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AFRICAN IDENTITIES AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Frank Aragbonfoh Abumere

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African Identities and International Politics

Using the lenses of realism, liberalism, the English School and constructivism, this book explains how the divisions and differences in African identities affect African international politics.

This book explores the African condition in the twenty-first century. It analyses how geographical, racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious and power differences shape continental and intercontinental relations in Africa through the creation of identities and values which militate against intra-continental or regional relations. The author assesses inclusionary and exclusionary, rational and irrational relationships, interactions and non-interactions which occur between geographical, linguistic, racial and religious entities in Africa. He suggests that, in these moments, one entity will negatively relate, interact or refuse to interact with another entity for the gains of the former and to the detriment of the latter or even to the detriment of both entities. Divided into two parts, the first part of the book employs an ecumenical approach to discuss the divisions and differences that disunite Africa as a continent and Africans as a people and how they affect African international politics. Part II goes on to explore how this 'othering' can be superseded by non-discriminatory, unifying and positive identities and values.

Examining the possibility of creating identities and values that can unite Africa as a continent and Africans as a people, this book will be of interest to scholars of African politics, international relations and political theory.

Frank Aragbonfoh Abumere is the Cmelikova Visiting International Scholar at the Jepson School of Leadership Studies, University of Richmond, USA.

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Frank Aragbonfoh Abumere

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Preface

Frank Aragbonfoh Abumere

This is a book about an 'African condition in the twenty-first century', i.e., the inclusionary and exclusionary – sometimes rational and at other times irrational – relationships, interactions or non-interactions between geographical entities, between linguistic entities, between racial entities and between religious entities in Africa. In these relationships, interactions or non-interactions, one entity negatively relates, interacts or refuses to interact with another entity for the gains of the former and to the detriment of the latter or even to the detriment of both entities. Constitutive of the relationships, interactions or non-interactions are differential treatment in which members of one entity are given preferential treatment that advantages them while members of another entity are ill-treated in ways that disadvantage them.

Africa is notoriously plagued by a plethora of problems, and some of the most intractable problems stem from the aforementioned 'divisions' and 'differences' which militate against intra-continental or regional relations. Although there are many factors responsible for the multitude of continental or regional problems in Africa, some of the factors are either generated by 'divisions' or 'differences' or a combination of both. Failure to take into consideration the scopes and contents or the extensity and intensity of the 'divisions' and 'differences' means that attempts to resolve intra-continental or regional problems in Africa have been mere conjectures rather than realistic resolutions. Employing an ecumenical approach by using the lenses of realism/neo-realism, liberalism/neo-liberalism, the English School and constructivism, the aim of this book is to explain how the 'divisions' and 'differences' affect African international politics and then suggest how to resolve them.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I (An African Condition in the Twenty-First Century) discusses the divisions and differences that disunite Africa as a continent and Africans as a people, while Part II (African International Politics) discusses the development of norms in international relations and how norms can be employed at the African regional level; explores how the 'othering' caused or engendered by the divisions and differences in Part I can be superseded by non-discriminatory, unifying and

positive identities and values; and then discusses the mechanisms through which the non-discriminatory, unifying and positive identities and values can be realised.

Part I is divided into Chapter 1 (Introduction – Divisions, Differences, Identities and Values); Chapter 2 (Geographical, Linguistic, Racial and Religious Divisions and Differences); Chapter 3 (Identity Politics and Power Relations); and Chapter 4 (Social Contract and Regulative Principles), while Part II is divided into Chapter 5 (A Structuralist Explanation of African International Politics); Chapter 6 (An African Liberal Regional Order?); Chapter 7 (The Order and Justice Dilemma in African International Politics); Chapter 8 (A Constructivist View of African International Politics); and Chapter 9 (Conclusion – Political and Economic Consequences).

Chapter 1 introduces 'an African condition in the twenty-first century'. It presents a conception of an African condition in the twenty-first century and then describes the different ways of analysing or understanding the African condition. Proceeding from Chapter 1's preliminary analysis of 'the divisions based on which Africans are differentiated' and 'the differences based on which Africans are divided', Chapter 2 offers a detailed description and explanation of the geographical, linguistic, racial and religious divisions and differences. Prima facie, some divisions and differences do not manifestly determine or influence regional relations in Africa, in this sense, they are less problematic than other divisions and differences. For instance, the chapter concedes, ab initio, that religious divisions and differences are more of intra-national problems and less of regional problems. Nevertheless, this chapter still examines whether, if at all, the major divisions and differences including religion affect regional relations. Then the chapter examines to what extent each division and difference negatively affects regional relations. If, in the first place, it is established that any division and difference affects regional relations, then examining to what extent it affects regional relations is important to understanding the African condition in the twenty-first century. Hence, this chapter analyses how the major geographical, linguistic, racial and religious divisions and differences shape the scopes and contents of regional relations in Africa.

Chapter 3 avers that the divisions and differences on the African continent are what African states and Africans make of them. African states and Africans can use the divisions and differences as grounds for positive identities and values which enhance regional relations or as grounds for negative identities and values which militate against regional relations. Therefore, it is possible to transcend these divisions and differences if African states and Africans are willing to form positive identities and adopt positive values that enhance regional relations. In this sense, the divisions and differences on the continent are neither necessary nor sufficient for African states and Africans to discriminate against one another. Nevertheless, the divisions and differences discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 socialise African states and Africans into forming various identities and adopting various values. The identities result

in both more powerful and less powerful groups who in turn may adopt positive or negative values. The values may be inclusionary or exclusionary. When more powerful groups adopt inclusionary values, they recognise and accommodate less powerful groups. But when the former adopt exclusionary values, they discriminate against and dominate the latter.

Chapter 3 concludes with an assertion that respecting the principle of irreducible minimal moral threshold should be our moral responsibility today in the face of the divisions and differences on the African continent and the consequent othering. The principle has three 'binding' requirements namely negative duty, positive duty and commensurability. The negative duty is a duty of no harm. The positive duty is simultaneously a duty of prevention (in non-relation to the negative duty) and a duty of remedy (in relation to the negative duty). While commensurability is a regulative notion that specifically determines the extensity of the duty of remedy and generally determines the extensity of the positive duty. Conscious of the divisions and differences on the continent, and taking the analysis in Chapter 3 as a prelude, Chapter 4 employs the social contract as a methodological device to explain different scenarios in which African states and Africans can find themselves depending on what they make of the social contract and depending on which identities they form and which values they adopt through the social contract.

In view of the divisions and differences discussed in Part I (Chapters 1–4), Chapter 5 discusses the realist view of African international politics. This entails looking at African international politics from the perspective of realism (classical realism and neo-realism) and then examining the validity of such perspective. The chapter particularly interrogates the validity of the structuralist claim that African states are prone to conflicts. Structuralists claim that African actors, in their respective conflict zones, are constrained to behave in accordance with the warring nature of their zones. This structuralism explains the contexts within which the actors in African state system act and how the contexts determine their actions. It claims that although the separate actors are only parts of the whole system, in their interactions they form a whole whose characteristics are greater than and different from the mere summation of the characteristics of its constituent parts. Although the structuralist claim that African states are prone to conflicts may be contentious, however, one cannot deny that approximately the claim seems to reflect a post-colonial history of the continent. Therefore, when examining the validity of the realist view of African international politics, this chapter pays attention to the proneness to conflict claim.

Chapter 4 argued for cooperation as the organising principle in African international politics. However, in view of the realist claim in Chapter 5, it is imperative to emphasise that we live in a liberal international order. Given that cooperation already exists in African international politics, Chapter 6 investigates why the divisions and differences in Part I persist in spite of the extant cooperation on the continent. In this context, cooperation refers to the preeminent multilateral organisations in Africa. At the regional level,

there is the AU. At the sub-regional levels, there are ECOWAS, ECCAS, EAC, SADC, COMESA, AMU, CEN-SAD and IGAD.

To say that the aforementioned regional and sub-regional multilateral organisations operate within a liberal international order is to say that they are bound by, or at least they respect, common rules, institutions and norms. One of the most problematic areas, if not the most problematic area, of liberal international order is human rights. Therefore, the chapter focuses on human rights. Focusing on human rights in a microcosm of international liberal order that comprises 55 sovereign states entails interrogating the Westphalian system itself, and its organising principle, sovereignty. Especially because Westphalianism and sovereignty are a principal cause of the divisions based on which Africans are differentiated; the differences based on which Africans are divided; and the identities and values that emanate from such divisions and differences. We do not only live in a Westphalian world, we live in a complex world that is so because it is simultaneously Westphalian, international and global.

One of the implications of the aforementioned complexity is the difficulty of finding a human rights approach that is simultaneously realistic and ideal. The question is how do we find an approach that is realistic enough to be effective and ideal enough to be acceptable in the global governance of human rights? In other words, how do we find a desirable human rights approach? Unless we find such approach, we will not be able to protect human rights especially in non-compliant and partial compliant states. To find the aforementioned approach, international legal rules to protect human rights or human rights regimes must accommodate state sovereignty and paradoxically circumscribe it. Whether such accommodation and circumscription of state sovereignty are legitimate is yet another issue that needs resolution. To resolve this question and the aforementioned ones, the discussion in Chapter 6 is divided as follows. Firstly, the chapter discusses the evolving concept of sovereignty. Secondly, it discusses the circumscription of state sovereignty by human rights regimes. Thirdly, it discusses whether there is legitimacy outside the state. Fourthly, it discusses models of human rights regimes. Then it discusses subsidiarity as a synthetic approach to the models of human rights regimes.

In Africa, in spite of the efforts of the multilateral organisations discussed in Chapter 6, the divisions and difference in Part I have resulted in grave injustices such as the genocide in Rwanda, xenophobia in South Africa, slave trade in Libya and so on. Many cases like the aforementioned ones are 'recurring decimals'. Yet in many of these cases, fighting for justice is a project in futility because doing justice to the victims of these atrocities may destabilise the status quo, i.e., the existing order. For this reason, although the order contra justice quandary is an old quandary in world politics, it remains relevant. Contending that the order and justice quandary in global politics is a false one, the aim of Chapter 7 is neither to argue for the precedence of order nor the precedence of justice. Contending that order and justice are not

mutually exclusive, and based on the grounds that global politics is complex rather than simple, the chapter shows how and why it is simultaneously possible and reasonable to combine order and justice without prioritising one at the expense of the other in African regional politics.

Anyone who attempts to resolve the order contra justice quandary must focus on the solidarism versus pluralism debate or explain why he/she chooses a different focus. The chapter attempts to resolve the order contra justice quandary within the context of the solidarism versus pluralism debate; however, its focus is not on the general solidarism versus pluralism debate. Its focus is specifically on Hedley Bull and his arguments for order and against justice. Nevertheless, it deals with both the general solidarism versus pluralism debate only to the extent that arguments from the debate corroborate or falsify Bull's arguments and the chapter's analysis in its special focus on Bull.

The chapter chooses to focus on Bull for the following reason. There are several authoritative works on how to resolve the quandary between solidarism and pluralism. These works are sufficient for their purposes. Any discussion on the solidarism versus pluralism debate will almost discuss Bull, if not extensively, at least sparsely. Arguably, if not certainly, Bull's *The Anarchical Society* is the most prominent work in the English School. If Bull's arguments can be falsified or corroborated, this will contribute to the resolution of the solidarism versus pluralism debate. Therefore, although the chapter generally deals with solidarism versus pluralism, it specially focuses on Bull.

The main discussion in the chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, the chapter discusses Bull's conception of order and justice in global politics. The crux of the section is that Bull gives precedence to order over justice because of his fear that giving precedence to the latter over the former will lead to the disintegration of the international society. The chapter thinks that such fear is a slippery slope argument. Therefore, in the second section, it discusses the slippery slope argument in global politics. In the third section, it discusses the complexity of global politics. It argues that due to the complexity of global politics, order and justice are required in global politics. Then, in the fourth section, it discusses what it refers to as 'the either/or argument'. In the discussion, it addresses the failure to recognise the possibility of combining order and justice without prioritising one at the expense of the other in global politics. Through a twin-strategy of equilibrium and adaptation, it explains how order and justice can be combined without prioritising one at the expense of the other in global politics.

Chapter 8 views African international politics from a constructivist perspective. Constructivism believes that structural conditions are not the principal determinant of the behaviour of actors. It thinks rather than material factors, ideational factors are the principal determinant of the behaviour of actors in that the preferences of actors are socially constructed, their actions are determined by their social interactions and their interests. In other words, when pursuing their interests, actors are conscious of their place and role in a social group, consequently they pay attention to, and respect, the interests

and reactions of the other members of the group. From a constructivist view, the divisions and differences in Part I are what Africa makes of them. From a constructivist view, the structuralist explanation of African international politics in Chapter 5 is wrong. In addition, from a constructivist view, the cooperation in Chapter 6 can be enhanced and the problem of recurrent injustices in Chapter 7 can be resolved.

The discussion in Chapter 8 is divided into three sections. In the first section, the chapter introduces the constructivist perspective on international politics. In the second section, it starts by discussing the development of norms in international relations and ends by discussing how norms can be employed at the African regional level. In sum, in the first and second sections, it develops a theoretical framework based on the appropriateness and strength of utilising a normative approach to African politics and regional interactions. In the third section, it starts by discussing how the divisions and differences on the continent can be superseded by non-discriminatory, unifying, positive identities and values. Then it ends by discussing 'fusion of horizons' as the mechanism through which the non-discriminatory, unifying, positive identities and values can be realised. In sum, in the third section, it discusses the possibility of creating identities and values that can unite Africa as a continent and Africans as a people.

As previous chapters would have already mentioned in the course of the discussion in the book, it is generally agreed that the economy and politics of a state are interdependent; positive development in one sphere affects the other sphere positively and negative development in one sphere affects the other sphere negatively. The above condition is not only true of states; it is also true of regions. Hence, Chapter 9 concludes the discussion in the book by looking at whether the African condition in the twenty-first century – both in terms of politics and political economy – will be positively different from the current negative one. The above description of the general aim of this concluding chapter is very broad. To narrow down the aim, the chapter is conscious that Africa is a microcosm of a world that has changed drastically due to globalisation, and digitisation is the pivot of this globalisation. Consequently, the chapter avers that due to the digitisation of our world, the future of African regional politics may be structurally different from the regional politics of both the past and the present. In future regional politics, we might be living in alternate coexisting regions, one populated by physical regional political entities and the other populated by virtual political entities namely virtual states at time T1 and a virtual regional state at time T2.

In order to examine our orientation vis-à-vis the aforementioned virtual political entities, and then to conclude the discussion in the book, the chapter is divided into seven sections. In the first section, the chapter introduces its subject matter, and then in the second section it explains its approach to the digitisation of our world. In the third section, it explains its conception of the virtual states and the regional virtual state. In the fourth section, it works with the assumption that the virtual states at time T1 and the regional virtual

state at time T2, like physical geographical states, have certain basic features that qualify them to be at least non-immoral phenomena.

In the first part of the fifth section, it bases the justifiability and unjustifiability of the virtual states and the regional virtual state on social contract. To determine their justifiability or unjustifiability, it treats them as if they were just another physical geographical states with alien, that is, virtual structures. Then it applies the requirements of social contract to them and judges whether they can be considered to be justifiable or unjustifiable based on how they fair against the requirements. Working with the assumption that in the virtual states and the regional virtual state there is a social contract between the virtual governments and their virtual citizens, and between the regional virtual government and its regional virtual citizens, it argues that whether the virtual states and the global virtual state are justifiable or unjustifiable depends on the extent to which they fulfil the conditions of the virtual social contract. Unlike the virtual states, since the regional virtual state is a regional phenomenon, it may have some similarities with world government, and some or all of the charges levelled against world government may also be levelled against it. Therefore, in the second part of the fifth section, the chapter discusses where such charges apply and ascertains their validity.

In the sixth section, the chapter reiterates my assertion that the justifiability or unjustifiability of the virtual political entities is important but not the main point, rather the main point – and more important – is how to navigate their turbulent waters or undulating terrains. While we need to focus on and then examine our orientation in order to successfully navigate the turbulent waters and undulating terrains of the virtual political entities, the chapter avers that the mechanism through which we do this is the broadening of our horizon. Then in the seventh section, the chapter offers its final remarks on both the chapter itself and the entire book.

PART I

AN AFRICAN CONDITION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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1 INTRODUCTION (DIVISIONS, DIFFERENCES, IDENTITIES AND VALUES)

Divisions and Differences

There are a lot of literature on Africa. However, many of the literature deal with national issues. On the one hand, some of the literature that deal with continent-wide issues either tend to narrowly focus on particular issues such as pandemics, poverty, aids, conflicts, bad governance, etc. without considering the broader issue of continental relations. On the other hand, others that consider the broader issue of continental relations tend to be postcolonial reactions to colonialism and imperialism. The focus of my book is mainly on regional relations but without negating postcolonial reactions to the West. My focus on regional relations pivots around the phenomena of divisions, differences, identities and values which constitute what I refer to as an 'African condition in the twenty-first century' (defined below). To this effect, in the course of the discussion in this book, I shall present a conception of an African condition in the twenty-first century and then describe the different ways of analysing or understanding the African condition. This will involve analysing the divisions and differences on the continent, and the possibility of creating identities and values that can unite Africa as a continent and Africans as a people. As part of the discussion, I shall present Ali Mazrui's analysis or understanding of the African condition and explain why in the twenty-first century we need to move beyond Mazrui's conception of the African condition in the twentieth century.

Ultimately, employing an ecumenical approach, using the lenses of realism/neorealism, liberalism/neoliberalism, the English School and constructivism, I will explain how the divisions and differences affect African international politics and then suggest how to resolve them. I will explain the structures and agents that legitimise the divisions and differences and then recommend how the divisions and differences can be transcended by adopting unifying identities and shared values. In this book, I argue for normative international politics in which the divisions and differences are superseded by non-discriminatory, unifying, positive identities and shared values. In this normative international politics, cooperation is the organising principle. I propose 'fusion of horizons' as the mechanism through which the

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supersession of the divisions and differences by positive identities and shared values can be realised. The aim of the book, as described here, is important for the following reason – and I am motivated to achieve the aim of this book due to such reason.

The African continent has come to be associated, or even synonymous, with underdevelopment, poverty, poor governance, conflicts, famines and starvation, diseases (pandemics and epidemics) and emigration especially crossing the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. In view of the above scenario which may be a caricature of the continent or perhaps a true depiction of the reality of the continent, some Africans opt for emigration, diaspora Africans pour remittances into the continent, some foreigners send aids into the continent, so on and so forth, in order to ameliorate the plight of the inhabitants of the continent. On the one hand, the above scenario is blamed on the internal dynamics of African states. On the other hand, the scenario is blamed on external dynamics, namely, the negative effect of the interactions between Africa and the Rest, especially the West. There is no doubt that the historical injustice (slavery, colonialism, apartheid and so on) done to Africa by the West has gravely shaped the trajectory of the historical underdevelopment of the continent. Even today, neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism still contribute to shaping the social, political and economic condition of the continent. I do not doubt the cogency of the internal and external dynamics arguments that major social, political and economic problems in Africa can be traced to the internal dynamics of African states and the interactions between African states and the West. Nevertheless, I think what I refer to as an African condition in the twenty-first century (defined below) has causal, contributory and constitutive roles in the predicament of the continent.

With 55 states – or what Ali Mazrui (1979, 1980) refers to as little Lilliputs – Africa represents a microcosm of the Westphalian world. In conjunction with the Westphalian fragmentation of the continent, other fragmentations have compounded the intractable problem of 'othering' on the continent. The fragmentations sum up an African condition in the twenty-first century because they simultaneously represent the 'divisions' based on which Africans are 'differentiated' and the 'differences' based on which Africans are 'divided'. By an African condition in the twenty-first century, I mean the inclusionary and exclusionary – sometimes rational and at other times irrational – relationships, interactions or non-interactions between geographical entities, between racial entities, between linguistic entities and between religious entities in Africa. In these relationships, interactions or non-interactions, one entity negatively relates, interacts or refuses to interact with another entity for the gains of the former and to the detriment of the latter, or even to the detriment of both entities. Constitutive of the relationships, interactions or non-interactions are differential treatment in which members of one entity are given preferential treatment which advantages them, while members of another entity are ill-treated in ways that disadvantage them. This can be

either formal (ingrained in laws and procedures), informal (for instance, systemic biases) or both formal and informal. My aim is to argue for normative international politics in which the aforementioned divisions and differences are superseded by non-discriminatory, unifying, positive identities and shared values.

As already mentioned in the penultimate paragraph, Africa is notoriously plagued by a plethora of problems, and some of the most intractable problems stem from the aforementioned divisions and 'differences' which militate against intra-continental or regional relations. Although there are many factors responsible for the multitude of continental or regional problems in Africa, some of the factors are either generated by divisions or differences or a combination of both. Failure to take into consideration the scopes and contents or the intensity and extensity of the divisions and differences means that attempts to resolve intra-continental or regional problems in Africa have been mere conjectures rather than realistic resolutions. In other words, I am sanguine that continent-wide divisions and differences which allow unjust discrimination contribute to worsening the condition of the continent. By allowing unjust discrimination, the divisions and differences hinder robust regional relations without which the continent cannot resolve certain transnational, international, sub-regional and regional problems.

The divisions based on which Africans are differentiated and the differences based on which Africans are divided are geographical, racial, linguistic and religious. The geographical divisions and differences are state versus state, sub-region versus sub-region and sub-Saharan Africa versus North Africa. The racial divisions and differences are Arabs, Blacks, Coloureds,[1] Indians and Whites. The linguistic divisions and differences are Arabic speakers, Spanish speakers, Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone. My classification of the divisions and differences has two provisos. Firstly, the geography-race-linguistics-religion analysis is to be construed as a Weberian ideal type. A Weberian 'Ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasised viewpoints into a unified analytical construct' (Weber, 1949, p. 90) (emphasis in original). The Weberian ideal type is fundamentally and entirely a representation and portrayal of a model-phenomenon which cannot only be imagined but, crucially, also sufficiently represents the realities it portrays. While ideal type may not be realistic, nevertheless the realities it represents or actual cases are approximated to it. However, ideal type neither stands for perfection nor is it the average of what it represents (Weber, 1949, pp. 90–92; Abumere, 2015, p. 35).

My focus is on the aforementioned divisions and differences rather than other divisions and differences on the continent. I am concerned with geopolitical differences but not gender and sexual differences. I am concerned

with Anglophone versus Francophone but not Shona versus Ndebele. I am concerned with racial differences but not ethnic differences. I am concerned with Christianity versus Islam but not Shia versus Sunni or Catholicism versus Pentecostalism, etc. So, throughout the discussion, the phrase 'divisions and differences' should be understood as those particular divisions and differences. It is necessary to know whether the consequences of the geographical, racial, linguistic and religious divisions and differences are overt/explicit or covert/implicit because 'the correct regulative principle for anything depends on the nature of that thing' (Rawls, 1971, p. 29). Sometimes the nature of the divisions and differences is systemic. That is, sometimes the divisions and differences do not appear to have any direct role in the African condition. However, a careful observation reveals how they indirectly affect the African condition in the twenty-first century. Vigilance is the price of systemic causes because:

> A systemic cause may be one of a number of multiple causes. It may require some special conditions. It may be indirect, working through a network of more direct causes. It may be probabilistic, occurring with a significantly high probability. It may require a feedback mechanism. In general, causation in ecosystems, biological systems, economic systems, and social systems tend not to be direct, but is no less causal. And because it is not direct causation, it requires all the greater attention if it is to be understood and its negative effects controlled.
>
> (Lakoff, 2012, s.p.)

If George Lakoff (2012) is right, understanding a systemic cause is more important than understanding a non-systemic cause because of the less-observability of the former. Since systemic causes are less and seldom observable, they can consistently and pervasively cause problems for the continent without the continent identifying the cause of the problems. Since problems whose source is not identified are likely to be intractable, then it is important that systemic causes are not neglected in the theoretical analysis of the problems of the continent and the practical resolution of such problems.

My approach to the relationship between the divisions and differences (on one side) and identities and values (on the other side) and the relationship between the former and the latter to their consequence (an African condition in the twenty-first century) involves both causal and constitutive explanations. As their names suggest, causal explanation deals with causation and constitutive explanation deals with constitution. While positivists prefer the former to the latter, post-positivists prefer the latter to the former, 'But in fact all scientists do both kinds of theory' (Wendt, 1999, pp. 77–78). In causal explanation, primarily we ask 'why?' and only secondarily ask 'how?' Whereas in constitutive explanation, primarily we ask 'how-possible?' and 'what?'(Wendt, 1999, p. 78). While in causal explanation we can also ask

'how-possible?' and 'what?', we only do so secondarily, for these questions primarily pertain to constitutive explanation. So too, while in constitutive explanation we can also ask 'why?', we only do so secondarily, for this question primarily pertains to causal explanation. Thus, answers to constitutive questions about the social world will have more in common with answers to constitutive questions about the natural world than they will with answers to causal questions about social life. This is true even though constitutive theorists might use different methods when thinking about the natural versus social world (p. 78).

In causal explanation, 'in saying that "X causes Y" we assume that: (1) X and Y exist independent of each other, (2) X precedes Y temporally, and (3) but for X, Y would not have occurred' (p. 79). Whereas in constitutive explanation we are conscious that 'natural and social kinds can be constituted in two ways. One is by their internal structure …. Internal structures do not cause the properties associated with them, in the sense of being antecedent conditions for independently existing effects, but rather make those properties possible' (p. 83). However, 'when we account for the properties of natural and social kinds by reference to their internal structures we are engaged in "reductionism"' (p. 83) (emphasis in original). Natural and social kinds are not only constituted by their internal structures, social kinds (perhaps some natural kinds too) 'can also be constituted in a …holist fashion by the external structures in which they are embedded…. the claim is not that external structures or discourses "cause" social kinds, in the sense of being antecedent conditions for a subsequent effect, but rather that what these kinds are is logically dependent on the specific external structure' (p. 84) (emphasis in original). However, accounting for the properties of social kinds by reference to the external structures in which they are embedded is tantamount to engaging in 'holism'.

On the one hand, in order to avoid reductionism, I recognise that social kinds are not constituted by their internal structures alone. On the other hand, in order to avoid holism, I recognise that social kinds are not constituted by their external structures alone. In sum, I recognise that social kinds are simultaneously constituted by their internal and external structures. It is in this light that I see the aforementioned divisions and differences (on one side) and their relationship to identities and values (on the other side) and the relationship of the former and the latter to their consequence (an African condition in the twenty-first century).

Having introduced the phenomena of divisions and differences in this sub-chapter, in the next sub-chapter I shall introduce the phenomena of identities and values. In this sub-chapter, while I focus on the phenomena of divisions and differences, in the next sub-chapter I focus on the phenomena of identity and values – all the analysis and narratives in the book are woven together through these four phenomena. In what follows in the next sub-chapter, I conduct my narrative through a systematic review of the state of the art of the concept of identity in Africa.

Identities and Values

Since this is a book on specific identities, namely African identities – rather than identities in general or other identities say Western identities or Asian identities – I shall rely on African conceptions of identity. African conceptions of identity are particularly espoused by African thinkers, so my reliance on African conception of identity will basically be a reliance on African philosophical conceptions of identity. Particularly, I shall 'rely on postcolonial African thinkers to tease out the concept of identity. So, the thoughts of thinkers such as Frantz Fanon (although he is not continental Africa, as a diasporic African he is an African in a pan-Africanist sense), Chinua Achebe, Kwame Gyekye, Kwasi Wiredu, Achille Mbembe, Kwame Anthony Appiah and Achie Mafeje pervade my narrative on the concept of identity' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.).

African philosophical conceptions of identity are a function of what African thinkers think the basic aim of philosophy is. The African and Ghanaian philosopher Kwame Gyekye (1995) thinks that philosophy has four basic aims among other basic aims. I shall outline the aims in no hierarchical or lexical order. The first aim is to provide a basic system of beliefs that will guide peoples' lives. The second aim is to determine 'the nature of human values and how these values can be realized concretely in human societies' (p. 23). The third aim is to provide 'conceptual interpretations and analysis of [human] experience, necessarily doing so not only by responding to the basic issues and problems generated by that experience but also by suggesting new or alternative ways of thought and action' (p. 24). This third aim is made possible by speculating about 'the whole range of human experience' (p. 23). Finally, the fourth aim is to provide 'conceptual responses to the problems posed in any given epoch for a given society or culture' (p. 27).

Gyekye's basic aims of philosophy are a general understanding of the aim(s) of philosophy. Spatio-temporal circumstances make the specific aim(s) of philosophy for one group of people different from the specific aim(s) of philosophy for another group of people. For example, one would expect the specific aim(s) of philosophy for Black people, given their spatio-temporal circumstances to be substantially different from the aim(s) of philosophy for White people. In this context, Frantz Fanon (1967) observes that Black people have one dimension in their relationship with fellow Black people and another dimension in their relationship with White people. According to Fanon (1967), Black people perceive themselves to be inferior to White people and conversely perceive White people to be inferior to them, and as such inferiority/superiority complex shape the way Black people behave in their relationship and interaction with White people. But since such inferiority/superiority complex is absent in Black people's perceptive of themselves in relation to other Black people, their behaviour in their relationship and interaction with one another is different from their behaviour when they interact with White people. For Fanon (1967), 'That this self-division is a direct result

of colonialist subjugation is beyond question' (p. 8). Therefore, on the one hand, while emancipation from colonialist subjugation is a specific aim of philosophy for Black people, it is not a specific aim of philosophy for White people. On the other hand, while the Fanonian self-division (assuming Fanon is right) is part of the identity of Black people, it is not part of the identity of White people.

In view of 'the spatio-temporal circumstances of the African people both in terms of internal dynamics (internal interactions and relations in Africa) and external dynamics (external interactions and relations between Africa and the rest of the world) both historically and presently' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.), the African people would emphasise an identity that entails 'a call for a new Pan-Africanism that brooks neither external dependence nor internal authoritarianism and social deprivation' (Mafeje, 2008 [2000], p. 113). Moreover, in view of the aforementioned spatio-temporal circumstances, Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye (1992) recommend that 'Philosophers belonging to a given culture or era or tradition select those concepts or clusters of concepts that, for one reason or another, matter most and that therefore are brought to the fore in their analysis' (p. 7). Considering the consequences of the spatio-temporal circumstances, Wiredu and Gyekye (1992) aver that 'this is the time when there is the maximum need to study African traditional philosophy' (p. 98) and, one may add, particularly African political thought (Abumere, 2022, s.p.). When studying African political thought, 'the starting points, the organizing concepts and categories' of contemporary African political though should 'be extracted from the cultural, linguistic, and historical background of African peoples if that philosophy is to have relevance and meaning for the people, if it is to enrich their lives' (Gyekye, 1995, pp. 33, 42).

I aver that if any theorisation about African international politics is to be relevant to Africans, then such theorisation must be concerned with an African *Zeitgeist*. Usually, people talk about *the Zeitgeist* not *a Zeitgeist*. In other words, when people talk about *Zeitgeist*, they usually use the definite article 'the' rather than the indefinite article 'a' or 'an' because of the assumption that there is only one singular *Zeitgeist* at a particular historical period (and sometimes in a particular geographical area, whether relatively large or relatively small) and not two or more plural *Zeitgeisten*. 'I used the indefinite article "an" rather than the definite article "the" to prefix African *Zeitgeist* because I think it is possible to have more than one *Zeitgeist* at the same time' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.)[2] (emphasis in original). Achille Mbembe (2001) says:

> there is a close relationship between subjectivity and temporality—that, in some way, one can envisage subjectivity itself as temporality. The intuition behind this idea was that, for each time and each age, there exists something distinctive and particular—or, to use the term, a "spirit" [*Zeitgeist*]. These distinctive and specific things are constituted by a set of material practices, signs, figures, superstitions, images, and fictions that,

> because they are available to individuals' imagination and intelligence and actually experienced, form what might be called "languages of life".
> (p. 15; emphasis in original)

In view of the close relationship between subjectivity and temporality in present-day Africa, one would be apt to say that identity is a *Zeitgeist* on the African continent because complex historical and current experiences indicate that the identity puzzle is one of the fundamental puzzles African philosophers are determined to solve. Solving the identity puzzle, or at least attempting to solve it, is very important partly because (among other things) (Abumere, 2022, s.p.) 'identity is increasingly used both as a weapon to further brutalise the weakest in our midst and as a leverage to claim a status of pure or authentic victim. To have been brutalised or to have been victimised, in turn, is increasingly seen as the most potent way to claim one's rights or one's access to care, justice, redress or reparation' (Mbembe, 2019, s.p.).

Usually, the identity puzzle is approached either as a category of practice or as a category of analysis. Without negating the category of analysis approach, I shall opt for the category of practice approach. At the same time, I shall employ the category of analysis approach to complement the category of practice approach (what I can lightly refer to as a supplementary approach). I will do the supplementary approach in consciousness of Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper's (2000) warning against the confusion of the category of practice with the category of analysis and vice versa (p. 5). In addition, I will do the supplementary approach in consciousness that 'preconceived treatment of identity is very common amongst researchers who continue to take it for granted as comprising a specific array of characteristics, rather than considering the mechanisms by which the concept is crystallized as reality' (Bray, 2008, p. 303).

My supplementary approach negates a reductionist approach to the identity puzzle that takes the form of what Amartya Sen (2007) refers to as 'identity disregard' and 'singular affiliation' (p. 20). According to Sen (2007):

> two different types of reductionism seem to abound in the formal literature of social and economic analysis. One may be called 'identity disregard', and it takes the form of ignoring, or neglecting altogether, the influence of any sense of identity with others, on what we value and how we behave …. In contrast with "identity disregard", there is a different kind of reductionism, which we may call "singular affiliation", which takes the form of assuming that any person preeminently belongs, for all practical purposes, to one collectivity only.
> (p. 20; emphasis in original)

Identity seems to be an essentially contested concept, that is, a concept whose users inevitably engage in endless disputes about the proper uses of the concept (Gallie, 1956, p. 169). Essentially contested concepts have no generally agreed upon meaning. Although they have their own original meanings, the original

meanings are 'jettisoned or only retained by some users, while other users invent their own meanings of the concepts. In short, an essentially contested concept means different things to different people, and none of these different meanings are taken to be the standard meaning of the concept' (Abumere, 2019, p. 1). As an essentially contested concept, or at least as a seemingly essentially contested concept, identity can be understood in positive or moral sense, negative or immoral sense, or neutral or amoral sense. No matter in which of these senses one understands identity, can be employed either for reactionary purposes or for progressive purposes or for both purposes.

Identity, according to Kwame Anthony Appiah (1992), is 'a coalescence of mutually responsive (if sometimes conflicting) modes of conduct, habits of thought, and patterns of evaluation; in short, a coherent kind of human social psychology' (p. 174). Appiah (1992) avers that that 'the African identity is, for its bearers, only one among many. Like all identities, institutionalized before anyone has permanently fixed a single meaning for them' (p. 177). Put differently, Appiah (1992) thinks that for the bearers of African identity, 'being African is … one among other salient modes of being, all of which have to be constantly fought for and rethought' (p. 177). Similarly, Achille Mbembe (2002) thinks that every African 'can imagine and choose what makes him or her an African' (p. 258). Nevertheless, on the one hand, Mbembe (2002) thinks that 'the state of war in contemporary Africa should, in fact, be conceived of as a general cultural experience that shapes identities, just as the family, the school, and other social institutions do' (p. 267). While on the other hand, Appiah (1992) thinks that in Africa, it is the tribal identity 'that provides one of the most useful models for such rethinking; it is a model that draws on other identities central to contemporary life in the subcontinent, namely, the constantly shifting redefinition of "tribal" identities to meet the economic and political exigencies of the modern world' (p. 177).

The tribal identity model claim was made ten years earlier by Chinua Achebe before Appiah reiterated it ten years later. So, Appiah's claim seems to be a corroboration of Achebe's claim. In other words, 'Appiah's claim that tribal identity provides one of the most useful models for rethinking identity in Africa' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.) seems to corroborate Achebe's (1982) self-description when the latter says that 'I'm an Ibo writer, because this is my *basic* culture' (s.p.) (emphasis mine). However, Achebe (1982) does not restrict his self-description to the Ibo/Igbo culture, that is, he does not limit his identity to the Ibo/Igbo culture. Going 'beyond describing himself as an Ibo writer and describing his Ibo identity as his basic culture' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.), Achebe (1982) also describes himself as a Nigerian, African and Black when he says that he is a 'Nigerian, African and a writer … no, black first, then a writer' (s.p.). According to Achebe (1982):

> Each of these identities does call for a certain kind of commitment on my part. I must see what it is to be black – and this means being sufficiently intelligent to know how the world is moving and how the black people

> fare in the world. This is what it means to be black. Or an African – the same: what does Africa mean to the world? When you see an African what does it mean to a white man?
>
> (s.p.)

Apparently, Achebe's self-description includes five categories of identity which are Ibo, Nigerian, African, Black and writer. In other words, Achebe sees himself as possessing multiple identities rather than a singular identity, and thus, he:

> self-identifies in five ways, namely Ibo, Nigerian, African, Black and writer. In a lexical order, Ibo comes first, Nigerian comes second, African comes third, Black comes fourth and writer comes fifth. His identity as an African only comes before his identities as Black and writer but comes after his identities as Ibo and Nigerian. That Achebe gives precedence to his identities as Ibo and Nigerian over his identity as an African (this does not in any way suggest that he thinks the various identities are mutually exclusive) may be function of the trajectory of the formation of the African identity understood in its singularity, that is as a singular identity, as opposed to African identities understood in their plurality, that is as plural identities.
>
> (Abumere, 2022, s.p.)

As Appiah (1992) says, 'To speak of an African identity in the nineteenth century … would have been "to give to aery nothing a local habitation and a name". Yet there is no doubt that now, a century later, an African identity is coming into being….this identity is a new thing; …it is the product of a history' (p. 174) (emphasis in original). Following Appiah's argument, one may think in the nineteenth century the African identity was in a liquid form, but by late twentieth century, the African identity was evolving from its liquid form to a solid form. On the one hand, the African identity in the twenty-first century (specifically this early twenty-first century) is apparently, and I dare say evidently, stronger than the African identity in the nineteenth century. On the other hand, it is difficult to say whether the identity is still in a liquid state or has transformed into a solid state or it is still transforming from a liquid state to a solid state. Appiah's argument 'does not tell us when the solidification of the African identity will happen, however it suggests that in its liquid state there are only pluralities of African identities and in its solid state there will be a singularity of African identity' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.).

I am not sanguine that 'a solid and singular African identity will necessarily replace liquid and plural African identities' (s.p.). Nevertheless, I am sanguine that 'the former can be superimposed on the latter or both can exist side by side' (s.p.). Put differently:

> the existing plurality of identities will not evolve into a singular identity, that is, it will not necessarily be replaced by a singular identity. Rather,

> both will coexist in a condition whereby in a metaphysical sense the singular identity is the universal while the plural identities are the particulars, or in a taxonomic ranking, the singular identity is the genus while the plural identities are the species, or in an ordinary language sense, the singular identity represents the general identity while the plural identity represents specific identities.
>
> (s.p.)

Moreover, as Appiah (1992) says in his translation and interpretation of an Akan proverb, 'Each of us…belongs to a group with its own customs' (p. 180). The implication of these pluralistic identities for the singular African identity is that 'To accept that Africa can be in these ways a usable identity is not to forget that all of us belong to multifarious communities with their local customs; it is not to dream of a single African state and to forget the complexly different trajectories of the continent's so many languages and cultures' (p. 180).

Once again, Appiah's argument corroborates Achebe's observation which the latter made a decade before the former's argument. Achebe (1982) observed that:

> It is, of course true that the African identity is still in the making. There isn't a final identity that is African. But, at the same time, there is an identity coming into existence. And it has a certain context and a certain meaning. Because if somebody meets me, say, in a shop in Cambridge [England], he says "Are you from Africa?" Which means that Africa means something to some people. Each of these tags has a meaning, and a penalty and a responsibility. All these tags, unfortunately for the black man, are tags of disability.
>
> (s.p.; emphasis in original)

Human identities are historical rather than ahistorical, and they are constructed rather than unconstructed. The African identity is not an exception. All human identities have their own false presuppositions, that is, errors and inaccuracies which we courteously refer to as myth, which religion refers to as heresy and which science refers to as magic (Appiah, 1992, p. 174). To understand the point about the construction of African identity in particular and human identity in general, we merely need to understand that 'Invented histories, invented biologies, invented cultural affinities come with every identity; each is a kind of role that has to be scripted, structured by conventions of narrative to which the world never quite manages to conform' (p. 174).

