HEGEMON AND HANDMAIDEN: A NEO-GRAMSCIAN APPROACH TO SOUTH AFRICA'S POSITION IN THE GLOBAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

BY

ZINTLE KOZA

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SUPERVISOR: DR P JOHNSON

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ABSTRACT

Despite its assumed leadership of and investment in the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), South Africa has not developed its own hegemonic project and is consequently unable to exert significant influence over the ideas of the two institutions. Rooted in Antonio Gramsci's absolute historicism, which locates decisions and actions at the level of the state within specific contexts, Robert Cox's Method of Historical Structures (MHS) offers a framework that enables an approach informed by Critical Theory to analysing and empirically understanding the underlying factors of this situation. Utilising the three elements of the MHS, namely, material capabilities, ideas and institutions, and applying them to the context of international relations, it was found that South Africa's choices have been informed by the global context of the post-USSR global arena it entered in 1990. The triumph of the neoliberal world order led by the United States framed the context of South Africa's engagement with Africa and the world, with its choices informed by a composite of neoliberally defined global social relations of production and ideas that had already elicited global consent. South Africa's organisation of material capabilities and resources was thus limited within the parameters of a neoliberal world order, and the predominance of institutions that facilitated the penetration of neoliberalism, regionally and globally. The global hegemonic order relies on surrogates for its functioning and South Africa's subsequent domestic adherence to the hegemonic neoliberal order has been transferred to SADC and, to a limited extent, to the AU through the policies and institutional projects that South Africa has championed since 1994. Nonetheless, in the face of persistent inequality and poverty, internal contestation to this adherence has emanated from trade unions and civil society organisations. It was found that the continued and intensifying domestic contestation reinforces the lack of a domestic hegemonic project that could have been projected externally to SADC and the AU, so that South Africa, as a dominant peripheral state in the global world order, displays more characteristics of handmaiden than hegemon.

Key concepts: Hegemony, neo-Gramscian theory, Method of Historical Structures, South Africa, African Union, Southern African Development Community

DECLARATION

I the undersigned, Zintle Koza, hereby declare that the research study is my own original work and that it has not been submitted, and will not be presented at any other University for a similar or any other award.

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Signature

12 December 2019

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Date

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DEDICATION

For my mother, Nomahlubi Mpondwana. All that I am and still hope to be would not be possible without her love and sacrifices. Ndiyabulela Hlubikazi!

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ACRONYMS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
ANC	African National Congress
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
AU	African Union
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa Group
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy
GNU	Government of National Unity
G8	Group of Eight countries
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MERG	Macroeconomic Research Group
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NDP	National Development Plan (Vision 2030)
NGP	New Growth Plan
NP	National Party
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RDP	Redistribution and Development Programme
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Programme
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADCC	Southern African Co-ordination Conference
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programs
TEC	Transitional Executive Council
TICAD	The Tokyo International Conference on African Development
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Committee on Trade and Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WEF	World Economic Forum
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organisation

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

South Africa's inimical relations with the southern African region and the rest of Africa before 1994 were premised on the Apartheid regime's need to secure its existence, primarily through the protection of its economy and borders. The new democratic dispensation presented the South African government with an opportunity to reposition the country in southern Africa, continentally and globally (South African Government Twenty Year Review, 2014). Post 1994 South Africa moved to pursue and implement what it termed its 'African Agenda', which encapsulated the policy and programmatic measures implemented to re-integrate and assume leadership in selected continental and regional structures. The internationalisation of the liberation struggle, particularly in Africa, informed this paradigm choice (Zondi, 2012).

The 48th African National Congress (ANC) National Conference held in 1991, the first convened in the country since 1959, adopted resolutions on foreign policy that pointed at the direction that the ANC was leaning towards. The resolutions highlighted the evolving global governance architecture and developments in international relations, specifically the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the end of the Cold War, and the priorities the ANC identified it would have to pursue in reaction when in government.

The resolutions made by the ANC must be considered in the local and international contexts of South Africa's re-entry into the global arena. The context of the global arena is critical, as "the international environment plays a key role in determining which countries are free to control their economic destiny" (Cheru, 2010: 215). The dominant discourse at the time of re-entry was neoliberalism, which heralded the triumph of liberal democracy and free market capitalism, with the United States (US) as the undisputed global power (Sidiropoulos, 2008). The Washington Consensus, sponsored by the US and championed by the Bretton Woods institutions, specifically the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), was the globally dominating development paradigm.

Further, the nationalist post-independence efforts in the rest of Africa reflected the prevailing hegemony in the global arena. The African leaders that sought to implement an independent and alternative path to the prevailing hegemony of the Washington Consensus had long since been eliminated (assassinated or overthrown) by Western supported coups (Cheru, 2010). Thomas Sankara in Burkina Faso and Patrice Lumumba in the Democratic Republic of Congo are but two such leaders. The failure of the socialist endeavours in Tanzania and Mozambique had an impact on the ANC policy trajectory, as these countries had actively supported the ANC in exile. Arguably more important is the reality that the ANC was not a socialist movement and could not have been expected to enact socialist policies. Former ANC and South African president, Thabo Mbeki (2002: 3), reminded delegates and South Africa at large of this during his address to the 2002 ANC National Policy Conference, stating that:

> Our movement, like all other national liberation movements throughout the world, is, inherently and by definition, not a movement whose mission is to fight for the victory of socialism. Had there been a merger of the national liberation and socialist goals in our country, with the ANC being both a national liberation movement and a party of socialist change, there would have been no historical need for a Communist Party, and no need for the existence today of our ally, the South African Communist Party.

At the time of South Africa's re-entry into the international arena, the majority of African countries had to subscribe to the Washington Consensus as the only means to access vital debt relief, market access (however limited) and aid in the international arena (Cheru, 2010). The disintegration of the USSR in 1989 and the re-engagement of China and Russia with the global market economy or 'free trade' informed the trajectory of South Africa's absorption into the prevailing global order (Habib and Padayachee, 2000).

Accordingly, the 1991 Conference resolved that democratic South Africa should prioritise Pan-African solidarity, democracy and peace, development and prosperity, environmental protection, disarmament, admission to the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the Lomé Convention between the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of

States (ACP) and the European Union (EU), and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) (African National Congress, 1991).

Critically, the Conference correspondingly called for the re-establishment of relations with the World Bank and the IMF (African National Congress, 1991). By 1991 Mandela was publicly coming out against nationalisation, and by the end of 1992 it was no longer a serious option for the party (Graham, 2012). The ANC's shifting position was a reflection of its perception of the balance of political and economic power domestically and globally. The shift gave prominence to accessing the international capital and the investor community, through ensuring adherence to the Washington Consensus policies in order to fund the ANC's electoral promises (Habib and Padayachee, 2000: 249).

The relations with the IMF were consolidated through a US$850 million loan in 1993, on condition that the incoming government pursue corporate-friendly policies and honour Apartheid debt (McKinley, 2017). The loan tied the transitional and subsequent governments to the neoliberal policies advocated by the Washington Consensus. Key aspects of the conditions related to the protection of the existing economic order. Thus, the ANC led the negotiations to a transition that was driven by a "constitutional framework that gave outgoing elites veto power over policies that threatened their political and economic interests" (Albertus and Menaldo, 2011: 2).

The discussions and outcomes of the Conference (which notably had 500 international guests) were elaborated in the discussion paper released by the ANC in October 1993 entitled 'Foreign Policy in a new democratic South Africa: A discussion paper'. Seven principles were identified to guide the country's future foreign policy. Ideologically, the principles were the promotion of human rights; promotion of democracy worldwide; support for international justice and law as the basis for relations between nations; peaceful resolution of conflicts; promotion of African interests; and the need to mirror foreign relations in the domestic democratic project. Economically, this included pursuing South Africa's economic growth through increasing regional and international economic cooperation (African National Congress, 1993). According to Graham (2012), this was the most unequivocal foreign policy position ever articulated by the ANC and also reflected the various influences the Party was under.

The article published in November 1993 by the influential *Foreign Affairs Journal*, entitled 'South Africa's Future Foreign Policy', attributed to former president Nelson Mandela, reinforced the Discussion Paper. The article restated the main elements of the Discussion Paper, but with one important distinction: it elevated the issue of human rights, placing it at the core of South Africa's future foreign policy across the board (Mandela, 1993). This spoke to the foregrounding of the symbolic, rather than the material aspects of hegemony (Alden and Schoeman, 2015). Further, the article highlighted how South Africa's future is interwoven with that of the rest of Africa, especially southern Africa. In addition, following the national elections, the ANC released the document entitled 'Foreign Policy perspective in a Democratic South Africa' during December 1994, restating the Party's commitment to the foreign policy approach articulated in the Discussion Paper and Mandela's article (African National Congress, 1994).

There are nuances in the implementation of South Africa's foreign policy under the three ANC-led administrations to date, as noted by Rizzi and Schütz (2014) and Lalbahadur (2015). Foreign policy during Mandela's term followed a normative approach, with South Africa joining various bodies aligned to the agenda (e.g. human rights, disarmament), involvement in mediation efforts on the Continent (e.g. Burundi, Sudan) and pursuing partnerships for support for the nation-building that was underway, which included the opening of South African embassies across the Continent. Mandela's global stature as a human rights icon drove and sustained the normative agenda (Le Pere, 2014).

The very first foreign policy document approved by the South African Cabinet in 1996 was a *Framework for Co-operation in Southern Africa* (Saurombe, 2010: 126). South Africa views regional integration as a necessary condition for long-term peace, stability and socio-economic development, economic growth and competitiveness for itself and the region. This policy position on regional integration is long standing and is reflected in official statements and policy documents produced by the ANC, dating back to before the transition in 1994 (Zondi, 2012).

The position and the documents were also informed by policies and views emanating from the African Union (AU) and its precursor, the OAU. These include the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa (1980), the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation (1989), and the Abuja Treaty (1991), which specified visions and plans for collective economic growth, solidarity and inter-African economic cooperation and integration (Adedeji, 2002).

The 1996 Framework was a precursor of resultant policies that underpin South Africa's aims. These include the *2011 White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy*, which explicitly states that "Africa is at the centre of South Africa's foreign policy", and places emphasis on integration as an imperative for South Africa and the Continent's socio-economic development and security (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2011).

1.1.1 Post-Apartheid South Africa in regional and continental organisations

In this context, the AU and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are the main institutions through which South Africa is pursuing leadership, regional integration and multilateral diplomacy in Africa. The current 2015-2020 Strategic Plan of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation highlights that the strengthening of the AU and its structures is a priority for deepening the integration process; and that SADC remains a strategic priority that is critical for South Africa's global competitiveness.

When South Africa joined SADC in 1994, the organisation had already initiated various institutional changes as part of its transition from the SADCC, which had been established in 1980. SADC's Regional Indicative Strategic Development Programme (RISDP) and its amended versions have since served as the blueprint for the regional agenda. South Africa's focus has largely been on the adoption and implementation of its integration objectives, which have been predominantly trade and investment oriented, in its pursuit of a market-driven integration approach (Nagar, 2017). These objectives were co-opted into the RISDP. Joining SADC was in line with pursuing domestic development through regional integration, focused largely on ensuring economic gains complemented by the Industrial Development Corporation and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (Games, 2017).

The preoccupation with South Africa's competitiveness and pursuit of economic gains through regional integration can be attributed to the role of the private sector in the drive to enter southern Africa and the rest of Africa. As noted by Carmody (2002), by the 1980s the South African economy was battered internally from the resistance to Apartheid, mounting public debt, international sanctions and the limits posed by the domestic market on a number of local conglomerates, such as Anglo American. Consequently, the South African private sector pressed the Apartheid government to seek accommodation and common ground with the still banned ANC. It was (white) business leaders who travelled to Lusaka, Zambia to meet the ANC leadership in exile to start the negotiations, and who would inform the post-1994 South African political economy. The (white-dominated) private sector favoured the protection of private property and globalisation through regionalisation, and was already expanding into southern Africa towards the end of Apartheid in preparation for the lifting of sanctions and official end of isolation (Games, 2017).

The subsequent engagement with the AU and SADC has largely been within a framework of leadership that was aligned to neoliberal principles, whist also promoting African solidarity and African leadership. In pursuing and taking charge of its 'African Agenda', specifically during the Mbeki administration, South Africa self-imposed the responsibility for and assumed the leadership of the Continent, as well as being a bridge-builder between the North and the South (Bohler-Muller, 2012). In engaging with and inside the two institutions, South Africa actively sought the role of the hegemon.

In its engagement in the AU and SADC, South Africa, firmly aligned with the principles embedded in the Washington Consensus, has prioritised issues of good governance, human rights, peace and security, peace building and development, as well as economic development, actively participating in both organisations from substantive and resource/material perspectives (Nagar, 2017). Since 1994, no other country in Africa (including Kenya, Nigeria and Ethiopia) has made more substantive contributions and investments in a more stable and prosperous Africa through support for mediation and peace building efforts, and support to the AU and SADC (African Union, 2018; Hengari, 2016; Saunders, 2014; Vickers, 2013; Saurombe, 2010). This refers specifically to the collective financial contributions made through assessed annual contributions, and specialised funds such as the African Renaissance Fund; support of peace building initiatives through the deployment of South African troops as part of peace keeping missions; as well as the leading roles played by Mandela, Mbeki and Zuma in the mediation of various conflicts on the continent. South Africa also hosts the Pan African Parliament, the Secretariats of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning Agency and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) (Mpungose, 2018; Vickers, 2013).

In assuming leadership, South Africa led the transition of the OAU into the AU during its chairship of the continental body in 2002. This enabled South Africa to transmit the neoliberal principles embedded in its own domestic policies to inform the nature and content of the AU, including the establishment of new institutions such as the Pan African Parliament; the AU Peace and Security Council; and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council.

Further, South Africa led the conceptualisation and incorporation of NEPAD and the APRM into the AU. NEPAD was formalised as the framework for the Continent's socio-economic development and engagement with external actors, including investors. NEPAD and the APRM in particular, transmitted South Africa's domestic neoliberal economic policies such as the Growth, Employment and Redistribution macroeconomic strategy (GEAR) into the continental arena. This was despite critique from other African states such as Senegal and broader African civil society as to the neoliberal orientation and practicality of the two initiatives (Murithi, 2005). Critically, NEPAD, in contrast to previous African-led plans such as the Lagos Plan of Action, brought conditionality back into the relations with the rest of the world, in tying investment, debt relief and trade to concepts of good governance and accountability as defined in the Washington Consensus (Adedeji, 2002).

These two initiatives, complemented by South Africa's domestic economic policies, were well received by the Bretton Woods institutions and their sponsors (Games, 2017). Accordingly, South Africa consolidated international recognition as a regional leader and as a leading voice on issues of Africa's development, and as the 'go-to' country for non-African neoliberal actors seeking to engage with the Continent. The Group of Eight (G8) countries' African Action Plan; the European Union (EU)'s

Strategic Partnership with Africa; and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) are some of the partnerships that were supported through this perspective.

South Africa was key in the establishment of such partnerships, ostensibly as part of its efforts to elevate Africa on the global stage, and to support partnerships that are "African-inspired and African owned" (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2017). South Africa's international status, through the recognition conferred to the Mandela and Mbeki Administrations, was accorded and enabled as a result of the country's endorsement and implementation of the hegemonic neoliberal principles. To be offered a seat at many of the tables (e.g. Group of 20, World Economic Forum, and Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development) is a reflection of South Africa's absorption into the system.

1.1.2 Internal contestation and dissent

However, internally the two administrations' policies were contested within the ANC and its Tripartite Alliance, consisting of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP). The contestation was rooted in the disagreements on the ideological about-turn made by the ANC on the pursuit of social and economic transformation in the country (Carmoday, 2002). Despite the conditionalities attached to the 1993 IMF loan, the ANC had won the 1994 general elections through promises of implementing a pro-poor redistributive Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The RDP was unilaterally abandoned by the ANC in 1996, and replaced with the market-oriented GEAR, which was followed up by the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA), approved by Cabinet in 2005. COSATU, trade unions and the SACP severely criticized the neoliberal approach of GEAR and ASGISA (Cronin, 1998). The 6^{th} National Congress of COSATU rejected GEAR outright, urging the South African Government to develop a macro-economic policy based on the RDP principles (COSATU, 1997). COSATU's critique was along the lines of Khor (2001 in Cheru, 2010: 201), that neoliberalism in Africa has been associated with "economic regression, loss of social services, drastic inequality, and financial crisis".

The content of the 1994 transition, including the ideological switch from the RDP to GEAR in particular, has remained a source of conflict within the ANC and the Alliance. At stake in the transition was “not only the economic policy of a democratically elected government but also the nature of South Africa’s future economic system”, (Alexander, 2010: 3). Bond’s (2006) critique goes further to argue that the transition was purely an elite political transition. The lingering discontent stemming from the transition was one of the main rallying calls in the gathering of forces (COSATU, SACP, ANC factions) that organised to challenge Mbeki’s last years in office, and ultimately remove him from office and thwart his attempts at a third term as the ANC president in 2009.

1.1.3 Decline of South Africa as a regional and continental hegemon

Accordingly, whilst the Zuma administration that succeeded Mbeki continued South Africa’s engagement in SADC, the AU, and the global multilateral fora, it did so notably less from the front, as compared to the previous ANC-led administrations. The approach taken was non-confrontational (Rizzi and Schütz, 2014), but with a definite shift to the East and alternative groupings to the hegemonic North and the prevailing neoliberal approach. This is reflected in the pursuit of strengthened partnerships outside of the West, notably bilaterally with China and membership of the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) group of countries (Anuoluwapo et al, 2018). South Africa’s membership of BRICS is widely viewed as the most strategic move in the field of international relations by the Zuma administration in this regard (Mpungose, 2018).

Additionally, the administration moved to strengthen relations with select influential countries in Africa, such as Angola and Uganda. These are countries that the previous administrations did not necessary seek out as partners. These are the states that have not been identified as partners or regional leaders for the pursuit of its neoliberal agenda by the West.

In this context, there was recognition that South Africa’s voice is not the sole or defining voice on African issues, with the West making overtures to other African states. As an example, the World Economic Forum (WEF) routinely invites Mauritius, Rwanda, Nigeria, Ethiopia and others to also participate in its meetings and initiatives conducted throughout the year. The G8 and later G7 Outreach has included other African countries. At regional and bilateral levels, a number of countries (Rwanda, Kenya, and Egypt) have extensive relations with the G7 economies, as well as international organisations on wide-ranging issues, including peace and security. The active positioning of South Africa as the leading African industrial nation and promoter of neoliberal principles waned under the Zuma administration as its focus was not on defending the status quo, leading to the marginalisation of the neoliberal agenda as, domestically, political leaders sought other agendas, including personal ones.

