] through agenda-setting, resolution drafting, and advocacy."

The key implication of this dual personality of the AU is that just as African governments can reflect their interests in its peace and security program, so also are the African regional bureaucrats who are employed by, and working within, the AU Commission. It is in this context that my usage of the term *African regional actors* in this thesis is not only referring to [representatives of] of African governments but also different African citizens and entities who contribute to the African continental peace

and security policy, particularly through the AU institutional mechanism. My argument, nonetheless, is not that the AU Commission is totally independent of the control of AU Member States when playing a role in the AU decision-making process. As a matter of fact, “if the member states... have problems with the commission’s role, they are in a position to change it” (Williams P. D., 2014, p. 152). Rather, the point is that the AU has a supranational image which offers ample opportunity for the Commission to integrate the interests of its staff and consultants into the broad policy program of the AU as a continental security actor. In the following section, I discuss how and why the immediate post-Cold War era witnessed the evolutionary consent of African regional actors to liberal normative ordering.

4.4 Amidst Hegemony: African Evolutionary Consent to Liberal Ordering

In categorising ‘conflict’ as the central problem confronting Africa and collective intervention as its integral solution, African regional actors concluded that they needed to maintain some clarity on the basic principles necessary for sustaining domestic stability in Africa. It was in this process that they gradually and unequivocally articulated their consent to liberal normative values. I show and argue in this section that the basis for this commitment was a function of the transformation of the Western liberal order into hegemony and its key values into common sense. I draw on neo-Gramscian theoretical thoughts and, where necessary, the literature on African studies to present this analysis.

To explore how this development was a case of acquiescing to the liberal ideological order, I trace its historical path in this section along two fronts: (i) African regional consent to human rights norm in the 1980s; and (ii) African regional consent to (liberal) democracy in the 1990s/2000s. The duo of individual human rights and multiparty democracy (which also incorporates adherent to the rule of law) are central to the organising principle of the liberal normative order and for devising a Western model of society. In the lexicon of the Western historic bloc and their organic intellectuals, these two values function to create a liberal society grounded in individuality or what Augelli and Murphy (1988, 29) characterise as “atomistic conception of society”. The practice of liberal democracy – which Pennock (1950, 16) characterises as “an inevitable development of the principles of political liberalism” – ensures equal functionality of individuals in determining who is entrusted with political power. On its own, the idea of individual human rights often foregrounds the superiority of individuality over collectivism in the realms of societal allocation of rights and choices. In any case, the

modern normative project of human rights and multiparty democracy – whether labelled as liberal or not – is not ideologically neutral; it is an ensemble of the modern Western liberal vision of society. A focus on the paradigm shift in the disposition of African regional actors to these two liberal principles would suffice to account for the critical junctures (and their causality) at which African interveners consented to the liberal order as the solution to African problems: a development that subsequently informed their undertaking of interventions from a liberal epistemological standpoint. Before dissecting these developments, however, I would first like to discuss some unique attributes of ‘the African society’ to set the stage.

4.4.1 *Rethinking the Uniqueness of the African Society*

The role of the hegemony of liberalism and its associated common sense in shaping the collective commitment of African actors at the continental level to the reproduction of the liberal order in Africa would hardly be effectively pinned down without pointing attention to the traditional constitutive nature of the African society, particularly as applicable up till the 1980s. The need to open up conversations around the nature of polity in the African state is not by any means to demonstrate anything primitive about the African state, but rather to point attention to the fact that the structural configuration of the African society is different from what is obtainable in the Western society, with the latter liberal and individualistic. The necessity of such an exploration reinforced why Gramsci argues that historical analysis would be necessary to dissect and understand the process that led to the *unequal valorisation* of the ideological conception of the world since “[v]arious... conceptions of the world exist, and one always make a choice between them” (Gramsci 1971, 326). In his reflection in this regard, Gramsci (1971, 327) maintains that “What must next be explained is how it happens that in all periods there co-exist many systems and currents of philosophical thought, how these currents are born, how they are diffused, and why in the process of diffusion they fracture along certain lines and in certain directions.”

Before I proceed from here, two caveats are in order. First, following Jean-François Bayart (1993), I am not pretending to be a historian in this sub-section by engaging in the historical deconstruction of the African society. All I intend to do briefly is to make sense of the empirical character of the African society before I continue with my discussion of how and why African actors at the continental level consented to the liberal hegemonic order. Second, I know it could be problematic to characterise what constitutes the ‘the African society’ since the African continent comprises more than

fifty states and have very heterogeneous ethnic groups. This contributes to the question broached by Bayart (1993, 33) that “is it possible to present as a paradigm the political historicity of a continent so heterogeneous...?”. However, following Doornbos (1990, 180), I maintain that while the vastness of Africa and the heterogeneity of African states are unequivocally acknowledged and recognised in this thesis, there are a set of commonalities that could be found across African polities which can be conceptually characterised as ‘the African society’ and which is altogether different from the Western liberal society. Scholars researching Africa often acknowledge this in their analytical deconstruction of polities on the African continent. Doornbos (1990, 180) notes that “the African state has significant common characteristics”. In the account of Bayart (1993, 33, 35), “[t]he States which make up... [the African] continent naturally have common characteristics” which show that the African society “does not belong to the [liberal] west”. Apart from reinforcing “the historical legitimacy of Africa as unit of analysis” (Mamdani 1996, 8), this distinctiveness of the African polity, which African regional interveners are gradually neglecting because they consent to liberal common sense, constitutes one of the key reasons why liberal peace interventions rarely proffer *lasting* solutions to the security challenges confronting many (post-)conflict societies in Africa.

In Chapter Three, I discussed historical disempowerment as one of the major constitutive determinants in the neo-Gramscian theory for making sense of the susceptibility of a group of nonhegemonic actors to the ideological order created by the historic bloc (in the aftermath of passive revolution). As the ‘recent’ global historical record has shown, no other social group has their indigenous institutions and governance orientations disempowered (in the process of colonialism) like the African actors. Narrating from the African experience, Fanon (1963, 210) contends that “colonialism is not simply content to impose its rule upon the present and the future of a dominated country... [and] not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain... [but it also] turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it”. Peter Duignan further captures this account when he notes that:

colonialism brought about deep-seated change [to Africa]. The imperial system stands out as one of the most powerful engines for cultural diffusion in the history of Africa. Its credit balance outweighs its debit account. Colonialism helped to erode Africa's isolation and brought Africa into the world economy; colonial rule transmitted new skills, new techniques, new ways of thought, and new methods of

governance. Colonialism also brought in its wake a vast range of new problems and new stresses. For better or for worse, old Africa was never to be the same again (Duignan 1986, 8).

With the benefit of hindsight, this account could not be more accurate in the overall analysis of the impact of colonial intrusion on Africa's indigenous civilizations, culture, institutions, and ways of doing across different realms. However, despite this evident historical disempowerment, what emerged as the African society in the aftermath of decolonisation is not without embodying and reflecting distinctive African culture that distinguished a typical African polity from its Western counterpart. One of the scholars who are cognisant of this development is Jean-François Bayart. In his succinct contention:

As a system of syncretic articulation sensitive to indigenous social contradictions, colonisation perpetuated the political strategies of extraversion, by providing through the monetary economy unheard of possibilities for domestic accumulation of wealth by the dominant classes. The production of African societies could no longer be distanced from the technological civilisation of the west. But all the evidence shows that the extraverted, even centrifugal, nature of the political process that this implies does not in any way diminish the role of indigenous participants. (Bayart 1993, 24-25).

Within the context of this uniqueness, attention could be drawn to three key areas in which the African society and its socio-political ordering system cannot be characterised as traditional liberal, as against the experience in the global West. The first in this category is the collectivist character of African society. A society that embraces a collectivist worldview is the one in which individuals are considered not independent of, or separable from, their communities and social groups. Rather, individuals are deemed interdependent and inextricably linked to others within their respective communities. The analysis presented by Thomas Tieku on the distinctive attribute of the African society is particularly apropos to offer insights in this regard. According to Tieku (2012, 41), "African societies exhibit many features of collectivist cultures" in which the root of such collectivist social life is traceable to "the Bantu approach to life, wittily expressed in the saying that 'humans are humans because of other humans'." This assertion is supported by Okere (1984, 148), who contends that the worldview of ordinary African persons is not the one isolated individuality but rather an integral member of a group that is informed by the ethos of collective solidarity. While reflecting on the African thinking about rights within communitarian structure,

Howard (1986, 19) points attention to the fact that there is a contention that ‘the group is more important than the individual’. In this case, rather than prioritising individual human rights, Africans place significant emphasis on people’s, communal or collective rights. The practice of this collectivist conception of life is particularly relevant in communities outside the state capitals. This ontological commitment to collectivism in African society is starkly different from the obtainable individuality worldview in Western liberal society (Okere 1984, 148).

Claude Ake argues within this constitutive African worldview when he notes that he understands why the African state may not take the liberal norm of individual human rights seriously. According to him, it is because the underlying “idea of human rights, or legal rights in general, presupposes a society which is atomized and individualistic” (Ake 1987, 5). As a matter of fact, the central tenets of liberal ideology – from the principle of individual human rights to the rule of law and democracy – that are deeply embedded in Western society revolves around the preservation of the principle of individuality. As noted by Augelli and Murphy (1988, 26, 29), the normative philosophy of liberalism ‘falsifies perceptions of social relations, [by] exalting individual autonomy’ and “portrays an abstracted individual, in isolation from his social context”. The implication of this contradiction between the constitutive nature of the African society (in terms of its collectivist societal structures) and the normative dictates of Western liberalism (in terms of its individualistic commitments) is that any attempt to invent the liberal order in the African society would demand social engineering, which may eventually end up in futility.

The second key distinctive attribute of the African state is the reality of ethnic consciousness, which in a way equally makes the African society not a resemblance of the Western liberal society. This idea of ethnic consciousness or loyalty to one’s ethnic group within the larger political structure of the African society is a feature that is ever-present in socio-political practices among the African people across different important realms. Looking at this societal scenario, Legum (1999, 18) argues that ethnicity constitutes a conspicuous reality in the polity of postcolonial African society. In *The State in Africa*, Bayart writes extensively about ‘the shadow theatre of ethnicity’ in the African state. According to him, even though ethnic consciousness seems not to have structure, “it cannot be denied” as it plays an active role in shaping the socio-political characters of the African state (Bayart 1993, 42). It is a phenomenon that is engrained in the structural fabric of the African society and is often instrumentalised as a functional mechanism for devising confrontations, making peace or appropriating

political powers (Legum 1999, 60). What this means is that the cultural and traditional domestic ordering system in the African society is not the one that can be designated as constitutive liberal since consciousness is first attached to one's ethnic *group* rather than the state.

The last in these distinctive properties of the African society is the existence of *functioning* traditional/informal institutions in parallel with government/formal institutions in the governance of the African society. Projecting analysing from a more Western liberal context, the German sociologist Max Weber had pointed attention to the centrality of viable formal institutions in the stability of the state. In Weber's account, the state is a 'compulsory political organisation' with "administrative staff [that] successfully upholds the claim to the *monopoly* of the *legitimate* use of physical force in the enforcement of its order" (Weber 1978, 54). From this Weberian reading of statehood – which is aligned with the liberal conception of the state and the conception of the state as autonomous of the society – any political entity called state is expected to maintain *sole* ownership of the institutional governance structures and machinery for enforcing domestic societal orders (Lemay-Hébert and Mathieu 2014, 235).⁸³ It is particularly from this (neo-)Weberian context that rebuilding government institutions or creating new government institutions constitutes an integral component of liberal statebuilding interventions. However, within the African society, government institutions rarely maintain any iota of monopoly in the ordering and governance systems. Rather, traditional and informal institutional structures equally play an active and important role in maintaining orders, adjudication, settlement or inflaming of conflicts. These informal institutions can destabilise the effectiveness of the state when they are not accorded appropriate respect in domestic governance practices. Based on this phenomenon, Moe (2012) argues that the knowledge of the basic attribute of a typical Western liberal sovereign state is not sufficient as the starting point for analysing statehood in Africa. For her, the postcolonial African state is endowed with dimensional "informal decision-making processes" across different societal issue-areas (Moe 2012).

What the above analysis suggest is that there is a historical and cultural context driving the practice of statehood in Africa that could easily be distinguished from what is operating in the typical Western liberal society. Whether such a practice is the best or not is outside the remit of this thesis. As Gramsci has noted, "to believe that one

⁸³ Although some analysts have argued that Weber's political theorising, particularly about statehood, may demand more holistic analysis beyond institutionalist interpretation. See, for instance, Lottholz and Lemay-Hébert (2016).

particular conception of the world, and of life generally, in itself possesses a superior predictive capacity is a crudely fatuous and superficial error” (Gramsci 1971, 171). Nonetheless, what is clear in this case is that while such an alternative practice takes place at the worldview level, it somehow lacks nonhegemonic avant-garde African organic intellectuals to theoretically organise it as an ensemble of an alternative ideology of state system. In the following section, I discuss how and why African actors at the continental level gradually consent to the liberal ordering principles within the context of the OAU/AU.

4.4.2 Common Sense and African Consent to Individual Human Rights

Gramsci’s theorising around hegemony provides an important illuminating tool to dissect the hegemonic causal influence of common sense in shaping the course of action. While it is usually “inherited from the past”, common sense “is not without consequences” as “it influences moral conduct and the direction of will” (Gramsci 1971, 333). Whenever it is unleashed by the hegemony of the historic bloc’s ideology, it “shapes out ordinary, practical, everyday calculation and appears as neutral as the air we breathe” (Hall 1988, 8). Of course, the development of common sense and its conformist influence on the choices of nonhegemonic actors is not without a historical context. Gramsci notes in this regard that:

But this elaboration must be, and can only be, performed in the context of the history of philosophy, for it is this history which shows how thought has been elaborated over the centuries and what a collective effort has gone into the creation of our present method of thought which has subsumed and absorbed all this past history (Gramsci 1971, 327).

Gramsci’s heuristic concept of common sense offers an important lens to critically explore the African regional consent to the liberal human rights project in the 1980s. In what follows, I deploy this (neo-)Gramscian conceptual idea to unpack the commitment of African regional actors within the OAU to the liberal individual human rights agenda and dissect, in Cox’s words, “how [the consent] to that order came about” (Cox 1981, 129).

When the African regional society was inaugurated in the early 1960s after decades of decolonisation, African leaders did not consider the normative value of individual human rights a priority for domestic ordering in African polities. To underscore this reality, the 1963 OAU Charter, which contains the thoughts of the early postcolonial

African leaders, does not make any reference to individual human rights as relating to the *internal affairs* of African states. What the Charter stresses concerning the subject of human rights is more of how they are relevant in Africa's international relations and their usefulness for justifying and advancing anti-colonial self-determination struggles in Africa. While pointing attention to the rights of African people, paragraph 2 of the preamble to the Charter notes that African leaders are "[c]onvinced that it is the inalienable right of all people to control their own destiny". This statement is mainly concerned with the attempt to justify the then ongoing decolonial struggles on the African continent. Article 2 (1e) of the Charter further states that the OAU would "promote international cooperation, having due regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights". Rather than striving to achieve individual human rights in the domestic affairs of its member states, the above reference is more about pledging to have due regard for human rights in its external relations. It is in this context that Murray (2004, 7) asserts that "[t]he provisions of the OAU Charter make little express mention of human rights. Instead, they reflect the dominating concerns of Africa at that time, namely, to ensure the independence of those African peoples that were still colonised". She further notes that where other aspects of human rights are mentioned in the Charter[,] they are broad and general and related to the relationship among states" (Murray 2004, 8).

This inattention to the issue of individual human rights was far away from being an oversight. As I have discussed in the previous section, the dominant worldview in African society is structured along collectivism rather than individuality as obtainable in the global West (Okere, 1984, p. 148; Tieku, 2012). Emphasis is usually placed on *collective or people's rights* as opposed to legalistic individual rights. Ake (1987, 5) argues in this context that "[t]he values implicit in... [individual human rights] are alien to those of our [– African –] traditional societies. We put less emphasis on the individual and more on the collectivity". It was not a surprise, therefore, that for more than eighteen years since its formation, OAU did not have a single instrument for encouraging or promoting human rights in the domestic affairs of African states (Ojo and Sesay 1986, 91, Umozurike 1983).⁸⁴ This particularly turned out to be the case as the OAU was "largely an association of heads of states and governments whose primary concerns have nothing to do with the protection and promotion of human rights" (Ojo and Sesay 1986, 92). A former Secretary-General of the OAU, Salim

⁸⁴ This is notwithstanding often reported brutality of some African regimes like that of Idi Amin of Uganda, Jean-Bedel Bokassa of Central African Republic, and Macias Nguema of Equatorial Guinea. All these regimes were ousted in 1979. See, for instance, Welch and Meltzer (1984).

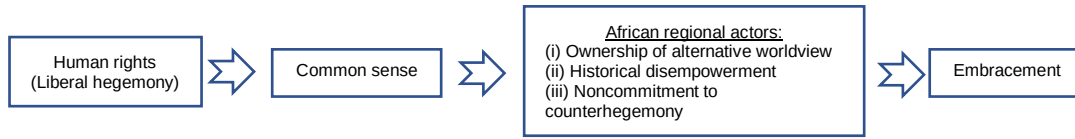
Ahmed Salim, reiterates this point during an interview that when he notes that “[t]he OAU cannot be completely different from its member-states” (Novicki 1992, 39).

However, this vantage point shifted from 1979 as this year marked the period when African regional leaders through the OAU began a direct interest in the promotion of human rights as affecting the internal affairs of African polities. It raises the very crucial question broached by Kannyo (1984, 129) that “why did the OAU decide to include human rights protection in its member states as one of its goals?”. What happened, in this respect, was the outcome of the interplay between common sense – as invented by the hegemony of the Western liberal world order – and local realities. This interaction is shown in figure 4.A below. At this period in history, the human rights project, as an integral component of the rising liberal democracy, had become a taken-for-granted normative value in world society based on the ideological undertakings of the Western historic bloc. Western actors had been consistently unified as a bloc before this time for the global advancement of the human rights principle. They specifically utilised global channels for this goal as Cox (1983, 172) reminds us that “international institutions [do] perform... ideological role[s]” in their reflection of the “orientations favourable to the dominant social and economic forces”. In this regard, the platform of the UN had been utilised to legitimise the universality of human rights norm (Kannyo 1984).⁸⁵ From the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 to the adoption and coming into force of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1966 and 1976, respectively (Weinstein 1980, 97), the UN consciously effected the legitimization of individual human rights as a universal normative principle. This global salience of human rights in normative ordering was further significantly enhanced in 1975 when thirty-five (35) Western countries signed the Final Act in Helsinki with a collective commitment to the universal promotion of the principle of human rights (Kannyo 1984, 141).⁸⁶ Of course, this was vigorously supported by global media and organic intellectuals of the dominant social group (Kannyo 1984). By the last half of the 1970s, therefore, among the values of liberalism, the human rights agenda had gained the status of global common sense (Kannyo 1984, 141) capable of shaping actions and “appear[ed] as natural as the air we breathe” (Hall 1988, 8).

⁸⁵ At the level of the United Nations, this process *officially* started in 1948 with the adoption the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

⁸⁶ For details of this agreement, see the 1975 Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe Final Act.

Figure 4. B: African Collective Response to Common Sense of Human Rights Norm



This common sense of respect for individual human rights, which had built up for years, prevailed in the African regional discourse within the OAU in 1979, particularly within the context of high-handedness and misuse of political powers by a few regimes in Africa (Aluko 1981). Some of these regimes that were noted to be using excessive state might against citizens around that time included that of Idi Amin of Uganda, Jean-Bedel Bokassa of Central African Republic, and Macias Nguema of Equatorial Guinea (Welch and Meltzer 1984). What followed in this regard was the emergence of local proponents of the human rights norm within the African regional society. These local, regional proponents include representatives from countries like Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania, and Botswana and agents from African civil society and epistemic communities. Of course, it was not a surprise that the common sense of human rights won the consent of African actors in this process. As I have discussed and argued in chapter three, some key factors are central to determine the extent to which a group of nonhegemonic actors would embrace or resist the power of common sense. Even though the African community seemed to have an alternative idea about rights within the context of their collectivist worldview about social relations (Tieku 2012, Oguejiofor 2009), as I have discussed in chapter three, they were historically disempowered because of their long period of colonisation, and they were not also committed to a straightforward project of counterhegemony.

Gramsci has argued that one of the basic attributes of ideological hegemony is its appearance as representing both the corporate interest of the dominant social group and also the interest of other social groups, which by implication, foregrounds its universality (Gramsci 1971). In this regard, the newly consented local proponents of the individual human rights agenda in Africa – which involved state actors, professional bodies and epistemic communities – considered its regional endorsement needful as a necessary solution to the high-handedness of regimes. They maintained the stance that collective advancement of human rights project in Africa was the single solution to the problem of gross violations of human rights on the continent of Africa. Between 1967 and 1979, for instance, Nigeria developed a few initiatives that solicited the

support of the UN to help in the establishment of regional human rights commissions in global regions, including Africa, where they were not in existence (Weinstein 1980, 100). In 1975, governments of Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia boycotted the OAU Summit in Kampala because of the grave human rights violations of the Idi Amin regime in Uganda with the hope that it would call the attention of African leaders on the need to take collective action on the issue of human rights in Africa (Kannyo 1984, 134). In the same vein, between 1978 and early 1979, a number of African bodies such as the African jurists, African Bar Association and All Africa Conference of Churches were also expressly vocal in their call for an African instrument on human rights (Umozurike 1983, 903, Weinstein 1980). By 1979, there was *hardly* any African epistemic community⁸⁷ speaking *against* the imperative of African consensus on human rights promotion. All these developments reinforce the reality of consent to common sense of human rights norm in Africa in the late 1970s.

As informed by this background, it generated discursive debates among the African leaders at the level of the OAU. At the 1979 OAU Summit held in Monrovia, African leaders resolved to develop an African instrument on human rights (Ojo and Sesay 1986). Accordingly, they requested the Secretary-General of the OAU to convene a “meeting of highly qualified experts to prepare a preliminary draft” of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) (Kannyo 1984, 146, Okere 1984). After organising three meetings to prepare the instrument, Mr Edem Kodjo, who was then the Secretary-General of the OAU, presented the drafted ACHPR to the OAU Assembly in June 1981 in Nairobi, and it was unanimously adopted (Kannyo 1984, 146). This Charter – which defines human and peoples’ rights in Africa and equally creates an African Commission on human and peoples’ rights – came into force in October 1986 after the required number of ratifications (Umozurike 1983, 904).⁸⁸ The common sense of individual human rights norm prevailed, although it could not totally displace the pre-existing value that African leaders placed on collective rights. The outcome of this process ended up with placing priority on both individual rights and collective rights as the latter was vigorously defended by some African decision-makers who are conversant with its centrality in African societal structures (Okere 1984, 145). Tieku (2017, 196) argues in this regard that African leaders “create a new

⁸⁷ ‘Epistemic community’ as used in this thesis follows its characterization by Haas (1992) to mean a network of knowledge-based experts.

⁸⁸ To reflect the orthodox African conception of rights, (collective) peoples’ rights was incorporated and engrained in this OAU/AU’s African human rights instrument.

human rights paradigm that places collective rights on an equal footing with individual rights”.

This development marked the evolutionary juncture at which the promotion of human rights became an integral official project for African actors at the continental level (Murray 2004, 22); although how effective is this goal could be a subject of debate. Since this period, the OAU – and subsequently its predecessor AU – has not reneged in its commitment to promoting individual human rights in African states. In July 1998, the Assembly of the OAU took a step further in this direction by adopting a Protocol establishing an African Court on Human and People’s Rights (Murray 2004). This Protocol, which allows the OAU to coordinate the promotion of human rights in Africa and administer its observation, came into force on 25 January 2004. In 1999, through the Algiers Declaration, the Assembly of the OAU reaffirmed the unwavering position and commitment of the OAU to the liberal normative value of human rights. The Declaration states that:

We, however, recognise that much remains to be done to bring these developments to the level of our own expectations and the legitimate aspirations of our peoples. We are aware of these limitations and are determined not to relent in our efforts to transcend them. In this Spirit, we reiterate our commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We emphasise the indivisibility, universality and interdependence of all human rights, be they political and civil or economic, social and cultural, or even individual or collective (OAU 1999).

This declaration embodies nothing but the reaffirmation of the liberal ideological positionality of African regional actors. When the OAU was officially replaced with the AU in 2002, this unambiguous commitment to promote the individual human rights norm was unequivocally transferred to the new organisation. This includes the existing human rights instruments and structures. No other place was this made express clear, like in the Constitutive Act that established the AU. Article 3(h) of the Act states that one of the objectives of the AU is to “promote and protect human and peoples’ rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and other relevant human rights instruments” (African Union 2000). This means is that the AU is an institutional agency for advancing, among others, the course of individual human rights.

A key point to reiterate concerning this historical account is that despite the evident involvement of local realities in the matrix of events that called the attention of African regional actors to the normative issue of individual human rights, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the global status of human rights discourse played a key role in the decision of African actors to activate their agency in the promotion of human rights norm (as an integral means of solving an aspect of the African fundamental problems).⁸⁹ Apart from the fact that every “given political solution is [equally] “ideological””, acts of foregrounding a normative idea by the fusion of hegemonic structure and superstructure “have a validity which is “psychological”; they “organise” human masses, and create the terrain on which men move” (Gramsci 1971, 376, 377). The actions in this regard could be categorised as conformist as it reproduces the social vision consciously advanced by the Western historic bloc. This underscores the critical reflections of a few prominent African scholars in this respect. Aluko (1981, 234) argues that African leaders or the “OAU did not have any idea of human rights other than those borrowed from the Western liberal tradition.” Ojo and Sesay (1986, 92) supported this assertion when they argue that the take-off of the direct involvement of the African agency in the promotion of human rights in Africa “was to a large extent externally induced”. In corroborating this, Kannyo (1984, 129) argues that the development at the global level, which interacted with local reality, informed the African agency in human rights project in the late 1970s. Summing this up is to argue that it is a phenomenon that exemplified the power of hegemony and its common sense to constrain and set boundaries for empirical actions of nonhegemonic actors. In the following section, I delve into the historical account of African regional consent to (liberal) democracy.

4.4.3 Common Sense and African Consent to Democracy

One of the scholars that attempted a description of the global society after the end of the Cold War in 1989 is the American political scientist, Francis Fukuyama. Bring attention to some of his assertions here is necessary to have a sense of the hegemonic ascendancy of liberal democracy and its corresponding common sense in global ideological configurations in the aftermath of the Cold War. In Fukuyama’s words:

What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end

⁸⁹ For some analysis on regional localization of global hegemonic ideas, see, for instance, Acharya (2004).

point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government... for the victory of liberalism has occurred primarily in the realm of ideas or consciousness and is as yet incomplete in the real or material world. But there are powerful reasons for believing that it is the ideal that will govern the material world *in the long run* (Fukuyama 1989, 4).

While Fukuyama's narrative of 'the end of history' may arguably be contested,⁹⁰ there is no doubt that the idea of democracy gained the status of global common sense significantly from the 1990s. As Gramsci has pointed out, because common sense constitutes the "way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become "common" in any given epoch", "it influences moral conduct and the direction of will" (Gramsci 1971, 322, 333). In what follows, I unpack how common sense of liberal democracy interacted with cooperative African local realities from the 1990s to affect African regional consent to the production of the liberal democratic order in Africa.

In the early days of postcolonial Africa, African regional actors demonstrated no concern for the imperativeness of a democratic system of government in the internal affairs of African states. In other words, the constitution of the African regional society in the early postcolonial era was based on the principle of plurality of orders. While some African polities organised themselves according to the dictates of a socialist system, others chose their respective preferences from other models such as one-party system, military rule, and democracy. Because each of these governance models has different value systems, African regional leaders consciously avoided making a decision that would impose a particular form of order on every African society, especially when designing the Charter of the OAU in 1963. To this end, the issue of a unified regional adherence to the liberal principle of multi-party democracy was a no-go area. As Tieku (2017, p. 128) reminds us, during this period, 'practices and procedures such as elections, political parties, and free press, which are used in Western democracies to encourage participation in political processes, were seen as divisive and alien to African cultures.' Young (2004, p. 34) argues within this context that the 'single-party system dominated African [socio-political] landscape'. In other words, the operative reality of African regional society in the postcolonial era was based on the co-existence of alternative orders rooted in different socio-political and ideological orientations.

⁹⁰ See, for instance, Huntington (1993a).

This phenomenon could hardly be separated from how democracy, *ab initio*, was characterised as a Western project and, therefore, no convincing rationale to valorise such a political project in the African continent that was striving for decoloniality from different manifestations of neo-colonialism. To showcase the inceptive postcolonial disposition of African actors to democracy, many democracies that were inherited at the point of independence were torpedoed across different African states within a time frame of less than two decades. What is equally worth noting in this respect is that the African community seemed to lack a uniform conception of what should be the standard system of government.⁹¹ As a result of this, military regimes or one-party socialist models were resorted to across different African political spaces. This did not generate any form of concerns at the regional level, particularly within the defunct OAU, until the end of the Cold War. On this basis, Nwankwo (1993, 50) asserts that *ab initio*, “the OAU gave little attention to matters touching on... democracy.”

However, with the end of the Cold War, there was a fundamental paradigm shift in the African regional construction. Things moved against the plurality of orders to favour the only game in town (i.e., liberal democratic order) (Tieku, 2017, p. 129). From the early 1990s, the disposition of African regional actors towards the project of multiparty democracy gradually and significantly changed (Kane 2008, Garber 1993, Ebobrah 2007). Ake (1993, 239) asserts during this epochal time that “Africa’s long neglected democracy movement is now enjoying unprecedented support”. From this period onwards, African regional decision-makers began to use the platform of the OAU to acknowledge the importance of democracy and singled it out as the prescriptive standard for practising good governance. This evolutionary journey (Wiebusch, et al. 2019, 20) specifically started in July 1990 when the then newly appointed OAU Secretary-General, Salim Ahmed Salim, presented the report on “The Fundamental Changes Taking place in the World and their Implications for Africa: Proposals for an African Response” to both the OAU Council of Ministers and the OAU Assembly. By its substance, the report contained the assessment of post-Cold War global developments, challenges facing Africa, and what could be done as an African response (Djinnit and Wane 2020, 10). An integral element of the report emphasises the global triumph of (Western) democracy and African shortcomings in democratic practices (Djinnit and Wane 2020, 10). After thorough deliberation on the report, the Assembly of the OAU issued a “Declaration on the Political and Socio-Economic Situation in Africa and the Fundamental Changes Taking Place in the World.” Some

⁹¹ As I have discussed in chapter 3, this scenario is not unconnected to the devastating historical disempowerment of colonialism on African civilisations.

of the contents of the Declaration is telling to understand the activation of African agency in the promotion of democracy. In the Declaration, African leaders maintain that:

We are fully aware that in order to facilitate this process of socio-economic transformation and integration, it is necessary to promote popular participation of our peoples in the processes of government and development. A political environment which guarantees human rights and the observance of the rule of law, would assure high standards of probity and accountability particularly on the part of those who hold public office... We accordingly recommit ourselves to the further democratisation of our societies and to the consolidation of democratic institutions in our countries... We therefore assert that democracy and development should go together and should be mutually reinforcing (OAU 1990).

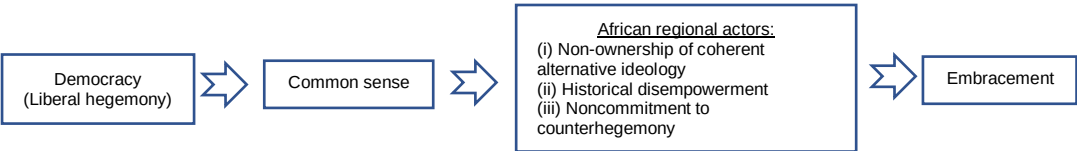
As aptly argued by Wiebusch, Aniekwe, Oette and Vandeginste (2019, 16), it was a declaration that “formalized... [African] continental commitment to a liberal agenda broadly associated with democracy, the rule of law and human rights”. Since this declaration, African regional leaders have not reneged in their collective advancement of the course of democracy. In 1995, the same Assembly of the OAU resolved at a meeting in Ethiopia that “[w]ithout democracy and peace, development is not possible” (OAU 1995). This position was further advanced in the 1999 *OAU’s Algiers Declaration*. In this Declaration, African leaders resolved that they “are convinced that the increase in, and expansion of the spaces of freedom and the establishment of democratic institutions... would further contribute to the consolidation of modern African states” (OAU 1999).

By the time the OAU was metamorphosing into the AU in the early 2000s, democracy promotion was directly transferred to the new pan-African organisation. Nowhere was this goal clearly stated, like in the Constitutive Act that established the AU. While Article 3 (f) of the Act states that an objective of the AU would be to “promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance”, Article 4 (m) identifies one of the principles of the AU to be “respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance” (African Union 2000). Based on these goals, as noted by Glen (2012, 127), “AU continues to slowly build towards that final success of a completely democratic [African] continent”. In 2007, the African actors finally institutionalised democracy in African regionalism by adopting the AU “African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance” (ACDEG). This normative instrument, which came into force in 2012, was developed as an institutional

mechanism for entrenching liberal democratic ethos across the African states that are parties to the Charter. The Charter firmly cements a democratic system of government as somewhat *obligatory* to African states and affirms the AU's agency in defending and promoting compliance to principles of democracy in African regionalism (Wiebusch, et al. 2019, 16, 17). Elvy (2013, 48) argues that AU's ACDEG aims to establish the liberal variant of democracy. Even though African regional actors are avoiding the use of the term *liberal* (due to its Western neo-imperialist character), the type of democracy they are promoting is not different from the one historically advanced by Western liberal actors when considering the common variables of regular elections, popular participation, respect for human rights, the rule of law and supremacy of constitutions (Tieku 2017, 128, 129).⁹²

African choice of promoting democracy in the domestic affairs of African states through the OAU was animated, to use the words of Djinnit and Wane (2020, 3),⁹³ “[a]t the confluence of local and global dynamics”. At the level of the superstructure was the issue of liberal hegemony, which presented democracy as common sense for domestic normative ordering. At the local level was the seeming lack of coherent alternative political ideology through which African regional actors could respond to the unfolding governance crisis in Africa.⁹⁴ Figure 4.B below shows the schematic outcome of the encounter between the global common sense of democracy and local realities in Africa. It would be in order to expatiate on this causality at both fronts.

Figure 4. C: African Collective Response to Common Sense of Democracy



At the global structural level, as I have hinted at the beginning of this section, post-1989 marked the defeat of communism, the end of the Cold War and the emergence

⁹² See, for instance, the AU's African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

⁹³ Both Said Djinnit and El-Ghassim Wane (2020, 3) were key players in the regionally decision-making process during this historic consenting period. While Djinnit served as Chef de Cabinet of the OAU Secretary-General between 1989 and 1999, Wane held various position within the O(AU) between 1994 and 2009 and served as the AU Commission Peace and Security Director from 2009 to 2015. See, for instance, Djinnit and Wane (2020).

⁹⁴ Of course, the local component of these dynamics is birthed by historical disempowerment and noncommitment to counterhegemony as I discussed in chapter 3.

of liberal democracy as a single dominant political ideology (Fowkes 1995, Plattner 1991). It informs McFaul's (2004) description of 'democracy... as a world value'. From discourse to practice, the nooks and crannies of the world society witnessed the hegemony of Western liberal democracy as a system of government. Some scholars describe this as the 'third wave of democratization' (Huntington, 1991; Huntington, 1993b) in which the general conception on the acceptable system of government revolves around liberal democracy with its constituting characteristics of adherence to the constitution, periodic elections, the rule of law, and individual human rights. In other words, democracy turned out to become the reigning political ideology in the global society within the confines of the post-Cold War world order as it was (and still) being "widely regarded as an ideal system of government" (McFaul 2004, 148). This triumph of Western liberal democracy in the wake of the Cold War shaped the perception of African actors – and by implication, the conceptual thinking within the institutional space of the OAU – about the desirability of democracy. Democracy becomes common sense and, to that extent, constrains the judgement of African actors by considering it as the panacea to Africa's political challenges. The role of common sense in this process could be pinned down when dissecting the address delivered by the then OAU Secretary-General, Salim Ahmed Salim, in July 1990, during which he presented the report on "The Fundamental Changes Taking place in the World and their Implications for Africa: Proposals for an African Response" to the OAU Assembly. In his speech to the July 1990 Summit, Salim notes that:

Aspiration for democracy and freedom knows no color of race, it has no geographical boundaries. It is a universal aspiration. Democratic freedoms and fundamental human and people's rights are acquired rights by humanity through the struggles and the sacrifices by men and women all over the world... The reality is there is a global consensus on the good sense of democracy and its universal values... Africa must guard against notions of standard prescriptions of democratic practices. We should equally guard against the imposition on any society of a particular model of democratic practices while affirming at the same time the relevance of universal democratic principles (my emphasis) (Djinnit and Wane 2020, 12).

Salim also reinforced some of the above contentions in one of his subsequent interviews in 1992. Responding to the question on 'what is the agenda for the OAU in the 1990s', Salim notes that:

we have to be involved in the whole question of the management of change. Africa is going through a *very exciting period*, a period of transition toward greater democratization, and we have to work to ensure that this transition takes place in conditions devoid as far as possible of turbulence, anarchy, and chaos. But more importantly, we have to work to ensure that the question of democratic transformation takes roots and becomes something of a permanent thing... [and] *not simply because it is now fashionable to do so* (my emphasis) (Novicki 1992, 36, 37).