Human identity's dependence on history and construction affects its deepness or shallowness. The kind of histories invented and the way they are invented, the kind of biologies invented and the ways they are invented and the kind of cultural affinities invented and the way they are invented

determine whether a human identity is deep, shallow or middle-of-the-road between the former and the latter. 'Ordinarily, one may assume that in terms of time period, the longer one is aware or conscious of his or her identity, the deeper such identity is. Conversely, the shorter one is aware or conscious of his or her identity, the shallower his or her identity is' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.). Nevertheless, 'The duration of awareness, of consciousness of an identity, has really very little to do with how deep it is. You can suddenly become aware of an identity which you have been suffering from for a long time without knowing' (Achebe, 1982, s.p.).

To show that the deepness or shallowness of a human identity does not depend on the duration of one's awareness or consciousness of the identity, Achebe (1982) uses the Ibo/Igbo identity. He says that historically in the Ibo/Igbo area of the larger area that is now known as Nigeria, the Ibo/Igbo people did not self-identify as Ibo/Igbo. Different subgroups of the group that is now Ibo/Igbo self-identified as people from one particular village or the other:

> In fact, in some place 'Igbo' was a word of abuse; they were the "other" people, down in the bush. And yet, after the experience of the Biafran War, during a period of two years, it became a very powerful consciousness. But it was real all the time. They all spoke the same language, called "Igbo", even though they were not using that identity in any way. But the moment came when this identity became very very powerful … and over a very short period.
>
> (s.p.; emphasis in original)

Achebe's illustration shows us three important things about human identities. Firstly, it is an indicator which shows us that human identities 'are complex and multiple and grow out of a history of changing responses to economic, political, and cultural forces, almost always in opposition to other identities' (Appiah, 1992, p. 178). Secondly, it shows us that human identities flourish in spite of our misrecognition of their origins, that is, human identities flourish in spite of 'their roots in myths and in lies' (p. 178). Finally, it shows us that, consequently, there is 'no large place for reason in the construction—as opposed to the study and the management—of identities' (p. 178). For Appiah (1992), 'One temptation, then, for those who see the centrality of these fictions in our lives, is to leave reason behind: to celebrate and endorse those identities that seem at the moment to offer the best hope of advancing our other goals, and to keep silent about the lies and the myths' (p. 178).

The temptation to celebrate and endorse human identities that are advantageous and then keep human identities that are disadvantageous silent arises for human beings when they are constructing their identities because 'A sense of identity can be a source not merely of pride and joy, but also of strength and confidence' (Sen, 2007, p. 1). A sense of identity can be a positive thing in that having a sense of identity is capable of making vital 'contribution to the

strength and the warmth of our relations with others, such as neighbors, or members of the same community, or fellow citizens, or followers of the same religion. Our focus on particular identities can enrich our bonds and make us do many things for each other and can help to take us beyond our self-centered lives' (p. 2). Nevertheless, just as a sense of identity can be a positive thing in the way described above, it can also be a negative thing because 'The adversity of exclusion can be made to go hand in hand with the gifts of inclusion' (pp. 2–3), and when this happens, 'a sense of identity can firmly exclude many people even as it warmly embraces others' (p. 3). Of course, a sense of identity can also be a neutral thing, that is, neither a positive thing nor a negative thing. 'But looking around the world both historically and presently, we see times and places when and where identity has been a source or even the source of negativities such as wars, discrimination, domination and other atrocities and violations and the consequent suffering and dehumanisation of the victims in the hands of the perpetrators' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.). As Amartya Sen (2007) reminds us, 'identity can also kill—and kill with abandon. A strong—and exclusive—sense of belonging to one group can in many cases carry with it the perception of distance and divergence from other groups. Within-group solidarity can help to feed between-group discord' (p. 2).

In view of the negative sense of identity, that is, identity as a negative thing as explained in the preceding paragraph, Sen (2007) asks a vital question, 'If identity-based thinking can be amenable to such brutal manipulation, where can the remedy be found?' (p. 3). In his response, he avers that the remedy to such brutal manipulation of identity-based thinking:

> can hardly be sought in trying to suppress or stifle the invoking of identity in general. For one thing, identity can be a source of richness and warmth as well as of violence and terror, and it would make little sense to treat identity as a general evil. Rather, we have to draw on the understanding that the force of a bellicose identity can be challenged by the power of competing identities. These can, of course, include the broad commonality of our shared humanity, but also many other identities that everyone simultaneously has. This leads to other ways of classifying people, which can restrain the exploitation of a specifically aggressive use of one particular categorization.
>
> (pp. 3–4)

If one takes a careful look at Africa, one will see that, both historically and presently, the continent has experienced and is still experiencing the brutal manipulation of identity-based thinking. In terms of the past, present and future of the continent as far as the brutal manipulation of identity-based thinking is concerned:

> Alarmingly, the trajectory of the manipulation of identity-based thinking on the continent shows that the future (at least the near future) is

> certain (or at least highly probable) to converge with the past and the present. Whether in Central Africa (for example, Democratic Republic of Congo – DRC – and Cameroun), West Africa (for example, Nigeria and Mali), East Africa (for example, Kenya and Uganda), Southern Africa (for example, South Africa and Zimbabwe) or North Africa (for example, Libya and Egypt), the brutal manipulation of identity-based thinking pervades the continent.
>
> (Abumere, 2022, s.p.)

We Africans have the onerous task to remedy the brutal manipulation of identity-based thinking because, among other factors such as coexistence on the same continent, political, economic and so on, 'there will always be strangers in our midst and at least some of us if not many of us, and at least sometimes of not often, we too are strangers in the midst of others' (s.p.). As Toyin Falola (2006) says, 'Africans have always been on the move, ever since the time they created civilization and scattered it around the continent and elsewhere' (p. 1). Moreover, there is no doubt that 'The interpenetration of so many different foreign cultures with so many varying indigenous ones makes culture clash a problem for every … African state' (Willard, 1970, p. vii). For this reason, when commenting on the predicament of African identities, without rejecting the realities of such identities, Mudimbe (2003) warns against 'the potential dangers of perspectives that in the name of difference would value as essences what was in actuality engineered by the colonial library' (p. 212).

Given that 'Identity is a matter of the significance of a thing, a question of purpose and perspective. The achievement of a sense of identity is most significant when it involves acquiring a sense of oneness from many separate distinct events or objects, when it is a question of parts and wholes' (Willard, 1970, p. 6). Thus, I think it is apt to posit that, to both individuals and collectives, identity is valuable. In other words, for both individuals and collectives, identity is a value. Value can be understood in both a narrow sense and a broad sense. In a narrow sense, value 'is that which is good, desirable, or worthwhile' (Mintz, 2018, s.p.). In a broad sense:

> Values are basic and fundamental beliefs that guide or motivate attitudes or actions. They help us to determine what is important to us. Values describe the personal qualities we choose to embody to guide our actions; the sort of person we want to be; the manner in which we treat ourselves and others, and our interaction with the world around us. They provide the general guidelines for conduct …. Values are the motive behind purposeful action. They are the ends to which we act.
>
> (s.p.)

In the foregoing discussion in this chapter, I focus on the conceptual and theoretical framework of the book, which revolves around the phenomena

of divisions, differences, identities and values. I introduced and explicated these phenomena in order to prepare the grounds for the discussion in the remainder of the book (Chapters 2–9). Based on the preliminary discussion of the phenomena of divisions, differences, identities and values in this chapter, I will engage in a detailed analysis of the geographical, linguistic, racial and religious divisions and differences in the next chapter.

Notes

1 In Southern African parlance, the term 'Coloured' refers to mixed race persons, especially persons of Black and White mixed race or Black African and Indian mixed race.
2 In this sub-chapter, I mainly follow my analysis of African philosophical conception of identity in *Normativity in African Regional Relations*. See Bibliography.

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2 GEOGRAPHICAL, LINGUISTIC, RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS AND DIFFERENCES

Levels of Analysis

In this chapter – proceeding from the preceding chapter's introduction, or preliminary analysis, of the divisions based on which Africans are differentiated and the differences based on which Africans are divided – I offer a detailed description and explanation of the geographical, linguistic, racial and religious divisions and differences. Prima facie, some divisions and differences do not manifestly determine or influence regional relations in Africa, in this sense, they are less problematic than other divisions and differences. For instance, this chapter concedes, ab initio, that religious divisions and differences are more of intra-national problems and less of regional problems. Nevertheless, I examine whether, if at all, the major divisions and differences including religion affect regional relations. Then I examine to what extent each division and difference negatively affects regional relations. If, in the first place, it is established that any division and difference affects regional relations, then examining to what extent it affects regional relations is important to understanding the African condition in the twenty-first century. Hence, I shall analyse how the major geographical, linguistic, racial and religious divisions and differences shape the scopes and contents of regional relations in Africa.

There are different ways to analyse and understand the African condition. Firstly, to understand the African condition, we do what I refer to as state level of analysis. In this kind of analysis, we understand the totality or generality of the African condition to be the sum of the specific political, economic and social conditions of the various African states. This kind of analysis lies on one extreme of the analytic spectrum because it simultaneously negates the role of external dynamics and commits the fallacy of composition by assuming that what is true of a part, some parts, or every single part is necessarily true of the whole as a unit. Therefore, summing up the state conditions of the various African states does not necessarily equal the regional condition of the continent.

Secondly, to understand the African condition, we do what I refer to as an external dynamics level of analysis. In this kind of analysis, we understand

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the African condition as the negative effect of the interactions between Africa and the West. This kind of analysis lies on the other extreme of the analytical spectrum because in the twenty-first century to blame almost everything on the West is tantamount to denying Africa any 'agency' in the affairs of the continent. While this kind of analysis was more apt in the twentieth century because of colonialism, it is less apt in the twenty-first century in spite of neocolonialism.

Thirdly, to understand the African condition, we do what I refer to as a regional level of analysis. In this kind of analysis, we neither necessarily focus on the state dynamics nor the external dynamics. Rather, we focus on the regional or continent-wide inter-state and inter-sub-regional dynamics that shape the condition of the continent. Finally, to understand the African condition, we can engage in a kind of analysis in which we combine any two or all of the three aforementioned analyses (synthetic level of analysis). The best kind of analysis is the one that combines all the three kinds of analysis. In other words, synthetic level of analysis is the best kind of analysis. Moreover, 'everything exists in relation to other things' (Bray, 2008, p. 302). Nevertheless, synthetic level of analysis is only the best kind of analysis 'generally', i.e., when we are 'generally' concerned with all levels of affairs. But when we are 'specifically' concerned with a 'specific' level of affairs, then state level of analysis, regional level of analysis or external dynamics level of analysis may be the best kind of analysis depending on the level of affairs we are concerned with.

In view of the lure to engage in synthetic level of analysis because it is the best kind of analysis, my aim is to engage in a synthetic level of analysis, or more accurately, a partial synthetic level of analysis. I call it a partial synthetic level of analysis because simultaneously it does not focus on the state level of analysis, it focuses on the regional level of analysis and arrives at the regional level of analysis through the external dynamics level of analysis. The decision not to focus on the state dynamics level of analysis is due to my focus on regional relations.

Although I engage in an external dynamics level of analysis, I only do so as a means to an end which is the regional level of analysis. In other words, I opt not to make the external dynamics level of analysis my focus for the same reason I opt not to make the state level of analysis my focus. Moreover, unlike the regional level of analysis, there are authoritative literature that suffice for the state and external dynamics levels of analysis. For instance, Martin Meredith's authoritative *The State of Africa* (2005, 2006)[1] and similar books suffice for the state dynamics level of analysis. Ali Al'Amin Mazrui, in terms of the external dynamics level of analysis, gave us a magisterium, *The African Condition*. While Immanuel Wallerstein's *Africa* (1961)[2] too, in terms of the external dynamics level of analysis, is a magisterium. Both magisteria and similar books are sufficient for their purposes. When other numerous authoritative literatures are added to Meredith's, Mazrui's and Wallerstein's, we even have a more robust understanding of the African condition.

Conceding the terrain of the state level of analysis to Meredith and others, and the terrain of the external dynamics level of analysis to Mazrui, Wallerstein and others, I do not necessarily have to engage in the 'best kind of analysis' which combines all the various kinds of analysis. Note that Meredith, Mazrui and Wallerstein are mentioned as representatives of scholars who do the kind of analyses in question. Mentioning them does not mean that I consider them to be *primi inter pares*. The three of them do not exhaust the list of world-class Africanists who do the kinds of analysis in question. They are mentioned because they suffice for the kind of illustration I wanted to make. Moreover, among Africanists today, if there are any *primi inter pares* they are probably Achille Mbembe and Valentin-Yves Mudimbe – after the death of Mazrui, the most important Africanists may be or may not be Mbembe and Mudimbe. Mudimbe's *The Invention of Africa* and Mbembe's *On the Postcolony* are quintessential magisterial classics. It may be an exaggeration, but it may not be too much of an exaggeration, to say that Mbembe is the king and Mudimbe is the high priest of the analysis of the African condition.

I should make the following clarification of my use of Mudimbe, Mbembe, Mazrui, Wallerstein and Meredith. Firstly, I used them simply for illustration. Secondly, I mentioned them 'neither by precedent nor antecedent, and neither in chronological, lexical nor in hierarchical order' (Abumere, 2015, p. 122). In other words, I mentioned them without any special order. Thirdly, I used them to illustrate the four levels of analysis, namely state level of analysis, regional level of analysis, external dynamics level of analysis and synthetic level of analysis. Fourthly, I used them to explain why I opt to focus on regional level of analysis although it is less appealing than state level of analysis, why I go through the external dynamics level of analysis to arrive at the regional level of analysis, and why I opt for a partial synthetic level of analysis (a combinational of the external dynamics and regional levels of analysis) although a combination of the three levels of analysis (full synthetic level of analysis) is the best kind of analysis.

The regional level of analysis lacks the appeal of the other kinds of analysis. For instance, the state level of analysis is the most concrete because it represents the immediate, direct and continuous struggle and failure of Africans to build nations. The external dynamics level of analysis conjures the most Afrocentric sentiments or pan-African emotions because it concerns the historical machinations of a malevolent enemy. However valid and useful, each kind of analysis must be complemented by the others in order to have a robust understanding of the African condition because none of the dynamics is at once necessary and sufficient for the African condition in the twenty-first century. Therefore, in my regional dynamics analysis, neither the state dynamics nor the external dynamics is negated. Nevertheless, I deal with both the state dynamics and the external dynamics only to the extent that they corroborate or falsify my regional dynamics analysis.

My analysis is important for the following reasons. Much of the literature deal with national issues. Some of the literature that deal with continent-wide

issues either tend to narrowly focus on particular issues such as pandemics, poverty, aids, conflicts, bad governance, etc. without considering the broader issue of regional relations, while others that consider the broader issue of regional relations tend to be solely postcolonial reactions to colonialism and imperialism. My focus is broadly on regional relations without solely focusing on postcolonial reactions to the West, and my approach is based on International Relations and political theory.

I leave aside the lengthy and complex precolonial history of the continent and focus on a brief history of the continent. I am conscious of the grave negative impact of the colonial period on the current state of the continent, even though I do not primarily focus on that period as an end in itself. Even today, neocolonialism and neo-imperialism still contribute to shaping the social, political and economic condition of the continent. However, my focus is on the African 'agency', and consequently, rather than primarily focusing on the roles played by non-Africans and the West as an end in itself, I only deal with such phenomenon in view of its consequences for the continent, that is, to the extent that Africans and Africa react to them and how such reactions contribute to shaping the African condition. To this effect, in the remainder of the discussion: firstly, I present Mbembe's analysis of how slavery, colonisation and apartheid have shaped the Black experience; secondly, I present Mazrui's analysis or understanding of the African condition; and finally, I give a detailed analysis of the major divisions and differences on the continent and how they affect regional relations.

The Black Experience

Achille Mbembe (2017) observes that three events, namely slavery, colonisation and apartheid, have dominated and continue to dominate Black discourse. He highlights the most important three canonical meanings which he thinks the events have acquired. Firstly, he argues that the events have led to a separation from oneself which in turn 'leads to a loss of familiarity with the self to the point that the subject, estranged, is relegated to an alienated, almost lifeless identity' (Mbembe, 2017, p. 78). Consequently, he argues, instead of one being-connected-to-itself, unfortunately one is 'constituted out of an alterity in which the self becomes unrecognizable to itself' (Ibid.).

Secondly, he argues that the events have led to disappropriation which is a process in which on the one hand 'juridical and economic procedures … lead to material expropriation and dispossession, and, on the other, to a singular experience of subjection characterized by the falsification of oneself by the other' (Ibid.). According to Mbembe (2017), a state of maximal exteriority and ontological impoverishment flows from disappropriation, therefore 'material expropriation and ontological impoverishment constitute the singular elements of the Black experience and the drama that is its corollary' (p. 78). Thirdly, he argues that the events have led to degradation in which the Black person is in servitude. This servile condition did not only 'plunge

the Black subject into humiliation, abjection, and nameless suffering. It also incited a process of "social death" characterized by the denial of dignity, dispersion, and the torment of exile' (Ibid.).

Mbembe (2017) concludes that in the threefold case of separation, disappropriation and degradation, the events of slavery, colonisation and apartheid 'condensed and unified the desire of the Black Man to know himself (the moment of sovereignty) and hold himself in the world (the moment of autonomy)' (Ibid.). This point is buttressed by the fact that:

> for each time and each age, there exists something distinctive and particular—or, to use the term, a 'spirit' [*Zeitgeist*]. These distinctive and specific things are constituted by a set of material practices, signs, figures, superstitions, images, and fictions that, because they are available to individuals' imagination and intelligence and actually experienced, form what might be called 'languages of life'.
>
> (Mbembe, 2001, p. 15; emphasis in original)

In view of the aforementioned events and condition, I see the individuals and institutions within post-colonial[3] Africa as largely a reflection of the events and condition. Then I see the actions and inactions of such individuals and institutions within post-colonial Africa as largely conditioned by the events and condition. Consequently, I contend that neocolonial interactional and institutional failures cause, enable or contribute to the problem of regional relations in post-colonial Africa. Here, I see the interactional and the institutional as devices of neocolonialism which is understood here as 'the control of less-developed countries by developed countries through indirect means….a form of global power in which transnational corporations and global and multilateral institutions combine to perpetuate colonial forms of exploitation of developing countries' (Halperin, 2014, s.p.). The operative phrase here is indirect means. In the context of this chapter, indirect means entails that Africans and African governments are the visible, immediate and direct actors responsible for the interactional and institutional failures. My focus is on these visible, immediate and direct African actors rather than the invisible, remote and indirect White or European actors.

By the problem of regional relations in post-colonial Africa, I mean the major divisions and differences on the continent – this does not entail ignorantly seeing the African continent as a state. My thesis applies to the generality of the continent, that is, it applies to the average major division and difference. After all, Africans had and continue to have almost the same experience in terms of European and White imperial, colonial, neocolonial and racist marginalisation, discrimination and domination whether in the cultural, social, political or economic sphere (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Mhlanga, 2013). Nevertheless, I agree with Kwame Anthony Appiah (1992), and I am conscious, that as Africans 'Each of us… belongs to a group with its own customs. To accept that Africa can be in these ways a usable identity

is not to forget that all of us belong to multifarious communities with their local customs; it is not to dream of a single African state and to forget the complexly different trajectories of the continent's so many languages and cultures' (p. 180).

The Paradoxes of the African Continent

Mazrui, the most cited African scholar and one of the most prominent African scholars, titled his 1979 Reith Lectures 'The African Condition'. A year later, 1980, the lectures metamorphosed into a book which he titled *The African Condition*: *A Political Diagnosis*. The concept 'the African condition' brings to mind Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* which deals with the distinctions between *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*, between labour, work and action and between the public or social and the private. Although Mazrui was not concerned with Arendt's distinctions, part of the reason he chose the title 'the African condition' was 'because it echoed the philosophical phrase "the human condition"' (1979, s.p.) (emphasis in original). Although in the twenty-first century, we need to move beyond Mazrui's conception of the African condition in the twentieth century, since he is the most cited African scholar and one of the most prominent African scholars, I think anyone who discusses the African condition without any reference to Mazrui's magisterial discussion of the subject, four decades ago will have to justify such omission.

Mazrui (1979) wanted 'to examine the state of Africa partly as a way of measuring the state of the world' (s.p.). He argued that 'Africa is in part a mirror of the human condition. But in a mirror the left hand becomes the right hand and vice versa. The mirror is both a reflection of reality and its distortion. The mirror is a paradox' (Ibid.). Mudimbe (2003) corroborates Mazrui's observation when the former avers that 'the predicament of African identities …. was in actuality engineered by the colonial library' (p. 212). More importantly, Mazrui (1979) chose the title 'The African Condition' because of a diagnostic reason, that is, he intended to diagnose 'Africa's aches and pains' (s.p.). For him, diagnosing Africa's aches and pains was equivalent to asking; 'what is Africa's state of health after 100 years of intense interaction with Europe?' (Ibid.). No wonder, in both the lectures and the book, the African condition is, to a large extent, understood to be a negative effect of the interaction between Africa and Europe.

In diagnosing the aforementioned negative effect or aches and pains, Mazrui (1979) said:

> It is as if I were a doctor and Africa had come to me for a comprehensive medical examination on the eve of a particular anniversary. The most important century in Africa's relations with Europe has been from the 1880s to the 1980s. It was from the 1880s that the map of Africa began to acquire more decisively the different flag colours of the occupation powers of Europe. Let us assume Africa has come to my clinic for varied

> medical tests on the eve of the 100th anniversary of Europe's rape of her body and her possessions.
>
> (s.p.)

Mazrui's (1979) political diagnosis of the African condition contains paradoxes or dialectics in 'which qualities which are seemingly contradictory are reconciled' (s.p.). His employment of 'paradox as a tool of studying reality' is based on his Heraclitean conviction that 'reality is always a unity of opposites' (Ibid.). In the first paradox, Mazrui (1979, 1980) says although human beings probably originated from the African continent, the continent is the least habitable or it is the last continent to be made truly habitable.

In the second paradox, considering slavery, racism, etc., he argues that 'among victims of sheer humiliation and contempt, Africans and people of African ancestry have suffered the most in modern history' (Ibid.). Similarly, Chinua Achebe (1982) says Whites, Europeans, etc. have different tags for Blackness, and 'Each of these tags has a meaning, and a penalty and a responsibility. All these tags, unfortunately for the black man, are tags of disability' (s.p.). Consequently, the Black person 'must see what it is to be black – and this means being sufficiently intelligent to know how the world is moving and how the black people fare in the world. This is what it means to be black. Or an African – the same' (Ibid.).

In the third paradox, Mazrui (1979, 1980) argues that although culturally Africa and the West are not close, African societies went through arguably the most rapid pace of Westernisation experienced by any culture in the twentieth century. Consequently, Africans faced a dilemma 'between rebellion against the West and imitation of the West' (Mazrui, 1979, s.p.). This echoes Frantz Fanon's (1967) assertion that the Black person has two dimensions, one dimension with his or her fellow Black persons and the other dimension with White persons (p. 8). On the one hand, the Black person, infused with a sense of inferiority while seeing the White person as superior, behaves in certain way towards the White person. On the other hand, the same inferiority-superiority complex between the Black person and the White person makes the Black person behave differently (in a negative sense) towards his/her fellow Black persons. According to Fanon (1967), 'that this self-division is a direct result of colonialist subjugation is beyond question' (p. 8).

The fourth paradox is the infamous resource curse in Africa. In spite of the abundant natural resources in Africa, the continent remains the poorest continent on earth. In the fifth paradox, Mazrui notes that in terms of geographical size, although Asia is the only continent larger than Africa, the African continent is fragmented into little Lilliputs – currently, there are 55 states in Africa – consequently, although Africa is large enough to be Jonathan Swift's Brobdingnag, the continent is populated by minute Lilliputians. For Mazrui, an understanding of this fragmentation is a prerequisite for any accurate diagnosis of the pains and aches of the continent. Since this fragmentation is a consequence of the scramble for Africa by the colonisers at the

Berlin conference in 1884–1885, Europe and Europeans are the cause of this particular African condition.

In the sixth paradox, Mazrui explores why although geographically Africa is the most central of all continents, it is the most peripheral or marginal of all continents in terms of political and military strengths. For him, this marginality has negative political, economic and military implications for the continent. In view of such implications, Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye (1992, p. 98) argue that, 'this is the time when there is the maximum need to study African [condition].... because of the historical accident of colonialism' (p. 98). Then Gyekye (1995) goes on to argue that when studying the African condition, 'the starting points, the organizing concepts and categories' of contemporary African political though should 'be extracted from the cultural, linguistic, and historical background of African peoples if that philosophy is to have relevance and meaning for the people, if it is to enrich their lives' (pp. 33, 42). In a way, this approach leads to 'a call for a new Pan-Africanism that brooks neither external dependence nor internal authoritarianism and social deprivation' (Mafeje, 2008 [2000], p. 113).

My conception of the African condition is different from Mazrui's. Nevertheless, my conception is not a negation of Mazrui's. On the one hand, I agree with Mazrui's conception. On the other hand, I think it is important to move beyond Mazrui's conception. Contextually, given the passage of time, while Mazrui's conception of the African condition is more apt for the twentieth century, it is less apt for the twenty-first century. In other words, it is more relevant for the twentieth century than the twenty-first century. There is no doubt that the historical injustice (slavery, colonialism, etc.) done to Africa by the West has gravely shaped the trajectory of the historical development or underdevelopment of the continent. Nevertheless, in the twenty-first century, to totally blame or almost totally blame everything on the West is tantamount to denying Africa any agency in the affairs of the continent. To some extent, Mazrui discussed the role Africans themselves play in the African condition; but largely his focus was on the role the West played in the African condition.

Divisions and Differences

Mbembe's Black experience and Mazrui's paradoxes manifest in the major divisions and differences which shape the identities and values on the continent. As already mentioned, the geographical divisions and differences are three-dimensional. One dimension is the Westphalian division of the continent into 55 states. Another dimension is the geopolitical division of the continent into sub-regions, West Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, North Africa and Central Africa. The other dimension is the distinction between sub-Saharan Africa and African Middle East. In other words, the geographical divisions and differences are state versus state, sub-region versus sub-region and sub-Saharan Africa versus North Africa.

Also, as already mentioned, the linguistic divisions and differences are Arabophone, Anglophone, Francophone, Hispanophone and Lusophone. Linguistic divisions and differences do not only separate some African states and Africans from other African states and Africans, these divisions and differences also influence or determine whether some African states and Africans tend to associate more with certain non-African states and non-Africans and less with fellow African states and Africans. The racial divisions and differences are between Arabs, Blacks, Coloureds (mixed race), Indians and Whites, while the religious divisions and differences are Christianity, Islam and Traditional Religions.

To reiterate, some divisions and differences do not manifestly determine or influence regional relations in Africa, in this sense, they are less problematic than other divisions and differences. Religious divisions and differences fall into this category because they are more of intra-national problems and less of regional problems. Some divisions and differences may affect regional relations more than other divisions and differences do. I am not comparing the extent to which one division and difference affects regional relations with the extent to which another division and difference affects regional relations. As long as a division and difference affects regional relations, that division and difference is important irrespective of its influence when compared with another division and difference. For this reason, every division and difference requires vigilance. After all, the harms caused by the divisions and differences are not always overt or explicit. They are sometimes covert or implicit. Importantly, when they are covert or implicit, they tend to be systemic because they are indirect and less observable, but yet pervasive. In other words, the major divisions and differences at sometimes implicitly and at other times explicitly influence regional relations.

Racial divisions and differences in Africa sometimes implicitly and at other times explicitly influence regional relations. These divisions and differences are Blacks, Coloureds, Indians, Whites and Arabs. Since an African's racial identity sometimes, and crucially, determines whether he or she subjectively identifies as an African and whether other Africans objectively identify him or her as an African, racial identity influences an African's affinity to other Africans. For instance, apartheid in South Africa and Rhodesia, slavery in Libya and the expulsion of Indians from Uganda by Idi Amin are representatives of the ills of racism on the continent. Like racial divisions and differences, the major linguistic divisions and distinctions such as Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish affect the scopes and contents of regional relations in Africa.

Linguistic divisions and differences are even more important than racial divisions and differences because of the following reasons: (1) divisions and differences based on linguistic grounds simultaneously separate African states and Africans from other African states and Africans (let us call this intra-continental alienation); (2) they influence or determine whether some African states and Africans tend to associate more with certain non-African

states and non-Africans and less with fellow African states and Africans (let us call this inter-continental alienation).

Especially in sub-Saharan Africa, the linguistic divisions and differences are mainly consequences of colonialism. In Marxian terminology, colonialism is the substructure while the linguistic phenomenon is the super structure. Hence, the linguistic phenomenon does not operate sui generis; it operates simultaneously as a remnant of colonialism and as a conduit for the perpetuation of colonial balkanisation of the continent. For instance, culturally and socially, Nigerians and Ghanaians identify more with one another than they do with Beninese and Togolese even though Benin and Togo serve as geographical barriers between Nigeria and Ghana. This is a case of the intra-continental alienation in the previous paragraph.

The colonialism-linguistic phenomenon is a nexus between former empires and vassal states (colonial powers and colonies). For instance, it is a nexus between France and its former colonies which are practically quasi-overseas French states – they are more pseudo-independent than they are independent. Francophone West African states are more connected to France than they are to non-Francophone African states. For instance, Francophone West African states are more connected to France than their fellow African states in East Africa both politically and economically. Perhaps, economically, being members of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) will bring Francophone West African states closer to East African states than they are to France. However, this is a mere conjecture. After all, politically, being members of the AU has not brought Francophone West African states closer to East African states than they are to France. This is a case of the inter-continental alienation in the penultimate paragraph.

The geographical divisions and differences are three-dimensional. One dimension of the geographical divisions and differences is the distinction between sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa. It might be far-fetched to say that compared to sub-Saharan African states, North African states are less African politically. Put crudely, it might be argued that North African states are more African in theory and less African in practice due to their affinity with the Middle East.

The above argument is contentious because, for instance, comparing Egypt (geographically located entirely in North Africa) with Sudan (geographically located in North-East Africa) one might conclude that Egypt is more Middle East in practice while Sudan is less Middle East in terms of both subjective identification by Sudan itself and objective identification by other African states. If this conclusion was apt before the separation between Sudan and South Sudan, we cannot be confident that it is still apt after the separation. This is because in spite of geography, Sudan (minus South Sudan) has many things in common (geography, race, language, history, etc.) with the Middle East as much as it has in common with sub-Saharan Africa.

Although countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia are simultaneously African and Middle East countries, there is no mutual exclusivity in such simultaneous membership and dual identity. Moreover, in practice, this geopolitical dimension has not engendered unhealthy rivalry on the continent. Nevertheless, arguably, North Africa 'subjectively' identifies more as Middle East and less as Africa while sub-Saharan Africa 'objectively' identifies North Africa more as Middle East and less as Africa. Therefore, the North Africa/sub-Saharan Africa divide contributes to making a continent-wide identity less cohesive. From a moral point of view, this North Africa/sub-Saharan Africa divide in itself is neither good nor bad; it is neutral. From a geopolitical point of view, it may be good for North Africa that they have a double hedge, but it is not good for African integration.

Another dimension of the geographical divisions and differences is the geopolitical division of the continent into sub-regions, namely, East, West, North, Southern and Central Africa. In theory, it might be argued that the deepening of sub-regional identities by virtue of the sub-regional groupings makes a continent-wide identity less cohesive. However, in practice, this geopolitical dimension has not engendered unhealthy rivalry among the sub-regions. Unlike the fragmentation of the continent into Westphalian states or little Lilliputs, the sub-regions geopolitical dimension has not enabled tragic crises and conflicts. While the former engenders unhealthy rivalry among the various Westphalian states, the latter encourages cooperation among the sub-regional states.

The greatest merit of the geopolitical division of the continent into sub-regions is that it has resulted in the emergence of sub-regional multilateral organisations that have been politically and economically beneficial to the sub-regions. These multilateral organisations include political and/or economic communities and/or unions such as the Economic Community of West-African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), East African Community (EAC), Southern African Development Commission (SADC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

However, an effective African Union (AU), rather than sub-regional organisations, is simultaneously the *conditio sine qua non* and the *conditio per quam* of regional relations on the continent. Because a stronger African identity and a more effective regional economic and political union such as the AU will make many of the seemingly intractable problems on the continent more tractable. For instance, when the risks, losses and benefits of dealing with transnational, international, sub-regional and regional matters are regionalised in Africa, the seemingly intractable problems on the continent will become tractable.

Consequently, the AU, rather than sub-regional organisations, will be more effective in and should be charged with the:

> Onerous task of dealing with the threats of transnational conflicts such as Joseph Kony's Lord Resistance Army – LRA (across Uganda, South Sudan, Central African Republic, Chad and Democratic Republic of Congo – DRC), Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (particularly across Algeria, Mali and Mauritania, and generally across the Maghreb and the Sahel), Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa (across Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon), Al-Shabaab (across Somalia and Kenya) and transnational crisis such as the Ebola pandemic (across DRC, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Nigeria, Mali and Senegal)
>
> (Ibid.)

Moreover, in responding to the Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic that requires global cooperation, a collective regional AU approach is a better fit for the continent than isolated sub-regional approaches.

The most important dimension of the geographical divisions and differences is the fragmentation of the continent into 55 Westphalian states or little Lilliputs. This fragmentation makes the geographical divisions and differences a very important consequential distinction simply because the Westphalian division of the world into sovereign territories is a very important consequential political phenomenon of our current world (Abumere, 2019, p. 10). This fragmentation has not only engendered unhealthy rivalry in the present such as xenophobia in South Africa, but it has actually enabled tragic crises and conflicts in the past.

The crisis and conflicts manifested as early as the 1960s in East Africa and North Africa, and later in the 1970s in West Africa and Central Africa. For instance, in East Africa, after the war of independence between the Ethiopian government and Eritrean separatists from 1961 to 1991, Ethiopia and Eritrea fought a border war from 1998 to 2000 and engaged in a standoff from 2000 to 2018. While in confrontation with Ethiopia, Eritrea also had a border conflict with Djibouti in 2008. Since colonialism is responsible for the geographical divisions and differences that are responsible for these wars, colonialism is (at least indirectly) responsible for the crises and conflicts. Ultimately, colonialism and the artificial separation of the peoples in these regions bear responsibility for the crises and conflicts.

Colonialism and the artificial separation of the peoples of East Africa are also responsible for the following crises and conflicts. While in confrontation with Eritrea, Ethiopia fought a border war with Somalia from 1977 to 1978 over the ownership of the region of Ogaden. In the same vein, while in disputation with Ethiopia, Somalia also fought a border war with Kenya from 1963 to 1967 in order to reclaim 'its lost territories including the Northern frontier district of Kenya' (Aremu, 2010, p. 550). Furthermore, Tanzania and Uganda fought a border war over the Kagera Salient from 1978 to 1979. Prior

to the war, political disagreements between Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda led to the collapse of the EAC in 1977.

Post-independence, no any other sub-region has experienced the amount of inter-state crises and conflicts which East Africa has experienced. Southern Africa has not experienced any inter-state war. Nevertheless, North Africa has experienced its fair share of inter-state conflicts. In 1963, Algeria and Morocco had a confrontation over the ownership of the Atlas Mountain area (Ibid.). Morocco is not a stranger to conflicts over claims of ownership of territories. From 1975 to 1991, Morocco and the Polisario Front fought the Western Sahara War and both parties are currently the principal actors in the Western Sahara Conflict that started in 1970. Still in North Africa, Egypt and Libya fought a border way in 1977. Having fought Egypt in North Africa, Libya turned to Central Africa for a conflict with Chad from 1978 to 1987. Again, two countries from separate regions, this time around Central Africa and West Africa, would be involved in another interstate conflict when Cameroon and Nigeria had a three-decade (1971–2002) disputation on the ownership of the Bakassi Peninsula.

Notes

1 I am referring to two versions of *The Fate of Africa*. One version is *The Fate of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence* (2005) and the other version is *The Fate of Africa: A History of the Continent* since *Independence* (2006). See Bibliography for full references.

2 I am specifically referring to *Africa: The Politics of Independence and Unity* (1961) rather than *Africa and the Modern World* (1986).

3 In this chapter and throughout this book, I deal with both post-colonialism with a hyphen postcolonialism without a hyphen. Post-colonialism with a hyphen entails a temporal delineation, and it 'is typically used to refer to the period after colonialism in various parts of the world' while postcolonialism without a hyphen involves a critical approach, and it 'is typically used to denote a specific theoretical orientation that has a diverse range of interests' (Quayson, 2020, s.p.).

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3 IDENTITY POLITICS AND POWER RELATIONS

Identity Politics

The divisions and differences on the African continent are what African states and Africans make of them. African states and Africans can use the divisions and differences as grounds for positive identities and values which enhance regional relations or as grounds for negative identities and values which militate against regional relations. Therefore, it is possible to transcend these divisions and differences if African states and Africans are willing to form positive identities and adopt positive values that enhance regional relations. In this sense, the divisions and differences on the continent are neither necessary nor sufficient for African states and Africans to discriminate against one another. Nevertheless, the divisions and differences discussed in the preceding chapters socialise African states and Africans into forming various identities and adopting various values. The identities result in both more powerful and less powerful groups who in turn may adopt positive or negative values. The values may be inclusionary or exclusionary. When more powerful groups adopt inclusionary values, they recognise and accommodate less powerful groups. But when the former adopt exclusionary values, they discriminate against and dominate the latter.

At one level, an observer of the African condition can view the divisions and differences from the perspective of facticity and existentiality and then attempt to ascertain to what extent Africans are 'thrown' into them and to disclose the moods through which Africans have responded to them either by turning away from them, turning towards them, or simultaneously and paradoxically turning away from and turning towards them. At another level, the observer can deal with the inevitable (if there is any) and socially constructed aspects of the divisions and differences in the form of an Aristotelian syllogism. Taking the inevitable aspect as a major premise, and the socially constructed aspect as a minor premise, then the observer can attempt to search for a conclusion that is simultaneously the *conditio sine qua non* and the *conditio per quam* of regional relations on the continent. Whether the observer views the divisions and differences from the perspective of facticity and existentiality and/or deal with the inevitable and socially constructed aspects of the divisions and differences, she

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has to reckon with identity, identity politics, othering and power relations if she is to understand the value of the divisions and differences.

Contemporary identity is revealed in the self being true to itself, i.e., being authentic.[1] Put differently, contemporary identity emphasises its authenticity and listening to its inner voice (Taylor, 1994). According to David Campbell (1992), 'identity is an inescapable dimension of being. No body could be without it' (p. 9). While Ted Hopf (1998) argues that, without identity a 'world of chaos, a world of pervasive and irremediable uncertainty, a world much more dangerous than anarchy' (p. 175) will be the order of the day. As shown in the introductory chapter, identity is very important. Here too, if Campbell's and Hopf's assertions are correct, then identity is very important. There is a consensus among theorists of identity that 'identity has become indispensable to contemporary political discourse' (Heyes, 2020, sec. 1). At the same time, the theorists agree that identity 'has troubling implications for models of the self, political inclusiveness, and our possibilities for solidarity and resistance' (sec. 1).

As earlier mentioned in the introductory chapter, identity can be employed positively, neutrally or negatively. This is not only true of domestic politics; it is also true of international politics. According to Anthony Burke (2006), 'there is … no world politics without identity, no people, no states, no international system' (p. 394). Then Bruce Cronin (1999) avers that 'identities provide a frame of reference from which political leaders can initiate, maintain, and structure their relationships with other states' (p. 18). While for Felix Berenskoetter (2017), '"identities" manifest our ontology of the international and play a central role in politics' (p. 1) (emphasis in original).

Wherever identity is found, whether in domestic politics or international politics, it 'represents a major distinction line between the self and the other' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.). Nevertheless, according to Achille Mbembe (2015), 'The self is made at the point of encounter with an Other. There is no self that is limited to itself. The Other is our origin by definition' (s.p.). When the self encounter the other, the former may oppress the latter or vice versa. Although in such encounter oppression does not always happen, 'unfortunately it is sometimes the case in both domestic and international politics, and it is often the case in African domestic politics and in Africa's and Africans' encounter with the rest of the world. This situation gives rise to, or at least engenders, identity politics on the African continent' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.).