South Africa's leadership is thus contested by some countries in various sectors such a trade, security and peace building in southern Africa (e.g. Angola and Zimbabwe on the implementation of the SADC Trade Protocol); peace and security in the Great Lakes (e.g. Rwanda, Uganda); and for overall leadership of the continental project (e.g. Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal, Rwanda) (Van Wyk, 2004; Zondi, 2012; Scholvin, 2017). The contestation reflects South Africa's weakened struggle to exercise power in the absence of hegemony. As noted by Ogunnubi (2015) as much as South Africa has stated its unwillingness to be a hegemon, the ambitions contained in its foreign policy allude to this intention. This is in spite of the declaration contained in the highlighted 1993-1994 ANC documents that "a democratic South Africa should therefore explicitly renounce all hegemonic ambitions in the region".

The contestation has continued, if not escalated, despite South Africa's support for the AU and SADC (and some individual member states), public assurances of its commitment to Africa's development, and reiteration of its non-hegemonic intentions. Arguably, the contestation also reflects the disconnect other African countries see in the internal contradictions in South Africa. As an example, with the increasing economic marginalisation of the majority of the population, xenophobic attacks against African migrants have occurred intermittently since 2008 (Marthoz, 2012; Le Pere, 2014; Hengari, 2016). They are at odds with the regional integration, African solidarity and renaissance that South Africa has been promoting between 1994 and 2017.

While South Africa's leadership and dominance was accepted at the global level during the Mandela and Mbeki administrations, acceptance of its leadership in the Continent remained low (Flemes, 2009; Lalbahadur, 2015; Games, 2017). While

Nigeria has financial and demographical continental strengths, its relative low levels of fiscal transparency and implementation of other neoliberal principles had hindered its consideration as a promoter of the neoliberal agenda by the West (Flemes, 2009). With the waning of global confidence in South Africa under the Zuma administration, the acceptance of South Africa's leadership in Africa arguably remains low. This disconnect poses a challenge for South Africa's ambitions in the AU and SADC, and by extension globally, such as South Africa's yearning for the 'African' permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council.

South Africa's seeming confusion on its overall plan and focus was highlighted in the 2012 National Development Plan (NDP), which currently serves as the Government's blueprint for achieving set targets for social and economic development for the country by the year 2030. The criticism in the NDP was levelled on the basis of the apparent lack of correlation between domestic interests and South Africa's actions in the AU and SADC. This could be because South Africa is over-extended with its international agendas in relation to its capacity, both domestically and with regard to external aims (Bohler-Muller, 2012). Or, as proposed by Lalbahadur (2015: 5), South Africa remains confused as to how to engage with its "most fundamental foreign policy challenge"; that of fitting into the region, despite the elevation of Africa and southern Africa in all the key domestic policy documents such as the NDP. Ogunnubi (2015: 6) supports this view, arguing further that while South Africa might have the will to lead or even be a hegemon, it is unclear if there is a "clearly articulated strategic plan that commands acceptance", in view of the internal contestation within the ANC at the time. Games (2017: 8) notes further that the "multi-layered foreign policy" with conflicting interests was laid bare under the Zuma administration. South Africa arguably has not developed a clear hegemonic project internally, or with respect to the AU and SADC; a dilemma that this research seeks to investigate.

1.2 Rationale of the study

South Africa's post-Apartheid relations with its immediate region and the rest of Africa remain of interest to international relations scholars and practitioners. South Africa maintains the largest diplomatic presence in Africa by an African country. The country's economy, despite the challenges it has been facing over the past five years, remains the most diversified in Africa, as the country leads the development in aviation, medical science, telecommunications, infrastructure and the sophistication of financial markets. South Africa also continues to attract migrants and immigrants from across the Continent, as a reflection of the economic stability and social security the country still offered until recently, in relation to other conflict-ridden African states. The South African government's *Twenty Year Review*, released in 2014, specifically highlights the establishment of the AU, NEPAD, APRM and strengthening of SADC as some of South Africa's main foreign policy achievements from 1994 to 2014.

Entrenched challenges still prevail however, particularly inequality, poverty and unemployment along racial lines. By the fourth quarter of 2017, unemployment stood at 26,7% (Statistics South Africa, 2018). The 2017 report on *Poverty Trends in South Africa* released by Statistics South Africa highlighted the increase from 53,2% to 55,5% in 2015, translating to over 30,4 million South Africans living in poverty. In its January 2017 report on South Africa, Oxfam stresses that three billionaires in the country own wealth equivalent to what the bottom 50% of the populations owns, and the richest 1% owns 42% of the total wealth of the country (Oxfam, 2017). This is not what citizens, particularly black citizens, expected. Citizens expected that democracy would bring prosperity and substantial material improvements in the standard of living and that all domestic policy post-1994 should have addressed this.

What is clear from the statistics is that the macro-economic policies stemming from the 1993 IMF loan have not created the reduction in socio-economic inequality in South Africa that the majority of South Africans thought 1994 would bring (Alexander, 2010). Additionally, the South African government has since increasingly come under the influence of rating agencies, which are part of the international institutional framework supporting the global hegemonic order, in its drive to attract foreign direct investment (Masondo, 2018). As noted by Cheru (2010) this is a situation that does occur when the state is removed as the driver of development through neoliberalism. Le Pere (2014) argues further that the heightened social insecurity in South Africa strains the credibility of the country's projected international personality. At the core of the social insecurity is the disjuncture between domestic policy failure on addressing inequality, in the face of compliance with the neoliberal hegemonic norms and imperatives.

Against this background, the study will unpack South Africa's choices in seeking to exercise hegemony in the AU and SADC, the limitations to its efforts and the implications thereof. This will be done through the prism of neo-Gramscian theory, which provides a critical approach to analysing and understanding the constitution of the global order that South Africa found prior to 1994, and has responded to since, which have translated into the hegemonic ambitions in SADC and the AU.

1.3 The research problem

Despite its assumed leadership and investment in the AU and SADC, South Africa does not appear to have an original and independent hegemonic project, which is something the NDP criticised, calling for a review of the country's approach to both organisations. There is a need to engage with the underlying factors as to why South Africa has not developed a hegemonic project and why it is thus unable to serve as a hegemon in the region or the African continent. The research will focus on the questions listed in the following section.

1.4 Research questions

- How does a neo-Gramscian conceptualisation of hegemony explain South Africa's self-proclaimed hegemonic role in the AU and SADC?
- How have South Africa's actions in the AU and SADC since 1994 illustrated the role of hegemon or subaltern state, respectively?

1.5 Research aim and objectives

The study aims to provide a better understanding of South Africa's struggle to achieve hegemony in the AU and SADC from a neo-Gramscian perspective. The study will also aim to provide an empirical investigation into the constraints faced by South Africa in its ambitions in the two organisations in relation to its participation in the global political economy.

The objectives are:

- To analyse South Africa's role in the AU and SADC through a neo-Gramscian lens that illustrates the mechanisms of global hegemony.
- Using empirical data, to present and analyse the nature of South Africa's participation in the global political economy in relation to its role and the impact on its position in the AU and SADC.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study will be valuable for understanding South Africa's problematic intended hegemonic project in the AU and SADC from a neo-Gramscian perspective. It will provide insights into why South Africa's hegemonic project remains elusive. The study will look beyond the prevailing neo-realist assertions that South Africa is a hegemon on the basis of its economy. The rise and fall of the Zuma faction within the ANC, linked to the internal contestation on the appropriate macro-economic framework for South Africa's social and economic transformation, also highlights that policy is not unified or constant. The study will also look into this, unpacking further the class dynamics of the contestation and their impact on South Africa's international engagements. It is expected that the study will contribute to the development of more critical approaches to the question of South Africa's ambitions and actual role in the region and on the African continent.

1.7 Scope of the study

The study focuses on the period from 1994 to 2017 and utilises the neo-Gramscian method of historical structures conceptualised by Robert Cox (1981) in relation to the exercise of hegemony in the international system to address the research problem and the research questions. In addition to examining South Africa's role in and relationship with the AU and SADC, because South Africa is a critical member of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), where relevant to the study, reference will be made to SACU.

1.8 Research methods

The study utilised Critical Theory as the methodical approach. As an approach, Critical Theory, among others, raises questions on the social construction of knowledge; the linkages between "practices, identities and institutions at both the domestic and international levels"; and offers a dialectic analysis of role-players in international relations (Patrascu and Wani, 2015: 389-396). As an approach, "the notions of dialectics, domination, exploitation, legitimating, and contradiction are central in the arsenal of critical theory" (Patrascu and Wani, 2015: 389-396). Critical Theory enabled the study to critically investigate the actions of the dominant neoliberal aligned ANC faction prior, during and after the 1994 transition, reflected in the decisions of its administrations between 1994 and 2017. Importantly, both Critical Theory and Cox's Method of Historical Structures (MHS) emphasise the elements of historical context, social forces and ideas (Cox, 1981). It is for this reason that methodology relied heavily on extensive consultation of literature for the purpose of both theoretical clarity and to obtain data that enabled an illustration of Cox's hypothesis. Through the approach, the study is thus illustrative, interpretative and reflexive. A more in-depth discussion on Critical Theory and the theoretical model selected (Cox's Method of Historical Structures) will follow in Chapters Two and Three.

1.8.1 Data collection method

The study employed a qualitative approach, based on secondary and primary sources through desktop research. Primary sources of data consulted are a variety of official documentation related to the research problem from the AU, SADC and official South African government records, bulletins and publications, as well as documents published by other relevant organisations such as the United Nations (UN) for the period 1994 to 2017. Additional secondary sources are books, journal articles, opinion pieces, and other relevant expert and scholarly outputs on the issues arising from the study.

A qualitative approach was used to afford the researcher flexibility in the data collection, analysis and interpretation of the data collated (Carter and Little, 2007). It allowed for critical reflection within the normative premise of the neo-Gramscian theory, as no theory is separate from values and intent as it is “'always for someone and for some purpose' (Cox ,1981: 128).

1.9 Link between the research questions and the data collection method

In addressing the first research question, the method employed was a literature search sourced from scholarly literature such as books, journal articles, opinion pieces and relevant research outputs from research institutions and others. The literature research assisted in clarifying and then presenting the theoretic underpinning of this research in the form of neo-Gramscian theory, defining its position in International Relations (IR) theory and in relation to other IR theories on the issue of hegemony, and the choice to use it for the study.

In addressing the second research question, the same method was applied. Literature was sourced on South Africa’s policy and programmatic actions and priorities in the AU and SADC between 1994 and 2017, in relation to its participation in the global political economy. However, the intention here was to obtain data, rather than theoretical and explanatory perspectives, with the aim of accumulating sufficient data to illustrate the theoretical relevance and application of the chosen framework. The data was sourced from opinion pieces, journal articles, relevant research outputs, newspaper articles, relevant magazine; as well as official documentation from the AU, SADC, the South African government and other relevant institutions covering the period covered by the study.

1.10 Data analysis

Informed by a qualitative approach, this study is illustrative, descriptive and explanatory in presenting the analysis of the data collected for both research questions. The descriptive element is the factual data collected. The explanatory element derives from the thematic analysis of the text employed to identify common themes and concepts, with interpretation in seeking to provide explanations of the linkages and implications, in addressing the two research questions (Baylis and Smith, 2001).

The thematic analysis provided the essential framework that facilitated the analysis of data and enabled the researcher to arrange and make sense of the data within the conceptualised chosen theoretical parameters. Further, re-coding data and linking themes to developing ideas aids continuity in the research process and increases the overall transparency of the analysis process (Easterby-Smith, 2012). This was beneficial in ensuring the relevance and coherence of the research process and its outputs.

The aim of the analysis was to illustrate a particular theoretical conceptualisation of a phenomenon in the field of International Relations, namely, the exercise of hegemony, and in doing so to provide answers to the research questions and insights to the research problem. The chosen analytical framework supports the study’s ontological prism, that of Critical Theory. This ontology allows for contextualisation (socially, politically, and economically) that links the research subject to the premises of neo-Gramscian theory on hegemony as a context-based construct, as elaborated in Chapter Two.

1.11 Ethical issues

No ethical issues were encountered. The research was conducted using secondary and primary sources in the form of published works for academic purposes only. All sources and references utilised are acknowledged fully to avoid plagiarism. As much as possible, data has been provided to substantiate statements made in support of the illustrative purpose of this research.

1.12 Structure of the dissertation

Chapter One: Introduction and Background

This chapter introduces the study by providing the contextual background, the motivation, objective, aims and value of the study. This chapter introduces the methodological approach and the methodology, as well as offering a description of the method of data analysis and presentation.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This chapter has two elements, one theoretical and one practical. It offers a critical overview of the three mainstream International Relations theories – Liberalism, Realism and Critical Theory (Marxism) – simultaneously investigating some of the literature aligned to each that deals with the emergence of the post-Apartheid South African state, its policy choices and decisions made in relation to both domestic and external affairs. The chapter also problematises and conceptualises the phenomenon of South Africa's transition to democracy at the time when the neoliberal world order had been established. Finally, the neo-Gramscian perspective on hegemony from which Robert Cox (1981) draws his analysis of International Relations is discussed in depth, serving to set the scene for Chapter 3.

Chapter Three: The Neo-Gramscian Framework

In this chapter, the first research question is addressed: How does a neo-Gramscian conceptualisation of hegemony explain South Africa's self-proclaimed hegemonic role in the AU and SADC? Given that this chapter is essentially of a theoretical nature, its primary purpose is to explain the neo-Gramscian hypothesis and MHS model of Cox (1981). It then progresses to the application of this model, that is, an analysis from a neo-Gramscian perspective, in a discussion of South Africa's transition to democracy, its attempts to establish itself as a hegemon and its history of involvement in the two organisations (AU and SADC).

Chapter Four: Hegemon or Handmaiden

In this chapter, the second research question is addressed: How have South Africa's actions in the AU and SADC since 1994 illustrated the role of hegemon or subaltern state, respectively? Empirical evidence of South Africa's choices and actions within the parameters of the prevailing neoliberal world order is provided in order to establish the extent to which the South African state achieved its aims of exerting influence in these organisations.

Chapter Five: Summary, Findings and Conclusion

This chapter summarises and presents the findings of the study. Further, it makes proposals and recommendations arising from the study.

1.13 Chapter conclusion

This chapter presented a background into the study. This includes an introduction of South Africa's re-emergence into the global arena as a legitimate democratic state, its subsequent engagement in the AU and SADC, the foreign policy that has informed the engagements, and the background to the country's hegemonic ambitions in the two organisations from the period 1994 to 2017. The background provided the context for the research problem and the two research questions the study focused on. This chapter also presented the aims, objectives, scope and ambitions of the study, as well as the methodology utilised.

Chapter Two will present the literature review and the theoretical framework for the study. This will comprise a presentation of the issues and perspectives arising from the literature consulted on the theoretical nature of the study as well as the research problem itself. The chapter thus includes a discussion of the neo-Gramscian conceptualisation of hegemony proposed by Cox (1981), and contextualises it within broader IR theory.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter introduces the theoretical basis for the study and the chosen conceptual framework, that is, neo-Gramscian theory on hegemony as applied by Cox (1981) to global politics. In doing so, the chapter first looks at how South Africa's role in the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been studied by scholars through the Liberal /Neoliberal, Realist/Neo-Realist and Neo-Marxist lenses. Each theoretical lens lends specific strengths and gaps, which are highlighted in the sections focused on each perspective. Thereafter, the chapter introduces the neo-Gramscian theory on hegemony, the key concepts that encompass it, the application to international relations by Cox (1981), and the conceptual framework's relevance to the critical study of the state of South Africa's hegemonic ambitions in the AU and SADC.

2.1 Three theories of International Relations in relation to South Africa

South Africa's role and positions in the AU and SADC have received considerable scholarly attention since 1994, as part of the analyses of its foreign policy. The analyses have primarily focused on assessing the evolution of foreign policy under presidents Mandela, Mbeki and Zuma respectively. A review of the existing literature shows that three main theories of international relations, namely, Liberalism /Neoliberalism, Realism/Neo-Realism and Neo-Marxism are the main theoretical lenses utilised to analyse and to offer insights to the status of South Africa's hegemony in the AU and SADC.

2.1.1 Liberalism /Neoliberalism

The growth of Liberalism is widely attributed to John Locke, who in the 17th century articulated its central concepts of individual rights to life, liberty and property, at the domestic and international levels (Meiser, 2017). From the classic liberalism of Locke, various strands of liberalism have been introduced in the International Relations discipline, in foreign policy making and by practitioners. Influential Liberal theorist Michael W. Doyle (1986: 73) notes, however, that there is no one description of liberalism. Instead the term is used to refer to a "a family portrait of principles and institutions, recognisable by certain characteristics, for example, individual freedom, political participation, private property, and equality of opportunity". It is these characteristics and related political ideals, such as democracy, industrialisation, anti-monarchy and the right to self-determination that became associated with the modern state and were disseminated by the victorious Allies after World War I (WW1). This worldview informed the formation of the League of Nations in 1920, an initiative led by US President Woodrow Wilson.

World War II (WW2) highlighted the failure of the League and the dissemination efforts of the Allies in ensuring allegiance by all states to liberalism. The end of WW2, however, saw the emergence of neoliberalism, based on economic and financial principles defined and disseminated by the new US hegemon. These principles were institutionalised globally through the international institutions that were established as a result of active support by the US and its allies. Thus, post-WW2 neoliberalism was entrenched globally through the establishment and maintenance of the Bretton Woods Institutions, powerful financial institutions which served as providers of economic support, and, accordingly, the norms and behaviour enforcer of states less developed or economically independent than the US, which emerged as the global hegemon after WW2. In addition to the World Bank (founded as the Reconstruction and Development Bank in 1944) and the IMF, these institutions include the World Trade Organisation (WTO), originally founded as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, also after WW2. Of these, Keohane (2012: 132) argues that the WTO is "the most important and, so far, enduring institutional result of the contemporary movement toward liberalization".

The political and ideological element of neoliberalism has similarly been incorporated in the United Nations (UN) and its agencies such as the United Nations Committee on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The organisations have ensured the spread and implementation of the neoliberal tenets of free trade and capital movement, essentially the maintenance of "an open, market-based international economic system" (Meiser, 2017: 23). Influential and powerful liberal states, mostly in the West, have served as guarantors of the system, including the institutions. The focus on institutions highlights the growth of the Neoliberal Institutionalism strand of Liberalism in this period, influenced significantly by the writings of another key Liberal theorist, Immanuel Kant

(*To Perpetual Peace* published in 1795), on the role of institutions (Moravcsik, 2010; Cristrol, 2019). This approach "justifies the use of power in constructing institutions on the basis of this conception of social purpose" (Keohane, 2012: 126). Consequently, "neoliberalism has not only changed the policies adopted by governments but also the conditions within which policy is conceived, formulated, implemented, monitored and responded to" (Fine and Saad-Filho, 2017: 692).

The collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1991, marking the downfall of the communism that was practised by the USSR, was a turning point for neoliberalism. The downfall gave credence to the superiority of neoliberalism as the framework for global social and economic development. It made the US and similarly aligned states "believe that they could construct 'a new world order' more consistent with their values and practices" (Keohane, 2012: 126). This was supported by the collapse of a number of governments in the South, including African and Latin American dictatorships, which thereafter complied with the new neoliberal world order through holding elections that led to economic gains through increased trade in the form of a boost to their exports of raw materials. Effectively, the end of the Cold War laid the foundations for the current international system that informs the "international institutions, organisations and norms" states are expected to abide by, founded on the neoliberal political economy of the victor in the post-Cold War system: the US (Meiser, 2017: 23).

It is this post-Cold War neoliberal global hegemony that post-Apartheid South Africa encountered. Not only was the system "pro-market policies", it was also a distinct "way of reordering social reality, and of rethinking our status as individuals", regulating all practices and beliefs (Metcalf, 2017: 2).

2.1.1.1 South Africa in international relations through a liberal / neo-liberal lens

The negotiated settlement in South Africa paved the way for policy makers to incorporate the country into the global neoliberal economy. Glaser (2018) argues that liberalism / neoliberalism gained two substantial victories early on. These are, firstly, the Constitution which "essentially prescribes a liberal-democratic polity; and secondly, the partial victory of classic free-market liberalism in economic policy making" (Glaser, 2018: 115). Expectations were high for continued gains from this foundation. It is these expectations that inform the criticism from analysts and other actors operating from this perspective.

Critics of South Africa's liberal/neoliberal position in SADC and the AU centre their analysis primarily on the normative agenda the country is pursuing, informed by events that transpired during its transition to democracy between 1990 and 1994, when neoliberal principles were embedded in the interim constitution. The Constitution and the 2011 White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy (which places the concept of *Ubuntu* at the core of South Africa's foreign policy), are viewed as some of the sources of this normative agenda, which is nonetheless reflected in a more nuanced liberal discourse in DIRCO's vision of "championing an African continent, which is prosperous, peaceful, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and united and which aspires to a world that is just and equitable" (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2017).

In pursuing and implementing this agenda under Mandela's government, South Africa focused on the western liberal principles in terms of respecting and protecting human rights, democratisation and peace and stability efforts. Mbeki's administration elaborated further on the agenda with South Africa driving the idea of an 'African Renaissance' institutionally through the establishment of the AU and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); and the re-orientation of SADC's framework and focus. The Zuma administration largely continued with the normative approach, although with clear challenges in closing the gap between the stated ideals and their operationalisation (Van Wyk, 2004; Landsberg, 2004; Hengari, 2014).

At a global level, South Africa moved quickly to participate in global governance structures through re-joining international organisations such as the UN and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and subscription to international agreements (e.g. Biological Weapons Convention), in line with the pursuit of this 'positive' normative agenda. This was supported as "many liberals also believe that the rule of law and transparency of democratic processes make it easier to sustain international cooperation, especially when these practices are enshrined in multilateral institutions" (Sydner, 2009:1).

Through this perspective, the liberal/neoliberal assessments of South Africa's foreign policy focus on its gains and perceived failures on the promotion of western liberal and neoliberal principles. As a result, a large part of the critique of South Africa's approach highlights related issues that include the country's tenures as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, the approach to Zimbabwe, Libya, Cuba, Iran, the Dalai Lama visa issue, and xenophobia. These positions or developments are perceived as a betrayal of the spirit of South Africa's transition and the international support that facilitated it (Habib, 2009: 114).

Further, South Africa's role in the AU and SADC is viewed as part of the country's externalisation of its democratic and liberal values to positively influence Southern Africa and the rest of Africa towards a more neoliberal agenda. This perspective is defended by authors such as Van Wyk (2004), Landsberg (2004), Bohler-Muller (2012), Marthoz (2012), Nganje (2014), Hengari (2014, 2016) and Le Pere (2014).

The liberal /neoliberal critique is arguably expecting South Africa to pursue and implement what Mearsheimer (2018: 1) terms the liberal hegemony, that is, "an ambitious strategy in which a state aims to turn as many countries as possible into liberal democracies like itself while also promoting an open international economy and building international institutions". From this lens, it is arguable that South Africa, during the Mandela and Mbeki administrations (particularly the latter), was preoccupied with attaining a liberal hegemon.

From this perspective, South Africa's intended hegemonic project in the AU and SADC is hindered by its perceived failures in the defence and implementation of the western liberal and neoliberal principles, as well as the resistance by other African countries to what they view as a western agenda being introduced through South Africa (Zondi, 2012). This perspective does not question South Africa's hegemony in the form of offering leadership in initiatives that are independent of global developments, but rather South Africa's priorities and implementation. It does not offer an adequate analysis, particularly relating to the transition and the structural power relations that underpin South Africa's attempts at a hegemonic project that is based on consent.

Critically, this perspective does not consider that liberalism/neoliberalism in Africa is arguably discredited, as it came with capitalism, which is also discredited, as it came with imperialism and colonialism (Mazrui, 1974: 68). Furthermore, this perspective does not engage the generational effects the Bretton Woods-imposed Structural Adjustment Programmes had on societies and economies in African countries such as Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania and Ghana. It further does not engage the challenges faced by liberal organisations such as the UN Security Council that are utilised to further political and economic aims that, at times, are not consistent with the stated ideology of prioritising human rights. It also does not consider the domestic abuses perpetrated in leading liberal countries (e.g. the targeting of African Americans by police and the judicial system in the US), and the impact on the promotion of the liberal and neoliberal agenda in the rest of the world.

2.1.2 Realism / Neo-Realism

Neo-realism grew out of the limitations of classic realism, which is traced as far back as Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War between the Greece and Sparta, which raged between 431 and 404 BCE with Niccolo Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes also highlighted as providing some of the earliest classic texts (Antunes and Camisao, 2017). The core idea for realism is that self-centred states are the primary actors in an international system which is characterised by anarchy and where conflict is inevitable due to human nature, as articulated by the most influential realist theorists in the IR discipline, Hans Morgenthau in the 1950s, in response to the outbreak of WW2. He argues that states are preoccupied with national interests through power maximisation, and the powerful states in the system ensure equilibrium through the balance of power among themselves (Chatterjee, 1997). The focus of the action and analysis is therefore on the state, informed by human nature.

Neo-realism developed in the 1970s through its first theorist, the influential Kenneth Waltz. According to Bessner and Guilhot (2015), Waltz shifted the analysis from decision making to the framework that underpins the decision making in the international system. He developed a systemic approach that “placed stress on the international system as the *explanans* for international relations” thereby enabling analysis of “systemic adaptation to an environment” through a technical and non-ideological approach, as opposed to the classis realist focus on the human nature of decision makers (Bessner and Guilhot, 2015: 89). A further distinction between the two, as noted by Tabarcia (2009) is that for realists, state power is revisionist or for the status quo; while neorealism introduced the notion of states acting as unit actors. In addition, for neo-realists, the “crucial feature of any system is the distribution of material power” (Hurell 2006: 6).

2.1.2.1 South Africa in international relations through a neo-realist lens

Arguably as a reflection of the prevailing influence of neo-realism in international relations, analysis of South Africa’s hegemonic status in SADC and the AU has been and continues to be through this lens. Tjemolane, Neethling and Schoeman (2014) look at whether South Africa is a hegemon or a partner in Africa, focusing on its resources and relative power in relation to human rights, trade and economic development. They conclude that South Africa is a hegemon only in trade relations. Scholvin (2017) analyses the structure of power relations between South Africa and countries he identifies as secondary powers; while Kagajwa (2009) looks at issues of capacity, resources and historical power dynamics, arguing that the country does not have hegemonic capabilities; and Flemes and Wojczewski (2010) look at the power structures in the region in relation to South Africa’s hegemonic intentions, noting the different power dynamics that inform South Africa’s approach to issues and its interests. For Nathan (2005), South Africa’s historical negative history in the region and caution in taking the lead constrains any hegemonic intentions there might be.

Adebajo (2018) concludes that South Africa is a regional hegemony, in that it has been actively pursuing collective goals for other African states in its engagements with the G8/G7, in the G20 and other global fora, and also structurally has greater resources relative to the other countries militarily and economically. However, he also argues that the country “lacks the legitimacy and capacity to create viable institutions that set the rules that others are encouraged to follow. South Africa has not been able to leave a lasting cultural and political influence on the region” (Adebajo, 2018: 95). This seeming contradiction in South Africa's status as a hegemon is at the core of this study.

One of the key theories within neo-realism is the Hegemonic Stability Theory, developed by Charles Kindleberger in the 1970s. The theory argues that in the system of anarchy, a hegemony is necessary to maintain stability through discipline and enforcing the norms, and providing the public goods that are the reward for the states that follow the hegemony (e.g. security). This would make the other states secure enough to open their markets. This system was evident in relation to Great Britain in the 19th century and the Unites States during the 20th century (Milner, 1998). The theory works on the assumption that a hegemony is in place, or rather already accepted by the other states, which is not the case with South Africa. Nevertheless, Tella and Ogunnubi (2014) use the theory to look at South Africa's role in Africa. They concluded that South Africa cannot be a hegemony, as its soft power is being eroded by xenophobia, which is against one of its stated liberal ideas of human rights.

Alden and Schoeman's analysis (2015: 242) brings in the dimension of structural power, which is defined by Susan Strange as "the power to shape the context within which states relate to one another" (1988 in Alden and Schoeman 2015: 242). Their main argument is that South Africa is only a symbolic hegemony as it remains weak materially, and importantly, when it has to lead it needs to access external power resources (e.g. UN, G8/G7 or through NEPAD endorsement). Consequently, the substantive hegemony will always rely on the international support, an issue that weakens its claims to leadership and its legitimacy. This means that South Africa cannot influence and or convince other states on its own, which is a prerequisite for a hegemon. In line with this, Alden and Soko (2005: 386) also note that South Africa's position remains contested due to its weak material base and the fact that the "ideational dimensions" of its hegemony are still very limited. As an example, in the area where South Africa arguably has the most structural power, the immediate region (e.g. Lesotho, eSwatini, Zimbabwe), it cannot translate the power into influence, as reflected in the continued lack of freedom of political association and democracy in eSwatini.

From another angle, Schenoni (2018) argues that South Africa was a hegemon during Apartheid, as it structurally had power over the immediate region (economically, militarily). This hegemony started declining from 1975 after the invasion of Angola, and thereafter rapidly after 1980 with Zimbabwe's freedom, and the formation of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC). Consequently, Schenoni (2018) contends that post-Apartheid South Africa has not been a hegemon over the past 20 years.

Neo-realism offers insights into the political economy in which South Africa seeks the hegemony, including the power relations with other key states. However, it does not consider the role played by non-state actors such as the private sector, civil society and other influencers of South Africa's foreign policy. It also ignores the historical dimension of international relations that leads to changes in the global order and, significantly, fails to take cognisance of the reality that states are not constituted external to the context they are formed in.

2.1.3 Neo-Marxism

In contrast to Liberalism/Neoliberalism and Realism/Neo-Realism, the Marxist approach to the international system, including the global economic system, is that it is not natural or inevitable. They, as all elements of life, are "interdependent products of particular historical conditions and social relations" (Pal, 2017: 43). This approach termed "historical materialism" is rooted in the work of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and serves as the main Marxist concept in understanding and analysing the development of capitalism. When applying historical materialism, there is recognition that human beings are determined by the changeable material conditions in which they can survive and reproduce. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels (1888: 41) illustrate this point by asking:

> Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views, and conception, in one word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life?

At the core is the interdependence or dialectics of all the components. From this perspective, international relations "is not just about states' foreign policy or the behaviour of politicians, but more about survival (or more broadly, life), reproduction, technologies and labour" (Pal, 2017: 45). Importantly, as argued by Burnham (1994: 230), "Marxist analysis understands international relations as the national processing of global class relations - and the study of forms of resistance to that processing". This offers an understanding of the role of production processes and transnational classes in the international system.

Marx's theories were first applied to international processes by early 20th century revolutionaries such as Rosa Luxemburg, Rudolf Hilferding and Vladimir Lenin (Pal, 2017). Thereafter, in the latter half of the twentieth century, after it had become evident that former colonies were unable to overcome the poverty and socio-economic destruction wreaked by colonial occupation and exploitation, Immanuel Wallerstein developed a neo-Marxist theory, the World Systems Theory in 1974, that focused on how states relate to each other, their co-dependency and its history (Pal, 2017).

2.1.3.1 South Africa in international relations through a neo-Marxist lens

In this context a contrasting view to the Liberal/Neoliberal and Realist/Neo-realist perspectives is provided by the neo-Marxist perspective, which questions the very essence of the notion of South Africa as a hegemon, using the transition as a starting point (Bond, 2000; 2004). As noted by Habib (2009: 143), the transition occurred within a particular "global order that not only established the parameters which governed its evolution, but also determined which interests prevailed within it". The disintegration of the USSR resulted in the dominance of neoliberalism with its focus on open markets and free trade, as promoted through the IMF and the World Bank. The incoming government in 1994 inherited an economy in crisis with high expectations of socio-economic opportunities from the poor majority, while receiving assistance predominantly from the West (Williams, 1994). The ANC came under heavy diplomatic and institutional pressure to adopt policies in line with neoliberal principles, thus switching from its original "leftist, basic-needs-oriented Reconstruction and Development Programme" (Peet, 2002: 55).

From this premise, the neo-Marxist perspective argues that South Africa, through its regional integration agenda, is pursuing “sub-imperialist” ambitions in the region influenced by its neoliberal reforms, through the local policy rendering of the Washington Consensus through NEPAD and the de-industrialisation of African economies by South African retailers (Bond, 2004; Miller, Saunders and Oloyede, 2008; Umezurike, Iwu and Asuelime, 2016). NEPAD comes under considerable criticism from this perspective, in view that it is underpinned by the same neoliberal assumptions as the RDP’s successor, the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (Habib, 2009). NEPAD is viewed as South Africa’s attempt to drive the behaviour and governance systems of other African countries towards the implementation of a neoliberal agenda (Jordaan, 2012).

From this perspective, relations with SADC and the AU are pursued primarily for South Africa’s economic interests that are influenced by its neoliberal reforms. The country’s focus on regional integration is thus tied to attracting foreign direct investment as part of the neoliberal narrative for global inclusion (Miller, Saunders and Oloyede, 2008; Mapuva & Muyengwa-Mapuva, 2014; Umezurike, Iwu and Asuelime, 2016). The NDP’s focus on the need for South Africa to increase its economic benefits from Africa through the AU and SADC reflects this preoccupation, as well as the need to better utilise the regional market for the country’s increased global competitiveness. As a result of this focus, Carmoday (2012: 234), argues that South Africa is achieving “market access in exchange for political quiescence rather than hegemony”.

From the neo-Marxist perspective supported by the highlighted authors above, South Africa’s ‘anti-global hegemonic rhetoric’ is not complemented by its approach to the AU and SADC. As a result, while South Africa continues to be given leadership positions by the West such as membership of the G20, a development that the neoliberal perspective views as proof of South Africa’s neoliberal support, the rest of Africa continues to view its credentials and motivations with suspicion, hence the continued resistance to its leadership and lack of hegemonic project (Alden and Schoeman, 2015; Shaw, 2015). The authors highlighted in the neo-Marxist perspective focus mostly on the economic and trade issues, thus locating the discussions on hegemony in that space.

2.2 Theoretical framework for study

The literature consulted revealed that there is significant scope for a neo-Gramscian perspective to be explored, as part of the critical approach to understanding South Africa's position in the AU and SADC. The neo-Gramscian perspective adds value in that it assists in avoiding over-reliance on either ideas ('idealism') which the neoliberal perspective literature offers, or economics / trade ('economism') which the consulted neo-Marxist literature primarily focuses on (Morton, 2010: 336). While Gramscian / neo-Gramscian theory is considered to be part of the neo-Marxist school, for the purposes of the study, it is will be discussed in the next section as the chosen theoretical framework. Use of this theory allows for a holistic, comprehensive and nuanced analysis of South Africa's hegemonic challenge. None of the literature consulted offered a specifically neo-Gramscian analysis and this study located itself in that space to address this gap.

2.2.1 Gramscian / Neo - Gramscian theory on hegemony

This study utilised Gramscian/neo-Gramscian theory on hegemony, as it offers a holistic, comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the concept. Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony is based on the premise that force alone does not rule people; they are also ruled by ideas (Bates, 1975: 351). Gramsci was preoccupied with the manner in which consent for a particular social and political system is produced and reproduced through the operation of hegemony. For Gramsci, hegemony is the process that allows the moral, economic, political and cultural values of the dominant group to be dispersed and accepted by the dominated groups as their own (Baylis and Smith, 2001: 210). In his analysis, Gramsci (1971: 145) highlighted:

> Two major superstructural "levels": the one that can be called "civil society", that is the ensemble of organisms commonly called "private", and that of "political society" or "the State". These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of" hegemony" which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of "direct domination" or command exercised through the State and "juridical" government. The functions in question are precisely organisational and connective. The intellectuals are the dominant

group's "deputies" exercising the subaltern functions of social hegemony and political government. These comprise: 1) The "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is "historically" caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production. 2) The apparatus of state coercive power which "legally" enforces discipline on those groups who do not "consent" either actively or passively. This apparatus is, however, constituted for the whole of society in anticipation of moments of crisis of command and direction when spontaneous consent has failed.

Consequently, the basis of the hegemony is to be found in the relationship between state and civil society, both within, and across nation-states (Gill, 1997). In broadening the understanding of the state, Gramsci (1971) proffered the notion of the state as a separate entity operated by government on its own that is nonetheless also part of civil society, through which hegemony is expressed. In this sense the state is viewed as a social relation arising from the hegemonic process between the dominant classes and various other social classes and factions. The dominant classes develop a hegemonic project that is able to co-opt and assimilate the broad interests of other classes to form a historic bloc (Bieler and Morton, 2004).

An important distinction that Gramsci also made is that between coercion and hegemony. For Gramsci, there is a distinction between hegemony achieved through consent, on the one hand, and domination through coercion, on the other, where hegemony fails, and consent cannot be elicited from civil society in order for the state and dominant national and international forces to maintain power. As explained by Cox (2007: 260), for Gramsci, "hegemony refers to an inter-subjective understanding of power and social relations, whereby people in all significant social categories acquiesce in the normality of things as they are". While the dominant has coercive power, be it financial, political or physical, it is not employed frequently over the subordinate as the latter "readily acquiesce" (Cox, 2007: 260).