What is very clear from these excerpts, which we could say directly reflect the minds of African leaders, is the acknowledgement of African commitment to the project of democracy within the context of being a universal commodity, global project, and popular fashionable practice. Even though African regional actors are not believing in a single model of democracy, as Salim asserts, they see it as an ahistorical, natural political project (in which the aspiration for such a political system is universal with no geographical boundaries). This characterisation is a simple case of the general acceptance of liberal democracy as a value system, but which, in a real sense, emanated from the transformation of the Western corporate interest into a general interest in the process of passive revolution (Gramsci 1971).⁹⁵

Of course, the basis for this consenting transition is not solely about the structural forces of common sense of democracy but also about the outcome of its interactions with domestic realities. The winning of the collective consent of African regional agents towards democracy from the 1990s was only possible within a particular local context. In the first instance, African regional leaders could not boast of ownership of a clear alternative political ideology that they could concertedly rely on in trying to find a lasting solution to the governance crisis in Africa.⁹⁶ The second point is that African actors could not display any clear commitment to counterhegemony at the level of ideology at this point in history. Accordingly, the only reigning project around this period was the movement for democratisation of Africa. The preponderance of African organic intellectuals working with(in) OAU had increasingly become proponents of liberal democratic order by the 1990s and therefore pitched their tent with the liberal West regarding governance and normative ordering. Informed by their critical role in policy

⁹⁵ For some studies attempted dissection of the process or causality that led to the development of specific AU mechanism(s) on democracy, see, for instance, Tieku (2009), Legler and Tieku (2010), and Leininger (2015). Although many of these analyses rarely interrogate what triggers African collective consent to liberal democratic project in the wake of the Cold War.

⁹⁶ Of course, this is not to argue that there were no alternative local perspectives of political system in Africa at this time, but that there is no unified African consensus in this regard.

prescriptions, this greatly impacted the course of action at the level of African agency regarding liberal democracy in the post-Cold War era (Tieku 2017, 47-49). Tieku (2009) and Legler and Tieku (2010) have argued in this regard that African democracy-promotion undertaking in the aftermath of the Cold War was largely expert-driven. This is not a surprise as it only shows the extent to which the African intellectual community was in harmony with the liberal democratic world order. In what follows, I show how this consent to liberal common sense is reaffirmed in African conceptual thinking about peace formation and peace intervention.

4.5 Affirming Consent: African Consensus on the Liberal Peace

In the previous section, I discussed how and why African actors at the level of the OAU/AU gradually committed to the reproduction of the Western liberal project towards the end of the twentieth century. In line with this consent to the liberal ideological paradigm, the conceptual framework for peace intervention that African actors designed within the context of the APSA showcases a liberal perspective of peace. I argue in this section that the consensus at the level of the AU on the liberal peace framework as the only model for African intervention is just a further affirmation of African consent to the hegemony and common sense of the Western liberal ideology in the modern global society. In what follows, I explore the contents of this African conception of peace and why this turned out to be the case.

The development of an African continental mechanism for collective intervention (i.e., APSA), as discussed in section 2, provided an important opportunity for African interveners to conceptualise how they think peace and stability could be re-engineered and restored in conflict-ridden societies in Africa. What then is the African conceptual thinking about state/peacebuilding, as previously broached by Makinda and Okumu (2008, 76) that '[h]ow is peace building understood in Africa?' Mac Ginty (2011, 32) previously argued that there is a preoccupation of Western actors with the liberal peace model of intervention. As it will be shown here, however, African interveners are equally very active in this process of designing statebuilding intervention from the purview of the liberal peace paradigm. A close look at the conceptual framing of intervention within the context of African security regionalism shows that the idea of African interveners about state/peacebuilding methodology is firmly rooted in liberal ideological thinking.

The content of the AU's major instruments for peace intervention is particularly helpful in making a conclusion in this realm. One of these key instruments is the Protocol

Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (henceforth Protocol) – which constitutes one of the crucial documents guiding the interventions of African regional interveners. Paragraph 15 of the preamble of the Protocol makes the African consensus on the liberal peace framework evident. In this regard, African leaders note that:

[we, the member states of the AU, are] aware... of the fact that the development of strong *democratic institutions* and culture, observance of *human rights* and *the rule of law*, as well as the implementation of post-conflict recovery programmes and sustainable development policies, are essential for the promotion of collective security, durable peace and stability, as well as for the prevention of conflicts (my emphasis) (African Union 2002).

This paragraph emphasises upfront the centrality of inventing liberal values in what African leaders consider as constituting the ‘surest’ approach through which a sustainable peace could be achieved. To showcase that this position was not a mistake but a representation of the ‘minds’ of African leaders, the Protocol subsequently re-echoes the importance of these liberal normative values in the African conception of peace reconstruction. Article 3(f) of the Protocol states that whilst undertaking its peace and security mandate, the PSC shall “promote and encourage democratic practices, good governance and the rule of law, protect human rights and fundamental freedoms... as part of efforts for preventing conflicts”. To this end, one of the principles that were set out to guide the PSC’s actions in the peace and security realm, as set out in Article 4(c), is the “respect for the rule of law, fundamental human rights and freedoms”. In the same vein, the Protocol empowers the PSC in conjunction with the Chairperson of the AUC in Article 7(m) to follow-up on member states’ “progress towards the promotion of democratic practices, good governance, the rule of law, [and] protection of human rights” whilst acting within the AU’s response to peace and security issues. In this regard, what is very unambiguous in these excerpts is the conceptualisation of peace mainly from the very liberal perspective.

This liberal peace standpoint has become explicitly dominant in the overall African discursive analysis of peace-formation in (post-)conflict countries. Only a few aspects of the Protocol clearly articulate this embedded conceptual understanding like as succinctly expressed in Article 14(1) of the Protocol, which states that:

In post-conflict situations, the Peace and Security Council [PSC] shall assist in the restoration of the rule of law, establishment and development of democratic

institutions and the preparation, organization and supervision of elections (African Union 2002).

As patently put forward in this excerpt, African regional actors prioritise the (re-)creation of a liberal democratic society – where there are liberal institutions, democracy, the rule of law, periodic elections, *inter alia* – as the surest pathway towards peace and stability. In this case, they consider the act of implanting liberal values in post-conflict African states as the act of resolving the triggers of conflict and, thereby, the right approach towards state/peacebuilding (see Paris, 1997).

This liberal peace conceptual thinking is at the same time visible in other important African instruments on state/peacebuilding undertakings. An instance, in this case, is the AU's Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) which African leaders specifically designed in 2006 to document their theoretical thinking about how to pragmatically reinvent stability in war-torn African society. In this PCRD, African regional interveners note that:

experience has indicated that in the early phases of the transition from conflict to peace, peace processes remain fragile and the risk of resumption of violence high. *This is because countries emerging from conflict are characterised by weakened or non-existent capacity at all levels, destroyed institutions and, the absence of a democratic culture, good governance, rule of law and respect for human rights* (my emphasis) (African Union 2006, 1)

What is further clarified in this respect is that the African explanation of relapse is strictly within the absence of a liberal order. To, therefore, build durable and sustainable peace is about creating liberal institutional structures for liberal practices. While maintaining the same ideological standpoint in term of peace intervention model, African leaders assert in 2009 through their "Tripoli Declaration on the Elimination of Conflicts in Africa and the Promotion of Sustainable Peace" that addressing the underlying triggers of conflicts in Africa is through, *inter alia*, the implementation of the existing AU instruments on "human rights, the rule of law, democracy, elections [and] good governance" (African Union 2009). This perspective on the importance of liberal ordering for peace creation is subsequently underscored in the AU's APSA Roadmap 2016-2020. African interveners pointed out in the Roadmap that:

Peace building is a complex and extensive process that involves addressing the root causes of conflicts, as well as creating social cohesion and establishing peaceful mechanisms and institutions for all members of society. It touches upon

all aspects of nation building, humanitarian interventions in the immediate aftermath of conflict as well as socio-economic development; it includes *rule of law* and the reform of the security sector, *constitutionalism and democracy*, good governance, *human rights* aspects as well as reconciliation (my emphasis) (African Union Commission 2015a, 43)

During his 'recent' press briefing on 20 March 2021, the AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, reiterated this African regional commitment to the liberal peace project. According to him:

...strengthening of democracy and good governance for human security... [is] very critical... So, defending, promoting [and] protecting democracy, [and] consolidating democracy is a very key priority for our continent... And that really brings us to the place where our emphasis on human rights [remains strongly] ... [In addition], the rule of law, constitutionalism, [and] zero tolerance for unconstitutional changes of government will play a very leading role in our engagement. The most important factor is to ensure that democracy is protected, democracy flourishes, [and] we have synergy to promote a new democratic culture that will let our people enjoy the benefit of development.⁹⁷

To capture the conceptual and epistemological stance of African regional actors on fostering peace and development during intervention – as expressed in relevant instruments of the AU – is to submit that its underlying assumptions are based on the liberal peace model (Vines 2013, 108). This is because such a conceptual model of intervention “draws heavily from liberal capitalist democratic principles” (Tieku 2017, 175) as it promotes “democratic governance, human rights and elections” (Butedi 2018, 99). While elucidating liberal peace as a framework, Duffield (2001, 11) argues that it “lays emphasis on such things as conflict resolution and prevention, reconstructing social networks, strengthening civil and representative institutions, promoting the rule of law, and security sector reform”. Making this more intelligible, Ryan (2013, 32) posits that “any peace strategy that promotes democracy, human rights, [and] the respect for the law... is going to contain strong traces of liberal thinking” and therefore that of liberal peace.

Wai (2014, 492) argues that Western actors' agency in the liberal peace project is designed for (re)inventing neo-imperialist domination. As I will further show in chapters

⁹⁷ For details of his comments, see the Press Briefing: AUC Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS), H.E. Amb. Bankole Adeoye. Access on 6 April 2021 at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_zecdUNeBq.

5, 6 and 7, projecting neo-imperialist domination is not the underlying force driving the liberal peace lens of African regional actors as they often characterise their agency as anti-imperialist (Tieku 2017, 128). The consensus at the AU level on liberal peace as the model for orchestrating African intervention is just a reaffirmation of African consent to the hegemony and common sense of the liberal normative order. To wit, it is a policy choice informed by the existing African consent to liberal ideological prescriptions at the level of African regionalism. In this case, African actors' commitment to the liberal vision of the world (as historically constructed by the Western historic bloc) laid the foundation which animated why their conceptual thinking about intervention is unambiguously rooted in liberal epistemology. The structural configuration of the liberal hegemony could not allow African agents to take seriously the underlying power structures that are constantly projecting liberal values in the conceptual thinking of peace interventions. This is because common sense, which is "inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed" has a dimension of 'material forces' and "is not without consequences" as "it influences moral conduct and the direction of will" (Gramsci 1971, 165, 333) and its clutter "makes critical reflection difficult" (Augelli and Murphy 1988, 20). An excerpt from the interview I conducted with a prominent African scholar – who has completed different research projects on activities of African states within the AU – is illuminating to understanding the extent of buy-in from African regional actors to common sense of Western liberalism and how this is sufficient to hamper any alternative thinking at the realm of African intervention. According to him:

Unlike in the 1960s or 1970s, there seem to be a broad consensus among African [regional] elites both at the political and technical levels that liberal values are the only game in town... So, AU is [promoting] and undertaking liberal peacebuilding [intervention] because the organisation is cognitively positioned as a liberal institution to reinforce a liberal system... To some extent, the debate [over whether or not to valorise liberal values] among African Heads of state [and government] has ended. There is a broad consensus that you cannot open that particular debate [again]... At the broader ideational level, there is a strong liberal institutionalist consensus that the [global] liberal system as created in after 1945 needs to be defended and AU is externally aware of that, [and] it doesn't want to go against the tide... [To this end, one could say that] imperial rule went through the front door but then came back through the back door.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ ASA#5 (Appendix 1).

4.6 Conclusion

The task of exploring the agency of African regional interveners in liberal intervention demands the inclusion of a historical analysis of how and why liberal normative values are foregrounded in African security regionalism. This is what this chapter has so far concentrated on. In this respect, I have dissected how the metamorphosis of the Western liberal value system into hegemony and common sense in the global society gained the acceptance of African regional agents and how this, in turn, affected their institutionalisation of the liberal peace project. I have explored this development by tracking down the historical, evolutionary transitions in the disposition of African regional actors to the Western liberal vision of the world within the institutional space of the OAU/AU.

As I have shown, based on my findings, what was at play in this process was not solely about the structural forces of the liberal ideological hegemony but also local realities in Africa, which created a favourable environment that encouraged the common sense of liberalism to fully unleash its impact on the cognition and conceptual thinking of African regional agents. I have analysed how these external and local forces interacted in practice to develop a situation whereby African actors became aligned to the prescriptions of the liberal hegemonic project and, by implication, thwarted the tendency for their alternative thinking. By moving beyond the causal influence of hegemony to incorporate its interplay with local developments, the analysis I presented in this chapter steered clear of a reductionist approach that may focus on the structure while neglecting the agent or vice versa. In any case, I have argued in this chapter that while there were local factors, the global hegemonic status of the liberal ideology in the late twentieth century played a dominant role in what made African actors acquiesce to its fundamental assumptions. In Chapters Five, Six and Seven of this thesis, I discuss how this consent informed their practice of liberal peace interventions in Somalia, South Sudan, and The Gambia, respectively.

Chapter Five: Explaining African Agency in Liberal Intervention in Somalia

In the previous Chapter, I explored how and why African agents at the continental level adjusted their ideological vantage point in the late twentieth century in favour of the Western liberal ideology. Of course, as I have noted, this was a period when the liberal ideology (or what some analysts termed capitalist democracy) gained the status of hegemony in the global society (Fukuyama 1989). In the same Chapter Four, I demonstrated how this monumental ideological shift prompted African regional actors to conceptualise peace solely from the purview of the dominant liberal peace thinking: a development that signifies cognitive preparedness towards a nonhegemonic reproduction of the liberal hegemony. My central argument in this regard was that while there were issues of changing local realities, the ascendancy of liberalism to becoming the dominant mode of thinking played a critical role in the activation of African agency liberal thinking (about peace).

In this Chapter, I empirically delve into the agency of African interveners in liberal intervention in Somalia. This focus of my empirical discussion here primarily centred on exploring the commitments of African interveners to liberal peace ordering in Somalia as a means of devising sustainable peace and stability in the country. I focus on the period between 2007 and 2020 during which African regional actors, via the agency and actorness of the AU, deployed AMISOM for the transformation and stabilisation of Somalia. Methodologically, the analysis I present in this chapter is neither intending to uncover the peacekeeping or counterterrorism aspect of the AMISOM's mandate nor aiming to analyse Western actors' contributions towards the operational activities of AMISOM. Of course, this is not to be oblivious of the involvement of non-African international actors in crafting peace and stability in Somalia, but mainly because the key concern of this thesis is fundamentally on the intervention discourses, undertakings, engagements, and approaches of African agents. In presenting a detailed analysis in this regard, this chapter draws on relevant archival materials and official documents of the AU both broadly and the ones that have to do with African international undertakings in Somalia. It equally relies on interview data, Somali policy documents and speeches delivered by regional or national/local actors on Somalia's peace process.

The argument I advanced in this chapter could be disaggregated into two intertwined constituents. The first part of my argument is that the African state/peacebuilding intervention in Somalia – that concentrates dominantly on the reengineering of national security institutions and promotion of democracy as integral mechanisms for reinventing sustainable peace in Somalia’s polity – is in line with the prescriptive assumptions of the globally prevalent liberal peace epistemology. Maintaining this contention became the case as these approaches mainly sought to establish a new Somalia where the state could regain its efficient capacity for domestic security ordering that would allow (liberal) democratic norms and values to prevail as a strategy for stimulating, nurturing, and fostering peaceful coexistence. In this process, the socio-political order which African interveners seek to establish in Somalia is based on the canonical dictates of the liberal order.

The other component of my argument in this chapter is that African regional interveners committed to this liberal approach to peace in Somalia because they have already consented to common sense of liberal peace. This development could not allow African interveners to think of alternative models of peace or envisage the neo-imperialist implications of orchestrating liberal peace ordering in Somalia. Accordingly, despite its notable unintended consequences, it has got to the point that African regional interveners could rarely think of alternative pathways to peace in the country outside the facilitation of a democratic order (that guarantees periodic one-man, one-vote elections). To further reinforce the influential impact of the liberal peace common sense in this process, Somali political elites equally embrace the same ideological standpoint.

To presenting my empirical findings on African agency in liberal intervention in Somalia, I compartmentalise this chapter into three main sections. I begin by exploring the background of the civil war in Somalia, which eventually necessitated African regional intervention in the country since the first decade of this century. I then dissect the constitutive characters, approaches, and underlying assumptions of African continental response to the crisis in Somalia. In the final part, I draw on neo-Gramscian theoretical thoughts around hegemony and common sense to unpack the underpinnings that informed why African regional interveners approached peace reconstruction in Somalia from the lens of liberal peace.

5.1 Background to African Intervention in Somalia

Dissecting African peace intervention in Somalia demands an initial discussion of the background of the civil war in the country, which eventually necessitated both regional and international interventions. In what follows in this section, I briefly explore the origin and dynamics of Somalia's civil war and show how the initial *Western* interventions could not offer a lasting solution to the crisis that engulfed the country. Within the confines of this analysis, I argue that the complexity of Somalia's civil war and the dreaded resistance against Western interventions and approaches created the necessity for (the search for) a non-Western intervention.

5.1.1 The Civil War in Somalia

The outbreak of civil war in Somalia could be dated back to the late 1980s (Menkhaus 2004, Mohamoud 2006). What triggered violence in this regard could be attributed to a combination of domestic and regional developments. Like many countries in the global South, Somalia gained independence in 1960 in the context of the global wave of decolonisation that profoundly manifested from the mid-twentieth century. As Emerson (1960, 289) notes that '[t]he first phase of the post-colonial reaction to colonialism involved the [uncritical] copying of the institutions of the imperial West', a parliamentary democracy was handed over to Somali people as the basic system of political governance under the leadership of President Aden Abdulla Osman. Even though Somalia was politically structured at this immediate post-independent period as a parliamentary democracy, the manifestation of clan-based politics was self-evident in the socio-political relations in the country, particularly when considering the distributive pattern of political representation across clans – although with the domination of Hawiye and Darood from the South (Ohanwe 2009, 142).⁹⁹ The practising and complexity of clan-based manoeuvring and stratagem in Somalian political governance contributed to the 1969 assassination of the then President of Somalia, Ali Sharmirke and the subsequent military takeover on 21 October 1969 under the leadership of General Siad Barre. To ease political tensions that pervaded the country, Siad Barre, who was from Darood clan, immediately pledged to embark on promising reforms that would reverse the previous political and administrative shortcomings in the interest of the people.

⁹⁹ As pointed out by Ohanwe (2009, 142), for instance, the 1969 Somalian parliamentary election showed the extent of politicization of clan and lineage as the 67 political parties that registered drew their respective supporters from specific families and friends.

On the home front, Barre's regime eventually embarked on social, legal and political reforms, which rather than responding to the yearnings of the collective Somali people, further heightened tensions within and across Somali political space. Siad Barre turned Somalia into a one-party state with scientific socialism as its political and economic ideology. Based on his socialist epistemological framework, the record shows that Barre's regime leaned towards authoritarianism and therefore articulated different policies that negated cherished traditional values and Somali societal norms. He officially, for instance, opposed and banned clan-oriented political practices as such a practice was considered by him as a contradiction to the socialist ethos and a hindrance towards pan-Somali ideology (Le Sage 2005). Since clan consciousness was not important, Siad Barre dominated his military cabinet with people and allies from his (Maheeran) Darood clan (Badmus 2015, 142). As noted by Ohanwe (2009, 143), his regime "imposed the death sentence on any Somali who [by any means] glorified clan politics".¹⁰⁰

On the regional scene, Barre's Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) became a hard-line supporter of 'Greater Somalia' nationalism, and therefore, the key sponsor of irredentist movements across the neighbouring states where ethnic Somalis are located. Dersso (2009, 5) recounted this experience when he noted that "Somalia's relations with its neighbours, particularly Ethiopia, were not happy". At the climax of this regional unification agenda, Barre's regime invaded the Ogaden region in July 1977 to harness the region, which is officially located within the Ethiopian territorial space. After a very short phase of military occupation, Somalian military forces were inflicted with heavy injury and decisively defeated by the Ethiopian armed forces, which led to the end of the war in March 1978. This turned out to be the case because, unlike his Ethiopian counterpart, who received substantial military support from the Soviet Union, Siad Barre could not secure expected military assistance from the Soviet Union or the United States (US).

There were two direct consequences of this heavy loss. First, it demoralised the Somali Army, Second, it propelled the disgruntled Somali population to rise against Barre, particularly in the context of different domestic realities such as his regime's draconian dictatorship, marginalisation of other clans and the poor state of the Somali economy. When a failed coup was subsequently orchestrated against his regime in 1978, Barre responded by deploying disproportionate state power mainly against

¹⁰⁰ However, the contradiction was that even though Barre's officially opposed clan-oriented politics, he actually practiced this traditional normative value as it was on record that half of his cabinet members are from his Darood clan (Dersso 2009, 5).

Majertan clan – the lineage of the coup plotters. His further clan-specific attacks, especially regarding the Isaaq clan in 1981, led to the rise of clan-based armed movements. Examples of these armed movements include the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDM), Somali National Movement (SNM) and United Somali National Congress (USC) (Dersso 2009, 6). As noted by Kusow (1994, 38), from the late 1970s, Siad Barre's regime "was unable to distance itself from the deep-rooted clannism" that historically served as the foundation of Somalian society. The resultant potency of these clan-based armed groups and their opening up of offensive against government forces from different locations, particularly in Mogadishu by the USC, led Siad Barre to flee from Somalia without a successor in 1991 (Le Sage 2005, 21). The resultant leadership vacuum in the Somali political seat of power created a reality of anarchy and turned Somalia into a quintessence of a collapsed state (Menkhaus 2004, Mohamoud 2006).

With the ousting of Siad Barre, one would ordinarily expect that a unified alliance would naturally emerge among the opposing clan-based armed factions. It, nonetheless, turned out that the opposite was the case as there emerged another dimension of intense rivalries and violent confrontations amongst what Norris and Bruton (2011, 7) regarded as "warlord-led clan factions". As aptly asserted by Murithi (2009, 146), "the coalition that succeeded Barre became embroiled in its own internal strife, leading to fractionalization in the country." Because of its dominant role in the final battle against Siad Barre in Mogadishu, the onus was somewhat on the USC in 1991 to produce a leader for Somalian government. However, while a faction of the USC under the banner of the Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA) agreed on Mohammed Ali Mahdi during a peace meeting in Djibouti in 1991 as the *pro tem* Somalia's President, the Somali National Alliance (SNA), another faction of the USC led by General Farah Aideed, opposed to Mahdi's leadership (Badmus 2015, 143). Even with the UN's recognition of Mohammed Ali Mahdi as the new interim leader of Somalia, both Mogadishu and other parts of the country were ungovernable for him in the face of General Farah Aideed's violent opposition and other forms of dreaded internecine confrontations across different domains in the country. In the midst of this complicated nation-wide chaos and absence of legitimate central authority, the SNM unilaterally declared north-western Somalia as an autonomous entity known as the Republic of Somaliland in May 1991 (Badmus 2015, 144).¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Somaliland has since then remained an autonomous political entity but without the recognition of the UN. Following the same trend, Puntland also seceded from the larger Somalia in 1998 (Fisher 2018, 295).

At this juncture, (Western) international actors under the umbrella of the United Nations (UN) considered external interventions imperative for the restoration of stability in Somalia. In what follows, I discuss how Western actors eventually intervened in the crisis but were resisted by Somali armed local actors.

5.1.2 Interventions and Withdrawal of Western Interveners

As Lemay-Hébert's (2014) account of Haiti has shown, Western interventions could attract resistance from local actors. This turned out to be the case in Somalia in the first half of the 1990s. As pointed out in the preceding section, the situation in Somalia ultimately propelled the interventions of Western interveners. However, it was abruptly terminated based on dreaded resistance from the local armed actors.

From early 1992, the UN activated its commitment on humanitarian grounds to rethink the necessity of intervening in the violent crisis that deeply engulfed the societal fabric of the Somali state. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who was then the UN Secretary-General, despatched a group of UN officials under the leadership of James Jonah in early 1992 to Somalia to mediate ceasefire among the key warring parties (Ohanwe 2009, 156). This mediation effort eventually yielded an expected outcome on 3 March 1992. Both Mahdi and Aideed agreed to a ceasefire and the despatch of a UN peace mission to Somalia to monitor the process.¹⁰² On this basis, in its Resolution 751 on 24 April 1992, the UN, through its Security Council, created the United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) mainly to monitor the cessation of hostilities in the country and for ensuring delivery of humanitarian and relief materials to people across different distributive centres. However, the interplay between local and international realities prevented the UNOSOM from effectively accomplishing its cardinal goal of creating needed stability and ensuring prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance to starving Somali people. This became the case as Aideed, and his local militias became hostile to the overall UN activities in Somalia. They considered the UN as a partisan actor in favour of Mahdi in the whole peace process.

Informed by the uncondusive environment for the UNOSOM to carry out its mandate, the UN Security Council, in its Resolution 974 on 3 December 1992, authorised the UN Secretary-General to establish an operation that would “use all necessary means to establish... a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia”.¹⁰³

¹⁰² As time passed by, however, Aideed and his group pulled out of such an agreement due to the alleged UN's impartial disposition.

¹⁰³ See United Nations Security Council (1992), Resolution 794 (S/RES/794), paragraphs 8 and 10.

The Secretary-General's subsequent response to this authorisation led to the establishment of the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) (otherwise known as Operation Restore Hope) on 8 December 1992 (Thakur 1994, 395). However, while the UNITAF was a UN authorised mission with about 38,000 troops contributed by 24 states, the operation was led and operationalised under the command of the United States (US). The leading role of the US, in this case, showed the extent to which the intervention was Western. Putting into consideration the strength of the Mission, its combat mandate and the sophisticated weapons deployed, it was not a surprise, therefore, that the operation initially succeeded in dislodging Somali warlords and in making humanitarian aid available for Somalis across different centres in the country where famine had become the norm for 'everyday' experience (Norris and Bruton 2011, 7).

After famine has abated in the country, a disagreement emerged between the UN Secretariat and US government over the next line of action for the UNITAF. The key issue in this regard centred on whether UNITAF should incorporate the non-discriminable disarmament of Somali warlords and clan-based militias into its interventionist agenda in Somalia. While Boutros-Ghali and the UN Secretariat, on the one hand, were keen on the need to orchestrate a comprehensive disarmament programme in the country, the US, which was in control of the UNITAF, on the other hand, was not interested in such a project (Ohanwe 2009, 165). As the mandate of the UNITAF was about to expire, the UN Security Council authorised in its Resolution 814 on 26 March 1993 the transition from UNITAF to a more robust UNOSOM II. Apart from expanding its mission size, the mandate of the UNOSOM II, which by nature a purely UN-led mission, was expanded beyond just securing the environment for the delivery of humanitarian aid to include the disarmament of local militias across Somali territorial space. In the sphere of state/peacebuilding, the same Resolution 814 authorises the UN's provision of "assistance to the people of Somalia in rehabilitating their political institutions and economy and promoting political settlement and national reconciliation".¹⁰⁴ The attempt to implement the mandate as set out by the UN Security Council prompted the UNOSOM II to focus on *coercive* disarming and disempowering of armed militias since it was not in the interest of the militias to surrender their weapons. This invariably created a new dimension of suspicion, enmity and confrontations between the UNOSOM II forces and local militias in Mogadishu, particularly those loyal to Aideed.

¹⁰⁴ See United Nations Security Council (1993), Resolution 814 (S/RES/814), paragraph 4.

In June 1993, the resistance against this peacebuilding methodology by local militias loyal to Aideed led to the killing of 24 Pakistani who were part of the UNOSOM II peacekeepers (Badmus 2015, 146). By this singular development, the attention of the UNOSOM II peacekeepers was reconfigured to the issue of punishing those responsible for the incident, particularly Aideed as the USC/SNA commander. The UN Security Council, in its Resolution 837 on 6 June 1993, authorised the Secretary-General to “to take all necessary measures to against all those responsible for the armed attacks”.¹⁰⁵ As all efforts, in accordance with this directive, were concentrated on the plan to arrest, prosecute and punish Aideed, his loyalist armed militias once again engaged the UNOSOM II peacekeeping forces in which they humiliated, desecrated and killed 18 US soldiers in Mogadishu on 3 October 1993.¹⁰⁶ This resulted in the disinterest of the US public and government in the continuity of their intervention in Somalia and the recognition by the UN of the complexity of intervening in Somalia’s crisis. Accordingly, the UNOSOM II forces were abruptly withdrawn from Somalia in March 1995. In the following section, I explore how this withdrawal paved the way for African intervention in Somalia, and the peace framework African regional actors sought to rely on in this process.

5.2 African Intervention in Somalia: An Undertaking of Liberal Peace Ordering

The withdrawal of Western forces from Somalia in 1995 resulted in two consequential outcomes. First, the withdrawal allowed Somali people within a period to attempt finding solutions to their own problems. In this case, different armed groups and their respective warlords struggled for power to determine the constitutive character of socio-political orders in Somalia. During this period of absence of a central political authority, Aideed – who was then the leading protagonist against Western forces – was killed in 1996. Second, it allowed African actors to activate their agency as leading interveners in the overall process designed to restore stability in Somalia.

In this section, I argue that the type of order which African interveners seek to create in Somalia is based on the prescriptions of the prevailing liberal peace project. To make my analysis salient and intelligible in this respect, I divide this section into three subsections. In the first subsection, I discuss the deployment of AMISOM, and I show that it was an intervention designed by African regional actors to consolidate the

¹⁰⁵ See United Nations Security Council (1993), Resolution 837 (S/RES/837), paragraph 5

¹⁰⁶ It is worth noting as well that Hundreds of Somalis were equally killed in the violent encounter.

dislodgement of a perceived ‘non-liberal’ order¹⁰⁷ in Somalia’s polity. In the second and third subsections, I demonstrate how ‘(re)building security institutions’ and ‘facilitating democracy’ constitute two cardinal approaches employed by African regional actors in their peace intervention in Somalia. I argue, across these two subsections, that each of these approaches is a constitutive element of the Western liberal (peace) project. It, therefore, demonstrates African interveners’ practical reliance on the prevailing hegemonic assumption that “liberalisation... will facilitate positive peace” (Taylor 2010, 158). Following Fisher (2018, 289), while I acknowledge the involvement of a few Western actors in Somalia’s state/peacebuilding processes, my analysis focuses mainly on the undertakings of African regional actors, particularly through the AU and AMISOM mechanisms.

5.2.1 AMISOM: Consolidating the Dislodgement of ‘Non-liberal’ Orders

As I already pointed out, the departure of Western actors in 1995 paved the way for African actors to assume a leading role in the peace-making process in Somalia. The initial actors that filled the vacuum were Somalia’s immediate neighbouring states – Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya – particularly under the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD).¹⁰⁸ In September 1999, the then President of Djibouti, Ismail Omar Guelleh, commenced a peace process that involved the delegates of some warring Somali factions. Even though the initiative was mainly from President Guelleh, IGAD officially expressed its endorsement for the move (Cornwell 2004).

After some level of preparation, the main decision-making peace conferences took place in Arta, Djibouti, in May and June 2000. The outcomes were codified as a Transitional National Charter (TNC). With the support of some African and Arab states, the provisions codified in the TNC culminated in establishing a Transnational National Government (TNG) that was constituted to administer the country for three years before *elections* would be organised. On 26 October 2000, Abdikassim Salad Hassan emerged as the TNG’s President (Cornwell 2004, 6). However, the hope attributed to the TNC or Arta agreement (as it is usually called) to serve as a viable framework for establishing sustainable peace in Somalia shortly evanesced as a group of factions refused to accord any legitimacy to the TNG-led government and to this purpose

¹⁰⁷ Here, I am referring to the type of order created by Islamic Courts Union (ICU) that is different from a classic liberal order.

¹⁰⁸ IGAD is a Regional Economic Community (REC) for Eastern African countries with eight countries – Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda – as its Member States.

formed the Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SSRC). The SSRC as 'anti-Arta process alliance' received the support of Ethiopia (Murithi 2009, 146).

The unsurmountable challenges that confronted the survival of the TNG prompted the IGAD to coordinate another round of peace negotiation process which led to the National Reconciliation Conference that took place in Eldoret, Kenya in October 2002. A subsequent IGAD's meeting on the same subject in Nairobi, Kenya, led to the agreement to create Somalia's Transitional Federal Institutions/Government (TFIs/TFG). The framework establishing the TFG known as the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC) was officially agreed on in February 2004 and by 14 October 2004, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, had emerged as the President of the TFG (Murithi T. , 2009, p. 147). Informed by the complex insecurity realities that pervaded Mogadishu, the TFG never carried out any administrative function from Somalia's capital. It commenced its administration of Somalia from neighbouring Kenya and later relocated to Jowhar (a city in Somalia) in June 2005 and subsequently relocated to Baidoa in early 2006 (Badmus 2015, 148). However, the Yusuf-led TFG was never accorded any form of broad legitimacy by the Somali people. It was mainly regarded a puppet of the Ethiopian government, a neighbouring country that is not in a good record of many citizens of Somalia (Dersso 2009). At the same time, the leadership structure of the TFG was also faced with deep and irreconcilable divisions between the 'Mogadishu group' and 'Yusuf Wing' on critical issues of 'whether to invite foreign peacekeepers' and 'whether to permanently relocate the seat of Somalia's government out of Mogadishu' (Menkhaus, 2007, pp. 360-362).

In this context of TFG's dysfunctionality, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) emerged as a dominant operating force in Somalia's Mogadishu in 2006 (Norris and Bruton 2011, 8). In the account of Dersso (2009, 13), the ICU at this point received local legitimacy and became a "strong actor to be reckoned with" in Somalia's strategic politics. Even though it was in 2006 that the ICU gained its ascendancy and attained its due recognition in the political and military analysis in Somalia, the structure of the Islamic court system that produced the ICU has been in existence since the mid-1990s (Barnes and Hassan 2007). In this case, the ICU turned out to be a complete destabilising force against the survival of the TFG and the expectations of liberal-minded regional interveners. Through its Islamist militias, ICU overpowered and defeated the US-sponsored Alliance for Restoration of Peace and Counterterrorism (ARPCT) in June 2006, which paved the way for the Union to take over the administration of the entire Mogadishu and some parts of South-central Somalia.

Within a short period of seven months, it was reported that the ICU brought a resemblance of order to Mogadishu and some parts of south-central Somalia (Menkhaus 2009, 225) as some scholars described it as a 'Golden Age' in Somalia's polity (Barnes and Hassan 2007, 154, 157). By its very attribute, ICU constitutes an alternative form of political authority that provides domestic orders outside the prescription of the liberal framework (Fisher 2018, 293).

Jabri (2010, 42) argues that an integral element of liberal intervention is its dispossession of local agency on what should constitute political identity. This alternative "version of political authority that has credibly claimed control of south/central Somalia since 1991" was characterised as unacceptable by the weak TFG and African regional actors (Fisher 2018, 303-304). As a result of this, TFG requested the assistance of the Ethiopian government and Addis Ababa positively responded by deploying its troops to Somalia in August 2006. Precisely by 28 December 2006, Ethiopian troops (with the support of the US) had assisted the TFG forces to defeat the rising ICU, and the TFG's seat of power was immediately moved from Baidoa to Mogadishu (P. D. Williams 2009, Barnes and Hassan 2007). However, even with the displacement of the ICU, complex local realities remained unchanged. First, the defeat of the ICU militias during this period was neither the same as the end of the armed group nor the end of the crisis rocking Somalia's territorial space. As noted by Dersso (2009, 14), ICU militias "were not totally crushed". In this case, the extremist members of the ICU – now commonly referred to as Al-Shabaab – refused to renege in their combative commitment to oust the TFG from Mogadishu (Jeng 2012, 261). Second, it became evident that the TFG would only continue to administer Somalia from Mogadishu for only the period that Ethiopian troops were ready to stay in the country. But because the Ethiopian government was not ready for its forces to stay longer in Somalia, these two developments generated a rethinking on the part of African leaders on the need for a new synergy for peace that will prevent the obstruction of the remnants of ICU adherents.

It was in this process that African regional actors found the agency of the AU to be useful. Although as far back as 25 October 2004, the President of Somalia's TFG, Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, has officially appealed to the AU for its intervention in Somalia (AU PSC 2005). In his recommendation on this subject matter on 5 January 2005, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, proposed that the PSC should support the despatch of 'an AU Peace Support Mission' to the country (AU PSC 2005, 6) to protect the Somali TFIs and support the transitional programmes of

the TFG. In the communiqué of its 22nd meeting, the AU PSC accepted the recommendation of deploying a peace-making mission to Somalia only *in principle* (AU PSC 2005b). However, notwithstanding this acceptance in principle, there was no immediate action on the AU part in this regard. An important point is worth emphasising at this juncture is that both the AU and IGAD accorded legitimacy and support to the Abdullahi-led TFG, even without a similar legitimacy and acceptance on the home front, particularly across different cities of Somalia.

While this process was going on, the leaders of the IGAD equally agreed during their meeting on Somalia on 31 January 2005 to deploy a Peace Mission in Somalia that will provide a secure environment for the relocation of the TFG's seat to Somalia and to "guarantee the sustenance of the outcome of the IGAD Peace process, and assist with the re-establishment of peace and security, including training of the Police and the Army" (IGAD 2005). To underscore the existence of the principles of subsidiary and complementarity in the interactions between the AU and IGAD in this process, the AU PSC at its 24th meeting on 7 February 2006 supported the appropriateness of the move and thereby authorised the IGAD to deploy what is known as IGAD Peace Support Mission in Somalia (IGASOM) (AU PSC 2005c). The intending mandate of the IGASOM, which was made explicit in the AU PSC on 12 May 2005, includes the relocation and protection of the TFIs, re-creating and training national Somali security forces and disarmament programme for local militias. It was envisaged that an AU Mission would take over from IGASOM after the first nine months. Nevertheless, despite the unambiguous decision of the IGAD to deploy IGASOM for Somalia's stabilisation project and the corresponding AU's authorisation, the sub-regional organisation did not implement this peace-making interventionist project as planned. Murithi (2012, 100) correctly attests to this development in his assertion that "IGAD... was never deployed to Somalia". While commenting, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, noted on 19 January 2007 that "[t]he deployment of a peace support operation in Somalia has been on the agenda of IGAD... since 2005. While a few decisions have been taken in this respect, their implementation has unfortunately proved to be difficult" (AU PSC 2007a).