Identity politics is a significant departure from pre-identitarian politics of recognition, and what makes the former a significant departure from the latter is that the former demands 'recognition on the basis of the very grounds on which recognition has previously been denied' (Kruks, 2001, p. 85). For example, on the basis of identity politics:

> Blacks qua Blacks would demand recognition from Whites, Africans qua Africans would demand recognition from Europeans, and so on. The point here is that a group or groups demand(s) equality with another group or other groups not based on common humanity, rather simply

> based on the identity of the group or groups that is/are demanding for equality. Note that although the group(s) is/are oppressed in the first place based on their identity, they insist that they should be treated equality based on that same identity.
>
> (Ibid.)

The aforementioned 'demand is not for inclusion within the fold of "universal humankind" on the basis of shared human attributes; nor is it for respect "in spite of" one's differences. Rather, what is demanded is respect for oneself as different' (Kruks, 2001, p. 85) (emphasis in original).

Identity politics starts with the analyses of oppression, discrimination, domination and those kinds of social injustice and then goes on 'to recommend, variously, the reclaiming, re-description, or transformation of previously stigmatized accounts of group membership. Rather than accepting the negative scripts offered by a dominant culture about one's own inferiority, one transforms one's own sense of self and community' (Heyes, 2020, sec. 1). Nevertheless, identity politics too can be dangerous in spite of its positive usefulness and its noble aim to equalise identities. The danger is that identity politics 'casts as authentic to the self or group a self-understanding that in fact is defined by its opposition to a dominant identity, which typically represents itself as neutral. Reclaiming such an identity as one's own merely reinforces its dependence on this Other, and further internalizes and reinforces an oppressive hierarchy' (sec. 2).

In spite of the above danger, identity politics is still a better than its alternative or opposite, namely, othering. Like identity politics, othering is dangerous too. But the danger of identity politics pales when compared to the danger of othering. Therefore, 'If the danger posed by identity politics is worth worrying about, then othering even deserves to be worried about even more' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.). While on the one hand identity politics is a process which attempts to equalise unequal identities, on the other hand othering is 'a process … through which identities are set up in an unequal relationship' (Crang, 1998, p. 61). Othering simultaneously constructs:

> the self or in-group and the other or out-group in mutual and unequal opposition through identification of some desirable characteristic that the self/in-group has and the other/out-group lacks and/or some undesirable characteristic that the other/out-group has and the self/in-group lacks. Othering thus sets up a superior self/in-group in contrast to an inferior other/out-group.
>
> (Brons, 2015, p. 70)

Taking a cue from Simon de Beauvoir (1949), othering can be succinctly described as:

> a situation involving moral agents on opposite sides of a relationship or interaction in which on the one side we have the subject who is/are

> active in the relationship or interaction, that is doing the othering, and on the other side we have the object who is/are passive in the relationship or interaction, that is, suffering the othering. The active subject is the self while the passive object is the other.
>
> (Abumere, 2022, s.p.)

The other is a construction which opposes and thereby constructs the self. In other words, othering involves self-other distantiating in which the self dehumanises the other (Brons, 2015, p. 70). Essentially, 'generally othering echoes Hegelian dialectic of self-other relationship and specifically Hegelian master-slave relationship' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.). However, othering:

> does not necessarily have to take the form of an affirmation of self-superiority and other-inferiority. Although othering often sets up a superior self/in-group in contrast to an inferior other/out-group, it can also create distance between self/in-group and other/out-group by means of a dehumanizing over-inflation of otherness. The other then, is not so much (implicitly) inferior, but radically alien. In either case, the effect is a near impenetrable border between the self/in-group and the inferior and/or radically alien other/out-group, 'justifying' social exclusion, discrimination, and/or subjection.
>
> (p. 72; emphasis in original)

Othering happens when identity differences are categorised as negative otherness rather than positive otherness or neutral otherness. Put differently, othering happens when the self negatively stereotypes the other rather than positively or neutrally stereotype the other (Abumere, 2022, s.p.). This is the case because:

> An identity is established in relation to a series of differences that have become socially recognized. These differences are essential to its being. If they did not coexist as differences, it would not exist in its distinctness and solidity. Entrenched in this indispensable relation is a second set of tendencies, themselves in need of exploration, to conceal established identities into fixed forms, thought and lived as if their structure expressed the true order of things. When these pressures prevail, the maintenance of one identity (or field of identities) involves the conversion of some differences into otherness, into evil, or one of its numerous surrogates. Identity requires differences in order to be, and it converts difference into otherness in order to secure its own self-certainty.
>
> (Connolly, 2002, p. 64)

Looking at both historical and current political affairs both within and outside Africa, one will realise that the assertion that othering is dangerous, and more dangerous than identity politics, is not far-fetched (Abumere,

2022, s.p.). Mentioning a few well-known instances of the atrocities othering has caused in the world will suffice to prove my point. To do this, I shall echo Slavenka Drakuli´c's (1993) words: 'I understand now that nothing but "otherness" killed Jews, and it began with naming them, by reducing them to the other. Then everything became possible. Even the worst atrocities like concentration camps or the slaughtering of civilians in Croatia or Bosnia' (p. 145) (emphasis in original). To the Holocaust which happened outside Africa, I shall add the following atrocities which happened within Africa. In the present-day Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), King Leopold II of Belgium and his fellow Belgians exterminated over 10 million Congolese. In 1994 in Rwanda, during the Rwanda genocide, within a period of one hundred days – the infamous '100 days of slaughter' (BBC, 2019) – around 800 thousand people mostly from the ethnic minority Tutsi were massacred by extremists from the ethnic majority Hutu. The list of the atrocities that othering has caused in both Africa and outside Africa can go on and on, but the aforementioned atrocities suffice to prove the point that it is not far-fetched to claim that othering is dangerous and more dangerous than identity politics (Abumere, 2022, s.p.).

Is another Holocaust possible? May be, may be not. But is it probable? I think, yes. In essence, is the banality of evil possible today? Depending on the vicissitudes of world and African history and world politics, the answer to this fundamental question may become clearer than it is now. For now, any answer will be a mere conjecture (Abumere, 2019, p. 27). Therefore, I hinge my answer on Arendt's (1951) claim that the lesson we learned from the countries where the Nazis implemented the Final Solution is that the Final Solution could happen in most places in the world. After all, as she argues, and I think she is apt to argue that, most human beings will cooperate with agents of evil and comply with their demands and orders under conditions of terror. The genocide in Rwanda may be historical but the barbaric slaughter of innocent children in Yemen is a present reality.

Power Relations

I concluded the preceding sub-chapter by asking whether the banality of evil is possible today. As shown in the preceding sub-chapter, power relations has the capacity to cause atrocities or bring about the banality of evil through othering. To understand how power relations can engender the banality of evil without much difficulty, we need to, first of all, look at the concept of domination and then secondly look at Hannah Arendt's (1964) conception of the banality of evil.

Max Weber (1978) describes domination as a condition that entails a high probability that person X will obey the command given by person Y (212–13). Specifically, Y dominates X if and only if the former has a certain power over the latter, 'in particular a power of interference on an arbitrary basis' (see Weber, 1978, pp. 212–213; Pettit, 1997, p. 52). In other words,

domination is one person's arbitrary power to interfere in another person's choices. Y dominates X if the former is arbitrarily capable of interfering in certain choices that X is in a position to make (Pettit, 1997, p. 52). Put differently, the domination of X means the asymmetric relationship between X and Y in which Y negatively controls, influences or illegitimately exercises power over X for the gains of Y and to the detriment of X. Constitutive of this asymmetric relationship is differential treatment in which Y is given preferential treatment which advantages it while X is ill-treated in ways that disadvantage it. 'This can be either formal (ingrained in laws and procedures), informal (for instance, systemic biases), or both formal and informal' (see Abumere, 2020; Abumere, 2022, s.p.).

Thus, domination in the context of the divisions and differences in the African condition refers to a situation in which a geographical, linguistic, racial or religious entity is arbitrarily capable of interfering in certain choices another geographical, linguistic racial or religious entity is in a position to make. The situation can be that: an entity is dominating another entity (singular perpetrator versus singular victim); an entity is dominating other entities (singular perpetrator versus plural victims); some entities are dominating another entity (plural perpetrators versus singular victim); or some entities are dominating other entities (plural perpetrators versus plural victims). Note that being a perpetrator and being a victim are not mutually exclusive; an entity can simultaneously be a perpetrator and a victim. For instance, Y (perpetrator) can dominate X (victim) based on geographical identity, and X can in turn dominate Z based on geographical identity too. In this case, X is simultaneously a victim and a perpetrator.

Domination, as described above, entails discrimination:

> Discrimination can be moral, immoral or amoral, and it can be positive, negative or neutral. Throughout this book, I use the term 'discrimination' in its negative sense. For instance, reverse discrimination such as affirmative action may be a positive thing. But discrimination that is quintessentially based on the grounds of identities and differences qua identities and differences will be a negative thing. This latter form of negative discrimination is what this book is concerned with.
>
> (Abumere, 2022, s.p.)

Y's discrimination against X takes two forms: X is discriminated against as a group, that is as one people; and X is discriminated against individually but because it belongs to a group. But why is it the case that persons having certain geographical, linguistic, racial, religious, ethnic, gender or sexual identities are also often victims of multiple discrimination? The answer to the above question is context-dependent. The reason X is discriminated against in place Y may not be the same reason Z is discriminated against in place Y. Y may discriminate against X for geographical reasons and Y may also discriminate against Z but for linguistic or racial reasons. While the particular

and specific reasons for discrimination against X and Z may be different, the universal and general reasons for the discrimination by Y are the same (Ibid.). Y discriminates against X and Z because X and Z do not share Y's identity or identities.

Generally, the grounds for Y's domination and discrimination against X (and/or Z) can be approached from two perspectives which are two sides of a coin, that is, they are one and the same thing (Ibid.).

The one approach is the 'positive' perspective while the other approach is the 'negative' perspective. Here, the terms positive and negative do not have any moral connotations and denotations; I am using them in their arithmetic sense. In this arithmetic sense, positive should be taken to mean 'part of' – sometimes, although not necessarily, an addition – while negative should be taken to mean 'not part of' – sometimes, although not necessarily, a subtraction. In the positive sense, X (and/or Z) is discriminated against because of the group it belongs to, that is, because of the group it is 'part of'. In the negative sense, X (and/or Z) is discriminated against because of the group it does not belong to, that is, because of the group it is 'not part of' (Ibid.). In other words, in the positive sense, Y discriminates against X because X has an identity that is anathema to Y. In the negative sense, Y discriminates against X because X does not share in Y's identity.

Remember I said that to understand how power relations can engender the banality of evil without much difficulty, we need to, first of all, look at the concept of domination and then secondly look at Arendt's (1964) conception of the banality of evil. Having looked at the conception of domination, I shall look at her conception of the banality of evil. She succinctly explained her conception of the banality of evil in her letter to Gerhard Scholem in which she says:

> I changed my mind and do no longer speak of "radical evil".... It is indeed my opinion now that evil is never "radical", that it is only extreme, and that it possesses neither depth nor any demonic dimension. It can overgrow and lay waste the whole world precisely because it spreads like a fungus on the surface. It is "thought-defying" ... because thought tries to reach some depth, to go to the roots, and the moment it concerns itself with evil, it is frustrated because there is nothing. That is its "banality." Only the good has depth that can be radical.
>
> (Arendt, 1964, s.p.; emphasis in original)

In view of the above description of the banality of evil, nothing radical needs to happen before power relations, through othering, metamorphosed into the banality of evil. Consequently, current events can surreptitiously slide into the banality of evil. It is for this reason that I think that once again the worst is not only possible but, alarmingly, it is probable. In other words, because of the present, rather than an expected divergence between the past and the future, there may be an unexpected convergence between the past

and the future. Conscious of the past, we cannot look at the present and confidently say with certainty that this time is different. Probably, we are back to the future.

Totalitarianism in general, Nazism, Stalinism and Fascism in particular, and other atrocities of both world wars and colonialism paint a horrendous picture of the evils humanity suffered in the twentieth century. In essence, they are the greatest evils of the twentieth century. Among the greatest evils, the Holocaust has a special place. It is a representative of the greatest evils of the twentieth century. Juxtaposing King Leopold II's nineteenth century and early twentieth century extermination of Congolese and Adolf Hitler's Holocaust, the following is apparent. On the one hand, if King Leopold II exterminated Whites, he would be rightly condemned and eternally damned as a devil incarnate. On the other hand, if Hitler exterminated Africans, he would have enjoyed his reign and died peacefully like King Leopold II. In fact, the Germans exterminated the Herero in Namibia, and for Europe, this extermination of 'savages' was morally inconsequential. The point is once Europeans had othered the Herero and Congolese (Africans), their extermination became practically possible and theoretically morally defensible, although in a European world of perverse morality. So too, once the Nazis had othered the Jews, their extermination became practically possible and theoretically morally defensible, although in a Nazi world of perverse morality.

In her analysis of the European scramble for Africa, that is, European colonial and imperial domination of Africa, Arendt (1951) argues that whatever atrocities European totalitarians committed against fellow Europeans in Europe were already committed against Africans in Africa. For Arendt (1951), starting with the atrocities against Africans in Africa, Europeans gradually moved from othering and dehumanising 'savages' to the point at which they became morally numb to the extent that they could see their fellow Europeans as lesser humans who have no human dignity that is worthy of being respected. On the one hand, the evil that European colonialists and imperialists unleashed on Africans was not a rehearsal (in the actual sense of the word) for the evil totalitarianism would unleash on Europeans, that evil was the real deal. Without exception, the Germans, Dutch, Belgians, French, British, Portuguese, Spaniards and Italians were all guilty. On the other hand, in a way, only figuratively, we can see the othering and dehumanisation of Africans as a rehearsal for the evil that totalitarianism unleashed on Europeans.

The Holocaust was only possible because of Nazism. Nevertheless, both the Holocaust and Nazism would not have been possible without the initial othering and the subsequent dehumanisation of the Jews. Therefore, the Holocaust – a representative of the greatest evils of the twentieth century – is a consequence of othering. In what context did this othering happen? It happened in the contest of totalitarianism. Mark Mazower's *Hitler's Empire*: *How the Nazis ruled Europe* (2008) and Timothy D. Snyder's *Bloodlands*: *Europe*

between Hitler and Stalin (2010) are sufficient exposition on how devastating the evils of totalitarianism were. Within the totalitarian vicissitudes of world history and world politics, a pertinent question is what did it mean to be human, what was the human condition and what did it mean to be a citizen even in the dark times of the twentieth century? Arendt (1968) tells us that:

> even in the darkest of times we have the right to expect some illumination, and that such illumination might well come less from theories and concepts than from the uncertain, flickering, and often weak light that some men and women, in their lives and their works, will kindle under almost all circumstances and shed over the time span that was given to them.
>
> (p. ix)

Therefore, I think in spite of the divisions and differences on the content, Africans still have the agency to opt for either positive categorisation of otherness, neutral categorisation of otherness or negative categorisation of otherness in the context of the dark times of the African condition in the twenty-first century. Tragically, we experience the darkest of times when our agency and spatio-temporal circumstances allow the possibility of othering to become the banality of evil. I think we have the capacity to prevent a return to the past and diverge from the present by enlightening the darkness and shortening the dark time of divisions and differences in the present, ultimately salvaging the future from the banality of evil.

The current political phenomenon is in part a mirror of the human condition. Just as a mirror paradoxically reflects and distorts reality (Mazrui, 1979, 1980), so too the current political phenomenon paradoxically reflects and distorts the human condition. Deducing from the above quotation from Arendt, we can still decipher what it means to be human today, or in deed to be African, in the face of the African condition. The question of what it means to be human today brings to mind Arendt's *The Human Condition* (1958) which deals with the distinctions between *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*, between labour, work and action and between the public or social and the private. But to understand why the aforementioned paradox is possible, we need to go beyond Arendt's *The Human Condition* and look at her *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and *Eichmann in Jerusalem*: *The Banality of Evil*.

Drawing insights from *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and *The Banality of Evil*, I think it will be an exaggeration of the highest order to equate the African condition with totalitarianism in general or Nazism, Stalinism and Fascism in particular. Nor can we equate the plight of the other today with the Holocaust. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that there is a common denominator between twentieth century totalitarianism and the African condition in the twenty-first century. The common denominator is othering. Arendt's thesis gives us insights into what makes it possible inside and outside a Westphalian state for some human beings to dehumanise other

human beings to the extent of the former exterminating the latter. Taking my cue from Arendt (1951, pp. 292–297), I think the Westphalian system has the capacity to engender othering and the consequences for the other are dire.

In the twenty-first century, the Westphalian system remains the most consequential political phenomenon in our world, and it divides the world into sovereign geographical territories whose borders serve as barriers between citizens and non-citizens:

> In a territorially bounded nation-state system, that is, in a "state-centric" international order, one's legal status is dependent upon protection by the highest authority that controls the territory upon which one resides and issues the papers to which one is entitled. One becomes a refugee if one is persecuted, expelled, and driven away from one's homeland; one becomes a minority if the political majority in the polity declares that certain groups do not belong to the supposedly "homogeneous" people; one is a stateless person if the state whose protection one has hitherto enjoyed withdraws such protection, as well as nullifying the papers it has granted; one is a displaced person if, having been once rendered a refugee, a minority, or a stateless person, one cannot find another polity to recognize one as its member, and remains in a state of limbo, caught between territories, none of which desire one to be its resident.
>
> (Benhabib, 2004, p. 55; emphasis in original)

I think one will be apt to aver that 'as long as the Westphalian system remains the most consequential political phenomenon in our world, and as long as it divides the world into sovereign geographical territories whose borders serve as barriers between citizens and non-citizens, the possibility of othering and the danger of dehumanisation will always be present in our world' (Abumere, 2022, s.p.). Moreover, as Seyla Benhabib (2004) says, 'The nation-state system … always carried within itself the seeds of exclusionary injustice at home and aggression abroad' (p. 61).

In a nutshell, this discussion is a reflection on the moral problem Africans face and how they ought to respond to the moral problem in view of the conditions analysed in the penultimate chapter, preceding chapter and this chapter. In a form of syllogism, the penultimate chapter is the major premise, the preceding chapter is the minor premise while this chapter is the conclusion to the syllogistic argument. Reflecting on this chapter, we see that the most tragic thing that happened to the so-called superfluous persons (in the Holocaust, in Leopold II's Congo and in Rwanda) is that their 'right to have rights' (Arendt, 1951, p. 296) was violated by agents of negative othering – the most tragic thing that happens to the other is that his/her right to have rights is violated by the self.

In Africa, when the right to have rights is violated, the violation is not just a problem for perpetrators and the victims. As a continent, every

African, whether directly or indirectly, actively or passively, is in a way 'involved' when the right to have rights is violated. As Arendt (1951) says, 'the right to have rights, or the right of every individual to belong to humanity, should be guaranteed by humanity itself' (pp. 296–297). To explain the aforementioned direct or indirect, and active or passive, 'involvement', I will take my cue from Karl Jaspers. In *Die Schuldfrage*, literally 'The Guilt Question', but translated as *The Question of German Guilt*, Jaspers (2001) outlines four categories of guilt Germans have for the atrocities of Nazism. The first category is criminal guilt, the second category is political guilt, the third category is moral guilt and the fourth category is metaphysical guilt (Jaspers, 2001). It is possible that some Germans fall into more than one category, in fact, history tells us that this is actually the case. It is also possible, I think, that some Germans did not fall into any of the categories although Jaspers' conception of the categories (as explained below) does not allow this. Like the Germans, on the one hand, some of us may fall into one or more of Jaspers' four categories of guilt as far as othering is concerned. On the other hand, I think some of us may not fall into any of the categories – although Jaspers' conception of the categories (as explained below) will hardly allow this.

Certainly, some Germans were innocent of the atrocities the Nazis committed and the institutional, structural and systemic totalitarianism of the Nazis. Moreover, those who were the victims of Nazism cannot be said to be guilty of Nazism. Nevertheless, although many citizens and persons are innocent of the probable banality of evil that othering may bring upon us, taking a cue from Jaspers we can identify different ways in which we as citizens and humans may be directly guilty for the harms of othering or indirectly guilty institutionally, structurally or systemically for the harms of othering. Therefore, adapting Jaspers' four categories of guilt to the context of othering on the African continent, I shall tease out what each category means when applied to us in the context of othering on the continent.

Criminal guilt, as the name suggests, is the guilt of those whose violation of (positive) laws has a causal role, constitutive role or both causal and constitutive roles in the banality of evil we face in our time. Political guilt is the guilt we as citizens have for the actions and omissions of political leaders that have causal role, constitutive role or both causal and constitutive roles in the banality of evil we face in our time. In this category of guilt, we are responsible for the actions and omissions of the state whose citizenship we share, whose laws we obey and under whose power and authority we are governed. Moral guilt is the moral responsibility we have for our actions and inactions, including following the instructions and obeying the orders of the government when doing so leads to the banality of evil in our time.

Then metaphysical guilt is the guilt we have because we share common humanity which makes us share in the responsibility for all the injustices and atrocities in the world especially when we fail to explore all the possibilities available to us to prevent the injustices and atrocities that are committed

with our knowledge or in our presence. I admit that Jaspers' conception of metaphysical guilt is far-fetched. However, if we are in a position to prevent the harms of populism especially those committed in our name or in our presence, or with our aid or with our knowledge, yet we wilfully and/or negligently fail to prevent them, then it is not far-fetched to assert that we are metaphysically guilty, albeit in ethics 'morally guilty' (not restricted to the sense of Jaspers' category of moral guilt) will be the proper phrase to describe our guilt.

What makes anyone guilty, whether criminally, politically, morally or metaphysically is because his/her causal role, constitutive role or both causal and constitutive roles in the banality of evil in our time violate(s) the rights of the victims. I suppose, and I think it is safe and apt to suppose, that the victims as human beings had (in the case of the dead) or have (in the case of the living) rights, understood especially as Hohfeldian incidents of privileges and claims (Hohfeld, 1919), that is, primary rules (Hart, 1961) – 'rules requiring that people perform or refrain from performing particular actions' (Wenar, 2020, sec. 2.1.2) – and also powers and immunities (Hohfeld, 1919), that is secondary rules (Hart, 1961) – 'rules that specify how agents can introduce and change primary rules' (Wenar, 2020, sec. 2.1.2).

By privilege, it is meant that '*A* has a privilege to φ *if and only if A* has no duty not to φ.... Privilege-rights mark out what their bearer has no duty not to do' (sec. 2.1.1) (emphasis in original). By claim, it is meant '*A* has a claim that *B* φ *if and only if B* has a duty to *A* to φ.... every claim-right correlates to a duty in (at least) one duty-bearer. What is distinctive about the claim-right is that a duty-bearer's duty is "directed at" or "owed to" the right-holder' (sec. 2.1.2) (emphasis in original). By power, it is meant '*A* has a power *if and only if A* has the ability to alter her own or another's Hohfeldian incidents.... Power-rights to alter the authority of others are...definitive of all developed legal and political systems' (sec. 2.1.3) (emphasis in original). While by immunity, it is meant '*B* has an immunity *if and only if A* lacks the ability to alter *B's* Hohfeldian incidents' (sec. 2.1.4) (emphasis in original). Immunities correspond 'to an absence of a power in some other party to alter the rightholder's normative situation in some way' (Ibid.).

More than privileges, claims, powers and immunities, what is really at stake is the victims' 'right to have rights' (Arendt, 1951, p. 296). Arendt (1951) says:

> Something much more fundamental than freedom and justice, which are rights of citizens, is at stake when belonging to a community into which one is born is no longer a matter of course and not belonging no longer a matter of choice, or when one is placed in a situation where, unless he commits a crime, his treatment by others does not depend on what he does or does not do. This extremity, and nothing else, is the situation of people deprived of human rights. They are deprived, not of the right to freedom, but of the right to action; not of the right to think whatever

> they please, but of the right to opinion … We become aware of the existence of a right to have rights (and that means to live in a framework where one is judged by one's actions and opinions) and a right to belong to some kind of organised community, only when millions of people emerge who had lost and could not regain these rights because of the new global political situation.
>
> (p. 177)

Given the role Arendt's right to have rights play in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, the right is so indispensable that it can be aptly considered to be a meta-right (Shue, 1980, p. 132), that is, right 'without which no other rights or opportunities may be enjoyed. In this case, [...it] would be a requirement to live one's life' (Maffettone, 2013, p. 137). In short, Arendt's concept of the right to have rights strongly suggests that there are certain fundamental basic rights without which life itself will not be possible or at least will not be fully lived, and it demands that as human beings, we have an obligation to protect the dignity and fragility of our fellow human beings. As Sebastiano Maffettone (2013) succinctly puts it, 'The basic rights and the correspondent universal duty depend on the nature of our human vulnerability. They are imposed by the fact that our weakness as human beings requires a necessary support that cannot be overlooked' (p. 137).

In order to mitigate the banality of evil in our time, in view of Arendt's concept of the right to have rights, I think respecting the principle of irreducible minimal moral threshold should be our moral responsibility today in the face of the divisions and differences on the African continent and the consequent othering. The principle has three 'binding' requirements namely negative duty, positive duty and commensurability. The negative duty is a duty of no harm. The positive duty is simultaneously a duty of prevention (in non-relation to the negative duty) and a duty of remedy (in relation to the negative duty), while commensurability is a regulative notion that specifically determines the extensity of the duty of remedy and generally determines the extensity of the positive duty.

Firstly, the negative duty of no harm stipulates that the self must refrain from violating the rights of the other. Secondly, the positive duty of prevention stipulates that any self who are in a position to prevent the violation of the rights of the other must do so. While the positive duty of remedy stipulates that, any self that violates the rights of the other should be held responsible for the violations. Thirdly, commensurability specifically stipulates that, *ab initio*, the self is *prima facie* commensurately responsible to the extent or degree of the violations that occurred due to his/her actions or omissions. In addition, commensurability generally stipulates that the commensurate responsibility should only be a *pro tanto* obligation. Consequently, it creates space for more demanding obligations that the self may have depending on different contexts. Here, note that the 'self' and the 'self' refer not only to individuals, but also to groups, states, sub-regions and so on.

Note

1 In this sub-chapter, I mainly follow the analysis I did in *Normativity in African Regional Relations*. See Bibliography for full reference.

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4 SOCIAL CONTRACT AND REGULATIVE PRINCIPLES

Social Contract

In the preceding chapter, I conclude with an assertion that respecting the principle of irreducible minimal moral threshold should be our moral responsibility today in the face of the divisions and differences on the African continent and the consequent othering. The principle has three 'binding' requirements namely negative duty, positive duty and commensurability. The negative duty is a duty of no harm. The positive duty is simultaneously a duty of prevention (in non-relation to the negative duty) and a duty of remedy (in relation to the negative duty), while commensurability is a regulative notion that specifically determines the extensity of the duty of remedy and generally determines the extensity of the positive duty. Conscious of the divisions and differences on the continent and taking the analysis in the preceding chapter as a prelude, in this current chapter I employ the social contract as a methodological device to explain different scenarios in which African states and Africans can find themselves depending on what they make of the social contract and depending on which identities they form and which values they adopt through the social contract.

When exploring political conceptions of morality vis-à-vis what one political entity or some political entities (whether an individual/individuals, a group/groups, a state/states or a sub-region/sub-regions) – hereafter, X – owe another political entity or other political entities (whether an individual/individuals, a group/groups, a state/states or a sub-region/sub-regions) – hereafter, Y – one is acquiescing, explicitly or implicitly, to the following. Firstly, society (domestic or international) is not a state of nature but a modern state or an international system or international society. Secondly, there is a social contract between X and Y.

The social contract is a methodological device that justifies political principles or arrangements by appealing 'to the agreement that would be made among suitably situated rational, free and equal persons' (Lloyd & Sreedhar, 2018, intro.). As a methodological device, Thomas Hobbes', John Locke's, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's and Immanuel Kant's social contracts are ahistorical (they are only hypothetical). Therefore, their value is not judged based on

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whether they are true or false. Rather, their value is judged based on whether they are helpful or unhelpful in explaining: the relationship between subjects or citizens and the government or state; the obligations subject or citizens owe the government or state; and the obligations the government or state owes subjects or citizens.

Employing the social contract methodological device, Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau offered explanations for the transition from the state of nature to the modern state. The nexus between the state of nature and the modern state is legitimacy. X requires legitimacy of one form or the other. The importance of legitimacy cannot be overstated because without legitimacy X is likely to be rejected and undermined by Y while Y is likely to be oppressed or repressed by X (Abumere, 2019). On the one hand, the absence of state legitimacy may leave citizens in Rousseau's (1997) naturalised social contract in which the inequalities, disadvantages and injustices of the state of nature are justified and legitimised. On the other hand, when and where illegitimate governments become repressive, in extreme cases the absence of legitimacy might even lead to Hobbes' (1651) state of nature where life is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short (ch. XIII).

The legitimacy debate throws up so many important but difficult questions. Among the questions, one may be apt to aver that the most important and the most difficult is 'what is the source of legitimacy?' Many great thinkers have attempted to answer this question. For instance, Max Weber distinguishes between traditional legitimacy, charismatic legitimacy and rational-legal legitimacy. Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill think legitimacy must be based on beneficial consequences. In one place, Jean-Jacques Rousseau argues that legitimacy is based on public reason, and in another place, he thinks it is based on the social contract. Kant argues that legitimacy is based on democratic approval, while John Rawls argues that legitimacy is based on both public reason and democratic approval. In addition, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Rousseau (as earlier mentioned), Hugo Grotius and Samuel von Pufendorf provide different arguments for legitimacy that is based on a social contract.

There is no consensus on what the right answer to the above question is. While some thinkers are more successful than others are, none of the thinkers has been able to provide a canonical answer to the question because they seem to rely on conjectures to formulate their answers. Therefore, it is safe to say that the problem of the source of legitimacy remains unresolved. Nevertheless, Hobbes', Locke's and Rousseau's social contracts fare better than the other arguments because they seem to be the most original and are actually the most popular (Abumere, 2019). In view of state legitimacy, remember that since the social contract is ahistorical (it is only hypothetical), asking whether any version of the social contract is true or false is a wrong question, the right question to ask is whether it is helpful or unhelpful.

The social contract offers an explanation for the relationship between X and Y, and the obligations the former owes the latter and vice versa. In general

terms, in the social contract, what X owes Y is respect for the general canons of justice, and this obligation is derived from a hypothetical contract in which X has consented to respect the general canons of justice in return for Y acquiescing to the laws of the modern state or the rules of the international system or international society. If X fails in its obligation to Y, the social contract can justify the delegitimisation of X. In the social contract, obligations are transactional. Therefore, one party's failure to fulfil its obligations can lead to the moral justification of the other party's refusal to fulfil its own obligations.

However, if one explores the different versions of the social contract, one will not find any consensus on what X owes Y. In other words, there is no canonical agreement on what the ethical and political behaviour of X ought to be vis-à-vis Y. For instance, if one juxtaposes Hobbes' and Rousseau's explanations of the transition from the state of nature to the modern state, one will find different justifications for different ethical and political behaviour. Put differently, comparing and contrasting Hobbes' and Rousseau's arguments for state legitimacy yields conflicting results. Looking at their methodological device – the social contract – we see that Hobbes and Rousseau start from the same position, the state of nature, and end at the same position, the modern state. However, while Hobbes' (1651) negative conception of the state of nature leads him to justify autocracy in the commonwealth (ch. XIII), Rousseau's (1988 [1762]) positive conception of the state of nature leads him to criticise autocracy.

I used the above brief explanation of the social contract, especially the Hobbesian and Rousseauean social contracts, to illustrate the lack of consensus and canonical agreement on what the ethical and political behaviour of X ought to be vis-à-vis Y. Thereby showing that Machiavelli regional relations on the African continent may be deemed to be right by some and may be deemed to be wrong by others. On the one hand, in view of the Hobbesian version of social contract, the Machiavellian political conception of morality is apt. On the other hand, in view of the Rousseauean version of social contract, the Machiavellian political conception of morality is an aberration. In the above senses, the Machiavellian view on the ethical and political behaviour of X vis-à-vis Y may be right or wrong depending on the social contract within which X operates.

Machiavelli says that the prince should not worry about the consequences of his political action, as long as he is able and, most importantly, wise enough to defend himself against attacks (Pojman, 2002, p. 4). *Prima facie*, the above seems to support the claim that, for Machiavelli, the 'end does not justify the means'. Although the dictum, 'the end justifies the means' is usually attributed to Machiavelli, he did not actually use that dictum. The dictum actually resonates more with Bentham as a consequentialist and a utilitarian. However, for Bentham, the end only justifies the means if the end is the greatest happiness of the greatest number. In other words, Bentham would place the interest of the collective or society above the interest of the individual or political leader.

Unlike Bentham, Machiavelli will place the interest of the political leader above the interest of the society. For Machiavelli, the end will justify the means if the end is the interest of the political leader. The following quotation reveals his thought:

> Everyone sees what you appear to be, few really know what you are…. and in the actions of all men, and especially of princes…one judges by the result….For that reason, let a prince have the credit of conquering and holding his state, the means will always be considered honest, and he will be praised by everybody because the common people are always influenced by what a thing seems to be and by what results from it.
>
> (Machiavelli, 1965, ch. 18)

On the other hand, Immanuel Kant would think that political actions should not be based on consequences but on duty. According to Kant (1785), there is 'only one categorical imperative and it is this: *act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law … act as if the maxim of your action were to become by your will a* **universal law of nature**' (4.421) (emphasis in original). For Kant (1785), if an 'action would be good merely as a means to something else the imperative is *hypothetical*; if the action is represented as *in itself* good, hence as necessary in a will in itself conforming to reason, as its principle, then it is categorical' (4.414) (emphasis in original). He argues that:

> all imperatives command either *hypothetically* or *categorically*. The former represent the practical necessity of a possible action as a means to achieving something else that one wills (or that it is at least possible for one to will). The categorical imperative would be that which represented an action as objectively necessary of itself, without reference to another end.
>
> (Ibid.; emphasis in original)

In view of the distinction between the categorical imperative and the hypothetical imperative, one can see that while Kant would opt for the categorical imperative as the basis of political action, Machiavelli would opt for the hypothetical imperative as the basis of political action. After all, Machiavelli does not believe that human beings will abide by the categorical imperative. He does not even believe that human beings will voluntarily obey laws – he thinks human beings only obey laws because of the threat of violence of the coercive apparatus of the state. For him, without good arms, good laws cannot exist. This means that laws alone cannot be useful in human affairs and that a considerable amount of force would need to be used to cause obedience. He says that, 'You must know there are two ways of winning, one by the rules, and the other by force. The first method is suited to men, the second to beasts. But because the first is frequently not sufficient, it is necessary to use the second. Therefore, it is necessary for a

prince to understand how to use the ways of both the beast and the man' (Machiavelli, 1965, ch. 18).

In view of the distinction between the hypothetical imperative and the categorical imperative, respecting the rule of law and human rights will be hypothetical imperative for a Machiavellian X or Y. While they will acknowledge that, *ceteris paribus*, they have an obligation to obey the rules guiding regional relations, their refusal to obey the rules is only a means to realise their individual goals which are contrary to the goals of the collective. In other words, when the goals of the collective align with the personal goals of X or Y, X or Y will respect the rules. But when the goals of the collective do not align with the personal goals of X or Y, X or Y will disobey the rules. If they have other means to achieve their ends, they may not violate the rules. If they do not have other means to achieve their ends, then they will violate the rules. However, the categorical imperative abhors such practical calculations. For the categorical imperative, obligations are non-transactional. So, X's or Y's obligations to respect the rules still hold irrespective of the non-alignment between X's goals and Y's goals or between their goals and the goals of the collective.

Nevertheless, if X or Y thinks violating the rules in order to achieve personal goals (even though such goals are contrary to the good of the collective) is morally justified, then they will have to universalise this principle. The principle will be as follows; in all places and at all times, any X or Y that finds itself in a similar circumstance as the X or Y in question should act in the same way. In our world today, while the universalisation of the respect for rules such as the rule of law and human rights is more acceptable, the universalisation of the violation of the rule of law and human rights is less acceptable.

Regulative Principles

To Be Hobbesian or to Be Rousseauean? To Be Machiavelian or to Be Kantian?

At the beginning of the preceding sub-chapter, I stated my aim to employ the social contract as a methodological device to explain different scenarios in which African states and Africans can find themselves depending on what they make of the social contract and depending on which identities they form and which values they adopt through the social contract. In the course of the preceding sub-chapter, I showed that political entities be adopt the Hobbesian version of the social contract or the Rousseauean version of the social contract and so on. And political entities may adopt Machiavellian political morality or Kantian political morality and so on. To adopt the Hobbesian version or the Rousseauean version, and to adopt Machiavellian political morality of Kantian political morality is for a political entity or some political entities to accept such version or political morality as the regulative principle that governs its relationship or interaction with another political entity or other political entities.

For example, rejecting Machiavellian political morality in favour of Kantian political morality, the African Union (AU) and other sub-regional multilateral organisations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) reject *coup d'état* and condemn any military overthrow of a democratic government as illegitimate. In a nutshell, what is acceptable or unacceptable in African regional relations depends on whether African regional relations is Hobbesian, Rousseauean, Machiavellian or Kantian. Consider the following scenario as described below.

Thomas Pogge (2001) argues that regardless of how any group comes to power – how it exercises power and whether the citizenry supports or opposes it – as long as such group has the preponderance of the means of coercion or near monopoly of force within the state, it is internationally recognised as the legitimate government of the state (pp. 19–20). This is in spite of the fact that the nature of the group's coming to power, the nature of its exercise of power and the opposition of it by the citizenry make it illegitimate. By recognising such group as the legitimate government, the international community consequently bestows upon it two crucial privileges namely international resource privilege and international borrowing privilege. These privileges respectively allow the government to sell the natural resources of the country and to borrow money in the name of the country (p. 20).

Because of the international borrowing privilege, such despotic governments – given their corrupt and unaccountable natures – borrow at will without considering the impact it will have on the population. Worse still they use the money to perpetuate themselves in power and for other self-aggrandisements and for their cronies, without any commitment to developing the country or making the plight of the population better. Nevertheless:

> Any successor government that refuses to honour the debt incurred by a corrupt, brutal, undemocratic, unconstitutional, repressive, unpopular predecessor will be severely punished by the banks and governments of other countries…. Such refusals are therefore quite rare, as governments, even when newly elected after a dramatic break with the past, are compelled to pay the debts of their ever so awful predecessors.
>
> (p. 20)

The international resource privilege involves the global institutional order recognising both de facto and de jure the group in power as having the power and authority to legally, validly transfer the ownership rights of their country's natural resources to whoever they wish (p. 20). When this happens, while the benefits are usually very lucrative for the benefactors, the consequences are usually very dire for the helpless victims.

Compare the above international case with a commercial law case; then you can deduce what is wrong with the former. 'A group that overpowers and takes control of a warehouse may be able to give some of the merchandise to others, accepting money in exchange' (pp. 20–21). Neither the group nor

the buyers are legally recognised as the rightful owners of the merchandise. But in the case of a group that illegitimately takes over power by force and sells off the natural resources of the country, 'the purchaser acquires not mere possession, but all the rights and liberties of ownership, which are supposed to be – and actually are protected and enforced by all other states' courts and police forces' (p. 21) (emphasis is original).

While military regimes gain possession of natural resources through force (having come to power through the barrel of the gun), corrupt civilian regimes usually gain possession of natural resources through fraudulent means either by stolen ballots, administrative opacity or both. But the international system treats them as if they were the rightful owners of the resources. The foreign states and multinational corporations that buy these resources know too well how they are ill-gotten.

In view of the foregoing discussion, Leif Wenar (2008) argues that international trade, as it is today, permits the selling and buying of stolen goods. 'The raw materials used to make many of these goods have been taken – sometimes by stealth, sometimes by force – from some of the poorest people in the world. These goods flow through the system of global commerce under cover of a rule that is little more than a cloak of larceny' (p. 2). Therefore, for him, many of the products sold and bought can be considered to be stolen goods (p. 2).

In the above scenario, *on the one hand*, the AU can recommend that the member states, multinational corporations and the global institutional order that have been accused of both bestowing resource privilege and borrowing privilege on rogue governments in Africa and violating the property rights of the citizenry of those governments should desist from recognising such governments as legitimate and consequently cease doing business with them. Member states that benefit from the status quo may not be interested in any change because they may not want to lose their benefits. Since it is in their national interest to maintain the status quo and oppose change, such states will look for ways to ensure the status quo remains and change does not occur. But such states usually will not categorically say that it is in their national interest to maintain the status quo and oppose change – making such categorical declaration is unpopular and 'politically incorrect'. Hence, for such states to achieve their aim, they may first have to reckon with the AU.