The industrial revolution in Britain the 18^{th} and 19^{th} centuries is an example of this process. Arguably, not all aspects of the hegemonic project were beneficial for all classes, but they consented as it seemed to offer the prospects for improved life opportunities, living conditions and public services. Industrial capitalism was offered as the vehicle for socio-economic upward mobility and also for the country's overall development. Colonialism was supported as an extension of the industrial capitalism, as the colonies provided the country with captive markets, cheap labour and raw materials, thus facilitating the diversification of the economy, which proved key in Britain's development and successful industrialisation (Harley, 2013).

For a class to be hegemonic and not coercive, the formation of a historic bloc is a prerequisite. It is the historic bloc that sustains and reinvents the state as needed for the hegemonic class. The bloc, through the mutually reinforcing and reciprocal relationship between the socio-economic base and the political and cultural values (superstructure), underpins the hegemony (Baylis and Smith, 2001: 210). Countering the hegemony will therefore require the formation of a new historic bloc. The historical bloc analysis enables the Gramscian approach to "avoid reductionism to economics (economism) or to ideas (idealism)", thus allowing for a more nuanced analysis of hegemony (Morton, 2010: 336). Cox elaborates that Gramsci framed the historic bloc in historical materialism, in which material conditions (including social relations and physical means of production) and ideas reinforce and shape one another.

In the absence of a historic bloc to drive the hegemony, a society can experience a passive revolution. This occurs when the changes implemented are imposed or borrowed from other countries or societies, due to the fact that a society did not fully go through the social, political and economic revolution that leads to the creation of a new historic bloc (Cox, 1983; Morton, 2010). In this context, there is no established hegemony, but rather the imposition of changes.

In the South African context, the developments around the transition, as discussed in Chapter One, point to the challenges around the establishment of a historic bloc. Informed by the need to reassure foreign investors and the involvement of various external actors in the negotiations for the transition, a domestic historic bloc arguably did not emerge. With South Africa not undergoing a full social, political and economic revolution, no domestic hegemonic project seems to have been established and the policies that flowed from the transition, including the Constitution, were either borrowed or imposed by the dominant faction within the ANC. This includes policies arising from the 1993 IMF loan such as the “scrapping of import surcharges that had protected local industries” (Bond, 2016: 1), which later found expression in GEAR.

In the absence of a historic bloc, the transition to democracy did not dislodge the seat of economic power, hence the passive revolution. As conceptualised by Cox (2002), this occurs when the outgoing national bourgeoisie (in terms of state power) simply hands political power to a new incoming national bourgeoisie, with the structure of ownership not changing. In relation to the post-Apartheid era, Cox’s presentation of Gramsci’s conceptualisation of “passive revolution” applies (Cox, 2002: 367). The imposition of a new order alongside or upon the old creates the need to form alliances in order to achieve political power, leading to the phenomenon of *transformism.* In this situation, leaders of subaltern groups are co-opted by those who wielded power in the old order. They attempt to defuse dissent and maintain existing state structures to retain a form of coherence in activities related to the exercise of power (Cox, 2002). The post-1994 South African state retained the same structures as the Apartheid state, while the incoming governing elite was co-opted by the historic bloc that was at the centre of the Apartheid state, through board memberships, ‘empowerment schemes’, and the like.

In this context, the activities of the weak State are aimed at bolstering its position, and tensions between rival factions are evident in strategic alliances between groups in political and civil society, all lobbying for power. This leads not only to an economically powerless national bourgeoisie, but contestation at the level of the state for power, as none of the various factions competing for power within the new national bourgeoisie have a real power base (Fadakinte and Amolegbe, 2017). The continued contestation within the ANC and the Tripartite Alliance at the state level highlights this challenge.

2.2.1.1 Robert Cox’s application of Gramsci’s concepts to global politics

The neo-Gramscian perspective utilised in this study is within a Critical Theory framework. As noted by Patrascu and Wani (2015: 392-393), Critical Theory is emancipatory in approach, looking at Marxist-inspired analyses of international theory and practise in rejecting the separation of context, environment, values and objects.

In the context of international relations, the neo-Gramscian work of Robert Cox on the global political economy and international politics is highlighted as one of the four Critical Theory positions in international relations (Patrascu and Wani, 2015: 391).

In this context, Cox is widely accredited as having undertaken the most important study of the Gramscian concept of hegemony in the field of international relations, introducing a neo-Gramscian analysis of world order (Özçelk, 2005). As a starting point, Cox (1981: 129) makes the case that his theory should be viewed as a Critical Theory, as critical theory does not take social relations, power and institutions for granted, but rather seeks to investigate how they came about, and "looks at the political and social complex in their entirety". Informed by Gramsci's historicism, Cox's theory focuses on the relationship and roles of the three interrelated 'spheres of activity', that is, social relations of production, the forms of state and the world orders. The historical structures framework he developed looks at how hegemon classes develop their consciousness and their historic blocs leading to "successive world orders" (Özçelk, 2005: 100).

All historical structures result from the reciprocal relationships between three elements: a) ideas that include imagery and intersubjective meanings, b) material capabilities and resources; and c) institutions that provide support and reinforcement (Cox, 1981; Bieler & Morton, 2004). The role of the social relations of production in the development of social forces and historic blocs is key. The ontology behind the relations of production is important, particularly in relation to the production of values, self-images and societal norms. An ontology of our reality relates to what we think is possible, our expectations and informs social patterns to all life – it has a direct impact on the social relations to production (Gill, 1997).

Cox (1981) views world orders as expressed universally, and as collective social, economic and political structures that set out the rules of behaviour for states and civil society forces that operate internationally. This concept of world orders can be seen in the global roles assumed by Britain and the United States during the eras of mercantile and industrial capitalism, and financial capitalism since the end of WWII, respectively. Between 1845 and 1875 Britain was the centre of the global economy, its economic doctrine accepted universally, and it was able to enforce the rules complemented by social and political structures it established domestically and internationally. Post WWII the United States established a hegemonic world order building on the doctrines and structures of Britain, with stronger institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions (Cox, 1981).

For Cox (1981: 139) hegemony is thus:

> A coherent conjunction or fit between a configuration of material power, the prevalent collective image of world order (including certain norms) and a set of institutions which administer the order with a certain semblance of universality.

This means hegemony manifests itself as broad consent for ideas that are supported by material resources and institutions, which while initially established by the hegemonic class in a state, is then projected outwards on a world scale (Cox, 1981).

In this context, international institutions / organisations play a key role, as they enable the transmission and enforcement of the hegemonic order. The institutions are generally established by the hegemonic state, or at least supported by it. Formal participation is designed to advantage the dominant state/s as in the World Bank, IMF and UN Security Council. In facilitating the hegemony, the institutions also align themselves ideologically with the prevailing order and as a result, play a significant material and ideological role in sustaining the hegemony in international relations (Cox, 1981). Hence the key and influential international institutions are embedded with the prevailing neoliberal principles. This includes the UN, WTO, World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). To influence such institutions and manifest itself internationally, a class's hegemony must present a new / unique form of the social relations of production to connect to social forces in other countries. Consequently, hegemony has to start at the national level (Bieler and Morton, 2004).

As a critical theory, the choice of ne-Gramscian theory enabled this study to place South Africa's choices (implicit and explicit) at the AU, SADC and the global level in historical perspective, while also questioning the status quo and its underlying factors.

2.3 Chapter conclusion

There has been substantial attention allocated to South Africa's hegemony or lack thereof in the AU and SADC, primarily through the application of the Liberalism/Neoliberalism, Neo-Realism and Neo-Marxist theories. There is no one definite conclusive "truth", as analysts are informed by their beliefs and approaches. The literature consulted on the three theories highlights the gaps that could be filled, theoretically and empirically, from an analysis conducted through a Gramscian/Neo-Gramscian lens. This would ensure that the analysis of South Africa's hegemonic challenge is holistic, comprehensive and nuanced.

Chapter Three will address the first research question: how does a neo-Gramscian conceptualisation of hegemony explain South Africa's self-proclaimed hegemonic role in the AU and SADC? The chapter further explores the theoretical framework within which this research is conducted and, informed by this neo-Gramscian perspective, discusses South Africa's history in the two organisations (AU and SADC) as well as the development of the country's current status in these.

CHAPTER THREE: THE NEO-GRAMSCIAN FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the first research question is addressed: How does a neo-Gramscian conceptualisation of hegemony explain South Africa's self-proclaimed hegemonic role in the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC)? In answering the question, the chapter will first look at the neo-Gramscian conceptual framework and key concepts utilised in the study to accommodate the data presented in Chapter Four. Thereafter follows an application of the concepts to South Africa's approach to SADC and the AU.

3.1 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is anchored on a Gramscian perspective. Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) was an Italian intellectual and communist politician whose writings have influenced various academic disciplines since the publication of prison writings he undertook between 1929 and 1935, and that were first published from 1947. Gramsci developed his theories through an analysis of the development and relations in the elaboration of the Italian and Mediterranean societies, and formation of the Italian state. The analysis was aimed at contextualising and finding alternatives in the struggle against fascism under the Benito Mussolini regime that had imprisoned him (Mittelman, 1998).

Gramsci is not the originator of the term 'hegemony'. Gramsci scholar David Morton (2007: 88) notes that there is arguably no one universally agreed upon "authorial" reference to the term 'hegemony'. He traces the term to the 19th century Italian philosopher Vincenzo Gioberti, and the Russian labour movement with the writings of Georgie Plekhanov and Vladimir Lenin. According to Morton (2007: 88):

> Gramsci probably had in mind Lenin's *Two Tactics of Social Democracy* which stressed how the proletariat should aim to exercise hegemony, implying leadership with the consent of allied classes such as the peasantry, the key idea being the hegemony of the dominant class, with the consent of other social classes.

Several related concepts bear relevance to the notion of hegemony and are discussed in this section, starting with *agency*. Gramsci's approach and analysis were informed by his philosophy of praxis. This is the concern with concrete measures to change current reality, specifically the social relations of production, through the possible mobilisation of allied social forces. Importantly, Gramsci departed from classic Marxism as he did not subscribe to "historical inevitability or the logic of history" in relation to structural change (Mittelman, 1998; Cox, 2007). Through the philosophy, structural change can be enacted and not simply waited or wished for. Central to this philosophy is the concept of agency. Gramsci believed in the significance of agency, which is crucial to understanding the dynamics of power and historical changes. Hence Gupta (2013: 38) notes that:

> So, when Gramsci describes Marxism as absolute historicism, what he means is that reality does not exist on its own, in and for itself, but only in a historical relationship with the men who modify it.

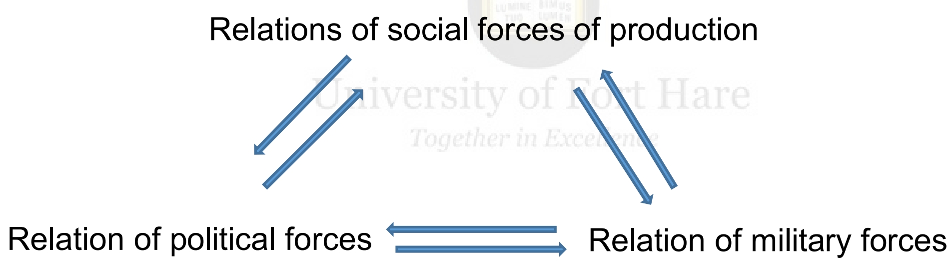
In this light, Gramsci viewed "praxis" as the human activity that, in relation to the historical conditions in which it is located, can shape the future (1971). Hegemony is thus a political, strategic praxis of leadership and relies on agency, hence the notion of the cultivation of consent by the hegemonic group / society, as this lends legitimacy (Cox, 1981; Morton, 2007).

While not subscribing to historical inevitability, Gramsci's theory of hegemony is also premised on the notion of *absolute historicism*. Through historicism, Gramsci propositioned that "all thought is conditioned by the circumstances in which it is formed" (Cox, 2007: 259), as history constitutes the evolving relationship of mind to society. For Gramsci, context enables a concept to gain precision, and sort out internal contradictions or ambiguities it might have. This gives absolute historicism its "explanatory powers". Gramsci utilised absolute historicism as his method of analysis, taking it from Marx and Engels (1888). From this perspective, and as an example, Gramsci understood that Marx's (and Engels') philosophy was informed by the historical context (Cox, 2007; Morton, 2007). The notion of absolute historicism is significant in that it allows for the placing of limits to agency, or the parameters of change in any given situation. This will be seen to assume significance in investigating the actions of the South African state in the continental and global arena in the 1990s and 2000s.

In addition, Gramsci's theory of hegemony centres on the *relations of social forces* that characterise the covert and overt struggle for hegemony in a society at a particular historic time. He referred to these as the relations of force, which occur within three dialectic moments (Figure 1). Morton (2007: 89) highlights that:

> These are the a) primacy of relations of production that form the basis of the relations of social force; b) the relation of political forces in which various social forces may contest for influence to gain a hegemonic position throughout society; and c) the relation of military forces, which could prove divisive in any struggle over hegemony and is understood as a strictly politico-military function.

Figure 1: Morton's depiction of Gramsci's dialectical moments



Importantly, within the second moment of political forces there are three additional relations that are focused on the articulation of ideas and 'subjective elements' beyond narrow economic interests. These are the economic-corporate level, solidarity of interests and transcended interests (Gramsci, 1971: 80 in Morton, 2007: 90). For hegemony to exist, the interests of the leading class have to transcend its narrow economic interests, thus enabling the establishment of a solidarity of interests across different classes. In other words, for a hegemony to exist, the "economic-corporative" has to be overcome (Adamson, 1980: 236). This conceptual shift beyond the economic foundation for domination is a key element of Gramsci's philosophy that separates him from the classic Marxist analysis, which is focused primarily on economic relations, as Gramsci emphasises the role played by ideas, values and the presentation of the interests of a particular class as universally valid.

With the focus on the relations of social forces, Gramsci underscored that hegemony is fundamentally a social construct. It is under continuous creation, thus leaving room for antagonistic expressions to develop (Adamson, 1980). The development of these expressions highlights that hegemony is a highly "contested, fragile and tenuous process rather than simply a structure or edifice, involving active struggle between a variety of relations of force" (Morton, 2007: 78). Hegemony does not exist infinitely; nor is it undisputed. The development of hegemony is connected to the development of a *historic bloc* in a society. The historic bloc is the actualisation of the class alliances formed around the identified transcended interests. It is the site of the compromises and adjustments made between the complex relations of the forces articulated by Gramsci. The historic bloc is of crucial importance because it drives the change that results in hegemony. According to Adamson (1980: 176) the bloc:

> Can be understood as the balance in the relations between the structure and the superstructure, the productive economic life of a society and its political and cultural awareness, its being and its consciousness.

The bloc then constitutes the values and images (economic, political, cultural, ideological, moral, intellectual) that the hegemon seeks to propagate in a society at a particular historic time. It is essentially the outcome of contestation in the arena of relations of political forces. The outcome is characterised by the integration of a variety of different class interests that are disseminated throughout society, and relationships formed by the leading social class in this pursuit (Morton, 2007).

Consequently, social change in Gramscian philosophy rests on the formation and actions of the historic bloc (Katz, 2006: 335). The historic bloc is informed by '*historical materialism'*, in that ideas and the material conditions dialectically engage. Ideas cannot be viewed separately from the material conditions in which they emerge. Marx and Engels (1888) developed this perspective and understanding of historical materialism, arguing that intellectual production changes its character in proportion to changes in material production. The historical bloc is in many ways a mirror into that dialectic. The development of a historic bloc is not a given, nor is it uninterrupted. Hegemonies grow out of historic blocs, but not all historic blocs are hegemonic. A social class which establishes itself as an intellectual and moral bloc will by definition be hegemonic in relation to itself, but its political alliances with other such groups may or may not develop into a hegemonic relationship (Morton, 2007).

Another concept of crucial importance to Gramsci is that of intellectuals in hegemonies. He (1971: 131) argued that while all have the potential to be intellectuals by virtue of having and using an intellect, "not all are intellectuals by social function". From his perspective:

> Intellectuals in the functional sense fall into two groups. In the first place there are the "traditional" professional intellectuals, literary, scientific and so on, whose position in the interstices of society has a certain inter-class aura about it but derives ultimately from past and present class relations and conceals an attachment to various historical class formations. Secondly, there are the "organic" intellectuals, the thinking and organising element of a particular fundamental social class. These organic intellectuals are distinguished less by their profession, which may be any job characteristic of their class, than by their function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong.

Intellectuals are critical role-players in the struggle over ideology. Both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic social forces rely on intellectuals to provide guidance and leadership in the dissemination of knowledge and ideas. Organic intellectuals have an important role to play in building a new historic bloc, connected to classes and social movements in ways that help to conceptualise political possibilities via the creation of a common political project and shared identity. As a counter-hegemonic force, organic intellectuals strive to contest the hegemonic ideas and "common sense" within society (Thomas, 2012: 118).

The relevance of Gramsci's ideas, as explained above, will be illustrated in the study, specifically in addressing the two research questions in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. The concepts underpinning hegemony suggest that in any society, with the existence of a historic bloc and accepting the notion of agency, the possibility for change exists. However, in the case of South Africa, it will be seen that the organic intellectuals who could have developed a new historic bloc chose instead to ally themselves with the dominant class fraction and to accept the existing relation of social forces of production. The phenomenon of a “passive revolution” was evident in the transition to democracy in SA and the organic intellectuals who had assumed political roles leading the struggle against Apartheid, once a change of regime was in sight, articulated the interests of the dominant group: white national and transnational capital.

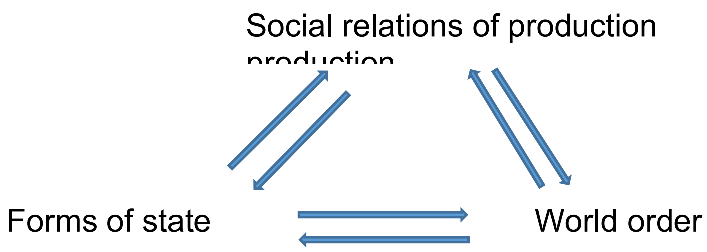
3.2 Robert Cox and hegemony in global politics

Contemporary IR studies remain preoccupied with seeking to provide relevant conceptual frameworks to better analyse and understand developments at the international level in the face of increasing complexities and role-players, outside of the traditional approaches. Scholar and critical theorist Cox (1981: 135-8) first applied Gramsci’s concepts to global politics and world order. Cox focused on hegemony, and the relations of social forces of production and the impact on the international order.