The necessity to cement the dislodgment of the ICU in the eventual withdrawal of Ethiopian forces by supporting the TFG (for a stable Somalia) gained prominence in early 2007 within the African security regionalism. On 19 January 2007, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, submitted a report on the situation in Somalia to the AU PSC, which also contained the findings of the AU

technical evaluation mission that was despatched to Somalia between 13 and 15 January 2007. In the report, Alpha Oumar Konaré appealed to the AU PSC to authorise the establishment of an AU peace support operation in Somalia as such a move would provide *sui generis* “opportunity to re-establish the structures of governance and further peace and reconciliation in Somalia” (AU PSC 2007a). In justifying the intervention, Alpha Oumar Konaré notes that:

Given the inadequate and ill-equipped security forces of the TFG, the potential for resurgence of a major conflict, should the Ethiopian forces withdraw without the deployment of a peace support operation, is assessed to be very high (AU PSC 2007a).

While making a decision on the report, the AU PSC, at its meeting on 19 January 2007, authorised the creation and deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for a period of six months ‘with 9 infantry battalions of 850 personnel each’.¹⁰⁹ The focal mandate assigned to AMISOM by the PSC as spelt out in the communiqué issued at the end of the meeting is: “(i) to provide support to the TFIs [Transitional Federal Institutions] in their efforts towards the stabilization of the situation in the country and the furtherance of dialogue and reconciliation, (ii) to facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance, and (iii) to create conducive conditions for long-term stabilization, reconstruction and development in Somalia” (AU PSC 2007b). The communiqué further sets out some specific tasks for the Mission. These include the provision of support for dialogue and reconciliation; protection of the TFIs [Transitional Federal Institutions]; facilitation of disarmament and stabilisation; and assisting the recreation and training of Somalia’s security forces (AU PSC 2007b). As a result of this authorisation, African regional actors through the AU operationalised and deployed AMISOM to Somalia in March 2007 (P. D. Williams 2016, 40).¹¹⁰ By and large, African intervention during this period was more of an effort to prevent the reversal of the task already started by the Ethiopian government to

¹⁰⁹ The duration for this mission has regularly been extended till the time of writing this thesis.

¹¹⁰ Even though about five African countries promised troop contribution during the planning phase of the mission (Hull and Svensson 2008), the implementation of the AMISOM’s agenda started with 1700 troops that were solely contributed by Uganda. From 1,700 troops in March 2007, however, the personnel strength of AMISOM has subsequently been strengthened with additional troops contribution from other African countries. Other countries that have joined AMISOM Troop Contributing Countries (TCC) are “Burundi (2007), Djibouti (2011), Kenya (2012), Sierra Leone (2013) and Ethiopia (2014)” (P. D. Williams 2018a, 172). As of January 2014, the strength of AMISOM military and police personnel, including Ethiopia’s forces in Somalia, had moved to 22, 126 (Wondemagegnehu and Kebede 2017, 204). According to the Chairperson of the AU Commission, the police component of AMISOM already had “2 Formed Police Units and 76 police officers” as at 2013 (AU PSC 2013b, 20). Even though AMISOM was originally planned to stay for six (6) months in Somalia before an UN-led mission would take over, the Mission is yet to find a workable exit strategy from Somalia at the time of writing.

dismantle non-liberal locally-evolving political orders and install an externally designed liberal order (P. D. Williams 2009).¹¹¹ Williams (2009:526-7) submits in this regard that:

In terms of the international politics surrounding AMISOM's creation, the AU's policy was widely seen as primarily serving Ethiopia's interests rather than the needs of the local population, who had experienced nearly two decades of conflict (P. D. Williams 2009, 526-7).

Beyond assisting dislodgment of a perceived non-liberal alternative authority, in the subsection below, I look at how the epistemological approaches deployed by African actors in their intervention in Somalia heavily relied on the assumptions of the liberal ideology.

5.2.2 *AMISOM: Building Security Institutions for Somalia*

While narrating the basic attributes of liberal intervention, Duffield (2001, 11) argues that it is a distinct “political project” with a transformative agenda that emphasises activities such as security sector reforms. This is particularly because, for Duffield (2001, 258), liberal governance intervention “has a radical mission to transform societies”. Rendering a similar account as a way of unravelling dimensions of liberal state/peacebuilding intervention, Visoka (2016, 21) maintains that one of the key elements of liberal peacebuilding involves “reforming the security sector”. This is because proponents of liberal normative governance consider credible, effective, and strong national security apparatuses as a key basis for defending domestic liberal order. Jackson (2011, 1809-10) finds this statebuilding approach as the core policy choice for Western actors within the broad framework of liberal peace. As my findings on African intervention in Somalia reveal, however, this liberal restructuring of security institutions as a frame for post-conflict stability is also applicable in African intervention operations. One of the mechanisms deployed by African actors regarding Somalia was a conscious rebuilding of the country's national security architecture for sustainable stability (Wondemagegnehu and Kebede 2017, 208-214). As Duffield, Visoka, and Jackson have aptly pointed out, this approach, as employed by African agents, is in no doubt in line with the prescriptions of the dominant Westphalian-liberal ideology. The epistemological thinking of African regional actors in this respect is not far from

¹¹¹ With this in mind, Hirsch (2018, 144) argues that ‘AMISOM was seen by many Somalis as “a tool of Western interests”’.

what Lemay-Hébert (2011) delineates as an 'empty-shell approach'. In what follows in this subsection, I unpack African agency in this respect.

The presence of African regional actors on the ground in Somalia takes the path of advancing state and peace reconstruction amid counterterrorist operations (Fisher 2018). One of the reasons why state formation turned out to be a priority for African interveners is the recognition that unless there was a deliberate attempt to (re)build the Somali state, the essence of their intervention will amount to nothing by the time AMISOM is withdrawn from the country. In this context, one of the approaches of the AU, and by extension African actors, as regarding Somalia, is (re)building of national security institutions. This development spurs the argument put forward by Fisher (2018, 301) that "At the heart of the Somali state envisaged by AMISOM has been the army and security services convened, assembled and trained by regional forces". On their part, Williams et al. (2018, 94) argue that at the heart of AMISOM's mandate in Somalia is to "help build the country's state security institutions". Notwithstanding adjustments that have been injected into the mandate of AMISOM over the years, the prioritisation of building formidable national security institutions for Somalia found its continued relevance. While defining the mandate of AMISOM in 2007, AU PSC agreed that AMISOM would assist in "the effective reestablishment and training of all-inclusive Somali security forces" (AU PSC 2007b). When the AMISOM mandates was revised in 2013, AU PSC re-emphasised this task when it notes that AMISOM shall:

provide, within its capabilities and as appropriate, technical and other support for the enhancement of the capacity of the Somalia State institutions, particularly the National Defence, Public Safety and Public Service Institutions (AU PSC 2013c).

Since 2007 when AMISOM was launched, African interveners made deliberate attempts through AMISOM to empirically carry out the reconstruction of Somalia's security architecture as a pathway for forging peace. The first security institution that received the attention of African actors is the Somali National Army (SNA).¹¹² African actors adopted three main approaches to rebuild the SNA as their integral liberal strategy for Somalia.

¹¹² The need to rebuild the SNA could be dated back to the 2004 peace agreement that was brokered by African actors under the IGAD (Wondemagegnehu and Kebede 2017, 208). The necessity for SNA was subsequently emphasised in the Somali National Security and Stabilisation Plan (NSSP) which turned out to be the key guiding state/peacebuilding policy framework of the TFG in 2006 (P. D. Williams 2020, 4). By 2008, what constituted the SNA is the merger of the remnants from Barre's army, militias from the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS)-Djibouti faction, militias from the ICU, and armed groups loyal to the TFG (Wondemagegnehu & Kebede, 2017, p. 208; Williams P. D., 2019, p. 5).

The first in this category is the coordination of the recruitment process into the SNA. At the consultative meetings of the AMISOM Troops Contributing Countries (TCCs), which the AU Commission organised in November and December 2009, there was an agreement on “the need to give... impetus to the recruitment and training” of the SNA (AU PSC 2010a). In early 2009, AMISOM coordinated the issuing of identification cards to forces that were to be integrated into the SNA, which was then delineated as the Joint Security Force (JSF) (P. D. Williams 2020). During this process, both the TFG and ARS were mandated to forward the names of their respective soldiers to AMISOM for identification purposes and for them to be integrated into a vetted Somalia’s military structure. By July 2009, about 800 identity cards had been issued by AMISOM (P. D. Williams 2020, 5). Because of the priority attributed to this line of engagement, by October 2010, AMISOM had “conducted induction and reintegration courses for 3,000 recruits” that were meant to be added to the newly reformed SNA (AU PSC 2010b). This recruitment and re-integration programme of AMISOM is also directed at Somalis that passed through the military training of the European Union (EU) Training Mission (EUTM) which was launched on 7 April 2010. However, unlike the EUTM situated in Bihanga, Uganda, AMISOM’s training and reintegration programme were carried out in the Gezira training camp in Mogadishu, Somalia (AU PSC 2011).

In furtherance of African commitment to strategic recruitment for the enlargement of the SNA, the AU Commission convoked some workshops before the end of 2012, centred on ‘Somalia Security Sector Empowerment’ (AU PSC 2013). One of the cardinal outcomes of these workshops was the development of a conceptual framework for the effective integration of domestic allied forces into the SNA. The ‘recruitment’ conceptual framework that turned out to be the upshot of these workshops was forwarded to the Somali government for review and endorsement (AU PSC 2013). By and large, the intervention of African interveners, through the AU and AMISOM in collaboration with international partners, contributed to the significant expansion of the size and numerical strength of the SNA. To this end, the size of the SNA jumped from around 6,400 in November 2009 to about 24,820 in May 2017 (P. D. Williams 2020, 6).

The second mechanism employed by AMISOM in achieving its assigned mandate of rebuilding the SNA is incentivisation. This method involves regular payment of monthly stipend to young Somalis or ex-clan-based militias who are already integrated into the SNA. As of October 2010, AMISOM was paying a monthly stipend for 3,274 officers

of the Somali National Security Forces (SNSF) (AU PSC 2010b). The funding sources for this project are mainly from bilateral international partners that support African peace intervention in Somalia. Based on my findings, two of these international partners are the Italian and Sweden governments. The cardinal aim of this incentivising strategy lies in the effort of African regional actors to sustain the steady expansion of the SNA by preventing or reducing acts of defection. The effectiveness of this technique was revealed by the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Jean Ping, in October 2010. In his words, “the payment of stipends to the Somali Security Forces... has contributed enormously to the overall sustenance and retention of the force, as shown by the relative reduction in the number of defections” (AU PSC 2010b).

The third approach adopted by AMISOM in reforming the SNA is through the operationalisation of in-service training, mentoring and joint military operations that involve both the AMISOM's forces and SNA (Wondemagegnehu and Kebede 2017, 210). In the realm of in-service training, AMISOM's mentorship programme aimed at enhancing the human resources capacity of the SNA. From a theoretical perspective, the target of AMISOM is to pass relevant knowledge across to the SNA as a way of empowering them. In this context, from 29 to 31 October 2012, AMISOM organised a workshop on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in Djibouti for 41 officers from the SNSF (AU PSC 2013). The workshop was designed to theoretically equip the top SNSF officers on the subject-matters of IHL and human rights as well as their relevance in military operations and influence the behaviour of the entire SNA towards the adherence to these principles in practical operations (AU PSC 2013). How the workshop was programmed to influence the operational activities of the SNA was pointed out by the Chairperson of the AU Commission that:

At the end of the workshop, participants adopted a plan of action, which includes an implementation strategy to ensure compliance, by the SNSF, with IHL. Follow-up activities were also agreed upon, including the conduct of similar training at all appropriate command and staff levels; the conduct of Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops on IHL [International Humanitarian Law]; the development of relevant policy and necessary law reforms; the establishment of an IHL commission; parliamentary ratification of the Additional Protocols of the Geneva Convention and the Convention of the Rights of the Child as committed in its Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Report of 2012; and the strengthening of the rule of law institutions, including the military courts system (AU PSC 2013).

As the content of this statement reveals, the workshop was purposed to mould the behaviour Somali military in a certain way that conforms to the operational standard of the military of a typical liberal state. It was a reformist and transformative exercise devised by African interveners towards the SNA, particularly to raise consciousness around human rights in military operations. In April 2013, within the same context of in-service capacity-building, AMISOM completed training for many junior officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) to handle platoon leadership (AU PSC 2013d). At the sphere of the joint military operation for knowledge transfer, AMISOM embarked on mentoring the NSA's '53rd, 143rd, Eagle, 27th and RECCE battalions' through the instrumentality of 'combat readiness mentoring' and 'co-location' (AU PSC 2019). This pattern of intervention animates the argument by Wondemagegnehu and Kebede (2017, 209) that the development of the SNA is "as an integral part of AMISOM's overall strategy" for Somalia.

Another key liberal security institution that African interventionists seek to revamp as a mechanism for forging peace in Somalia is the Somalia Police Force (SPF). Even though AMISOM's mandate of rebuilding the SPF could be dated back to its emergence in 2007, practical actions by the Mission could not start in this regard until the middle of 2009. At this point, the strength of the Police Component of AMISOM (PC-AMISOM), including officers, trainers, mentors, and advisers, already stood at 95 personnel (AU PSC 2009). The initial tasks carried out by PC-AMISOM from its base in Nairobi include: the creation of a personnel database for SPF; designing of a policy framework that would guide the registration, selection, recruitment and training for SPF; formulation of a training strategy for SPF; and creation of a Police Steering Committee that would guide the interactions between AMISOM and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in this process (AU PSC 2009). Some of the priorities identified by the PC-AMISOM as a roadmap for re-establishing the SPF, as reported by the then Chairperson of the AU Commission, Jean Ping, include: "Initial Basic Constable Training, In-service Training, Officer Cadet Training, Initial Basic and NCO Leadership Training, Senior Commanders Training and Strategic Training" (AU PSC 2010a). By October 2010, the personnel of the PC-AMISOM have been deployed into three different strategic locations: Nairobi (Kenya); Manyani (Kenya) and Mogadishu (Somalia). The Manyani Training Facility in Kenya served as the major centre for carrying out training programmes for selected members of the SPF through the sponsorship of some international partners such as Denmark and Italian Carabinieri. As of October 2010, PC-AMISOM had succeeded in conducting refresher training for 875 officers of SPF, a train-the-trainer programme for other 26 SPF officers

and training on mine protection for a combination of 50 Somali police officers (AU PSC 2010b).

By September 2011, the number of SPF officers trained by the PC-AMISOM on different subject areas had increased significantly. To complement this institutional capacity-building process, PC-AMISOM created “a biometric database unto which bio-data for 4,850 SPF personnel has been captured and uploaded” in the last quarter of 2011 (AU PSC 2011). On physical infrastructure, a preparatory attempt had been completed by the PC-AMISOM as of 2011 to renovate and re-equip the Somali police headquarters and ten (10) other police stations across Mogadishu and environs. During this period, the achievement of AMISOM in this regard was enumerated by Vance Gariba, who was then a Senior Police Advisor to AMISOM Police. According to him, as of 2011,

AMISOM has provided refresher courses to over 2 000 Somali police, and has trained 500 new recruits in Djibouti and 200 junior and middle-level managers in Kenya, while mentoring and advising at the airport police station is ongoing, with the reactivation of the I/24/7 communication equipment for the Somali Police Force (Walker and Lisa 2011).

By June 2013, PC-AMISOM had implemented this infrastructural project by rehabilitating and equipping different police stations across Mogadishu with necessary operational equipment such as computers, police registers, furniture, among others (AU PSC 2013d). The training for SPF officers was also intensified by PC-AMISOM both in Djibouti for additional 200 PSF officers and at General Kahiye Police Training Academy in Mogadishu for additional 871 SPF officers (AU PSC 2013d). As these officers are completing their training, they are subsequently deployed to different police stations for operational activities.

To motivate the wholehearted commitment of the SPF personnel, AMISOM devises arrangement for the payment of stipends for members of the SPF every month (AU PSC 2010b). In addition to the above re-organisation interventions, PC-AMISOM launched a mechanism for mentoring by setting up “a Joint Police Operations and Coordination Centre (JPOCC), to effectively co-locate AMISOM police and the SPF” (AU PSC 2013d). This invariably created a structural modality that allows PC-AMISOM to mentor the SPF across its leadership hierarchy. The summary of what AMISOM has done concerning the capacity-building and reorganisation of Somalia’s policing

architecture was articulated by the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, in October 2019. According to him:

AMISOM mentored 3,251 Somali Police personnel deployed in 31 operational Police stations in Somalia on various policing themes and provided operational support to enhance the delivery of professional, responsive and robust policing services across Somalia. Similarly, and in line with the STP [Somali Transition Plan], AMISOM provided capacity building support to the SPF through the conduct of refresher and specialized training, including Community Policing and Human Rights, Community Policing and De-radicalization, and Training of Trainers (TOT) to enhance policing skills (AU PSC 2019).

5.2.3 AMISOM: Promoting Democracy in Somalia

As I discussed in Chapter Two, one of the key indicators for measuring a liberal peace intervention lies in the question of whether the interveners are interested in promoting multi-party democracy or not.¹¹³ Paris (1997, p. 56) argues expressly in this respect that the fundamental canon of liberal state/peacebuilding intervention “is the assumption that the surest foundation for peace... is market democracy”. Promoting democracy for peace and stability constitutes the second major approach employed by African regional interveners in their intervention in Somalia. In this case, when it comes to the question of which political model is needed to rescue Somalia from further sliding into more complex violence, the response from African interveners is *democracy*. Its valorisation within the context of classic liberalism permeates the collective African policy-decisions on Somalia and their empirical undertakings in the country for the last few years. This consensus on democracy as a therapy for Somalia’s crisis gained more prominence as African interveners expand their peace activities on the ground. It propels the contention by Farah and Toure (2017, 186) that “One of the constant factors in search of political stability in Somalia has been the thought that Western-style democracy could be a panacea to the decades of state decay in Somalia”. In what follows in this subsection, I show ‘how’ African interveners, in the course of their intervention, channelled their efforts to promoting what Farah and Toure (2017, 186) delineate as ‘Western-style democracy’ in Somalia.

¹¹³ The type of democracy referring to here is the one that prioritises periodic elections for political governance.

When AMISOM was deployed in 2007, the task of creating 'a democratic Somalia' was not explicitly stated in the mandate of the Mission. Although, as I previously argued in this chapter, the broad agenda of consolidating the dislodgement of an alternative non-liberal form of political authority was evident. But as African actors were getting more involved in peace operation in the country, they articulated the imperativeness of deepening democratic culture and process as a cardinal means of bringing about stability in Somalia. When the mandate of AMISOM was revised in 2013, AU PSC makes democracy promotion an integral component of AMISOM's task. Accordingly, AMISOM was mandated to "support the FGS [Federal Government of Somalia] in establishing the required institutions and conducive conditions for the conduct of free, fair and transparent elections by 2016" (AU PSC 2013c). When the AU PSC reviewed the mandate again in May 2019, the same goal was further set for the mission. In this case, it is rephrased that AMISOM will "provide technical support to the FGS and FMS [Federal Member States], including through the National Interim Electoral Commission, in ensuring effective planning, conduct and security for the 2020/2021 elections" (AU PSC 2019c).

As informed by the intertwined connection between mandate and undertaking in a given state/peacebuilding intervention, the operational activity of AMISOM was repositioned mainly from 2013 to foreground the deliberate advancement of electioneering processes. In addition to this repositioning of AMISOM's operational activity, AU Commission also activated its institutional agency in making democratic electoral exercise successful in Somalia. This started explicitly in the context of the 2016/2017 Somalia's elections. To create an inter-departmental synergy in a way that involves collaboration between the AU Commission and AMISOM on the promotion of the 2016/2017 electioneering process in Somalia, AU Commission despatched a delegation to Somalia in July 2016 to carry out a pre-election assessment for the purpose of identifying specific areas that assistance is mostly needed for the success of the elections. This delegation, led by Olabisi Dare, interacted with key local political elites that were directly involved in the conduct of the 2016/2017 Somali elections and some officials of the UN in Somalia. The expectations that African actors attributed to periodic democratic elections as a fundamental pathway for building peace in Somalia were categorically echoed in the official statement that AMISOM released in this respect. According to the press release, "[t]he team's visit underlines the African Union commitment to ensuring the smooth running of parliamentary and presidential polls in Somalia, which are an important step for the establishment of credible governance structures in the country" (AMISOM 2016a). As the team leader, Olabisi Dare, further

reinforces the resolute commitment of the AU towards the entrenchment of democracy in Somalia's political space. In his words, "[t]he African Union Commission made a decision to support the electoral process here in Somalia and we are here to establish the facts that will inspire [and] guide that support, not just for these elections but also for the future of governance in Somalia" (AMISOM 2016a).

The AU headquarters subsequently intensified its actions in this regard. After the consideration of the report of this pre-election assessment, the AU PSC at its meeting on 6 September 2016, "requests the AU Commission to expedite the deployment of technical experts, as well as provide other relevant forms of support to AMISOM" to strengthen the capacity of the mission in relation to its role in Somalia's 2016 elections (AU PSC 2016b). In September 2016, AU Commission deployed a short-term team of electoral experts to Somalia to provide necessary advisory and technical support for AMISOM and its Political Unit in ensuring the success of the 2016 Somali elections. It was equally designed that such a short-term deployment would empower the capacity of AMISOM to engage a combination of local, national, regional, and international actors towards the success of the elections (AMISOM 2016b).

In carrying out its mandate of promoting the 2016/2017 electioneering process in Somalia, AMISOM opted for and adopted two major methods. The first method in this regard centred on the provision of a conducive, safe and secured environment for the conduct of 2016 election-related activities.¹¹⁴ Between October and November 2016, for instance, the Police Component of AMISOM "trained a total of 227 Galmudug State police officers on electoral-related security issues" to make the environment secured for elections (AMISOM Police 2016b). For obvious reasons, it was not in the interest of the members of al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups for the elections to take place in any part of Somalia. To this end, their ready intention to disrupt such a democratic process in 2016 was easily predictable (Menkhaus 2017, 139). However, with the intense efforts and pragmatic strategies devised by AMISOM, the 2016/2017 Somalia's elections were conducted across different capitals of Somalia's federal member states through electoral colleges without a major violent obstruction (Menkhaus 2017, 139, 140). In collaboration with Somali national forces, AMISOM provided a coordinated tight security environment that made the success of Somalia's 2016 election a reality. In this case, AMISOM deployed its forces to different host regional capitals where elections were held in late 2016 and at the same time applied

¹¹⁴ AUO#20 (Appendix 1).

a similar approach to ensure the success of the 2017 elections of Somalia's federal parliamentary leadership and President (AU PSC 2017c).

The second methodological strategy of AMISOM was political engagement with different local actors while collaborating and partnering with other international actors in Somalia.¹¹⁵ The underlying basis for deploying this mechanism lies in recognising that political engagement is central for providing necessary electoral guidance and preventing and resolving electoral disputes and concerns. The set of local and national stakeholders whom AMISOM engaged in this process was enumerated in a report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on 16 January 2017. According to the report, the local stakeholders that AMISOM engaged include "the Federal Government, the Somalia National Leadership Forum, the Federal Indirect Electoral Implementation Team, the state-level indirect electoral implementation team, [and] the independent electoral dispute resolution mechanism" (AU PSC 2017c). Through this interventional exercise, AMISOM animated its advocacy agency that helped in sensitising and mobilising local Somali people during the electoral process. At the same time, this engagement allowed the mission to proactively respond to different issues that arose in the 2016 elections.

Just like the way African actors collectively operated through the mechanisms of the AU and AMISOM in facilitating the 2016/2017 Somalia's electoral process, they equally commenced another round of strategic support aiming at facilitating the smooth conduct of the 2020/2021 Somalia's elections. This time, they expected that the elections would move from voting through delegates or electoral colleges to direct universal suffrage where *every* Somali within the territorial space controlled by FGS would be directly involved in the elections of their leaders, both at the state and federal levels. It is with the supposition that such an experiment of 'one person, one vote' would restore the country as a 'full' democratic state.

The process of developing the electoral law that would guide the 2020 general elections was completed with President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmaajo signing the Somalia's Federal Electoral Law into law on 20 February 2020 (African Union 2020b). More than 80 political parties had registered for this exercise (NIEC 2020). This 'one person, one vote' multiparty electoral exercise, however, encountered some preparatory difficulties.¹¹⁶ In this respect, African actors through the AU consider

¹¹⁵ AUO#20 (Appendix 1).

¹¹⁶ For instance, the Chairperson of the Somalia's National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC), Halima Ismail, told the Somali lawmakers on 27 June 2020 that the November 2020 elections would have

adequate preparation as an important determinant for any electoral process that would accomplish its overarching aim. Within the context of this thinking, the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) of the AU Commission worked directly with AMISOM through the instrumentality of capacity-building initiatives in getting relevant Somalia's stakeholders empowered and prepared for the 2020/2021 elections, both at the state and federal levels.

From 17 to 21 June 2019, AU's DPA and AMISOM jointly convened a capacity-building workshop in Kampala, Uganda, that involved members of Somalia's National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) as well as other relevant Somalia's election stakeholders (AU PSC 2019, 2). The workshop was specifically designed to quip and guide Somalia's election stakeholders, particularly the NIEC and security agencies, on how to effectively plan and implement mechanisms for ensuring adequate security and dispute resolution during the electoral process in a way that would respond to people's security and concerns from the period of creation of election centres to voter registration to the announcement of election results (African Union 2019). Issues of adequate security and electoral conflict management turned out to be the initial focus for African interveners in their facilitation of the 2020/2021 Somalia's elections. This is informed by their understanding that no electioneering process can succeed where the security intensely fragile and political disputes are not well managed. This is particularly the case as the opposition of a faction of the ICU, known as al-Shabaab, to a liberal democratic order in Somalia is far from over.

Apart from organising capacity-building workshops in preparation for the general elections, AMISOM participated in different public awareness to sensitise and mobilise Somali people for the elections. The Mission, for instance, participated in a public awareness meeting in Mogadishu on 29 November 2019 where its Police Commissioner, Augustine Magnus Kailie, interacted with Somali civil society and provided some ideas on the next phase of Somalia's democratic electoral project (AMISOM 2019). At the same time, AMISOM played a central role in the 'recently' constituted Somalia's National Electoral Security Task Force that involved the joint participation of Somalia's security forces and AMISOM forces. The key point to make in this regard is that while the project of (re)inventing a democratic polity in Somalia attracted the support of actors in the global North, African regional interveners are specifically in the vanguard of this peace project. An excerpt from my interview with

to be proponed until March 2021 if manual registration would be used or until August 2021 if biometric registration would be used due to "significant technical and security challenges" (Guled 2020).

an AU official (who has been working with AMISOM for years) reveals and illuminates how the promotion of democracy and periodic elections is an integral component of African peace strategy in Somalia. In his attempt to narrate the actions of AMISOM on the ground as designed by African actors, the AU official comments:

The AU mission here [i.e., AMISOM] is a peace support operation... We have military component, civilian component, and police component... We first came to Somalia in 2007... Our key roles and functions in Somalia have changed over the years... Right now, as I speak to you, our role in a nutshell is to create peace while degrading Al-Shabab... We also have a civilian component that is also supporting political processes. We run political programmes... For instance, we are going to have elections in the next couple of weeks. One of our key roles is election security... It is specifically part of our mandate to provide election security which means to safeguard the elections... We train them [Somalis] on election technical capacity... The idea was that this year would be Somalia's first one man, one vote since around 1969. In a build up to one person, one vote which is not going to happen for some reasons, we started offering them training on disputes resolution... The African Union's view is that we want to see democratisation [in Somalia]; by that we mean one person, one vote democratic political system.¹¹⁷

In the section below, I explore *why* African regional interveners focus(ed) on inventing a liberal democratic order in Somalia.

5.3 Discussion: Unpacking Underpinnings for African Liberal Intervention in Somalia

In the previous section, I dissect the intervention of African regional actors in Somalia, which started mainly in 2007. As I have discussed it empirically, two major approaches are predominant in the African strategy for state and peace reconstruction in the country. These are a conscious effort at (re)building national security institutions that would defend liberal institutions and order in the country (Fisher 2018, 287) and a deliberate attempt at facilitating the creation of democratic order in Somalia. I have shown how these approaches are not contradicting or deviating from the basic normative assumptions of the prevailing liberal peace framework of

¹¹⁷ AUO#20 (Appendix 1).

state/peacebuilding. Rather, it is evident that African regional presence in Somalia is a quintessence of liberal intervention.

Taylor (2010, 161) has argued that the “[c]ritical analysis of why the sort of policies promoted by the liberal peace – and not others – are readily adopted in post-conflict spaces is generally lacking”. A crucial question that may be of interest at this juncture, which is the central concern of this chapter, is: why did African interveners favourably dispose towards the assumptions of liberal peace in their peace interventions in Somalia? A critical reflection in this regard is useful, in the words of Chandler (2010, p. 13), to grasp “the logic and the political context which makes [liberal] international statebuilding appear to be rational and legitimate” for African practitioners. As I pointed out in Chapter Two of this thesis, a central argument in the mainstream critical scholarship on international intervention is that Western actors are favourably disposed to such practices (i.e., liberal state/peacebuilding) because they intend to perpetuate neo-imperialism in the global South (see, for instance, Duffield, 2001, p. 11; Chandler, 2010, pp. 24, 25; Robinson, 1996, pp. 6, 7; Pugh, 2006, p. 271; Dillon & Reid, 2000, p. 119). On the contrary, an interest in advancing Western neo-imperialism was not the driving force that propelled the commitment of African regional interveners to the project of liberal peace in their attempt to forge peace and stability in conflict-affected Somalia.

With the inadequacy of the Western neo-imperialist framework, one may need to consider the utility of nationalism as a causal factor of African liberal intervention in Somalia. Such a consideration is related to the longstanding nationalist rivalries between Somalia and its immediate neighbouring countries of Ethiopia and Kenya, and how both countries were committed to preventing any nationalist-oriented political authority in Somalia, which the ICU seemed to represent. However, while this nationalist explanatory standpoint may be appropriate and sufficient for dissecting the reactions of Somalia’s immediate neighbours to its internal affairs, the same is not the case in this stance when the action that demands explanation involves all African actors at the continental level. Based on my empirical findings, what specifically played out in this case, as I discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis, is the function of the “hegemony of liberal values that reigns in global [modern] politics” (Taylor, 2007, p. 556). Following Augelli and Murphy (1988), in what remains in this section, I draw on neo-Gramscian conceptual tools of hegemony and common sense to make sense of African agency in liberal intervention in Somalia.

5.3.1 Common Sense and African Building of Security Institutions in Somalia

At the heart of the basis why African interveners commit to (re)building security institutions in Somalia is consent to common sense, which Gramsci delineated as representing the engrained, incoherent and prevailing assumptions, beliefs and opinions shared or held by the generality of actors in a given historical period (Mantzari and Georgiou 2019, 73), but which is altogether “a conception of the world mechanically imposed by the external environment, i.e. by one of the many social groups” (Gramsci 1971, 323). African actors at the continental level have consented to the globally prevailing Weberian-liberal thinking that valorises the importance of strong security architecture in the matrix of paraphernalia for fostering domestic stability before they intervened in Somalia. In the process of reinforcing the hegemonic perspective of political polity as historically created by historic bloc, Max Weber (1978, p. 54) has popularly argued that ‘state’ is a “compulsory political organisation... [with] administrative staff [that] successfully upholds the claim to the *monopoly* of the *legitimate* use of physical force in the enforcement of its order”. Within the confines of this (neo-)Weberian liberal institutionalist thinking (Weber 1978, Lemay-Hébert 2009), African regional interventionists share the notion that formidable and assertive security institutions are required for a state to experience orderliness and peace in its polity. In the attempt to recast such an idea as a guiding principle for their intervention engagements, they laced their peace instruments with the notion of the necessity of security sector transformation. A look at their peace formation instruments, as developed before their undertakings in Somalia, is particularly important to underscore their consent to the common sense of a positive relationship between strong national security institutions and peace. In this case, these documents provide insights into the pre-existing conceptual thinking within the African security regionalism on the imperativeness of building strong security institutions in the range of measures that are necessary for establishing viable peace in (post-)conflict contexts.

In 2006, African region actors launched the AU policy on PCRD to provide a policy direction for the AU in its attempts to consolidate peace and address the root causes of conflict in countries that are coming out of violence. Paragraph 25(c) of the Policy explicitly states that an African country emerging from conflict shall “[g]ive priority to the (re)-establishment and strengthening of the capacity of security institutions, including defence, police, correctional services, border controls and customs” (African Union 2006). The same paragraph in sub-sections (i) and (ii) further states that post-conflict countries shall make deliberate attempt to “[p]ursue the transformation of the

organs of state, especially those relating to security and justice” and “[r]estore and strengthen institutions of public law and order, including the establishment of an efficient police force” (African Union 2006). This AU policy document also makes it clear in paragraph 25(d) that as a way of approaching peaceful coexistence and stability in the post-conflict phase, it is crucial for any African country emerging from civil wars to devote significant effort towards the (re)building of the human resource capacity of its security sector (African Union 2006).

As a way of consolidating this taken-for-granted position on the significance of viable national security institutions for stability in a given conflict-affected polity, African leaders through the AU Assembly encouraged the AU Commission in February 2008 to develop a comprehensive AU policy framework on security sector reform (SSR) (AU Assembly 2008). In response to this request, AU Commission developed a distinct AU Policy Framework on SSR (PFSSR), which the AU Assembly adopted in January 2013.¹¹⁸ To showcase an element of consent to common sense in this regard, African leaders expressly acknowledge in the framework that the consensus at the global level on the centrality of SSR to peace consolidation played a contributing role in the designing of the AU PFSSR (African Union Commission 2013b).¹¹⁹ While re-emphasising capacity-building of security institutions as an essential element of lasting peace, African leaders agree in the framework that SSR is an integral “part of a broader democratization... effort” and that “where national authorities lack the capacity for coordination,” AU will “partner with national authorities to facilitate coordination of SSR assistance and to build national capacities for the Member State” (African Union Commission 2013b). The subsequent or corresponding activation of African agency at the realm of conscious (re)building of national apparatus for peace in Somalia cannot be unproblematically isolated from this taken-for-granted stance.

As Gramsci advances, common sense, which is “inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed... is not without consequences” as “it influences moral conduct and the direction of will” (Gramsci 1971, 333). When key decisions were being made on Somalia, this existing taken-for-granted common sense became a reference point

¹¹⁸ A copy of this African Union Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform was accessed on 15/09/2020 at: <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/au-policy-framework-on-security-sector-reform-ae-ssr.pdf>.

¹¹⁹ Some of the policy documents cited in the Framework to reinforce the broader global consensus at the level of the UN on the SSS for peacebuilding include: 21 February 2007 Statement by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2007/3); Report of the Secretary-General (A/62/659-S/2008/39) of 23 January 2008; and Report of Secretary-General (A/63/881-S/2009/304) of 11 June 2009. It is within this context that one of the African scholars I interviewed on 18 May 2020 maintains that “AU, to a large extent, borrowed a lots of ideas and consensus from a very Eurocentric framework that was initially developed by the UN, which was dominated by the global North” (ASA#4).

and, therefore, a silence of alternative perspectives to the top-down building of liberal security institutions. From the outset, there is a consensus amongst the relevant decision-making organs of the AU on the need to strengthen the Somali security institutions to forge and devise peace and stability in Somalia. In the preparatory process that led to the authorisation and deployment of AMISOM, African actors through the AU made a deliberate effort to grasp the fluid and complex situations in Somalia to determine the nature of the AMISOM's mandate in the conflict-ridden country. In this regard, in a press statement on the situation in Somalia on 8 January 2007, the AU PSC agreed to make its final interventionist decisions on Somalia "based on proposals to be submitted by the African Union Commission, [while] working closely with [the] IGAD, the TFG and other stakeholders".¹²⁰ To make a proposal in this realm, AU Commission convoked a consultative meeting on 10 January 2007 that involved representatives from the TFG, IGAD, Ethiopia and Uganda (AU PSC 2007a).

Of course, "the prevailing philosophical and theoretical consensus legitimates some forms of 'theoretical' inquiry and *delegitimizes* others" (Tooze 1990, 273). It was, therefore, concurred at this meeting that an AU mission should be dispatched to Somalia to gather relevant information that would form the basis of the proposal that would be sent for the consideration of the AU PSC on Somalia's case. On this basis, the AU Commission dispatched a Technical Assessment Mission to Somalia from 13 through 15 January 2007 to gather relevant information and identify the fundamental challenging issues confronting the stability of the country, which may demand urgent intervention. Certainly, members of this team are also part of the African epistemic community that already consented to the top-down building of security institutions as a foundation for stability. The report submitted by the Mission, which was communicated by the Chairperson of the AU Commission to the AU PSC on 19 January 2007, revealed the near non-existence of national security forces that could enforce domestic order in Somalia. The key recommendation of the Mission in this regard was the need for the AU 'to assist in the implementation of the NSSP [National Security and Stabilisation Plan], particularly the effective reestablishment and training of all-inclusive Somali security forces" (AU PSC 2007a, 8). As I pointed out earlier in this chapter, the origin of what culminated in the development of Somalia's NSSP in the first place dated back to the 2004 peace agreement that African mediators brokered under the umbrella of IGAD. Informed by its congruence with the existing

¹²⁰ See the Press Statement on the Situation on Somalia as released by the AU Peace and Security Council on 8 January 2007 which was accessed on 23 June 2020 at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/press-statement-situation-somalia>.

common sense around the imperativeness of liberal security institutions, the AU PSC found the recommendation convincing and thereby ingrained the same in the inaugural tasks assigned to AMISOM on 19 January 2007 (AU PSC 2007b).