On the other hand, the AU may argue that if member states are not to respect the resource and borrowing privileges of rogue governments, then there might be a domino effect whereby some states will be dictating to other states, for example some states might be telling other states that human rights, gender equality, etc. must be respected. In a nutshell, there will be a slippery slope of interference and even intervention. Consequently, the AU may refrain from asking member states not to respect the resource and borrowing privileges of rogue states because the AU does not want to be accused of promoting liberalism or idealism, particularly liberal institutionalism, and even liberal interventionism (Abumere, 2021).

In responding to the above slippery slope argument, I shall start by saying that, firstly, resource and borrowing privileges are harmful practices. As long as these practices by authoritarians and dictators cause harm to citizens, they stand to be morally culpable. Secondly, asking member states not to respect the resource and borrowing privileges of rogue states is not tantamount to the AU promoting liberalism, idealism, or particularly liberal institutionalism or liberal interventionism. Because there are resolutions of United Nations (UN) Conventions, African Charter, etc., in support of the recommendation to boycott rogue governments that exploit resource and borrowing privileges. Such resolutions and declarations are already in place; they only need to be implemented or enforced, respected or observed (Ibid.).

For instance, the following UN resolution and declaration support such recommendation. According to the UN General Assembly Resolution 1803 (XVII) of 14 December, 1962, peoples and nations have the right 'to permanent sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources [which] must be exercised in the interest of their national development and of the well-being of the people of the state concerned' (United Nations, 1962, s.p.). And according to Article 1 of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development (Resolution 41/128 of 4 December, 1986), peoples have the 'inalienable right to full sovereignty over all their natural wealth and resources'. Furthermore, the following articles also support the recommendation. According to Joint Article 1.2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, all peoples have the right to 'freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources'. And according to Article 21 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 'peoples shall freely dispose of their wealth and natural resources. This right shall be exercised in the exclusive interest of the people. In no case shall a people be deprived of it'.

A Recapitulation

Being the last chapter of Part I, this chapter serves as the nexus between Part I and Part II. So, as I reach the end of Part I, I shall briefly reiterate the salient points in Part I and briefly preview Part II. The foregoing discussion in Part I and the forthcoming discussion in Part II can be summed up as follows. With 54 states, Africa represents a microcosm of the Westphalian world. In conjunction with the Westphalian fragmentation of the continent, other major fragmentations have compounded the intractable problem of 'othering' on the continent. The fragmentations sum up an African condition in the twenty-first century because they simultaneously represent the 'divisions' based on which Africans are 'differentiated' and the 'differences' based on which Africans are 'divided'. I argue for normative international politics in which the divisions and differences are superseded by non-discriminatory, unifying, positive identities and shared values. In this normative international politics, cooperation is the organising principle.

Furthermore, an analysis of the contemporary postcolonial state of the continent will inevitably involve references to underdevelopment and poverty, bad governance and conflicts, epidemics and pandemics, immigration and aids, etc. However, I focus on the divisions based on which Africans are differentiated and the differences based on which Africans are divided. Because the divisions and differences hinder robust continental relations without which major transnational, international, sub-regional and continental problems will remain intractable. After all, it is generally agreed that the economy and politics of a state are interdependent; positive development in one sphere affects the other sphere positively, and negative development in one sphere affects the other sphere negatively. The above condition is not only true of states; it is also true of regions. Hence, the prevailing divisions and differences, and identities and values, on the continent have consequences for the regional political economy of the continent. Consequently, I contended that the divisions based on which Africans are differentiated, and the differences based on which Africans are divided should be considered as the principal determinants of the African condition in the twenty-first century. Analogously, I take Karl Marx's (2011) dialectic that is 'standing on its head' and turned it 'right side up' ironically the same way Marx took Hegelian dialectic which was 'standing on its head' and turned it 'right side up'. In Marxian terms, the divisions and difference can be seen as the substructure while the political economy can be seen as the superstructure.

To the above effect, in Part I, I discussed the divisions and differences that disunite Africa as a continent and Africans as a people. While in Part II, I discuss the development of norms in international relations and how norms can be employed at the African regional level; I explore how the 'othering' caused or engendered by the divisions and differences in Part I can be superseded by non-discriminatory, unifying and positive identities and values; and then I discuss the mechanisms through which the non-discriminatory, unifying and positive identities and values can be realised.

In summary, in the form of an Aristotelian syllogism, taking the discussion of divisions and differences in Part I as a major premise and the discussion of norms in international politics as a minor premise, the discussion of how the divisions and differences can be superseded through the adoption of non-discriminatory, unifying and positive identities and values serves as a conclusion. The conclusion to the syllogism is that the acceptance of norms and fusion of horizons are simultaneously the *conditio sine qua non* and the *conditio per quam* of normative international politics in Africa. In this normative international politics, cooperation is the organising principle. The relations and cooperation in this normative international politics are multifaceted; they are simultaneously vertical, horizontal, multipolar and multidimensional. Primarily, they are regional relations and cooperation that traverse the length and breadth of the continent. Importantly, they are simultaneously inter-personal, transnational, international, sub-regional and regional relations and cooperation.

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PART II

AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

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5 A STRUCTURALIST EXPLANATION OF AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

What Is the Nature of African International Politics?

The Paramountcy of National Interest

In view of the divisions and differences discussed in 'Part I', this chapter discusses the realist view of African international politics. This entails looking at African international politics from the perspective of realism (classical realism and neo-realism) and then examining the validity of such perspective. The chapter particularly interrogates the validity of the structuralist claim that African states are prone to conflicts. Structuralists claim that African actors, in their respective conflict zones, are constrained to behave in accordance with the warring nature of their zones. This structuralism explains the contexts within which the actors in African state system act and how the contexts determine their actions. It claims that although the separate actors are only parts of the whole system, in their interactions they form a whole whose characteristics are greater than and different from the mere summation of the characteristics of its constituent parts. Although the structuralist claim that African states are prone to conflicts may be contentious, however, one cannot deny that approximately the claim seems to reflect a post-colonial history of the continent. Therefore, when examining the validity of the realist view of African international politics, this chapter pays attention to the proneness to conflict claim.

The Europe scramble for Africa which led to the partitioning of the African continent into conquered colonies at the 1884–85 Berlin Conference shows that what mattered to Europeans was solely their national interest. One of the legacies of this European pursuit of national interest is that post-colonial Africa is a continent of 55 Westphalian states or Lilliputs. Viewing these states from a realist lens, the realist sees 55 self-regarding and other-regarding units or actors who are chasing their respective national interests in African international politics.

Realism conceives of states to be simultaneously self-regarding and other-disregarding entities. In international politics, to be simultaneously self-regarding and other-disregarding is to reify the paramountcy of

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national interest. The realist conception of states is tantamount to sheer reification because reification is:

> the apprehension of the products of human activity *as if* they were something else than human products – such as facts of nature, results of cosmic laws, or manifestations of divine will. Reification implies that man is capable of forgetting his own authorship of the human world, and further, that the dialectic between man, the producer, and his products is lost to consciousness. The reified world is … experienced by man as a strange facticity, an *opus alienum* over which he has no control rather than as the *opus proprium* of his productive activity.
>
> (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 89; emphasis in original)

The idea that national interest is paramount allows states to pursue their national interests, sometimes 'by any means necessary' and at other times with 'all options open'. When the status quo favours a state and promotes its national interest, then such state may use the paramountcy of national interest to ensure that the status quo is unchanged (if the state has the power to do so) even when the status quo is neither the most theoretically plausible nor the most practically possible, and of course not the most morally reasonable, option available. But when the status quo does not favour a state and does not promote its national interest, such state may use the paramountcy of national interest to ensure that the status quo is changed (if the state has the power to do so) even when the change is neither the most theoretically plausible nor the most practically possible and of course not the most morally reasonable.

The reification of the paramountcy of national interest is generally (sometimes specifically), to a large extent (although not exclusively) and sometimes directly and at other times indirectly, traced to different realists who seem to have bought the idea – although to different degrees – that 'outside the state there is no morality' or 'outside the state there is no justice'. Among all the theorists of International Relations, realists are the ones who are most associated with the promotion of national interest even when such interest is selfish and constitutes harm to other states. From Thucydides, Thomas Hobbes and Niccolo Machiavelli to the present day, we may trace how realist ideas help creep, at least indirectly, the paramountcy of national interests into international politics. But I will rather focus on Hans Morgenthau, who more than any other realist giant in recent times seemed to have mastered the art of the promotion of national interest in both International Relations theory and foreign policy. Although Thucydides is considered by many to be the founding father of International Relations in general and realism in particular, Stanley Hoffmann (1987) contends that Morgenthau, if the discipline of International Relations has a founding father, is the founding father (p. 6). If Morgenthau who is a realist is considered to be the founding father of International Relations, then it follows that he can be considered to be the founding father of realism. Although that will be farfetched. It is more plausible to contend that Thucydides is the founding father of both International Relations and realism.

Carr (2001) had argued that 'no ethical standards are applicable to relations between states' (p. 153). Following suit, Morgenthau (1954) argued that 'universal moral principles cannot be applied to the actions of states' (p. 9). For Morgenthau (1951a), political situations usually have a blend of good and evil on the one hand and wisdom and error on the other hand. This blend is so strong that we cannot extricate the good from the evil and wisdom from error in political situations. Hence to categorically deal with international political matters as purely moral or immoral or wise or wrong is at its best at once an inadequate way to deal with political situations and an injustice to political situations (Morgenthau, 1951a, p. 13).

Describing the history of American foreign policy as a realist one, Morgenthau (1952) says that is how every state behaves. He argues that the only thing that matters to states is their interest. When their interest is threatened, they become utterly faithless, mean and crafty (Morgenthau, 1952, pp. 970–971). For him, our common moral principles are not the ultimate moral guide for the political actor; the moral standards of politics are different from our common moral standards. The political actor acts according to the moral standards pertaining to politics. Hence the ultimate moral duty of the political actor is to be politically expedient – for that is what is demanded of him in politics. To fail to be politically expedient is to have morally failed politically (Morgenthau, 1946, p. 186). If because of moralistic contempt for the rules of politics a political actor fails to act expediently and as a result those in his or her charge and the interest of the state are endangered, such an actor is politically morally culpable (Morgenthau, 1951b, p. 33).

Morgenthau (1954) says that:

> it is exactly the concept of interest defined in terms of power that saves us from both … moral excess and … political folly. For if we look at all nations … as political entities pursuing their respective interests defined in terms of power, we are able to do justice to all of them in a dual sense: We are able to judge other nations as we judge our own and, having judged them in this fashion, we are then capable of pursuing policies that respect the interests of other nations, while protecting and promoting our own. (p. 10)

For Morgenthau (1952), prudence is the core of political morality. Political actors ought to consider the political effects of their political actions and must ensure that their actions and the effects serve the interests of their states. The national interest is the only standard, both morally and intellectually, that great nations have (Morgenthau, 1952, p. 986). National interest, as understood by Morgenthau (1952), has three components namely the protection of the territory, political institutions and culture of the state (p. 973). National interest, understood as national security or survival, cannot be compromised for anything. But after it, states should bring morality into consideration when they act in the international arena. No wonder he argues that it is impossible for us to have a compromise between national interest and moral values in matters of foreign policy (Morgenthau, 1951b, p. 34).

It is on the above grounds, one may argue, that he propounded six principles of political realism, namely:

1 Political realism believes that politics, like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature.
2 The main signpost that helps political realism to find its way through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power.
3 Realism assumes that its key concept of interest defined as power is an objective category that is universally valid, but it does not endow that concept with a meaning that is fixed once and for all.
4 Political realism is aware of the moral significance of political action.
5 Political realism refuses to identify the moral aspirations of a particular nation with the moral laws that govern the universe.
6 Intellectually, the political realist maintains the autonomy of the political sphere (Morgenthau, 1993, pp. 4–5, 10, 12–13).

However, Morgenthau (1945) seems to have contradicted himself if we look at some other passages of his writings. For instance, in *The Machiavellian Utopia*, Morgenthau (1945) says our ordinary moral principles are not merely part of politics; rather they are the foundation of the political reality upon which a government is built (p. 147). He says although states pursue their national interests in their international relations with other states and will only comply with international law if it helps further their national interests; regard for a few moral principles restrains states from violating the fundamental rights of other states, and it is to these few moral principles that the law of nations and Western civilisation itself owe their existence. Then he admits that there is a contradiction between claiming on the one hand that states are only concerned with their national interest and on the other hand that there are few moral principles that guide states. But explains that these moral principles do not actually dictate to states the political actions they should take or not take at the international arena. Rather, the moral principles are so strong that they influence political actors to such an extent that political actors do not even entertain the thought of violating the fundamental rights of other states as a means of pursuing national interest.

In other words, the violation of the fundamental rights of other states as a means of pursuing national interest is already eliminated from international politics by these moral principles even before political actions are considered by political actors (Morgenthau, 1939, pp. 125–126). According to Morgenthau (1948):

> if we ask ourselves what statesmen and diplomats are capable of doing to further the power objectives of their respective nations and what they actually do, we realize that they do less than they probably could and less than they actually did in other periods of history. They refuse to consider certain ends and to use certain means, either altogether or under certain conditions,

> not because in the light of expediency impractical or unwise, but because certain moral rules interpose an absolute barrier. Moral rules do not permit certain policies to be considered at all from the point of view of expediency. (pp. 174–175)

Having asserted that 'moderation in politics cannot fail to reflect the moderation of moral judgement' (Morgenthau, 1954, p. 10), Morgenthau (1948) admits that the moral boundaries of international politics have been negatively affected by national interest which results from the nature of modern warfare – given that advanced technology has changed the way wars are fought (p. 182). Thus, it is understandable while he opines that Hobbes' characterisation of international relations or international politics as a state of nature misleads us to think that morality or norms have no effect on international politics. Nevertheless, on another contradictory note, Morgenthau (1948) would consider as profoundly true Hobbes' assertion that it is the sovereign that gives birth to law and morality, or justice and injustice; hence outside a sovereign state there is no law and morality or justice and injustice.

Just as Morgenthau enunciated his arguments for the paramountcy of national interest with logical soundness and almost always with logical validity, so too states defend their national interests using arguments that are sometimes logically sound and sometimes even logically valid. But at many times, states' arguments for the defence of their national interests lack both logical soundness and logical validity. After all, international politics is littered with instances in which the paramountcy of national interest made states use slippery slope arguments. But remember that, as fallacies slippery slope arguments seem to be correct but prove, upon examination, not to be so (Copi, 1961, p. 52).

Realism has significant implications for African regional relations due to the following reasons. Firstly, realism takes the Westphalian system to be the status quo and a very important 'consequential political phenomenon of our world. The system divides the world into sovereign territories whose borders simultaneously serve as barriers between citizens and non-citizens and as negation of external authorities' (Abumere, 2019, p. 10). Secondly, (neo)realists take this system to be 'characterised by anarchy – that is to say, the absence of hierarchy' (p. 10). Thirdly, (neo)realists take anarchy to be 'an ordering principle, which says that the system comprises independent states that have no central authority above them' (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 30). Fourthly, the anarchical nature of international politics necessarily means the absence of norms in international politics. Fifthly, therefore, states ought to resort to self-help if they are to survive in the dangerous sea and turbulent waters of international relations.

Proneness to Conflicts

In view of the conflicts mentioned in the second chapter, international relations theory analyses of African international relations tend to view African international relations through the lenses of realism and neo-realism. Looking

at the crises and conflicts mentioned in the second chapter, James Hentz's (2019) structuralist analysis of African international relations might conclude that African states seem to have adopted realism as their *modus vivendi* and *modus operandi* in their international relations with one another. Hentz (2019) asserts that African states are prone to conflicts (p. 144). As earlier mentioned, this assertion may be contentious; however, one cannot deny that approximately the assertion seems to reflect a post-colonial history of the continent.

Hentz (2019) traces the origin of intra-state conflicts in Africa to four sources (p. 144). Firstly, the states are undemocratic or experiencing intractable problems in their transition to democracy. Secondly, they are simultaneously underdeveloped and characterised by astronomical inequalities. Thirdly, they are artificial colonial creations. Fourthly, although to different degrees in different states, generally they are ethnically heterogeneous. Ultimately, Hentz (2019) argues that the African state system inherently engenders conflict because of three unique features of the system, namely juridical statehood, neopatrimonialism and weak centre–periphery relations (p. 145).

In terms of neopatrimonialism, the largely poor population of many African states widely accepts a moral economy that is characterised by patron-client relations. On the one hand, patron-client relations are 'a special case of dyadic…ties involving a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socio-economic status [patron] uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits or both for a person of lower status [client] who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services to the patron' (Scott, 1972, p. 92). On the other hand, moral economy (Thompson, 1971) has to do with what is acceptable/unacceptable as reasonable/unreasonable behaviour in a given economic relationship. It entails the activities persons in such relationship are expected to perform in their economic sphere. Furthermore, a 'moral economic activity occurs in and helps to reproduce relationships in which the transactors have become obligated to each other because of their past transactions. This means that such activity is motivated to a significant degree by the relationship in which it occurs' (Carrier, 2018, p. 30). For instance, politicians (patrons) provide material assistance – legally or illegally, and ethically or unethically – for electorates (clients) in certain constituencies. In return, the politicians expect that the electorates will vote for them. Alternatively, the electorates (clients) in certain constituencies vote for some politicians (patrons) and in return expect that they will get some material assistance from the politicians in the future.

Perhaps one can talk about a certain degree of (neo)patrimonialism in many African states to the extent that what exists in many African states can be seen as a hybrid regime in which patrimony and rational-legal bureaucracy are intertwined (Erdmann & Engel, 2007, p. 104). In this case, why the rational-legal bureaucracy expects one thing of leaders, the people expect another thing of them. On the one hand, the operating political logic of the rational-legal bureaucracy is adherence to constitutionalism, the rule of

law and due process. On the other hand, the operating political logic of the people is that their parochial interests are met by the leaders. Because what the people expect of their leaders is not what the rational-legal bureaucracy expects of the leaders, the leaders are nevertheless deemed legitimate by the people even when the former do not abide by the rules of the rational-legal bureaucracy.

To satisfy the parochial interests of the people, the leaders need resources: the more resources the leaders have, the more they are able to satisfy the parochial interests of the people and the more the people deem the leaders legitimate. Since the resources the leaders divert to satisfy the parochial interests of their people are national resources, the leaders actually become even more corrupt and rent-seeking in the quest to satisfy their people's parochial interests. In this case, leaders cannot be seen to have stolen too much and to have not shared with the right people or to have shared with the wrong people. Consequently, patronage is seen as moral and thus encouraged, and this leads people to often accept patron-client relations. No wonder in many natural resource-rich African states where there is already no properly functioning rational-legal bureaucracy, the more natural resources the states are able to extract, the more rent-seeking behaviour increases and the more bad governance increases. Simply put, in many natural-resource-rich African states, rather than alleviating bad governance, natural resources exacerbate it.

The problem is that the phenomenon of patron-client relations is an institution. By institution, it is meant 'a relatively stable collection of practices and rules defining appropriate behaviour for specific groups of actors in specific situations' (March & Olsen, 1998, p. 948). Although patron-client relations are not encoded in legal rights, they are grounded in (Pitcher et al., 2009, p. 139), as Max Weber (1978[1922]) says, 'the subjects' claim to reciprocity, and this claim 'naturally' acquires social recognition as custom' (p. 1010). In other words, patron-client relations are 'institutionalised and grounded in rules that are broadly shared and understood but not, or not sufficiently, codified in law' (Pitcher et al., 2009, p. 139).

For Hentz (2019), the aforementioned unique features (juridical statehood, neopatrimonialism and weak-centre periphery relations) lead to the emergence of conflict zones in which inter-state wars are the order of the day. In their respective conflict zones, actors are constrained to behave in accordance with the warring nature of their zones. This structuralism explains the contexts within which the actors in African state system act and how the contexts determine their actions. Although the separate actors are only parts of the whole system, in their interactions they form a whole whose characteristics are greater than and different from the mere summation of the characteristics of its constituent parts. The anarchy that provides structure to the African state system is not the same as that which provides the structure of the Westphalia state system and shapes the behaviour of the states in that system. The African state system is a conflation of interstate and intrastate forces, which shape the conflict zones across the continent. Thus, while most

of Africa's conflicts and wars have been intrastate, there is often a systemic dimension to them because they are often imbedded in regional conflict zones (Hentz, 2019, p. 147).

What Is Wrong with a Structuralist Explanation of African International Politics?

The Global South Burden

The current set of global political, economic, legal and social institutions, rules, regimes and norms which systemically, directly and indirectly regulate, shape and affect the relationships, interactions, competitions and cooperation among persons, collectives, peoples, states, corporations and organisations globally are neither the most theoretically plausible nor the most practically possible, and of course not the most morally reasonable. In this sense, the structures and modus operandi of organisations such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation, etc. are neither the most theoretically plausible nor the most practically possible and of course not the most morally reasonable. So too current regimes such as free trade, intellectual property right, etc. are neither the most theoretically plausible nor the most practically possible and of course are not the most morally reasonable.

When the above-mentioned institutions suffer the deficiencies of theoretical plausibility, practical possibility and moral reasonableness, it is countries of the global south that are faced with the greater part of the negative consequences. In cases like this, countries of the global south almost always find themselves at the receiving end because global politics and domestic politics are interdependent. Although, in the case of the countries of the global south, this interdependence is almost a dictatorship of global politics because in terms of consequences global politics impacts the domestic politics of countries of the global south more than the domestic politics of the countries of the global south impact global politics. Positive development in global politics affects the domestic politics of countries of the global south positively, and negative development in global politics affects the domestic politics of countries of the global south negatively. While the onus is on countries of the global south to ensure their countries are well governed, as individual countries they can only do so much in terms of global politics. Hence the defects of global politics and global institutions will continue to impact countries of the global south negatively except such defects are remedied.

In view of the above assertion, being the weakest (both economically and politically) continent on earth, the only way African states many to swim rather than drown in the turbulent and crocodile-infested waters of global politics is by bandying together as a collective actor rather than as individual units. Therefore, rather than looking at African states from a structuralist-realist lens which shows 55 self-regarding and other-disregarding states that on the one hand think

national interest is paramount and on the other hand are prone to conflicts, one can look at the 55 African states not merely as individual entities but as a collective entity that behaves as if it were a rising power in global politics.

In order to give us insights into what it would mean for the 55 individual African states to behave as if they were a collective rising power in global politics, in the next section I provide a framework that contributes to understanding the behaviour of rising powers in the new global order. I contend that context is the principal determinant of the behaviour of rising powers in the new global order, and therefore we need to adopt contextualism in order to understand their behaviour in the new global order. I start with a presentation of the concept of power, continue with an explanation of the aims of rising powers in the new global order and then conclude by proposing an approach to the analysis of the behaviour of rising powers in the new global order.

What Rising Powers Want

A decade ago, 2011, Jim O'Neill coined the acronym BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) and later BRICS (including South Africa) to show how economic power is shifting from developed economies to emerging markets. Two years later, 2013, he coined the acronyms MINT (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey) and MIST/MIKT (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea and Turkey) to show the rapid progress of emerging markets. In international or global politics, established powers feared that these rising (emerging) powers, who are so called 'because of their rapid economic development, and expanding political and cultural influence' (Tank, 2012, p. 1), will seek to revolutionise the global order. However, there has been no *revolution*, partly because established powers resist such revolutionary change and partly because the rising powers are less interested in such revolutionary change and more interested in reforming the global order. Consequently, the current global order is only a new global order in *relative* terms rather than in *absolute* terms.

The quintessential difference between rising powers and established powers is that the former are relatively less powerful while the latter are relatively more powerful. Obviously, power is the distinguishing factor or distinction line between rising powers and established powers. Consequently, one must understand the concept of power in order to understand the behaviour of rising powers in the new global order. Nye and Goldsmith (2011) () define power as 'the ability to affect others to get the things you want. You can do that in three ways: you can use coercion, sticks; you can use payments, carrots; or you can use attraction and persuasion' (p. 46). Then they distinguish between three forms of power, namely hard power, soft power and smart power.

Firstly, hard power entails coercion (usually military force) and payment (usually economic resources). Secondly, soft power entails persuasion and attraction (Nye, 2011, p. xiii). Attractive soft power entails other actors 'valuing or cherishing what you are, what you have or what you represent, making them want to imitate you, join you, share in or benefit from what

you are, what you have or what you represent. By doing so, they become amenable to you, so you can affect them to get what you want' (Abumere, 2018, pp. 47–48). While persuasive soft power entails successfully convincing other actors, without the threat of violence or economic inducement, to accept your position (Ibid.). Thirdly, smart power as a derivative of hard power and soft power 'is the combination of the hard power of coercion and payment with the soft power of persuasion and attraction' (Nye, 2011, p. xiii). In other words, smart power is 'the ability to combine hard and soft power into … strategies in varying contexts' (Nye, 2011, p. xiv).

Since power is an actor's ability to get other actors to want what the actor wants (Nye, 2004, p. 31), then, on the one hand, one may not consider China to be a rising power because it is the second most powerful state and the challenger to the hegemon, namely the United States of America (USA). On the other hand, it is contentious to place Russia in the category of rising powers. If Russia is considered to be a rising power because of its economy, considering its military strength one may be apt to think such categorisation is wrong. Nevertheless, I shall assume the traditional categorisation of all the aforementioned states in the introductory section as rising powers is apt.

Taking a cue from Nye (2011), I think a rising power will do well to always ask the following questions: 'What goals or outcomes do I prefer? What resources do I have and in which contexts? What are the positions and preferences that I am targeting to influence? Is hard power, soft power or smart power most likely to succeed? What is the probability that I will succeed in my attempt?' (pp. 208–209). Since 'strategy relates means to ends, and that requires clarity about goals (preferred outcomes), resources, and tactics for their use' (Nye, 2011, p. 208), rising powers need to adopt a strategy that is capable of handling 'very different distributions of power in different domains and understand the trade-offs among them' (Nye, 2011b, p. 213). As Nye (2011) says, a rigid approach to strategy is likely to be counter-productive (p. 212).

In international or global politics, it is apparent that 'rising powers [… are] seeking a global political role comparable with their increased economic clout … [and they] are changing the dynamics of power in the international system by seeking a greater voice in international institutions and building political bonds through regional organisations' (Tank, 2012, p. 1). A keen observation of rising powers shows that they have some distinctive features. Firstly, comparatively, they are less economically developed than established powers (p. 2). Secondly, they seek to be recognised as rising powers and seek to enjoy the benefits of such status (p. 3). 'One of the stepping stones to this status can be recognition as a regional leader, particularly as the general relevance of regions in geopolitics increases…. Another means for achieving recognition as a rising power is through the projection of soft power' (Ibid.). Thirdly, rising powers seek to challenge the status quo (Ibid.). However, the relative (not absolute) shift of the balance of economic power from established powers to rising powers makes the former fear that the latter can potentially destabilise the global order by challenging the former (Ibid.).

Moreover, generally although to different degrees, every rising power is a non-status quo power since its modus operandi is to react to and challenge the global order and established powers. Nevertheless, what really challenges the global order is neither the rise or emergence of new powers nor the relative decline of established powers (p. 4) but the persistent uncertainty concerning the actual intentions and aims of rising powers (Narlikar, 2010, p. 2). In this regard, Patrick Stewart (2010) says, in the coming decades, one major strategic problem the United States of America (USA) needs to resolve is how the USA should integrate rising powers into the current global order and its institutions.

Rising powers simply want a multipolar global order that is simultaneously democratic and just (Renard, 2009) in terms of both the processes of decision-making and the outcomes of the decisions. They want neither a unipolar nor a bipolar global order, and they do not even want a multipolar global order in which they are relegated by established powers. It is in this context that rising powers behave or act the way they do. For instance, historically during the Cold War, non-alignment as a strategy was only adopted by Indian, Indonesia, South Africa and Nigeria because of the bipolar context of the Cold War which pitted the USA and its allies (the Western Bloc) against the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) and its allies (the Eastern Bloc). India, Indonesia, South Africa and Nigeria did not only act in their context as members of the Non-Aligned Movement, they also acted in the context of the *developing world* which the formation of the movement was predicated on (Abumere, 2015, p. 24).

If India, Indonesia, South Africa and Nigeria 'belonged to either the Western Bloc or Eastern Bloc, non-alignment would not have been possible because the members would have been acting in another context in which non-alignment would be redundant' (Ibid.). In this description of the behaviour of India, Indonesia, South Africa and Nigeria during the Cold War, we see the significance of context. Consequently, I think the dominant International Relations (IR) theories (realism/neorealism, liberalism/neoliberalism, constructivism, the English School, etc.), standing alone as individual theories, cannot fully capture the behaviour of rising powers in international politics. Each individual theory assumes that regardless of context, rising powers 'will always act in accordance with the tenets of that theory' (Ibid.). The theories do not realise that whether a rising power behaves or acts according to the principles of a particular theory depends on the context in which the rising power acts (Ibid.).

As Nye (2011) says, 'power always depends on context' (p. xiv). To understand the behaviour of rising powers in the new global order, I aver that we should adopt contextualism. Contextualism is an analysis of international or global politics that gives preeminence to context. Context is:

> (i) the era, period, or time; (ii) the place or space, and; (iii) the conditions or circumstances; which make up the milieu in which a relevant [international or] global actor (for instance a state) acts or behaves or in which

> relevant [international or] global actors (for instance states) act or behave. In contextualism, context is the principal element that shapes, structures or determines behaviour.
>
> (Abumere, 2015, p. 19)

Contextualism emphasises the importance of context because 'the relevant actors in [international or] global politics act within a context, [international or] global political decisions are made or [international or] global political events occur within a context' (Ibid), and this is important because 'context…has a direct consequence for the decisions or events' (Steinmo, 2008, p. 127). As Sven Steinmo (2008) aptly observes, 'behaviour, attitudes and strategic choices take place inside particular social, political, economic and even cultural contexts' (p. 127).

In a way, contextualism is analogous to institutionalism in the sense that 'context is to contextualism what institutions are to institutionalism' (Abumere, 2015, p. 19). A brief explanation of the three prominent variants of institutionalism, namely rational choice institutionalism, sociological institutionalism and historical institutionalism will suffice to give us insights into the similarity between contextualism and institutionalism. Rational choice institutionalists think that institutions 'configure the pattern of inducements and penalties which are obtainable by individuals when they make decisions' (p. 127). They think human beings are 'rational individuals who calculate the costs and benefits in the choices they face' (p. 126). While they think institutions are important only 'because they frame the individual's strategic behaviour' (Ibid.). In other words, they think human beings are 'strategic actors whose aim is the maximisation of personal benefits, and it is due to this reason that we follow rules. We co-operate because we get more with co-operation than without it. We follow rules because we individually do better when we do so' (Ibid.).

Sociological institutionalists think that 'individuals are socialised by institutions; hence individuals' behaviour is formed by what they consider to be appropriate due to their socialisation' (Ibid.). They think that rational choice institutionalists exaggerate the selfishness, self-interestedness or rationality of human beings (Ibid.). For them, fundamentally human beings are satisficers, that is, social beings 'who act habitually …. institutions frame the very way in which people see their world and are not just rules within which they try to work. Rather than following rules to maximise their self-interest, humans … follow a "logic of appropriateness" …. the important institutions (rules) are social norms that govern everyday life and social interaction' (Ibid.) (emphasis in original).

Historical institutionalists concur with rational choice institutionalists and sociological institutionalists but go further to accentuate the importance 'of context and of the historical order of events' (Della Porta & Keating, 2008, pp. 9–10). They think that 'human beings are both norm-abiding rule followers and self-interested rational actors. How one behaves depends on the individual, on the context and on the rules' (Ibid.) (emphasis in original). However,

for historical institutionalists, except we look at history, 'that is, the particular history in which particular human beings acted' (Abumere, 2015, p. 20), we will not be able to ascertain whether the rational choice institutionalist conception of human beings is more important than the sociological institutionalist conception of human beings and vice versa (Steinmo, 2008, p. 126).

In a nutshell, institutionalism emphasises 'the role institutions play in structuring behaviour' (p. 123); similarly, contextualism emphasises 'the role context plays in determining, structuring or shaping the behaviour of states in [international or] global politics' (Abumere, 2015, p. 19). Contextualism does not see the behaviour of rising powers in the new global order from the lenses of either rational choice institutionalism alone, or sociological institutionalism alone or historical insitutionalism alone. It sees the behaviour of rising powers in the new global order states 'through a combination of the lenses of rational choice institutionalists, sociological institutionalists and historical institutionalists' (p. 20).

In the foregoing discussion, I simply explain that we need to adopt contextualism in order to understand the behaviour of rising powers in the new global order. This is in line with my assertion that context is the principal determinant of the behaviour of rising powers in the new global order. For instance, rising powers may behave or act in accordance with realist/neorealist, liberal/neoliberal or constructivist principles and so on or combine such principles. However, whether rising powers are realists/neorealists, liberals/neoliberals or constructivists and so on, or whether they combine realist/neorealist, liberal/neoliberal or constructive principles and so on depends on the context in which they behave or act (p. 21). I concede that there are other factors that determine the behaviour of rising powers in the new global order. However, I emphasise that the context in which they behave or act is the most important determining-factor.

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6 AN AFRICAN LIBERAL REGIONAL ORDER?

We Live in a Liberal International Order

Focusing on Human Rights

The penultimate chapter (Chapter 4) argued for cooperation as the organising principle in African international politics. However, in view of the realist claim in the preceding chapter (Chapter 5), it is imperative to emphasise that we live in a liberal international order. Given that cooperation already exists in African international politics, this chapter investigates why the divisions and differences in Part I persist in spite of the extant cooperation on the continent. In this context, cooperation refers to the preeminent multilateral organisations in Africa. At the regional level, there is the African Union (AU). At the sub-regional levels, there are the Economic Community of West-African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), East African Community (EAC), Southern African Development Commission (SADC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

To say that the aforementioned regional and sub-regional multilateral organisations operate within a liberal international order is to say that they are bound by, or at least they respect, common rules, institutions and norms. To say that they are bound, or at least they respect, common rules, institutions and norms is not to say that once they accept the norm of sovereignty, then almost any international situation they are involved in is qualified to be an international order (Glaser, 2019). Liberal international order is not Feyerabendian 'anything goes'. Order entails four things: there are units; there are relationships among these units; the relationships are structured or patterned (Lake et al., 2021); and the structuring or patterning of the relationships is done by rules, institutions or norms.

As John G. Ikenberry (2018) says:

> international order is not simply an artifact of concentrations of power.... international order itself is complex: multilayered, multifaceted, and not

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> simply a political formation imposed by the leading state. International order is not "one thing" that states either join or resist. It is an aggregation of various sorts of ordering rules and institutions. There are the deep rules and norms of sovereignty. There are governing institutions, starting with the United Nations. There is a sprawling array of international institutions, regimes, treaties, agreements, protocols, and so forth. These governing arrangements cut across diverse realms, including security and arms control, the world economy, the environment and global commons, human rights, and political relations. Some of these domains of governance may have rules and institutions that narrowly reflect the interests of the hegemonic state, but most reflect negotiated outcomes based on a much broader set of interests.
>
> (p. 20)

One of the most problematic areas, if not the most problematic area, of liberal international order is human rights. Human rights are notoriously problematic for non-Western states. For instance, the 'Asian Values' in the Bangkok Declaration of 1993 shows how problematic human rights are for Asia. Although African states do not reject the human rights aspect of liberal international order as states like China and Russia do (Ziegler, 2021), human rights are still problematic in Africa in spite of the African Charter for Human and Peoples' Rights (the Banjul Charter). Therefore, I shall focus on human rights. Focusing on human rights in a microcosm of international liberal order that comprises 55 sovereign states entails interrogating the Westphalian system itself and its organising principle, sovereignty. Especially because Westphalianism and sovereignty are a principal cause of: the divisions based on which Africans are differentiated; the differences based on which Africans are divided; and the identities and values that emanate from such divisions and differences.

The Westphalian system that divides the world into sovereign territories and the international and global systems that coordinate the competition and cooperation among the sovereign territories are the most normative and consequential political phenomena in our world. Since the principle of sovereignty is the hub around which the systems revolve, human rights regimes must learn how to navigate the deep waters of sovereignty in order to be effective – by effective, I mean the practical resolution of human rights problems. However, how do we protect human rights in a world that is simultaneously Westphalian, international and global? There are three models of sovereignty, namely statist, internationalist and cosmopolitan. Each model of sovereignty has its derivative model of human rights regimes. Imitating their roots, the statist and internationalist models of human rights regimes are *realistic* while the cosmopolitan model of human rights regimes is the *ideal*. Therefore, reconciling the models, this chapter proposes a synthetic approach which is arrived at through the principle of subsidiarity.

Sovereignty as an Organising Principle

After the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the division of the world into sovereign geographical territories, namely states, gained the ascendancy. After the Second World War, by mid-twentieth century, the Westphalian system established itself as the uncontested norm. Our world became populated with sovereign states who alone were recognised as the legitimate possessors of supreme authority over geographical territories. These states, depending on how they perceive one another – as enemies, competitors or friends (Wendt, 1992, 1999), may fight, compete or cooperate.

In an ideal description of Westphalian states' relationships, enemy states fight one another, competitor states compete with one another and friendly states cooperate with one another. The key point is that there are conflicts, competition and cooperation among Westphalian states. These conflicts, competitions and cooperation are coordinated by the international and global systems which are derivatives of the Westphalian system. Therefore, the Westphalian system is not the only norm in global politics, the derivative international and global systems are also the norm. Since the Westphalian system is built on the principle of sovereignty, the international and global systems are a function of sovereignty. In other words, sovereignty is the organising principle of both the Westphalian system and its derivative international and global systems.

In the twenty-first century, our world is still Westphalian but it is not only Westphalian. It is also international. In addition, thanks to the extensity, intensity and velocity of the current form of globalisation, our world is also global. Admittedly, our world is more Westphalian than international and global, and it is more international than global. Nevertheless, the important point is that our world is simultaneously Westphalian, international and global – this is what I refer to as the complexity of our world. I use the terms 'international', 'internationalism' (international system and international society) and 'international realm' interchangeably to refer to *international* politics in which states are simultaneously the dominant and only relevant actors, while I use the terms 'global', 'global system' and 'global realm' interchangeably to refer to *global* politics in which states, supranational organisations, multinational corporations, non-governmental organisations, individuals, etc. are all relevant actors.

The 'Westphalian', the 'international' and the 'global' relate to each other by representing the statist model of sovereignty, the internationalist model of sovereignty and the cosmopolitan model of sovereignty, respectively, which in turn relate to a Westphalianism-internationalism-cosmopolitanism trajectory in world history and world politics by representing an epoch in the trajectory (Table 6.1). The statist model represents the Westphalian epoch, the internationalist model represents the internationalist epoch and the cosmopolitan model represents the cosmopolitan epoch. I will explain these relationships in detail in the following sections.

Table 6.1 The Westphalianism-internationalism-cosmopolitanism trajectory

	1st stage/epoch	*2nd stage/epoch*	*3rd stage/epoch*
Realm and system of politics	Statist/Westphalian	International	Global
Trajectory of world history and world politics	Westphalian	Internationalism (international system and international society)	Cosmopolitanism
Model of sovereignty	Statist	Internationalist	Cosmopolitan
Model of human rights regimes	Statist	Internationalist	Cosmopolitan

One of the implications of the aforementioned complexity is the difficulty of finding a human rights approach that is simultaneously realistic and ideal. The question is how do we find an approach that is realistic enough to be effective and ideal enough to be acceptable in the global governance of human rights? In other words, how do we find a desirable human rights approach? Unless we find such approach, we will not be able to protect human rights especially in non-compliant and partial compliant states. I use the term 'non-compliant states' to refer to states whose default is the violation of human rights, while I use the term 'partial compliant states' to refer to states that are prone to violating human rights, i.e., states that have a high propensity to violate human rights although the violation of human rights is not their default.

To find the aforementioned approach, international legal rules to protect human rights or human rights regimes must accommodate state sovereignty and paradoxically circumscribe it. Whether such accommodation and circumscription of state sovereignty are legitimate is yet another issue that needs resolution. To resolve this question and the aforementioned ones, I divide the remaining discussion in this chapter as follows. Firstly, I discuss the evolving concept of sovereignty. Secondly, I discuss the circumscription of state sovereignty by human rights regimes. Thirdly, I discuss whether there is legitimacy outside the state. Fourthly, I discuss models of human rights regimes. Then I discuss subsidiarity as a synthetic approach to the models of human rights regimes.