For Cox (1981:135-8), hegemony within a historical structure is constituted by three spheres of activity (Figure 2):

> The *social relations of production*, encompassing the totality of social relations in material, institutional and discursive forms that engender particular social forces; *forms of state*, consisting of historically contingent state civil society complexes; and *world orders*, which not only represent phases of stability and conflict, but also permit scope for thinking about how alternative forms of world order might emerge.

Figure 2: Cox’s spheres of activity in a historical structure

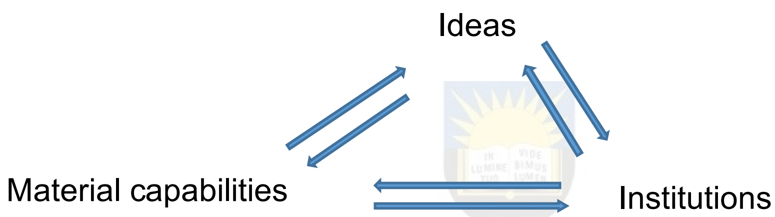


Within each of the above spheres, there are three elements that reciprocally combine to constitute a historical structure. Morton (2007: 115) highlights the elements as:

> *Ideas,* understood as intersubjective meanings as well as collective images of world order; *material capabilities*, referring to accumulated resources; and *institutions*, which are amalgams of the previous two elements and are means of stabilising a particular order.

Collectively, the three elements ensure the uniqueness of a specific historical structure at a particular era. The dialect between them differs from historic structure to historic structure.

Figure 3: Cox's historical structure



Cox's neo-Gramscian perspective provides a Critical Theory route to hegemony. Instead of viewing structures and orders as historical inevitabilities, or as given, Critical Theory concerns itself with understanding "how the order came about, how it may be changing and how that change may be influenced or challenged" (Cox, 1992: 2). It provides a historical analysis focused on understanding the interrelated elements that inform a structure. In a critical departure from the positivist paradigms that have focused on hegemony as dominance through material advantages, the neo-Gramscian perspective centres its analysis on the relations between social interests in the struggle for leadership based on consensus (Morton, 2007: 134). This is in line with Gramsci's articulation of hegemony as a socially created structure, made possible by various social investments. In basing his philosophy on historicism, Cox's perspective is defined in terms of the dialectic between continuity and change, understood as an explanation for the interactions between mental processes through which people conceive action and the material structures that constrain action in different historical periods, with the parameters for change ultimately informed by social forces and the overarching system of states within a global configuration (Mittelman, 1998: 1967).

For Cox then, hegemony is decidedly not ahistorical. It appears as an expression of a broadly-based consent, manifested in the acceptance of ideas and supported by material resources and institutions, which is initially established by social class forces occupying a leading role within a state, but then is projected outwards on a world scale.

Cox (1981: 139) argues that within a world order, a situation of hegemony may prevail:

> Based on a coherent conjunction or fit between a configuration of material power, the prevalent collective image of world order (including certain norms) and a set of institutions which administer the order with a certain semblance of universality.

Cox (1983: 170) applies his theory through viewing historical development in the global order in four distinct periods that highlight the development of a hegemonic and non-hegemonic era. The four periods are: 1845–1875 (British Empire hegemony); 1875–1945 (non-hegemonic period during which other states challenged the British supremacy); 1945–1965 (US hegemony following World War II victory); and 1965–present (questioning of the US hegemony as the global order is under strain due to inequality, and calls for structural change).

The last two periods lend the context to the study because of the emergence of post-colonial independent states and the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in the first, and the transition to democracy in South Africa, and substitution of the OAU by the AU in the second. In both periods, hegemony as a historical structure was significant, as it set the framework for post-Apartheid South Africa's entry into the international arena. The two periods will structure the theoretical analysis of South Africa's choices around the three elements of a historical structure conceptualised by Cox (1983), namely, ideation and consent; material capabilities and resources; and institutions.

Cox (1983)'s contribution is key in understanding the development of the global order and the underlying structures. Critically, through the theory, we can understand that arrangements of social forces (ideas, constitutions and material capabilities), forms of state and world orders, collectively characterise different historical periods. Consequently, an analysis of a historical structure and period has to consider the underlying relations of production that form the basis of the hegemony. Cox's theory further highlights the transitionary character of hegemonic world structures, and their specificity to their certain periods (Mittelman, 1998: 72).

The neo-Gramscian perspective offers a conceptual framework that places South Africa's engagement in the AU and SADC in historic context ideationally, materially and institutionally; that offers a Critical Theory analysis of the periods and social relations of production that informed the state's engagement at the domestic, regional and global levels; and of the possibilities that were open to it in relation to change.

3.3 South Africa's transition to democracy

The notion that South Africa has a special place to play in Southern Africa and the rest of the Continent is one assumed by both the Apartheid regime and the post-1994 governments. The former was influenced by its self-portrayal as the last European outpost in Africa, and thus defender of white civilisation (Vestergaard, 2001). This view was reinforced by the regime's economic, military and technological strength in comparison to the immediate and outer regions. Despite these advantages, the regime irrefutably did not have the Continent's consent for its assumed material-based dominance.

Consequently, it employed various tactics in seeking consent to its dominant role. Among others, it proposed the Constellation of Southern African States in 1980, through which the regime sought to co-opt the Frontline States (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, and Zambia) (Price, 1984). This was the attempted 'bantustanisation' of the region which was hindered by Zimbabwe's independence (Adedeji, 1996: 10). In the face of the rejection, the regime tried coercion in seeking acquiescence through destabilising the immediate region, with army raids. A racist basis for statehood and public policy in a Continent of Africans was hardly the foundation for any conceivable consent from other African states.

By the time South Africa joined the OAU in 1994, Africa had undergone considerable change since the independence gained in the 1960s. Politically, a significant number of the 52 OAU member states had governments that limited freedoms in their countries such as Equatorial Guinea, Congo, Cameroon, Nigeria, The Gambia, Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Continent experienced over 50 coups in over 20 countries over the three decades since Ghana's independence in 1957. The coups were informed by various factors, for example, the continued interference of former colonial powers such as Belgium and France; Cold War dynamics where African states became sites for proxy wars; responses to ethnic-rooted exclusion from power; and political factionalism (Roessler, 2011; Barka and Ncube, 2011). Suffice to say, there was a lack of institutionalised democracy in the majority of OAU member states. The OAU's focus was on territorial integrity and the defence of the independence of the post-colonial states.

By 1994, the Continent's overall economic prospects were worse than was expected at independence. Between 1983 and 1989 a number of African countries south of the Sahara implemented Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) as the neoliberal conditions for loans received from the World Bank and the IMF. The economies of the countries were structured for maximum exploitation by colonialism, and the post-independence economies remained structurally impotent to reverse this course, as the global political economy remained the same as under colonialism. The debt crisis that faced many African countries in the 1970s and 1980s exposed this reality. The failure of the SAPs by the 1990s and the retracting of the loans further indebted African governments, continuing a cycle of balance of payment deficits that triggered further social discontent (Barka and Ncube, 2011). The SAPs, which were based on neoliberal principles of lowered social spending; privatisation; inflation targeting; and market autonomy, were not suited for the conditions and challenges that faced the African economies at the time. Fundamentally, the SAPs did not address the structural marginalisation and exploitation of African economies, which had been constructed during colonialism (Heidhues and Obare, 2011).

Despite the economic and political challenges faced by many countries, the OAU and the immediate region remained steadfast in their support of the struggle against the Apartheid regime. Countries such as Lesotho, Botswana, eSwatini, Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia sheltered exiles, and some hosted the camps of the armed wings of the banned political parties. Others, such as Ethiopia, facilitated the struggle through providing travelling documents and training for the guerrilla forces. Among the OAU's key measures of support was to establish the Liberation Committee to coordinate its support, and a fund to which member states contributed. It is African countries, led by Nigeria, that gave support and anchored the work of the UN Special Committee against Apartheid, which started working in 1963, in the face of resistance from the powerful countries of the West. Through the Committee's efforts, South African liberation movements were accorded official observer status in the UN General Assembly (United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid Reports 1963 -1994).

As the Apartheid government showed stronger signs of releasing political prisoners, then-ANC President Oliver Tambo consulted widely in the region (using Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda's presidential plane), seeking support and advice for the way forward. The ANC's Harare Declaration of 1989 partly resulted from the consultations regionally and was first adopted by the Frontline States, then the OAU and thereafter the United Nations. African leaders such as the former Tanzanian President, Julius Nyerere, were among those that provided counsel (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2018). The OAU remained invested in the liberation of South Africa until the proclamation of the new republic in 1994.

The collapse of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) from 1989 was pivotal in framing the post-Apartheid international global order in which South Africa would seek acceptance, support and integration. On one hand, the disintegration took away the Apartheid regime's stated purpose of leading the fight against the spread of communism in Southern Africa. On the other, it highlighted the triumph of the US-led neoliberal global order.

In unbanning the ANC and all other banned political movements on 2 February 1990, then-State President F.W. De Klerk highlighted the developments of 1989 as a key motivating factor in the regime's decision to pursue negotiations. In De Klerk's view, the fall of the USSR not only weakened the organisational capability of the organisations that had been supported by the USSR; it also offered new possibilities for the regime in its plans to reinvent itself and leverage the support it still maintained with powers such as the US and Britain (De Klerk, 1990). It was never the intention of the National Party to lose political power, and the ANC realised the need to put out a message that was aligned with the prevailing global neoliberal hegemony, particularly considering the 1989 developments.

In the first six months after his release on 11 February 1990, Mandela would make visits to the US, Britain, Germany, France, and Sweden among others, where he met with public, business and civil society leaders, as well as addressing parliamentary sessions. This included interviews with influential media in the West such as *Time* magazine. Mandela's core message was simple, that post-Apartheid South Africa needed the support of the international role-players to transition into a democracy and provide the public goods expected by the majority; and would work to provide security for their continued and future investment (Schneider, 2018).

Against this background, the post-1994 government did not interrogate the basis of the assumption of leadership and hegemony by the Apartheid state. It continued on the premise that South Africa should and would assume the leadership position, primarily based on the material resources advantages, and the narrative of its exceptionalism stemming from its transition (Alden and Schoeman, 2013). This approach had implications for South Africa's engagement with the historical structure it had to operate within.

The following sections will apply Cox's three elements of a hegemonic historic structure, specifically ideation and consent; material capabilities and resources; and institutions, to South Africa. The analysis aims to provide insights into the social relations of production and power structures that have informed South Africa's engagement in the AU and SADC.

3.3.1 Ideation and consent

Ideas are central to the neo-Gramscian perspective in understanding hegemony. Cox (1981:136) defined two broad kinds of ideas. The first consists of intersubjective meanings, or shared notions of the nature of social relations which tend to preserve habits and expectations of behaviour. In the contemporary global politics, Cox (1981) cites the notion that states relate to each other through diplomatic channels and the organising authority of states over people, as examples of intersubjective meanings.

The period after WWII was marked by the development of a new hegemonic global order led by the US, particularly in relation to the role of the government and market in fostering development. Before the 1980s most developing countries, including African countries, favoured a system in which the government has a strong interventionist role to augment the unequal role their economies had in the global market. Consequently, this translated into policies that included regulations on capital flows and support for national over foreign investors. This was a counter-hegemonic position borrowed from the USSR. In the United Nations context, developing countries lobbied for a 'New International Economic Order' to address the North-South gap, and promote collective actions in areas such as commodity prices, technological development and development assistance. The US actively worked with other Western countries to frustrate these efforts, thereby cultivating consent within the Western world against the counter-hegemonic position (Aggarwal and Weber, 2012).

The election of Margaret Thatcher (UK), Ronald Reagan (US) and Helmut Kohl (Germany) in the early 1980s ensured that the efforts for the New International Economic Order would gain no traction, and cemented the US's leadership of the hegemonic project. Supported by big business, the governments championed free trade, free investment, deregulation, and privatisation as the best route to grow economies (Broad and Cavanagh, 1999: 79). In 1989 John Williamson, a Senior Fellow at the Institute for International Economics, based in Washington DC, summed up the 10 policies that characterised the export-led growth paradigm and termed them the Washington Consensus, as they were supported by the political leadership in Washington, the economic agencies of the US government, and the technocrats in the World Bank and IMF (Broad and Cavanagh, 1999). The support led to the growth of ‘corporate friendly’ agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1993 and the creation of the World Trade Organisation in 1994. Similar agreements were pursued with other countries. The hegemony of the US economic model was in full effect, and was reflected in the expansion of its corporations globally.

3.3.1.1 Mandela era 1994 – 1999

In this context, there were shared notions that the influential proponents of the Washington Consensus (governments, private sector) expected post-Apartheid South Africa to subscribe to in its quest for support, acceptance and leadership in the Continent. As noted by Cox (1981: 136) shared notions are historically conditioned. From this, we understand that the articulation of South Africa’s post-Apartheid policies has to be considered in the context of the period they occurred.

The secret meetings held between the ANC and the NP from 1985 to 1989, some with Mandela directly and others with the exiled leadership in Zambia, served to shape the ANC’s post-Apartheid policy shifts on key policies such as nationalisation. The meetings further served to reassure the Apartheid elite (government and business) that the globally shared notions of protecting investments, export orientated trade, and other neoliberal principles would be protected in the new dispensation. The ANC did not have a defined ideology leading to the negotiations, separate from its positioning on seeking a non-racial, non-sexist society with equal rights for all before the law.

Against this background and as highlighted in Chapter 1, two key documents in 1993 (ANC’s ‘*Foreign Policy in a new democratic South Africa: A discussion paper’,* and Mandela’s ‘*South Africa’s Future Foreign Policy*’) presented the incoming government’s conceptualisation of South Africa’s post-1994 relations with the rest of the Continent. Significant concepts in both were that South Africa’s future was ‘intertwined’ with the rest of Southern Africa, and the Continent; and that South Africa would not seek domination over others “through force of arms, economic might or subversion” (Mandela, 1994). Mandela’s article specified the policy areas that the ANC had identified as priorities for the development of Southern Africa, namely, economic development, trade, democracy, disarmament and non-proliferation, and peace and security.

Both documents articulated positions aligned to the prevailing global intersubjective meanings at the time. There was little attention given to the social construction of the meanings; the relations informing the construction; and the ideological underpinnings. In both documents, the fall of the USSR was taken as the starting point for South Africa's post-Apartheid reintegration into global politics. There was an explicit lack of ideation autonomous from the global hegemony led by the US. By 1994 the shared notions that had been cemented through the 1980s included the benefits of trade liberation through agreements; and disarmament and non-proliferation for developing countries. Their inclusion in the ANC's agenda pre- and post-transition was in alignment with the prevailing notions.

Mandela's approach to the AU and SADC was thus steeped in liberal and neoliberal principles from the onset (pre-release and after his release). His focus was on promoting reform and adherence to the principles of good governance, democracy, human rights, and stability for increased investment. His focus ensured that neoliberal policies were inserted into national policy from 1994, building on the ANC's acquiescence to the global intersubjective meanings. The 1996 Constitution reflects this alignment in a number of areas, which include the shared notions of the sanctity of property ownership as an essential element of a free market economic system. This and other policies were inserted into the national policies. Mandela's approach was further informed by the domestic financial requirements arising from the transition, and the international expectations of his status as a human rights icon (Schneider, 2018).

Throughout his term, Mandela was consistent in this approach, as reflected in his public addresses at OAU/AU and SADC meetings that focused on trade liberalisation, peace, stability, democracy, human rights, co-operation and development, and good governance. By 1995, South Africa's vision of regional integration was firmly along neoliberal policies that include trade liberation, and "disciplined approaches" to fiscal and monetary matters (Mandela, 1995: 2). A key omission was how this would be achieved. There was no ideation put forward by South Africa on policy interventions that would underpin and drive the restructuring that was separate from the global hegemonic order.

3.3.1.2 Mbeki era 1999-2008

Continuing from Mandela's focus on good governance, free trade, democracy and human rights, Mbeki (1999: 1). encapsulated these principles and more around an all-encompassing concept of an African Renaissance. The main tasks of the renaissance would include:

> The establishment of democratic political systems that take into account African specifics; establishing the institutions and procedures which would enable the continent collectively to deal with questions of democracy, peace and stability; achieving sustainable economic development; qualitatively changing Africa's place in the world economy; and strengthening the genuine independence of African countries and the Continent in their relations with the major powers and enhancing their role in the determination of the global system of governance in all fields.

Mbeki strengthened South Africa's neoliberal framed continental agenda. South Africa led the conceptualisation and establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) as institutional measures to support the incorporation of the neoliberal agenda. By the end of Mbeki's first term as President in 2003, NEPAD and the APRM were established as AU institutions and processes. Through NEPAD and the APRM, South Africa sought to link good governance, democracy, and human rights to foreign direct investment (Kondlo and Landsberg, 2007: 8), in line with policies of Western countries. Mbeki lobbied Western countries and made changes to NEPAD and APRM frameworks to ensure they were aligned to the global hegemonic project, as reflected in the endorsement by the G8 2002 Kananaskis Summit. These continental concepts and frameworks promoted by Mbeki will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

The transformation of the OAU into the AU was another important milestone in Mbeki's neoliberal agenda. South Africa sought to change the continental governance architecture (Kondlo and Landsberg, 2007). South Africa was actively engaged in the establishment of the AU, and the AU Charter is infused with the neoliberal and normative values that also underpin the South African Constitution. Through the

Charter, member states bound themselves to promote and protect human and peoples' rights; consolidate democratic institutions, culture and popular participation; ensure good governance and the rule of law; promote social justice to ensure balanced economic development; and coordinate and harmonise the policies between the existing and future Regional Economic Communities towards the achievement of the Union's gradual integration (AU, 2000). On the SADC side, South Africa pushed for the implementation of protocols relevant to its priorities on free trade, politics and defence, and finance and investment during Mbeki's term (Kondlo and Landsberg, 2007).

In promoting the neoliberal aligned governance and economic policies in the two organisations, South Africa encountered opposition, as it could not convince most of the states that a proposition made in support of the US global hegemonic project was also in their interest. This resistance manifested itself in different ways from 1994 to 2008. For example, the 2003 AU Summit decided to integrate NEPAD into the AU. Despite the decision the integration was "a painful and divisive process" with some countries interpreting the AU decision differently (Maloka 2018 in Adebajo and Virk 2018: 297). The opposition can be attributed to other African states concluding that South Africa was a conduit of the US hegemonic project. The cited evidence is the orientation of South Africa's economic policy since 1996; and the framework underpinning NEPAD and the APRM (Bond, 2004, 2005; Miller, Saunders and Oloyede, 2008; Umezurike, Iwu and Asuelime, 2016). South Africa did not have its own autonomous agenda (Bond, 2000).