When the mandate of AMISOM was subsequently subjected to revision by African leaders to determine whether such a task is still relevant to the changing realities in, and needs of, Somalia, the same project of top-down transformation of Somali national security architecture was further established as an integral component of what should be the central focus of African regional interveners in the country. This continuing engraving of 'security institution-building' in the mandate of AMISOM despite a few adjustments is also not unconnected to this prevailing ideological thought at the realm of African security regionalism as Gramsci argues that the prevailing conception of the world constitutes 'material forces' for shaping ways of doing (Gramsci 1971, 165). In late 2012, when the AU wanted to carry out a strategic review of AMISOM, the AU Commission appointed a five-member team to carry out consultation and make strategic recommendations. In its report, the Team made it clear that Somalia's institutional capacity in the security sector remains low and, on this basis, advised that one of the subsequent strategic objectives of AMISOM should still be to 'enhance the capacity of the [Somali] defence and public safety institutions' (AU PSC 2013b, 9). While reviewing and modifying the mandate of AMISOM on 27 February 2013, the AU PSC re-articulates the exigency of building the institutional security framework of Somalia as an approach for foster peace in the country. Accordingly, AU PSC notes that AMISOM would "provide, within its capabilities and as appropriate, technical and other support for the enhancement of the capacity of the Somalia State institutions, particularly the National Defence, Public Safety and Public Service Institutions" (AU PSC 2013c, 3). In the same vein, while reporting the AU-UN joint review of AMISOM to the AU PSC on 27 June 2018, the Chairperson of the AU Commission submitted that "the AMISOM military mandate should include mentoring SNA [Somali National Army]" and that "AMISOM's role in [Somali] police training should continue to be recognized in the mandate by the Council" (AU PSC 2018a).

What created the basis for the above decision outcomes, as I pointed out, is the function of buy-in into the hegemonic thinking by African regional interveners that top-down (re)creation security architecture is central for building durable peace. Like their Western counterparts, African regional interveners rarely view such a state/peacebuilding approach (which reinforces top-down, technocratic and statist approach without a clear recognition of local agency) as problematic. Comments by

some leading African regional interveners are apropos to further underscore this taken-for-granted stance in the thinking about state/peacebuilding within the African regional security space. In May 2013, while attending the 21st Extra-ordinary Summit of the IGAD in Addis Ababa, the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, whose country is the pioneer troop-contributing country to AMISOM, asserts expressly that there is a need for “capacity building for the people of Somalia especially in the area of professionalization of the army as one of the most important pillars of the state”.¹²¹ President Museveni further notes that:

Somalia needs support in strengthening its army for peace and security through training technical staff to handle specialized equipment and recruiting educated young people with the right ideology to build a professional army.¹²²

This remark demonstrates a reflection of the hubris of liberal common sense (but being expressed this time around by an African actor) on how external transformation of security apparatus could create needed domestic order and peace. Another key African regional actor that advances a similar position is the former Chairperson of the AU Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. In her report to the AU PSC in January 2017, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma notes that “the process of transforming and restructuring the [Somali] national police force remains fundamental for the *long-term* stabilization process of Somalia” (my emphasis) (AU PSC 2017c). Hills (2014, 92) notes in this regard that transforming Somalia’s security architecture into the ones that meet liberal international standards is seen by African regional agents as fundamental to fostering peace in Somalia. The articulated stance of these African regional decision-makers on the centrality of liberal security sector transformation for the stability of liberal is not informed by coercive external pressure but rather by strongly held assumption in the context of common sense.

The implication of the re-echoing of this hegemonic line of thought, as applicable in the context of Somalia, is that it reinforces conventional practices while forecloses the possibility of alternative approaches that refuse to situate top-down development of national security institutions as the *most prominent* pathway to durable stability in Somalia. This constitutes the argument of Augelli and Murphy (1988, 18) that because of common sense, “we rarely question why we think and act in a certain way, but, rather regard our ways of thinking and acting as absolutely objective and eternal and,

¹²¹ See New Vision, ‘Professionalise Somali army – Museveni’, 4 May 2013 which was accessed on 23 June 2020 at: <https://www.newvision.co.ug/news/1318635/professionalise-somali-army-museveni>.

¹²² Ibid.

as such, as needing no deep study into their origins or consequences”. While narrating the causal variable of African agency in this regard, after studying the thinking and actions of African actors on the ground in Somalia for years, one of the prominent African scholars I interviewed emphatically notes that:

Africans’ valorisation of Weberian-liberal approaches in their peace undertakings [in Somalia] stems from the state of colonisation of the minds of Africans... The AU [and, by extension, the African regional community] is captured by these [liberal] ideas that are Eurocentric in nature. So, it would take some time for our people to adopt and embrace ideas that are indigenous and home-grown... We need to decolonise the AU from some of these [Western liberal] ideas that have informed its establishment. But that means working with AU personnel [as] they themselves [also] have to be decolonised.¹²³

5.3.2 *Hegemony, Common Sense and African Promotion of Democracy in Somalia*

As noted by Gramsci (1971, 348), “[n]ot just in the fact that... common sense applies the principle of causality, but in the much more limited fact that in a whole range of judgements [...] common sense identifies the exact cause”. This is particularly because common sense constitutes the “structure of everyday thinking” and it shapes the decisions and actions of consented actors (Dodge 2009, 258). The effort of African interveners at promoting democracy in Somalia as a way of creating peace in the country is connected to how African regional agents growingly consent to the hegemony and common sense of (liberal) democracy, which foregrounds democracy as the *only* model of government suitable for devising stability in a given post-conflict environment. In this respect, and as I have discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis, African regional actors unequivocally consent to the prevailing common sense that “[l]iberal democracy is... [the] technical prescription for curing a host of ills, rather than as a political value to be debated” in the process of state/peacebuilding intervention (Bukovansky 2007, 184). They view democracy as a universal, natural and unproblematic political project that is suitable for inventing durable peace and stability across post-conflict societies irrespective of its context.

Before their intervention in Somalia, African leaders – at the continental level within the institutional space of the AU – have been very explicit and unequivocal on (liberal)

¹²³ ASA#4 (Appendix 1).

democracy as the fundamental political system for conflict transformation and peaceful polity.¹²⁴ Although, as Tieku (2017, 128) rightly pointed out, they rarely use the term 'liberal' when discussing democracy. However, they embrace all the trappings and ideals of liberal democracy as panaceas for sustainable peace. In his analysis of the US intervention in Iraq, Dodge (2009, 299) maintains that to investigate the causal influence of the prevailing ideological thinking on a pattern of intervention, 'the dominant ideational influences working on government officials have to be uncovered'. A reliable method to pin down common-sense African regional actors' operation in this realm is to first dissect the key documents which they designed as guiding instruments for peace interventions. As I discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis, African continental actors made it expressly clear in different AU state/peacebuilding instruments that liberal projects such as (re)establishment of democracy, rebuilding of democratic institutions and organisation of periodic elections are foundational and fundamental in forging peace in any post-conflict polity. In Article 14 (1) of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, they state that in a given post-conflict context, the collective of African community "shall assist in the restoration of the rule of law, *establishment and development of democratic institutions and the preparation, organization and supervision of elections*" (my emphasis) (African Union 2002). Also, in paragraph 36 (a) (iii) of the AU PCRD Policy, African leaders state that to build durable peace, each post-conflict African country shall "establish a constitutional, democratic governance that guarantees periodic contestation of for political office, based on the rule of law" (African Union 2006). In these two important documents, African leaders collectively maintain a fixated position on liberal democracy as the only suitable form of government suitable for domestic stability. In this milieu, one of the respondents I interviewed notes that:

To some extent, the debate [over whether to valorise or not to valorise liberal democratic values] among African Heads of State [and Government] has ended. There is a broad consensus that you cannot open that particular debate [again].¹²⁵

Another respondent who is knowledgeable about African institutionalisation of peace intervention buttresses a similar point. She asserts in this regard that:

... the idea that democratic orders are an important building block for peace has been very central from the very beginning of the evolution of the African peace and security architecture. [It is based on the premise] that if you want to build in the long

¹²⁴ ASA#7 (Appendix 1).

¹²⁵ ASA#5 (Appendix 1).

term a stable and sustainable society, that has to go hand in hand with [respect for] human rights, with democratic participation, and with accountability. This is still one of the core assumptions or preconditions that African Union [i.e., African security community] follows.¹²⁶

As Hall (1988, 8) notes, common sense is “simply ‘taken for granted’ in practice and thought, and forms the starting-point (never examined or questioned) from which every conversation begins”. It creates an intellectual atmosphere in which the basic assumptions of the liberal democratic peace taken as natural and, therefore, unproblematised (Taylor, 2007, p. 557). This strongly held assumption about liberal democracy within the African regionalism was brought forward in African decision-making on Somalia. In 2004 when African regional actors brokered the peace talks that resulted in the signing of the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC) of the Somalia Republic, democracy was recognised as the natural political model for advancing peace and stability in Somalia.¹²⁷ This was reinforced by the then Chairperson of the AU Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, in 2005 before AMISOM was authorised. While recommending the creation of AMISOM to support the TFI/TFG in 2005, Alpha Oumar Konaré made it clear that the transition process was expected to end with the establishment of democracy in Somalia. According to his words, “[t]he peace process [which] has now entered into the transition [is] expected to conclude with the holding of national elections” (AU PSC 2005). When the African regional decision-makers designed the mandate of AMISOM in 2007, however, the act of promoting democracy was not included in the mandate of the Mission. This was not without a reason since African regional actors are already cognitively configured at this point to reproduce the hegemony of liberal democratic peace. What happened in this instance was because AMISOM was only designed to stay in Somalia for just six months before a UN mission will take over, and it would be aimless to commit to a democratic project since elections would not take place within this short period.

But by the time AMISOM’s mandate was being reviewed in 2012/2013, AMISOM had already been deployed for about six years and Somalia had already ended its eight years (2004-2012) transition from the TFG to the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), particularly with the clan-based selective appointment of new Members of Parliament (MPs) ¹²⁸ who subsequently chose Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as the new

¹²⁶ ASA#9 (Appendix 1).

¹²⁷ See, for instance, paragraph three (3) of the preamble of the TFC.

¹²⁸ This method of appointing MPs is based on nominations from a group of clans which some analysts usually characterized as 4.5 formula consociational democracy (Menkhaus 2017, 143, 144).

President of Somalia in September 2012. As the outcome of the revision, African leaders at the level of the AU PSC decided to embed the promotion of democratic elections in the AMISOM mandate. According to the communiqué of its 356th meeting held on 27 February 2013, AU PSC authorises the AMISOM to “support the FGS in establishing the required institutions and conducive conditions for the conduct of free, fair and transparent elections by 2016” in Somalia (AU PSC 2013c). This marked the unequivocal African institutional commitment to the advancement of the democratic process in Somalia. As I previously noted in this chapter, when the AU PSC reviewed the mandate of AMISOM again in May 2019, the same goal was further set for the mission. In this case, it is rephrased that AMISOM will “provide technical support to the FGS and FMS [Federal Member States], including through the National Interim Electoral Commission, in ensuring effective planning, conduct and security for the 2020/2021 elections” (AU PSC 2019c). Within this interventional process, the type of democracy African leaders want for Somalia is the one in which universal democratic values and principles such as ‘one man, one vote’, respect for human rights, the supremacy of the constitution, the rule of law, representative government, among others, are promoted.¹²⁹

Menkhaus (2017, 132) argues that liberal state/peacebuilders are very prompt at advising and supporting elections in every post-conflict context even though such a common-sense practice may serve as “a major source of strain on fragile compacts among elites, and a potential trigger of ethnic mobilization and renewed armed conflict.” From a postcolonial and decolonial purview, one would expect African interveners to step back and open up conversation around what Somalis want, perhaps within the context of alternative clan political system(s). This is because “clan loyalties dominate political life” (Menkhaus 2017, 133) in Somalia, and the country seemed to have locally evolving nonhegemonic orders that are different from liberal democratic political ordering.¹³⁰ One of the Somali scholars I interviewed emphasised this point during our conversation on African intervention in Somalia. According to him:

Promoting democracy for peacebuilding... should be contextualised... The problem with the AU [and by extension African interveners] is that no consideration is given for what the Somalis want. For example, they do not ask the Somali public what

¹²⁹ For details on how African conception of democracy reproduces the hegemony of Western liberal democracy, see AU's African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Accessed on 17 September 17, 2020 at: <https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36384-treaty-african-charter-on-democracy-and-governance.pdf>. And for additional analysis on this reproduction of hegemony, see for instance, Tieku (2017).

¹³⁰ AUO#20 (Appendix 1).

type of election they want. No study is carried out. All that the AU is doing is only something that would give them leverage and legitimacy to continue their failed intervention in Somalia.¹³¹

Menkhaus (2017, 144) argues that reinventing “universal direct elections” in conflict-ridden Somalia “could [among other unexpected consequences] upset things badly” in the country. However, African interveners could hardly reflect on this line of thought because the common sense around the utility of elections and democracy has been deeply embraced at the level of African regional space (Tieku 2017, 128). It is not that African regional agents are oblivious to the reality of clan-based political practices within the Somali societal space.¹³² Rather, it is believed within the African leadership circle that such an idiosyncratic and nonhegemonic political ideology is more divisive and disintegrating than uniting compared to the self-assured hubris of Western democratic order. Jonathan Fisher (2018) particularly pays attention to this regional abhorrence to alternative political ordering within the context of Somalia. In his words:

Indeed, regional state elites have tended to reject Somali political structures and norms where they do not conform to governance models elsewhere in the region. Alternative, context-specific forms of political authority have instead been dismissed or vilified, including those based around notions of heterarchy. This has manifested itself particularly in strong, collective regional rejection of the notion that politics based around the unit of the clan represents a legitimate or recognizable building-block of statehood (Fisher 2018, 302).

One of the AU officials I interviewed confirm this African interveners’ antagonism towards the Somali clan-inspired governance system. According to him:

Somalia is a clan-based society... [However] the AU policy will be not to have clan-based system in Somalia... Clan-based system has... caused great wars and security challenges [in Somalia] ... The African Union’s view is that we want to see democratisation [in Somalia]; by that we mean one person, one vote democratic political system. This year, like I said, we were hoping to have one person, one vote but it didn’t happen for a number of reasons. Preparations were not done on time, the institutions are still weak, [and the] constitution has not been finalised... The

¹³¹ ASA#10 (Appendix 1).

¹³² AUO#20 (Appendix 1).

AU is taking a pragmatic view that by 2024/2025, we are going to see universal democratic system [in Somalia].¹³³

As aptly pointed out above, there is a regional buy-in into the globally prevailing ideological thinking that forming stability in post-transition Somalia demands a multiparty democracy. Against Death and Gabay's (2014, 6) advice, African regional actors treat international projects like promoting democracy as "neutral and unproblematic 'public goods'". Therefore, any alternative form of political order outside the prescriptions of Western liberal democracy is regarded as conflict-prone. The remarks of President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda in May 2017 during a conference on Somalia in London is particularly revealing to underscore the African regional thinking narrative in this regard. According to him, the "bankrupt ideology of clannism" is a major obstacle to peace project in Somalia and therefore Somali political stakeholders are advised on the "need to form political Parties with a patriotic, national outlook".¹³⁴ And to show the influential power of common sense in this regard, President Museveni further asserted that "We [African leaders] were... confident of the correctness and feasibility of our decision" on Somalia.¹³⁵ Yet, after more than fourteen (14) years of the African presence in Somalia, the crisis bedevilling the country is far from being over.¹³⁶

This submission of President Museveni on the divisive attribute of the Somali clan system is also reflected in the comment of an AU official whom I interviewed. According to him, "clan-based system has... caused great wars and security challenges [in Somalia]" and the interest of the African regional community is "to see [political] democratisation [in the country]".¹³⁷ This is how fetishization of common sense operates in African thinking on Somalia to reproduce hegemony while concomitantly stifling alternative orders (Taylor 2010, 168), which buttresses the Augelli and Murphy's (1988, 20) argument that "the clutter of common sense makes critical reflection difficult". It, therefore, explains the point raised by Gramsci that the existence of hegemony is not simply measured by the extent to which its normative ideas displace common sense, but rather by the extent to which its philosophy

¹³³ AUO#20 (Appendix 1).

¹³⁴ See State House Uganda, 'Speeches: President Museveni's Statement at a Conference on Somalia, London', State House of Uganda Website, 11 May 2017, Accessed on 24 June 2020 at: <http://statehouse.go.ug/media/speeches/2017/05/11/president-musevenis-statement-conference-somalia-london>.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ This marks part of the basis for Taylor's (2007, 555) argument that there is "a disjuncture between the prescriptions of liberal peace and the realities "on the ground" in Africa".

¹³⁷ AUO#20 (Appendix 1).

disorganises the development and advancement of alternative ideologies (Taylor 2010, 166).

5.3.3 *Local Consent to Hegemony and African Liberal Intervention in Somalia*

One of the central narratives in the mainstream critical intervention literature is the characterisation of liberal state and peace reconstruction as an externally *imposed* project of the (Western) internationals. Mac Ginty (2010, 582) argues within this context that “the liberal peace has been imposed with different degrees of rigour”. While this experience had been the case in some post-conflict contexts, it is growing getting to a point when local actors are also craving for liberal peace projects, speaking in the language of the Western historic bloc and, therefore, encouraging international liberal interveners to act in a manner that conforms with the prescriptions of the hegemonic liberal thinking. In other words, many local, national actors are increasingly becoming proponents of the Western liberal peace agenda and, therefore, consent to its common sense as the panacea for durable peace – even in an instance where the reality on the ground dictates something different. It is a development that showcases the reality of hegemony as a causal variable. In Gramscian thinking, this is not a surprise. It only indicates a successful passive revolution in the global society where hegemony constraints and prescribes thought and actions across social spaces. As Gramsci theoretically elucidated, this hegemony entails the creation of a set of constitutive political, economic, cultural and moral normative standards by a particular social group in a way that such standards become diffused and therefore become a conventional and natural way of thinking to the extent that they shape and determine the actions and inactions of different other social groups within the same socio-political society (Femia, 1981; Mantzari & Georgiou, 2019, p. 73; Eagleton, 1991, p. 116).

This constraining and prescribing scenario of hegemony is applicable in the context of African liberal intervention in Somalia. Besides the strongly held assumption by African regional actors that implementing the liberal top-down project is the pathway to peace, which centrally drives their liberal interventional approaches in Somalia, there is also a driving force of local consent to liberal transformation as the solution to Somalia’s instability. It shows that nonhegemonic consenting to the hegemony of liberal ideology and its universal promises on peace is not only taking place at the realm of African regional institutionalism but equally within the context of Somali polity. Based on my empirical findings, what African interveners have done (or are doing) in Somalia is equally designed in a way as a means of *assisting* Somalia’s TFG or FGS in

implementing its core prioritised stabilisation programme for Somalia.¹³⁸ Both the twin projects of top-down (re)building security institutions and facilitating the democratic process in Somalia are agenda that had been domestically designated by the government in Mogadishu as prerequisites for initiating and consolidating needed sustainable peace in Somalia. This happened before African regional actors empirically activated their agency in each of these spheres of activity.¹³⁹ So, in the conversation that preceded African empirical agency in each of these liberal projects, the Somali political elite (equally) reinforced the priority of these liberal peace agenda.

In the area of rebuilding security institutions, in 2006, the TFG designed Somalia's National Security and Stabilization Plan (NSSP)¹⁴⁰ as the primary framework through which TFG sought to bring security stabilisation to Somalia after a long period of civil war and instability (P. D. Williams 2018, 123). One of the key urgent tasks identified in the framework centred on the need to re-establish, re-build and strain effective Somalia security forces. The NSSP as a framework, however, provided room and guidance for interested external peacebuilding partners to participate in the broad process of transforming the security architecture of Somalia to meet the convention Weberian standards (P. D. Williams 2020, 369). Although Menkhaus (2017, 135) has argued that local political elites "embrace state building [of Somalia], not so much as a desired outcome... but more a lucrative project from which they could profit". So, when the Technical Evaluation Mission of the AU Commission visited Mogadishu from 13 to 15 January 2007 to identify which areas to assist Somalia, NSSP constitutes an elemental document through which the TFG engaged and solicited for the intervention of African regional actors (AU PSC 2007a). It became known to the members of the Mission in this process that some bilateral and multilateral partners have got involved in implementing the NSSP. When the Mission was presenting its final recommendations, it submitted that one of the priorities of Africa's peace support mission in Somalia should be to:

assist in the implementation of the NSSP, particularly the effective reestablishment and training of al inclusive Somali security forces, *bearing in mind the programs already being implemented by some of Somalia's bilateral and multilateral partners* (my emphasis) (AU PSC 2007a).

¹³⁸ ASA#7 (Appendix 1).

¹³⁹ Of course, as I have previously demonstrated, African actors have cognitively endorsed such hegemonic approaches long before this time.

¹⁴⁰ It needs to be emphasised, however, that the ideas embedded in the NSSP are equally based on the 2004 TFC that was brokered by African regional actors.

This marked part of the basis upon which when the AU PSC was deciding on the tasks of the AMISOM in 2007, the body expressly endorsed the same recommendation without making any adjustments, whether substantive or otherwise. Of course, as I previously discussed in this chapter, such an approval could not have been otherwise since African regional actors also strongly held the same Weberian-liberal assumption.

The same scenario repeated itself when the mandate of AMISOM was being revised in 2012/2013. By 2011, the transitional government in Somalia had revised the NSSP for a second time to refine the framework on how ‘the TFG and its national and international partners... [could] work together towards the realization of a shared national and regional security vision’ of stable Somalia (Transitional Federal Government 2011).¹⁴¹ One of the key priorities of the Somalia’s government in this regard was “to enhance and sustain international support for the stabilization of Somalia” (Transitional Federal Government 2011). As shown in the final report, when the AU was reviewing the mandate of AMISOM in 2012/2013, the revised version of the NSSP (again) served as the basis through which the Somali national stakeholders engaged the Review Team of the AU in December 2012 and January 2013 (AU PSC 2013b). Accordingly, it created another contributing basis for the Review Team’s recommendation and AU PSC’s endorsement on the need for AMISOM to “establish special training teams to enhance the capacity of Somalia’s National Defence and Public Safety Institutions” in 2013 (AU PSC 2013b, AU PSC 2013c).

What happened in these instances is that, even though this consent is far from being universal, the national political elites who are at the forefront of Somalia’s peace process consent to the hegemonic liberal assumption that externally driven national security reengineering is an indispensable project for stability in Somalia and, on this basis of such ideological thinking, solicit for external interventions. It, therefore, showcases a dimensional commitment to such a Weberian-institutional-liberal project from below. This demonstrates that Richmond’s (2011b, 49) argument – that “liberal peace process faces an absence of local agency” – is not applicable in all cases. Only a few statements could provide a further grasp of this local consent to the hegemonic project of overhauling the security architecture of Somalia as a way of pursuing

¹⁴¹ After its development in 2006, the NSSP had been subsequently been revised for two times – 2009 and 2011. The revision of this framework usually involves the participation of both national/local actors as well as external actors involving in state/peacebuilding undertakings in Somalia (see, Williams P. D., 2018, pp. 123, 124).

stabilisation like the statement of the then President of Somalia, Sheik Sharif Ahmed, as embedded in his foreword to the 2011 Somali NSSP. According to his words:

My government currently has limited resources (human, financial and institutional) to reinforce the national security institutions in order for them to effectively tackle threats... Therefore, rebuilding of our nascent national security sector institutions, particularly the Somalia National Force (NSF), the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Somalia Police Force (SPF) remain critical tasks for my government. The good is to make them more responsive and in better compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL) and respect for human rights, as they work to defend and secure the state and its citizenry (Transitional Federal Government 2011, ii).

This local consent to hegemony is equally applicable in the context of African regional commitment to promoting democracy in Somalia. As I previously argued in this Chapter, the clan-based system of politics is notably entrenched in the fabric of Somali society. By virtue of this idiosyncratic Somali politics and culture, one would expect that a locally evolving political system would be required for an efficient administration of Somalia. Despite this contextual reality, the local political elites, who are at the forefront of Somalia's peace process, agree with the hegemonic line of thought that multiparty democracy is the cardinal political model that can support durable stability in the country.¹⁴²

Within this context in 2004, Somali political elites endorsed the TFC, which created the foundation for establishing the TFG in 2004 (Murithi 2009, 147). The TFC, as a peace framework, makes it explicit that Somalia would seek 'to re-establish peace, *democracy*, the rule of law, [and] social justice' in its transition process. It further states in Article 21 (1) that TFG shall specifically "encourage the formation of political parties" in the governance process in the overall attempt to reinvent a stable 'new' Somalia.¹⁴³ Towards the end of the eight-years transitional period of the TFG, the Somali National Constituent Assembly voted overwhelmingly to adopt the 2012 Provisional Constitution for the Federal Republic of Somalia (BBC 2012). The content of the Provisional Constitution makes it unequivocal that the political model favoured by the national political actors in Somalia to bring about the needed peaceful stability in Somalia is not within the remit of 'alternative forms of political authority', to use Fisher's (2018) coinage. Rather, the choice of Somali political elites in this regard, as

¹⁴² AUO#20 (Appendix 1).

¹⁴³ For details of the TFC, see The Transitional Federal Charter of the Somalia Republic, February 2004, Nairobi, accessed on 25 June 2020 at: <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/docs/2177/Transitional%20Federal%20charter-feb%202004-English.pdf>.

articulated in the Provisional Constitution, is a multiparty democratic system of government which further signifies a local consent to the hegemony of liberal peace. Accordingly, Article 1(1) of the Constitution enunciates that “Somalia is a federal, sovereign, and democratic republic founded on inclusive representation of the people, a multiparty system and social justice” (Federal Republic of Somalia 2012).

However, the idea of rolling out the multiparty democratic electioneering process was put on hold when Somali clan delegates indirectly elected a new FGS government based on ‘4.5 formula’¹⁴⁴ in 2012 due to inadequate preparation and widespread insecurity in the face of Al-Shabab threats (Menkhaus 2017, 136). Shortly after this period, African interveners through the AU undertook a review of AMISOM’s mandate – which I discussed earlier in this Chapter – mainly “to determine how best AMISOM can further contribute to the stabilization of Somalia and align its activities to the priorities of the Federal Government Somalia” (AU PSC 2013b). Like in the case of top-down capacity-building of security architecture, the government of Mogadishu interacted with the AU’s Review Team on how they might need external assistance for this democratic peace project. The Review Team reported this back to the AU and formed part of the basis for the AU PSC decision in 2013 that AMISOM’s future peace activity in Somalia shall include “support[ing] the Federal Government of Somalia to successfully organize free and fair general elections by 2016” (AU PSC 2013b).¹⁴⁵ Even though Somalia could not also hold ‘universal direct elections’ in 2016 as a way of becoming a full democracy (Menkhaus 2017, 136), such a goal has become a key priority for FGS (Federal Government of Somalia 2017, 14).

This commitment from below to the project of reinventing democracy as the system of governance in Somalia was made known by the present President of Somalia, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmaajo, in his speech during the London Conference on Somalia in May 2017. In his words:

The successful and peaceful transfer of power following my election was a reminder of Somalia’s potential as a beacon of democracy and hope in one of the most unstable regions in the world. In fact, Somalia has a long and proud tradition of democracy going back to independence in 1960. We are the first country in Africa wherein a sitting president transferred power peacefully after losing national

¹⁴⁴ The idea of ‘4.5 formula’ in this respect refers to an arrangement in which all the four major clans in Somalia are given equal selected representation and minority clans are assigned half of that proportion (Menkhaus 2017, 134).

¹⁴⁵ This recommendation lay the foundation for the PSC’s decision to incorporate promotion of electioneering process into the mandate of AMISOM in 2013.

elections. Despite the enormous challenges my country faces, we strive to those ideals. *We believe that the only path to fully recovering Somalia is strengthening our democratic institutions.* To that end, I will spare no effort to realizing the promise of my campaign... As the leaders of Somalia, we recognized that the Constitution is the document that binds us together. However, our political efforts will not stop there. In the coming months, we will complete legislation around political parties so that all MPs [Members of Parliament] and other interested groups can form their parties legally. We are determined to encourage a vibrant political environment which upholds the *best practices of democracy*, freedom of assembly and freedom of speech – all of which are enshrined in our Constitution (My emphasis).¹⁴⁶

Of course, the extent to which this promise has transformed into reality in the Somali political landscape is very questionable. But what is clear from these remarks is that there is a local drive towards a liberal democratic order (that foregrounds constitutionalism, the rule of law, freedom of expression, individuality, etc.) as the *only path* to fully stabilise Somalia. One of the Somali scholars I interviewed notes in this regard that ‘the idea of [establishing] ‘one man, one vote’ democracy [in Somalia] definitely has some [local] support.’¹⁴⁷ Another respondent corroborates the same point when he asserts that ‘the AU operates in Somalia with the consent of the FGS [Federal Government of Somalia]’.¹⁴⁸ It is a local endorsement of hegemony, irrespective of how “fragmentary [and] incoherent” (Gramsci 1971, 419) it may be. My findings further reveal that this local consent to democratic normative ordering goes beyond the circle of Somali political actors. One of the AU officials deployed to Somalia emphasised this point during our conversation. In his words:

What we have [here in Somalia] is a large and strong civil society and is at the forefront of the advocacy for one person, one vote [democratic political system]. [This is] because here in Somalia, a lot of people believe that one reason to get rid of the clan system is because sometimes it becomes unfair and allows corruption. The idea is that if you have one person, one vote [system], there are chances that the system will be less corrupt... [Therefore] Somali civil society is the one advocating for much broader inclusive democratic system... [on the premise] that if we get rid of clan system then... the need to resort to war will become less.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Speech Delivered by President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed at the London Conference on Somalia in May 2017, Accessed on 25 June 2020 at: <https://www.independent.co.ug/video-museveni-farmajo-speeches-future-somalia/>.

¹⁴⁷ ASA#10 (Appendix 1).

¹⁴⁸ ASA#7 (Appendix 1).

¹⁴⁹ AUO#20 (Appendix 1).

This local dimension of consent to common sense further contributes to and solidifies African interveners' efforts towards (re)inventing a democratic order in Somalia. The development in this regard was made known by the Head of the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM), Ambassador Francisco Madeira, while reporting the situation in Somalia to the UN Security Council on 21 May 2020.

It is abundantly clear that holding national elections is a top priority for Somalia. I am also convinced, from my engagement with key election stakeholders, that they too view this as a matter of necessity and urgency.¹⁵⁰

In corroborating this causality, one of the AU officials I interviewed made a categorical statement that is worth quoting. According to him:

If you find the collective of African agents foregrounding [liberal] democratic ideals in their interventional engagement [in Somalia], it is because it resonates with local interests and consent.¹⁵¹

5.5 Conclusion

The act of unpacking and disaggregating the empirical interventional actions and responses of international state/peacebuilding actors, particularly in specific post-conflict contexts, is at the heart of the process for grasping the applicable actors' state/peacebuilding approaches and their underlying underpinnings beyond mere deductive reasoning. This is a fundamental underpinning that animated this chapter as it centred on the very attempt to make sense of the African peace intervention in Somalia regarding their agency in the liberal project in the country. Within the confines of this teleology, what I have done in this chapter has been to explore the African intervention in Somalia – via the instrumentality of the AU and AMISOM – for the purpose of dissecting what precipitated the pattern of their approaches to peace in the country. In the process of this exploration, I have made two connected arguments. I have argued that the African approaches to state/peacebuilding in Somalia – which relied on the two interconnected assumptions that 'rebuilding security institutions' and 'promoting democratic electioneering process' are at the heart of forging stability in the country – are not a reflection of "African deterrence to Eurocentric intellectual

¹⁵⁰ See, AMISOM Website, Ambassador Francisco Madeira Addresses UN Security Council on the Situation in Somalia, 22 May 2020, Accessed on 26 June 2020 at: <https://amisom-au.org/2020/05/ambassador-francisco-madeira-addresses-un-security-council-on-the-situation-in-somalia/>.

¹⁵¹ AUO#15 (Appendix 1).

frameworks” of how to devise peace in a fragile environment (Fisher 2018, 288). Rather, as I have demonstrated, it is evidence of their “preoccupation with the expanded reach of liberal governance” (Willett 2005, 573) and, therefore, consent to the prescriptions of the hegemonic liberal peace template. These twin priorities mainly aim to serve as an integral mechanism for reinventing a new Somalia where liberal democratic values and norms are allowed to thrive via the viability of the state security apparatus.

In addition, I have equally argued in this chapter that why African regional actors committed to these liberal peace approaches in Somalia is because African regional actors have consented to the hegemony and common sense of liberal peace ordering and, therefore, could not allow them to think of alternative models of peace or envisaging its inherent contradictions. In making these arguments, I have drawn on relevant official documents of the AU, interview data, Somali policy documents, and speeches delivered by regional/local actors on Somalia’s peace process. A takeaway from the findings and argument of this chapter is that both within the institutional space of African security regionalism and Somali political elites, approaching peace from the purview of the liberal ideological framework is common sense, natural and, therefore, unproblematic. It, therefore, reinforces the causal power of hegemony in the realm of African interventions.

Chapter Six: Explaining African Agency in Liberal Intervention in South Sudan

In the preceding chapter, I empirically examined the agency of African interveners in liberal peace intervention in Somalia. I specifically focused on the period between 2007 and 2020 during which African regional actors, via the mechanism of the AU, deployed AMISOM for the stabilisation and transformation of Somalia. In this regard, based on empirical evidence, I unpacked how the approaches of African regional actors to peace and stability in the country centred majorly on 're-building national security institutions' and 'promoting liberal democratic ordering'. I argued within this context that the undertaking of African actors in Somalia was an instance of activation of African agency in the project of liberal peacebuilding as they focused on building liberal security institutions and a democratic system of governance as a means of forging sustainable peace. I took a step further to show and argue that African regional actors undertook a liberal peace project in Somalia was because they consented to common sense of liberal peace as the only surest pathway to reconstruct stability.

As a continuation of Chapter Five, this chapter presents the second empirical discussion that forms an integral part of the foundation upon which the central argument of this thesis is based. In this chapter, I interrogate African agency in liberal intervention in South Sudan by focusing on African actors' commitment to liberal transformative, forward-looking transitional justice in the country. In this respect, I illustrate how the African intervention in South Sudan focuses on creating a liberal democratic polity, bringing violators of local and international law to book, and entrenching a culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law. I argue in this process that the consent of African regional actors to common sense of liberal peace – which premised on the creation of liberal democratic polity as the surest pathway to forging sustainable peace – played a central causal role in animating their agency in liberal ordering in South Sudan.

To methodologically foreground my analysis in this chapter within the context of empirical evidence, I draw on relevant archival and official documents of the AU and IGAD on the African intervention in South Sudan. I also rely on relevant interview data to deconstruct the basis for African policy choices concerning the security stabilisation of South Sudan. As I emphasised in the case of Somalia in Chapter Five, the concentration on the actions of African interveners here is not an attempt to discard

the involvement of non-African actors in South Sudan's peace process, but rather a deliberate dedication to the scope of this thesis.

To present my analysis of South Sudan's African peace intervention, I divide this chapter into three main sections. First, I discuss and analyse how the African peace undertaking on South Sudan was inspired by the conflict in the country a few years after its political independence. Following this section, I demonstrate how African actors' approaches to peace formation in South Sudan fall under the ideological assumptions of the Western liberal peace model. Finally, by drawing on the neo-Gramscian theoretical framework, I show how hegemony and common sense played a central and crucial role in dictating African policy choices on South Sudan.

6.1 Background to African Intervention in South Sudan

A suitable starting point for an intellectual endeavour to make sense of the engagement of African agents on South Sudan's stabilisation project is to first dissect the context for such an intervention. This is because, like other societies where state and peace reconstruction activities are being carried out, the intervention of African regional actors in South Sudan was not without a specific background. What I intend to do in this section, therefore, is to unpack the developments that animated the involvement of African actors in the domestic affairs of South Sudan. At the heart of my discussion in this process is the argument that African intervention in South Sudan was necessitated as a result of the conflict that broke out in the country a few years after its independence. Hence, *ab initio*, the overarching essence of collective African undertakings concerning South Sudan was to facilitate sustainable peace and stability in the country. In what follows, I explore how specific turn of events led to the operationalisation of African agency in the building of state and peace in South Sudan.

As a separate political entity, the Republic of South Sudan (subsequently South Sudan) gained independence on 9 July 2011 (LeRiche and Arnold 2013). This makes the country the newest African state at the time of writing. The independence of South Sudan was the product of a prolonged civil war that engulfed the Republic of Sudan (subsequently Sudan) for many years. At the heart of the civil war was the disagreement between Northern Sudanese, on the one hand, and Southern Sudanese, on the other hand, particularly on the issue of attempted 'Islamization' and 'Arabisation' of the latter that "became apparent under the [Ibrahim] Abboud regime, which took power in 1958" (LeRiche and Arnold 2013, 12). So, for Southern Sudanese, it was more of "a war of revolution" which they prosecuted through the Sudan People's

Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) against the Government of Sudan (GoS) (LeRiche and Arnold 2013, 2). The civil war, however, came to an end when African regional actors under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)¹⁵² supported by the AU mechanism led a peace negotiation process between 2002 and 2005 that resulted in a peace agreement known as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).¹⁵³

As a codified document, the CPA was signed on 9 January 2005 in Nairobi by the representatives of the two opposing parties – GoS and SPLM/A (Pheiffer 2015, 34, Murithi 2009). Taken as a whole, the CPA was designed as an agreement to end the prolonged north and south confrontations that ravaged Sudan for many decades. It contains a number of protocols on different issues – ranging from power-sharing to wealth-sharing and security arrangements – which were signed before 2005. On the aspect of political power-sharing, it is agreed in the CPA that there shall be six months pre-interim period and six years of interim period for a Government of National Unity that would involve representatives from both northern and southern Sudan (Murithi 2009). The document further states that at the expiration of this period – which amounted to six and a half years – South Sudanese would vote through an internationally supervised referendum to determine whether to secede or continue as a part of the larger Sudan. A particular uniqueness of the CPA is that it represents the outcome of a peace negotiation process in which the leading intermediaries are African interveners (although they received support from the international community). To this end, African interveners as a group mobilised enormous resources to ensure the success of the CPA.¹⁵⁴

The regional and continental efforts that were put in place to ensure the successful implementation of the CPA yielded an expected outcome as the opposing political gladiators (i.e., the GoS and SPLM/A) complied to a certain extent to the details that were spelt out in the CPA. In this case, the adherence to the protocol of power-sharing led to a referendum in January 2011 in which South Sudanese voted on their choice whether to secede or continue as part of the larger Sudan. With an overwhelming

¹⁵² IGAD is one of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa. It has eight African states as its members, namely Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya and Uganda.