The Evolving Concept of Sovereignty

The concept of sovereignty is contentious. It may be a contested concept, yet it is not an *essentially* contested concept. Despite the concept meaning different things to different people, it has a core from which all the varied meanings emanate. In its crudest or simplest sense, sovereignty means '*supreme authority within a territory*' (emphasis in original) (Philpott, 2016, p. 1). In other words, sovereignty is characterised by *authority*, *supremacy* and *territoriality*.

In essence, an entity *A* is sovereign over entity *B*, if and only if the conditions of *authority*, *supremacy* and *territoriality* exist between them, i.e., in their relationship. *Authority* signifies that entity *A*'s power over entity *B* is not arbitrary; *A* has the right to command *B* to do or not to do *C*; and *B* has the obligation to obey *A*. *Supremacy* signifies that there is no entity that has authority over *A*, and there is no entity that has equal authority with *A*. All entities are under *A* and all other authorities are subordinate to *A*'s authority. *Territoriality* signifies that *A*'s supreme authority is exercised within a certain geographical jurisdiction over members and residents (who may be non-members) of the geographical jurisdiction.

Concisely, to say that *A* has supreme authority over a particular geographical jurisdiction is to say that within that particular geographical jurisdiction, *A*'s power is legitimate. *Prima facie*, this seems to imply that no other power is legitimate within that particular geographical jurisdiction. Whether any other power is legitimate or illegitimate within the particular geographical jurisdiction, and to what extent such power is legitimate or illegitimate, will be discussed in the next section. While authority, supremacy and territoriality can be seen as the three *characteristics* of sovereignty, they do not tell us *all* we need to know about sovereignty. To have a full comprehension of the meaning of the concept of sovereignty, we also need to look at the three *dimensions* of sovereignty, namely the holders of supreme authority within a particular geographical jurisdiction, the nature of sovereignty and the relationship between internal and external sovereignty (Philpott, 2016, p. 1).

In terms of the holders of supreme authority within a particular geographical jurisdiction, early and prominent theorists of sovereignty such as Niccolo Machiavelli (1950), Jean Bodin (1992) and Thomas Hobbes (1651) agreed that the sovereign is a singular individual. Although Machiavelli did not explicitly use the term sovereignty, the (sovereign) prince is an individual. Unlike Machiavelli, Hobbes' use of the term 'sovereign' is explicit, but like Machiavelli the (sovereign) Leviathan is an individual.

In the political thoughts of the three great thinkers – Machiavelli, Bodin and Hobbes – there is no mistake that the sovereign is and must be an individual. The sovereign as a singular individual might have been the order of the day in the times of Machiavelli, Bodin and Hobbes, but this is no longer the case. Machiavelli, Bodin and Hobbes might still be very prominent today, but their assertion has become antiquated. In our world today, in most states, the people – rather than a singular individual – are the collective holders of supreme authority over their state. Although sovereignty is not synonymous with democracy, since the French Revolution sovereignty has become synonymous with the *demos*. Today, in most states, sovereignty is seen to lie with the people rather than God, the King or any individual or a group of persons such as aristocrats or oligarchs.

In a Westphalian world, *prima facie* it seems sovereignty must be absolute. However, the world is not only Westphalian; it is also international and global. In a world that is simultaneously Westphalian, international and global,

although sovereignty can be absolute, it is not *necessarily* absolute. 'Absolute is quintessential modern sovereignty' (Philpott, 2016, p. 1) rather than contemporary sovereignty. For the purpose of international history, in chronological order: by 'modern', I mean 1500 to 1945; while by 'contemporary', I mean 1945 to present day.

Contemporary sovereignty reflects the possibility and actuality of non-absolute sovereignty. In theory, sovereignty can also be non-absolute, and in practice evidence of non-absolute sovereignty abounds in our world. The dispersal of sovereignty in multilateral organisations such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the North Atlantic Free Trade Organization (NAFTA), the International Criminal Court and so on is evidence of non-absolute sovereignty. The EU's regionalism remains the quintessential case of non-absolute sovereignty.

Some argue that 'sovereignty can only be *either* present *or* absent, and cannot exist partially' (emphasis added) (James, 1999, pp. 462–464; Philpott, 2016, p. 1). I think this *either/or* argument is based on a misconception of 'absoluteness'. As Daniel Philpott (2016) clarifies, 'absoluteness refers not to the extent or character of sovereignty, which must always be supreme, but rather to the scope of matters over which a holder of authority is sovereign' (p. 1). If the *either/or* argument is correct, then outside the state, there is no sovereignty. To argue that sovereignty must be either *fully* present or *totally* absent outside the state is tantamount to arguing that things are always either/or. Things are either/or if, and only if, the options are *A* and *non-A*; that is, if one is necessarily correct, then the other – being the opposite – must be necessarily wrong. However, things are not always either/or (Abumere, 2015, p. 187).

Contrary to the allusion that things are always either/or, things can be neither/nor if the options are *A*, *B* and both are wrong. Conversely, if both are right, they can also be *A* and *B*. Furthermore, either of them can be fully or partially right or wrong. In this case, they can also be partially A and partially B, partially A and fully B, or fully A and partially B (ibid.). Therefore, *contra* James, one can be right to argue that sovereignty is partially present and partially absent outside the state rather than fully present or totally absent outside the state. Given the denotation and connotations of the concept of sovereignty, i.e., given the characteristics and dimensions of sovereignty, arguing that sovereignty is either fully present or totally absent outside the state is simplistic.

In terms of the third dimension of sovereignty, sovereignty has two sides, the one side is internal sovereignty and the other side is external sovereignty. Internal sovereignty has to do with the *intra*-national relations of a state while external sovereignty has to do with the *inter*-national relations of a state. In *intra*-national relations, the state exercises its supreme authority over persons (citizens and residents), collectives, associations, corporations and institutions within its geographical and jurisdictional territory. In *inter*-national relations, the state is recognised as a state, i.e., as a member of the international

community of states. It is seen as equal with other states and consequently, as being independent. In other words, firstly, it is seen as having the independence to exercise its internal sovereignty, i.e., conduct its intra-national relations without interference. Secondly, by virtue of its membership in the international community of states and its equality with other states, it is seen as having the independence to conduct its inter-national relations.

On the one hand, the determinant principle of internal sovereignty is non-interference. On the other hand, the determinant principle of external sovereignty is equality. Therefore, the determinant principles of sovereignty are equality and non-interference. These principles are absolute in modern sovereignty. However, in contemporary sovereignty, only the principle of equality is absolute, the principle of non-interference is non-absolute. For instance, the UN's Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is a reflection of the non-absoluteness of the principle of non-interference. Security Council-sanctioned or non-security council-sanctioned, legitimate or illegitimate, unilateral, bilateral or multilateral interventions, whether military or economic sanctions, reflect the non-absoluteness of the principle of non-interference.

The Circumscription of State Sovereignty by Human Rights Regimes

By virtue of sovereignty, states have 'the totality of international rights and duties recognised by international law' (International Court of Justice (ICJ), 1948, p. 180). These rights and duties may be limited when states conclude certain treaties (Pellet, 2000, p. 37) – whether bilateral agreements or multilateral agreements – whose terms and conditions stipulate that: parties to the treaty can no longer enjoy certain rights or are no longer required to carry out certain duties; in relation to other parties to the agreement as recognised by international law. Until the end of the Second World War in 1945, states had the exclusive obligation to protect human rights. However, this does not mean that states had a license to violate human rights.

Even though in principle human rights themselves were not regulated by international law, i.e., they were part of states' reserved domain, what was permissible for states to do regarding human rights was circumscribed by international law. Because even in cases of reserved domain, 'jurisdiction which, in principle, belongs solely to the State, is limited by rules of international law' (ibid.). In this sense, 'the jurisdiction of a State is *exclusive* within the limits fixed by international law' (emphasis in original) (Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), 1923, p. 24). Consequently, sovereignty is not interpreted in isolation, it is interpreted in view of, and in combination with, 'general principles of international law such as the general prohibition of abuses of rights….sovereignty is not – and has never been an unlimited power to do all that is not expressly forbidden by international law' (Pellet, 2000, p. 37).

In the protection of international human rights, *prima facie* what is at stake is not the principle of equality but the principle of non-interference.

However, while the principle of non-interference is directly at stake, the principle of equality is indirectly at stake. In fact, states claim the principle of non-interference based on the grounds of the principle of equality. In other words, the former is a derivative of the latter. When criticised for human rights violations, many non-compliant and partial compliant states 'fight back' or at least are on the defensive on the grounds that as sovereign states they are no less than the states criticising them, and the states criticising them are no more than them. For non-compliant and partial compliant states, this principle of equality demands that they do not bow to the criticising-states. In this sense, the principle of non-interference is predicated on, and is a consequence of, the principle of equality.

Human rights regimes respect the principle of equality but circumscribe the principle of non-interference. International human rights are protected by international legal rules which are hierarchical. Due to this hierarchy, different violations of different international legal rules require different kinds of responses. When one state violates international legal rules 'the kind of reaction expected from other States will vary according to the degree of "bindingness" of the violated rules' (Pellet, 2000, p. 38) (emphasis in original). The implications are that 'when a state is not bound by a rule, its international responsibility is not "entailed" when it does not comply with the requirement of said rule … human rights rules are, in this respect, of a particular nature since they are not "reciprocal"' (Pellet, 2000, pp. 38–39) (emphasis in original).

Since the end of the Second World War, a period that reflects the ascendancy of non-absolute sovereignty and the continuous decline of absolute sovereignty, international legal rules protecting human rights have circumscribed the authority of states. Human rights regimes have placed a number of important restrictions on the freedom of states to act regarding human rights (Pellet, 2000, p. 37). For instance:

(i) Firstly, although the United Nations Charter gives precedence to order over justice, and prioritises peace and security over human rights, the Charter is replete with allusions to the value of fundamental human rights (Pellet, 2000, p. 38).
(ii) Secondly, 'at the regional as well as the global level, a great number of Conventions have been adopted for the protection of human rights, either in general or focusing on specific rights…or on particular categories of human beings' (ibid.).
(iii) Thirdly, many of the above international legal rules and human rights regimes, through a process of consolidation, have become customary rules of international law and these customary rules are binding on states irrespective of the ratification or non-ratification of the conventions by states (ibid.).

The circumscription of the authority of states by international legal rules protecting human rights or the restriction of the freedom of states by human

rights regimes has some peculiar features that are worth noting. The freedom of states to act regarding human rights is checked and balanced in several ways and at several levels because 'this tight normative net is made up of legal rules of quite diverse binding nature' (ibid.). For instance, as Alain Pellet (2000) aptly points out, firstly, 'some are purely optional and bind only those States which have accepted them by ratifying the relevant treaties' (p. 38). Secondly, 'some are binding in a region or some regions, but clearly not at the universal level' (ibid.). Thirdly, some 'are binding for all States, but they may be waived by an express contrary treaty' (ibid.). Fourthly, some 'must be seen as 'peremptory norms of general public international law' and these form the main part of the famous … *jus cogens*' (ibid.).

For the above reasons, 'sovereignty, properly defined, is not a defence for breaches of gross violations of fundamental human rights. It has never been such, and today it is less a defence than ever' (Pellet, 2000, p. 37). As Pellet (2000) says:

> In cases of human rights violations, sovereignty is never a defence; in cases of gross violations of human rights, it has no role to play; it does not impede the Security Council from concluding that such violations create a threat to the peace and to draw the appropriate consequences in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter; and it cannot even protect Heads of State from international prosecution.
>
> (p. 43)

Moreover, it can be argued that the circumscription of state sovereignty by human rights regimes is necessary because the extensity, intensity and velocity of the current form of globalisation are seen to be shifting our world from a statist world, through an international world, to a global world. In other words, the trajectory of world history and world politics is believed to be revealing a progressing shift beginning from the Westphalian system, going through an international system, then going through an international society, and eventually leading to a cosmopolitan system.

An international system is a mere system of states where 'two or more states have sufficient contact between them, and have sufficient impact on one another's decisions, to cause them to behave – at least, in some measure – as parts of a whole' (Bull, 2002, p. 9). The transition from international system to international society occurs 'when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions' (Bull, 2002, p. 13). International system and international society – which constitute internationalism – serve as an intermediary position and the transition phase between Westphalianism and cosmopolitanism. Consequently, the nation-state is believed to have faded, or at least it is believed to be fading, 'as the necessary organising principle of all global relationships and their histories'

(Rosenberg, 2004, p. 191). Therefore, it can be argued that globalisation necessitates a new kind of explanation that is different from a state-centric explanation (Finney, 2005).

However, the current situation of world politics negates the assertion that the trajectory of world history and world politics is moving from Westphalianism through internationalism to cosmopolitanism. Whether it is in the United States of America, Brazil or Europe, populism and the resurgence of nationalism contradict internationalism and cosmopolitanism. Populism is threatening to reverse the trajectory of world history and world politics to pre-First World War era in which nationalism was the order of the day. Nevertheless, a look at the past three quarters of the century after the Second World War may suggest that international society and cosmopolitanism are not in terminal decline. The world history and world politics of the aforementioned period make it plausible to argue that resurgent nationalism and populism are exceptions and therefore the current situation of world history and world politics is an aberration rather than the norm.

At some point in the trajectory of world history and world politics, the question of whether resurgent nationalism and populism can lead to the terminal decline of international society and cosmopolitanism may be resolved in the affirmative or negative. Until that point is reached, the question will remain relevant. 'Depending on the vicissitudes of world history and world politics, the answer to this…question may become clearer than it is now. For now, any answer will be a mere conjecture' (Abumere, 2019, p. 27). Unfortunately, even the most conscientious study of the trajectory and dynamics of world history and world politics can only help us decipher 'the pattern of the past which explained the present' (Watt et al., 1998, p. 135). Even when we decipher the pattern of the past and explain the present, 'the best we can aim at is to be able to make an educated guess about what the future is likely to be' (Abumere, 2019, p. 27). Moreover, 'the lessons of world history and world politics seldom allow us to predict, or forecast, the future with certainty – world history and world politics are neither mathematics nor physical science' (ibid.).

International, Sub-Regional and Regional Cooperation in Africa

Outside the State, There Is No Legitimacy?

In the preceding section, I discussed the circumscription of state sovereignty by human rights regimes or international legal rules to protect human rights. Such circumscription implies that there are other models, or at least another model, of sovereignty apart from state sovereignty. The concept of sovereignty is traditionally associated with the state. The statist model of sovereignty 'gives the state free reign in the constitution of political and economic relations' (Held, 2002, p. 1). It is not only the traditional model of

sovereignty; it is also the most realistic and popular model of sovereignty. It is what we find everywhere in the world and it is what is readily accepted. Simply and aptly put, the statist model of sovereignty is the norm.

However, apart from the statist model of sovereignty, there are other models of sovereignty namely the internationalist model and the cosmopolitan model. These models relate to the Westphalianism-internationalism-cosmopolitanism trajectory by representing epochs in the trajectory. The statist model represents the Westphalian epoch, the internationalist model represents the internationalist epoch and the cosmopolitan model represents the cosmopolitan epoch. Unlike the statist model, the internationalist model 'seeks to delimit political power and extend the liberal concern with limited government to the international sphere' (ibid.). The internationalist model is not as common as the statist model, but it is more common than the cosmopolitan model. Moreover, the internationalist model is not as readily acceptable as the statist model, but it is more readily acceptable than the cosmopolitan model. Unlike the statist and internationalist models, the cosmopolitan model of sovereignty 'conceives international law as a system of public law which properly circumscribes not just political power but all forms of social power' (ibid.).

It is common to hear that outside the state there is no legitimacy. If this is true, then the internationalist and the cosmopolitan models of sovereignty are null and void. To ascertain whether legitimacy is present or absent outside the state, i.e., in the international and global arena, it is pertinent to know what legitimacy is and how it is present within the state. Legitimacy can be normative or *de facto*. Although my focus is on *de facto* legitimacy, I shall briefly mention what normative legitimacy entails. Traditionally, a state is deemed to be normatively legitimate if the following two co-joined conditions exist: (i) the state has a moral right to the obedience of its citizens, and; (ii) the citizens have a moral obligation to obey the laws of the state (Copp, 1999, p. 10). However, in recent times, a state is deemed to be normatively legitimate if it enjoys the following Hohfeldian 'advantages':

(i) A sphere within which it has a privilege to enact and enforce laws applying to the residents of its territory
(ii) A power to put people residing in its territory under a *pro tanto* duty to do something simply by enacting a law that requires them to do that thing, provided that the law falls within its spheres of privilege and is otherwise morally innocent
(iii) A privilege to control access to its territory by people who are not residents and have no moral claim to live or travel there
(iv) A claim against other states that they do not interfere with its governing its territory
(v) An immunity to having any of these extinguished by any action of any other state or person (Copp, 1999, pp. 27–28)

A state derives its *de facto* legitimacy either internally, externally or both internally and externally. On the one hand, a state is deemed to be externally legitimate when the international community of states simply recognises it as legitimate irrespective of whether it is internally legitimate or not. On the other hand, a state is deemed to be internally legitimate if it meets any one, a combination of some, or all of the requirements of internal legitimacy, namely, belief, consent, beneficial consequences, public reason and democratic approval.

In terms of belief, Max Weber (1964) argues that a government is legitimate when the governed believe so (p. 382). He famously argued that there are three sources of legitimacy, namely traditional legitimacy, charismatic legitimacy and rational-legal legitimacy. Legitimacy is traditional when people believe 'in a particular political or social order because it has been there for a long time' (Peter, 2016, sec. 1). Legitimacy is charismatic when people have faith in their leaders due to certain qualities, characteristics or character-traits possessed by their leaders. And legitimacy is rational-legal when people believe in the rationality and legality of the rule of law (Weber, 1964, 1991). In essence, Weber (1964) argues that 'the basis of every system of authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a belief, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige' (p. 382).

Consent is the most prominent source of state legitimacy among theorists of legitimacy. From Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Hugo Grotius to Samuel Freiherr von Pufendorf, we encounter different versions of consent as the major source of state legitimacy. Nevertheless, in essence, state legitimacy can be based on the grounds of consent for the following reasons:

> (i) Consent of those governed is a necessary condition for the legitimacy of political authority; (ii) consent is not directly a condition for legitimacy, but the conditions for the legitimacy of authority are such that only political authority that enjoys the consent of those governed can meet them; (iii) the conditions of legitimate political authority are such that those governed by that authority are under an obligation to consent.
> (Raz, 1995, p. 356; Peter, 2016, sec. 3.1)

In terms of beneficial consequences, a state is only deemed legitimate if or when it provides political, economic and other benefits for its citizens (Peter, 2016, sec. 3.2). Whereas in terms of public reason and democratic approval, political authority and institutions are deemed to be legitimate only when they reflect the general will, and have the general approval, of the governed. On this view, legitimacy may be based on public reason alone, democratic approval alone or a combination of both public reason and democratic approval (ibid.). Public reason refers to the public decision(s) reached by moral agents – who are members of society – through a process of rational

deliberation. Whereas democratic approval refers to the public decision reached by the majority (as determined by laid down procedures) of members of society. Typifying the demands of the legitimacy that is based on both public reason and democratic approval, John Rawls (2001) stated that 'political power is legitimate only when it is exercised in accordance with a constitution (written or unwritten) the essentials of which all citizens, as reasonable and rational, can endorse in the light of their common human reason' (p. 41).

Considering the sources of legitimacy, Thomas Nagel (2005) asserts that the state 'is the primary *locus* of legitimacy' (pp. 114–115). Nagel's assertion echoes the common view on legitimacy. However, one can argue that legitimacy exists outside the state as long as international and global authorities can demonstrate they have any of the aforementioned sources of legitimacy. Moreover, echoing Weber's notion of belief, Seymour Martin Lipset (1983) argues that legitimacy has to do with 'the capacity of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate and proper ones for the society' (p. 24). Therefore, for instance, when people believe that certain international and global authorities are the appropriate bodies or vehicles for international, regional or global governance matters, then we can say that such authorities are legitimate.

Even if the state is the *primary locus* of legitimacy, does this not allow room for at least a *secondary locus* of legitimacy? If so, then one may be apt to argue that outside the state there is *secondary* legitimacy, at least to some degree even if not to the degree of the *primary* legitimacy located in the state. This *secondary locus* exists as long as both people (the governed) and international and global authorities (the governors) accept that the governors have the right to exercise power in certain matters. As Dolf Sternberger (1968) says, 'legitimacy is the foundation of such governmental power as is exercised, both with a consciousness on the government's part that it has a right to govern and with some recognition by the governed of that right' (p. 244).

If Sternberger is right, then I think the EU and the UN are quintessential examples of the *secondary locus* of legitimacy. On the one hand, the UN General Assembly (GA), which is where all member states are represented and have equal power, is the locus of legitimacy in the UN. However, the frequent breach of the resolutions of the GA by member states threatens to undermine the legitimacy of the UN. Although the resolutions of the Security Council (SC) are more respected than the resolutions of the GA, the undemocratic nature of the SC has led to serious criticisms of the SC which in turn tend to undermine its legitimacy. On the other hand, as a political union that is based on subsidiarity, the EU is authorised by the member states through the Maastricht and Lisbon Treaties to supersede the member states in 'Union' matters. By virtue of their membership in the Union, member states are obligated to, and they actually, acquiesce to the authority of the EU. Therefore, comparatively, the EU is more while the UN is less of the *secondary locus* of legitimacy.

Robert Dahl (1971) argues that legitimacy is analogous to a reservoir. In the 'legitimacy-reservoir', when water reaches or goes beyond a certain threshold, then there is legitimacy. But when water does not reach a certain threshold, i.e., when water is below a certain threshold or when the 'legitimacy-reservoir' is empty, then there is no legitimacy. Although Dahl did not tell us what this threshold is, the reservoir analogy shows the possibility of the presence of legitimacy in both the international realm and the global realm. Therefore, varying the reservoir analogy, I think a helpful way of describing the degree of presence or absence of legitimacy outside the state is to talk in terms of the thickness and thinness of legitimacy. Comparatively, the legitimacy that exists within the state is 'thicker' than the legitimacy that exists outside the state. Then the legitimacy that exists in the international realm is thicker than the legitimacy that exists in the global realm.

The Three Models of Human Rights Regimes

I contend that although the legitimacy that exists in the global realm is thinner than the legitimacy that exists in the statist and international realms, it does not necessarily follow that the cosmopolitan model of sovereignty is less desirable while the statist and internationalist models of sovereignty are more desirable. Likewise, I contend that although the legitimacy that exists in the international realm is thinner than the legitimacy that exists within the state, it does not necessarily follow that the internationalist model of sovereignty is less desirable than the statist model of sovereignty. Consequently, international and global authorities can legitimately protect human rights.

Human rights regimes or international legal rules to protect human rights imitate models of sovereignty; hence, we have the statist model of human rights regimes, the internationalist model of human rights regimes and the cosmopolitan model of human rights regimes. Just as the statist model of sovereignty is the traditional model, the most common and the most readily acceptable model of sovereignty, so too the statist model of human rights regimes is the traditional model, the most common and the most readily acceptable model of human rights regimes. Also, on the one hand, just as the internationalist model of sovereignty is less common and less readily acceptable than the statist model of sovereignty, so too the internationalist model of human rights regimes is less common and less readily acceptable than the statist model of human rights regimes. On the other hand, just as the internationalist model of sovereignty is more common and more readily acceptable than the cosmopolitan model of sovereignty, so too the internationalist model of human rights regimes is more common and more readily acceptable than the cosmopolitan model of human rights regimes.

The statist model of human rights regimes insists that human rights 'remain *primarily* a matter of sovereign national (concern) and (ought to continue to be) a largely peripheral concern of international (interstate) relations' (emphasis in original) (Donnelly, 2007, p. 30). For the statist model of human

rights regimes, there are only two ways to understand human rights. Firstly, human rights are claims which citizens, residents, others and groups who are within the geographical and jurisdictional territory of a particular state have against such state. Secondly, human rights are duties or obligations which such state owes its citizens, residents, others and groups who are within its geographical and jurisdictional territory. These two ways of understanding human rights are complimentary – they are two sides of a coin. As the complimentary claims aptly show, states have a very crucial role to play in the protection of human rights.

However, the problem with the statist model of human rights regimes is to insist that human rights are primarily a matter for states. The internationalist model of human rights regimes shows that human rights are also a matter for international authorities while the cosmopolitan model of human rights regimes shows that human rights are also a matter for global authorities. To understand why the internationalist model insists that human rights are a matter for international authorities, we need to understand the *raison d'etre* of the international society as explained in the penultimate section. In view of the *raison d'etre* of the international society, the internationalist model insists that although there may be a considerable variety of norms, human rights activities are 'permissible only to the extent authorised by the norms of the society of states' (Donnelly, 2007, p. 30).

The internationalist model of human rights regimes acknowledges that states have a crucial role to play in the protection of human rights. But it is not sanguine about the ability or willingness of states to protect human rights. Hence, it insists that human rights are primarily a matter for the international society and international authorities. For instance, going beyond (individual) human rights to (group) minority rights, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) insists that matters of minority rights are so important that their protection is not the responsibility of only states, it is also the responsibility of the international society and international authorities. Referring to its members particularly, the OSCE says that minority rights are 'matters of legitimate international concern and consequently do not constitute exclusively an internal affair of the respective State' (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), 1991, chap. II, para. 3).

The cosmopolitan model of human rights regimes deems the statist and internationalist models to be inadequate due to what Jeremy Waldron (2000, pp. 236–239) refers to as the circumstances of cosmopolitanism. The circumstances of cosmopolitanism are 'the background conditions and presuppositions that inform and motivate the case for a cosmopolitan framework of law and sovereignty.... (i.e.) the processes and forces of globalisation that increasingly enmesh us in overlapping communities of fate' (Held, 2002, p. 23).

The statist model of human rights regimes focuses on the state. However 'the universality of human rights fits uncomfortably with a political order structured around sovereign states' (Donnelly, 2007, p. 30). In other words, by virtue of their universality, human rights transcend the territorial boundaries

of sovereign states. These rights are *universal* rights whose holders transcend the boundaries of sovereign states; correspondingly, their protectors transcend sovereign states. To some extent, the above criticism also applies to the internationalist model of human rights regimes because to some extent the model focuses on states. To the extent that the model focuses on the international society, and since the international society is populated by states, to that extent the model focuses on states.

The focus of the cosmopolitan model of human rights regimes is the individual because cosmopolitanism is quintessentially a moral theory that asserts that 'the ultimate units of concern are human beings or persons….the status of ultimate unit of concern attaches to every living human being equally…. this special status has global force. Persons are ultimate units of concern for everyone' (Pogge, 2008, p. 175). Cosmopolitanism transcends the state and the international society. Its concerns are global and its domain is the world as a whole. Consequently, it sees individuals more as members of the universal *cosmopolis* and less as members of a particular *polis*. Therefore, it may be apt to argue that the cosmopolitan model of human rights regimes, rather than the statist or internationalist model, is the best fit for human rights when human rights are conceived of as universal moral claims rather than as mere legal claims (Donnelly, 2007, p. 30).

Comparing the three models of human rights regimes, what makes any of them the most desirable? I contend that the two principal determinants of the desirability of any of the models are *realistic* and *ideal*. On the one hand, except a model is realistic, it will not be effective and except it is effective, it may not be desirable. On the other hand – assuming that the protection of an internationally defined set of human rights is a desirable priority – if a model is not ideal, it may not see the protection of human rights as a priority, and any model that does not see the protection of human rights as a priority is unlikely to be desirable. Therefore, in the protection of human rights, we need to be conscious of both the realistic and the ideal if our aim is simultaneously to do that which is effective and right. The ultimate task is to search for a model of human rights regimes that is at once realistic and ideal.

On a spectrum of *reality* and *ideal* in which *reality* represents the *0* end of the spectrum while *ideal* represents the *1* end of the spectrum, the statist model of human rights regimes is at the *0* point of the spectrum. The internationalist model of human rights regimes is, theoretically, at the *0.5* point of the spectrum. But practically, it is anywhere between the *0* point and the *1* point, and it is most likely closer to the *0* point than the *1* point. While the cosmopolitan model of human rights is at the *1* point of the spectrum (Figure 6.1)

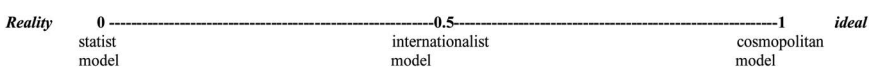

Figure 6.1 The reality-ideal spectrum

I place the statist model at the *0* point of the spectrum because it is the traditional, the most common and the most readily acceptable model. I place the cosmopolitan model at the *1* point of the spectrum because it is the least common and the least readily acceptable model. While I place the internationalist model at the *0.5* point of the spectrum because: on the one hand, it is less common and less readily acceptable than the statist model; on the other hand, it is more common and more readily acceptable than the cosmopolitan model. Let us assume, arithmetically, it is possible to assign scores to the models. On the one hand, on the *reality* score, the statist model has *1*, the internationalist model has *0.5* and the cosmopolitan model has *0*. On the other hand, on the *ideal* score, the cosmopolitan model has *1*, the internationalist model has *0.5* and the statist model has *0*. Therefore, on a combinatorial score of both *reality* and *ideal*, the statist model has the sum of *1*, the internationalist model has the sum of *1* and the cosmopolitan model has the sum of *1*.

On the one hand, if we use *realistic* as the only determinant of the desirability of any model, then on a scale of preference the statist model (with a score of 1) is the most desirable. The internationalist model (with a score of 0.5) is less desirable than the statist model but more desirable than the cosmopolitan model. While the cosmopolitan model (with a score of 0) is the least desirable. On the other hand, if we use *ideal* as the only determinant of the desirability of any model, then on a scale of preference the cosmopolitan model (with a score of 1) is the most desirable. The internationalist model (with a score of 0.5) is less desirable than the cosmopolitan model but more desirable than the statist model, while the statist model (with a score of 0) is the least desirable. However, if we use both *realistic* and *ideal* as the determinants, neither the statist model (with a score of 1), nor the internationalist model (with a score of 1), nor the cosmopolitan model (with a score of 1) is more or less desirable than the other models.

Although the statist model is the most effective because it practically resolves human rights problems, it is not the most ideal therefore it may not be the most desirable yet may be the go-to solution. Although the cosmopolitan model is the ideal, it is not the most effective because it does not practically resolve human rights problems; therefore, it may not be the most desirable. Since the internationalist model is the bridge between the realistic and the ideal, i.e., since it is the common ground between the statist model and the cosmopolitan model, *prima facie* it seems to be the apt option when resolving the dilemma between choosing either the statist or the cosmopolitan model. However, because the internationalist model is less effective than the statist model and not ideal like the cosmopolitan model, therefore the internationalist model may not be the most desirable model.

Consequently, a reconciliation of the three models is desirable, i.e., a synthesis of the models is the apt resolution to the dilemma of choosing among the three models. In other words, a synthetic approach to human rights protection is the realistic and ideal approach to the global governance of human rights in a complex world. I aver that this synthetic approach is possible

through the principle of subsidiarity. How the principle of subsidiarity is applicable to the three models of human rights regimes and which implication such application has for the three models of sovereignty are the subject matter of the next section.

Subsidiarity as a Synthetic Approach to the Global Governance of Human Rights in a Complex World

In its most comprehensive conception, the principle of subsidiarity is:

> A principle of justice that requires larger communities to protect the legitimate autonomy of smaller communities, to provide them with the assistance (*subsidium*) needed to fulfill their ends, and to coordinate and regulate their activities within the common good of the larger community, of which they are a part and which is also necessary to the flourishing of their individual members.
>
> (Carozza, 2016, p. 53)

Subsidiarity envisages hierarchical international or global politics populated by cooperating authorities rather than an anarchical international or global politics populated by competing authorities. In subsidiarity's envisaged hierarchical international or global politics, lower authorities or smaller communities and higher authorities or larger communities are all part of one community. The lower authorities or smaller communities receive *subsidium* from higher authorities or larger communities in order for the former to fulfil their human rights responsibilities (Carozza, 2016, p. 43). The former have a right to the *subsidium* while the latter have a duty to provide the *subsidium*.

The duty of the higher authorities and larger communities is twofold. It is at once a negative duty and a positive duty. The negative duty takes the form of restriction while the positive duty takes the form of provision. In terms of the negative duty of restriction, subsidiarity restricts the higher authorities and larger communities from intervening or interfering in lower authorities and smaller communities when the latter are capable of fulfilling their *telos* without any aid from the former. In terms of the positive duty of provision, subsidiarity requires the higher authorities and larger communities to assist the lower authorities and smaller communities when the latter are incapable of fulfilling their *telos* without any aid.

In view of the higher authorities or larger communities' twofold negative duty of restriction and positive duty of provision, subsidiarity throws up three paradoxes. Firstly, generally, it stipulates both negative and positive duties for higher authorities and larger communities. Secondly, particularly, it limits the powers of higher authorities and larger communities but at the same time empowers higher authorities and larger communities. Thirdly, specifically, it limits the intervention or interference of higher authorities and larger communities but at the same time requires it (Carozza, 2016, p. 44).

Subsidiarity is aptly criticised for being state-centric. However, it is not always state-centric. It can be, and sometimes is, person-centric (Follesdal, 2016). The proper way to put the criticism is to say that generally subsidiarity is more state-centric and less person-centric. Furthermore, subsidiarity faces legal, political and philosophical objections (Besselink, 1998, p. 639). In spite of the objections, subsidiarity is still very helpful in the protection of human rights. Consequently, in international human rights law, the principle of subsidiarity is fashionable (Besson, 2016, p. 70).

Both in theory and in practice, subsidiarity is used in different ways. Although the usage varies, the essence remains and that is very important. I shall follow the tradition of varying the usage of subsidiary, but importantly I shall retain the essence of subsidiarity. Within the context of the three models of sovereignty and the three models of human rights regimes, I make the following proposition. State, international and global authorities should adhere to certain norms. I shall tease out these norms in the remainder of this section.

Pluralism is one of the greatest advantages of subsidiarity. This is good news for international human rights law because all the different levels of authorities on the subsidiarity ladder can take advantage of pluralism to protect human rights. Based on pluralism, national, sub-regional, regional and global governance systems should work in concert (Woods et al., 2013) to protect human rights (p. 2). This will produce a twofold advantage. Non-compliant and partial compliant states fail to protect human rights due to lack of capacity and non-capacity-related reasons. In terms of lack of capacity, a state fails to protect human rights because it is a weak state, i.e., 'weak in its core functions of providing security to its citizens (security gap), providing basic services to its citizens (capacity gap) and having legitimacy among its people (legitimacy gap)' (Tyagi, 2012, p. 1). 'Working in concert' helps supranational authorities to provide *subsidium* for states who are willing to protect human rights but lack the capacity to do so. Therefore, subsidiarity resolves the problem of lack of capacity.

In terms of non-capacity-related reasons, a state fails to protect human rights due to strategic reasons, cultural reasons, etc. Such states choose to violate human rights or not to protect human rights although they can choose to do otherwise without making unbearable sacrifices or incurring unbearable costs. 'Working in concert' allows supranational authorities to serve as checks and balances against non-compliant and partial compliant states whose violation of human rights or failure to protect human rights is a matter of choice.

When states and supranational authorities (the systems) are working in concert, subsidiarity suggests the following. Cases of human rights violations should be resolved, and matters of human rights protection should be dealt with, at the lowest level of the subsidiarity ladder – the closest authority to the people – that is most efficient and capable of resolving the cases or dealing with the matters (ibid.). In other words, 'Issues ought to be addressed at the lowest level capable of addressing them….some problems can be handled

well and efficiently at the local, national, sub-regional and regional levels reducing the number of issues that need to be tackled at the international and supranational level' (United Nations (UN), 2015, s.p.). This will allow states to exercise their sovereignty, but at the same time, it will allow supranational authorities to circumscribe the authority of states or provide *subsidium* to states as the case may be. In this sense, while subsidiarity recognises and respects state sovereignty, the sovereignty that is recognised and respected is not absolute sovereignty, but non-absolute sovereignty.

In addition, I suggest that the systems respect what I refer to as the principle of violation and responsibility. This principle has three 'binding' requirements namely negative duty, positive duty and commensurability. The negative duty is a duty of no harm. The positive duty is simultaneously a duty of prevention (in non-relation to the negative duty) and a duty of remedy (in relation to the negative duty). While commensurability is a regulative notion that *specifically* determines the extensity of the duty of remedy and *generally* determines the extensity of the positive duty.

The negative duty of no harm stipulates that the systems must refrain from violating human rights. The positive duty of prevention stipulates that the systems must prevent the violation of human rights while the positive duty of remedy stipulates that any system (any level of authority) that violates human rights should be held responsible for the violations. Then commensurability *specifically* stipulates that, *ab initio* the systems are *prima facie* 'commensurately responsible' to the extent or degree of the violations. Furthermore, commensurability *generally* stipulates that the 'commensurate responsibility' should only be a *pro tanto* obligation. Therefore, it leaves room for more demanding obligations which the systems may have depending on different contexts.

Recapitulation

There is no consensus on *what* exactly must exist outside the state before we can deem legitimacy to exist outside the state. Consequently, there is no certainty as to *when* exactly we can deem legitimacy to exist outside the state. In other words, there is neither an agreed-upon threshold nor a particular threshold that must be reached before legitimacy can be considered to be present outside the state. Therefore, on the grounds of the thickness and thinness of legitimacy, it is wrong to conclude that legitimacy is present in the state and absent outside the state. The correct question to ask is to what extent is legitimacy present outside the state.

The implication is that, whether legitimacy is present to a larger extent or to a lesser extent outside the state, at least legitimacy is extendable to the international realm and the global realm. Therefore, the statist model of sovereignty is not the only legitimate model of sovereignty. The international and cosmopolitan models of sovereignty are also legitimate. Consequently, the statist model of human rights regimes is not the only legitimate model.

The internationalist and cosmopolitan models of human rights regimes are also legitimate.

Although the statist, internationalist and cosmopolitan models of human rights regimes are predicated on the statist, internationalist and cosmopolitan models of sovereignty, respectively, the determinants of the desirability of any model of human rights regimes may or may not be the determinants of the desirability of any model of sovereignty. I do not intend to digress into the world government debate and its feasibility, desirability and necessity arguments. Therefore, I will not pursue the desirability of models of sovereignty argument any further. What is at stake is not the desirability of any model of sovereignty, but the desirability of any model of human rights regimes.

Based on the determinants of the desirability of any model of human rights regimes, I concluded that neither the statist model, nor the internationalist model, nor the cosmopolitan model of human rights regimes is more desirable than the other models. Reconciling the three models of human rights regimes, I proposed a synthetic approach which is arrived at through the principle of subsidiarity. The synthetic approach has implications for sovereignty. The synthetic approach takes the dispersal of sovereignty in the state, international and global realms as a *fait accompli*. Then it requires the distribution of obligations and rights between the state, transnational, international, sub-regional, regional and global authorities.

In African, such authorities include the preeminent multilateral organisations both at the regional level, namely the African Union (AU), and at the sub-regional levels, namely the Economic Community of West-African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), East African Community (EAC), Southern African Development Commission (SADC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

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7 THE ORDER AND JUSTICE DILEMMA IN AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Africa as an International Society

The Modus Operandi of World Politics

In our world today, and on the African continent, there are abundant intra-national, international and global cases of injustice that are not remedied. The lack of remedy is largely, or at least partly, because there is a consensus – implicit or explicit – among relevant national, international and global political actors not to distabilise the *status quo* in world politics. Since remedying the injustices may lead to the distabilisation of the *status quo*, therefore the relevant global political actors choose the 'lesser evil' of ignoring the injustices rather than the 'greater evil' of distabilising the *status quo*. Consequently, while there are abundant cases of injustice in global politics, there are no abundant cases of justice. In world politics, there are no shortages of injustice; there are only shortages of justice.

Some instances of injustice in world politics suffice to illustrate the point made in the preceding paragraph. In the relationship between the global north and the global south, there are historical injustices that have not been atoned. Slavery, one of the greatest evils of our world, has not been atoned. Another unatoned historical injustice is colonialism. From the perspective of the global south, although colonialism is one of the greatest evils of our world, there has been no reparation for colonialism. There is no reparation and there is hardly any instance of a former colonialist apologising for colonialism. Other historical injustices include racial segregation in the United States of America, apartheid in South Africa and so on. Current injustices include war crimes against children in Yemen, the violation of the human rights of the Rohingya in Myanmar and Uighur Muslim in China and so on.