Critically, the very existence of many African governments was threatened by the positions promoted by Mandela and Mbeki. South Africa's approach was underpinned by the advancement of liberal and neoliberal principles (good governance, market liberalisation, etc.), and this could not be successfully implemented "without eroding the very nature of the post-colonial (Southern) African state and undermining the positions of incumbent elites" (Taylor, 2011: 1238). This threat served to undermine South Africa's aims at influencing and institutionalising the appropriated identified norms (Taylor, 2011). It is this threat that arguably ensured that Mandela's call for the OAU to support sanctions against Nigeria did not find support in 1995, following the execution of Ogoni activists. The elites that have entrenched positions in the post-colonial state are varied. Depending on country contexts, they include the political leaders in government; the private sector that benefits from the status quo; and external actors that also benefit from the status quo.

3.3.1.3 Zuma era 2009 – 2017

Zuma's administration noticeably sought a different orientation in engaging the two organisations, moving away from the normative and transformational ideations of Mandela and Mbeki. His approach to SADC and AU has been viewed as pragmatic (Khadiagala and Nganje, 2016) and consensus driven (Saunders, 2014). Critically, he did not elaborate on his predecessors' neoliberal agenda.

Cox (1981:136), argues that intersubjective meanings or notions are historically conditioned, that the notions have not always been there, and it is possible to trace their origins and to detect signs of a weakening of some of them. Zuma understood this in his approach to both domestic and foreign politics. In contrast to 1994, the national and global context had changed. Nationally, Zuma came to power through an alliance that primarily wanted an alternative to the neoliberal policies (particularly economic) that had been promoted by Mbeki. The lack of consultation on the policy shift from the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to the 1996 Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR), and continued marginalisation of the left wing of the Tripartite Alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), in policy making since, was a key factor in Mbeki's recall. The recall was the manifestation on the continued internal ideational contestation within the ANC, as well as within the Tripartite Alliance. Mbeki was viewed as allied to the West, and the ineffectiveness of the neoliberal policies to halt the weakening of the South African economy and unemployment increased social discontent. Zuma expediently used the oppositional positioning of socialism by the SACP and COSATU as a purely populist tactic, as he had no ideological allegiance to socialism.

Zuma's position was supported by developments abroad. Globally, by 2009 at the policy level, the Washington Consensus was no longer the unquestionable framework. Even at the height of its entrenchment in the global system, there was resistance to it in the form of academia and NGOs who worked to expose its disadvantages for developing countries (Lopes, 2012). A post-Washington Consensus paradigm gained traction, highlighting the uniqueness of economies and need for nuance in policy interventions. It challenged the World Bank and IMF's one-size-fits-all neoliberal impositions on developing countries, and the cycle of sovereign debt caused as a result (Güven, 2018; Birdsall and Fukuyama, 2011).

In addition, the 2008 financial crisis, which originated in the US, placed pressure on proponents of the US economic model. The financial crisis exposed the fragility of free market-based economies that have limited regulation for their financial and banking services. The idea that economic growth can only be attained through neoliberal policies as promoted by the US hegemony was put into question with China's ascendancy (Horesh and Lim, 2017). Along with Brazil, India and Russia, China had formalised their co-operation as the BRIC group. Critically, China did not present new ideas, but utilised the existing neoliberal institutions (UN, WTO, etc.) to its advantage, while also seeking new structures, such as the BRIC group, to strengthen its voice (Pan and Kavalski, 2018). It used its material advantages to pursue its objectives, rather than ideas, which appealed to Zuma.

The Post-Washington Consensus paradigm, also known as the Beijing Consensus, presented the second kind of intersubjective meanings or shared notions highlighted by Cox (1981: 136). These are the ideas relevant to a historical structure that are collective images of social order held by different groups of people. Cox (1981) argues that there are different views on both the nature and legitimacy of prevailing power relations, the meaning of justice and public goods and so forth. Whereas intersubjective meanings are broadly common throughout a particular historic structure and constitute the common ground of social discourse, collective images may be varied and opposed to each other. The clash of rival collective images provides evidence of the potential for alternative paths of development and raises questions as to the possible material and institutional basis for the emergence of an alternative structure. The collective images promoted nationally, and globally in 2009 provided Zuma's administration with possibilities for pursuing a different course, and a differently constituted state as opposed to his two predecessors.

On the continent, he focused on security and defence issues; strengthening bilateral relations with selected countries like Angola, Central African Republic and Equatorial Guinea; and regional infrastructure development. While he continued the mediation efforts in Zimbabwe and Madagascar, he did not attach the resolution of the conflicts to the promotion of good governance, democracy or human rights, nor the African Renaissance; nor to any promises of aid or better trade from developed countries, like his predecessors. South Africa was no longer the spokesperson for adherence to the hegemonic global order in the Continent. South Africa’s relations with SADC under the administration continued, with no apparent intensification or weakening. South Africa successfully utilised its SADC membership to ensure Dr Dlamini Zuma’s election as the AU Commission Chair in 2012 (Saunders and Nagar, 2018, in Adebajo and Virk, 2018).

In seeking to depart from the neoliberal hegemony, Zuma pursued and prioritised relations with other centres of power. He strengthened bilateral ties significantly with China and Russia. One of the successes of his administration was South Africa’s admission to the BRIC group during December 2010. This was Zuma’s priority when taking office in 2009, and he made sure to visit all the four member countries in 2010 as part of his lobbying (Hervieu, 2011). In joining BRICS, South Africa sought to join influential countries offering a counterweight to the neoliberal global order, especially as expressed through international organisations. The Zuma administration viewed the bloc as “playing an important role towards the shifting and distribution of power internationally, towards the rise of a multi-polar world order” (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2013: 2), and transforming global governance. In seeking a counterweight, the administration was making a statement that alternative centres of power, institutional arrangements, and approaches to global governance were possible. It was further making the point that the globally dominant policy narrative is not necessarily the only policy route available.

Zuma’s departure from the frontlines of the neoliberal agenda received opposition from the social forces that have participated in the (re-) production of South Africa’s assimilation to the neoliberal hegemony. This is particularly true of the neoliberal academics, think tanks and media. He was criticised for ignoring ‘traditional’ relations such as with the US and the Strategic Partnership with the EU (Calland and Temin, 2018; Allison, 2012). As noted by Bob Jessop, et al. (1988, in Thomas, 2012), the strength of a hegemonic project is that it is often articulated by others outside of this class. For it is typically the role of organic intellectuals (such as financial journalists, politicians, philosophers, engineers, and sociologists) to elaborate hegemonic projects, rather than members of the economically dominant class or class faction. In the South African political economy, the economically dominant class has not changed since Apartheid and the compromises made during the 1994 transition structurally entrenched the dominance.

This dominance manifested itself in the opposition that has been mounted on various policy initiatives not in favour of the neoliberal hegemony that the Zuma administration initiated. These include the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act to allow government control of 20% of new ventures in the sectors. The revised 2017 Mining Charter sought 30% black ownership and has been contested in court by the Chamber of Mines; and in 2016 the ANC supported the idea of land expropriated without compensation under increasing pressure from dispossessed communities (Shipalana, 2017). All these initiatives met with opposition from domestic and international supporters of the neoliberal order. The contestation also came from the recognition that the policies would be utilised for cronyism and self-enrichment, which characterised the Zuma's presidency. The contestation continues and weakened the Zuma administration's attempts at redefining South Africa's relations with the global order. The lack of a domestic hegemony continues to be a challenge for South Africa.

3.4 Material capabilities and resources

Cox (1981:136) defines material capabilities as productive and destructive potentials:

> In their dynamic form these exist in the technological and organisational capabilities; and in their accumulated forms as natural resources that technology can transform, stocks of equipment (e.g. industries and armaments), and the wealth which can command these.

From this conceptualisation, the strength of South Africa's material resources and capabilities has changed since 1994. At the time of Mandela's release in 1992, South

Africa was in the middle of a recession that had started in 1988 due to a decline in investment by the parastatals, and weakened consumer and business confidence (Fallon and de Silva, 1994). International sanctions, the costs of maintaining the Apartheid regime militarily, and the constraints that hindered the effective participation of all citizens in the economy, also contributed.

Despite the structural weaknesses to South Africa's material resources and capabilities, as a result of colonialism and Apartheid (e.g. lack of skilled labour), in 1994 the South African economy was still the most diversified in Africa (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 1994). It had been open to inflows of foreign direct investment and technology for many decades; it had a not insignificant physical, banking, and human resource base; it had developed a globally competitive edge in some complex activities (metallurgy, mining equipment, chemicals and paper); and the manufacturing sector was relatively large and diversified (Lall, 1993: 3 in Padayachee, 2005: 550).

South Africa utilised state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to drive the industrialisation. Many of the SOEs were established in the first half of the 20th century in support of the development of the infrastructure required to build a resource-based economy. State ownership of the entities was necessitated by the huge capital requirements for these infrastructure investments (Robb and Mondliwa, 2013). A number of the SOEs such as Eskom (energy), Transnet (rail and port), SAA (aviation), and Denel (aerospace and military technology) dominated the Southern African region, becoming market leaders due to significant investment in research and development by the government in the period between 1994 and 2008. This approach gave South Africa technological capabilities to transform its natural resources (including mineral resources) to valued products and services. The technological capabilities were complemented by technical and managerial expertise; as well as the capital investment in the institutions that enabled growth and development.

One of the key defining legacies of the Zuma administration is the patronage network that fed off the maladministration and corruption at the SOEs, which effectively eroded their competitiveness and financial sustainability (Mutize and Gossel, 2017). Consequently, South Africa lost the lead it had. Other African countries such as

Ethiopia (aviation), Rwanda (ICT) and Mauritius (financial services) have invested in research and development and effective implementation, and have become regional leaders in their own right in specific sectors. This has implications for South Africa. The first is the glaring disconnect between the country's persistent public stance on good governance with the continued hosting of the NEPAD Agency, and the APRM. The second is that other countries, with the right investment, are equally capable of developing expertise without necessarily being aligned to the specific neoliberal model the country advocated for under Mandela and Mbeki. Ethiopia and Rwanda are two of the fasted growing economies in Africa and do not fully subscribe to the hegemonic neoliberal principles prescribed by the West.

South Africa's material resources and capabilities have also been impacted by the trade policies it implemented post-1994. As discussed earlier, the Washington Consensus promoted an export-focused economic growth policy framework, characterised by trade agreements. In line with this paradigm, South Africa joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1995. Apartheid South Africa was a founding member of the WTO's predecessor, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1944, and advanced its interests there as a developed country. According to Faizel Ismael (2012: 3), former South African Ambassador to the WTO, the GATT's Uruguay Round of negotiations from 1986 to 1994 found a post-Apartheid South Africa "forced to undertake developed country commitments in key market access areas, including Agriculture, Industrial Tariffs and Services".

Consequently, since South Africa liberalised its markets, the manufacturing sector has been unable to compete with manufacturing firms in other countries such as China, Vietnam and Bangladesh (Rodrik, 2006 in Bhorat and Rooney, 2017), with the sector declining by a further 20% since 2001, resulting in further job losses in an already high unemployment climate in the country. William, et al. (2014) also note that the three factors which have historically made South African manufacturing competitive – low labour costs, a cheap and reliable electricity supply and government support through subsidies and tariffs – have slowly been eroded. As highlighted by Imbs (2013) this has led to an accelerated deindustrialisation of the South African economy, with the different regions becoming more alike in their increasing production of services, with imports substituting the products that are no longer being produced, or are not being produced competitively. This has greatly affected South Africa's material capabilities and resources at its disposal in pursuit of a hegemony.

As discussed above, the Washington Consensus has underpinned South Africa's domestic and external policies, such as the export-focused economic growth. Neoliberal principles are the core of the post-RDP policies: GEAR of 1996; the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) of 2005; and the National Development Plan of 2012 (NDP).

In 1996 the Mandela administration discarded the RDP in favour of GEAR. Adopted in 1994 in the lead up to the inaugural national elections, the RDP was redistributive and envisaged a strong interventionist role for the government across the sectors. It was an important symbol of an alternative reality or structure that could be built. South African political activist and socialist scholar, Neville Alexander (2010: 3), recalled the ambitions of the RDP to:

> Create jobs through public works; to build a million new houses with electricity and flush toilets; to extend primary health care and provide ten years of free education to all South Africans; to redistribute land through a land claims court; end the value-added tax on basic foodstuffs; and to implement extensive affirmative action measures in both the private and public sectors.

In contrast, GEAR's point of departure was that growth could be achieved through transformations aimed at a competitive outward looking economy. It stressed the need for market-led growth; fiscal and monetary prudence; and investor confidence. Its core focus was the balance of payments; inflation targeting; and the centrality of foreign direct investment – all neoliberal policies. As noted by South African economist academic, Sampie Terreblanche, GEAR was clearly situated in the Washington Consensus paradigm, more so the anti-state views promoted by the Reagan/Thatcher paradigm (1999: 3). It is worth noting that the 15-member technical team that produced the document included two officials from the World Bank (South African Department of Finance, 1996). In 1994, the World Bank had warned the incoming government against sudden and unexpected shifts in economic policies to ensure investor confidence. GEAR and the subsequent aligned policies were a return to the World Bank sanctioned policies.

ASGISA and the NDP continued along this Western approved line, with South Africa's growth and development dependent on free trade; appeasing the markets and investors; and increased exports, particularly into the rest of the Continent. GEAR and ASGISA did not meet their targets (Laubscher, 2017). With the continued entrenched inequality, poverty and unemployment, the NDP is also not on course to meet its targets for these three areas by the 2030 self-imposed deadline. The pressures that the post-Apartheid government received from the Washington Consensus agents remain on policy making (Padayachee, 2005), despite these realities. This is because the domestic policy vacuum continues and it is in this void that the influence endures.

International Financial Institutions (IFIs), such as the World Bank and the IMF, have clearly influenced the formulation of South Africa's policies, in particular the macroeconomic policy. They have, however, been supported by equally powerful domestic forces embracing and promoting neoliberal policies as the only feasible path. At the beginning of 1996 these included the South African Foundation, a collection of the 50 largest corporates in the country, which published an attack on the RDP and called for neoliberal policies. In response, in June 1996, the government unveiled GEAR. Thomas (2012: 118) notes that as a result, the multiple social forces acting both within and outside South Africa worked to simultaneously create a particular world order (neoliberal globalisation), while at the same time sustaining that world order by arguing that South Africa must conform to its precepts. In conforming through GEAR, ASGISA and the NDP, South Africa continues to be without an independent ideation on its own development path and the policies that are needed.

South Africa's economic and corporate dominance in the region has largely been through its corporate sector. The expansion has been facilitated by the neoliberal policy agenda that has driven the post-Apartheid domestic and regional agendas. In acceding to the dominant neoliberal policy, economic policies, since GEAR, have been developed with capital in mind: capital in the form of domestic-based and transnational capital with interests in the country. Maximum engagement with capital as vehicles to promote growth has been pursued as a core element of South Africa's foreign economic policy (National Development Plan, 2012; Taylor, 2011). Prior to 1994 and since, with the successive post-Apartheid governments' strategies and policies, leveraging market access to support domestic social and economic transformation has been an explicit objective, in line with the neoliberal economic policy.

3.5 Institutions

Institutions, the third element of hegemony, are a critical component in understanding hegemonic historic structures in neo-Gramscian theory. Cox (1981) states that institutionalisation of hegemonic ideas or beliefs is the vehicle for preserving and perpetuating a particular order. The makeup and focus of the institutions reflect the power relations prevailing at their point of origin, and tend to, at least initially, promote collective images consistent with the power relations. The institution will then reflect the prevailing collective image at a particular historical era, from the contesting images. Cox (1981: 137) also argues that with time, institutions do assume their own lives, either:

> Becoming a battleground of opposing tendencies or stimulating the creation of rival institutions reflecting different tendencies. Ultimately, institutions are specific blends of ideation and material power, which in turn influence the development of ideas and material capabilities.

The institutionalisation of ideas therefore has a significant role in the development and maintenance of a hegemony. International organisations are one of the mechanisms through which the norms of the hegemonic order are expressed and reinforced. The features of international organisations in this role include; a) they embody the rules which facilitate the expansion of hegemonic world orders; b) they are themselves the product of the hegemonic world order; c) they ideologically legitimate the norms of the world order; d) they co-opt the elites from peripheral states; and e) they absorb counter-hegemonic ideas (Cox, 1981). The organisations and the rules are generally initiated by the state that established the hegemony, or at the very least have its support.

Using Cox's conceptualisation, neither the OAU nor the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), were established by or through a hegemonic state, nor did the organisations introduce ideation at the time different to the prevailing order in the context of the Cold War between the US and the USSR. The OAU's goals were to fight colonialism, Apartheid and to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the newly independent states (OAU Charter, 1963). It was established in response to the independence gained by African countries south of the Sahara from 1960, and the recognition of the need for cooperation and coordination.

The OAU was challenged in two main respects. In the face of imperialism and Apartheid, there was division on how already independent African countries should progress further collectively. The eventual agreement was a compromise between radically differing views of African unity, between those who thought of African unity as a symbolic and tactical aspect of a revolutionary movement (Casablanca Group), and those who thought of it as an alliance between sovereign states to protect their newly acquired status in the world community (Monrovia Group) (Farmer, 2012). Despite the compromise, the OAU Charter's language reflects the ascendancy of the Monrovia Group, in that it does not include the immediate African federal government sought by the Casablanca Group, and created an alliance of sovereign states. This reflected the internal ideological disagreement of nationalism vs Pan-Africanism. This ideological division was also reflected in Arab states being more inclined towards nationalism and the West, as well as economically. The OAU's other main challenge was the lack of implementation of the various continental plans that had been agreed to, including the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980 - 2000.

In the OAU's disunity and ideological vacuum, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) established in 1958 by the UN Economic and Social Council, positioned itself as the ideation centre on issues related to Africa's development. This includes informing the development of the OAU's regional integration approach and economic development policy approaches. On its front, SADCC focused on coordinating responses to the Apartheid regime and supporting South Africa's liberation struggle. As with the OAU, there was no hegemonic project by any one state. The transition in 1992 into SADC was in reaction to the changes in South Africa, and still there was no autonomous ideation on how to pursue regional integration, and social and economic development moving forward.

As the neo-Gramscian Critical Theory approach places prominence on understanding the historical material and ideological context, South Africa's approach to the OAU/AU and SAADC/SADC must be analysed against the background of the end of the Cold War and the global hegemony of neoliberalism at the time. In both the AU and SADC, South Africa – under Mbeki and Mandela – served as a conduit for neoliberal policies to be implemented in other parts of Africa through the promotion of neoliberal policies such as NEPAD (Thomas, 2012: 118).