¹⁵³ de Waal was very emphatic in this regard when he notes that “the January 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)... brought to an end the long civil war between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A)” (de Waal 2014, 347).

¹⁵⁴ Of course, the implementation of the CPA was equally supported by some non-African peacebuilding actors and agencies. On 8 August 2011, for instance, the Speaker of the South Sudanese Legislative Assembly, James Wani Igga, acknowledged at the floor of the Parliament that “[w]ithout the full commitment of the two UN Secretary-General... Independence of South Sudan would not have seen the light of the day” (H. F. Johnson 2016, 97).

affirmative vote in favour of independence (Johnson 2013, 151), the outcome of this exercise led to the independence of South Sudan on 9 July 2011. It is on this basis that Gerenge (2015, 93) asserts that “South Sudan is the product of a painful history of struggles for self-determination characterised by protracted wars”.

Notwithstanding the ecstasy and exhilaration that accompanied this historical development, in less than three years after the official independence of South Sudan as a distinct political entity, a civil war broke out in the country. This civil war that began precisely in December 2013 (Rolandsen 2015) propels the contention by de Vries and Schomerus (2017, 27) that for South Sudan, “independence has meant war, violence, economic collapse and international ostracization.” Although this development was entirely not a surprise to some analysts, they had earlier predicted the likelihood of such if the country’s political independence was not well-managed. One of these analysts is Emmanuel (2011, 91), who earlier argued that South Sudan’s independence could turn to a regret disillusionment should the attention of the political elite not focusing majorly on meeting people’s needs. An important question that one may reflect on is: what could have accounted for why South Sudan people could not enjoy their valued political independence longer enough before being confronted with another dimension of civil unrest? For obvious reasons, there are diverse cumulative and remote causes of the conflict.¹⁵⁵ However, the key immediate triggers could be attributed to the fractionalisation, misunderstanding, distrust and rift that ensued among South Sudan’s ruling political elites within the SPLM, particularly between President Salva Kiir and the then Vice President Riek Machar. Pointing attention to this causal factor, Vhumbunu (2016, 4) notes that:

The build-up to the civil war can be traced back to the difficult, strained and uneasy political relationship between Kiir and Machar, both in government and within the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) (Vhumbunu 2016).

As a result of the rivalries and struggle for political powers among the top South Sudanese government officials, President Kiir suddenly dissolved the whole cabinet (except four Ministers) and sacked his Vice President (who was planning to rival him over the SPLM presidential candidacy) on 23 July 2013 (African Union 2014a). This political decision resulted in the realignment and emergence of two warring factions within the SPLM, with one faction known as the ‘SPLM/A In Government’ (SPLM/A-IG) supporting President Kiir and the other faction known as ‘SPLM In Opposition’

¹⁵⁵ For some detailed accounts on what led to South Sudan’s civil war, see, for instance, Young (2019), de Waal (2014), and Johnson (2016).

(SPLM/A-IO) supporting the former Vice President Machar. This power struggle gave rise to the violence that broke out during the meeting of the SPLM's National Liberation Council on 15 December 2013, particularly among the members of the South Sudanese Presidential Guard (African Union 2014a, 25, 26). Even though the initial issue started in the form of political rivalries between President Kiir and the then Vice President Machar, it subsequently turned out to become an ethnic confrontation between the Dinka and Nuer ethnic groups, which thereby contributed to deep societal division, fragility and volatility of the security situations in the 'newly' independent South Sudan (Lucey and Kumalo 2017b, 3). Rolandsen's (2015, 163) argues in this regard that South Sudanese "conflict is rooted in deep cleavages within the ruling political party... [and] [w]hen internal tensions came to a head in late 2013, a combination of neopatrimonial politics, a weak state structure and legacies of violence from the previous civil war allowed this to escalate into a full-scale armed conflict." As a by-product, the development degenerated into a high level of brutality that claimed thousands of lives and showcased different dimensions of attacks and reprisal attacks, even indiscriminately against unarmed civilians (Gerenge 2015, 95, 96, Rudnicová 2018).

This outbreak of violence in South Sudan generated concerns for African leaders for at least three reasons. First, by virtue of the mandate of the AU, as expressly spelt out in its Constitutive Act, African actors have technically assumed the responsibility of coordinating African cooperation for ensuring peace and stability on the African continent (Rudnicová 2018, 175). Second, the development was considered as a setback to the African vision of silencing all guns by the year 2020 and AU's 2063 agenda of prosperous and stable Africa.¹⁵⁶ Third, the violence in South Sudan was a surprise for the leadership of the African regional community. In her nostalgia expression, for example, the then Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, asserts that "the AU welcomed the new nation of South Sudan into its ranks, with high expectations that this country would become a beacon of peace, prosperity and hope" (AU PSC 2015). But on the contrary, the incident had led to the deterioration of the country's security situation, left at least 1.52 million people displaced and turned more than 552,000 people into refugees in neighbouring states (AU PSC 2015). It was against this background that the intervention of African actors

¹⁵⁶ For details of Africans' vision of silencing all guns by year 2020 and their 2063 agenda of prosperous and stable Africa, see African Union (2013) 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, accessed on 12 October 2020 at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/newsevents/workingdocuments/29149-wd-50_declaration_en.pdf.

into the domestic affairs of South Sudan was activated in December 2013 with the sole aim of helping the country in finding lasting solutions to its security problems.

6.2 African Intervention in South Sudan: An Undertaking of Liberal Peace Ordering

In his attempt to deconstruct international peacebuilding operations from a more non-critical perspective, Paris (2002) argues that there is an underlying ideological assumption driving the policy direction of any given peace operation. Therefore, for him, the set of activities categorised as peace reconstruction intervention should not be seen as mere “technical (or non-ideological) exercises in conflict management” but rather as operations with ideological underpinning as such an understanding “helps to stimulate the study of peacebuilding in a broader historical and analytical context” (Paris 2002, 638). Even though Paris’s broad perspective finds no problem with Western liberal empire-building through interventions (2002, 638), his contention that intervention policy choices are not ideologically neutral is worth noting. In this section, I show how African regional actors, through the mechanisms of the AU and IGAD, intervened in South Sudan’s peace processes and how liberal ideology underpinned their course of action. As a way of elucidating my empirical analysis in this regard, I divide this section into three subsections. In the first subsection, I demonstrate how the first major step taken by African interveners in responding to the situation in South Sudan centred on the investigation of violations of human rights and the rule of law (i.e., two important principles of liberal ideology). In the second subsection, I narrate how South Sudan’s peacebuilding framework, which African actors led its negotiation process, prescribes the liberal approach for inventing peace and stability in South Sudan. Finally, in the third subsection, I show how African interveners attempt to create a Hybrid Court for South Sudan (HCSS) and how the overarching essence of the Court was to entrench the culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law in South Sudan – as a way of building peace. More broadly, my argument across this section is that the approaches which African peacebuilders adopted during their engagement in South Sudan fall within the ideological propositions of the hegemonic liberal framework.

A clarification on what constitutes *intervention* would be in order to proceed in this section. While drawing on political discourse theory as elucidated by Ernesto Laclau, Wodrig (2017, 12) asserts that the contemporary peace activities, which could be termed intervention, “is not only performed in the place under intervention” but also at

the realm of discourse where crucial decisions are made by key actors regarding what should be the pattern of actions on the ground in the process of enforcing in peace formation. Sharing a similar viewpoint, Witt (2020, 39, 41) notes that “social spaces of interaction” where key decisions are made on “what kind of order” to establish in a post-conflict context is a realm of intervention. This nuanced understanding of intervention is particularly relevant for discussing the activities of African interveners concerning their efforts to rebuild peace in South Sudan. Of course, while the presence of African interventionists is feasible on the ground in South Sudan through the AU’s liaison office in Juba in 2008 (Motsamai 2017, 5, Butedi 2018), the substantial aspect of their undertakings regarding peace reconstruction in the country takes place at the level of discourse. In this case, paying attention to the interconnection between the content of discourse and actions is central for grasping the interventional approaches of African agents to peace in South Sudan post-conflict context. Hence, the empirical discussion that would unfold in this section will focus on interventions as broadly conceived in Wodrig’s and Witt’s analyses.

6.2.1 A Swift Focus on Human Rights and the Rule of Law Issues

The outbreak of civil war in South Sudan elicited an immediate response from African regional interveners through the AU mechanism. Just as Levitt (2008, 145) has argued that Africa’s new paradigm of interventionism takes human rights seriously, the focus of their discourse engagement in this regard specifically concentrated on issues around the liberal principles of respect for human rights and the rule of law. On 17 December 2013 – two days after the eruption of violence in the country – the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, released an official statement on behalf of the AU expressing deep concerns about the situation in South Sudan. She specifically urged South Sudan’s stakeholders to allow resolution of the conflict on the basis of “*respect for the rule of law, [and] human rights*” and conveys “AU’s readiness to assist in finding a solution to the current situation *within the context of relevant AU’s instruments*” (my emphasis) (AU Commission 2013). Following the tradition in African security regionalism (or what is commonly referred to as APSA) (Vines 2013),¹⁵⁷ the Chairperson of the AU Commission subsequently reported the development in South Sudan to the AU PSC on 30 December 2013 for a collective African decision to be taken. In specific terms, the report details violations of local/international laws and human rights during the crisis. Of course, it needs to be

¹⁵⁷ I have earlier discussed the APSA institutional framework in Chapter Four of this thesis.

re-emphasised that the 15-member AU PSC, by its very statutory position, represents the “standing decision-making organ of the AU for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts” on the African continent (African Union 2019a, 70). In other words, it is the major body that is saddled with the responsibility of making important decisions, particularly as relating to the direction of African collective actions whenever the need arises (Ani 2018).

After deliberation on this South Sudan’s update at its 411th meeting in December 2013, which was held at the Heads of State and Government level, the PSC agreed on some key decisions on South Sudan. First, in the final communiqué, African leaders within the PSC stated that AU “*strongly condemns... violations of human rights*” in South Sudan and that “those involved in violations of human rights and international humanitarian law... [during the conflict] will be held accountable for their actions” (My emphasis) (AU PSC 2013a). Second, the AU PSC stressed the need to “resolve the current conflict and address its underlying causes, *on the basis of respect for human rights, [the] rule of law, [and] democracy*” (my emphasis) (AU PSC 2013a). Third, the AU PSC requested the Chairperson of the AU Commission “to urgently establish a Commission to investigate the human rights violations” in South Sudan “and make recommendations on the best ways and means to ensure accountability, reconciliation and healing” in the country (AU PSC 2013a). At the heart of this resolution is the understanding within the AU that the report from such a Commission of inquiry will provide useful insights on how to ensure accountability and promote sustainable peace in the country’s peace reconstruction process.

In his analysis of the Western peace undertaking in Bosnia, Chandler (2000, 90, 201) points attention to the fact that Western liberal interveners are so unequivocal on the centrality of respect for human rights and the rule of law in forging durable peace. As the above policy decisions have shown, African regional actors equally share a similar viewpoint. It is from this standpoint that they attempt to address the instability confronting South Sudan. International Crisis Group emphasises this African interventionist approach to South Sudan’s peace process based on the organisation’s interviews with the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, and AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smaïl Chergui, in January 2014. In the account of the International Crisis Group (2014, 31), from late 2013,

Senior AU officials have expressed the organisation’s commitment to taking a leading role in documenting and reporting on human rights violations, as well as addressing accountability and reconciliation [in South Sudan].

It is a conventional practice in African security regionalism for the AU Commission to act in accordance with the directives of the AU PSC. Accordingly, the Chairperson of the AU Commission constituted the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan (AUCISS) on 7 March 2014 (African Union 2014a) to carry out the objectives already set out by the AU PSC. According to the 'Concept Note' on the creation of the AUCISS, the body of inquiry was structured to comprise five (5) members with at least a former Head of State/Government, a retired or serving Judge, a representative of civil society, a representative of women/youth/children and a representative of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHR) (African Union 2014b, 4). The composition of the AUCISS¹⁵⁸ in which its members are mainly non-AU officials, particularly points attention to the three-dimensional decision-making process within the AU as consciously argued by Tieku (2017).¹⁵⁹ Even though the mandate of the AUCISS takes a form of elaboration in the Concept Note, the AUCISS was still mainly saddled with the responsibility of investigating dimensions of human rights violations within the context of South Sudan's civil war and make appropriate recommendations on how to "ensure accountability, reconciliation and healing... with a view to deterring and preventing the occurrence of the violations in future" (African Union 2014b, 3). In this case, while the AUCISS was aimed at investigating issues before and during the eruption of the 2013 South Sudan's conflict, it became so revealing that the driving force such an inquiry was on how to devise a workable contextual means for entrancing *liberal normative values* in South Sudan as an integral approach towards peace.

As Desmidt and Hauck (2017, 15) note, "the AU became the leading actor to investigate the human rights abuses in South Sudan". In this process, AUCISS conducted several missions to South Sudan to carry out its assigned mandate. After about seven months since its inauguration, the AUCISS submitted its final report on 15 October 2014. However, the content of the report was not made public for many months, perhaps based on the thinking that its release could hamper the peace process that was ongoing at that time. This, however, generated condemnation from civil society organisations, including those located in South Sudan. Some of these organisations jointly wrote a letter to the AU, demanding the publication of the AUCISS's final report (Human Rights Watch 2015). In accordance with the internal

¹⁵⁸ As constituted, members of the AUCISS are Olusegun Obasanjo, Sophia A.B. Akuffo, Mahmood Mamdani, Bineta Diop and Pacifique Manirakiza (African Union 2014a).

¹⁵⁹ In his account of the AU, Tieku (2017, 31-52) argues that the decision-making process within the AU has intergovernmental, supranational and outsiders' component. The outsiders as an integral component involve networks of independent experts and eminent persons who regularly carried out consultancy services for the organisation.

processes within the AU, the Chairperson of the AU Commission later presented the report of the AUCISS to the AU PSC on 29 January 2015 during its 484th meeting for consideration, but the deliberation on the findings and recommendations of the report was also postponed (AU PSC 2015). The report, which ‘seems’ to be eventually adopted by African leaders, is voluminous with 315 pages.¹⁶⁰ Based on the mandate assigned to the Commission, it is not a surprise that the report’s content as submitted by the AUCISS was loaded with recommendations mainly on how to advance political liberalisation of South Sudan’s polity as a way of promoting peace. The report’s recommendations reveal on how the AUCISS project is nothing but a mechanism designed for making suggestions for a liberal intervention in South Sudan.

In the area of human rights, the report states that “[t]he Commission (AUCISS) found that serious violations of human rights have been committed” as well as “serious violations of international humanitarian law” (African Union 2014a, 296, 297). On this basis, the report “*recommends that the government [of South Sudan should] ratify all major international and human rights instruments... [and] strengthen the national institutional framework for the protection of human rights*” (my emphasis) (African Union 2014a, paras 1144, 1145). As pertaining to the rule of law and justice system, the AUCISS reports that rule of law is yet to be valued, internalised and adherent to in South Sudan’s political space due to reasons such as the dearth of independence of the judiciary, the limited reach of justice systems, incapacitation of the courts, marginalisation of customary courts and absence of state’s monopoly of the use of force (African Union 2014a, 289-291). The Commission, therefore, recommends the holistic institutional reforms of South Sudan’s justice system in a way that will allow “a strong, independent judiciary with a national reach” (African Union 2014a, 292). On accountability for existing violations of laws and human rights in the context of no confidence in South Sudan’s liberal judiciary system, the report recommends the establishment of:

an Africa-led, Africa-owned, Africa-resourced legal mechanism under the aegis of the African Union supported by the international community, particularly the United Nations to bring those with the greatest responsibility at the highest level to account (African Union 2014a, para. 1148).

¹⁶⁰ Even though the report of the AUCISS was later discussed by the PSC at its 526th meeting on 24 July 2015, the council could not make a clear decision as regarding its adoption because of a separate opinion from Mahmood Mamdani, who was a member of the AUCISS (Rudnicová 2018, 184). However, I believe African leaders adopted the report in principle as its key recommendations reflected in the peacebuilding framework they facilitated for South Sudan.

A central inference drawn from the AUCISS project is that the whole idea of its essence was to advance the liberal peace agenda in South Sudan while relying on evidence gathered from the ground. This is within the contextual thinking that except the liberal normative principles of respect for human rights and the rule of law are taken seriously, and their violators are consciously brought to book, no attempt at peacebuilding would yield an expected outcome. From this standpoint, the conception of African interveners about human rights and the rule of law as regarding their centrality in peacebuilding exercise is not at variant with the perception of Western interventionists. In the following subsection, I show how this liberal viewpoint is further brought to bear by African regional actors in designing South Sudan's state/peacebuilding framework.

6.2.2 (R-)ARCSS: Developing a Liberal Peace Framework for South Sudan

Besides constituting a commission of enquiry to develop a liberal policy direction for the African intervention in South Sudan, African interveners found it reasonable to intensify actions towards liberal state/peacebuilding exercise in South Sudan. One of the principal strategies they adopted in this process was to work through the instrumentalities of the AU and IGAD, while not discounting support from the international community, to mediate and design an official peacebuilding agreement that would define and guide the model of peace for the country.¹⁶¹ Joshi, Lee and Mac Ginty (2014) have argued that a fundamental perspective to recognise the activation of a liberal ideological standpoint to state/peacebuilding in a given context is to deconstruct the content of its guiding framework. For them, the key approach to determine whether a liberal peace intervention is taking place in a post-conflict society or not is to ascertain the extent to which its underlying peace framework contains elements of five policy areas: "promotion of democracy; [the] rule of law; emphasis on human rights; security sector reform; and governance reforms" (Joshi, Lee and Mac Ginty 2014, 372). From this analytical lens, as elucidated by Joshi, Lee and Mac Ginty, a dissection of South Sudan's peacebuilding framework, which African actors coordinated its negotiation process, provides an important vantage point to further

¹⁶¹ In order to further understand African methodological approaches to interventions in South Sudan more broadly, it is pivotal to grasp the institutional connectedness between the AU and IGAD within the conceptual notion of subsidiarity and complementarity in African peace and security architecture (APSA) (Motsamai, 2017; Lucey and Kumalo, 2017a). While the concept of complementarity in this context reinforces the acknowledgement of the importance of collaborative peacebuilding efforts amongst a group of *connected* actors, subsidiarity emphasises some sort of decentralisation of peacebuilding decision-making and interventions "within a tiered governance system" (O'brien 2000, 58). Based on the structural ordering of African security regionalism, as codified in the APSA, the IGAD is an integral component and building block of the AU security structure (African Union 2002).

elucidate the agency of African regional actors in the liberal peace project in South Sudan. This is precisely what this subsection intends to throw light on.

On 4 January 2015, African leaders within the IGAD intervened and commenced peace talks for South Sudan (Vhumbunu 2016, 5). To consolidate this process, AU had earlier established the 'AU High Level Ad hoc Committee for South Sudan' (AUHLCSS). Its membership comprises one country each from the five regions in Africa, namely Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa (AU PSC 2014). This Committee of five African countries, ALSO known as the C5, has the assignment of not only to complement and strengthen AU's support to the IGAD-led peace process on South Sudan (AU PSC 2014) but also to *directly* and *fully* participate in the conceptual details of the peacebuilding process. At a press conference on 28 April 2015, Seyoum Mesfin, who was then the IGAD chief mediator for South Sudan peace talks, made it known that with the establishment of the AU High-Level Ad hoc Committee for South Sudan, AU 'has asked to participate not only through [the] IGAD but also to join the IGAD and give its full support and participation' (Tekle 2015a).

While waiting for the operationalisation of the AUHLCSS, AU appointed Alpha Oumar Konaré as the AU High Representative for South Sudan on 2 June 2015 (AU Commission 2015b). The basic assignment of Konaré was to "facilitate a collective and coordinated African action, in the search for a negotiated solution" to the conflict in South Sudan while interacting with South Sudanese parties, IGAD, UN, and other international actors (AU Commission 2015b). All these responses underscored the fact that the peace process for South Sudan was an *African-led* exercise.¹⁶² This African-led effort on South Sudan eventually yielded an expected outcome in August 2015 when the two warring South Sudanese parties – SPLAM/A-IG represented by President Salva Kiir Mayardit and SPLM/A-IO represented by Dr Riek Machar Teny – signed the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS). While Dr Riek Machar Teny signed the ARCSS on 17 August in Addis Ababa and President Salva Kiir Mayardit signed the same agreement on 26 August in Juba (Vhumbunu 2016, 3). The official guarantors for the ARCSS are the African states along with the AU.

With respect to its proposed model of peace, a succinct way to describe the ARCSS is to characterise it as a prescriptive framework for liberal peace interventions in South

¹⁶² One of the principles guiding the African peace-support undertaking is 'African leadership' which is designed to allow African policymakers to dictate the priority and substance of their peace projects. Thus, whenever they agreed on a peacebuilding framework, then one can take them responsible for such a decision (African Union, 2006, 6; Tieku, 2017, 176).

Sudan. On political governance system, ARCSS specifically accords priority to 'liberal' democracy where multi-party elections reign as the pathway for accomplishing a stable South Sudan. This ideological stance is made apparent right from the beginning of the framework. Chapter 1 (1.5) of the ARCSS expressly states that the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) that was expected to manage the affairs of the country for two and a half (2½) years "shall hold elections sixty (60) days before the end of the Transition Period in order to establish a democratically elected government" (IGAD 2015, 5). How to actualise this democratic transformation of South Sudan's polity is further enumerated in Article 16 of the same Chapter 1. This included a review of the 2012 Political Parties Act and 2012 National Election Act in compliance 'with the international best practices' not later than six months after the signing of the ARCSS, and the setting up of the National Electoral Commission'(NEC), which "shall organize (e)lections for President, the National Assembly, State Governors and State Assemblies sixty (60) days prior to the end of the Transition Period" (IGAD 2015, 18). In this case, the ARCSS states that "regional and international observers shall be invited and accredited by the NEC to monitor the entirety of the Electoral process" in the country (IGAD 2015, 19).

Beyond its valorisation of democratic governance, the ARCSS also features the rule of law, human rights and liberal institution reforms prominently. In this case, the existing liberal closure at the level of the AU was brought to bear. On what should be the attribute of South Sudan's judicial system, the peace agreement emphasises in Chapter I (12.1) that "The Judiciary of South Sudan shall be independent and subscribe to the principle of separation of powers and the *supremacy of the rule of law*" (author emphasis) (IGAD 2015, 15). In Chapter V (3.1), the peace framework further emphasises that there shall be an establishment of the "Hybrid Court for South Sudan (HCSS)", but in this case, "*by the African Union Commission* to investigate and prosecute individuals bearing the responsibility for violations of international law and/or applicable South Sudanese law" (my emphasis) (IGAD 2015, 43). This HCSS,¹⁶³ which shall be under the control of the AU, would be an independent body in ensuring the adherence to the rule of law and in prosecuting violators of human rights throughout the transition period and shall have supremacy over *any* other courts in South Sudan.¹⁶⁴ In the realm of governance, ARCSS lays emphasis on institutional

¹⁶³ The subsequent collective effort of African regional interveners towards the operationalization of the HCSS is discussed in the next subsection.

¹⁶⁴ The featuring of the HCSS in the ARCSS speaks more of the influence of African regional actors on the peacebuilding framework as it reflected the adopted submission of the AUCISS as I previously discussed.

reforms to invent liberal transformation and social engineering of South Sudan's polity. Some of the key national institutions marked for transformative projects in Chapter I (14.1) of the framework include Human Rights Commission (HRC), Judicial Service Commission (JSC), Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Civil Service Commission (CSC) (IGAD 2015, 17). As reinforced by this content, the epistemological paradigm of peace advanced in the ARCSS is liberal peace. It places emphasis on the promotion of democracy, the rule of law, human rights and institutional reforms as a surest methodology for building peace in South Sudan. This was succinctly summarised in Chapter VI (1.2) of the ARCSS that the permanent constitution of South Sudan should be informed by the principle of "a Federal and democratic system of government that... guarantees good governance, constitutionalism, [the] rule of law, [and] human rights" (IGAD 2015, 46). In essence, African leaders saw the liberal peace framework as the pathway to enduring stability in South Sudan. Lucey and Kumalo (2017a, 7) argue in this regard that:

[African interveners through the] IGAD and the AU agree that the ARCISS is the only framework that can be used as a basis for moving forward [on the stability of South Sudan].

However, after a few months into implementing the ARCSS, violence again broke out in South Sudan on 7 July 2016 (Vhumbunu 2016, 4). One of the key underpinnings for this development was not unconnected to how the ARCSS failed, in the beginning, to reflect a comprehensive aggregation of the minds of South Sudanese warring parties. For instance, the incumbent President, Kiir, expressed serious reservations on sixteen (16) different issues before signing the ARCSS and, in this process, considered the project as a form of *neo-colonialism*.¹⁶⁵ Taylor (2010, 160) has argued that "a hegemonic project in Gramscian sense needs a 'politics of support' as well as a 'politics of power'". A subtle politics of power was deployed by African interveners in getting the local endorsement of the ARCSS (Rudnicová 2018, 185). In the process of signing the ARCSS, President Kiir noted that "[w]ith all those reservations we have, we will sign this document... We had only one of the two options, the option of *imposed peace* or the option of a continued war" (my emphasis) (Tekle, 2015b; Vhumbunu, 2016, p. 6). Similarly, when addressing South Sudanese on the ARCSS on 15 September 2015, he asserted that "[t]here were many messages of intimidations and

¹⁶⁵ For details of these reservations, see The Reservations of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan on the "Compromise Peace Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan", Juba, 26th August 2015. Accessed on 22 January 2020 at: <https://carleton.ca/africanstudies/wp-content/uploads/GRSS-reservations.pdf>.

threats for me in the last few weeks, to just sign the Agreement silently without any changes or reservations... which was mounted on me by [the] IGAD... [and] AU” (Mayardit 2015). To this end, it was not entirely a surprise that the ARCSS failed in actualising its purposed liberal transformation of South Sudan. Wambugu (2019, 12) asserts in this regard that:

[A]n international engagement that interacted and continues to interact with South Sudan from the premise of an incapable partner, while overlooking the role of the community receiving intervention, is perhaps one of the greatest tragedies of international liberal peacebuilding [in South Sudan].

With the failure of the ARCSS in stabilising South Sudan, African actors immediately initiated a new peace talk as a way of re-activating the peacebuilding framework. For this cause, they worked through the IGAD to create the High-Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF)¹⁶⁶ on 12 June 2017 (IGAD 2017) while they responded to the development within the AU through the existing mechanisms of the AUHLCSS and AU High Representative for South Sudan (AU PSC 2018a). This new African-led peace mediation culminated in signing the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) on 12 September 2018 (Vhumbunu 2018, 3). Based on the dictate of the R-ARCSS, A Revitalised Transitional Government of National Unity (R-TGoNU) was formed in February 2020 (African Union Commission 2020).

In terms of substance and content, however, the R-ARCSS is merely an elaboration of the initially collapsed ARCSS and, therefore, a quintessence framework for liberal peacebuilding. As regarding political governance, Chapter I (1.4.11) of the R-ARCSS emphasises that “a federal and democratic system of governance... be enacted during the permanent constitution making process” for South Sudan (IGAD 2018). In the same Chapter I (1.20.5.), it is expected that “[s]ixty (60) days prior to the end of the Transitional Period, the National Elections Commission (NEC) shall organize elections in accordance with the provisions of the Permanent Constitution adopted” (IGAD 2018, 29). Concerning the rule of law, Chapter I (1.17.1) of the R-ARCSS states that “[t]he Judiciary of South Sudan shall be independent and subscribe to the principle of... the supremacy of the rule of law” (IGAD 2018, 25). With respect to human rights violations’ accountability, the R-ARCSS further notes in Chapter V (5.3.1.1.) that a Hybrid Court

¹⁶⁶ Referring to its usefulness, Biel and Ojok (2018, 12) assert that “HLRF round of talks contributed towards the peacebuilding process in South Sudan because it brought together the warring factions [and] opened space for dialogue”.

for South Sudan (HCSS) shall be established and administered by the AU “to investigate and where necessary prosecute individuals bearing responsibility for violations of international law and/or applicable South Sudan law” (IGAD 2018, 66). On institutional reforms, the larger substance of the R-ARCSS is designed for institutional transformation and reforms of South Sudan at the national level in areas such as the military, security sector, judiciary, finance, administration and governance. To show the liberal character of the R-ARCSS, it states in Chapter VI (6.2.2.) that the parameters for South Sudan’s permanent constitution shall rely on “a federal and democratic system of government that... guarantees good governance, constitutionalism, [the] rule of law, [and] human rights” (IGAD 2018, 71).

As a framework for liberal peacebuilding, African regional interveners have not only endorsed the R-ARCSS as guarantors, they have equally demonstrated commitment to its implementation.¹⁶⁷ In late 2018, both the AUHLCSS and AU Inter-departmental Taskforce on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development undertook a field mission to South Sudan to get first-hand information on how to facilitate the implementation of the R-ARCSS framework. In the same vein, the entire members of the AU PSC carried out a field mission to South Sudan from 5 and 8 March 2019 to interact with different stakeholders in the country as a way of “following up on the implementation status” of the R-ARCSS (AU PSC 2019).¹⁶⁸ The overarching message of the AU PSC delegation that was passed across during the mission centred on African regional commitment and support to “the fully implementation of the R-ARCSS in finding lasting peace in South Sudan” (AU PSC 2019). According to the official press release of the mission, “the PSC, in it’s the interactions with all stakeholders, reconfirmed the readiness of the AU to spare no efforts in supporting the accelerated implementation of the R-ARCSS” (AU PSC 2019). The AUHLCSS further stated on 6 July 2019 that the AU is “[c]ommitted to support genuine national reforms on security... [democratic] governance; and [the] rule of law, among others” in South Sudan within the provisions of the R-ARCSS (African Union 2019b). The key point to re-emphasize here is that the collective of African regional actors are in the vanguard state/peacebuilding interventions in South Sudan (Lucey and Kumalo 2017a, 5) and the peacebuilding framework they facilitated for the country is mainly aimed at creating a liberal polity where democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights would have a permanent place. This development has been recognised by a few analysts who

¹⁶⁷ RAS#4 (Appendix 1).

¹⁶⁸ Since October 2016, this mission marked the third time the AU PSC will visit South Sudan for peacebuilding interventional purposes.

attempted analysis of the ideological dynamics of state/peacebuilding in South Sudan. Omeje and Minde (2014, 17) contend in this regard that:

The dominant paradigm of peace and state building in South Sudan, as in other postconflict states in Africa, tends to follow the liberal peace logic.

In the following subsection, I discuss how African interveners attempt to entrench respect for human rights and the rule of law in South Sudan's polity through the instrumentality of the HCSS.

6.2.3 Pursuing HCSS, Promoting Human Rights and the Rule of Law Norms

As I pointed out in the previous subsection, the second phase of peace negotiations coordinated under the auspices of the African agency resulted in the R-ARCSS, which invariably follows the prescriptions of the globally prevailing liberal peace. R-ARCSS as the principal peace framework for South Sudan empowered the AU to establish a Hybrid Court for South Sudan (HCSS)¹⁶⁹ to investigate and, where necessary, prosecute "individuals bearing responsibility for violations of international law and/or applicable South Sudanese law, committed [in South Sudan] from 15th December 2013 through the end of the Transitional Period" (IGAD 2018, 66). The guidelines on key procedural issues such as relating to the funding, location, enforcement mechanism, appointment, and composition of judges of the HCSS shall be prepared and provided by the AU.¹⁷⁰ R-ARCSS further provides that the HCSS shall be an independent entity and maintain supremacy over any national courts in South Sudan. In this case, the peacebuilding framework considers the Report submitted by the AUCISS as the main document for the HCSS's adjudication.

In line with this prescriptive axiom of the R-ARCSS, one of the pursuits of African regional interveners in their peace interventions in South Sudan is the commitment to create a Hybrid Court for South Sudan (HCSS). They have intensified efforts since the signing of South Sudan's peace agreement(s) to ensure the reality of the establishment of the HCSS. This is reflected in both their interventionist actions towards South Sudan and their discursive engagement with the transitional government of South Sudan. At the 720th meeting of the AU PSC on 20 September

¹⁶⁹ A number of scholars have started underscoring the challenges associated with this mechanism in facilitating needed peace in South Sudan. See, for instance, Babiker (2019).

¹⁷⁰ Of course, this marked the first time that the AU would be assigned the responsibility of creating a special court for the trial of human rights violators due to the weakened or compromised domestic justice system in any post-conflict society.

2017 African leaders called on the AU Commission and government of South Sudan to “urgently conclude the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment” of the HCSS (AU PSC 2017). A similar decision was repeatedly agreed on at the 751st, 886th and 894th meetings of the AU PSC, where the peace process in South Sudan was discussed. On 14 November 2019, the AU PSC made it further unambiguous that “the South Sudanese Government with the support of the AU Commission... [needs] to expeditiously work towards the operationalization of all transitional justice mechanisms, including the Hybrid Court for South Sudan” (AU PSC 2019). In my interview with one of the senior officials of the AU, he makes the commitment of African regional agents in this regard unambiguous. According to him,

Now we [African regional actors] are trying to set up a Hybrid Court for South Sudan; we need [African] experts on human rights, transitional justice, [and] international law.¹⁷¹

Within the context of this pursuit, African regional actors have made some practical progress towards creating the HCSS while trying as much as possible to carry the transitional government of South Sudan along. As far back as September 2015, during the 547th meeting of the AU PSC, African leaders had requested the Chairperson of the AU Commission to mobilise available resources within the disposal of the AU, both material and human, to support the African peace intervention in South Sudan, including the setting up of the HCSS (AU PSC 2015a). In this regard, it needs to be accentuated that even before the finalisation and signing of the R-ARCSS, AU had commenced its assertive engagement that is meant for the actualisation of the HCSS. On 2 November 2015, the AU Commission convened a workshop that discussed the practical procedural steps through which the AU Commission could approach the structural formation of the HCSS. Some of the participants in this workshop include members of the AUHLCSS, AU High Representative for South Sudan, Alpha Oumar Konare, Head of the IGAD Team Special Envoys, Ambassador Seyoum Mesfin, and representatives of the IGAD Plus Mechanism (AU Commission 2015c). As the focal outcome of the workshop on the subject matter of HCSS, it was recommended that the AU Commission should set up a technical working team on the Court, prepare a guideline for its establishment and operation, and on this basis, engage the government of South Sudan as well as the United Nations (UN) (UN Security Council 2016).

¹⁷¹ AUO#8 (Appendix 1).

At the time the AU PSC was briefed on the outcome of the workshop on 29 January 2016, the Council “calls on the (AU) Commission to urgently implement the outcomes of the... workshop”, particularly as relating to the HCSS (AU PSC 2016). Subsequently, the AU Commission assigned its Office of the Legal Counsel to guide the creation of the HCSS. Just as this internal mobilisation was ongoing, an AU delegation, led by Ambassador Joram Biswaro (as the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission and Head of the AU Mission in South Sudan) visited South Sudan in July 2017 and held a consultation meeting with the officials of the South Sudanese Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs on the creation of the HCSS (AU Commission 2017a). During this meeting, both parties agreed on a constitutive draft statute and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding the setting up of the HCSS. Both documents constitute preliminary legal instruments (and terms of reference) upon which the design and establishment of the HCSS are proposed to be based in areas such as jurisdiction, structure, appointment, procedures, among others.

To further advance this cause, the Office of the Legal Counsel of the AU Commission convoked a working session in Addis Ababa from 8 to 11 August 2017 that brought together relevant representatives from the AU Commission, representatives of the government of South Sudan and a representative of the UN Office of Legal Affairs to review the earlier draft statute and MoU as regarding the operationalisation of the HCSS (AU Commission 2017b). This meeting permitted both parties – AU Commission and government of South Sudan – under the technical guidance of a designated UN legal official to make needed adjustments to the previously drafted statute and MoU. As noted in the official press release that followed the meeting, “the [working] session considered and made significant amendments to each of the draft legal instruments” (AU Commission 2017b).

Progress towards the actualisation of this peace project was recorded in December 2017 when both the draft statute and the MoU were endorsed by the South Sudanese Council of Ministers (UN Human Rights Council 2018b). However, the empirical operationalisation of the court is presently stalled as South Sudan’s Legislative Assembly is since yet to pass and domesticate the draft statute. In the same vein, South Sudan’s transitional government is yet to sign the MoU. Informed by this development, the resultant ongoing delay in implementing Chapter V of the R-ARCSS, as relating to the HCSS, is far from being the consequence of unwillingness on the part of the AU. Rather, it is the reluctance of the disposition of the Revitalised

Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) of South Sudan to the whole idea of the HCSS. In other words, the government of South Sudan has constituted 'a stumbling block' to the reality of the HCSS, which buttresses the point raised by Lucey and Kumalo (2017b, 12) that the "HCSS has met with resistance from within the South Sudanese governing elite, many of whom are wary of being prosecuted".¹⁷² This is a perspective shared by my respondents on what is delaying the operationalisation of the HCSS. One of my interviewees, who is a South Sudanese scholar and leader of a civil society organisation, told me during our conversation that:

The prospect for establishing the [hybrid] court [for South Sudan] via the African Union seems to be dead on arrival... Simply because there seems to be a narrative that the [transitional] government [of South Sudan] put forward that South Sudanese are resilient people and therefore they are forgiving, and they don't need a court, and they can reconcile.¹⁷³

Teitel (2000) attempts explaining how retributive transnational justice is conceptualised for liberal transformative projects in post-conflict societies. For Teitel (2000, 215), the deployment of retributive transitional justice in the context of peace reconstruction is both "backward-looking and forward-looking" and the latter is aimed at embedding liberal normative values. She argues at length that:

Whereas in prevailing penal theory, retributive justifications relate to punishment generally conceived as a unitary practice, the sanction in transition prompts rethinking the theorizing of punishment and its justification as more closely related to various discrete stages of the criminal process. The transitional sanction suggests an alternative sense of the retributivist idea. Though the transitional sanction is characterized by being limited, the experiences discussed suggest that core retributive purposes are vindicable by diminished—even symbolic—punishment. Core retributive aims advanced by the limited criminal process are recognition and stigmatization of past wrongdoing. Condemnation of past wrongs

¹⁷² Based on my findings, although representatives of South Sudanese political elite signed the R-ARCSS, they are not comprehensively supporting the operationalisation of the HCSS mechanism. The major basis for this ontological viewpoint is not unconnected to their awareness that they are the key culprits. Therefore, the argument of some of these local actors is that such an interventional mechanism would only undermine peacebuilding in the actual sense. In 2017, for instance, South Sudan Minister of Information, Michael Makuei, raised the concern that "there seems to be more concern about the transitional justice and establishment of the hybrid court other than thinking of bringing peace first to South Sudan" (Sudan Tribune 2017). Roach (2016, 1350) argues in this regard that "while many South Sudanese people remain committed to [transitional] justice, the political elites... have emphasized the trade-off between human rights abuses and political stability."