In Africa, in spite of the efforts of the multilateral organisations discussed in the preceding chapter, the divisions and differences in Part I have resulted in grave injustices such as the genocide in Rwanda, xenophobia in South Africa, slave trade in Libya and so on. Like the case of world politics, in African regional politics, there are abundant intra-national, transnational and international cases of injustice that are not remedied. The lack of remedy is

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largely, or at least partly, because there is a consensus – implicit or explicit – among relevant national, transnational, international and regional political actors not to destabilise the status quo in regional politics. Since remedying the injustices may lead to the destabilisation of the status quo, therefore the relevant regional actors choose the 'lesser evil' of ignoring the injustices rather than the 'greater evil' of destabilising the status quo. Consequently, while there are abundant cases of injustice in African regional politics, there are no abundant cases of justice. In African regional politics, there are no shortages of injustice; there are only shortages of justice.

Many cases like the aforementioned ones are 'recurring decimals'. Yet in many of these cases, fighting for justice is a project in futility because doing justice to the victims of these atrocities may destabilise the *status quo*, i.e., the existing order. For this reason, although the order *contra* justice quandary is an old quandary in world politics, it remains relevant.

It is not contentious to argue that the *modus operandi* of world politics is the prioritisation of order at the expense of justice. While some think justice should have precedence over order, others agree with the *modus operandi*. In support of the *modus operandi*, Hedley Bull (2002), a champion of the English School, argues that 'not only is order in world politics valuable, there is also a sense in which it is prior to other goals, such as that of justice' (p. 93). On the one hand, the problem with the precedence of order is that it tends to lead to unpleasant scenarios in which serious justice and human rights concerns are disregarded – it could be a case of 'might makes right'. On the other hand, the precedence of justice may in extreme cases lead to anarchy, thereby not only undermining peace and stability but paradoxically also undermining justice and human rights – it could be a case of '*fiat justitia, et pereat mundus* – let justice be done, though the world perish'.

Contending that the order and justice quandary in global politics is a false one, my aim in this chapter is neither to argue for the precedence of order nor the precedence of justice. Contending that order and justice are not mutually exclusive, and based on the grounds that global politics is complex rather than simple, I will show how and why it is simultaneously possible and reasonable to combine order and justice without prioritising one at the expense of the other in African regional politics. When I say global politics is complex, what I mean is that global politics is characterised by cases that contain both order and justice problems, therefore neither order nor justice is sufficient to resolve the problems. We need a combination of the two. In contrast, simple cases are cases that contain either only order or only justice problem and consequently require only order or justice to be resolved. In global politics, simple cases are the exception while complex cases are the norm.

Anyone who attempts to resolve the order *contra* justice quandary must focus on the solidarism versus pluralism debate or explain why he/she chooses a different focus. I attempt to resolve the order *contra* justice quandary within the context of the solidarism versus pluralism debate; however, my focus is not on the general solidarism versus pluralism debate. My focus is specifically

on Hedley Bull and his arguments for order and against justice. Nevertheless, I deal with both the general solidarism versus pluralism debate only to the extent that arguments from the debate corroborate or falsify Bull's arguments and my analysis in my special focus on Bull.

I choose to focus on Bull for the following reason. There are several authoritative works on how to resolve the quandary between solidarism and pluralism. These works are sufficient for their purposes. Any discussion on the solidarism versus pluralism debate will almost discuss Bull, if not extensively, at least sparsely. Arguably, if not certainly, Bull's *The Anarchical Society* is the most prominent work in the English School. If Bull's arguments can be falsified or corroborated, this will contribute to the resolution of the solidarism versus pluralism debate. Therefore, although I generally deal with solidarism versus pluralism, I specially focus on Bull.

The rest of the discussion is in four sections (this sub-chapter contains the first and second sections while the next sub-chapter contains the third and fourth sections). In the first section, I discuss Bull's conception of order and justice in global politics. The crux of the section is that Bull gives precedence to order over justice because of his fear that giving precedence to the latter over the former will lead to the disintegration of the international society. I think that such fear is a slippery slope argument. Therefore, in the second section, I discuss the slippery slope argument in global politics. In the third section, I discuss the complexity of global politics. I argue that due to the complexity of global politics, order and justice are required in global politics. Then, in the fourth section, I discuss what I refer to as 'the either/or argument'. In the discussion, I address the failure to recognise the possibility of combining order and justice without prioritising one at the expense of the other in global politics. Through a twin-strategy of equilibrium and adaptation, I explain how order and justice can be combined without prioritising one at the expense of the other in global politics.

Order Versus Justice

The English School thinks the fundamental standards by which we can measure the workings of the international society are order and justice (Suganami, 2010, p. 24). The distinction between system of states or international system and society of states or international society is crucial to Bull's conception of order and justice in global politics. For Bull, international politics has three principal characteristics. Firstly, it is a plurality of sovereign states. Secondly, there is an international interaction among the sovereign states, and they form a system of states (an international system) by virtue of the international interaction. Thirdly, the sovereign states accept certain common international rules and institutions, and they form a society of states (an international society) by virtue of the common international rules and institutions (Bull, 1977, p. 233).

For Bull (2002), international politics starts with an international system in which 'two or more states have sufficient contact between them, and have

sufficient impact on one another's decisions, to cause them to behave – at least, in some measure – as parts of a whole' (p. 9). Then international politics progresses from international system to international society 'when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions' (p. 13).

In international security affairs, members of the international society are in a quasi-Hobbesian dilemma. They do not trust one another, and they are either attacking one another or protecting themselves from being attacked by others (Hoffman, 1986, p. 187). Consequently, some members of the English School like Bull think members of the international society are better off seeking and upholding an international order that will negate their quasi-Hobbesian dilemma rather than clamouring for justice that will destroy the order that is crucial to escaping their quasi-Hobbesian dilemma.

Just as the distinction between system of states or international system and society of states or international society is crucial to Bull's conception of order and justice in world politics, so too the distinction between order in social life, international order and world order is crucial to understanding why he gives precedence to order over justice. Order in social life, according to Bull (1977), is 'a pattern of human activity that sustains elementary, primary or universal goals of social life' (p. 5). These elementary, primary or universal goals are 'life, truth and property' (p. 5). Firstly, the elementary goal of life ensures that 'life will be in some measure secure against violence resulting in death or bodily harm' (pp. 4–5). Secondly, the elementary goal of truth ensures that 'promise, once made, will be kept, or that agreements, once undertaken, will be carried out' (pp. 4–5). Thirdly, the elementary goal of property ensures that 'the possession of things will remain stable to some degree, and will not be subject to change that are constant and without limit' (pp. 4–5).

International order, according to Bull, is 'a pattern of activity that sustains the elementary or primary goals of the society of states' (p. 8). Just as order in social life has its goals, so too international order has its goals which are as follows. Firstly, international order preserves international system and international society. Secondly, international order upholds the independence or external sovereignty of the members of the international system and international society, namely sovereign states. Thirdly, international order ensures peace among sovereign states in their relationship as members of the international system and international society. Fourthly, international order restricts the use and occurrence of violence in international system and international society. Fifthly, international order ensures members of the international system and international society comply with international agreements. Sixthly, international order ensures that sovereign states respect each other's spheres of jurisdiction (pp. 16–19).

Bull (1977) says that international order is only valuable 'because it is instrumental to the goal of order in human society as a whole' (p. 22). Then he says that someday order in world politics may 'take the form of the maintenance

of elementary goals of social life in a single world society or great society of all mankind' (p. 23). However, 'we are still accustomed to thinking of order in world politics as consisting of domestic order, or order within states, and international order, or order among them' (p. 23). Consequently, he thinks the international society, compared to other ways in which human activities or affairs can be politically organised at a world scale, is the best way we have. For him, at least international society is better than neo-medievalism and world state. Nevertheless, he concedes that in the absence of international society, international order can still be sustained by international system (p. 65). But he goes on to contend that 'the modern international system is also an international society, at least in the sense that international society has been one of the elements permanently at work in it' (p. 51).

In view of the above contention, Bull thinks that it is the transition to international society, and the common rules and institutions embedded in the international society, that mostly ensure that international order is largely sustained in the modern states system (Suganami, n.d., p. 10). For Bull (1977), institutions in the international society are 'a set of habits and practices shaped towards the realisation of common goals' (p. 74). The institutions include 'the balance of power, international law, the diplomatic mechanism, the managerial system of the great powers, and war' (p. 74). In addition, institutions include 'sovereign states themselves which may be seen to act as organs of the anarchical or decentralised society of states in operating its rules' (Suganami, n.d., p. 10). The rules of the society of states are as follows. First, 'the complex of rules that states what may be called the fundamental or constitutional normative principle of world politics' (Bull, 1977, p. 67). Second, 'the rules of coexistence' (p. 70). Third, 'the complex of rules concerned to regulate co-operation among states' (p. 70).

Having explained Bull's distinction between order in social life, international order and world order, now I will explain why he gives precedence to order over justice. On the one hand, Bull agrees with Ali Mazrui's (1967) famous argument that in world politics order is given precedence over justice (pp. 36–38). On the other hand, Bull disagrees with Mazrui that in world politics justice should be given precedence over order. For Bull (2002), 'not only is order in world politics valuable, there is also a sense in which it is prior to other goals, such as that of justice. It does not follow from this, however, that order is to be preferred to justice in any given case' (p. 93).

Bull thinks that in some circumstances, there will be clashes of different justice demands and since there is no way of prioritising one justice demand over another, this is bound to lead to disorder. For this reason, if justice is given precedence over order, this may lead to the disintegration of the international society (p. 85). As Bull (2002) says, 'the institutions and mechanisms which sustain international order, even when they are working properly, indeed especially when they are working properly, or fulfilling their functions … necessarily violate ordinary notions of justice' (p. 87). This precedence of order over justice is due to the fear that giving justice precedence over order

will lead to the disintegration of the international system and society. For him, although there is no mutual exclusivity or absolute incompatibility between order and justice, the current international society – given its institutions and rules – can only satisfy the demands of justice insufficiently (Bull, 2002, p. 89; Abumere, 2015a, p. 141). Therefore, he thinks in the struggle for precedence between order and justice, the best possible scenario is an international society that has order as a primary goal and justice as secondary rather than vice versa.

The Slippery Slope Argument

In the previous section, I discussed Bull's conception of order and justice in world politics. The crux of the section is that Bull gives precedence to order over justice because of his fear that giving precedence to the latter over the former will lead to the disintegration of the international society. I think that such fear is a slippery slope argument. Therefore, in this section, I will discuss the slippery slope argument. I will start by explaining the slippery slope argument in order for us to have a comprehensive view of the nature of the slippery slope argument before delving into its usage in global politics. Furthermore, I will explain how the slippery slope argument creeps into global politics. This is meant to give us insight into the source of the slippery slope argument in global politics before properly delving into its usage in global politics. Then I will explain how the slippery slope argument is used in global politics.

In the explanations, I will give some instances in which the slippery slope argument can be used, explain the mechanism of how it can be used in the instances, and then rebuts its usage in those instances. In addition, I will give some instances of how the slippery slope argument is used in other domains such as public policy, law, ethics and healthcare. Having encountered the slippery slope argument in other domains, we will easily recognise its nuances when we come across it in global politics.

The slippery slope argument is ubiquitous, but it is a fallacy. Fallacy, according to Irving Copi (1961), is 'a form of argument that seems to be correct but which proves, upon examination, not to be so' (p. 52). As fallacies, slippery slope arguments seem to be correct but prove, upon examination, not to be so. 'The fallacy of the slippery slope generally takes the form that from a given starting point one can by a series of incremental inferences arrive at an undesirable conclusion, and because of this unwanted result, the initial starting point should be rejected' (Hansen, 2015, sec. 1) (emphasis in original). Essentially, slippery slope arguments say that if we accept certain arguments, ideas, decisions, actions or policies which we deem desirable, such acceptance is likely to lead us to also accept other arguments, ideas, decisions, actions or policies which we deem undesirable (Rizzo & Whitman, 2003, p. 545). Hence Mario Rizzo and Douglas Whitman (2003) aptly conclude that slippery slope arguments have 'a hypothetical form: if this, then that – with increased likelihood' (p. 545).

Given their hypothetical form, slippery slope arguments are usually speculations; 'they are predictions made by observers, about how acceptance of

some ideas (and resulting actions) can lead to acceptance of other ideas (and resulting actions)' (p. 546). So, inherently, slippery slope arguments are ideas some people have about the ideas of other people, that is, they are some people's predictions about how other people will behave in the future even though the latter 'are motivated by their own ideas' (p. 546). For this reason, slippery slope arguments predict that if we allow certain 'instant cases', cases which slippery slope arguments concede are apparently desirable or harmless and cases which slippery slope arguments differentiate from the 'danger cases' – then our allowing of those 'instant cases' will likely bring about the 'danger cases' which are undesirable or harmful (Schauer, 1985, p. 365).

Slippery slope arguments do not only rely on causal relations, as Hans Hansen (2015) says, 'the series of small steps that lead from an acceptable starting point to an unacceptable conclusion may also depend on vague terms rather than causal relations' (sec. 1). For instance, it is due to vagueness of terms or unclear linguistic or unclear grammatical boundaries that make 'the beard' and 'the heap' slippery slope arguments possible (sec. 1). In 'the beard' slippery slope argument, a fully bearded person 'eventually becomes beardless as hairs of the beard are removed one-by-one; but because the term "beard" is vague, it is unclear at which intermediate point we are to say that the man is now beardless. Hence, at each step in the argument until the final hair-plucking, we should continue to conclude the man is bearded' (sec. 1). In the case of 'the heap' slippery slope argument, due to the vagueness of the term 'heap', 'it is unclear at what point piling scattered stones together makes them a heap of stones; if it is not a heap to begin with, adding one more stone will not make it a heap, etc. In both these cases apparently good reasoning leads to a false conclusion' (sec. 1).

Whether slippery slope arguments rely on causal relations or the vagueness of terms, that is, unclear linguistic boundaries or unclear grammatical boundaries, slippery slope arguments are characterised by their usage 'to oppose some type of change in the status quo. In that sense, and only in that sense, slippery slope arguments are usually employed for "conservative" purposes' (Rizzo & Whitman, 2003, p. 541) (emphasis in original). Since the resistance to change or transformation in favour of the status quo is ubiquitous, it is no surprise that slippery slope arguments can be used and are actually used, in 'almost every arena where decisions must be made' (pp. 540–541).

I have been discussing the general form of the slippery slope argument which can be succinctly stated as follows: 'If you accept a seemingly appropriate argument now, you will be more likely to accept an inappropriate argument later. And if you accept such an inappropriate argument, you will be more likely to make a bad decision or perform a dangerous act' (p. 540). What I am really concerned with in this section is the specific use of the slippery slope argument in global politics. Before I turn to the specific use of the slippery slope argument in global politics, let us see how the argument is specifically used in some other domains. A few instances will suffice.

In public policy, the slippery slope argument can be used to argue that 'instituting a price ceiling on milk will lead to price controls on the sale

of cows' (pp. 540–541). In law, the slippery slope argument can be used to argue that 'forbidding the Nazis to march in Skokie will lead to the forbidding of valuable speech that hurts the feelings of religious or ethnic groups' (pp. 540–541). In ethics, the slippery slope argument can be used to argue that 'acceptance of the abortion of a month-old foetus will lead to acceptance of the abortion of third-trimester foetuses or even to infanticide' (pp. 540–541).

In healthcare, the slippery slope argument can be used to argue that the socialisation of healthcare leads to risky health behaviour since people would not have to pay for such risky behaviour (p. 556). Knowing that the expenses for healthcare are socialised, people will engage in riskier health behaviours than they would normally do if the expenses were privatised. This will increase the total cost of healthcare system which will in turn pressurise taxpayers and government to seek to curb the risky health behaviours that are draining public funds. Therefore, taxpayers and government will be forced to support measures that regulate lifestyle choices including the intrusion into private life domains such as sexual lifestyle, dietary lifestyle, etc. This will be done based on the argument that society will spend less if lifestyle choices are regulated or restricted and society will spend more if lifestyle choices are unregulated or unrestricted because comparatively some lifestyle choices are more expensive while other lifestyle choices are less expensive (p. 556).

If we look at slippery slope arguments through the lens of rational choice, we will see that the arguments are susceptible to different objections namely the automata objection, the imputation objection and the presentism objection (pp. 542–543). Firstly, the automata objection says: 'If the future decision … is bad, but the prior decisions are good, why not simply refrain from making the bad decision down the road? The slippery slope argument seems to rob our future selves of the ability to make reasoned decisions. It treats future decision-makers as automata who cannot resist doing the wrong thing' (p. 542).

Secondly, the imputation objection says:

> If the consequences of a sequence of decisions are undesirable overall, then why are we tempted to defect from the right path now? Suppose, for instance, that undesirable future decisions will somehow flow with probability from the present decision. Unless we are simply ignorant of the causal chain, the undesirability of the final outcome should be imputed backward to the initial decision, and the initial decision should thus not appear desirable after all. The slippery slope argument seems to violate the assumption…of rational expectations.
>
> (pp. 542–543)

Thirdly, the presentism objection says:

> The mere fact that the ultimate decision appears undesirable from today's vantage point does not mean it will appear undesirable tomorrow. After all, if we take that final step when the time arrives, it must look desirable

> at that time. The slippery slope argument appears to privilege the current over the future point of view, ruling out the possibility that new values will exist at the moment of decision.
>
> (p. 543)

The creeping of the slippery slope argument into global politics may be generally, although not specifically, and largely although not exclusively, and indirectly although not necessarily directly, traced to different realists. They seem to have bought the idea – although to different degrees – that outside the state, there is no morality or outside the state, there is no justice. But specifically, the source of the slippery slope argument in global politics may be traced to the idea of the paramountcy of national interest. As I explained in the penultimate chapter, paramountcy of national interest is the idea that the pursuit of national interest, sometimes 'by any means necessary' and at other times with 'all options open', allows states to deploy the slippery slope argument when it favours them. When the status quo favours a state and promotes its national interest, then such state may use the slippery slope argument to ensure that the status quo is unchanged even when the status quo is neither the most theoretically plausible nor the most practically possible and of course not the most morally reasonable, option available.

Either Order or Justice?

The Complexity of Global Politics

In the previous section, I argued that Bull's fear that the prioritisation of justice in global politics will necessarily lead to the disintegration of the international society is a slippery slope argument. I intend neither to argue for the prioritisation of justice at the expense of order nor to argue for the prioritisation of order at the expense of justice in global politics. My intention is to argue that order and justice can be combined without prioritising one at the expense of the other in global politics. This argument is based on the complexity of global politics. Therefore, in this section, I will explain what I mean by the complexity of global politics. As a prelude to the explanation, I will briefly discuss the pluralist and solidarist divide in the English School and how such divide at least points to the possibility of combining order and justice in global politics.

As Hidemi Suganami (2010) aptly observes:

> There is an important sense in which the pluralist-solidarist divide within the English School is not an insurmountable one. The two sides disagree mainly on what is feasible within the contemporary society of states as a whole. Even pluralists would not deny that there may be some regional groupings of states within which higher goals, such as the guarantee and protection of human rights, may be pursued effectively. Neither could (or should) they insist on some a priori grounds that the world, as a

> whole, would (or should) never become solidarist, however sceptical they may be of such a transition in the near future.
>
> (pp. 25–26)

Suganami (n.d.) says 'it is not an exaggeration to say that most English School thinkers are solidarists at heart – although they may disagree about the degree of solidarity which they claim to witness in the world they study' (pp. 25–26). In view of Bull's argument that order is a precondition for other goals which include justice and human rights, that is, order is a primary goal why justice and human rights are secondary goals, Suganami (n.d.) argues that solidarism is immanent in Bull's pluralism (pp. 25–26). Moreover, Andrew Hurrell (2007) argues that:

> The old pluralist impulse to separate order from justice has long confronted many difficulties. The value of order is not placed within any general ethical account or framework. Order as analysed by Bull… implies an ethical view and hence a view of justice: to argue that certain goals should be pursued is to suggest that it is right to pursue them and that those who do so act justly.
>
> (p. 297)

Bull thinks that the international society is still essentially pluralistic and therefore members of the international society can only agree on the goal of order. He thinks that members of the international society lack sufficient degree of solidarity that is required to pursue the goal of justice. For instance, he argues that 'the universal promotion of human rights can be "subversive of coexistence" because of the absence of any substantive consensus in this field' (see Bull, 1984; Hoffman, 1986, p. 184; Bull, 2000, p. 13) (emphasis in original). Nevertheless, he says that 'to show that a particular institution or course of action is conducive of order is not to have established a presumption that that institution is desirable or that that course of action should be carried out' (Bull, 2002, p. 94). For instance, he thinks 'the avoidance of war is not always the highest imperative' (see Bull, 1984; Hoffman, 1986, p. 184; Bull, 2000, p. 13).

As Suganami (2010) points out, Bull 'was not fundamentally opposed to solidarist goals; he simply held them to be still somewhat premature for the society of sovereign states to pursue. His later writings, however, suggest that he was becoming somewhat more "solidarist" than he was in the 1960s' (p. 25) (emphasis in original). Firstly, based on natural law which Bull (1979) defined as 'a doctrine which proclaims that rules are valid among all mankind quite irrespective of the social and cultural facts of the time' (p. 171). Secondly, based on his belief that 'now there exists a global international society that has clearly outgrown its originally European social or cultural base…and doubts may be entertained as to whether any genuinely universal society or culture has yet taken its place' (p. 171). Then, thirdly, Bull argues for 'some degree of commitment to the cause of individual rights on a world scale' (p. 171).

No wonder uncharacteristically Bull once says that 'moral judgements… should never be overridden or sacrificed' (Bull, 1965, p. 25). In essence, 'Bull was painfully aware not only of the gap between moral imperatives and political reality but also of the multiplicity of moral perspectives in the contemporary world' (see Bull, 1984; Hoffman, 1986, p. 184; Bull, 2000, p. 13). However, he 'is critical of moral generalisations. To him they are impossible, because of the complexity of concrete situations and because of the very difficulty of the choices faced by statesmen' (Ibid.). He thinks that it is not always possible to reconcile justice and order (see Bull, 1984; Bull, 2000, p. 13).

In view of the solidarist and pluralist divide, and in view of Bull's concession of some grounds to solidarism in spite of his pluralism, when I say that global politics is complex rather than simple, I mean the following. As earlier mentioned, global politics is characterised by cases that contain both order and justice problems, therefore neither order nor is justice sufficient to resolve the problems. We need a combination of the two. In contrast, simple cases are cases that contain either only order or only justice problem and consequently require only order or justice to be resolved. In global politics, simple cases are the exception while complex cases are the norm.

While Bull's international society is populated by sovereign states, 'global politics' is not only populated by sovereign states (although sovereign states are the most important actors in global politics), it is also, importantly, populated by other members such as supranational organisations, multilateral organisations, multinational corporations, individuals, etc. When all these members interact with one another in global politics, their relationships become greater and even different from the mere sum of each of them. In other words, the interaction of the members forms a world system or society.

Some members of the global system or society may prioritise order at the expense of justice while others may prioritise justice at the expense of order. Nevertheless, the global system or society is better off having an equilibrium of order and justice, i.e., a combination of order and justice as an intermediary position between the two opposite extremes of order on the one end and justice on the other end of a spectrum. If we discard the intermediary position, we have to prioritise either order or justice. On the one hand, when order is prioritised at the expense of justice, order is seen as the precondition which allows the members of the global system or society to pursue other goals. In this case, the global system or society deems order to be prior to justice, consequently it treats order as an overriding value. On the other hand, when justice is prioritised at the expense of order, justice is seen to have precedence over order in a world that aims to be just and fair. In this case, the global system or society deems justice to be prior to order, consequently it treats justice as having an overriding value.

We can comprehend the above global system or society by looking at it through the lens of systemness. Systemness is defined as a condition in which the behaviour of the 'whole' as a singular entity is different from the behaviour of the individual parts (the different entities) that make up the whole.

It is 'a functional state of diverse, interconnected, discrete parts that behave predictably and consistently as a coherent whole in ways that are distinct from and superior to the sum of the parts' (Kenneth W. Kizer qtd. in Lerner, 2013, p. 1). In other words, it is 'the coordination of multiple components that, when working together, create a network of activity that is more powerful than any action of individual parts on their own' (Seiler, 2012, s.p.). In terms of systemness, when states interact with one another at the international arena, their relationships become greater and even different from the mere sum of each of them; hence the international system. Fusing the horizons of order and justice together is much more effective, than order or justice alone, in dealing with systemic structures. Just as when all the actors in African regional politics are joined together they become greater and even different from the mere sum of each of them; so too, when order and justice are fused together they become a broader 'horizon' and even different from the mere sum of each of them. Hence, fusing the horizons of order and justice together provides a systemic solution to a systemic problem. Surely, the systemic complexity of global politics calls for systemness which the fusion of the horizons of order and justice offers (Abumere, 2021).

Some members of the African regional system may prioritise order at the expense of justice while others may prioritise justice at the expense of order. Nevertheless, the African regional system is better off having an equilibrium of order and justice, that is, a combination of order and justice as an intermediary position between the two opposite extremes of order on the one end and justice on the other end of a spectrum. If we discard the intermediary position, we have to either prioritise order or prioritise justice. On the one hand, when order is prioritised at the expense of justice, order is seen as the precondition which allows the members of the regional system or society to pursue other goals. Consequently, the global system or society treats order as an overriding value and therefore deems it to be prior to justice. On the other hand, when justice is prioritised at the expense of order, justice is seen to have precedence over order. Consequently, justice is treated as having an overriding value and therefore is deemed prior to order.

In global politics, order and justice are not mutually exclusive. Exclusively relying on justice without consideration for order may in extreme cases lead to anarchy, thereby paradoxically further undermining justice. Therefore, it is important that order is considered. Nevertheless, exclusively relying on order without consideration for justice has the potential to overturn order and paradoxically lead to the disintegration of the global system or society the order is meant to sustain. The reaction of Germany to the Allied Powers in view of Article 231, the War Guilt Clause, of the Treaty of Versailles shows that perceived injustice by some members of an international system or international society against another member can sometimes lead to catastrophic consequences. The clause says 'The Allied and Associated Governments *affirm* and Germany *accepts* the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments

and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies' (The Allied and Associated Powers, 1919, s.p.) (emphasis mine).

The Either/Or Argument

In the previous section, I argued that due to the complexity of global politics, order and justice are required in global politics. I discussed the pluralism and solidarism divide in the English School and how such divide points to the possibility of combining order and justice without prioritising one at the expense of the other in global politics. Then I explained that the fact that Bull concedes many, or at least some, grounds to solidarism in spite of his pluralism shows the possibility of combining order and justice without prioritising one at the expense of the other in global politics. By overlooking this possibility, the order *contra* justice quandary assumes that in world politics, it is *either* order is prioritised and justice is relegated *or* justice is prioritised and order is relegated. The assumption is that they cannot coexist without prioritisation and relegation. If the *either/or* argument is correct, then the quandary cannot be resolved.

However, to think that order must be either prioritised or relegated and justice must be either prioritised or relegated in world politics 'is tantamount to arguing that things are always either/or. Things are either/or if, and only if, the options are *A* and *non-A*; that is, if one is necessarily correct, then the other – being the opposite – must be necessarily wrong. However, things are not always either/or' (Abumere, 2015a, p. 187). Contrary to the allusion that things are always either/or, things can be neither/nor if the options are *A*, *B* and both are wrong. Conversely, if both are right they can also be *A* and *B*. Furthermore, either of them can be fully or partially right or wrong. In this case, they can also be partially *A* and partially *B*, partially *A* and fully *B*, or fully *A* and partially *B* (p. 187).

In view of the foregoing analysis, there are two kinds of different possibilities for order and justice in global politics. The first kind of different possibilities has to do with the presence and absence of order and justice in global politics. Firstly, both order and justice can be completely present. Secondly, both of them can be completely absent. Thirdly, both of them can be partially present and partially absent. Fourthly, one can be completely present while the other is completely absent. Fifthly, one can be completely present while the other is partially present and partially absent. Sixthly, one can be completely absent while the other is partially present and partially absent.

The second kind of possibilities which is more relevant to my analysis has to do with the prioritisation and relegation of order and justice in global politics. Firstly, both of them can coexist without prioritisation. Secondly, both of them can coexist without relegation. Thirdly, in all cases, order can be prioritised while justice is relegated. Fourthly, in all cases, justice can be prioritised while order is relegated. Fifthly, in some cases, order can be

prioritised while justice is relegated. Sixthly, in some cases, justice can be prioritised while order is relegated. In view of the above possibilities, it is not far-fetched to say that order and justice can coexist without the prioritisation of one at the expense of the other in global politics.

Moreover, one notable way of combining order and justice without the prioritisation of one at the expense of the other in global politics is the adoption of the principle of subsidiarity as the governance mechanism for the protection of human rights. On the one hand, subsidiarity acknowledges the importance of order and therefore maintains order by working within the framework of international or global order. It seeks neither to overthrow the current order nor to overhaul it radically. On the other hand, subsidiarity recognises the importance of justice and therefore makes the protection of human rights necessary. It sees the protection of human rights neither as something that is done only at the convenience of members of the international or global society nor as an appendage to order.

As evident in the foregoing discussion, my approach to the order *contra* justice quandary is a synthetic approach. It neither jettison order for justice or *vice versa* nor prioritise order at the expense of justice or *vice versa*. To resolve the order *contra* justice quandary in global politics, or at least to manage complex cases of global politics which require both order and justice, we need a framework that is simultaneously balanced and flexible. On the one hand, by a balanced framework, I mean a strategy that neither gives precedence to order nor to justice. Rather, it contains adequate order and justice resources to deal with complex cases of global politics. The three merits of a balanced framework are; it has order resources to deal with cases that require order resources, it has justice resources to deal with cases that require justice resources, and it can combine both order and justice resources to deal with cases that require both order and justice resources (Abumere, 2017, p. 33). On the other hand, by a flexible framework, I mean a framework that is not only suitable for cases that require order or cases that require justice, but can be adapted to suit cases that require order, cases that require justice and a combination of both cases that require order and cases that require justice (pp. 33–34).

The flexibility of the aforementioned framework is important because as Joseph Nye (2011a, 2011b) says, 'too rigid an approach to strategy can be counterproductive' (p. 212). To have a balanced and flexible framework, 'we need to adopt a twin-strategy, namely equilibrium and adaptation,' which equilibrates order and justice resources on one level and adapts the resources to suit particular cases on another level (Abumere, 2015b, p. 7). Moreover, 'a strategy ought to be flexible enough to be adaptable to various contexts. Any … strategy should serve as the nexus between means and ends. For this reason, the focus is how to use available resources (means) to achieve desired goals (ends)' (Abumere, 2017, p. 34). In other words, 'a strategy relates means to ends, and that requires clarity about goals (preferred outcomes), resources, and tactics for their use' (Nye, 2011b, p. 208).

The aforementioned framework, i.e., the equilibrium and adaptation strategy, is a twin-strategy. In other words, equilibrium is one part of the strategy and adaptation is the other part of the strategy. In terms of structure, it is a two-level strategy. The first level – which can be variously referred to as the upper level, the general level, the theoretical level or the policy level – is equilibrium. While the second level – which can be variously referred to as the lower level, the special level, the practical level or the implementation level – is adaptation (Abumere, 2017, p. 34). In contrast, equilibrium is the first level while adaptation is the second level, equilibrium is the upper level while adaptation is the lower level, equilibrium is the general level while adaptation is the special level, equilibrium is the theoretical level while adaptation is the practical level, and equilibrium is the policy level while adaptation is the implementation level.

My concept of equilibrium is analogous to the microeconomics concept of equilibrium. Taking a cue from microeconomics, I intend equilibrium to help balance the forces of order and justice in global politics the same way it helps balance the forces of demand and supply in competitive markets. This strategy, which deals with complex cases of global politics that require the balancing of order and justice, is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. It is a means to resolve the order *contra* justice quandary in global politics. In microeconomics, specifically in a competitive market, equilibrium eliminates shortages and surpluses, or at least reduces the level, duration and frequency of shortages and surpluses (p. 34). In my framework, order and justice are to be dealt with as if they were demand and supply. Then equilibrium will be employed to balance them so that there will neither be shortage of order and surplus of justice nor shortage of justice and surplus of order.

On the first level or policy level, equilibrium demands that both order and justice are given equal consideration. On the second level or implementation level, adaptation demands that the particular case that is to be resolved should determine the 'adaptation of equilibrium' (p. 34) (to be solely order, solely justice, equal order and justice, more order and less justice or less order and more justice). Firstly, equilibrium demands that there must be sufficient order and justice resources or means to resolve complex cases of global politics. Secondly, adaptation demands the following. The particular resources or means we use, whether they are order, justice or order and justice, and the amount of the resources or means we use, whether it is solely order, solely justice, equal order and justice, more order and less justice or more justice and less order, depend on what the cases to be resolved require (p. 34).

On the one hand, equilibrium is important because it creates room for sufficient order and justice resources without shortage of order or justice and without surplus of order or justice. On the other hand, adaptation is important because it creates room for the effective utilisation of order and justice resources in various cases. The guiding question is, in a particular case, what do we need? (p. 34). Depending on the case, the answer may be or may not be order, justice or a combination of order and justice. If the answer is a combination of order and justice, then the further question, how much order do we need and how

much justice do we need? Depending on the case, the answer may be or may not be equal order and justice, more order and less justice, or more justice and less order. Depending on the answers to the above questions, then we will know whether we should rely on order alone, justice alone, equal order and justice, more order and less justice, or more justice and less order.

Figure 7.1 illustrates the various possible combinations of order and justice in different cases on the equilibrium and adaptation twin-strategy spectrum.

'Case A' which is purely a justice problem requires zero percent order resource and 100 percent justice resource. Case K which is purely an order problem requires zero percent justice resource and 100 percent order resource. Case F which is an order and justice problem of equal measure requires 50 percent order resource and 50 percent justice resource. Cases B, C, D and E which are more of justice problems and less of order problems require more justice resources and less order resources. While cases G, H, I and J which are more of order problems and less of justice problems require more order resources and less justice resources (p. 35).

Equilibrium

Order	More Order and Less Justice	Equal Order and Justice	More Justice and Less Order	Justice

Adaptation

Order	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Justice	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0
Case	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K

Figure 7.1 The equilibrium and adaptation twin-strategy

To reiterate, in the above twin-strategy, equilibrium and adaptation are arrived at through a two-level of analysis namely, theoretical level (policy level) and practical level (implementation level). Firstly, on the theoretical or policy level, cases are analysed to determine whether they are simple cases (cases requiring only order or only justice) or whether they are complex cases (cases requiring both order and justice). At this level, equilibrium demands that simple cases (order *or* justice) require simple solution (only order *or* only justice) and complex cases (order *and* justice) require complex solution (order *and* justice). Secondly, on the practical or implementation level, complex cases are analysed to determine the degree of order and the degree of justice that are required. At this level, adaptation demands that the extent to which a complex case is a case of order, to that same extent it requires order resource, and to the extent to which the case is a justice case, to that same extent it requires justice resource.

However, the equilibrium and adaptation twin-strategy has no pretensions to mathematical certainty or exact science. It should be treated as an ideal type analogous to the Weberian ideal type. Therefore, the equilibrium and adaptation twin-strategy is not perfect. It is not even the average of the order and justice that we require in global politics. Nevertheless, it is to it that the realities of the order and justice should be approximated. This is because essentially 'ideal type is wholly and only a depiction of a model-phenomenon that is not only imaginable but also adequately representative of the realities it depicts. It is to it that the realities it represents or real cases are to be approximated. But it neither stands for "perfection" nor is it the "average" of what it represents' (Weber, 1949, pp. 90–92; Abumere, 2017, pp. 35–36) (emphasis in original).

Moreover, according to Max Weber (1949), 'An ideal type is formed by the one-sided *accentuation* of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent *concrete individual* phenomena which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified *analytical* construct' (p. 90) (emphasis in original). That the equilibrium and adaptation twin-strategy is an ideal type is clearly a limitation. But this limitation does not negate the importance of the twin-strategy. The limitation only means that the twin-strategy should not be taken as exact science, laws of physics or mathematical certainties. This limitation extends to social science in general and political science in particular (Abumere, 2017, p. 35). After all, as Sven Steinmo (2008) says, 'the study of politics is not, and cannot be, like physics, because what we study and what we are interested in explaining are not inanimate objects to which absolute, invariant and fixed laws apply' (p. 134).

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8 A CONSTRUCTIVIST VIEW OF AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Constructivism to the Rescue

In this chapter, I view African international politics from a constructivist perspective. Constructivism believes that structural conditions are not the principal determinant of the behaviour of actors. It thinks rather than material factors, ideational factors are the principal determinant of the behaviour of actors in that the preferences of actors are socially constructed, their actions are determined by their social interactions and their interests. In other words, when pursuing their interests, actors are conscious of their place and role in a social group, consequently they pay attention to, and respect, the interests and reactions of the other members of the group. From a constructivist view, the divisions and differences in Part I are what Africa makes of them. From a constructivist view, the structuralist explanation of African international politics in the fifth chapter is wrong. In addition, from a constructivist view, the cooperation in the penultimate chapter can be enhanced and the problem of recurrent injustices in the preceding chapter can be resolved.

I divide the discussion into three parts. In the first part (this sub-chapter), I introduce the constructivist perspective on international politics. In the second part, I start by discussing the development of norms in international relations and end by discussing how norms can be employed at the African regional level. In sum, in the first and second parts, I develop a theoretical framework based on the appropriateness and strength of utilising a normative approach to African politics and regional interactions. In the third part, I start by discussing how the divisions and differences on the continent can be superseded by non-discriminatory, unifying, positive identities and values. Then I end by discussing 'fusion of horizons' as the mechanism through which the non-discriminatory, unifying, positive identities and values can be realised. In sum, in the third part, I discuss the possibility of creating identities and values that can unite Africa as a continent and Africans as a people.

Generally, both at the inter-personal level of relationships and at the international level of relationships, the ultimate result of constructivist African international politics is the rejection of 'othering' and the inclusionary and exclusionary complex in the relationships and interactions between the

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aforementioned diverse geographical, racial, linguistic and religious entities on the continent. Particularly at the international level of relationships, the ultimate result of constructivist African international politics is the acceptance of norms that will govern the relationships and interactions between the aforementioned entities. When, simultaneously, the entities are bounded together by norms, and their relations and interactions are bound by norms, then the realist-rationalist fundamentalism that is characterised by the epistemic conception of the entities as ontologically self-interested and self-regarding entities will fade away. Instead of the realist-rationalist fundamentalism, the entities will be seen as 'other-regarding' members of the African society that are amenable to behaving in standards that are deemed to be appropriate by other members of the society.

My aim is to argue for normative international politics in which the aforementioned divisions and differences are superseded by non-discriminatory, unifying, positive identities and shared values. In the normative international politics, I am arguing for, cooperation is the organising principle. I admit that norms already play an important role in African international relations. In global politics at the global level and in African international politics at the regional level, norms play an important role. Moreover, we live in a liberal international order. Realists/neo-relists, liberals/neo-liberals, constructivists, the English school and critical theorists disagree on what exactly the nature of the current global order is. Whatever it is, it entails institutions, norms and rules.

As earlier mentioned in the penultimate and preceding chapters, cooperation already exists in multilateral organisations such as the United Nations (UN) at the global level and the African Union (AU) at the regional level. Furthermore, at the sub-regional levels, cooperation already exists in multilateral organisations such as the Economic Community of West-African States (ECOWAS), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), East African Community (EAC), Southern African Development Commission (SADC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

However, in view of the problem of 'othering' on the continent, I think normativity is not sufficiently entrenched in African international relations. To resolve the problem of 'othering', I think more consideration should be given to normativity. The kind of cooperation I argue for will make the existing normativity in African international relations robust. I am using 'normativity' in both its descriptive (institutional) and prescriptive (ethical) senses. In its descriptive or institutional sense, normativity refers to the acceptable norms, standards or rules of behaviour that are the order of the day. In its prescriptive or ethical sense, normativity refers to the morally right thing to do.