With both the Mandela and Mbeki administrations conforming to and acting as surrogates of the US hegemonic order, South Africa's approach to the OAU/AU and SADC was pursued with the clear goal of promoting the prevailing global order. As a key state in the establishment of the AU, South Africa influenced the establishment of structures modelled on international organisations aligned to the hegemonic order, particularly the UN, and the EU. Consequently, the 2002 AU Charter established structures such as the Peace and Security Council; Economic, Social and Cultural Council; African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR); African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (AfCHPR); AU Commission; and the Pan-African Parliament.

In line with the EU regional integration model (which is underpinned by neoliberalism), the Charter also made provisions for the African Central Bank (ACB), the African Monetary Fund (AMF) and the African Investment Bank (AIB), all which by the end of 2017 had not yet been established due to insufficient accessions and ratification of their respective protocols by AU Member States. The conformity to the prevailing neoliberalism is further reflected in SADC's adoption of the EU's regional integration model. The 1992 SADC Treaty, and the development framework, the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (2005 – 2020), infused the neoliberal agenda in terms of sectoral priorities, processes and goals, as well as the use of the EU's linear model of regional integration, as the SADC "increasingly embraced a free market approach to integration along the lines of neoliberal orthodoxy" (Hentz, 2005: 33).

The lack of developing ideas for institutionalisation (domestically and regionally), before and after South Africa's joining of the OAU/AU and SADC reflects what influential post-colonial political theorist, Frantz Fanon (2004), views as the existential problem of the post-colonial national bourgeoisie in African states. Fanon (2004) argues that the national bourgeoisie was underdeveloped at the time of taking over from the colonialists, and in South Africa's case, the Apartheid regime. In this state, Fanon (2004) further argues that the national bourgeoisie has little economic clout, as the economy has developed outside its control and their knowledge is academic. The combination of the lack of economic clout and uncertain knowledge of the South African economy by the elite in the Tripartite Alliance is reflected in an enlightening anecdote shared by former Minister of Intelligence, Ronnie Kasrils (2013: 2), himself then a high-ranking ANC and SACP member:

> It was a dire error on my part to focus on my own responsibilities and leave the economic issues to the ANC's experts. However, at the time, most of us never quite knew what was happening with the top-level economic discussions. As Sampie Terreblanche has revealed in his critique, *Lost in Transformation*, by late 1993, big business strategies which were hatched in 1991 at the mining mogul Harry Oppenheimer's Johannesburg home, were crystallising in secret late-night discussions at the Development Bank of Southern Africa. Present were South Africa's mineral and energy leaders, the bosses of US and British companies with a presence in South Africa and young ANC economists schooled in western economics. They were reporting to Mandela, and were either outwitted or frightened into submission by hints of the dire consequences for South Africa should an ANC government prevail with what were considered ruinous economic policies.

The signing of the IMF loan in 1993 by South Africa and the resultant neoliberal policies and conditionalities have since entrenched the structural causes of inequality in South Africa. What the anecdote also reveals is that the incoming elite did not have a clear ideology or plan. In the interactions Mandela held with domestic and international capital in those first months in 1990, his speeches reassured the corporate sector that their investment would be secured long term; and informed them that the ANC "believed" that the post-1994 economy would be a mixed economy, with no specifications on the mix.

Fanon (2004: 98) argues that:

> The historical calling of an authentic national bourgeoisie in an underdeveloped country is to repudiate its status as bourgeoisie and instrument of capital, and become entirely subservient to the revolutionary capital which the people represent.

Unfortunately, it often turns away from this. With no clear plan, and not following the revolutionary path, especially in light of the implementations of the 1993 IMF loan conditions and the adoption of GEAR as examples, the post-Apartheid national bourgeoisie has been unable to expand its vision of the world, as predicted by Fanon (2004). Rejecting the revolutionary path and lacking capital, this underdeveloped bourgeoisie stagnates, along with the economy, which remains locked in the pre-industrial stage (limited innovation, industry or value addition), continuing to produce raw materials for Western countries (Fanon, 2004).

The lack of ideology and development of the national bourgeoisie limits its involvement to that of intermediary, and here Fanon (2004: 100) argues it "discovers" its mission as an intermediary. The aim is not to transform the nation, but to "serve as a conveyor belt for capitalism". In its domestic and foreign policy, all South African administrations since 1994 have served as conveyors to varying degrees. As discussed, domestically this was implemented through corporate focused policies such as GEAR, ASGISA and the NDP. In the AU and SADC through the promotion of NEPAD, the APRM, and protocols aimed at fostering neoliberal policies. The national bourgeoisie remains a conveyor because it has failed to change social relations of production since 1994. In this, the national bourgeoisie cannot, and as seen in South Africa, has not changed the structure, but rather extended the inherited structure, institutions and ideas.

Fanon's (2004) analysis of the national bourgeoisie is also valuable in analysing the lack of innovation and structural change that continue to hinder social and economic development in South Africa. At the core of the failure of the post-Apartheid national bourgeoisie is the inability to "establish coherent social relations based on the principle of class domination" (Fanon, 2004:110). This is because in itself it has not yet developed into a class; there has been no political consciousness. In the absence of the development of a class, the post-Apartheid national bourgeoisie has been unable to seek class alliances and compromises that would enable the formation of a historic bloc. As discussed earlier, no hegemony can exist without a historic bloc.

The lack of class formation is not confined to South Africa and is reflective of the challenge facing the post-colonial African state. Fadakinte and Amolegbe (2017: 65) make the argument that the struggle for power amongst the dominant became violent because no one had hegemony to lead (with consent) through developing "meaningful policies for development". The policies can be viewed as what Gramsci termed the transcendent interests beyond the narrow economic interests of the dominant (Cox, 1983). For Fadakinte and Amolegbe (2017: 65), colonialism hindered the development of a class structure in Africa. Consequently, dominant classes have no "class consciousness and no class solidarity", which impedes the development of hegemonic values that could be disseminated. Consequently, the post-colonial state remains embryonic and marred by structural crises.

Zuma tried to change the course of South Africa's engagement with the global hegemonic order. His failure points to the strength of the institutionalisation of neoliberalism globally, and the adherence to its tenens, even by new powers such as China. By 2009, when Zuma was elected as president, the institutionalisation of the hegemonic ideas had been affected globally. Even the emergence of China to oust US as the leading economic partner of Africa and South Africa, the global institutionalisation of ideas was complete. Critically, BRICS is a replica of the World Bank, and the institutions and practices introduced by the US remain intact, despite the US being replaced as the economically dominant power. Here the substitution of one dominant power for another has had no effect on the world order as neoliberal hegemony is absolute. It is only in the strategies used by dominant powers that there is variation, for example, the terms of Chinese loans as opposed to terms of IMF loans. But the fundamental basis is the same. Africa remains institutionally subjected to the structures erected post-1945, with a neoliberal foundation. Consequently, during Zuma's administration, South Africa's neoliberal policy orientation did not alter, and it continued to engage actively in the relevant institutions and formations such as the G20, OECD, UN, and the WTO. This continued adherence to the global order remains embedded in domestic policy.

3.6. Chapter conclusion

This chapter looked at South Africa's self-proclaimed hegemonic role in the AU and SADC from a neo-Gramscian conceptualisation of hegemony, as developed by Cox (1981). The focus is specifically at South Africa's location in and engagement with the global order between 1994 and 2017 on three areas constituting the elements of consent and ideation; material resources and capabilities; and institutions.

This chapter has shown that the post-USSR global order influenced the ideas that the transition elite in South Africa internalised and implemented after 1994. The combined historical effects of colonialism and Apartheid have challenged the development of a class structure in South Africa from which an internally developed historic bloc could emerge that was capable of producing its own hegemonic ideas. The lack of the structure and thereby class consciousness, and autonomous ideation among the incoming political elite, who were economically dependent on a faction of the national bourgeois class representing international capital, ensured that South Africa could only become a conduit for the US global hegemonic order.

The AU and SADC were not established in line with Cox's conceptualisation of international organisations of a hegemonic order. Consequently, neither organisation has autonomous values separate from the neoliberal order in which they were formed. South Africa's immersion in the order has ensured that both organisations retain a neoliberal character, despite the lack of a hegemony of values and images. The decrease in South Africa's material capabilities and resources since 1994 has curtailed the lead the country acquired, and the extent of the national wealth that could be marshalled for a hegemonic project.

The next chapter will examine the global dynamics of South Africa's hegemonic ambitions, through looking at the second research question: How have South Africa's actions in the AU and SADC since 1994 illustrated the role of hegemon or subaltern state, respectively?

CHAPTER FOUR: HEGEMON OR HANDMAIDEN?

The neo-Gramscian perspective utilised in this study conceptualises hegemony as expressed through consent to hegemonic values. This consent is displayed in the broad-based acceptance of ideas emanating from the hegemon. The ideas are supported by material capabilities and institutions, which also reinforce them (Cox, 1981). Chapter Three offered a theoretical overview on the exercise of global hegemony and Chapter Four will illustrate the practical application of the study's theoretical approach. This chapter focuses on addressing the second research question: How have South Africa's actions in the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) since 1994 illustrated the role of hegemon or subaltern state, respectively? This will be done through looking at empirical data of South Africa's priorities and decisions regarding the two organisations. Utilising the neo-Gramscian approach borrowed by Cox in his explanation of the phenomenon of global hegemony in international relations, this chapter will answer the research question through first looking at South Africa's policy developments at the domestic level, and thereafter looking at the resultant actions in the two organisations in relation to ideation and consent, material capabilities and resources, and institution building.

4.1 Introduction

Drawing from Chapter Three, it becomes apparent that South Africa's post-Apartheid policy paradigm was decided before the formal advent of democracy in 1994, as it was clear to the black majority government in waiting that inequality, poverty and lack of formal employment in the majority black population was the most pressing social and economic issue. However, domestic and international capital investment in the country ensured varied interest from multiple stakeholders on the path to be followed, something that the African National Congress (ANC) had become increasingly aware of whilst in exile. As Lee (2002: 82), notes, South Africa was "catapulted onto centre stage in the international arena at a breath-taking speed and there was no shortage of offers from governments and international organisations for assistance", particularly in terms of the reintegration into the global economy.

To manage this, a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) was established in December 1993 through the Transitional Executive Act no 151 of 1993. Its mandate was to negotiate and prepare for the transition. The TEC operated until the first democratic general elections in 1994. It was a multiparty institution with seven sub-councils that dealt with the economy and foreign affairs, amongst others (Farhana, 2009). Importantly, it prepared the way for the Government of National Unity (GNU) that was formed after the 1994 elections. Although it was intended as a multiparty institution, the TEC was dominated by the ANC and the National Party (NP) in terms of participation and ownership of the project, with notable non-participation by other influential parties such as the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and small right-wing parties. The NP was founded in 1914 to entrench, sustain and defend the interests of Afrikaners (descendants of mainly Dutch colonists) (Furlong, 2010). The party's dominance in the project highlights the structural underpinnings of their domination. Prior to the establishment of the TEC, the NP was still the governing party, and this informed its continued influence in the TEC and the GNU.

A key policy area for the TEC was the future economic policy. In this space, the ANC established the Macroeconomic Research Group (MERG) in 1991, with financial support from countries that had historically been supportive of the liberation struggle, such as Canada. MERG released its report in December 1993 with recommendations largely based on an interventionist Keynesian policy approach. The report (Macro-economic Research Group, 1993: 3) entitled 'Making Democracy Work: A Framework for Macroeconomic Policy in South Africa', recommended:

> Effective state intervention, a robust private sector, with active involvement of all men and women in all spheres of society, and a carefully designed, implementable, and well-supported macroeconomic strategy for transition.

Along these lines, the report argued for strong state leadership and coordination, in addition to direct intervention to facilitate development. The contestation within the Tripartite Alliance of the ANC, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) was highlighted when the MERG recommendations "were discarded on 3 December 1993", days before the TEC signed off on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan to South Africa. The loan was a sign that the IMF was in agreement with the macroeconomic policy paradigm that had triumphed (Padayachee, 2013: 839). This was the triumph of the neoliberal global hegemonic order. In discarding the MERG report and agreeing with the IMF conditions, the TEC chose a policy paradigm that minimised the role of the state in the economy and overall development in favour of the markets. It is a policy that also emphasised free trade and infrastructure development as means to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in order to support economic growth and job creation.

Despite the differences over the direction of policy, the Tripartite Alliance campaigned for the 1994 elections on the platform of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) social and economic policy framework. The RDP ambitiously sought to address the structural causes of inequality, poverty and unemployment, through integrating growth, development, reconstruction and redistribution into a unified programme. Informed by those principles, the RDP's five programmes were meeting basic needs (land, housing, electricity, housing, etc.); developing human resources; building the economy; democratising the state and society, and implementing the RDP itself (RDP, 1993). The RDP's strength also came from the fact that it was the outcome of consultations with labour and other civil society stakeholders (Freund, 2013). Critically, labour was at the forefront of the conceptualisation of the RDP. Marais (1996: 211), highlights that at first, the conceptualisation of the RDP was the preserve of COSATU which passed its fourth draft at a special conference in 1993, and was broadened to include parties under the umbrella of the Mass Democratic Movement.

However, the eventual RDP White Paper that was adopted by the GNU had significant amendments to appease the private sector (domestic and international), and the hegemonic global system. Specifically, over and above poverty alleviation, the document committed South Africa to fiscal and monetary discipline; raised employment creation through economic growth as the priority; raised the possibility of funding the RDP through privatisation, making no mention of nationalisation; and the pursuit of trade liberalisation in line with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to facilitate export growth (Mosala, et al. 2017: 327). A combination of factors led to the unceremonious dumping of the RDP by the South African Government in 1996. They include the rapid depreciation of the South African Rand in 1996 which intimidated the Government; the lack of investment by the domestic private sector in the programme; lack of resources to implement it; challenges with coordination among the implementing departments and the insufficient economic growth to finance it (Carmody, 2002).

These challenges, as well as continued pressure from domestic and international capital, resulted in South African conforming to the global policy hegemony of neoliberalism by discarding the RDP two years into its implementation. The GEAR macroeconomic strategy represented an ideological shift from the RDP. GEAR was unveiled without consultation on 14 June 1996 by the then-Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel. It prioritised economic growth for unemployment, poverty and inequality, and development. At the core of GEAR was a neoliberal approach highlighting fiscal and monetary discipline, inflation targeting, public debt capping, labour flexibility, trade liberalisation, international competitiveness, FDI and a further relaxation of exchange controls. The overall specific target was an annual growth rate of 6%, to create 400 000 new jobs per year by 2000 (South African Department of Finance, 1996). GEAR was essentially "a profit-led strategy to economic growth and a trickle-down approach to issues of income and wealth redistribution" (Lesufi, 2002: 287).

GEAR was embraced by the domestic private sector and international business sector, as well as the World Bank and the IMF. The World Bank and the IMF welcomed the policy, judged by the recognition or positions allocated to South Africa in complementary fora such as the OECD and WEF. Further, since 1994, "extremely talented South African officials have presided over the board of governors of the IMF and the World Bank, and a host of other important international bodies" (Bond, 2001: 416). Hence domestic and international business praised government for the shift. In contrast, the Tripartite Alliance partners (COSATU and the SACP) and other civil society organisations criticised the government, not least for the lack of consultation (Cronin, 1998; Marais, 2011).

By 2004, social discontent was mounting as GEAR's limits to addressing inequality were exposed. The envisaged increase in FDI that would support economic growth and job creation, thus enabling the impoverished to acquire the resources to spearhead their own socio-economic betterment, did not materialise (Lee, 2002: 82). The results of GEAR's implementation were decidedly mixed by 2004. Inflation decreased and interested rates lowered, with the budget deficit at only 2.2% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP); the growth rate reached 5% per annum; and investment by State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) was growing by 13.6% per year (Habib, 2013; Luiz, 2007 in Mosala, et al. 2017). On the other hand, in the face of the increasing social inequality, critics maintained that South African had "adopted a self-imposed IMF/World Bank structural adjustment programme (SAP). The losers would (continue to) be the impoverished masses" (Lee, 2002: 82).

Despite the increasing social costs of the chosen policy choices, the South African Government continued with a neoliberal policy orientation. In August 2005, the Government announced the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative – South Africa (ASGISA), which was formally launched in 2006. ASGISA was aimed at targeting specific weaknesses that were negatively impacting on the economy. These include an uncompetitive economy; currency volatility; insufficient public sector capacity to lead development; lack of skilled labour; barriers to entry; and deficiencies in public sector organisations. Much emphasis was placed on facilitating increased public–private sector collaborations. The government targeted an annual growth rate of 4.5% from 2005 to 2009, rising to 6% from 2010 to 2014 (The Presidency, South Africa: 2006). This was to be facilitated by an increase in public expenditure on fixed capital investment to R370 billion over three years, and programmatic interventions aimed at the marginalised. ASGISA was in operation for only two years by the end of Mbeki's presidency in 2008.

With continued social discontent, the then-president Jacob Zuma introduced a new policy, the New Growth Path (NGP), in 2010. Building on the neoliberal foundation of GEAR, the NGP focused on accelerating economic growth through aiming at infrastructure and services industries, public services and rural development, the green economy and branching out in other markets. It targeted the creation of five million new jobs by 2020 (Mosala, et al. 2017) and included targets for short-term job creation and skills development in various sectors through public-private sector partnerships projects. Programmes such as the Expanded Public Works Programme sought to create new jobs for lower skilled South Africans in particular, as promised to the Tripartite Alliance partners before and after the ANC's Polokwane Electoral Conference in 2007. In spite of such programmes, inequality, unemployment and poverty continued to rise. By 2011, unemployment stood at 25% (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Following this lead, Government launched the 2030 National Development Plan (NDP) in 2012. One of its specific targets is to create 11 million jobs by 2030, to reduce unemployment to 6% and to reduce inequality from Gini coefficient 0.7 to 0.6 (National Development Plan, 2012). Implementation of the NDP since 2012 has been mired in the maladministration and corruption that has characterised the Zuma administration. This included the numerous private-public partnerships that enabled and facilitated the abuse of state funds for vastly inflated payments to private companies often linked to senior members of the ruling party at national and provincial levels.

By the end 2017, South Africa was one of the most unequal countries in the world (United Nations Development Programme, 2017); and social discontent manifested through service delivery protests and a rise in community- and issues-based organising against the government through civil society movements like Electricity and Water Crisis Committees, Concerned Residents Committees, and the nationally organised Anti-Privatisation Forum and Anti-Eviction Campaign (Mosala, et al. 2017, 336). Critics of the NDP included their Alliance Partner, COSATU, who argued against the Government's unilateralism and the neoliberal thrust of policy formulation (Congress of South African Trade Unions, 2013). One of the most reported on movements is the #FeesMustFall student movement that mobilised against increasing fees, as government's subsidy to institutions of higher learning remained stagnant in the face of burgeoning student numbers.