¹⁷³ ASA#8 (Appendix 1).

has transformative dimensions. Wrongdoing that is publicly individuated, in and of itself, isolates the perpetrator and liberates the collective in a measured process of transformation (Teitel 2000, 50).

Thinking along the lens of Teitel, a few scholars have delineated transitional justice mechanisms in conflict or post-conflict context as an integral component of the liberal peace project (see, for instance, (McAuliffe 2017, Andrieu 2010). In the account of Fletcher and Weinstein (2002, 636),

[The] justification for criminal trials [i.e. transitional justice] offered by many in the international community... is the assumption that establishment of the rule of law and democracy is a critical component of reconciliation. In particular, advocates for war crimes trials [in post-conflict contexts] subscribe to the belief that individual accountability is necessary to achieve this [broad liberal] goal.

As advanced by Teitel, Fletcher, and Weinstein, this perspective is apropos to deconstruct the African regional perspective of retributive transitional justice in the broad project of peace reconstruction in South Sudan. Even though the HCSS is designed as a hybrid mechanism, its overriding long-term essence has a liberal transformative focus. In this case, from the purview of African regional actors, the overarching necessity for HCSS is the interest to engrain liberal cultures of respect for human rights and the rule of law in South Sudan's polity as a way of facilitating peace in the country. In other words, African regional commitment to the HCSS project is based on the perception that such an intervention will not only facilitate retributive transitional justice but will also allow the entrenchment of the respect for human rights and the rule of law norms in the South Sudanese polity which is considered *sin qua non* for durable peace in the country. The Chairperson of the AU Commission once makes it clear that "[t]ransitional justice is crucial for the promotion of human rights [and therefore the rule of law]" (African Union 2019c, iv). This is expressly pointed out in the R-ARCSS framework that "[t]he HCSS shall strive to leave a permanent legacy in the State of South Sudan upon completion of its mandate" (my emphasis) (IGAD 2018, 68). From this standpoint, Owiso (2018, 88) characterises the HCSS as a "liberal-prosecution model of transitional justice".

6.3 Discussion: Unpacking Underpinnings for African Liberal Intervention in South Sudan

In the previous section, I discussed and analysed the African regional intervention in South Sudan within the context of their peace operations in the country. I pointed attention to how African regional actors focused on promoting human rights and the rule of law through a coordinated investigation and forward-looking liberal transformative transitional justice. In addition, I showed how South Sudan's peace framework that was designed under the supervision of these African actors foregrounds the importance of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law in South Sudan's peace formation processes. I argued in this regard that the African intervention in South Sudan is mainly designed for liberal peace reconstruction in the country as it conforms to the ideological prescriptions of liberal peace. Like I emphasised in Chapter Five of this thesis, this development also creates a puzzling scenario for mainstream critical intervention scholarship for considering liberal interventions as *solely* the project of *neo-imperialist* Western actors. Why did *anti-imperialist* African interveners¹⁷⁴ operationalise a liberal intervention – which valorises the promotion of Western liberal values of human rights and the rule of law – in South Sudan?

This section constitutes the main discussion segment of this chapter that intends to respond to the above question. Across its two subsections, I rely on African peacebuilding instruments and interview data to interrogate and make sense of why postcolonial African actors activated their agency in liberal peace reconstruction in South Sudan. I argue in this regard that the reason why African interveners embrace the above liberal approaches in their peace intervention in South Sudan is based on their firm consent to the common sense of the liberal ideological premise that creating a democratic polity where the rule of law and respect for human rights are duly observed is the only pathway to sustainable peace, irrespective of its context. To make this perspicuous, I draw on the theoretical and analytical substance of (neo-)Gramscian ideas of hegemony and common sense.

¹⁷⁴ As a way of reinforcing historical anti-imperialist stance of African actors, for instance, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013, 385) argues that "crossing the global imperial designs of domination, exploitation, and racism, has proven to be a lifetime struggle for Africans."

6.3.1 Common Sense and African Promotion of Human Rights and the Rule of Law in South Sudan

Central to the agency of African interveners in promoting human rights and the rule of law in South Sudan is their consent to common sense of liberalism, which I discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis. As Gramsci elucidated, the ideology of the dominant social group could metamorphose into common sense in a given historical evolution and, therefore, allows:

the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become "common" in any given epoch (Gramsci 1971, 322).

Of course, as Gramsci elaborated further, even though the source of this common sense is traceable to the conscious ideological project of the dominant social group, a nonhegemonic social group may see it in the process of ideological submission as an ahistorical, natural way of doing. For him, what happens in this regard:

signifies that the [nonhegemonic] social group in question may indeed have its own conception of the world... But this same group has, for reasons of submission and intellectual subordination, adopted a conception which is not its own but is borrowed from another group; and it affirms this conception verbally and believes itself to be following it, because this is the conception which it follows in "normal times" (Gramsci 1971, 327).

Buttressing this Gramsci's thought as I have elaborated in Chapters Three and Four of this thesis, even though the emphasis on the liberal principle of individual human rights (which equally reinforces adherence to the rule of law) was a product of Western liberal ideological projects, postcolonial African actors at the regional level have in the face of historical colonial disempowerment, and noncommitment to counterhegemony consented to its common sense.¹⁷⁵ They have not only consented to and localised¹⁷⁶ this idea, but they equally embraced thinking about post-conflict peacebuilding and prevention of violence from such a liberal ideological vantage point. In this case, the entry point of African regional actors into the discourse of state/peacebuilding in South

¹⁷⁵ For more analysis on the roles of 'historical disempowerment' and 'noncommitment to counterhegemony' in facilitating the agency of nonhegemonic groups in the reproduction of hegemony, see Chapter Four of this thesis.

¹⁷⁶ For conceptual understanding of 'localization' as used here, see Acharya (2004) who defines it as "the active construction (through discourse, framing, grafting, and cultural selection) of foreign ideas by local actors, which results in the former developing significant congruence with local beliefs and practices" (245).

Sudan was not from an ideological vacuum but rather from the Western liberal ideological standpoint. Willett (2005, 573) argues that African regional actors are practising “liberal peace by proxy”, because such an undertaking is being “determined by the powerful vested interests of Western liberal democracies that are themselves increasingly reluctant to militarily engage in African conflicts”. As my findings reveal, while I agreed with Willett on the agency of African actors in this liberal project, its central underpinning is more than a mere function of (coercive) dictates by any funding Western agents. In other words, it has a consensual dimension. An African scholar and expert who is knowledgeable about ideological development at the level of African regionalism said during my interview with her that:

It easy to say it is because the AU [African Union] is being funded by the Europeans [and thereby influenced by the Europeans] ... [But] I will say we have to look at where we are as a continent, [and] how we make sense of free and fair elections... African Union [which represents the voice of African actors] is not tolerant for other ideas, [it is] strongly influenced by liberal ideology.¹⁷⁷

Notably from the early 1980s (in the face of absence of potent ideological resistance), African regional leaders consented to the Western liberal worldview, which emphasises respect for human rights and the rule of law within the polity of the African state.¹⁷⁸ Of course, as I noted earlier Chapter Four, this embracement was not without a certain historical context, particularly as related to the broader realities within global society in which Western hegemony is exerted to delineate certain principles as acceptable common sense and others as unacceptable aberration. In this regard, through the agency of the OAU (and later the AU), they collectively declared themselves as adherents and promoters of individual human rights norm on the continent of Africa.¹⁷⁹ What happened in the process, to use the words of Fairclough (1995, 17), was a “winning of consent in the exercise of [ideological] power”. Ever since this historic moment, African regional leaders have designed a number of institutional mechanisms to consolidate their stance as exponents and promoters of the liberal principle of respect for individual human rights. Just before the beginning of this century, they collectively asserted in this regard that:

We reiterate our *commitment* to the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We emphasise the indivisibility, universality and

¹⁷⁷ ASA#2 (Appendix 1).

¹⁷⁸ See more on this account in Chapter Four of this thesis.

¹⁷⁹ In reality, however, many of these regional actors rarely observe this liberal principle in their respective domain.

interdependence of all human rights, be they political and civil or economic, social and cultural, or even individual (my emphasis) (OAU 1999).

The consent of African regional leaders to common sense of human rights promotion and, subsequently that of the rule of law, has become the lens for their conception of peace formation. A critical look at the contents of some of their peace intervention instruments – as I tried to do in Chapter Four of this thesis – is revealing when making sense of their current efforts towards the creation of the HCSS for the liberal transformation of South Sudan's polity where respect for human rights and the rule of law are duly observed. As a typical instance, in paragraph 15 of the preamble of the AU's Protocol to the Establishment of the PSC, they state expressly that "[w]e [i.e. African regional leaders] aware also *of the fact* that the development of... *observance of human rights and the rule of law*... are essential for the promotion of collective security, durable peace and stability, as well as for the prevention of conflicts" (my emphasis) (African Union 2002).¹⁸⁰

As Gramsci pointed out, the embracement of common sense has a causal influence. It determines the scope of conversations, sets the limits for policy choices, makes critical reflections difficult, and stifles alternative thinking. In his elucidation, "common sense applies the principle of causality" (Gramsci 1971, 348) and consent to such a prevailing conception:

is not without consequences... [as] it influences moral conduct and the direction of will, with varying efficacy but often powerfully enough to produce a situation in which the contradictory state of consciousness does not permit of any action, any decision or any choice, and produces a condition of moral and political passivity (Gramsci 1971, 333).

Hall buttresses this Gramsci's theoretical position (as I previously articulated in this thesis). In his account,

Common sense shapes out [the] ordinary, practical, everyday calculation and appears as natural as the air we breathe. It is simply 'taken for granted' in practice

¹⁸⁰ This is re-emphasised in other African peace policy framework such as the one on PCRCD where in paragraph 39, they note that "[t]he pursuance of human rights... is critical because abuse of human and peoples' rights... can trigger or perpetuate conflicts... all of which require focused attention as part of the reconstitution of society" (African Union 2006). To activate their preparedness in this realm, they have since February 2019 designed their Transitional Justice Policy (TJP) to provide a sort of guidelines on how they would respond to the issues of violations of human rights and the rule of law in post-conflict societies (African Union 2019c).

and thought, and forms the starting-point (never examined or questioned) from which every conversation begins (Hall 1988, 8).

The already embraced common sense and taken-for-granted assertion on the positive relationship between peace(building) and adherence to the liberal cultures of human rights and the rule of law shaped the African collective approach to peace interventions in South Sudan from the beginning. This firm ideological stance set from the outset the scope of African regional discourse on South Sudan and therefore hindered alternative ways of thinking about peace projects in the country in a way that could have subjected the agenda of facilitating the rule of law and human rights to critical interrogation. Within two days of the outbreak of the civil war in South Sudan, the first official press release that represented some sort of collective view of African regional leaders made it clear that the only way to restore peace in the country is through the epistemological lens of “*respect for the rule of law, [and] human rights*” (my emphasis) (AU Commission 2013). Of course, this is not unconnected to the realisation by African actors that the human rights principles they consented to were violated during the conflict (Roach 2016, 1349, International Crisis Group 2014, Owiso 2018). On the one hand, while this affirmative statement precedes the position of South Sudanese people on the methodology of peace they want, on the other hand, it sets the agenda/scope on how African interveners should address the issue of state/peacebuilding in the country. To this end, the conversation of African regional leaders at the level of the AU PSC on 30 December 2013 was basically around the same subject-matter which propelled them to stress a similar conclusion that resolving and addressing the root causes of South Sudan’s conflict has to be “*on the basis of respect for human rights, [the] rule of law, [and] democracy*” (my emphasis) (AU PSC 2013a). Accordingly, as I have previously discussed, they agreed to constitute a Commission of inquiry (i.e. AUCISS) to unravel local developments and make recommendations along these lines (AU PSC 2013a).

The confirmation by the AUCISS that human rights were violated during the crisis, and that there were no efficient national legal mechanisms for addressing accountability, propelled African regional actors to agree on the need for “an Africa-led, Africa-owned, [and] Africa-resourced legal mechanism... to bring those with the greatest responsibility at the highest level to account” and in the process implant the liberal normative values of respect for the rule of law and human rights in the social space of South Sudan for peacebuilding purposes (African Union 2014a). An African Ambassador to the AU (who was then a member of the AU PSC) made it known during

my interview conversations with him that African approaches to interventions in South Sudan were context-driven while not discarding the collective commitment of African interveners to the ideological assumptions of liberal peace in the country.¹⁸¹ It is the above context that birthed African agency in liberal intervention South Sudan. In this regard, the existing consent to liberal peace common sense within the African security regionalism worked with local developments to shape the conclusion of African regional actors that “[b]uilding sustainable peace in South Sudan will require a careful balance between re-establishing the rule of law, [and] redressing gross human rights violations” (Lucey and Kumalo 2017b, 2).

Mainly to re-articulate the theoretical position of Gramsci, Augelli and Murphy (1988, 18) argue that because of common sense,

we rarely question why we think and act in a certain way, but, rather, regard our ways of thinking and acting as absolutely objective and eternal and, as such, as needing no deep study into their origins or consequences.

This theoretical assertion is very on point regarding my findings on African peace undertakings in South Sudan. What happened in the context of African intervention in South Sudan was that African regional leaders were less concerned about the contemporary origin of the idea of respect for human rights and the rule law, and how their commitment to its common sense for peace purposes may further reinforce the liberal ideological hegemony or empire-building of Western actors. Rather, their concerns revolved around prevailing common sense that activation of a liberal transformative accountability process is central for the sustainable rebuilding of peace in South Sudan. Because these ideas are already embedded in the (R-)ARCSS as the guiding state/peacebuilding framework for South Sudan, it is not a surprise that African regional interveners reiterated their conviction during the 751st meeting of the AU PSC that:

the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS) remains the *only* viable option towards addressing the challenges facing South Sudan (my emphasis) (AU PSC 2018b, para. 3).

¹⁸¹ RAS#4 (Appendix 1).

6.3.2 Hegemony, Local Consent and African Agency in Transformative Accountability Project in South Sudan

As Gramsci reminds us, even though hegemonic ideas are constitutive interests of the dominant historic bloc, they usually appear in the process of historical evolution as representing the universal interests of people in general. This universal appeal of hegemonic ideas often helps to create the consent of nonhegemonic population in their reproduction without a correspondent critical consciousness to question their origins, contextual relevance and broader consequences. While re-reading Gramsci, Hopf (2013, 321) points attention to this account in his contention that:

[H]egemonic ideas are those that advance the interests of the dominant classes but are veiled in language that presents them as if they were advancing the universal interests of the people in general+ Hegemonic power is maximized to the extent that these ideas become taken for granted by the dominated population+ A taken-for-granted truth is one that people assume to be so without questioning its empirical or normative validity.

The commitment of African interveners to liberal transformative accountability project in South Sudan also has a causal dimension of local consent (Roach 2016, 1356). Even though such a liberal forward-looking approach may pose a challenge to peacebuilding on the ground, a cross-section of South Sudanese non-elite actors and civil society organisations are particularly interested in, and consented to, the inclusion of retributive transitional justice project in South Sudan's state/peacebuilding operations (International Crisis Group 2014, 32). In a survey conducted by the South Sudan Law Society (SSLS) in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) between 2014 and 2015 across different locations in South Sudan with 1,525 individual interviews, more than 80 per cent of the respondents supported coordinated accountability measures for human rights violators in South Sudan (Deng, et al. 2015). In the same vein, the outcome of the several interviews conducted by Steven Roach in December 2015 with local actors in South Sudan revealed that ordinary South Sudanese wanted the incorporation of accountability measures in the peacebuilding project of South Sudan (Roach 2016, 1356). Different South Sudanese civil society organisations such as South Sudan Human Rights Society for Advocacy (SSHURSA), South Sudan Law Society and South Sudan Action Forum have become vocal in their attempt to serve as a voice for non-elite local actors in this realm. Some of my respondents made some direct comments on how the zeal of African interveners to create the HCSS is in tandem with the yearning and aspiration

of the preponderance of South Sudanese non-elite actors. Responding to whether or not the HCSS project received local support, one of my respondents who is a South Sudanese scholar and leader of a civil society organisation notes that:

There is an overwhelming [local] support for the end to impunity [through the Hybrid Court] in South Sudan. That support mostly comes from victims themselves, civil society [organisations], [and] religious institutions.¹⁸²

The same position was also corroborated by another respondent, who is a scholar and human rights activist. While responding to my question, in this regard, she notes that:

Is civil society still in support of the Hybrid Court [for South Sudan]? I will say yes, but I may be biased because the people and victims I speak with say they want accountability. Now, I don't know about the rest of the population. So, based on my community of survival, I will say there is still overwhelming [local] support for a Hybrid Court for South Sudan.¹⁸³

The question at this juncture is: how does this affect the decision of African interveners on how to facilitate peacebuilding in South Sudan? My empirical findings show that despite the existential consent to liberal peace common sense at the level of African security regionalism, African actors often engage local actors to know their views in the process of their intervention, particularly through the instrumentality of need assessment missions.¹⁸⁴ Of course, there is a level of politicisation in this regard with respect to whom African need assessment missions choose to interact with on the basis of seeking local views. In this case of South Sudan, AUCISS served as a key mechanism through which African actors were able to make sense of the consent of the non-elite local actors on the necessity of redressing violations of human rights in South Sudan's peace process. During the inquiry into the situations in South Sudan in 2014, AUCISS was able to conduct interviews with 70 witnesses, including non-elite South Sudanese, especially women and girls from internally displaced persons (IDP) camps (African Union 2014a). The AUCISS' recommendation of the imperativeness of "an Africa-led, Africa-owned, [and] Africa-resourced legal mechanism under the aegis of the African Union" for South Sudan partly embodied the demand of this set of local actors (African Union 2014a). Concerned local civil society organisations have also resorted to open letters in convening the interest of South Sudanese people on this issue of liberal transformative accountability mechanism of the HCSS

¹⁸² ASA#7 (Appendix 1).

¹⁸³ ASA#6 (Appendix 1).

¹⁸⁴ AUO#2; AUO#4 (Appendix 1).

(International Crisis Group 2014, 32). On 6 March 2014, for instance, a group of 27 civil society organisations wrote an open letter to the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)¹⁸⁵ not only to express their support for the creation of the AUCISS but to demand the intervention of African regional leaders in forging a culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law in South Sudan (Human Rights Watch 2014). In the letter, they made it clear that:

[P]rior to the outbreak of the current armed conflict, the government of South Sudan was failing to guarantee basic human rights to people in its territory... If South Sudan emerges from the current crisis, significant effort will be needed to foster a culture of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The ACHPR should play a decisive role by beginning to call for broad human rights reforms in South Sudan... South Sudan must commit to numerous long-term improvements in order to better protect and promote human rights. Comprehensive judicial reforms are necessary if the judiciary is to meet minimum standards of professionalism and independence... The ACHPR should call for and support such comprehensive reforms and call on the government of South Sudan to devote adequate human and financial resources to the judicial sector... Weaknesses in the South Sudan Human Rights Commission, including insufficient human and financial resources and its susceptibility to political pressure have left it unable to adequately respond to the current crisis (Human Rights Watch 2014).

These actors consented to the hegemony of liberal peace and thereby envisage peace through the purview of a culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law. The aggregation of this yearning contributed to strengthening the commitment of African actors to forward-looking transnational justice in South Sudan's peace process. One of my respondents, who is familiar with the African intervention in South Sudan, specifically draws my attention to this causal role of non-elite local actors in the discourse of around the HCSS project. According to her words:

It was majorly a strong demand from the civil society that Obasanjo Commission [of Inquiry] recommended for an African [human rights] accountability mechanism... [In this case], from the beginning, the [Hybrid] Court [for South Sudan] itself was particularly a strong demand from the Nuer Community because when the conflict started in most of 2013/2014... the victims were mostly from Nuer ethnic group.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ By addressing this letter to the ACHPR, these civil society organizations were directly communicating African actors at the regional level on their position on South Sudan's peace process.

¹⁸⁶ ASA#6 (Appendix 1).

6.6 Conclusion

Liberal interventions for peace and state building purposes as ‘a political project in its own right’ (Duffield 2001, 11) have increasingly been described in the mainstream critical scholarship as the preoccupation of Western actors driven by their neo-imperialist agenda. Viewing these practices from the lens of state-building, Chandler (2006, 1) maintains that they are nothing but “attempts by Western states... to deny the [neo-imperialist] power which they wield and to evade accountability for its exercise”.¹⁸⁷ However, what is often neglected in this mainstream intervention discourse, as I elaborated in Chapter Two of this thesis, is the agency of some non-Western actors and how to theoretically account for it. Along these lines, what I have done so far in this chapter has been to explore the empirical response of African interveners to state/peacebuilding projects in South Sudan with the main purpose of deconstructing their agency in liberal state/peacebuilding in the country and in the process account for its driving force. At the level of their approaches to peace in South Sudan, I have demonstrated how African regional peacebuilders focused on institutionalising liberal normative values such as democratic ordering, respect for human rights and the rule of law in their efforts to forge peace stability in the country. (In the next Chapter, I will also how a similar undertaking is carried out in the context of the Gambia).

Within this context, by making use of neo-Gramscian theoretical concepts of hegemony and common sense as analytical tools, I have argued in this Chapter that the decision of African regional interveners to approach peace reconstruction in South Sudan from the purview of liberal epistemology is informed by their subsisting consent to common sense of the liberal peace. Because of the ‘material forces’ of liberal hegemony at the global level and ‘causal influences’ of its common sense (Gramsci 1971, 165, 333), African interveners could not activate alternative approaches to peace in South Sudan in a way that is sufficient to question the origins, local validity and broader consequences of applying the liberal peace formula in the country. As the last empirical chapter for this thesis, in the next chapter, I discuss the African peace intervention in The Gambia.

¹⁸⁷ Maintaining a similar contention, Chomsky (1999, 11) asserts that “[w]ith the Soviet deterrent in decline, the Cold War victors [i.e. Western actors] are more free to exercise their [liberal interventionist] will under the cloak of good intentions but in pursuit of [neo-imperialist] interests that have a very familiar ring outside the realm of enlightenment”.

Chapter Seven: Explaining African Agency in Liberal Intervention in The Gambia

In the previous chapter, I explored African interveners' agency involvement in liberal peace reconstruction in South Sudan by delving into their efforts towards liberal transformative forward-looking transitional justice in the country. In this regard, I illustrated how African intervention in South Sudan revolved around the invention of liberal democratic polity through bringing violators of local and international law to book and entrenchment of a culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law. I demonstrated this by unpacking three key developments: the initial response of African interveners to the crisis in South Sudan; the content of the (R-)ARCSS, which they developed as the framework for stabilising South Sudan; and the project of HCSS, which they spearheaded for peace formation in the country. My primary argument in this regard was that African regional actors' acquiesce to common sense of liberal peace, which premises peace on the existence of a liberal democratic order, played a central role in animating their agency in liberal re-ordering operations in South Sudan.

As the last episode in this empirical evidence, this chapter presents the third empirical analysis that contributes to drawing inference for this thesis. In terms of specificity, in this chapter, I dissect and anatomise the intervention of African actors in The Gambia in the wake of the country's post-election crisis. I focus on narrating the peace undertakings of these non-Western actors in the country and what precipitated the ideological paradigm of their interventions. As a caveat, following Chomsky (1999, 2), my main aim in this chapter is *not* to provide an ethical analysis of "what should be, or what should have been, done" in The Gambia, but rather of "the framework in which events proceed". Witt (2020, 13) has argued that the previous African intervention in Madagascar was an attempt "to restore the ideal of a liberal polity". This chapter will demonstrate that such an operation is not limited to Madagascar. It will show how African approaches to peace and stability in The Gambia were directed under the dictates of liberal peace epistemology. It will uncover how they fundamentally attempt to devise stability by consolidating democracy and social engineering of the country's polity. In my analysis in this respect, I argue that African actors committed to a liberal transformative project in The Gambia because they consented to common sense of liberal peace framework as the *only* pathway for creating sustainable peace.

Concerning methodology, in this chapter, I draw on relevant peace formation decisions and instruments of African regional actors, which they developed through their mechanisms of the AU and Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS). I equally rely on interview data that I obtained in my conversation with relevant respondents who are knowledgeable about the engagement of African interveners in The Gambia. In addition to this evidence, I also rely on Gambia's policy documents, decisions of its policymakers and the extant literature. To make sense of the evidence gathered in this regard, I employ the neo-Gramscian theory of hegemony as an analytical framework. Just like in the previous cases, even though there were instances of non-African agency in peace operations in The Gambia, I only concentrate here on the activities of African agents – to adhere to the focus of this thesis.

In terms of structure, I divide this chapter into three main sections. In the first section, I discuss the background development that led to the intervention of African actors in the internal affairs of The Gambia from December 2016. In the second section, I unpack how the strategy devised by African actors in their peace intervention in The Gambia was to invent a liberal democratic order in the country as postulated by the ideological assumptions of liberal peace. In the final section, I explore and elucidate what underpins this African deployment of liberal peace approaches to peace reconstruction in The Gambia.

7.1 Background to African Intervention in The Gambia

Presenting a holistic account of how African regional actors intervened in the internal affairs of The Gambia and why the intervention took a particular form requires a conscious effort at the outset to deconstruct the preceding events that led to such an intervention. This specifically constitutes the key focus of this section. To achieve this purpose, in the first part of this section, I discuss some developments in the postcolonial Gambia up till 2016. More specifically, in this regard, I demonstrate how the character of the socio-political order in The Gambia as of 2016 was far away from being liberal despite the instances of operationalisation of democratic governance in the country. In the second part of this section, I discuss how a 'crisis' broke out in the country during its 2016 presidential elections and how the crisis created a stalemate that provided the basis for African regional intervention in the country's domestic affairs. Overall, my main argument in this section is that African intervention in The Gambia was not an aimless adventure. It was a purposive undertaking designed for

stabilising the country in the aftermath of its 2016 crisis and for (re)inventing a socio-political order where durable peace could have a dwelling place.

7.1.1 Postcolonial Gambia Up Till 2016

In terms of geography and population, The Gambia is one of the ten (10) smallest countries on the African continent. In this context, Saine (2008, 453) characterises The Gambia as a 'ministate'. During the era of colonialism, The Gambia, like many other African countries, was colonised by the United Kingdom of Britain. These many years of colonial experience speak volumes of how Gambians were historically disempowered, particularly concerning their socio-political and cultural civilisations. The country, however, gained political independence and attained the status of a sovereign entity on 18 February 1965 (A. Saine 2008, 453). At the point of the country's political independence, a democratic system of government was directly handed over to the people of The Gambian under Sir Dawda Jawara as the Prime Minister.¹⁸⁸ Like in many postcolonial states, the activation of a democratic system of government in The Gambia in this immediate postcolonial era was not much of coercion but consent. Even though such an organisational project had no clear local origin and denoted more of what was being projected by the historic bloc of colonisers, local actors within The Gambia's polity at this epochal time *consented* to its universal, superior form of organising model. Rupert Emerson particularly draws attention to this development across many postcolonial states from the 1940s. In the words of Emerson (1960, 228):

The insistence of the rising nations on the democratic way derived from a number of sources. One fertile source, effective for both colonial and non-colonial peoples, was the general prevalence of such beliefs as that democracy is itself a good, that it is a superior form of government, that it is a symbol of maturity in the modern world, and that its adoption carries with it an assertion of equality. The ability to make a democratic system work appeared to be accepted by the nationalists as significant element in disproof of the assumption of inferiority which they so bitterly resented.

Notwithstanding its independence, The Gambia was initially regarded as one of the Commonwealth States with Queen of England as the Head of State (Nyang, 1975; Perfect, 2008, p. 427). However, the political status of the country changed in 1970

¹⁸⁸ The ruling political party at this time was the People's Progressive Party (PPP).

with its adoption of a republican constitution that invariably led to the transition in the position of Sir Dawda Jawara from being the Prime Minister to the President of The Gambia. This democratic system of government under President Jawara and his ruling political party, People's Progressive Party (PPP), managed to survive until 1994. Although, as the extant historical literature on The Gambia suggested, this relative stable experience of democracy in the country did not translate to any tangible form of development and prosperity for the people of The Gambia (A. Saine 2008, 454).

In 1981 when President Jawara travelled on a visit to the UK, some elements in The Gambia's military orchestrated an effort to topple democracy in the country. This singular incident prompted President Jawara to approach a neighbouring country, Senegal, for its intervention to restoring his government by every necessary means, including the option of the use of force. Informed by the good rapport between President Jawara and his Senegalese counterpart, President Abdou Diouf, the government in Dakar positively responded by thwarting the nearly successful coup, which led to the death of about five hundred thousand people. Following the coercive restoration of constitutional order in The Gambia by Senegalese military, both countries decided to form a confederation on 12 December 1981 known as Senegambia Confederation. This unification between the two countries, which Saine (2008, 454) describes as a "marriage of confusion" could not stand the test of different challenges which eventually precipitated its collapse in 1989.

The Gambia's first republic under President Jawara came to an end on 22 July 1994 due to the bloodless coup d'état that was orchestrated by some junior officers of The Gambia's military (Saine A. S., 1996; Saine A., 2009). This development led to the emergence of Lieutenant Yahya Jammeh as the military Head of State of the Republic of The Gambia (Loum 2002). Following the usual military practices, the new military regime suspended the existing Gambia's constitution, dissolved the previous government, banned political activities, and formed the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC) as the ruling body in domestic affairs of The Gambia (Loum 2002, 153). Some of the reasons for these actions, according to the architects of the coup, include the appalling state of the economy, endemic nature of corruption, the dominance of Nigerians in the military, and the absence of a convincing response from the President Jawara-led PPP government (Perfect, 2008, p. 431; Loum, 2002, p. 147). Accordingly, the Yaya Jammeh-led AFPRC immediately promised to respond to the challenges that were noted to be confronting the political, economic and military governance in the country, particularly by advancing policy reforms that would

entrench transparency, accountability and *democracy* (Saine A. , 2008).¹⁸⁹ However, the summary execution of thirty soldiers who allegedly plotted an unsuccessful coup in November 1994 witnessed an intensely negative reaction from the international community to the undemocratic governing system in the country (A. Saine 2008, 455). Within this context, different Western actors such as the US, EU and Japan instituted sanctions against The Gambia's military regime (A. Saine 2008, 455).

These unfriendly strong external reactions ultimately reminded Yahya Jammeh and his AFPRC of the abhorrent disposition of the global community to any form of political authority outside the category of democracies. But more importantly in this matrix of pressure is the fact that this period coincided with post-Cold War 'third wave' of common sense of democratization across many parts of global South, including Africa – in which “democracy [is] less “hurrah” word and more of a commonsense word” (Huntington, 1991b, p. 7; Saine A. , 2009, p. 5). Within the Gambian polity, there was some sort of popular movement for a transition to democracy during this period (Wiseman 1996, 934). This local movement demonstrated a reflection of the invocation of local consent to the hegemony and global legitimisation of democratic ordering as “an uncontested good” (Fierlbeck 1998, 12). This interplay of global and local development led to The Gambia's transition to a democratic system of government in 1996 (Loum 2002, 169). In other words, The Gambia's swift transition from military rule to democracy in 1996 signifies an instance of how liberal hegemony works in everyday global society to (re)produce a particular way of thinking or doing, even at the domestic level, that conforms to the dictates of liberal normative ordering principles.

In Chapter Four of this thesis, I discussed the uniqueness of the African society. I argued in the process that despite the evidence of historical disempowerment, which makes African actors susceptible to hegemony and common sense of liberal ideology, 'African society' is by its distinctive characters not structured along liberal lines. Like in many African countries, this specifically played out in the characterisation of The Gambia's polity during Yahya Jammeh's administration, particularly between 1996 and 2016. The professed practising of democracy in the country was not without its own 'vernacularisation' and, therefore, made The Gambia's polity not suitable as a quintessence of liberal democratic polity. Informed by this recasting of hegemony in

¹⁸⁹ It may sound paradoxical that the new military regime promised the entrenchment of democracy (Hughes 2000, 36), but the central causal rationale is that in the post-Cold War era, democracy has become the single prevailing standard in the hands of both local and external actors for measuring the legitimacy of any government. It is a typical manifestation of liberal hegemony in the modern historical era.

an eccentric local cultural context, the attribute of The Gambia's democracy and its periodic elections during this period reportedly presented a contradiction to the assumptions of liberal democratic ideology (Saine A. , 2008, p. 458; Saine A. S., 2000, p. 202). This development reminds us of the important question broached by Shivji (1991, 80) that "Can a liberal perspective on democracy in Africa be anything else but compradorial?".

Within the context of consolidated authoritarianism, through the instrumentality of state power (Perfect 2010, 55, 56), President Yahya Jammeh 'ritually' retain his constitutional grip on the leadership of The Gambia by renewing his political mandate through façade periodic elections (Helal 2017, 912). In his attempt to report this phenomenon, Saine (2009, 32) notes that political configuration under Yahya "Jammeh could not afford to remain intransigent, yet could or would not open the political process for competition for free and fair elections... [And any] journalists who dared reveal or hint at this in their reporting would earn the wrath of Jammeh and his repressive National Intelligence Agency (NIA)". While analysts using *solely* Western parameters could consider this practice as an aberration, pundits outside such a restricted lens understand that it speaks more of the configuration of the African society in which individualism tends not to be the utmost priority as obtainable in Western liberal society. However, as time passed by, political liberalism as modern hegemony – which emphasises the imperativeness of respect for human rights and the rule of law in a democracy – increasingly gained the consent of local actors in The Gambia's political society. In the following section, I discuss how this unfolding development culminated in a crisis in 2016.

7.1.2 The 2016 Presidential Elections and the 'Crisis' in The Gambia

Before the 2016 presidential elections in the Gambia, the internal reality in the country showcased a somewhat absence of any formidable political threat to the continuation of Yahya Jammeh as the President of The Gambia and APRC as the ruling political party. This initial projection is not without context. First, President Jammeh seemed to have mastered how to deploy the resources and power of the state for his electoral advantage. Second, the United Democratic Party (UDP), the main opposition political party, was severely weakened by the government's practices. The key instrument in the hands of the opposition leaders in UDP before the 2016 presidential elections was protesting, mainly to express their displeasure against the government's high-handedness under Yahya Jammeh. However, every attempt to carry out such a

protest was not without a corresponding reaction from the government. As a reaction to the demonstration carried out by some members of the UDP in April 2016 in their attempt to demand democracy-friendly election law, The Gambia's security forces arrested some UDP members. The utilisation of severe torture by security forces under the command of President Jammeh in this process led to the death of Ebrima Solo Sandeng (who was one of the youth leaders of the UDP) while in government's custody (Perfect 2017, 324). Subsequently, a peaceful protest was organised by leaders of the UDP to demand justice on the extra-judicial killing of Sandeng (Kora and Darboe 2017, 149). President Jammeh's government reacted by arresting key leaders of the UDP, and they were later sentenced to three years in prison by the High Court in Banjul (Perfect 2017, 324). One of the opposition figures affected is Ousainou Darboe, who could have contested against the candidacy of President Jammeh in the 2016 presidential elections.

Based on this background, when the APRC eventually presented President Jammeh as its presidential candidate in February 2016, it seemed there was no single notable formidable political party or candidate that could effectively withstand and challenge the APRC's candidate in the election. This scenario was captured by Kora and Darboe (2017, 151) in their contention that "[w]ith Ousainou Darboe and other UDP leaders in jail, pundits and ordinary citizens alike debated whether a new opposition standard-bearer could be found." To, however, consolidate opposing forces, seven opposition political parties reached a consensus in October 2016 and agreed on Adama Barrow as the presidential candidate of the Coalition (Perfect 2017, 325). The possibility of Adama Barrow being a major contender was rarely envisaged as he was then just a real-estate developer without any relevant experience in public office.

Since the end of the Cold War, it has become a practice for a range of international actors, both Western and non-Western, to deploy observers whenever elections are conducted in many developing countries. During the 2016 presidential elections in The Gambia, an unusual scenario played out. On the one hand, while the European Union (EU) communicated its readiness to deploy a group of technical experts to observe and monitor The Gambia's 2016 presidential elections, the government in Banjul refused to accept the monitoring mission of the EU. On the other hand, whereas The Gambia's government was ready to receive a monitoring team from the ECOWAS,¹⁹⁰ the regional economic community found no convincing reasons to deploy election

¹⁹⁰ ECOWAS is a sub-regional African organization which was formed in 1975. It currently has 15 West African states as its member states, including The Gambia.

observers to The Gambia due to previous state-sponsored electoral malpractices. However, at the AU level, African leaders agreed to despatch a small group of election observers to The Gambia to monitor the compliance of the election to the international best practices (Kora and Darboe 2017). What this demonstrates, among others, is the increasing *empirical* commitment of African regional actors towards the advancement of democracy across national spaces on the African continent.

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), which is the official body saddled with the responsibility of administering elections in The Gambia, eventually conducted the election on 1 December 2016 amidst the Internet shut down (Hartmann 2017). When the IEC announced the results of the election on the second day, it was perhaps a surprise to different international and domestic actors that Adama Barrow was declared the winner of the election as he defeated the incumbent President Jammeh according to the valid vote cast (Witt and Schnabel 2020, 278). In his swift and astonishing reaction on 2 December 2016, President Jammeh publicly accepted the outcome of the election, conceded defeat, and congratulated Adama Barrow on his victory (Hartmann 2017, 86). However, the situation suddenly changed on 9 December 2016 when President Jammeh announced the reversal of his previous remarks by categorically rejecting the outcomes of the election based on serious irregularities that manifested during the electoral process (Witt and Schnabel 2020). Because of this premise, President Jammeh demanded a fresh election that would be administered by a different set of IEC leadership (Hartmann 2017, 87). This new volte-face was not entirely surprising, as some analysts attributed it to the demand by some opposition leaders that President Jammeh should be prosecuted immediately after leaving office based on his previous human rights records (Perfect 2017, 328). As a means of backing his decision with a clear action to show that he was not committed to any form of power transition, President Jammeh deployed the military on the streets, which, among others, prevented access to IEC offices and created a nation-wide trepidation (Hartmann 2017, 87). Both the opposition groups and a cross-section of regional and international actors outright disagreed with these whims and caprices of President Jammeh. By implication, they maintained a clear stance on the need to implement the electoral voice of the people of The Gambia.