My normative view echoes cosmopolitanism; however, they are different. Firstly, cosmopolitanism is concerned about the whole world while I am concerned about Africa. Secondly, and more importantly, what my normative view echoes even in the African context is moral cosmopolitanism rather

than legal cosmopolitanism. On the one hand, legal cosmopolitanism defends 'a concrete political ideal of a global order in which all persons have equivalent legal rights and duties, that is, are fellow citizens of a universal republic' (Pogge, 1992, p. 49). On the other hand, moral cosmopolitanism argues that 'all persons stand in certain moral relations to one another; we are required to respect one another's status as ultimate units of moral concern' (p. 49).

In view of legal cosmopolitanism, I am neither committed to a concrete political ideal of an African order in which all Africans have equivalent legal rights and duties, that is, are fellow citizens of a regional African republic. Nor to a single community on the African continent in which there are similar moral standards, economic practices, political structures and cultural norms. In view of moral cosmopolitanism, I have a twofold commitment. Firstly, all Africans stand in certain moral relations to one another, they are required to respect one another's status as ultimate units of moral concern. Secondly, all African states should stand in certain moral relations to one another; they should respect one another's status as units of moral concern.

Norms – Ideal and Non-ideal Norms

The Development of Norms in International Relations

Since the sociological concept of institutions and the political science concept of norms appear to be identical but are actually different, I begin the discussion of norms by distinguishing norms from institutions. Institutions are 'a relatively stable collection of practices and rules defining appropriate behaviour for specific groups of actors in specific situations' (March & Olsen, 1998, p. 948). In international politics, norms are 'collective expectations for the proper behaviour of actors with a given identity' (Katzenstein, 1996, p. 5). In other words, norms are 'generalised standards of conduct that delineate the scope of' an actor's 'entitlements, the extent of its obligations, and the range of its jurisdiction' (Raymond, 1997, p. 126).

Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink (1998) explain that 'aggregation' is what differentiates the concept of institutions from the concept of norms (p. 891). On the one hand, the concept of institutions 'emphasise the way in which behavioural rules are structured together and interrelate ("a collection of practices and rules")' (p. 891). On the other hand, the concept of norms 'isolates single standards of behaviour' (p. 891). Norms perform a threefold function. Firstly, norms order and constrain the behaviour of actors (regulative function). Secondly, norms create new actors, actions or interests (constitutive function) (p. 891). Thirdly, norms stipulate for actors the ethical things they should do and the unethical things they should not do (prescriptive or evaluative function) (Abumere, 2019, p. 5).

Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) describe the life cycle of norms as a three-stage process; norm emergence, norm cascade and norm internalisation (p. 895). At the stage of norm emergence, due to a factor or a combination of

some factors such as altruism, empathy or commitment to certain ideas, norm entrepreneurs persuade norm leaders, usually a small number of actors, to accept or reject certain behaviour (pp. 895, 898). Norm emergence and norm cascade 'are divided by a threshold or 'tipping' point, at which a critical mass of relevant state actors adopt the norm' (p. 895). At the norm cascade stage, norm leaders or international organisations and networks socialise other actors into accepting the emergent norm. The reason a norm cascades varies from one actor to another. Some actors may accept the emergent norm due to peer pressure or conformity, while others may accept an emergent norm due to concerns about their own legitimacy, reputation or esteem (p. 895). When many actors have been socialised into the cascaded norm, norm cascade reaches a tipping point at which the norm is internalised, that is, it becomes banal. Thus, the norm internalisation stage (p. 895). 'This three-stage process is the ideal-type life cycle of a norm. Emerged norms may not reach a tipping point at which cascade occurs. Cascading norms may not reach a tipping point at which norm internalisation occurs' (Abumere, 2019, p. 5). In addition, 'internalised or cascading norms may eventually become the prevailing standard of appropriateness against which new norms emerge and compete for support' (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 895).

Matthew J. Hoffmann (2005, 2010, p. 16) says that paradoxically norms have dual quality. On the one hand, by virtue of being shared objects, norms appear to actors as external phenomenon. In other words, actors perceive norms as external phenomenon and experience norms, at least partially, as rules that are external to the actors, as rules that are out there. On the other hand, norms only exist when a community of actors enact them and norms are sustained when a community of actors continue to re-enact them. Because of their participation in the enactment and re-enactment of norms, actors perceive norms as internal phenomenon, and they experience norms, at least partially, as internal rules (Ibid.). To sum up the paradoxical dual quality of norms, for actors norms are simultaneously internal and external rules. Hoffmann (2010) explains that:

> There is an implicit equivalence made between contestation that goes on within a normative community (generated by the "gap between general rules and specific situations") and contestation that occurs between different normative communities ("inevitable tension between norms"). The first is endogenous contestation – actors that accept a general norm and are constituted by it nevertheless have different understandings of it or operationalize its strictures differently, leading to disputes and change in the meaning of the norm from within. The second is compliance or diffusion – actors from different normative communities seek to enlarge their communities or to hold on to extant norms in the face of external normative challenges and disputes that arise can lead to normative change in both communities.
>
> (p. 15; emphasis in original)

How Norms Can Be Employed at the African Regional Level

Amitav Acharya (2011) argues that international relations should revolve around regionalism. Therefore, his explanation of norm subsidiarity and norm localisation – although the explanation was not specifically given within the African context – is helpful in understanding African international relations. He defines 'norm subsidiarity as *a process whereby local actors create rules with a view to preserve their autonomy from dominance, neglect, violation, or abuse by more powerful central actors*' (p. 97) (emphasis in original).

Norm localisation does not merely ascertain the congruence between local identity and international identity norms and institutions, and the acceptance or rejection of the norms and institutions. Importantly, norm localisation simultaneously describes a complex process and the outcome of the process through which norm-takers reach 'congruence between transnational norms (including norms previously institutionalised in a region) and local beliefs and practices' (Acharya, 2004, p. 241). According to Acharya (2004), in the norm localisation process, foreign norms are incorporated into local norms even when the former did not cohere with the latter initially (p. 241). Ultimately, he contends that whether norm diffusion strategies and process succeed or fail 'depends on the extent to which they provide opportunities for localisation' (p. 241).

Generally, whether the employment of norms at the African regional level succeeds or fails depends, at least in part, on the nature of African international relations. Particularly, whether norm localisation succeeds or fails at the African regional level also depends – at least in part – on the nature of African international relations. We need to know the nature of African international relations in order to ascertain the role norms can play at the African regional level. On the one hand, as explained in the fifth chapter, structuralist-realists think the nature of African international politics is structural-realist. On the other hand, as we see in the penultimate chapter, Africa is a microcosm of the liberal international order. Yet, as we see in the preceding chapter, Africa resembles an international society. Conscious of the descriptions of the nature of African international politics in the fifth, penultimate and preceding chapters, in this current chapter I shall offer a constructivist description of the nature of African international politics.

Unlike Hentz's (2019) structuralism (as described in the fifth chapter), social constructivism believes that structural conditions are not the principal determinant of the behaviour of actors (Tieku, 2013, p. 4). It thinks rather than material factors, ideational factors are the principal determinant of the behaviour of actors in that the preferences of actors are socially constructed, their actions are determined by their social interactions and their interests. In other words, when pursuing their interests, actors are conscious of their place and role in a social group, consequently they pay attention to, and respect, the interests and reactions of the other members of the group.

The preference formation of actors is influenced by their social interactions in three fundamental ways. Firstly, actors are socialised into accepting certain

norms and behaving in accordance with the norms. Secondly, without being incentivised by any material factor (if not always, but at most times), actors' comprehension and conception of international politics become intersubjective. In other words, actors acquire intersubjective, rather than subjective, worldview. Thirdly, actors have a better understanding of their international environment and recognise the different options that are available to them within their environment (p. 5).

On the one hand, Tieku (2013) contends that regional normative fabrics have been neglected in Africa, and such neglect limits the applicability of social constructivism to international politics on the continent (p. 7). On the other hand, he contends that any African International Relations theory that is worth its salt must consider pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism is a description of African political elites' internalisation of the norm that Africans are one, and as such, Africans ought to support, and cooperate, with one another. In other words, unity ought to be the right kind of relationship among Africans, and African leaders must always act harmoniously, seeking compromise rather than confrontation (p. 7). Consequently, disagreements among leaders are discouraged while consensus is encouraged. Leaders are pressurised to align with the consensus on continental matters (Clapham, 1996).

Tieku (2013) thinks that international politics in Africa has been greatly impacted by pan-Africanism (pp. 7–8). To conform to pan-Africanism, African governments frequently sacrifice their states' interests and preferences. Pan-Africanism sets the ethical standard of behaviour for African political elites and governments. It does:

> not only encourage African political elites to show loyalty in public to continental unity; it also makes it hard for those elites to oppose openly an issue that commands broad support. Decision-making is often made easy by the self-regulation of the norm. It is the powerful effect of the norm that allows African states to develop common positions on crucial international issues. It often encourages African governments to engage in block voting in international forums. Indeed, it dictates actions of African governments in international politics especially in the absence of obvious material concerns. (pp. 7–8)

In a nutshell, Tieku (2013) argues that the central referent of international politics in Africa are group preferences formation, consensual decision-making procedures and the solidarity principle (p. 1). For him, except these three collective traits are taken into consideration, we will not be able to explain international politics in Africa. In other words, any African international relations theory that fails to consider the three collective traits in its explanation of international politics in Africa is bound to fail. Consequently, to employ norms at the African regional level, one must rely on the three collective traits. In sum, to employ norms at the African regional level, one must rely on pan-Africanism. I will discuss this in detail in the next part of this discussion.

Pan-Africanism – Continental Africa and Africa Diaspora

Identities and Values: Enemies, Competitors and Friends

The divisions and differences are significant because they are ultimately inclusionary and exclusionary, and as such, they structure continental relations – both international relations and inter-personal relations. For instance, Westphalian divisions and differences necessarily embrace relationism as their organising and operating principle and consequently negate non-relationism. Although Westphalian divisions and differences may not absolutely reject every strand of non-relationism, the categorical fact is that for Westphalian divisions and differences relationism is the norm while a pretentious or a grudging acceptance of some minimal strands of non-relationism is the exception.

On the one hand, relationism: Stresses the common relationships that bind subjects and agents of justice together; it is a member-based approach, that is, it is associative. Any person that is not part of a particular relationship is deemed to have neither obligation to, nor right claim against, persons who are bounded together by the relationship (Abumere, 2017, p. 35). On the other hand, non-relationism 'does not see justice to be dependent on such relationship or any relationship other than common humanity and its variants. Justice … is not based on any special relationship and its variants such as citizenship, compatriotism, etc., but on common humanity and its variants such as basic human needs, natural prerogatives and sufferance, etc.' (Maffettone, 2013, p. 127; Abumere, 2017, p. 35). This juxtaposition of relationism and non-relationism is not meant to argue for one position as the morally just theory or against the other position as the morally unjust theory. Rather, it is meant to show why the divisions and differences, and the identities they ascribed to geographical-political spaces and persons, and the consequent values that emanate from those identities, impede continental integration.

The power or agency of the divisions and differences to structure relations is derived from the identities which they ascribe to geographical-political spaces and persons and the consequent inclusionary and exclusionary values that emanate from such identities. To reiterate, these identities are, for example, Cameroon in contradistinction to Uganda, Francophone in contradistinction to Anglophone, Black in contradistinction to White, etc. Sui generis, the particular geographical, racial, linguistic and religious identities are neither moral nor immoral; they are morally neutral. However, the identities, especially the Westphalian identities, have moral significance because they embody inclusionary and exclusionary values.

The geographic, racial, linguistic and religious divisions and differences socialise African states and Africans into forming various identities and adopting various values. Yet the divisions and differences on the continent are neither necessary nor sufficient for African states and Africans to discriminate

against one another. African states and Africans can use the divisions and differences as grounds for positive identities and values which enhance continental relations or as grounds for negative identities and values which militate against continental relations. Taking my cue from Alexander Wendt's (1992) social constructivist argument that 'anarchy is what states make of it' (p. 1), I contend that the divisions and differences on the continent are 'what African states and Africans make of them'.

All the divisions and differences (religious, racial, linguistic and geographical) and all the dimensions of the geographical divisions and differences (North Africa versus sub-Saharan Africa, sub-regional groupings and Westphalian fragmentation) must be resolved in order to have a holistic resolution to the African condition in the twenty-first century. Nevertheless, since the problems are intractable, resolving all of them at once is a herculean task. If it is infeasible to resolve all the problems at once, the next-best option is to move gradually by resolving one problem or some problems at a time. Resolving one problem or some problems at a time will at least alleviate the negative consequences of divisions and differences on the continent. For instance, in West Africa, we can take the geographical, linguistic and religious problems as a tripod since 'everything exists in relation to other things' (Bray, 2008, p. 302). Resolving one of the problems will unbalance the tripod and may make the other problems tractable. Even if it does not make the other problems tractable, at least we will have less problems to resolve. This will give us more time and space to resolve the remaining problems, that is, we can concentrate our resources on resolving the remaining problems.

In view of the conflicts mentioned in the previous section, international relations theory analyses of African international relations tend to view African international relations through the lenses of realism and neorealism. Looking at the crises and conflicts mentioned in the previous section, Hentz's (2019) structuralist analysis of African international relations might conclude that African states seem to have adopted political realism as their modus vivendi and modus operandi in their international relations with one another. However, as Tieku's (2013) social constructivist analysis of African international relations shows, pan-Africanism is the order of the day on the continent. In opposition to Hentz's (2019) structuralism and in support of Tieku's (2013) social constructivism, I argue for normative international politics in Africa and, in the next section, I will explain how the norm of 'fusion of horizons' can be internalised to strengthen the already-existing pan-Africanism.

Rejecting the realist assertion that the anarchical nature of international politics necessarily means the absence of norms in international politics, Wendt (1999) argues that there are three cultures of anarchy, namely Hobbesian culture, Lockean culture and Kantian culture. In a Hobbesian culture, states perceive or understand one another to be enemies and consequently relate with one another as enemies. In a Lockean culture, states perceive or understand

one another to be rivals and consequently relate with one another as rivals. While in a Kantian culture, states perceive or understand one another to be friends and consequently relate with one another as friends. Consequently, contra realists, 'the anarchical nature of international politics does not necessarily negate norms, but the norms accepted or rejected by states determine how states act in international politics' (Abumere, 2019, p. 3).

Therefore, using the Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian cultures as a methodological device, one can envisage different scenarios in which African states and Africans can find themselves depending on what they make of the divisions and differences on the continent and depending on which identities they form and which values they adopt. The continent can turn out to be a Hobbesian continent of enemies who are merely settling for a modus vivendi, a Lockean continent of rivals who are competing against one another or a Kantian continent of friends who are cooperating with one another. Whether the continent becomes Hobbesian, Lockean or Kantian depends on what the continent makes of the divisions and differences and what the continent makes of the divisions and differences will have consequences – negative or positive – for the continent.

The crust of the foregoing discussion in this section is that it is possible to transcend the divisions and differences on the continent if African states and Africans are willing to form positive identities and adopt positive values that enhance continental relations. In this case, the different states, the different sub-regions, both the sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa divides, the different races, the different religions and the linguistic entities should not see their particular identities and divisions as limiting cases but as smaller facets of a larger pan-Africanism. By pan-Africanism, I mean neither a political union of the 54 African states nor an extensive relationship and intensive solidarity between continental Africans and African diaspora. By pan-Africanism, I mean genuine African identities and values that transcend geographical, racial, linguistic and religious divisions and differences. In order to arrive at this pan-Africanism, firstly, both at the inter-personal level of relationships and at the international level of relationships, states must allow norms to govern continental relations, and the continent must be amenable to a 'fusion of horizons'.

Fusion of Horizons: Normativity in Interpersonal and International Relations

In an ordinary language sense, the word 'fusion' simply means 'the combination or joining together of two or more things' while the word 'horizon' simply means 'the point beyond which we cannot see' (Abumere, 2015, p. 35). However, my understanding of fusion of horizons is Gadamerian. To understand what Hans-Georg Gadamer means by fusion of horizons, the concept of horizon must be traced back to Edmund Husserl through Martin Heidegger.

According to Husserl (1973), 'Perception has horizons made up of other possibilities of perception, as perceptions we *could* have, if we *actively directed* the course of perception otherwise: if, for example, we turned our eyes that way instead of this, or if we were to step forward or to one side, and so forth' (p. 44) (emphasis in original). Then he goes on to contend that:

> There are three types of horizons, namely internal horizon, external horizon and temporal horizon. Internal horizons are those characteristics that an object necessarily has because they are in the nature of the object. External horizons are those horizons that establish the relationship between an object and its environment. Temporal horizons denote the temporal nature or circumstances of the object. In other words, the internal horizon denotes the existence of the object – its nature. The external horizon denotes the special relations of the object to the environment. While the temporal horizon, *cum* the internal and external horizons, denote the spatio-temporal nature of the object and its relations to time, space, other objects and its environment
>
> (Abumere, 2015, p. 35; see Vessey, n.d., s.p.)

In the vein of Husserl's conception of horizon, Heidegger (1982) argues that horizon is 'that towards which each ecstasis[1] is intrinsically open in a specific way … the open expanse towards which remotion itself is outside itself' (p. 267) (emphasis is original). While according to Gadamer (1989), horizon is 'the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point' (p. 302). In essence, horizon is the:

> Larger context of meaning in which any particular meaningful presentation is situated. Inasmuch as understanding is taken to involve a 'fusion of horizons', then so it always involves the formation of a new context of meaning that enables integration of what is otherwise unfamiliar, strange or anomalous. In this respect, all understanding involves a process of mediation and dialogue between what is familiar and what is alien in which neither remains unaffected.
>
> (Malpas, 2018, sec. 3.2)

For Gadamer (1989), it is important to have a horizon because 'a person who has no horizon does not see far enough and hence overvalues what is nearest to him' (p. 302). In his words, 'every finite present has its limitations. We define the concept of "situation" by saying that it represents a standpoint that limits the possibility of vision. Hence essential to the concept of a situation is the concept of a "horizon"' (p. 302) (emphasis in original). Therefore, importantly, one must fuse his or her horizon with the horizons of others in order for one to go beyond the limits of his or her own horizon. Fusing one's horizons with the horizons of others means that one is able to change standpoints and step out of one's own horizon, and 'the merely changing

of standpoints entails the possibility of having different horizons and the mere stepping out of our horizons entails the possibility of having broader horizons' (Abumere, 2015, p. 36).

In summary:

> Fusion of horizons is not Hegelian dialectics of, say, being + nothingness = becoming, or thesis + antithesis = synthesis which itself becomes a new thesis. Nevertheless, fusion of horizons occurs when individuals understand that the context of their discourse can be seen from a different perspective in order to reach a new conclusion. The acquisition of novel information, or the development of a novel perception of the existing information, makes individuals re-evaluate their previous conclusions, make individuals aware of the limitations of their previous conclusions, help individuals gain novel understanding of their discourse, and supposedly leads to a fusion of the horizons of the individuals who are involved in the discourse. Hence, the limitations of the previous conclusions are at least minimised, previous understanding is improved, new perspectives are formed and the formerly limited horizon becomes a broadened horizon.
>
> (Abumere, 2015, p. 193; see Vessey, n.d., s.p.)

Fusion of horizons does not fit with Hentz's (2019) structuralist explanation of African international relations. It fits with Tieku's (2013) social constructivist explanation of African international relations. At the descriptive level, it disagrees that structural conditions are the principal determinant of the behaviour of actors. It thinks rather than material factors, ideational factors are the principal determinants of the behaviour of actors. At the prescriptive level, it demands that when pursuing their interests, actors should be conscious of their place and role in a social group and pay attention to, and respect, the interests and reactions of the other members of the group.

Therefore, fusion of horizons does not only echo pan-Africanism, it is also capable of strengthening it. It supports the claim that African leaders must always act harmoniously, seeking compromise rather than confrontation. Consequently, it discourages destructive disagreements among leaders and encourages consensus. This is not to say that fusion of horizons does not tolerate disagreement. It tolerates disagreements that are constructive. After all, it is through constructive disagreements and revision of initially held views that parties in a dialogue arrive at a fusion of horizons.

If Tieku (2013) is right that the central referent of international politics in Africa are group preferences formation, consensual decision-making procedures and solidarity (p. 1), then fusion of horizons can equally serve as a central referent of international politics in Africa. Furthermore, if Tieku (2013) is right that international politics in Africa has been greatly impacted by pan-Africanism (pp. 7–8), then fusion of horizons can affect African international politics because it will encourage African governments to harmonise

their states' interests and preferences. In a nutshell, fusion of horizons can enhance pan-Africanism by setting ethical standard of behaviour for African political elites and governments.

If adopted as the organising principle of African international relations, fusion of horizons will enhance Acharya's (2011) norm subsidiarity and norm localisation (p. 97) in African international relations. In support of norm subsidiarity, fusion of horizons supports African states in creating '*rules with a view to preserve their autonomy from dominance, neglect, violation, or abuse by more powerful central actors*' (p. 97) (emphasis in original). Then in support of norm localisation, fusion of horizons will not merely ascertain the congruence between local identity and international identity norms and institutions, and the acceptance or rejection of the norms and institutions. More importantly, it will simultaneously envisage congruence between local norms and international norms and encourage norm-takers to reach 'congruence between transnational norms (including norms previously institutionalized in a region) and local beliefs and practices' (Acharya, 2004, p. 241). Since in norm localisation process, foreign norms are incorporated into local norms even when the former did not cohere with the latter initially (p. 241), then fusion of horizons is very helpful in this process because it encourages dialogue and the synthesis of one's view with the view of the other.

Generally, both at the inter-personal level of relationships and at the international level of relationships, the ultimate result of fusion of horizons is the rejection of 'othering' and the inclusionary and exclusionary complex in the relationships and interactions between the aforementioned diverse geographical, racial, linguistic and religious entities on the continent. Particularly at the international level of relationships, the ultimate result of fusion of horizons is the acceptance of norms that will govern the relationships and interactions between the aforementioned entities. When, simultaneously:

> the entities are bounded together by norms; and their relations and interactions are bound by norms; then the realist-rationalist fundamentalism that is characterised by the epistemic conception of the entities as ontologically self-interested and self-regarding entities will fade away. Instead of the realist-rationalist fundamentalism, there will be an emergence of a constructivist conception of the entities in which they will be seen as "other-regarding" members of the African society that "are amenable to behaving in standards that are deemed to be appropriate by other members of the society".
>
> (Abumere, 2019, p. 5; emphasis in original)

I believe fusion of horizons is capable of reducing African states' proneness to conflicts. If Hentz (2019) is right, as mentioned in the fifth chapter, the problems of ethnic heterogeneity and democracy are some of the sources of intra-state conflicts in Africa (p. 144). Firstly, ethnic heterogeneity is only a source of conflict when it is weaponised to dominate the other or

discriminate against the other. Fusion of horizons, as already explained, negates othering and affirms the other. In other words, it negates the politics of identity and affirms the politics of recognition. Hence, it is very helpful in the management of ethnic heterogeneity. Secondly, the states are undemocratic or experiencing intractable problems in their transition to democracy. If actors internalise fusion of horizons, they are more likely to settle disputes by dialogue rather than violence. If Pericles' definition of democracy (which is popularised by Abraham Lincoln) as the government of the people, for the people and by the people, is correct, then fusion of horizons is helpful in the transition from authoritarianism to democracy because it entails taking into consideration the views of the other even if that other is the opposition.

In international politics, when actors choose to abide by norms, they do not cease to pursue goals that they are interested in; while actors still pursue their goals, the means they use to achieve the goals are no longer inevitably mere self-regarding and other-disregarding (Abumere, 2019). For instance, states that abide by norms in international politics do not see reliance on materialist means or hard power as inevitable. In addition, they do not see materialist means or hard power as the only means to achieve goals 'everywhere' and at 'all times'. While such states may rely on material means or hard power 'somewhere' and 'sometimes', they are willing to achieve their goals by other means, namely norms (Ibid.). This willingness to achieve goals through norms is an antidote to transnational, international, sub-regional and regional crises and conflicts on the continent. There is no general agreement on whether norms extensively and ubiquitously shape the behaviour of actors in international politics and likewise we do not know to what extent norms shape the behaviour of actors in international politics. Nevertheless, at least to some extent norms constrain the behaviour of actors 'in international politics just as law, morality or norm constrains the behaviour of individual members of society' (pp. 4–5).

Note

1 *Ecstasis* or *ekstasis* stands for transcendence or transcendental.

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9 CONCLUSION (POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES)

What We Know – The Past and the Present

Introduction

As already mentioned in the course of the discussion in this book, it is generally agreed that the economy and politics of a state are interdependent; positive development in one sphere affects the other sphere positively, and negative development in one sphere affects the other sphere negatively. The above condition is not only true of states; it is also true of regions. Hence, this chapter concludes the discussion in this book by looking at whether the African condition in the twenty-first century – both in terms of politics and political economy – will be positively different from the current negative one. The above description of the general aim of this concluding chapter is very broad. To narrow down the aim, the chapter is conscious that Africa is a microcosm of a world that has changed drastically due to globalisation, and digitisation is the pivot of this globalisation. Consequently, the chapter avers that due to the digitisation of our world, the future of African regional politics may be structurally different from the regional politics of both the past and the present. In future regional politics, we might be living in alternate coexisting worlds, one populated by physical political entities and the other populated by virtual political entities namely virtual states at time T1, virtual sub-regions at time T2, virtual regions at time T3 and a virtual global state at time T4.

Today, that our world has changed drastically due to globalisation is not a contentious statement to make. That digitisation is the pivot of this globalisation is not a contentious statement to make too. Having accepted that globalisation in general and digitisation in particular have become the norm of today, 'we assume today that change in all areas of life, including its most basic conditions, will continue to accelerate, making our world ever more unsurveyable and uncertain as time goes on' (Stegmaier, 2019, p. XI). This makes one to ask, 'how does the digitisation of our world change our orientation?' Different answers can aptly, or at least plausibly, be given in response to the above question. However, in responding to the question, I will focus

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on how the digitisation of our world is changing our orientation vis-à-vis the structural trajectory of African regional politics.

To reiterate, I aver that due to the digitisation of our world, the future of regional politics may be structurally different from the regional politics of both the past and the present. In future regional politics, we might be living in alternate coexisting worlds, one populated by physical political entities and the other populated by virtual political entities namely virtual states at time T1, virtual sub-regions at time T2, virtual regions at time T3 and a virtual global state at time T4. Whether these virtual political entities are justifiable or unjustifiable is important, but not the main point. The main point, and more important, is that we need to find ways to successfully navigate the turbulent waters and undulating terrains of the virtual political entities. Here, if we are to successfully find such ways, we must focus on and then examine our orientation since 'Orientation involves finding paths both in the terrain and through all the circumstances of human life; not only our daily life but even our survival depends on the success of our orientation' (Ibid.). Moreover, as Werner Stegmaier (2019) says, 'Orientation is, in common understanding, the achievement of finding one's way in an unsurveyable and uncertain situation so that one can successfully master the situation' (Ibid.).

In order to examine our orientation vis-à-vis the aforementioned virtual political entities, and then to conclude the discussion in this book, I divide this discussion into seven sections. The first and second sections are contained in this sub-chapter, the third and fourth sections are contained in the next sub-chapter while the fifth, sixth and seventh sections are contained in the final sub-chapter. In the first section (this section), I introduce the subject matter of the chapter, and then in the second section I explain my approach to the digitisation of our world.

In the third section, I explain my conception of the virtual states, virtual sub-regions, virtual regions and the global virtual state. This will give us insights into how complex rather than simple these virtual political entities are. As von Wright (1951) says, 'in normal scientific practice we have to reckon with plurality rather than singularity, and with complexity rather than simplicity of conditions' (p. 135). Moreover, as Stegmaier (2019) says, 'Orientation is needed precisely when situations, both large and small, change to such an extent that they become confusing – when you no longer know your way around' (p. XI). As already mentioned, the virtual political entities are complex rather than simple and are pluralistic rather than singular in nature. Likewise 'Global orientation, too, is pluralistic; it is bound to multiple standpoints and various leeways. The world society and its world orientation do not have a clear center either; what becomes center or periphery depends on every single position and is newly decided on case by case' (p. 249).

In the fourth section, I work with the assumption that the virtual states at time T1, the virtual sub-regions at time T2, the virtual regions at time T3 and the global virtual state at time T4, like physical geographical states, have certain basic features that qualify them to be at least non-immoral phenomena.

Except these basic features are present, it will not even be worthwhile to examine, for instance, whether the virtual states, the virtual sub-regions, the virtual regions and the global virtual state are justifiable and whether the regional virtual states and global virtual state are not susceptible to the charges levelled against world government.

In the first part of the fifth section, I base the justifiability and unjustifiability of the virtual states, the virtual sub-regions, the regional virtual states and the global virtual state on social contract. To determine their justifiability or unjustifiability, I treat them as if they were just another physical geographical states with alien, that is, virtual structures. Then I apply the requirements of social contract to them and judge whether they can be considered to be justifiable or unjustifiable based on how they fair against the requirements. Working with the assumption that in the virtual states, the virtual sub-regions, the regional virtual states and the global virtual state, there is a social contract between the virtual governments and their virtual citizens, between the sub-regional virtual governments and their citizens, between the regional virtual governments and their regional virtual citizens and between the global virtual state and its citizens, I argue that whether the virtual states, the virtual sub-regions, the regional virtual states and the global virtual state are justifiable or unjustifiable depends on the extent to which they fulfil the conditions of the virtual social contract. Unlike the virtual states and the virtual sub-regions, since the regional virtual states are a regional phenomenon and since the global virtual state is a global phenomenon, they may have some similarities with world government, and some or all of the charges levelled against world government may also be levelled against them. Therefore, in the second part of the fifth section, I discuss where such charges apply and ascertain their validity.

However, I am conscious that:

> For both the decentralized structure of the world society and the discontinuous processes of orientation, the metaphor of a network or a web has become commonplace; every "node" is, via diverse relations, linked with every other one. Each can conceive of itself as the center, and each can also become a center for others. But a single node does not allow one to survey and control the network as a whole.
>
> (pp. 249–250)

Therefore, in the sixth section, I reiterate my assertion that the justifiability or unjustifiability of the virtual political entities is important but not the main point, rather the main point – and more important – is how to navigate their turbulent waters or undulating terrains. While we need to focus on and then examine our orientation in order to successfully navigate the turbulent waters and undulating terrains of the virtual political entities, I aver that the mechanism through which we do this is the broadening of our horizon. Then in the seventh section, I offer my final remarks on both this chapter and the entire book.

My Approach to the Virtualisation of Our World

The virtualisation of our world seems to be an essentially contested concept, that is, a concept whose users inevitably engage in endless disputes about the proper uses of the concept (Gallie, 1956, p. 169). Essentially contested concepts have no generally agreed upon meaning. Although they have their own original meanings, the original meanings are 'jettisoned or only retained by some users, while other users invent their own meanings of the concepts. In short, an essentially contested concept means different things to different people, and none of these different meanings are taken to be the standard meaning of the concept' (Abumere, 2020, p. 1).

As an essentially contested concept, or at least as a seemingly essentially contested concept, the virtualisation of our world can be understood in positive or moral sense, negative or immoral sense, or neutral or amoral sense. No matter in which of these senses one understands the virtualisation of our world, one can use the concept either for reactionary purposes or for progressive purposes or for both purposes. However, my understanding of the concept is neutral, that is in an amoral sense, and I understand it to mean the intensively, extensively and speedily digitisation of global interactions and communications through advancements in technologies which consequently is making our physical interactions and communications less and less while making our virtual interactions and communications more and more.

My approach to the digitisation of our world is the same as my approach to divisions, differences, identities and values as explained in the introductory chapter. For the purpose of emphasis and clarity, I will reiterate the approach. It contains both causal and constitutive explanations. As their names suggest, causal explanation deals with causation and constitutive explanation deals with constitution. While positivists prefer the former to the latter, post-positivists prefer the latter to the former, 'But in fact all scientists do both kinds of theory' (Wendt, 1999, pp. 77–78). In causal explanation, primarily we ask 'why?' and only secondarily ask 'how?' Whereas in constitutive explanation, primarily we ask 'how-possible?' and 'what?' (p. 78). While in causal explanation we can also ask 'how-possible?' and 'what?', we only do so secondarily, for these questions primarily pertain to constitutive explanation. So too, while in constitutive explanation, we can also ask 'why?', we only do so secondarily, for this question primarily pertains to causal explanation. Thus, answers to constitutive questions about the social world will have more in common with answers to constitutive questions about the natural world than they will with answers to causal questions about social life. This is true even though constitutive theorists might use different methods when thinking about the natural versus social world (p. 78).

In causal explanation, 'in saying that "X causes Y" we assume that: (1) X and Y exist independent of each other, (2) X precedes Y temporally, and (3) but for X, Y would not have occurred' (pp. 78–79). Whereas in constitutive explanation we are conscious that 'natural and social kinds can be

constituted in two ways. One is by their internal structure…. Internal structures do not cause the properties associated with them, in the sense of being antecedent conditions for independently existing effects, but rather make those properties possible' (p. 83).

However, 'when we account for the properties of natural and social kinds by reference to their internal structures we are engaged in "reductionism"' (p. 83) (emphasis in original). Natural and social kinds are not only constituted by their internal structures, social kinds (perhaps some natural kinds too) 'can also be constituted in a …holist fashion by the external structures in which they are embedded…. the claim is not that external structures or discourses "cause" social kinds, in the sense of being antecedent conditions for a subsequent effect, but rather that what these kinds are is logically dependent on the specific external structure' (p. 84). Nevertheless, accounting for the properties of social kinds by reference to the external structures in which they are embedded is tantamount to engaging in 'holism'.

On the one hand, in order to avoid reductionism, I recognise that social kinds are not constituted by their internal structures alone. On the other hand, in order to avoid holism, I recognise that social kinds are not constituted by their external structures alone. In sum, I recognise that social kinds are simultaneously constituted by their internal and external structures. It is in this light that I see the digitisation of our world. I think seeing the digitisation of our world in the aforementioned light equips us, on the one hand, to appreciate the fact that 'In the course of the globalization of orientation, our values change as well' (Stegmaier, 2019, p. 263). And on the other hand, it equips us to deal with the reality that 'Globalization requires you to adapt to competition and to the transformations it brings about, and that means; to time and time values. These values demand from everyone ongoing achievements of reorientation' (p. 263).

What We Do Not Know – The Future

Politics of the Future?

Stegmaier (2019) aptly observes that 'The "theory" of the earth as a globe has become an unquestioned certainty, an indubitable everyday reality' (p. 247) (emphasis in original). As he succinctly puts it, 'Ever since mankind understood the spherical shape of the earth and began creating models of the globe, one has been able to view it from above, and turn it (as a model) on its own axis and thus survey it from all sides (not simultaneously, but with rapid succession). One views the earth as a whole from a "theoretical" standpoint' (p. 247) (emphasis in original).

In addition to the world as a globe, the world is fast becoming 'virtual'. If ever the possibility of a virtual world was unthinkable in this first quarter of the twenty-first century, it seems the reverse is gradually, if not increasingly, becoming the case. Even though the realisation of a virtual world seems

improbable some time ago, the thought that it is impossible has vanished today thanks to the extensity, intensity and velocity of the advancement in digital technology. Today, in the first quarter of the twenty-first century:

> the digitization of human orientation creates a new situation of orientation with new requirements for orientation: the potentials for orientation as well as the needs of orientation have grown in an unprecedented manner, and they pose new demands on our abilities of orientation. The capacity for orientation now also involves the ability to participate in manifold variants of online communication, and it is to a large extent replaced by this ability.
>
> (p. 260)

Globalization 4.0, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, might be the nexus between the physical geographical world and the virtual world. In 2019, the World Economic Forum coined the term Globalization 4.0 'to signal the coming shift in globalized structures' (Roylance, 2019, s.p.). Globalization 4.0, or the Fourth Industrial Revolution, is 'Characterized by the major global changes brought on by technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics and the Internet of Things' (Ibid.).

Globalization 4.0 or the Fourth Industrial Revolution is no longer a phenomenon that can, might or may occur in the future, 'With digital technologies continuously disrupting business, government, academia and society both on a national and massively global scale, the advent of Globalization 4.0 … may be upon us' (Ibid.). It would not be far-fetched to think that Globalization 4.0 is already happening in the present because 'the Fourth Industrial Revolution and its digital technologies have not only transformed virtually every industry across the board, but has done so on a global scale the likes of which has never before been seen' (Ibid.). One may even be apt to say that the phenomenon was already happening even before the World Economic Forum coined the term to describe it.

Looking at the forgoing narrative, it is apparent that:

> Our global orientation world has been increasingly "globalized." Today, the spherical surface of the globe is surrounded by a network of satellites that makes everyone constantly available for anyone at (almost) any place. The geographical overview of the world is thus (almost) completed. Although you can, because of the earth's curvature, still only see until a horizon (as before), you can now, using current communication technologies, make the world completely visible from (almost) any position at all times. Global geographical orientation is presently no longer a problem.
>
> (Stegmaier, 2019, p. 247; emphasis in original)

We do not know the extensity and intensity of the disruption the phenomenon will cause physical geographical political structures and entities.

But it is certain that they will be impacted – whether positively, negatively or both positively and negatively is another matter. After all, 'the massive scope, system-wide impact and increasing velocity of the Fourth Industrial Revolution … makes it so impactful – and potentially catastrophic' (Roylance, 2019, s.p.). It has the capacity to cause 'the destabilization of the world as we know it' (Ibid.).

Talking about the impact of Globalization 4.0 and the catastrophe and destabilisation the phenomenon is causing and may cause physical geographical political structures and entities brings me to the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the catastrophe and destabilisation the phenomenon has caused and is causing physical geographical political structures and entities. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the extensity, intensity and velocity of the virtualisation of our world have dramatically increased beyond whatever one could have imagined. 'In our spatially and temporally globalized world, a world society develops in which everyone may deal with everyone else at any time or place on earth' (Stegmaier, 2019, p. 248). Ironically, while the COVID-19 pandemic inhibited the ability of everyone to deal with everyone else at any time or place on earth as far as the physical geographical world is concerned due to lockdowns, quarantines, social distancing and travel restrictions, it has aided the ability of everyone to deal with everyone else at any time or place on earth as far as our virtual world is concerned.

Stegmaier (2019) observes that 'The hitherto strongest push of globalization has primarily arisen from the spread of science and technology…since the middle of the 19th century, and from the forced liberalization of markets beginning in the 1980s' (p. 248). Today, whether for good or for bad, 'the economic orientation outweighs the political, legal, and moral orientations; world orientation has become a world market orientation' (p. 248). Today, the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed a lot to how we fare, whether for better or for worse, in this world market orientation. In the COVID-19 pandemic, many governments locked down their countries. Consequently, many persons, businesses and organisations, including governments, were basically on a virtual mode.

Although persons, businesses and organisations are used to operating on a virtual mode to a lesser extent than they did or are doing in the COVID-19 pandemic, being put on a virtual mode as the default way of operating in the COVID-19 pandemic intensified their relationship with the virtual world. Such intensification might socialise the former into seeing the latter as normal rather than an aberration. As Stegmaier (2019) reminds us:

> On the world market where you must act and react very quickly, the new information and communication technologies permit a globally unlimited range of business activities as well as extremely short-term interdependencies of companies on the markets. Different countries become – in the long run – competing "business locations"…. This leads

> to major political reorientations; the, so far, politically dominant world of states becomes – in the name of "neoliberalism" – an economically dominated business world.
>
> (p. 248; emphasis in original)

We have all heard the COVID-19 pandemic time being called 'the new normal'. Since this 'new normal' is different from the old normal, we are prompted to think about whether in the future there might be another phenomenon – whether positive (good), negative (bad) or neutral – that will be very different from normal times to the extent that its extensity, intensity and velocity will radically transform a substantial part of both domestic and global political structures and entities from physical geographical political structures and entities to virtual political structures and entities. The above radical disruptive phenomenon is unlikely to occur. However, it does not have to occur for us to have insights into the incursion into the domains of physical geographical political structures and entities by virtual entities. Moderate disruptive phenomena such as virtual currencies and social media networks are quintessential disruptive phenomena that can give us insights into the incursion into the domains of physical geographical political structures and entities by virtual entities.

Virtual currencies and social media networks are forms of global exchange, and in a way, they have amplified our existing global exchange. On the one hand, social media networks contribute largely to the instantaneousness and simplification of global communication. Moreover, 'our orientation also becomes simpler when communication … is guided through standardized formats, where you just have to "click" your way through. However, the new means of communication are not only auxiliary, but are also coercive means: they are orientation schemes you simply have to adopt' (p. 260) (emphasis in original).