This refusal of President Yahya Jammeh to accept the outcomes of the 2016 presidential elections invariably created a constitutional crisis with stalemate and uncertainty in the internal affairs of The Gambia (Kreß and Nußberger 2017, 239, Witt and Schnabel 2020). A few scholars had attempted the description of the reality of this

crisis. Perfect (2017, 328) asserts that the development “provoked a political crisis”. Kora and Darboe (2017, 147) report that “[t]he country plunged into political crisis.” On their part, Kreß and Nußberger (2017) assert that the phenomenon triggered a constitutional crisis and political conflict. Animated by this uncertainty and the possibility of military clamping down as an option for the government, President-elect Adama Barrow escaped to Senegal. In a similar manner, many Gambians crossed the borders and fled to neighbouring Senegal to look for safety amid the uncertainty. According to the update provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), those that fled to neighbouring states involved several thousand Gambians (Caux 2017). In an endeavour to be specific, Perfect (2017, 328) estimated the figure of these refugees to be around 46,000 Gambians.

Even though this 2016 crisis was purely a domestic matter for The Gambia, African regional actors refused to interpret the scenario *simply* in that way. Rather, they deemed it a concern that demanded a collective response. Such a purview has been prominent and prevailing within the African collective security regionalism, mainly since the beginning of this century (Jordaan 2017). A key document that detailed this pan-African ethos is the 2004 Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy. It states in paragraph six (6) that “security of each African country is inseparably linked to that of other African countries and the African continent as a whole” (African Union 2004). One of the AU officials I interviewed buttressed this point strongly during our conversation. In the course of our interaction, he notes that:

When your neighbour’s house is on fire, it’s better that you are not oblivious of it... One of the things I think a lot of our countries have done [is that they] have signed a collective defence and security agreement. That means that we look at issues from the perspective of a security community... If you look at the ECOWAS, under the ECOWAS collective security framework, ECOWAS [members] have subscribed to certain shared values, and when those shared values are challenged as it happened in the Gambia and in other cases, then I think the African continent is obliged to actually come in and support. It is not a humanitarian gesture per se. It is not, in most cases, an altruistic move. But we have now taken the spirit of African togetherness. Be your sister’s keeper, and we have come up with frameworks to deal with that... We have subscribed to these shared values; these norms that we have developed and the collective shared sense of security; we are now under

perhaps [moral] obligation to support each other when our countries are confronted by certain security challenges.¹⁹¹

The invocation of this understanding – that crisis in any part of Africa is not without its consequences on the entire continent – within the context of the political crisis in the Gambia provided the basis for immediate intervention of African actors in the domestic affairs of the country. The immediate goal of African interveners in this respect was to assist the country in finding a lasting solution to its political quandary by harnessing African resources. In the section below, I dissect the constitutive character of African regional approaches to peace and stability in the Gambia.

7.2 African Intervention in The Gambia: An Undertaking of Liberal Peace Ordering

A few scholars have argued that one of the constituent elements of liberal state/peace intervention is social engineering which involves a deliberate effort by a group of external agents in altering the ordering institutions of a post-conflict country for the purpose of regulating societal behaviour along the liberal lines in a way that allows the thriving of liberal principles such as the respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy. Paris (2004, p. 4) contends in this regard that liberal peacebuilding is “nothing less than an enormous experiment in social engineering, aimed at creating the domestic conditions for a durable peace within countries just emerging from civil wars”. Richmond and Franks (2007, 36) reinforce a similar assertion that “liberal peace project is... a comprehensive form of social engineering, requiring the institutionalization of liberal forms of governance within the state and their control by external actors”. A particular area worth paying attention to in this mainstream discourse of liberal social engineering is that the key actors identified thus far to be at the forefront of this liberal transformative experimentalism are Western actors.¹⁹² As I pointed out in Chapter Two of this thesis, this is a key divergence between the empirical analysis in this thesis and the extant mainstream critical scholarship on liberal interventions.

In what follows in this section, I present new evidence on how African interveners are equally in the vanguard of this liberal social engineering project in the course of their

¹⁹¹ AUO#8 (Appendix 1).

¹⁹² For instance, the empirical analysis presented by Paris in this regard was based on the peacebuilding interventions carried out by Western actors and their varying agencies in the last decade of the twentieth century. Similarly, Richmond and Franks’ discussion in this milieu was focused on the UN’s interventions in Cambodia.

intervention in The Gambia. In this case, I unpack the intervention of African interveners in the domestic affairs of The Gambia and demonstrate how these set of non-Western agents aimed at (re)inventing a liberal peace order in the country through a liberal transformative project. To make my discussion comprehensive to cover both the early and later phase of this intervention, I divide this section into two subsections. In the first subsection, I dissect the immediate intervention of African actors in The Gambia's polity, which were orchestrated through the mechanisms of the AU and ECOWAS. I argue within this context that the main strategy of these African agents at the early stage of their engagements in The Gambia was to consolidate the democratic process in this country. In the second subsection, I show that the latter policy action by African regional actors in their peace reconstruction in The Gambia was the deployment of the African Union Technical Support to The Gambia (AUTSTG). The AUTSTG was a mission mainly for (re)building and transforming the institutional structures of the country along liberal ideological lines (in the name of striving for sustainable peace). Taking as a whole, my key priority across this section is to uncover and convey the liberal peace character of the African intervention in The Gambia in the aftermath of the country's 2016 presidential elections.

7.2.1 *Intervention for Consolidating Democracy*

While an unambiguous emphasis is placed on ensuring stability, the immediate intervention of African regional actors in the crisis rocking The Gambia was designed to protect and consolidate democracy in the country. This initial policy strategy is not entirely unpredictable based on the existing consensus at the level of the African security community. As I discussed in chapter four of this thesis, African leaders through the OAU (which later metamorphosed into the AU in 2002) have since the year 2000, through the Lomé Declaration, maintained a theoretical policy stance against any form of unconstitutional change of government (UCG) on the African continent (Dersso 2016). An aspect of UCG as delineated by African actors is "the refusal by an incumbent government to relinquish power to the winning party after free, fair and regular elections" (OAU 2000, 4). Subsequent policy instruments, such as the AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, which was crafted and developed in 2007, have further 'consolidated' this position of African actors, particularly as relating to the promotion of democracy in Africa (Tieku 2009).¹⁹³

¹⁹³ Referring to this development, Leininger (2015, 51) notes that "non-acceptance of UCG has become a particular African notion of democracy protection and promotion".

From this context, African discursive reactions to the crisis in The Gambia were very swift and reflected a stance on the necessity of the survival of democracy in the country. On 10 December 2016, a day after President Jammeh rejected the outcome of the elections, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, on behalf of African leaders, released a statement to highlight and communicate the position of the African regional community on The Gambia. Among others, the official press release notes that:

The Chairperson of the Commission reaffirms the imperative need for the concerned Gambian stakeholders to strictly comply with the rule of law and the respect of the will of their people as clearly expressed during the 1 December presidential elections that have been labelled free, fair and transparent. In this respect, she recalls the relevant provisions of Article 23 (4) of the AU Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

The Chairperson of the Commission underlines that the statement made on 9 December 2016 by outgoing President Yahya Jammeh, who had already publicly and gracefully recognized that the victory of President-elect Adama Barrow is the true expression of the will of the Gambian people, as null and void.

The Chairperson of the Commission strongly urges President Yahya Jammeh to facilitate a peaceful and orderly transition and transfer of power to the new President of The Gambia, as decided by the people of the country (AU Commission 2016a).

The above statement illuminates how the interventional reaction of African agents to the political quagmire in The Gambia was designed, from the outset, to ensure the survival of constitutional democracy in the country (in their attempt to restore stability). In the same manner, the AU PSC – as the key institution saddled with the responsibility of making decisions on behalf of all African states on intervention matters – also reacted to the post-election crisis in The Gambia. Through its communiqué on 12 December 2016, the AU PSC endorsed the standpoint of Chairperson of the AU Commission, and concomitantly emphasising the “the imperative need for the concerned Gambian stakeholders to strictly comply with the rule of law and the respect of the will of their people as clearly expressed during the 1 December 2016 presidential elections” (AU PSC 2016a, 1). The AU PSC went further to underscore the spirited readiness and resolve of “the AU [on behalf of the entire African community] to take all necessary measures” in restoring and protecting democracy in The Gambia (AU

PSC 2016a, 3). By emphasising the possibility of deploying ‘all necessary means’, African interveners at this point signalled their resolve to employ the use of force, if necessary, in preserving democracy in The Gambia.

In accordance with the structural design of the African peace and security architecture, as discussed in extenso in Chapter Four, the immediate response of African actors to the situation in the Gambia was equally carried out at the level of the ECOWAS. On 17 December 2016, African leaders in West Africa under the umbrella of the ECOWAS met to discuss the crisis in the Gambia and what should be their collective response. Just like the previous resolution at the continental level, they resolved that they “shall take all necessary measures to strictly enforce the result of the 1st December 2016 [Gambia’s] elections” (ECOWAS 2016a, para. 38(h)).¹⁹⁴ This further affirms the strong consensus amongst African regional agents on the imperative of democracy for conflict prevention and peace formation.¹⁹⁵ It buttresses the point raised by one of my respondents:

Unlike the 1960s and 1970s, there seem to be a broad consensus amongst African [Union] elites at the political level and at the technical level that liberal ideas are the only game in town.¹⁹⁶

However, despite this articulation of standpoints by African interventionists, President Yahya Jammeh doubled down on his earlier resolve and insisted that no peaceful transfer of power would take place. As a follow-up response, particularly beyond discursive reactions, African interveners activated the principle of subsidiary that is firmly engrained in the AU’s African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). In a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 2008, for instance, AU and RECs in Africa have agreed to uphold and adhere “to the principles of subsidiarity, complementarity and comparative advantage... in the promotion and maintenance of

¹⁹⁴ It needs to be noted that this decision rejects the stance of President Jammeh on his refusal to comply with the election outcomes.

¹⁹⁵ Even though African actors were in the vanguard of this process, they were not the only interveners that immediately reacted to the crisis situation in The Gambia. The United Nations (UN), for instance, equally reacted to the development a day after President Yahya Jammeh rejected the outcomes of the 2016 Gambian Presidential elections. On 10 December 2016, the UN Security Council (UNSC) releases an official press statement that “strongly condemned the statement by the outgoing President of The Gambia, Yahya Jammeh” and in the process “called on him to respect the choice of the sovereign people of the Gambia” (UN Security Council 2016a). What is worth noting, again, in this regard is that there was a broad and strong consensus across the institutional spaces of the ECOWAS, AU and UN on the necessity of an uninterrupted democratic transition in The Gambia.

¹⁹⁶ ASA#5 (Appendix 1).

peace, security and stability” in Africa.¹⁹⁷ As I deconstructed in Chapter Four, this signifies assigning of responsibility to sub-regional African organisations in the operationalisation of African agency in peace interventions within the institutional space of the AU. In this case, African actors positioned the ECOWAS mechanism to take the lead in restoring democracy in The Gambia as a strategy for approaching stability in the country (Kaaba and Fagbayibo 2019, 29). To this end, on 10 December 2016, the Chairperson of the AU Commission made it clear that African agents at the continental level would work closely with sub-regional African agents within the ECOWAS in finding solutions to the impasse in The Gambia (AU Commission 2016a). As an affirmation of this move, the AU PSC on 12 December 2016 commended this African joint effort on The Gambia through the ECOWAS mechanism (AU PSC 2016a, para. 10).

This first approach deployed by African agents at the level of the ECOWAS centred on utilising high-level mediation delegation to avert violent impasse while maintaining the necessity of uninterrupted democracy in the country. On 13 December 2016, an ECOWAS’s high-level delegation was despatched to the Gambia to persuade President Jammeh to step down to allow steady democracy and peace in The Gambia (Hartmann 2017, 88). The delegation comprised the then President of Liberia and Chairperson of the ECOWAS Authority, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, and President of Sierra Leone, Ernst Koroma, among others (ECOWAS 2016b). Notwithstanding the personalities involved, the mission could not yield expected outcomes for African interveners. Nonetheless, they decided not to give up on this diplomatic effort. On this account, on 17 December 2016, West African leaders appointed the duo of President Muhammadu Buhari and President John Mahama as the Mediator and Co-Chair respectively in restoring democratic normalcy in The Gambia (ECOWAS 2016a). This culminated in the second African high mission visit to The Gambia on 13 January 2017 that involved President Buhari, and his counterparts in Liberia (President Sirleaf Johnson) and Ghana (President Mahama) for the same goal of prevailing on President Yahya Jammeh to peacefully relinquish power (Helal 2017, 916). The repetition of this pro-democratic diplomatic intervention could not convince President Jammeh of the need to relinquish power. Rather, on 17 January 2017, President Yahya Jammeh declared a state of emergency.

¹⁹⁷ For details of this agreement, see the 2008 Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Area of Peace and Security between the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities and the Coordinating Mechanisms of the Regional Standby Brigades of Eastern Africa and Northern Africa at: <http://www.peaceau.org/uploads/mou-au-rec-eng.pdf> (accessed on 11 November 2020).

A day after, the Gambian Parliament (which was already under his control) extended the term of his presidency by ninety days (BBC News 2017, Helal 2017).

Jabri (2010, 54) has argued that “the liberal peace project might be conceived as constitutive of a ‘matrix of war’.” Jabri draws on Western actors’ engagement in Afghanistan to elucidate this epistemological and conceptual contention. She notes in this regard that “if we look closely into the operational modes of the intervention in Afghanistan we see that it might well be defined in terms of the ‘liberal peace’... Clearly the Afghanistan context covers the array of interventionist practices that define the spectrum of liberal interventionism; from the use of military force to development goals led by civilians from [Western] international institutions” (Jabri 2010, 50). Even though it is a case of a non-Western agency, this conceptual analysis of Jabri finds its relevance in the context of the African intervention in The Gambia concerning the use of military force in pursuit of liberal democratic peace projects.¹⁹⁸ African interveners committed to what Mac Ginty (2011, p. 6) regards as “coercive liberal peace-making” in The Gambia. Since President Jammeh’s original tenure would elapse in a few days to come (specifically on 19 January 2017), and Jammeh had not demonstrated any sign of readiness to yield to the outcomes of the elections, African leaders resorted to their earlier decision to deploy ‘all necessary means’ in prosecuting democratic consolidation in The Gambia. To dispel doubt on the possibility of using force, the Chairperson of the ECOWAS Commission, Marcel Alain de Souza, disclosed on 23 December that Senegal had been chosen to lead African military operations in The Gambia (BBC News 2016). As there were no changes, on 18 January 2017, troops from a few West African states such as Senegal, Nigeria and Ghana were mobilised under what is eventually known as the ‘ECOWAS Mission in the Gambia’ (ECOMIG) (Hartmann 2017, 89).

On 19 January 2017, the regionally assembled troops crossed the borders from Senegal into The Gambia’s territory with the basic aim of enforcing African pro-democratic decisions in The Gambia (The Guardian 2017). To prevent any escape, a Nigerian warship was mobilised into The Gambia’s waters (Perfect 2017, 329). Informed by this unwavering commitment of African leaders in using force, if possible, to enforce democracy in The Gambia and its gradual transmutation into a never-racking ordeal for President Jammeh, a slight last-minute mediation by both Mauritania President, Alpha Condé, and Guinea President, Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, *forced*

¹⁹⁸ It is in this process that Williams (2017) characterizes an aspect of African interventions in The Gambia as “a new African model of coercion”.

President Jammeh to agree to a peaceful democratic transition in The Gambia (Helal 2017, 919, Oxford Analytica 2017). He finally went into exile in Equatorial Guinea on 21 January 2017. This military intervention that was devised to effectuate African pro-democratic resolution in the Gambia was conceptualised as *Operation Restore Democracy* (Nwangwu, et al. 2019, 122).¹⁹⁹ Drawing on this experience, Kaaba and Fagbayibo (2019, 39) assert that the Gambian experience demonstrates the commitment and willpower of African interveners to “resolve threats to democracy on the [African] continent”.

With the stepping down of President Jammeh after the African military intervention and his subsequent departure from the country, President Barrow – who had been inaugurated in The Gambian Embassy in Senegal on 19 January 2017 (Witt and Schnabel 2020, 278) – returned to The Gambia on 26 January 2017 to commence his constitutional functions as the President of The Gambia. Based on the shared perception that The Gambia was far from being stable and that it was likely going to explode if President Barrow is left alone to deal with The Gambia’s military that had been under the control of Yahya Jammeh for the past 22 years, African leaders decided to extend the mandate of the ECOMIG on 29 January 2017 to stay in The Gambia for additional months to support and protect the newly inaugurated democratic government (Foroyaa 2017).²⁰⁰ On this basis, Witt and Schnabel (2020, 278) argue that the presence of African regional actors in The Gambia outlasted the period of the actual crisis in the country to involve the period of its post-conflict transitional phase. In the sub-section that follows, I show how African interveners subsequently committed to the liberal institutional transformation of The Gambia’s polity in their endeavour to forge peace and stability in the country.

7.2.2 Deploying the AUTSTG for Liberal Transformation of the Gambia’s Polity

As I earlier pointed out in this section, the project of social engineering during state and peace reconstruction has increasingly been identified as an integral component of modern liberal interventions. In her analysis of post-2001 liberal intervention in Afghanistan, Suhrke (2007) argues that social engineering constitutes one of the cardinal strategies devised by Western agents to orchestrate social change and

¹⁹⁹ Of course, as Helal (2017, 918) reminds us, this was equally the precise codename used by the US for its 1994 interventions in Haiti.

²⁰⁰ By June 2017, African leaders at the subregional level of West Africa further extended the mandate of the ECOMIG for addition one year and changed it status to a peace support operation. See, The Standard (2017b).

modernisation in pursuit of liberal peace in the country. The key point to note here is that the mainstream scholarship on external intervention has provided sufficient account to spot the agency of Western interveners in this regard. What is, however, missing in this discourse is the agency of some non-Western players. In what follows, I dissect how African interveners, as a group of non-Western actors, equally activated their commitment to liberal transformative and social engineering project in The Gambia through the mechanism of the AUTSTG.

Even though Yahya Jammeh left for exile on 21 January 2017 and Adama Barrow returned to The Gambia on 26 January 2017 to commence his official responsibility as the President of The Gambia, the country's was never considered totally over in the early months of 2017. The newly inaugurated administration quickly realised the need for an immediate and responsive state/peacebuilding intervention to avert degeneration of the country into a violent crisis. In this case, the new administration suddenly realised that the country is likely to collapse without a comprehensive response to different internal issues within a short period of time. Some of the interventionist projects envisaged in post-election crisis Gambia to (re)invent a state polity where there is a room for perpetual peace was hinted at by President Barrow on at least two different occasions. While meeting a delegation that comprised representatives of the AU, ECOWAS, UN and EU under the leadership of the AU High Representative for Mali and the Sahel, Pierre Buyoya, on 16 May 2017, President Barrow "appealed for financial and technical support in the areas of training and professionalizing of the [Gambia's] justice, defense and security sectors."²⁰¹

President Barrow further characterised his vision in this respect in December 2017 when he noted that post-election crisis the Gambia "offers a renewed opportunity to build a modern accountable state *based on the foundations of democracy, good governance, [and] respect for human rights*" (my emphasis) (The Gambia 2017, 3). This development eventually prompted the drafting of The Gambia National Development Plan (NDP) (2018-2021), which expressly specifies some strategic priorities requiring immediate attention in The Gambia. Some of these identified priorities include the necessity of restoring "good [democratic] governance, respect for human rights, [and] the rule of law" (The Gambia 2017, 5) which are believed to be "the surest route to lasting peace" (Paris, 2004, p. 37). In this case, even before the commencement of state/peacebuilding operations in The Gambia, what should

²⁰¹ See the Joint Statement of AU, ECOWAS, EU and UN Assessment Mission to The Gambia that was released on 17 May 2017.

constitute its overriding character – which altogether falls under the rubric of liberal peace agenda – had been delineated by the Gambia’s national actors.

Informed by the limited internal capacity in transforming the post-crisis Gambia in such a manner that resembles a liberal state, the Gambia’s political elites found it imperative to seek external assistance. A set of actors whose interventions were deemed to be paramount in this regard are African actors.²⁰² To this end, on 29 March 2017, the government of The Gambia officially asked for the assistance of African interveners through the AU PSC (AU CMPCRD, 2018, p. 4). Acting on this request, the AU PSC approved the deployment of a Technical and Multi-Disciplinary Needs Assessment Mission to the Republic The Gambia during its meeting on 29 March 2017 (AU Peace and Security Department 2018, 35). This assessment, mission chaired by former President Pierre Buyoya, was despatched to The Gambia from 13 to 19 May 2017 (AU Peace and Security Department 2018, 35).²⁰³ The focus of the evaluation exercise was centred on three priority areas: national dialogue and reconciliation; security sector reforms; and socio-economic transformation (Wachira 2017, 34).²⁰⁴

After completing this exercise, the Mission submitted its report, which was communicated by the Chairperson of the AU Commission to the AU PSC on 15 June 2017 during its 694th meeting. The decision of African interveners at the level of the AU PSC on which areas to support The Gambia as a way of facilitating lasting stability in its polity was very specific. In this regard, they resolved to focus on reconstructing and reforming the national security structures of The Gambia as well as its human rights and the rule of law institutions. According to the communique issued at the end of the meeting, African leaders request the AU Commission “to provide all necessary support for Security Sector Reform in The Gambia, including the immediate secondment, by AU Member States... of five (5) staff officers to support the *reorganization* of The Gambian Armed Forces” (my emphasis) (AU PSC 2017b). In the same vein, they ask the AU Commission “to deploy three (3) Human Rights Experts, as well as a Senior Rule of Law Adviser in The Gambia and other Experts to assist in the process of transitional justice” (AU PSC 2017b). By concentrating on this ‘technical’ project, African leaders resolved to overhaul, transform and modernise the country’s socio-political structures in areas of security, human rights and the rule of

²⁰² AUO#8 (Appendix 1).

²⁰³ This assessment exercise also involved the participation of the representative(s) of the UN.

²⁰⁴ Of course, this act of dispatching mission to assess and identify the needs of a post-conflict state is in line with the African framework on inter-departmental task force on Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) that was launched in May 2016 (African Union Commission 2016d).

law within a context of democracy to regulate the character of its polity, particularly on the order of liberal peace.

As I discussed in Chapter Four, it is an established convention within the African security regionalism for the AU Commission to expedite action on the resolutions of African leaders, especially as agreed on at the level of the PSC. As stated in Article 10 (3a) of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the PSC, for instance, it is the responsibility of the Chairperson of the AU Commission to “ensure the implementation and follow-up of the decisions of the Peace and Security Council” (African Union 2002). Accordingly, the AU Commission did not exercise any form of unnecessary delay in carrying out the decisions of African leaders on The Gambia. In September 2018, the African Union Technical Support to the Gambia (AUTSTG), which is an expert team of ten (10) members, was officially deployed by African actors to The Gambia (Khadiagala 2021, 208). One of my respondents notes that one of the broad ideas guiding this intervention through the deployment of the AUTSTG is not unconnected to the African Solidarity Initiative (ASI) framework that foregrounds the ethos of ‘Africa Helping Africa’ (African Union 2012c).²⁰⁵ The activation of this technical approach state/peacebuilding marked a new phase in the African intervention in the country.²⁰⁶ The deployment of two out of these ten (10) experts was, however, delayed due to the Moratorium imposed by the AU Executive Council in 2018 on the recruitment of short-term staff.²⁰⁷ The AUTSTG, which comprises senior military advisers, senior human rights expert(s) and senior rule of law expert(s) (AU CMPCRD, 2018), is an interventionist mission designed by African actors to “provide expertise to the government on the rule of law, democracy, transitional justice, human rights], and security sector transformation” (Khadiagala 2021, 208). It is from a similar standpoint that Mutangadura (2019) describes the AUTSTG as a consciously designed technical mechanism that “provides advice to The Gambia’s government on [the] rule of law, democracy, transnational justice and security sector transformation.”

Since the AUTSTG was deployed in September 2018, the Mission made a deliberate attempt towards the rebuilding, reconstruction, reorganisation and social engineering of the Gambia’s socio-political structures. As a centralised operation, the AUTSTG experts are positioned in different strategic institutional structures of the Gambia’s

²⁰⁵ RAS#5 (Appendix 1). For more details on the ASI in African security regionalism, see African Union (2012c) and Obamamoye (2020).

²⁰⁶ It is from this lens that Singh and Forti (2020, 20) characterize this undertaking as “a unique model of... [African peacebuilding] engagement”.

²⁰⁷ See, Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Activities of the African Union Technical Support Team (AUTSTG) within the context of National Institutional Reforms in The Gambia, August 2020, para. 10.

polity. Some of these pivotal national institutions include the “Office of the National security Adviser, Office of the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Defence, Office of Chief Defence Staff of the Gambia Armed Forces (GAF), Ministry of Internal Affairs, National Human Right Commission, Truth Commission, and the Constitutional Review Commission” (AU CMPCRD, 2018, p. 4). Some of the methods adopted by the AUTSTG in recasting and revamping the security, human rights and the rule of law sectors of The Gambia include capacity building, offering of expert advice, policy development and establishment of institutions.²⁰⁸ In the aspect of capacity building, workshops and consultative forums were organised modulate the orientations and perspectives of the Gambia’s local actors. As an instance, from 12 to 14 December 2018, the AUTSTG in collaboration with the AU Commission organised a consultative dialogue in Banjul, that involved the participation of the AUTSTG experts, representatives of the AU Liaison Offices/Missions, and officials of the Gambia’s government (AU Commission 2018a). While focusing on the theme *Enhancing the Integration of Rule of Law, Security Sector Reform, Transitional Justice and Governance into Stabilisation Effort*, the consultative forum was specifically devised to equip the Gambia’s government officials on the intertwined connections between the practices of the rule of law, transitional justice, security sector reform and sustainable peace as related to the post-crisis Gambia (AU Commission 2018a). As such, some of the ideas discussed during this workshop were directly incorporated into the Gambia’s strategic peacebuilding strategic framework.

Concerning the offering of expert advice, policy development and institution establishment, the AUTSTG utilised these methods to advance some structural changes in the Gambia’s polity. The two key sectors that were most impacted in this African social engineering project are the Gambia’s security and justice sectors. The AUTSTG has carried out some purposive operational activities aimed at reformatting and rebuilding the country’s national security and justice architecture in a way that could support the creation of a liberal form of peace. In the security sector, the AUTSTG facilitated the development of the Gambia’s National Security Policy. Based on the empirical evidence I gathered, the recently launched National Security Policy, which the AUTSTG facilitates, is the first of its kind in the history of The Gambia. This was also made known by the AU PSC when it noted that the AUTSTG has put in great efforts “in discharging its mandate of providing technical support to relevant Gambian defense and security sector institutions in the area capacity building, which has seen

²⁰⁸ ASA#8 (Appendix 1).

the country developing its first ever National Security Policy” (AU PSC 2019). In the same vein, military experts of the AUTSTG have helped the government of The Gambia to draft its National Security Council Act which would serve as the overriding guiding framework for national security actors in the country (AU PSC 2019d). Some other tangible transformative operations of the AUTSTG in this regard include the restructuring of the Gambia’s Ministry of Defence and re-organization of the Gambia Armed Forces for efficient administration of personnel, operations, training and civilian-military cooperation.²⁰⁹

Regarding the Gambia’s justice system, the AUTSTG attempted some reforms that were tailored to promote both the rule of law and human rights in The Gambia’s socio-political space. To firmly establish the culture of the rule of law in The Gambia, the AUTSTG, through its Senior rule of law expert that was attached to the Gambia’s Ministries of Interior and Justice, coordinated the reorganisation and restructuring of the Gambia’s Police Force and Prisons system. This was reflected in the August 2020 report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on African regional activities in The Gambia. According to the report:

The Senior Rule of Law Expert embedded in the Ministry of Interior has been and continues to provide technical support on the reform of the justice system, and rule of law, as well as reform of The Gambia Police Force and Prisons. The Expert also collaborates with the Ministry of Justice and has worked with a Technical Team to re-draft the Prisons Act. Within the period of the deployment, the expert has assisted the Ministry of Interior in developing proper coordination and supervisory mechanisms over the security institutions under the Ministry.²¹⁰

In the realm of promotion of human rights, the AUTSTG steered and guided the process that led to the operationalisation of the Gambia’s National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). The Act establishing the Gambia’s NHRC was only passed by the Gambian Parliament in December 2017 but assented to by the Gambian President in January 2018.²¹¹ This shows how inexperienced the institution of the NHRC was in term of commitment to the creation of the culture of respect for individual human rights in the Gambia’s social space before the AUTSTG was deployed. With its deployment,

²⁰⁹ Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Activities of the African Union Technical Support Team (AUTSTG) within the context of National Institutional Reforms in The Gambia, August 2020, paras. 16, 17.

²¹⁰ Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Activities of the African Union Technical Support Team (AUTSTG) within the context of National Institutional Reforms in The Gambia, August 2020, para. 18.

²¹¹ See the 2017 National Human Rights Commission Act of The Gambia.

because of the deemed centrality of the NHRC in facilitating societal peace, AUTSTG specifically played a key role in operationalising the Commission.²¹² Subsequently, the AUTSTG provided expert assistance, in collaboration with the Chairperson of the NHRC, to review the Act, which establishes the NHRC to ensure that its provisions conform with the international best practices. In this regard, the AUTSTG used global human rights instruments as benchmark documents for revising Gambia's NHRC. The August 2020 report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission further makes these human rights reformist operations of African interveners explicit when it notes that:

The AU Human Rights Expert has effectively supported the [Gambia's] National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) since its operationalization and the Ministry of Justice on technical issues, the NHRC's set-up and policy developments. The Experts reviewed the National Human Rights Commission Act and provided advice on how certain provisions of that law could be amended to conform to the Paris Principles (UN principles on the status and functioning of national human rights institutions). The Expert provided advice to the Ministry of Justice on the process for developing a national human rights policy. The Human Rights Expert... conducted an induction for members of the NHRC. Activities at the event included familiarizing Commissioners with African and UN human rights systems and instruments, and how the NHRC could engage with the two systems as part of its mandate to promote and effectively protect human rights at the national level... The NHRC, with the technical support of the AUTSTG Human Rights Expert, has formulated guidelines and standards to support institutional capacity building of law enforcement and rule of law actors as a measure to nurture a culture of respect for human rights within State institutions.²¹³

In liberal ideological thinking, there seems to be a consensus that liberal democratic governance can rarely succeed in any political society without strong support from the very institutions that promote security, individual human rights and the rule of law. From this purview, analysts have growingly delineated the capacity building of institutions in the aftermath of conflict as an integral component of the liberal peace project. For instance, while Jabri (2010, 53) argues that liberal peace project usually portrays itself "in terms of institution-building and governance", Chandler (2007, 594) contends that institution-building practices are elemental for undertaking liberal

²¹² According to an internal document obtained at the African Union Commission in August 2019.

²¹³ Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the Activities of the African Union Technical Support Team (AUTSTG) within the context of National Institutional Reforms in The Gambia, August 2020, paras, 19, 21.

state/peacebuilding project. Paris (2006, 434) gives his account of this analysis when he asserts that creating strong institutions is required to prevent post-conflict societies from deviating from liberal democratic practices. These contentions, in essence, corroborate the argument put forward by Duffield (2001, 11) that the act of reforming social, security, legal, civil and representative institutions of a post-conflict state for stability purposes is a constitutive element of conceptual liberal peace. In other words, when a technical reformatting of state institutions and structures is undertaken by external agents in the context of state/peacebuilding, it is a manifestation of a liberal peace intervention (Mac Ginty 2011, 40).

By its very nature, AUTSTG is a social engineering project that is meant to transform the socio-political culture of the Gambia's polity in a way that favours liberal peace ordering (Mutangadura 2019). It has a top-down constructive mandate designed for reconstructing and rebuilding the capacity of important liberal democratic institutions in forging peace (Khadiagala 2021, 208). The fourth progress report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission on PCRD echoes that "the AUTSTG is mandated to support efforts of the Government [of The Gambia] in promoting peace, stability, and respect for human rights, through the provision of technical expertise for the reform of its Security Sector, Transitional Justice, and Rule of Law sectors."²¹⁴ The three major sectors at the centre of these operations (security, human rights, and the rule of law/justice) are considered central for the survival of liberal democratic ethos in post-crisis Gambia. This, by implication, reveals how these African *technical approaches* to state/peace intervention in The Gambia conform to the epistemology and assumptions of the liberal peace framework. The liberal ideological dimension of such a technical ordering project propelled the submission by Bukovansky (2007, 184) that:

[The use of the term 'technical assistance' to describe a broad array of policies designed to disseminate proper institutional forms from the liberal core to the non-liberal or quasi-liberal periphery is symbolic of the prevailing wisdom. Sending advisors who show local authorities how to set up elections or courts or banking systems is presented as a technical rather than a political act. Calling such dissemination of ideas 'technical' links them to science and engineering, rather than politics and ethics. It gives them an aura of value-neutrality and scientific validity.

²¹⁴ A copy of this document – Fourth Progress Report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the AU's efforts on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development in Africa – was obtained during my fieldwork to the African Union Commission in August 2019.

7.3 Discussion: Unpacking Underpinnings for African Liberal Peace Intervention in The Gambia

In the preceding section, I discussed how African agents, through their mechanisms of the AU, ECOWAS and AUTSTG, intervened in the internal affairs of the Gambia in their collective effort to rebuild peace in the country in the aftermath of its post-election crisis. In this process, I dissected how the first phase of the African intervention in the country, which involved the mobilisation of military forces, was specifically designed to consolidate democratic political governance in the country. I equally showed how the second phase of their intervention in the country involved a conscious attempt at state/peacebuilding through technical advice and social engineering to regulate societal behaviour along the liberal lines.²¹⁵ I argued in the course of this empirical analysis that the form of intervention carried out by African actors in The Gambia is a typical liberal one that conforms to the canonical liberal epistemology, which prioritises the advancement of liberal normative values of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law as the surest route for forging durable peace. A key question that is worth asking at this juncture is why did African actors prioritise the liberal peace epistemology in the instance of their peace projects in The Gambia? This resembles a question broached by Clapton (2014, 3) in the context of Western interventions that: “what has compelled Western states to intervene in particular territories in order to promote liberalism and democracy?”.

In this section, I change the direction of my discussion from dissecting *how* African actors carried out liberal intervention in The Gambia to interrogate *why* African agents deployed the liberal peace framework as an approach to peace formation in the country. This section, therefore, constitutes the discussion component of this chapter where I closely anatomise what underpins the deployment of the liberal peace formula by African interveners as a pathway to stability and peace in The Gambia. Because the lens of the ‘neo-imperialist intentionality framework’ of the mainstream scholarship proves to be inappropriate on the basis of my empirical findings, I undertake this course of action through the lens of the neo-Gramscian framework hegemony as elaborately discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis. To carry out this analysis, I divide this section into two subsections. In the first part, I look at the causal influence of common sense in African actors’ commitment to liberal peace transformative projects in The Gambia. In the second part, I elucidate how liberal hegemony

²¹⁵ This transformative approach to state/peacebuilding on the basis of the prescriptive ordering principle of liberal peace resembles a project characterised by Call and Wyeth (2008) as ‘building state for building [liberal] peace’.

generated local consent for African liberal intervention in the Gambia. On the whole, across these subsections, I argue that – just like in the previous two cases – the activation of African interveners’ agency in liberal peace intervention in The Gambia is propelled by their consent to, and acceptance of, the assumptions of liberal ideology and its variant of liberal peace within the context of hegemony and common sense.

7.3.1 *Consenting to Common Sense: African Liberal Transformative Project in The Gambia*

At the heart of the driving force for African agency in the liberal transformative project in The Gambia is the issue of common sense as consciously elucidated and advanced by Gramsci in his *Prison Notebooks*. In Gramsci theorising, as I expatiated in Chapter Three of this thesis, the existence of consent to common sense is a pivotal factor that could propel the voluntary agency of a group of nonhegemonic actors in the ideological project of the historic bloc. As constitutive of “the traditional popular conception of the world” and “popular beliefs... [that] are themselves material forces” (Gramsci 1971, 165, 199), the acceptance and institutionalisation of common sense on the part of nonhegemonic actors make them susceptible to its “taken-for-granted truth” (Hopf 2013, 321), hinder their critical capacity to question its origins or consequences and give room for initiating their voluntary, but unconscious, agency in the reproduction of the hegemonic conception of the world as historically designed by the dominant social group. This act of consenting to common sense – which is “the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become “common”” (Gramsci 1971, 322) – played a crucial role in activating the agency of African interveners in liberal social engineering in The Gambia.

Long before the beginning of their engagement with peace formation in The Gambia, African interveners had embraced the prevailing liberal peace paradigm as the *only* surest approach to fostering peace in (post-)conflict societies. Within the context of their consent to this ideological positionality, they believe strongly in democratic governance, which places unparalleled emphasis on the centrality of liberal institutional structures as the foundations for inventing peace and stability in the polity of any country emerging from conflict. In this regard, they uphold (without questioning) the dominant assertion that it takes the existence of an efficient liberal democratic order with functioning liberal institutions for sustainable peace to be assured in an organised society. Increasingly, as I have demonstrated in Chapter Four, this liberal standpoint about peace reconstruction has expressly been institutionalised by African

actors as the overarching theoretical framework for guiding the scope of their peace interventions. Drawing attention to this pre-existing taken-for-granted again is particularly important (as a starting point) to underscore the role of common sense in African liberal transformative operations in The Gambia.