On the other hand, virtual currencies and social media networks have become part of a standardised global culture since:

> Global exchange – through travel, telecommunication, and international cooperation – is possible only by means of a standardization of the conditions of exchange….The standardized "global culture" permits everywhere an initially problem-free orientation. Besides standardized communication- and orientation-technologies, it also involves standardized orientation signs and a standardized orientation language (English).
>
> (p. 251; emphasis in original)

Cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and Facebook's Diem (formerly Libra) are some of the many signs that the future of politics may be structurally different from politics as we know it. Normally, currency is in the domain of the central bank, cryptocurrencies in a way assume part of the responsibilities of central banks; for instance, monetary policies of central banks may not apply

to cryptocurrencies. Virtual currencies create a demos who, although are physical citizens of physical geographical states, have become a virtual demos. Like virtual currencies, other virtual entities such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Webo (WeChat), TikTok and similar social media networks create a demos who, although are physical citizens of physical geographical states, have become a virtual demos, namely netizens.

Imagine the virtual currencies case and the netizens case are replicated in different areas, for instance Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that lead to educational or academic qualifications that are neither regulated nor certified by actual physical geographical states but by virtual regulators, say Facebook. Imagine we go on to replicate the virtual currencies case and the netizens case in areas of cyber defence as opposed to states' defence ministries and departments, virtual finance ministries as opposed to states' finance ministries and departments and so on. In short, imagine that at time T1 in the future, the trajectory of virtual globalisation develops to the extent that the aforementioned virtual entities become what may be referred to as virtual states as opposed to physical geographical states, that is, entities that perform similar functions like physical geographical states but such entities only exist in the virtual world rather than having their own physical geographical territories.

Then imagine that at times T2, T3 and T4 in the future, these virtual states evolve to the extent that they become what may be referred to as sub-regional virtual states, regional virtual states and a global virtual state as opposed to physical geographical states, that is, unified virtual sub-regional, regional and global entities that perform similar functions like physical geographical states but such sub-regional, regional and global entities only exist in the virtual world rather than having their own physical geographical territories. Since the virtual states at time T1 and the sub-regional, regional and global virtual states at times T2, T3 and T4 lack physical geographical territories, they also lack physical citizens but have virtual citizens who are physical citizens of actual physical geographical territories. The virtual world of the future, populated by virtual states at time T1 and occupied by sub-regional, regional and global virtual states at times T2, T3 and T4, has two essential qualities namely, virtual governments and virtual citizens. At time T1, virtual states contain virtual governments and virtual citizens. At times T2, T3 and T4 the sub-regional, regional and global virtual states contain sub-regional, regional and global virtual governments and sub-regional, regional and global virtual citizens.

These virtual political structures of the future are highly conjectural, but they may come to be although that seems very unlikely at the moment. For now, the question of whether the virtual political structures are probable or not is a difficult one. If they are probable, the sooner we start thinking about their political and moral implications, the better. Assuming that the virtual states at time T1 and the sub-regional, regional and global virtual states at times T2, T3 and T4 are probable, there may be a need

to examine whether they are justifiable. Assuming that the sub-regional, regional and global virtual states at times T2, T3 and T4 are probable, the latter two may look like disguised regional and global governments or regional and global Leviathans, therefore there may be a need to examine whether they are susceptible to the usual charges levelled against world government.

Even if the virtual states at time T1 and the sub-regional, regional and global virtual states at times T2, T3 and T4 are improbable, which does not mean that they are impossible. The very idea that they are possible is sufficient for us to pay attention to the question of whether the virtual states, the sub-regional, the regional and the global virtual states are justifiable and whether the regional and global virtual states are susceptible to the alleged infeasibility, desirability and necessity deficiencies of world government. Thus, firstly, one may need to examine whether the virtual states and the sub-regional, regional and global virtual states are justifiable vis-à-vis their relationships with their citizens who are actually physical citizens of physical geographical states. Secondly, one may need to examine whether the regional and global virtual states are susceptible to the usual charges against world government vis-à-vis their places in regional politics and global politics. Nevertheless, the point remains that their justifiability or unjustifiability, although important in itself, will mean 'nothing' to us if we cannot device successful ways to orientate ourselves to these virtual political entities.

Basic Features

In addition to the 'theory' of the earth as a globe 'which is based on satellite systems and space stations' (p. 247), Stegmaier (2019) tells us that 'there is also the fixing of time through the system of "universal time" (UTC) via the "international atomic time" (IAT)…this allowed us to synchronize the times of the day as accurately as desired everywhere on earth' (p. 247) (emphasis in original). I aver that in addition to the synchronisation of times, there is also the virtualisation of our world. This virtualisation allows us to synchronise our activities as citizens of physical geographical entities with our activities as netizens of virtual political entities. Consequently, persons at time T1 can simultaneously be members of the virtual states (as virtual citizens) and physical geographical states (as physical citizens) and persons at times T2, T3 and T4 can simultaneously be members of the sub-regional, regional and global virtual states (as sub-regional, regional and global virtual citizens) and physical geographical states (as physical citizens).

How can virtual citizens be citizens of virtual states at time T1 or the sub-regional, regional and global virtual states at times T2, T3 and T4 and at the same time citizens of physical geographical states? Whose laws should they obey when there is a clash of laws? Prima facie, these questions seem difficult. However, for two centuries now, the world has always found a way

to deal with synchronisations brought about by advancements in technologies. For instance:

> The invention of the telephone, likewise in the 19th century, permitted a (quasi) synchronous communication across any desired distance on earth; today, this has been perfected through computer- and satellite-based information and communication technologies. Whatever happens anywhere in the world can be broadcasted 'live' to all other places in the world. The events on earth can always be represented everywhere on earth.
>
> (p. 247; emphasis in original)

Just as persons can be citizens of two (dual citizenship) or more states and residents of yet other states, so too physical citizens can be citizens of the virtual political entities and physical states. And just as persons navigate and reconcile conflicting laws of different states or governments they owe allegiance to, so too they can navigate and reconcile the conflicting laws of the virtual political entities and their physical geographical states. After all, 'For "global players" – commercial enterprises, media, governments, NGOs, and inter- and transnational public institutions – the globalized world as a whole is the situation of their orientation; from all world affairs they gather footholds for their decision-making. In doing so, they however follow their own matters of interest' (p. 249) (emphasis in original).

That persons can legitimately be members, and obligated to obey the laws (*ceteris paribus*), of the virtual political entities suggests that both these entities share some desirable political and moral features with physical geographical states. The political and moral value of the virtual political entities depends on them having such features because the features are the substructure upon which the superstructure of their justifiability and the lack of world government-deficiencies of the regional and global virtual states are built. In other words, except the virtual political entities have such features, the question of whether they are justifiable and whether the regional and global virtual states have the deficiencies of world government will not even arise, even if they arise, they will merely be an academic exercise. I shall work with the assumption that they, like physical geographical states, have certain basic features that qualify them to be at least non-immoral phenomena. The basic features are good moral nature, coercion and cooperation, the basic structure and irreducible minimal moral threshold.

Concerning the first basic feature, I assume that the future political entities will have a good moral nature or at least a neutral moral nature, not a bad moral nature. They are not states whose *raison d'etre* is to do evil or cause harm. However, like in actual physical geographical states, in the virtual political entities, there will be different groups with different moral natures, namely the good, the bad and the ugly, that is, the morally good, the morally bad and the morally neutral. Since the populations cut across sub-regions,

regions and the world, drawing membership from every physical geographical state in a sub-region, region or the world, the virtual political entities will have very diverse and cosmopolitan populations, and in a way, they will be sub-regional, regional and global entities or at least quasi sub-regional, regional and global entities.

Concerning the second basic feature, I assume that like actual physical geographical states, the virtual political entities contain vertical and horizontal relationships. By vertical relationship, I mean the relationship between the government and citizens that is characterised by the coercion of the latter by the former. While by horizontal relationship I mean the relationship among citizens that is characterised by cooperation. On coercion, relationists argue that the state owes its citizens duties of justice partly because the state coerces its citizens to do things which they may not do absent coercion or to restrain from doing things which they may do absent coercion (Blake & Smith, 2013). On cooperation, relationists argue that citizens owe one another duties of justice partly because the citizens of the state cooperate with one another as a collective in order to ensure the well-being of the entire citizens (Ibid.). Given that coercion and cooperation exist in the virtual political entities, taking a cue from relationists, the virtual state governments, sub-regional virtual governments, regional virtual governments and global virtual government owe their virtual citizens, sub-regional virtual citizens, regional virtual citizens and global virtual citizens, respectively, duties of justice and the virtual citizens, sub-regional virtual citizens, regional virtual citizens and global virtual citizens, respectively, owe one another duties of justice.

Concerning the third basic feature, in view of the aforementioned coercion and cooperation in the second basic feature, I assume that there is a basic structure in the virtual political entities. Adopting John Rawls' (1999a) famous description, 'the basic structure of society [...is] the way in which the major social institutions distribute fundamental rights and duties and determine the division of advantages from social cooperation' (p. 6). Then, importantly, I assume that the basic structure of the virtual political entities is just and not unjust.

To sustain the good moral nature of the virtual political entities, the coercion and cooperation that exist in the virtual political entities, and the just basic structure of the virtual political entities, that is, to sustain the first, second and third basic features of the virtual political entities, let us also assume the following fourth basic feature of the virtual political entities. Individuals, collectives, groups and the governments are bound by a principle of irreducible minimal moral threshold. The principle, as explained in the third chapter, entails a negative duty of no harm, a positive duty of prevention (in non-relation to the negative duty) and remedy (in relation to the negative duty), and a regulative notion of commensurability that specifically determines the extensity of the positive duty of remedy and generally determines the extensity of the entire positive duty (Abumere, 2022, s.p.).

Firstly, the negative duty of no harm stipulates that political actors and moral agents must refrain from violating the rights of the other. Secondly, the positive duty of prevention stipulates that political actors and moral agents who are in a position to prevent the violation of the rights of the other must do so. While the positive duty of remedy stipulates that, any political actor and moral agent that violates the rights of the other should be held responsible for the violations. Thirdly, commensurability specifically stipulates that, *ab initio*, political actors and moral agents are *prima facie* commensurately responsible to the extent or degree of the violations that occurred due to their actions or omissions. In addition, commensurability generally stipulates that the commensurate responsibility should only be a *pro tanto* obligation. Consequently, it creates space for more demanding obligations that the political actors and moral agents may have depending on different contexts (Ibid.).

Conjectures – African Politics and Political Economy in the Twenty-First Century

The Justifiability of Virtual Political Structures and Entities

In the preceding section, I assumed that the virtual political entities, like physical geographical states, have certain basic features that qualify them to be at least non-immoral phenomena. When assuming that the virtual political entities have the basic features discussed in the preceding section, one is acquiescing, explicitly or implicitly, to the following. Firstly, the virtual political entities are not a state of nature. Secondly, they are similar to the modern state. As a methodological device that justifies political principles or arrangements by appealing 'to the agreement that would be made among suitably situated rational, free and equal persons' (Lloyd & Sreedhar, 2018, intro.), the social contract can be seen as the nexus between the state of nature and the modern state. The social contract helps to explain or justify: the relationship between subjects or citizens and the government or state; the obligations subjects or citizens owe the government or state; and the obligations the government or state owes subjects or citizens.

The social contract offers an explanation for the relationship between the government and the citizens, and the obligations the former owes the latter and vice versa. In general terms, in the social contract, what the government owes the citizens is respect for the general canons of justice, and this obligation is derived from a hypothetical contract in which the government has consented to respect the general canons of justice in return for members of the general society acquiescing to the laws of the society. If a government fails in its obligation to the society, the social contract can justify the de-legitimisation of such government. In the social contract, obligations are transactional. Therefore, one party's failure to fulfil its obligations can lead to the moral justification of the other party's refusal to fulfil its own obligations (Abumere, 2021a).

However, as explained in the fourth chapter, if one explores the different versions of the social contract, one will not find any consensus on what a government owes its citizens. In other words, there is no canonical agreement on what the political and moral behaviour of a government ought to be vis-à-vis its citizens. For instance, if one juxtaposes Thomas Hobbes' and Jean-Jacque Rousseau's explanations of the transition from the state of nature to the modern state, one will find different justifications for different political and moral behaviours. Put differently, comparing and contrasting Hobbes' and Rousseau's arguments for justification yields conflicting results.

Looking at their methodological device – the social contract – we see that Hobbes and Rousseau start from the same position, the state of nature, and end at the same position, the modern state. However, on the one hand, Hobbes' (1651) negative conception of the state of nature leads him to justify autocracy in the commonwealth (ch. XIII). Paradoxically, when and where governments become repressive, in extreme cases the absence of state legitimacy might even lead to Hobbes' state of nature where life is 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short' (Ibid.). On the other hand, Rousseau's ([1754]1992) positive conception of the state of nature leads him to criticise autocracy although in his naturalised social contract the inequalities, disadvantages and injustices of the state of nature are justified and legitimised. In addition, on the one hand, in view of the Hobbesian version, the Machiavellian conception of politics and morality may be right. On the other hand, in view of the Rousseauean version, the Machiavellian conception of politics and morality is an aberration. In the above senses, Niccolo Machiavelli's ([1532]2014) view on the political and moral behaviour of the political leader vis-à-vis her society may be right or wrong depending on the social contract within which she operates.

Extending the social contract from domestic politics to global politics, Immanuel Kant (1999) famously uses the social contract as a vehicle that leads to perpetual peace. He thinks states live 'in a condition of natural freedom, which itself is a condition of continual war' (p. 151). In order for states to leave the condition of perpetual war and arrive at the condition of perpetual peace, he proposes three defining articles for a perpetual peace (*foedus pacificum*).[1] The first article says 'the civil constitution of every state should be republican' (1991, sec. 2.1). The second article says 'the law of nations shall be founded on a federation of free states' (sec. 2.2). While the third article says 'the law of world citizenship shall be limited to conditions of universal hospitality' (sec. 3.3).

Basically, Kant (1999) urges sovereign states, specifically republican states, to enter into a social contract in which they will form a federation that 'does not aim to acquire any power like that of a state, but merely to preserve and secure the freedom of each state in itself, along with that of the other confederated states' (p. 104). However, not sanguine that Kant's proposed federation is a viable vehicle that leads to Kant's intended perpetual peace, Jürgen Habermas (2010) says 'this weak conception of a voluntary association

of states that are willing to coexist peacefully while nevertheless retaining their sovereignty seemed to recommend itself as a transitional stage *en route* to a world republic' (p. 268).

Extrapolating from the above explanation of the social contract, I aver that as long as one is conscious that the social contract is a methodological device, one can apply the social contract to the virtual political entities even though they are not physical geographical states. What matters is that they must be faithful to the tenets of the kind of social contract that is applied to them. Whether it is Hobbes' social contract or Rousseau's social contract as discussed above, or John Locke's social contract, Immanuel Kant's social contract or any contemporary social contract, as long as the virtual political entities abide by the tenets of the social contract within which they operate, then they are justifiable. The fact that there are different kinds of social contract, all of them ahistorical and hypothetical, which apply to physical geographical states, suggests that it is possible to apply the social contract, given its ahistorical and hypothetical nature, to virtual political entities that have state-like nature and perform stake-like functions.

Hypothetically, on the road from physical geographical states to the virtual states at time T1, physical individuals acting as virtual individuals agree on what principles should govern their vertical relationship (the relationship between a virtual government and virtual citizens) and horizontal relationship (the relationship among virtual citizens) in a virtual state. The principles agreed upon may be principles of the Hobbesian social contract, the Lockean social contract, the Rousseauean social contract, the Kantian social contract or one of the contemporary social contracts. To the extent that a virtual state is faithful to the principles agreed upon, to that extent it is justifiable. And to the extent a virtual state is unfaithful to the principles agreed upon, to that extent it is unjustifiable.

Hypothetically, on the road from the virtual states to the sub-regional virtual state, the regional virtual state and the global virtual state at times T2, T3 and T4:

> there are three possible kinds of social contract. The first kind of social contract is among [virtual] individuals [sub-regional-wide, regional-wide and] worldwide. In the negotiation of this kind of social contract, [virtual] individuals are represented. The second kind of social contract is among [virtual] states. In the negotiation of this kind of social contract, [virtual] states are represented. The third kind of social contract contains elements of both the first and the second kinds. In the negotiation of this kind of social contract, both [virtual] individuals and [virtual] states are represented at different levels.
>
> (Abumere, 2019, p. 20)

In the first kind of social contract, virtual citizens acting as sub-regional, regional and global virtual citizens agree on what principles should govern

their vertical relationship (the relationships between sub-regional virtual governments and sub-regional virtual citizens, regional virtual governments and regional virtual citizens, and global virtual governments and global virtual citizens) and horizontal relationship (the relationship among sub-regional virtual citizens, among regional virtual citizens, and among global virtual citizens) in the sub-regional virtual states, the regional virtual states and the global virtual state. In the second kind of social contract, virtual states agree on what principles should govern the vertical relationship (between the virtual states and the sub-regional, regional and global virtual governments) and the horizontal relationship (among the virtual states) in the sub-regional, regional and global virtual states. In the third kind of social contract, elements of the first and second kinds of social contract are combined. The principles agreed upon may be principles of the Hobbesian social contract, the Lockean social contract, the Rousseauean social contract, the Kantian social contract or one of the contemporary social contracts. To the extent that the virtual political entities are faithful to the principles agreed upon, to that extent they are justifiable. And to the extent they are unfaithful to the principles agreed upon, to that extent they are unjustifiable.

Hypothetically, just as there was a total transition in politics from the state of nature (the past) to modern sovereign physical geographical states (the present), there might be – although improbable, not impossible – a partial transition from modern sovereign physical geographical states (the present) to virtual states (the future at time T1) and from virtual states (the future at time T1) to the sub-regional, regional and global virtual states (the future at times T2, T3 and T4). I used the phrases total transition and partial transition to indicate that on the one hand while modern sovereign physical geographical states are a replacement for the state of nature, on the other hand virtual political entities are not a replacement for physical geographical states. Virtual political entities, if they ever come to be, will only exist alongside physical geographical states.

Since the social contract is ahistorical and hypothetical, we do not need to know if it is true or false. We only need to know if it is helpful or unhelpful (p. 20). In the same way the social contract methodological device is used to justify the transition from the state of nature to the modern state, it can also be used to justify the virtual political entities as alternate states to (albeit coexisting with) the modern state. I contend that, comparatively, a virtual political entity will not necessarily be less or more justifiable than a physical geographical state. Whether physical social contract or virtual social contract, whether domestic social contract or regional social contract, whether Hobbesian, Lockean, Rousseauean, Kantian or any contemporary social contract, inherent in any social contract are theoretical stipulations and practical conditions a state or government must satisfy for it to be justifiable. I think the virtual political entities may be justifiable, unjustifiable or partially justifiable and partially unjustifiable. Whether they are justifiable, unjustifiable or partially justifiable and partially unjustifiable depends on the form of social

contract from which they emerge and to the extent they fulfil or fail to fulfil the conditions of the social contract (p. 20).

In the foregoing discussion in this section, I explained the justifiability of the virtual political entities based on the social contract. Unlike the virtual states and sub-regional virtual states, since the regional and global virtual states are quasi-global phenomena, they may have some similarities with world government, and some or all of the charges levelled against world government may also be levelled against them. Therefore, in the remainder of this section, I discuss where such charges apply and ascertain their validity. World government is usually accused of being infeasible (the feasibility argument), undesirable (the desirability argument) and unnecessary (the necessity argument). On the feasibility argument, it is posited that a combination of the international political structure and the harmful process of creating a world government makes world government infeasible. The feasibility argument is a two-part argument; the first part is a political realist sub-argument while the second part is a consequentialist sub-argument (p. 20).

In international relations theory, as explained in the fifth and preceding chapters, political realism takes the Westphalian system as the default international political structure and then argue that this is a system of anarchy, i.e., the absence of hierarchy in international relations terms. Political realism does not understand anarchy in the ordinary sense of the word, rather it understands anarchy as 'an ordering principle, which says that the system comprises independent states that have no central authority above them' (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 30). In view of this supposed global anarchy, that is, the absence of global hierarchy, and supposing that it is impossible to have a global hierarchy in place of the global anarchy, political realism argues that creating a world government from a Westphalian system is infeasible (Lu, 2016, intro.).

The political realist infeasibility sub-argument against world government may or may not be valid when interrogated vis-à-vis world government. My concern is to ascertain whether it is valid vis-à-vis the regional and global virtual states. On the one hand, world government is an overthrow of the Westphalian system, hence it requires the Westphalian system to be either demolished or subsumed under it. The resistance the Westphalian system puts up against such demolition or being subsumed under world government is what makes world government infeasible if at all the political realist sub-argument that world government is infeasible is correct. In other words, the self-preservation instinct of the Westphalian system makes it resist any attempt to change the status quo international political structure, and this is what makes world government infeasible – once again, if at all the political realist argument that world government is infeasible is correct.

On the other hand, the regional and global virtual states, unlike world government, do not require the demolition of the current international political structure. They do not even require that the Westphalian system be subsumed under it. Although they erode the powers of Westphalian states as exemplified by the erosion of the monetary power of central banks by

cryptocurrencies, this does not equate with the collapse of the Westphalian system. Therefore, rather than a replacement government like world government, they are only alternate states which exist side by side physical geographical states. Consequently, although they may be resisted by physical geographical states in order for the latter to prevent or minimise the erosion of the latter's power, such resistance to stem the erosion of their power is not existential and may not even be systemic in the sense that it is not about the cessation of the Westphalian system or its continued existence. Absent existential and systemic resistance to the regional and global virtual states, I think the regional and global virtual states are feasible.

The second part of the infeasibility argument, that is, the consequentialist sub-argument, posits that even if the political realist infeasibility sub-argument fails, that is, even if the creation of a world government is possible in spite of the global anarchy of the Westphalian system, 'the process of creating a world government may produce more harm than good; the necessary evils committed on the road to establishing a world government would outweigh whatever benefits might result from its achievement' (Ibid.). In the recorded history of the world, there has never been a world government. Therefore, on the one hand, we do not know *a posteriori* that the process of creating a world government will cause great evils or harms. On the other hand, *a priori* we do not know what exactly the process entails. It may entail great evils or harms, or greater good or benefits. In short, it may or may not entail greater evil and harms and lesser good and benefits. It may or may not entail lesser evil and harms and greater good and benefits. And it may or may not entail equal evil and good or equal harms and benefits. Therefore, the argument that the process of creating a world government may produce more harm than good is a conjecture (Abumere, 2019). Whether this conjecture is true or false vis-à-vis world government is not the question. The question is whether it is true or false vis-à-vis the regional and global virtual states.

The process of creating the regional and global virtual states may or may not entail the disruption of the Westphalian system, it may or may not involve something similar to Joseph Schumpeter's ([1942]1994) Creative Destruction (pp. 82–83). The bottom line is that just like in the case of world government, the consequentialist infeasibility sub-argument is a conjecture when applied to the regional and global virtual states. Whether this conjecture is true or false in the case of the regional virtual state we do not know, just as we do not know whether it is true or false in the case of world government.

The desirability argument is a three-part argument. The first part is the tyranny sub-argument. The second part is the homogeneity sub-argument. And the third part is the inefficiency sub-argument. The tyranny sub-argument was succinctly posited by Kant when he said a world government 'would either be a global despotism or else would rule over a fragile empire torn by frequent civil strife as various regions and peoples tried to gain their political freedom and autonomy' (qtd. In Rawls, 1999b, p. 36). The homogeneity sub-argument begins by assuming that, intrinsically, pluralism is valuable

while, intrinsically, homogeneity is non-valuable (Abumere, 2019), it continues by assuming that a world government has the propensity to simultaneously engender the erosion of pluralism and the promotion of homogeneity (Ibid.), then it concludes by asserting that a world government is undesirable (Lu, 2016, intro.). The inefficiency sub-argument correctly observes that a world government will be remote from the governed, but contentiously posits that such remoteness will lead to the dilution of laws thereby making the laws meaningless and inefficient (Ibid.). In the inefficiency sub-argument, just as he did in the anarchy sub-argument, Kant (1991) succinctly argues that 'the laws progressively lose their impact as government increases its range, and a soulless despotism, after crushing the germs of goodness, will finally lapse into anarchy' (p. 113). Combining the three sub-arguments, 'The desirability argument says that a world government will be tyrannical, homogenizing and inefficient, and therefore, it will be undesirable' (Abumere, 2019, p. 11).

While the desirability argument may or may not apply to world government, it does not apply to the regional and global virtual states because the regional and global virtual states are fundamentally different from world government in three ways. Firstly, unlike world government, they are not a physical political entity with a physical geographical territory. Consequently, regional and global virtual citizens can freely exit the regional and global virtual states if these entities turn to despotism, and regional and global virtual citizens need not fight for autonomy because there is no physical geographical territory to fight for or to fight over. In short, if the regional and global virtual states trend towards tyranny, regional and global virtual citizens can freely relinquish their membership. Secondly, unlike world government, the regional and global virtual states are not a replacement government (as already discussed above). Since regional and global virtual citizens remain physical citizens of their various physical geographical states, the regional and global virtual states do not make them homogeneous because they retain their heterogeneity as physical citizens of diverse physical geographical states. Thirdly, unlike world government, the regional and global virtual states are alternate states (as already discussed above). The laws of physical geographical states still apply to regional and global virtual citizens irrespective of the laws of the regional and global virtual states. Whether the regional and global virtual states increase their range or not, their laws will only apply to regional and global virtual citizens *qua* regional and global virtual citizens while physical citizens *qua* physical citizens must abide by the legal framework of their physical geographical territories. So, even if the regional and global virtual states are inefficient, their inefficiency will not be as grave as that of a world government (assuming a world government is inefficient).

The necessity argument accepts that 'the Westphalian system and global institutional order are defective and hence incapable of resolving intractable global problems' (Ibid.), but it advises that 'we do not need to jettison them for a world government. Rather, we need to make the system and order more just and less unjust in order to resolve intractable global problems'

(Ibid.). Consequently, world government construed as 'a global Leviathan with supreme legislative, executive, adjudicative and enforcement powers, is largely unnecessary to solve problems such as war, global poverty, and environmental catastrophe' (Lu, 2016, intro.). In short, the necessity argument thinks that world government construed as a global Leviathan is neither necessary nor sufficient to achieve the agenda of political liberalism (Ibid.). I think the regional and global virtual states are unnecessary. However, this neither negate nor affirm the justifiability of the regional and global virtual states because as non-replacement governments (as discussed above) and as alternate states (as discussed above), the regional and global virtual states have no pretensions to resolving intractable regional and global problems.

Orientation That Is Made Possible by the Broadening of Horizon

Having resolved the problem of the justifiability and unjustifiability of virtual political structures, I shall now explore the kind of orientation we need to live and thrive, or at least survive, in these virtual political entities that populate the virtual world. Calling our digitised world a virtual world is merely telling us what its 'identity' is. This does not tell us anything, or at least it does not sufficiently tell us something, about the 'value' of such world. To know the kind of orientation we need in order to live and thrive, or at least survive, in such world, it is not enough to know the identity of the world, we must also know its value. Taking a cue from Stegmaier (2019), it is apt to say that 'Now the fundamental value is innovation. Change is no longer considered to be decay but rather a chance for renewal' (p. 263).

In our digitised world today, it is not enough just to be innovative, the digitised world also demands that when innovating, we must ensure that our innovations are creative, efficient, mobile, flexible, resilient and risky (p. 264). On the one hand, in terms of creativity, 'Innovations must be extremely inventive and also appealing (in a variety of ways) if they are to assert themselves (more or less) on a global scale' (p. 264). While in terms of efficiency, innovations 'must be successful in a widely economic sense, as far as possible' (p. 264). On the other hand, in terms of mobility, innovation demands that 'You need to go to wherever is most conducive to innovation: you must be ready to, again and again, change your place of work and residence' (p. 264). While in terms of flexibility, innovation demands that 'You must be able to adapt to always new living conditions' (p. 264). Then in terms of resilience, innovation demands that 'You must be able to withstand the stress you face when acting upon times values' (p. 264). Finally, in terms of riskiness, innovation demands that you must have an appetite for risk, that is, 'you must, at your own peril, be willing to take risks regarding the future' (p. 264).

Since 'We will only survive in our rapidly changing world if we succeed in reflecting on our current orientation skills and acquiring new ones' (pp. XI–XII), I aver that except we broaden our horizon, any attempt to

acquire new orientation skills fit for our digitised world might just be a project in futility. In other words, it is through the broadening of our horizon that our orientation is able to match the pace of the digitised world. This is even more imperative when we realise that 'If every orientation is the achievement of dealing with a specific situation, be it private, social or global, then orientation as a whole is the ability to keep up with the times' (p. XII). I am sanguine that the broadening of horizon will help us acquire the orientation skills we need in the digitised world because 'Individuals' orientations are bound to their standpoints, perspectives, and horizons; to the clues they hold on to and the signs that are available; to their routines, beliefs, and identities – all orientation decisions are inevitably made under these conditions' (p. XII).

Stegmaier (2019) explains that 'Just as orientation is a nominalized verb, "horizon" is a nominalized principle: Gr. *horizon* means "limiting"; and the horizon is a *horizon kyklos*, a "limiting circumstance". *Horizein* meant, in its transitive usage, "to limit, to delimit, to define by means of borders" and in this sense "to distinguish"'(p. 43) (emphasis in original). He goes on to say that 'In orientation, a horizon limits an overview. To gain an overview, you can "let your eyes wander across the horizon", you can explore it with your (sensory or mental) eyes' (p. 43) (emphasis in original).

By the broadening of horizon, as explained in the preceding chapter, I am simply advocating for what Hans-Georg Gadamer (1989, 1992) would refer to as fusion of horizons. For the purpose of emphasis and clarity, I shall reiterate the concept of fusion of horizons. According to Gadamer (1992), 'what I described as a fusion of horizons was the form in which this unity actualizes itself, which does not allow the interpreter to speak of an original meaning of the work without acknowledging that, in understanding it, the interpreter's own meaning enters in as well …. Working out the historical horizon of a text is always already a fusion of horizons' (pp. 576, 577). Broadening of horizon is used in the everyday language sense while fusion of horizon is technical. Gadamer is famous for popularising the concept of fusion of horizons in his hermeneutics, hence drawing insights from him will be very helpful. According to Gadamer's account of dialogue, where his notion of fusion of horizons is derived from, a reader can 'have a dialogue with the text he or she reads; dialogue represents an active language or a language in action; and the fusion of horizons is the end-result of any successful dialogue' (Abumere, 2021b, p. 123). For Gadamer (1992), 'To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one's own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were' (p. 379).

Since Gadamer's hermeneutics is predicated on Edmund Husserl's and Martin Heidegger's phenomenology, Gadamer simply 'sees fusion of horizons as the ideal way to conduct a dialogue. While Husserl focused on perception, Gadamer focused on linguistics. Hence the latter's concern with dialogue' (Abumere, 2021b, p. 123). Husserl (1931[1973]) famously argues

that 'Perception has horizons made up of other possibilities of perception, as perceptions we could have, if we actively directed the course of perception otherwise: if, for example, we turned our eyes that way instead of this, or if we were to step forward or to one side, and so forth' (p. 44). While Stegmaier (2019) asserts that:

> The standpoint of an orientation is the (metaphorical) "point" one "stands" on in a horizon and from which one sees and understands what one can see or understand within this horizon. This could be geographical, political, scientific, moral, religious, or any other type of standpoint; in each case, one can 'enter' it and "leave" it, "adopt" it or "abandon" it. In this respect, one can "have" multiple standpoints at once.
>
> (pp. 44–45; emphasis in original)

Husserl opines that there are: internal horizon (the characteristics that objects necessarily have because they are in the nature of the objects); external horizon (these are the horizons that establish the relationship between objects and their environment); and temporal horizon (this signifies the temporal nature or circumstances of objects). Put differently 'the internal horizon denotes the existence of the object – its nature. The external horizon denotes the special relations of the object to the environment. While the temporal horizon, cum the internal and external horizons, denote the spatio-temporal nature of the object and its relations to time, space, other objects and its environment' (Abumere, 2021b, p. 123).

To me personally, temporal horizon is very important because, as Stegmaier (2019) tells us in view of innovation and what it demands of us, ultimately 'Time values keep our value orientation itself in fluctuance' (p. 264). Even Husserl admits that temporal horizon is more important than both internal and external horizons:

> because we see all objects as temporal objects, as objects that are not only extended in space but also in time. Given that the inner horizon is made known to us by our common expectations of future disclosures about the object, and given that the outer horizon is made known to us as how the object relates to its surroundings, therefore temporality is the vital link between objects and other horizons.
>
> (Abumere, 2021b, p. 123)

Husserl explains that future disclosures and relations, including the history of the object that made the object the sort of object that it is and put it in the place where it is, are essentially temporal. Therefore, he concludes that the possibility of internal and external horizons depends on temporal horizon, that is, without temporal horizon there is neither internal horizon nor external horizon. More than the precedence of temporal horizon over internal and external horizon, is that taking horizon holistically, that is

unifying temporal, internal and external horizons, we should be aware that, as Stegmaier (2019) says:

> Without seeing the horizon, one can look up to the point of the horizon, which always remains far away. When advancing towards it, it draws back too; one cannot cross and transcend it, but only defer it. As such, it is a spatial boundary, but only for a certain time – it is a moving boundary. Horizon is where orientation ends; but behind every horizon, a new horizon arises. As such, horizons are temporary limits of delimiting spaces of viewing or understanding.
>
> (p. 44)

Stegmaier (2019) says that 'Based on the model of the "heavenly vault", horizons are envisioned as (more or less metaphoric) spherical halves, "before", "in", or "from" which one sees or understands something' (p. 43) (emphasis in original). While Gadamer (1989) says horizon is 'the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point' (p. 302). As Gadamer (1989) says, 'Every finite present has its limitations. We define the concept of "situation" by saying that it represents a standpoint that limits the possibility of vision. Hence essential to the concept of a situation is the concept of a "horizon"'(p. 304) (emphasis in original). Moreover:

> the "horizon" is the larger context of meaning in which any particular meaningful presentation is situated. Inasmuch as understanding is taken to involve a "fusion of horizons", then so it always involves the formation of a new context of meaning that enables integration of what is otherwise unfamiliar, strange or anomalous. In this respect, all understanding involves a process of mediation and dialogue between what is familiar and what is alien in which neither remains unaffected.
>
> (Malpas, 2009, s.p.; emphasis in original)

To summarise the crux of the foregoing discussion, although horizon signifies our real and metaphorical limit at any point in time or at a particular time and at any place or at a particular place, horizon neither confine us to that limit nor exclude our ability and possibility of transcending such limit. I think our ability and possibility to transcend such limit is based on the fact that:

> The field of vision between the standpoint and the horizon is the perspective. The "perspective" term relates to sight and the direction of viewing: the "field of vision" of a directed view is a limited sector of the circle around a standpoint, i.e. of the scope of vision (this also applies to the metaphorical standpoints – in a metaphorical sense as well). The word "perspective" comes from Lat. *Specere*, i.e., "to view, to see"; *perspicere* means "to look through something; to look into something; to inspect; to see through something".
>
> (Stegmaier, 2019, p. 47; emphasis in original)

As Stegmaier (2019) reminds us, 'Since perspectives can be complemented or substituted with further or other aspects, they abbreviate sight and, at the same time, multiply it' (p. 47). Therefore, perspectives 'differentiate sight. Perspectival viewing, as we know it, always has alternatives; it is the ability to view something in various ways that exclude but also complement and enrich each other' (p. 47).

Conclusion

I shall conclude the discussion in this chapter and the entire book with a twofold reiteration. I shall begin with a reiteration of the salient points in the discussion in this chapter and then end with a reiteration of the salient points in the discussion in the next chapter. So, beginning with this chapter, let me reiterate that it is generally agreed that economy and politics are interdependent; positive development in one sphere affects the other sphere positively, and negative development in one sphere affects the other sphere negatively. Hence, this chapter concludes the discussion in this book by looking at whether the African condition in the twenty-first century – both in terms of politics and political economy – will be positively different from the current negative one. The above description of the general aim of this concluding chapter is very broad. To narrow down the aim, the chapter is conscious that Africa is a microcosm of a world that has changed drastically due to globalisation, and digitisation is the pivot of this globalisation. Consequently, the chapter avers that due to the digitisation of our world, the future of African regional politics may be structurally different from the regional politics of both the past and the present. In future regional politics, we might be living in alternate coexisting world, one populated by physical political entities and the other populated by virtual political entities namely virtual states at time T1 and sub-regional, regional and global virtual states at times T2, T3 and T4.

In view of the virtual political entities, we need to have an orientation that can make us thrive, or at least survive, in future regional politics. Let me reiterate that 'Orientation involves finding paths both in the terrain and through all the circumstances of human life; not only our daily life but even our survival depends on the success of our orientation' (p. XI). Moreover, as Stegmaier (2019) says, 'Orientation is, in common understanding, the achievement of finding one's way in an unsurveyable and uncertain situation so that one can successfully master the situation' (p. XI). I aver that due to the digitisation of our world, the future of African regional politics may be structurally different from the regional politics of both the past and the present. In future regional politics, we might be living in alternate coexisting regions, one populated by physical regional political entities and the other populated by virtual political entities namely virtual states at time T1 and virtual sub-regions, regions and global state at times T2, T3 and T4. Whether these virtual political entities are justifiable or unjustifiable is not the main

point. The main point is that we need to find ways to successfully navigate the turbulent waters and undulating terrains of the virtual political entities, that is, we must master these virtual political entities by orientating ourselves to them.

If we are to successfully find such ways, we must focus on and then examine our orientation. When focusing and examining our orientation, we must at all times and at every place be conscious that:

> orientation must also be capable of adapting to unpredictable and surprising situations as well, i.e. it must be able to change if the situation changes. The achievement of orienting oneself astonishes less by giving a permanent hold or stability than by keeping up with changes. For this purpose, it needs to establish flexible structures that indeed provide a hold and stability, but only for a certain time. In the words of Heraclitus, orientation needs to stay in flux, like a river that remains the same and which, at the same time, always changes; a river which one does not step a second time without having become somebody else.
>
> (pp. 1–2)

Therefore, in conclusion to this chapter, I reiterate my assertion that the justifiability or unjustifiability of the virtual political entities is not the main point, rather the main point is how to navigate their turbulent waters or undulating terrains. While we need to focus on and then examine our orientation in order to successfully navigate the turbulent waters and undulating terrains of the virtual political entities, I aver that the mechanism through which we do this is the broadening of our horizon.

Now I shall conclude the discussion in the entire book with a reiteration of the salient points in the entire discussion. The discussion can be summed up as follows. With 55 states, Africa represents a microcosm of the Westphalian world. In conjunction with the Westphalian fragmentation of the continent, other major fragmentations have compounded the intractable problem of 'othering' on the continent. The fragmentations sum up an African condition in the twenty-first century because they simultaneously represent the 'divisions' based on which Africans are 'differentiated' and the 'differences' based on which Africans are 'divided'. I argued for normative international politics in which the divisions and differences are superseded by non-discriminatory, unifying, positive identities and shared values. In this normative international politics, cooperation is the organising principle.

An analysis of the contemporary postcolonial state of the continent will inevitably involve references to underdevelopment and poverty, bad governance and conflicts, epidemics and pandemics, immigration and aids, etc. However, I focused on the divisions based on which Africans are differentiated and the differences based on which Africans are divided. Because the divisions and differences hinder robust regional relations without which major transnational, international, sub-regional and regional problems will

remain intractable. After all, it is generally agreed that the economy and politics of a state are interdependent; positive development in one sphere affects the other sphere positively, and negative development in one sphere affects the other sphere negatively. The above condition is not only true of states; it is also true of regions. Hence, the prevailing divisions and differences, and identities and values, on the continent have consequences for the regional political economy of the continent.

Consequently, I contended that the divisions based on which Africans are differentiated, and the differences based on which Africans are divided, should be considered as the principal determinants of the African condition in the twenty-first century. Analogously, I took Karl Marx's (2011) dialectic that is 'standing on its head' and turned it 'right side up' ironically the same way Marx took Hegelian dialectic which was 'standing on its head' and turned it 'right side up'. In Marxian terms, the divisions and difference can be seen as the substructure while the political economy can be seen as the superstructure.

Note

1 In this part of the article, I mainly follow the analysis I did in 'World Government, Social Contract and Legitimacy' (2019). See Bibliography for full reference.

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