Two of the key African peace instruments that are worth dissecting to unearth this prior African consensus on liberal social engineering for peacebuilding purposes are the AU's Protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC and AU's policy framework on PCRD.²¹⁶ In paragraph 15 of the preamble to the Protocol relating to the establishment of the PSC, African actors assert expressly that "the development of strong democratic institutions" is "essential for the promotion of collective security, durable peace and stability" (African Union 2002). In Article 14(1) of the same Protocol, they further maintain that "establishment and development of [liberal] democratic institutions" are central and imperative to fostering lasting peace in post-conflict contexts (African Union 2002). In the same vein, when looking at the African framework on PCRD, it becomes more evident that African interveners have conceptually consented to the prominence of revamping liberal democratic structures in the matrix of peace interventional operations. In paragraph 3 of the framework, they state that the central rationale for relapse in post-conflict context is a function of "weakened or non-existence capacity at all levels, destroyed institutions and, the absence of a democratic culture, good governance, [the] rule of law and respect for human rights" (African Union 2006, para. 3). Accordingly, they emphasise in the framework that to avoid a scenario of relapse into violence, it is imperative to focus on revamping the capacity of government institutions across key sectors.²¹⁷

With respect to the security sector, they maintain in paragraph 25(c) of the framework that their peacebuilding interventions in post-conflict countries will "give priority to the (re)-establishment and strengthening of the capacity of security institutions". As regarding domestic political ordering, they stress in paragraph 36(d)(ii) of the framework that their interventions will concentrate on facilitating "the establishment and/or restoration of inclusive democratic public institutions." As concerning ensuring societal adherence to the principle of individual human rights, they emphasise in paragraph 41(a)(v) of the framework that their peace operations will "promote

²¹⁶ As I noted previously, Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) is the African actors' conceptual terminology for state/peacebuilding. In the course of my interview with an African scholar on 3 June 2020, she reminded me of the interchangeable usage of PCRD and state/peacebuilding in African peace and security lexicon.

²¹⁷ For details on this, see, for instance, paragraphs 20, 25(c), 32 (c), 36 (d), 37 (f) of the AU's Policy on PCRD.

institution-building of national structures mandated to promote and protect human rights.” What is evident from the above is a glimpse of the pre-existing African consent to the prevailing common sense that reviving liberal democratic structures is a *sine qua non* for reinventing peace before their peace operations in The Gambia.²¹⁸

As Augelli and Murphy (1988, 18, 20) remind us, “The clutter of common sense makes critical reflection difficult” and its accounts for why “we rarely question why we think and act, but, rather, regard our ways of thinking and acting as absolutely objective and eternal and, as such, needing no deep study into their origins or consequences”. This specifically played out in the African intervention in The Gambia. When the Gambia’s new administration requested for the assistance of African actors in its post-crisis peace projects (AU CMPCRD, 2018, p. 4), African regional actors could not “but start in the first place from common sense” (Gramsci 1971, 425). As I pointed out earlier, what they did in this regard was to deploy a Technical and Multi-Disciplinary Needs Assessment Mission chaired by former President Pierre Buyoya to The Gambia from 13 to 19 May 2017 (AU Peace and Security Department 2018, 35). The essence of dispatching such a ‘Needs Assessment Mission’ – which is in line with the conventional ethos of African security practices – to identify where support is precisely required for the Gambia’s state/peacebuilding project. In other words, the mission was designed basically to use the liberal peace common-sense standard that is already embraced by African interveners to assess the Gambia’s polity in order to determine what is missing on the path to sustainable peace in the country. In this case, their focus was centred on three priority areas: national dialogue and reconciliation; security sector reforms; and socio-economic transformation (Wachira 2017, 34).²¹⁹

According to the report of the Mission which was communicated by the Chairperson of the AU Commission to the AU PSC on 15 June 2017 during its 694th meeting, the institutional and structural configurations of the country’s polity were not in line with the assumptions of the liberal peace paradigm.²²⁰ One of my respondents who is familiar with the African intervention in The Gambia recounted this finding when she notes that a key reality that came to the attention of African regional actors in the process of their assessment was that “during the twenty-two years [administration] of the former the Gambian President, Yahya Jammeh, there were a lot of institutional

²¹⁸ Of course, I discussed in extenso in chapter four of this thesis, the activation of their voluntary consent in this regard is not without a history.

²¹⁹ See High Level Technical and Multi-Disciplinary Needs Assessment to the Republic of the Gambia: Mission Report 13-19 May 2017 presented at the Peace and Security Council 694th Meeting, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 15 June 2017 PSC/PR/RPT. (DCXCIV).

²²⁰ Ibid.

weaknesses and structural inconsistencies within the country, particularly in the context of security and justice sectors” that are inimical to domestic stability and peace.²²¹ Because common sense “influences moral conduct and the direction of will” (Gramsci 1971, 333), when African leaders at the level of the AU PSC were deciding on 15 June 2017 on what should be their epistemological approach to the Gambia’s peace project, they foreclose other possibilities outside the liberal top-down transformative approach. In this regard, they resolved on the prevailing liberal peace thinking that externally assisted technical transformation of The Gambia’s security sector and the revamping of its human rights, and the rule of law structures would provide a needed foundation for inventing lasting peace and stability in The Gambia.²²² As a reflection of common sense, they strongly believe in this liberal peace transformative formula. This underscores the conclusive avowal of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, on 28 January 2020 that the “current [Gambia’s] reform processes... will contribute towards socio-economic development [and stability] in the country” (AU Commission 2020a).

Some of the respondents I talked to in this regard emphasise a similar point on how the epistemological and methodological approach of African actors to state/peacebuilding project in The Gambia was not an accident but rather a representation of the cognitive positionality of African actors in terms of what they strongly consented to through the mechanism of the AU. One of my interviewees, who is a scholar researching the African intervention in The Gambia, notes that “at a more epistemological level, deploying technical expertise for institution-building in The Gambia as a way of building peace receives acceptance and strong enthusiasm within the institutional space of the African Union... [and] on the ideological level, this pattern of African actors’ intervention in The Gambia is a reflection of their embraced worldview on how peace could be reinvented and sustained”.²²³ Another respondent raises a similar point by his broad categorisation of the conventional peace methodology of African interveners, which in essence further demonstrates the relevance of common sense in their operationalisation of liberal technocratic and expert-driven approach in The Gambia. While focusing on the AU as an entity representing the collective agency of African actors, he notes that:

...AU has not been able to fundamentally move away from that particular [liberal peace] project... [Its] emphasis has always been on the re-engineering of the

²²¹ ASA#8 (Appendix 1).

²²² See AU PSC (2017b).

²²³ ASA#8 (Appendix 1).

state... in a way that the state becomes a classic liberal Western state with all the trappings of sovereignty... AU approach to peacebuilding is [also] top-down and technocratic in the sense that AU has a number of specific actors who often aware of what they considered to be the best way to build peace which is often expert-driven in a way that reflects their cognitive orientations... [Lastly], AU peacebuilding is [also] not in any way meant to change the Westphalian state system as presently constituted... AU is not interested in opening the system for a new political arrangement to emerge... [It] is a taboo you cannot go to the AU and talk about the possibility of a different political system... Why is the AU doing this? [This is] because the AU is made up of a collection of elites schooled, grounded, [and] socialised within a liberal mindset... [In other words] AU is a collection of elites who have been socialised to think that the liberal [peace] model is the only game in town.²²⁴

7.3.2 Local Consent to Hegemony and African Liberal Intervention in The Gambia

It is increasingly becoming a prevailing narrative in the mainstream critical intervention scholarship that liberal interventions in the form of social engineering are *externally imposed* projects of dispossession. One of the scholars that ‘recently’ advanced this line of argument is Vivienne Jabri. In her words, “the liberal peace project is not a project of peace as such, *one that would recognise the self-determination of others*, but is rather a project of dispossession, one that seeks to depoliticise the temporal and spatial articulation of selfhood in place of a globally affirmed, institutionalised discourse that seeks conformity to a liberal international political economy” (my emphasis) (Jabri 2010, 48). But as I will further show in the case of African peace intervention in The Gambia, this outright rejection of self-determination of local agents is *not always* the case. While such a perspective is not necessarily inaccurate, its theoretical lens is based on coercive empire-building of Western actors, which could not help us navigate what happens when local actors desire the same undertaking and, in the process, influences its operationalisation. In other words, whereas the agency of non-Western local actors in driving liberal social engineering could present a puzzle for an analysis using *solely* neo-imperialist framework, the same is not the case when the neo-Gramscian analytical framework of ‘consent’ in the context of hegemony is deployed. As Gramsci (1971, 12) has contended, when hegemony is invoked at the level of

²²⁴ ASA#5 (Appendix 1).

ideology in a given society, it presents a structural constraint on societal thinking and allows:

The "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; [and] this consent is "historically" caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.²²⁵

In the above subsection above, I have argued based on my findings that the consent of African interveners to common sense of liberal peace was at the heart of their liberal transformative intervention in The Gambia. As I will discuss in this subsection, this collectivist acceptance of the liberal peace formula at the regional level also meets the consent of the Gambia's local actors,²²⁶ which further strengthens and emboldens the resolve of African interveners to carry out liberal social engineering operations in The Gambia. It is a development that reinforces the contention put forward by Pasha (2013, 146) that what is often silent in the broad normative discourse of the hegemonic order "is the willing acquiescence of postcolonial elites to the expectations of hegemony."

As I pointed out previously, right from the end of the 2016 political impasse in The Gambia (after the initial diplomatic and military intervention of African agents), the new administration under the leadership of Adama Barrow made its position known on the need for a structural reform project in The Gambia. According to my findings, this is not just the interest of President Adama Barrow and a few political elites alone, but rather represents the interest of constituency of the Gambians that voted for Adama Barrow in the December 2016 presidential elections. The type of reformist programme that the new administration was yearning for is the one that aims at altering the structural configuration of the Gambia's polity in a way that would deepen or reinvent liberal democratic ordering in the country. Of course, this is due to the buy-in from local actors in the prevailing idea that peace is only sustainable in a liberal democratic polity where values such as democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law make strides.

During his first news conference on 29 January 2017 after returning to The Gambia, President Adama Barrow promised that his administration would specifically commit

²²⁵ As I have argued in Chapter Three of this thesis, the only set of nonhegemonic actors that *may* escape such a structural constraint or given of consent are those that own coherent alternative ideology, not disempowered historically and committed to counterhegemony.

²²⁶ My usage of local actors here incorporates national actors. I, however, know that both are not always the same.

to security and socio-political reforms in The Gambia (Aljazeera 2017). Within the confines of this task, his administration in December 2017 developed and launched the Gambia's National Development Plan (NDP) (2018-2021) to serve as the roadmap for guiding national actions in the next four years. Part of the top priorities identified in the NDP centred the necessity of restoring "good [democratic] governance, respect for human rights, [and] the rule of law" through strategies such as 'strengthening [of] public institutions" (The Gambia 2017). In his foreword to the NDP, President Barrow specifically makes the liberal transformative agenda of his administration more evident when he notes that:

On 2nd December 2016, Gambians with great courage, determination and dignity decided to take back their country after 22 years of dictatorship. During this period, the abuse of power and total disregard for our constitution, the rule of law and respect for fundamental human rights of citizens reigned supreme. This historic decision that ushered in the "new Gambia" has created a seismic shift in our country's trajectory since gaining independence in 1965. *It heralds a new chapter in our history and offers a renewed opportunity to build a modern accountable state based on the foundations of democracy, good governance, [and] respect for human rights* (my emphasis) (The Gambia 2017, 3).

A year later, during an interview, while particularly focusing on the security aspect of the aspired reforms, President Barrow re-emphasised how the overarching goal of such a transformative project was to advance a liberal democratic polity that is needed to foster sustainable peace in The Gambia. In his words:

We are going in for reforms. In those reforms, I think this security [sector] is part of it. They [African troops] cannot just leave prematurely. We have to reform our security sector... We want to educate them [The Gambia's military personnel]. I am [also] the Minister of Defence... I think I'm doing that to make sure I have one of the best Army in Africa. *And I want that to be part of my legacy so that the process of democracy will continue... this is what we [his administration and Gambians] want in this country.* And I think the military has a very important role as far as democracy is concerned... so that they know how to operate in a civilian government, [and] in a democratic process. This is very significant. *If they are part of the democratic process, [and] they accepted, then that means The Gambia will move on* (TRT World 2018).

As shown in these excerpts, even before African regional actors commenced liberal social engineering of the Gambia's polity, there was an existence of local consent to the notion that peace and development in post-crisis Gambia depend on inventing a liberal normative order in the country.²²⁷ To this end, the key agenda of the new administration was to secure external assistance and support along those lines. In January 2018, when the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Smail Chergui, received the Gambian Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and Gambians Abroad, Ousainou Darboe, the latter stressed the importance of institutional restructuring to manage Gambia's post-crisis security challenges (African Union Commission 2018d). To pursue this further, on 29 March 2017, the Gambia's government officially requested for the *technical* assistance of the African regional community in specific areas that are judged crucial for (re)inventing a liberal societal order such as security, justice and human rights sectors (AU CMPCRD, 2018, p. 4). One of the AU officials I interviewed pointed attention to this development during our conversation. In his account, he notes:

At the moment we [African actors] are supporting the Gambian government with a technical support team... we responded to a request from the government of The Gambia to provide them support in four key areas: transitional justice, the rule of law, human rights and improving the economy. Improving the economy is not our area, so we focus on the [first] three. As we speak, we have eight officials – six of them serving military officials – deployed [to] The Gambian national institutions where they are supporting the security and defence sector reform processes. We have two civilians; one deployed to the National Human Rights Commission [and] the other one deployed to the Ministry of Interior, supporting the issue of the rule of law.²²⁸

Of course, this specificity on the part of the Gambia's government on technical and capacity-building assistance for liberal transformation and social engineering of the Gambia's polity was not without its consequences on the actions of African interveners as pertaining to The Gambia. What it did in this regard was to strengthen the existing belief of African actors in the liberal peace formula and embolden their assurance in common sense of liberal social engineering as the route to sustainable stability in The Gambia. In other words, this shared consent in the context of liberal hegemony contributed to why African security agents found the capacity-building approach

²²⁷ ASA#8 (Appendix 1).

²²⁸ AUO#8 (Appendix 1).

unproblematic in their operations in the country. One of the respondents I talked to on African intervention in The Gambia pointed my attention to this local consent as a causal variable. She notes in this regard that:

[The action of African actors in The Gambia] allows the national leadership and ownership of peacebuilding [processes]... African Union has only acted as an implementation partner of the plans that have been developed by the government as outlined in the [Gambian] National Development Plan... [In other words], the African Union allowed the government [of the Gambia] to determine what it wants, and then the organisation play a supportive role to that rather than trying to set the course of what should have been the pattern of peacebuilding in The Gambia.²²⁹

This reality of the local aspect of consent to liberal democratic ordering in The Gambia corroborates the responses provided by a research consultant who is directly involved in monitoring and analysing African actors' peace intervention. In the course of my discussion with her, she submits that:

You could say this [African liberal approach to peace] is a Western model that is now imposed on Africa, but I have a feeling that it surpassed it... and that young people [across Africa] want to have [liberal democratic] political systems... What we have seen is that ordinary [African] citizens want democracy [and, therefore, a liberal democratic polity].

7.4 Conclusion

The question of “what has compelled... states to intervene in order to promote liberalism and democracy” (Clapton 2014, 3) and not other forms of order is increasingly eliciting the interest of analysts in recent times. Nonetheless, except each of these interventions is properly explored and dissected, the associated why-questions would hardly be uncovered. The grasping of this point contributed to the basis for this chapter. To this end, what I have done in this chapter has been to interrogate and explain the agency of African actors in liberal peace intervention in The Gambia, particularly in the wake of the 2016 post-election crisis in the country. In this process, I have discussed how African regional actors intervened in the domestic affairs of The Gambia with an initial focus on consolidating democracy and later transforming the polity of the country through the mechanism of the AUTSTG

²²⁹ ASA#8 (Appendix 1).

according to the order of liberal democratic peace. In the course of my analysis in this chapter, I have advanced two key arguments. First, I have argued that the undertaking of African actors in The Gambia is an instance of intervention that falls under the rubric of the liberal peace project. This is not unconnected to how their intervention operations valorised technical (re)building of security, justice, human rights, and the rule of law institutions mainly to embed liberal democratic culture in the country for fostering lasting peace.

Second, I equally argued in this chapter that African regional actors activated their agency in liberal peace intervention in The Gambia because they consented to the popular assumptions that liberal democratic order is a prerequisite for durable peace. As my findings revealed, this 'voluntary' acquiesce to the liberal peace formula was not only manifesting at the level of the cognitive configuration of the African security community but also within the Gambia's polity. To elucidate such a development as a causal variable in this sense, I have drawn on the neo-Gramscian conceptual tools of hegemony and common sense as explicated in Chapter Three of this thesis. What the above findings further demonstrate is that while the state/peacebuilding interventionist approach of African actors in The Gambia was not resisting the creation of liberal order as advanced by the Western historic bloc, its overarching driving force was not a deliberate intention to build a new Western empire. Rather, their agency in the liberal peace project in the country was a demonstration of the structural influence of (consenting to) common sense.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

Bandung was initially a protest against Western arrogance, but its aspirations could only materialize in the idiom of modernity... [Hence, though the] subaltern does speak, but speaks in the idiom of hegemony.

Mustapha Kamal Pasha, 2013²³⁰

The above quote from Mustapha Pasha constitutes part of his reflection on the contemporary existence of nonhegemonic agency amid structural constraints of Western modernity. While using Afro-Asian Bandung Conference of 1955 as an epochal reference point, Pasha underscores how the empirical awakening of the ex-colonial world in the context of the socio-political and intellectual ordering of the world only ended up in reinforcing the established ideological agenda of the dominant West. For him, even though the nonhegemonic agency does manifest as a critical reaction to the logic of Eurocentric hegemony, its eventual articulation could not operate outside the remit of the ideological expression invented by the very agents of hegemony. From this standpoint, he submits that the *subaltern does speak but speaks in the idiom of hegemony*.

Why is pointing attention to a reflection like that of Pasha important at this juncture? It is important because it reminds us of the usefulness of critical scholarship in modern times. For one, critical scholarship – particularly the ones that draw on neo-Gramscian, decolonial and postcolonial thoughts – has become an important intellectual weapon for dissecting the asymmetrical configurations of the global society at the levels of thinking and practice by standing “apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how that order came about” (Cox 1981, 129). It constitutes an important philosophical standpoint for “reminding us that, while it does not seem so, we do not live in a world without any alternatives” (Kurki 2011, 146). At many instances when the practitioners of international relations (from both Western and non-Western worlds) seem to take the modern reality of co-existence of modernity and coloniality²³¹ for granted, critical scholarship often serves as a deconstructive lens for unpacking whose civilisation is

²³⁰ This excerpt is taken from the contribution of Mustapha Pasha to the edited volume titled *Postcolonial Theory and International Relations: A Critical Introduction*. For more detail on this, see Pasha (2013, 154)

²³¹ For detail analyses on this co-existence of modernity and coloniality, particularly from a decolonial standpoint, see Quijano (2007) and Mignolo (2011).

reigning and why certain civilisations are perpetually characterised as illegitimate in the global matrix of thinking and doing. However, even critical scholarship has been forthcoming in this regard, only limited attention has been made to deploy its analytical substance to navigate how and why some non-Western interveners, particularly those from the ex-colonial world, are operating in the hegemonic ideology of peace as historically invented by Western agents. My thinking along these lines contributes to what *eventually* motivated my interest is this thesis's subject matter.

In what follows in this chapter, I present the concluding discussion of this thesis. In the first section, I will re-articulate the essence of this thesis, the key research question that the thesis has been investigating, the approaches it adopted and what constitutes its empirical findings. In the second section, I will enunciate the main contribution of this thesis to the critical IR scholarship on international intervention. Finally, in the third section, I will briefly reflect on the implications of these findings and, in the process, suggest a future research agenda.

8.1 Recapturing the Subject, Approaches and Findings of this Thesis

The puzzle that animated this thesis was at the intersection of empirical developments and the state of the literature on international intervention. On the empirical side of the story, African international actors, who are located in the ex-colonial world, are deploying the epistemology of the liberal peace in their undertakings of peace formation across some (post-)conflict contexts in Africa. In this regard, these postcolonial African actors committed to creating a liberal form of society where normative values of democracy, the rule of law and human rights are guaranteed to build sustainable peace and stability. However, when connecting this development to the state of the literature on intervention, it presents a puzzling scenario. This is particularly because, as I discussed elaborately in Chapter Two, the mainstream critical scholarship on intervention has recognised the liberal peace intervention as a neo-imperialist project of the West. This mainstream narrative (which needs to be taken seriously) further maintains that the reason why Western actors are committed to this liberal project lies in their *deliberate intention* to build a new Western liberal empire across the global South (Ignatieff 2003, 2, 3, Chomsky 1999, 11, Wai 2014, Pugh 2006).

Informed by the dominance of this explanation, it, therefore, presents a conundrum when thinking about the agency of African actors in liberal peace intervention. To this end, this thesis has asked the central question '*why did African interveners activate their agency in liberal peace interventions?*' as a way of contributing to this intellectual discourse. Hence, the central aim of this thesis has been to explore and elucidate the agency of African interveners in the Western ideological and political project of liberal peace, as Duffield (2001, 11) reminds us that "liberal peace is a political project in its own right". It takes 'the active and even leading role' of African agents seriously in the prevailing undertakings of the liberal approach to peace (in Africa) (Death and Gabay 2014, 2). Therefore, as a scholarly intervention, this thesis is embedded within the broad ontological standpoint of positioning non-Western actors as a subject of analysis in liberal peace intervention debates for mitigating the often-emphasised Eurocentrism in IR discipline (Sabaratnam 2013, Shilliam 2011, Acharya and Buzan 2019).

As a way of investigating and answering the question I raised in this thesis, I applied a qualitative research methodology that foregrounds the utility of interview data, archival/official materials, and a combination of historical and discourse analyses. For a robust contextual analysis, I drew on these approaches in Chapters Five, Six and Seven to empirically make sense of the agency of African actors in liberal peace interventions in the cases of Somalia, South Sudan, and The Gambia, respectively. To complement this empirical probing process, in Chapter Four, I zoomed in on the specific historical junctures at which African regional actors collectively committed to the liberal ordering epistemology as the pathway for reinventing lasting peace in post-conflict contexts.

While applying this methodological process, the findings of this thesis are illuminating in providing a clue to its central research question. First, across these cases, my findings corroborate what initially informed this study that African actors are unambiguously committed to the liberal peace framework as the operative paradigm in the process of their peace intervention in post-conflict African societies. In other words, their peace interventions are specifically "designed to promote liberal democratic institutions and forms of governance" (Clapton 2014, 3). In their intervention to forge peace in Somalia, they dislodged a locally legitimate non-liberal political ordering system and, thereafter adjusted the focus of their activities to re-engineering security apparatus and liberal democratic order. In South Sudan, to build peace, they focus on creating a liberal democratic polity, bringing violators of local and international law to book and entrenching a culture of respect for human rights and the

rule of law. In The Gambia, the same African interveners centred their peace efforts on consolidating democracy and social engineering of a liberal polity. Across these cases, as I have shown in Chapters Five, Six and Seven, African actors demonstrated their agency in the prevailing Western liberal peace project. It is a project that prioritises reforming socio-political structures of (post-)conflict non-Western societies to conform to the Western liberal democracy.

The second aspect of the findings of this thesis is that African actors were engaging in this liberal peace interventionist project because they consented to the model as the *only* pathway to sustainable peace. As I demonstrated in Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven, this consent occurred at two levels. At the regional level, gradually since the triumph of the Western liberal capitalist democracy in the late twentieth century, African actors have collectively agreed on (and institutionalised) the liberal democratic ordering as the *only* project suitable to (re)invent lasting peace and development. Also, at the local level (in the cases I investigated), there is a degree of consent to the same liberal reconstruction of peace. This is not, however, without some variations across these cases. Unlike in Somalia and The Gambia, where government policies were directed towards achieving this liberal ordering, some political elites in South Sudan are trying to avoid the punitive accountability component of the liberal peace programme.

While relying on these empirical findings, in Chapter Three, I discussed the theoretical framework that helps me to answer the why-question of this thesis. In this regard, I re-articulated the neo-Gramscian idea on hegemony and common sense. I showed how it offers useful analytical insights into the agency of a group of nonhegemonic actors in the hegemonic project of the dominant social group. To further advance this neo-Gramscian theorising while connecting it to this investigation, I *developed* a neo-Gramscian model for explaining nonhegemonic agency in hegemony. The model speaks more deeply into why some nonhegemonic actors are more susceptible to consent to hegemony and its common sense more than others. It relies on three determinants: *(non-)ownership of coherent alternative ideology*; *historical (dis)empowerment*; and *(non)commitment to counterhegemony*. While applying this neo-Gramscian analytical framework to answer its question, this thesis advances the central argument that African actors activated their agency in liberal peace interventions because they *consented* to the prevailing *common sense* of liberal peace (as the *only* ideological project suitable for inventing durable peace). This contention reinforces the recent assertion by Lehti and Pennanen (2020, 29) that the resilience

of “[l]iberal peace... could be approached from the Gramscian hegemonic perspective”. African actors’ consent to common sense of Western liberal peace was possible because they experienced historical disempowerment, and they currently lay no claim to coherent alternative ideology. In addition, they are presently not committed to countering Western liberal hegemony. Thus, because the “clutter of common sense makes critical reflection difficult” (Augelli and Murphy 1988, 20), African regional interveners have taken the ‘Western code’ of liberal peace for granted.²³² As a consequence, it stifles their critical reflection on its origin and consequences in the broad ideological ordering of the global society. It is, therefore, a situation of “hegemony and consent” (Gramsci 1971, 207), which reinforces the previous contention by Ikenberry (2011, 18) that the current “liberal international order is sustained through consent rather than balance or command”.

8.2 Underscoring the Contribution of this Thesis

The overarching essence of any academic research project revolves around attempting to expand the frontiers of knowledge. This thesis has not claimed an exception to this canonical rule as the pursuit of knowledge advancement constitutes its central goal. In the process of answering its central research question, this thesis has contributed to the mainstream IR critical scholarship on international intervention. In what follows, I briefly discuss this contribution which could be broadly categorised into empirical and theoretical components.

8.2.1 *Bringing in Non-Western Agency to the Discourse of Liberal Peace Interventions*

The central *empirical* contribution of this thesis to the mainstream scholarship on international intervention is that it innovatively brought the often-neglected agency of non-Western (African) actors to the discourse of liberal peace interventions. By so doing, it advances the scholarly discourse of liberal intervention by making non-Western actors a *subject of inquiry* rather than an object that is being acted upon. As I elaborately discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis, the previous gaze of liberal intervention scholarship had centred *exclusively* on the Western agents as a subject of analysis. In the same way, the local and hybrid turn scholarship that tends to respond to this exclusivity issue also got encumbered with the characterisation of non-

²³² The use of ‘Western code’ here follows the order of Mignolo (2011, xii) to mean the ‘belief that in terms of epistemology there is only one game in town’.

Western actors as agents of resistance against the conceptual framework of the Western liberal peace. A few other studies that are committed to position non-Western actors as a subject of liberal peace debate mainly deploying anti-colonial perspectives for critiquing its entire representation (i.e., (Sabaratnam, 2011; Lottholz, 2017). To this end, this act of 'methodological exclusion' (Sabaratnam 2013, 263) in liberal intervention research had created a scenario of "a blind plot when it comes to [the practice of liberal intervention by] non-Western actors" (Paffenholz 2015) and therefore the denial of their agency (Acharya and Buzan 2019, 286).

Contributing to the IR subfield of intervention from this context, this thesis provides a novel empirical analysis that accounts for the agency of actors from the ex-colonial world in the Western neo-imperialist project of liberal peace. By making African actors a subject of its liberal interventionist discourse, it uncovers how this set of actors are conceptualising peace and practising peace reconstruction according to the fundamental assumptions of the Western liberal peace paradigm. What it unearths in this regard includes how African international interveners are active players in the deployment of troops and experts for the protection and rebuilding of liberal democratic order in post-conflict African societies. In this way, this thesis heeds and responds to the ongoing clamour for decentring intervention research in the IR discipline. For one, Schroeder (2018, 145) has argued that there is a need to decentre the study of international intervention because the present "research on intervention has traditionally focused on the interests, narratives and practices of actors in the Global North". With the empirical analysis presented in this thesis, the substantive disposition of African international actors, as a group of non-Western actors, to the issue(s) of liberal reconstruction of peace is no more in the state of oblivion. In this case, this thesis divulges how the disposition of African (regional) actors to the Western liberal peace project is not on the side of resistance. Therefore, it offers an empirical analysis for thinking beyond the usual binary of 'Western agency of liberal peace' versus 'non-Western resistance to liberal peace'.

8.2.2 Introducing Common Sense as a Lens for Grasping Non-Western Agency in Liberal Peace Interventions

The second component of the contribution of this thesis to the IR subfield of 'intervention' lies in its introduction of the neo-Gramscian theoretical thinking on hegemony and common sense as an analytical lens for understanding the agency of postcolonial non-Western (African) actors in the Western liberal peace project. As I

discussed in Chapter Two, the neo-imperialist intentionality vista has been the sole framework through which the IR critical scholarship analyses the predilection of Western international actors towards the liberal peace paradigm in the course of their post-conflict interventions. To this end, this 'neo-imperialist intentionality' lens dominated debates on why Western agents usually drew on the liberal peace epistemology for peace reconstruction purposes in the contemporary time, particularly with respect to their peace operations in the global South. Ignatieff (2003, 3) was very clear on this when he notes that the 'recent' Western liberal peace project is "for imperial reasons: to consolidate... global hegemony, [and] to assert and maintain... [global] leadership". While this critical reading of meaning to the actions of Western actors is not necessarily faulty, it only reinforces the contention by Cox (1981, 128) that "[t]heory is always *for* someone and *for* some purpose". Whereas this neo-imperialist intentionality framework may provide an important lens for understanding the choice and actions of Western liberal interveners, the same is not the case when the involving interveners are actors located in the non-Western ex-colonial world.

In the process of drawing on its findings, as discussed across its empirical chapters, this thesis introduces the neo-Gramscian theoretical framework of hegemony and common sense as a suitable analytical perspective for understanding why postcolonial African actors are putting a premium on the Western liberal peace paradigm as the only normative ordering model for invoking durable peace in post-conflict African societies. It foregrounds the standpoint that what propels the commitment of this set of global South actors to the Western liberal peace project is not because of their deliberate intention to advance Western neo-imperialism but because of the transformation of the project into modern common sense as "the best basis on which to organize society" (Harrison and Mitchell 2014, 144). Reflecting from this perspective, Fukuyama (1989, 4) maintains that "the victory of liberalism has occurred primarily in the realm of ideas" and Harrison and Mitchell (2014, 142) note that "the world the West made" has become "everyone's world". In essence, this thesis advances the idea that the neo-imperialist intentionality framework is *not* the only game in town when thinking about the drivers of modern liberal peace interventions. Rather, it points attention in this process to the neo-Gramscian theorising of hegemony and common sense as a useful analytical standpoint for deconstructing the disposition of African interveners to such a Western domineering project. To this end, this thesis introduces what Morton (2007, 18) characterises as "thinking in a Gramscian way" to critical IR discourse on liberal peace interventions in the global South.

8.3 Conveying Implications of this Thesis and Suggesting Future Research

As Sabaratnam (2011, p. 299) reminds us, “[m]any things remain unsaid, and some of these things are very important”. A key line of discourse that is worth reflecting on at this juncture is the conclusion that could be drawn from the findings of this thesis. Overall, the findings of this thesis convey and pose at least two crucial implications to the IR critical (intervention) scholarship. First, they demonstrate that the end is not in sight for the enforcement of the liberal democratic re-ordering project in (some part of) the global South: a practice that only produces a Western liberal form of order while stifling alternative non-Western political projects (Clapton 2014, 7). Just recently, as I have discussed in Chapter Two, the mainstream (IR) critical scholarship on international intervention is awash with the (empirical) narration of the crisis of the liberal approach to peace and, thus, the call for the dominant model to be defenestrated. Looking at it from being embedded in ‘empty-shell’ mentality (Lemay-Hébert 2011) to being a “little more than a chimera” (Richmond O. P., 2005, p. 205), Cooper (2007, 614), for instance, argues that “the current crisis of the liberal peace does offer a real opportunity to push forward a more critical and emancipatory agenda” of peace intervention. This clamour for the need to abandon the general application of the liberal framework during interventions in the non-Western ex-colonial world (Zaum 2012, 122) is also at the heart of the IR critical scholarship that exposes liberal neo-imperialism in interventional practices. Making a point from this standpoint, Clapton (2014, 136) has argued that “the push to promote liberalism and democracy as universal standards for states... [in post-conflict context] will not necessarily last”.

However, while this scholarly positionality, which envisages the imminent end to liberal interventionism is understandable, this scholarship has not taken the key findings of this thesis seriously. In other words, it has not taken seriously the transformation of the liberal ideas into common sense and its corresponding non-Western consent, which serve as the driving force for sustaining liberal interventionism in the global South, particularly in Africa. As Lehti and Pennanen (2020, 29) remind us, being critical of the hegemonic ordering project does not automatically mark its end as long as its popular acceptance remains relatively stable. The empirical chapters of this thesis, for instance, have demonstrated that African regional actors in close collaboration with some local actors were at the vanguard of reconstructing and reorganising polities of Somalia, South Sudan and The Gambia in a way that conforms to the dictates of the liberal vision of the world. These chapters made it clear that the underpinning for this development is a function of the acquiesce of these postcolonial actors to common

sense of liberalisation (with its priority for democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law) as the only game in town for devising domestic stability. In other words, it means it has now got to the point that Western actors do not need to intervene before the Western liberal ordering project continues in this part of the ex-colonial world since the “structural confines... of society at large, are arguably defined by the... ideological hegemony of liberal capitalism” (Kurki 2011, 139). Of course, this reality of taking the liberal interventionist project for granted by non-Western agents is not limited to Africa.

The second key implication of the findings of this thesis to the IR scholarship is that they draw attention to how and why the project of decoloniality and delinking is largely encumbered, particularly in the ex-colonial world of Africa. The IR decolonial scholarship has recently been vocal in its advocacy for a decolonial turn in intervention practices to suffocate the reproduction of global politics of coloniality (Sabaratnam, 2017). This set of critical scholarship encourages postcolonial actors to follow the path of “epistemic disobedience and delinking from the colonial matrix in order to open up decolonial options” (Mignolo, 2011, p. 9). It entreats them to resist “the demands of the worldwide law of value... that embody the demands of reproduction of worldwide” Western liberal hegemony (Amin, 1990, p. 70). It urges these non-Western actors to embrace a “project of delinking from modern [Western liberal] rationality and building other possible worlds” (Mignolo, 2007, p. 498). While it is difficult to foreclose the future possibility of this decolonial and delinking vision, the findings of this thesis demonstrate that such a project is largely hampered (at least in Africa) by non-Western consent to the logic and common sense of Western liberal hegemony.

To, therefore, extend the frontiers of the IR critical (intervention) scholarship in the context of these implications, some questions are worth interrogating. In what ways has the consent to liberal common sense shaped non-Western actors’ practices beyond (African agents’) undertakings of peace interventions? How can the non-Western delinking from the Western liberal ordering be attained in the context of the existing transformation of liberal ideas into global common sense? What can decolonial approaches learn from neo-Gramscian approaches to unravel the social constraints of postcolonial emancipatory projects (in Africa)?

8.4 Closing Thoughts

The research question that animates this thesis – *why did African interveners activate their agency in liberal peace interventions?* – reveals its overarching basis. Its essence basically centres on investigating the agency of African actors in the practice of liberal peacebuilding intervention. Two connected premises informed the motivation for this research undertaking. First, such an engagement has increasingly being labelled as a neo-imperialist project of the West. Second, the reason why Western agents are committed to such a practice is equally characterised as a deliberate intention to extend their liberal empire across the non-Western ex-colonial world. Thus, embarking on this thesis was to explain the underpinnings for the actions of African actors in this regard and contribute to the broader IR literature on international interventions that had paid little attention to non-Western agents as a subject of inquiry. This thesis has maintained a central argument in this process that African actors are also involved in the practice of liberal intervention and that their agency in this scheme is informed by their consent to common sense of liberal peace. The takeaway from this thesis is that the neo-imperialist intentionality framework is not the only game in town when making sense of why some actors committed to the modern liberal peace project. When it comes to the context of African interveners, as the thesis has demonstrated, the neo-Gramscian framework of hegemony and common sense provides a useful analytical tool for delving into their agency in liberal peace intervention.

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Appendix 1

Full List of Interviews

Officials of the African Union

AUO#1, 6 August 2019
AUO#2, 7 August 2019
AUO#3, 8 August 2019
AUO#4, 9 August 2019
AUO#5, 10 August 2019
AUO#6, 16 August 2019
AUO#7, 23 August 2019
AUO#8, 29 August 2019
AUO#9, 6 September 2019
AUO#10, 10 September 2019
AUO#11, 2-23 September 2019
AUO#12, 24 September 2019
AUO#13, 23 and 24 September 2019
AUO#14, 25 September 2019
AUO#15, 26 September 2019 (A)
AUO#16, 26 September 2019 (B)
AUO#17, 13 June 2020
AUO#18, 22 June 2020
AUO#19, 11 November 2020
AUO#20, 19 November 2020

Representatives of African States

RAS#1, 5 August 2019
RAS#2, 15 August 2019
RAS#3, 17 September 2019 (A) (S)
RAS#4, 17 September 2019 (B) (N)
RAS#5, 18 September 2019
RAS#6, 19 September 2019
RAS#7, 20 September 2019

Academics and Analysts

ASA#1, 4 September 2019
ASA#2, 19 March 2020
ASA#3, 25 March 2020
ASA#4, 18 May 2020
ASA#5, 19 May 2020
ASA#6, 23 May 2020
ASA#7, 3 June 2020 (A) (Ja)
ASA#8, 3 June 2020 (B) (Ch)
ASA#9, 1 July 2020
ASA#10, 10 July 2020
ASA#11, 24 February 2021