Contrary to the ANC's assertions otherwise, the policy framework since 1994 has been largely neoliberal, with consequences for nation building and development (Bond, 2004). Since GEAR, successive post-Apartheid governments have relied heavily on trade liberation; investment in the form of FDI; and capital flows as the vehicles for development and economic growth. Through the policies, the ANC effectively extended liberalisation, adopting macro-economic policies that led to the containment of the fiscal deficit (easing fears of a populist response), single-digit inflation and lower interest rates (Mosala, et al. 2017; Lee, 2002).

A key feature of the policy framework has been a commitment to the rules set by international capital. The importance of transnational capital is evidenced by the increasing importance placed on the ratings of the country's bonds by the three ratings agencies that dominate the industry, namely, Standard & Poor's (S&P), Moody's, and the Fitch Group, which are based in Britain and the US. South Africa received its first credit assessment by the agencies in 1994. Arguably more than any other international factor, the rating agencies have ensured South Africa's adherence to monetary and fiscal policies in line with the requirements of capital. As noted by Ocran (2015: 1):

> The ratings act as a kind of moral suasion that compels developing countries to pursue more prudent and sensible monetary and fiscal policies. Sovereign ratings serve as an incentive for sound monetary and fiscal policies because performance on these policies forms an integral part of the rating methodologies.

This adherence, which was cited by the engaged social forces as part of the common sense of being a significant actor in the global economy, which South Africa seeks to be, "serves the class interests of a nascent historic bloc in South Africa, largely outwardly oriented and derivative of money capital" (Taylor, 2011: 1239). Zuma routinely faced scrutiny for not paying enough attention to the adherence and compliance to the rules of transnational capital during his term. Reference was made to the positive impact his resignation had on the South African Rand (Mkentane, 2018), with *The Economist* (15 February 2018) citing his 'disastrous legacy'.

This domestic policy orientation has informed South Africa's engagement with SADC and the AU. This orientation was influenced by the global triumph of neoliberalism of the 1990s, epitomised by the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialists Republics (USSR) in 1991. The informal and formal negotiations towards South Africa's 1994 transition were pursued within the framework of the global neoliberal order. In unbanning the South African liberation movements in 1990, then-president FW De Klerk underscored the importance of the neoliberal triumph in influencing his decision, and for setting the envisaged policy direction for a post-Apartheid South Africa. The changed global order is something that an influential ANC faction quickly responded to, as evidenced by the direction taken with the 1993 IMF loan.

The choice of domestic policies also placed South Africa in prime position to be instrumental in shaping the new continental organisation in the form of the AU. At the time of the AU's formation in 2002, the global neoliberal order was firmly entrenched. South Africa led the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001 as the policy framework for continental development, and engagement with the rest of the world. Through NEPAD, South Africa promoted a return to the neoliberal policies that characterised the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) implemented from the 1980s through the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The SAPs represented the subjugation of African countries to the ideological paradigm of the West, and the policy prescripts of the WB and the IMF. Against this background, South Africa's attempts to assume the position of hegemon from 1994 have been deeply resented, as it represented ideological and material 'bullying', seen as aligned to the neoliberal policies of the West.

4.2 South Africa as a hegemon in SADC and the AU

The Coxian (1981: 136) conceptualisation of material capabilities and resources is that they are:

> Present in a dynamic form (technological and organisational capabilities) and in an accumulated form of natural resources that technology can transform, stocks of equipment (e.g. industries and armaments), and the wealth which can command these.

The following section demonstrates how South Africa has utilised its material capabilities and resources to try and pursue a hegemonic project in SADC and the AU, working within its chosen neoliberal policy framework.

4.2.1 Trade

South Africa's economic strength in the industrial sector in relation to the rest of the Continent (in particular the SADC region) has informed the dominant Realism-based analysis of its hegemony. The importance of the Continent, especially the SADC region, to South Africa's economy cannot be overstated. Successive post-Apartheid governments' policies have prioritised leveraging market access in the region to support domestic social and economic development. The NDP states that South Africa's growth and global competitiveness is connected to that of the SADC region, and that leveraging the platform must be a fundamental aspect of a growth strategy. It calls for South Africa to actively play an "integrative" role. According to the National Development Plan (2012: 130) to reach the goals by 2030, South Africa will have to pursue:

> Greater commitment to regional industrialisation and supply chain linkages, shifting trade balances, power purchase agreements, the establishment of a Financial Centre for Africa, and substantially more financial resources devoted to funding projects in the region with linkages to South African companies.

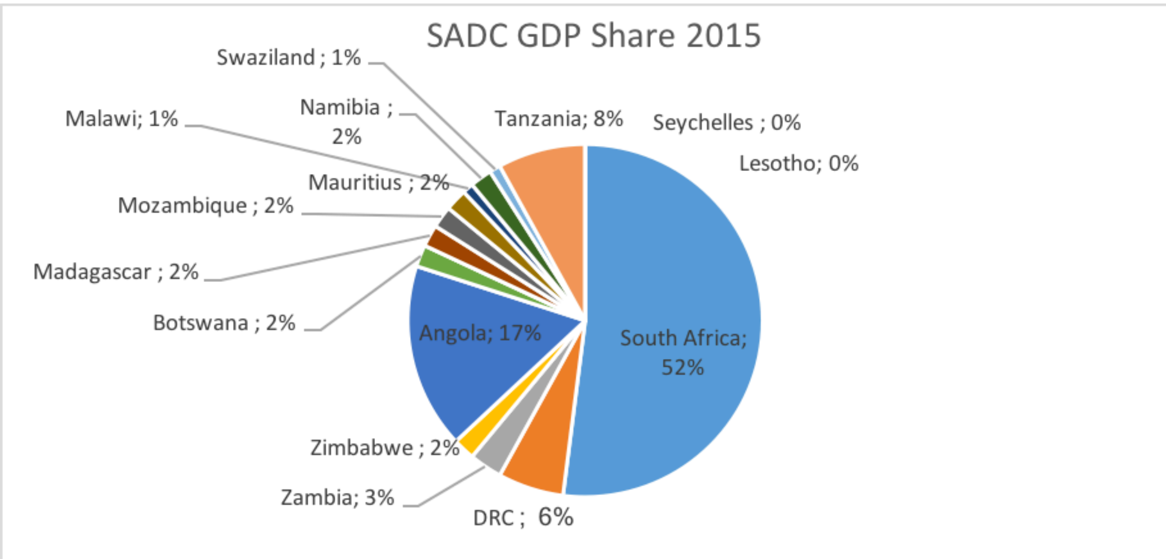
The NDP proposals were made in the context of South Africa's economic downturn. Over the past decade, South Africa has experienced lacklustre economic performance due to, but not limited to, lower commodity prices and higher electricity costs (African Development Bank, 2018). By 2017, the unemployment rate stood at 27.33%, up from 22.33% in 2007 (Statistics South Africa, 2007). This is in contrast to the reality that post–1994, South Africa was a dominant economic force within SADC and one of the largest economies in the rest of Africa.

Despite the de-industrialisation in the manufacturing sector relative to the agricultural, commodity and services sector since 1994, South Africa has the most diversified economy and a sophisticated formal financial sector that is integrated in the global economy. The South African economy accounted for 19.1% of Africa's GDP in 2016 (African Development Bank, 2017). According to the Trade Law Centre of Southern Africa (2018), the trade between South Africa and the rest of Africa was worth US$ 29 billion in 2016. In 2017, South Africa exported US$23.3 billion and imported US$8.5

billion worth of goods. Intra-Africa exports accounted for 26% of the total exports and 10% of total imports (Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa, 2018).

The Johannesburg Stock Exchange is the largest in the Continent, and one of the top 20 exchanges globally in terms of market capitalisation (World Economic Forum, 2017). At the SADC level, the economic dominance is pronounced. In 2015, South Africa's contribution to the SADC GDP was over 50% (see Figure 1). The region is South Africa's largest export and investment destination. Tariffs were eliminated in 2008 on 85% of goods traded between the SADC members (SADC, 2017). Thirteen of the 16 Member States are party to the Free Trade Agreement (FTA), with Angola, Comoros and the Democratic Republic of Congo still outside it (Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa, 2018).

Figure 1.



Data source: 2017 OECD Economic Outlook on South Africa

Despite the FTA and its implementation, the imbalance continues. As noted by Vickers and Cawood (2018 in Adebajo and Virk 2018: 137) it reflects the:

> Structural factors such as South Africa's relative size, level of development, and productive and supply capabilities. It also mirrors the historical trade relationships that naturally cast the region in a hub and spoke relationship with South Africa.

It is not only the number of products but also the type of product. South African imports from the rest of Continent are made up of mostly crude oil, raw materials and others. The South African exports are value-added manufactured goods that include machinery (Vickers and Cawood 2018, in Adebajo and Virk 2018:137), highlighting the continued challenge of industrialisation in the region.

South Africa's corporate dominance through an export-led growth model has led to criticism that the expansion is leading to de-industrialisation in countries such as Zimbabwe (Bond, 2004). South Africa, has however, publicly stated its support for industrialisation across the Continent, including through the implementation of the SADC industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap (2015-2063) adopted in 2015 (Southern African Development Community, 2017).

4.2.2 Role of State-Owned Entities

The Apartheid state drove industrialisation domestically by establishing strategic public enterprises in key sectors of the economy. The enterprises include Iscor (steel), Sasol (energy and chemicals), Eskom (electricity); and Telkom (communication services). These enterprises were inherited by the democratically elected government in 1994, positioning South Africa to intensify its industrial development and become the African hegemon, which was widely expected of it. This section outlines the failure to achieve this and the reversal of South Africa's previous gains as an industrial giant. The failures have reduced South Africa to arguably a similar status as that of other African states as primarily a supplier of raw materials for advanced industrialised states.

The State-Owned Entities (SOEs), as they were renamed, remain critical, as they are responsible for networks and services in key sectors such as infrastructure, finance, national security, and social sectors (Kikeri, 2018). Of these, the most engaged in SADC and AU member states during the study period have largely been the national infrastructure, development finance, arms, and energy SOEs. These include Airports Company of South Africa; Denel; Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA); Eskom; Industrial Development Corporation (IDC); PetroSA; South African Airways (SAA); and Transnet. By May 2012, South Africa had approximately 715 SOEs (including subsidiaries) across the three spheres of Government, commercial and non-commercial with an estimated asset base of R1 trillion, equated to 27% of the GDP (Kikeri, 2018: 4).

Since 2004, the SOEs moved to invest and increase their presence in the rest of the Continent. As an example, the DBSA has financed infrastructure projects in Zambia, Tanzania, Uganda and Nigeria; and disbursed R3.7 billion in infrastructure support to the Continent in the 2016/17 financial year (Development Bank of Southern Africa, 2017). Leaders of the SOEs were included in South African delegations to diplomatic engagements in the Continent as part of the expansion. The strength of South Africa's presence in development financing, including collaboration with third parties such as the European Investment Bank, ensured the transmission and maintenance of the neoliberal principles on 'sound' policies. In this role, both the DBSA and the IDC have become key role-players and transmitters of neoliberal policies in other African countries where they have operations.

The organisational capabilities and resources of the majority of the SOEs were eroded considerably under the Zuma Administration due to cronyism, lack of corporate governance and poor performance (Njobeni, 2018). The poor performance has impacted on government debt, which rose to over 50% by early 2017, compared to 26.5% in December 2008, and 2.2% in the mid-2000s. By 2017, SOEs no longer served as the drivers of South Africa's industrialisation, but were rather utilised for private gain (Mutize and Gossel, 2017).

Eskom and SAA have provided the most exposure in terms of the size of their losses in the period covered by the study. Since 2010 the government has provided R350 billion (8% of the GDP) of guarantees for Eskom's construction of new power plants (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2017), amidst an energy crisis that progressed due to maladministration. SAA has not been profitable since 2011 and received over R29 billion in bailouts between 1999 and 2017 (Africa Check, 2017). The majority of SOEs remain in a state of crisis, impacting their effectiveness in supporting Government and corporate South Africa's expansion. The situation is exacerbated by the continued non-performance and political in-fighting in the ANC.

In addition to the SOEs, Government established other entities to support the expansion, especially in the context of the then planned NEPAD. One of these is the African Renaissance and International Co-operation Fund (ARF), established by the Mbeki administration in 2000. The ARF was established through an Act of Parliament (ARF Act of 2000) to support peace and nation building efforts in other African countries. Since its establishment, it has disbursed over R500 million in support of various programmes. These include assistance to the National Transitional Government of Liberia (R25,8 million); humanitarian assistance to Western Sahara (R10 million); and pre-election support programming for the Democratic of Congo (R22,4 million) (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2016). The impact of ARF funds on communities (excluding humanitarian assistance) and how it (ARF) has supported South Africa's ambitions cannot be easily ascertained, as there has been no external validation of the Department's statements, nor monitoring and evaluation of the projects supported. Additionally, the ARF has been marred by allegations of corruption, and maladministration with the Auditor-General raising issues of process and evidence (Mataboge, 2013).

In line with the external expansion priorities of domestic capital into the rest of Africa, there have been increasing domestic calls from the business sector, the ANC and government Departments such as the Department of Trade and Industry, for greater alignment between South Africa's support for conflict resolution and peace building in the Continent, and economic opportunity. This underscores the point that foreign policy is increasingly viewed as a tool to promote the financial interests of dominant domestic capital (which has largely not changed since 1994), and to enhance the status of surrogate hegemon. This view was captured in the National Development Plan (2012), which argues that despite South Africa playing a key role in peace building on the Content, there has been limited gain in terms of trade and investment for the country.

For the NDP, this reflects the lack of economy-related capacity in the South African Foreign Service and the need for leadership and capabilities of the business community to be brought on board. It in unsurprising that the NDP promotes this view, as it was also compiled on the foundations of the global neoliberal paradigm that informed previous frameworks such as GEAR. Critically, the Chairperson of the NDP

Commission, which oversaw the drafting of the document, was former Finance Minister, Trevor Manuel, one of the main promoters of the Government's submission to the neoliberal global hegemonic order. The private sector's interests were secured in the NDP, and through it, in Government's decision making for the foreseeable future.

4.2.3 Role of the South African private sector

Domestic capital and locally based transnational or multinational capital are the drivers of the state's impetus towards hegemonic status. Hence, South Africa's economic dominance is manifested in the expansion of local businesses to the rest of the Continent. According to Games (2017: 11):

> South Africa has since 1994 become one of the largest non-oil investors in Africa, and one of the most diversified. According to the South African Reserve Bank, between 2000 and 2015 the value South Africa's investment stock in Africa increased from 5% to 14% of its total outward FDI stock.

The investment is across all sectors including consultancy, law, professional services, and engineering. As a result, South African companies account for 50% of the Continent's largest companies (McKinsey, 2016).

The expansion has been facilitated by the neoliberal policy agenda that has driven the government's domestic and regional agenda. In acceding to the dominant neoliberal agenda, economic policies (domestic and foreign engagement), have since GEAR, been developed with capital in mind. Capital in the form of domestic-based capital and transnational capital with interests in South Africa. These policies include the liberalisation of exchange controls to facilitate easier investment into the Continent. Taylor (2011: 1236) notes that the policies have been based on "maximum engagement with the capital as the corporate vehicles to promote growth as pursued as a central plank of South African foreign economic policy". The manufacturing sector is consciously absent in the expansion. This is a consequence of its inability to compete following trade liberalisation, and the erosion of the factors that had made the sector previously competitive (government policy, low labour costs, and cheap electricity) (Imbs, 2013; Bhorat and Rooney, 2017).

While investment by South African companies in the rest of the Continent has decreased since 1994, they remain a significant source of FDI in Southern Africa. In 2015-2016, South Africa was responsible for a capital investment of USD 3.6 billion, funding about 60 projects (fDi Markets, 2017 in the Africa to Africa Investment Report, 2017). Table 1 below highlights some of the more prominent enterprises (including SOEs) that have expanded into the rest of the Continent:

Table 1:

Industry	Enterprise
Financial Services	Standard Bank, Old Mutual, the Liberty Group and Rand Merchant Bank.
Hospitality	Protea Hotels, Legacy Group, Southern Sun and Sun International.
Retail	Shoprite, Pick n Pay, Massmart, Woolworths, PEP, Foschini, Mr Price and Truworths.
Pay tv	MultiChoice
Mobile telecoms	Vodacom and MTN
Extractives	Group Five, Anglogold Ashanti, De Beers, Randgold Resources and Sasol in extractives
Food	Tiger Brands, Promasidor, Famous Brands and Illovo Sugar.
<u>State Owned Enterprises</u>	
Airports Company of South Africa	
Eskom	
Industrial Development Corporation	
PetroSA	
South African Airways	
Transnet	

Sources: Vickers and Cawood 2018 in Adebajo and Virk (2018, 138) & Games (2017)

South Africa's public and private economic expansion has not been without opposition in the destination countries for a number of reasons. Local businesses have complained of being excluded from the market (Mlambo and Ogunnubi, 2018); their inability to compete against the economies of scale; South African companies sourcing from their home base and not in the local market; and the export of 'Apartheid labour practices' by the mostly white-owned businesses (Vickers and Cawood, 2018, in Adebajo and Virk, 2018; Games, 2017). The latter criticism highlights one of the core domestic challenges in South Africa, that of the limited transformation in business ownership since 1994. It is in contrast to South Africa's promotion of the country in SADC and the AU as being transformed. In response, the Department of Trade and Industry published the '*Guidelines for Good Business Practice by South African Companies Operating in the Rest of Africa'* in 2016. Adherence is voluntary and there is no monitoring mechanism. Notably, the ANC, in support of domestic capital, had resolved at its 2012 Mangaung Conference that the Code of Conduct should not "inhibit the comparative advantage of South African companies and organisations" (ANC, 2012). The adoption of the Code in 2016 was within this context.

In addition to the localised opposition, there has also been marked disconnect between the Government and the private sector in engaging the rest of the Continent. The NDP notes that there is marked dislocation between the efforts of South Africa's business leaders and its government leaders and officials (National Development Plan, 2012). Comparisons were made to countries such as France, China, Britain and South Korea, in which foreign policy and business complement each other internationally. In this space, Vickers and Cawood (2018 in Adebajo and Virk, 2018) propose the establishment of a coordinating mechanism constituting of government and business leaders to drive 'SA Inc.' As highlighted earlier, the drafting of the NDP was from a neoliberal perspective and these and other recommendations were made in that context.

4.3 South Africa as a surrogate hegemon in SADC and the AU

The agreement to sign the 1993 IMF loan signalled South Africa's acquiescence to the global neoliberal order, despite arguments to the contrary by the ANC. It is within this framework that South Africa has engaged SADC and the AU. In Cox's neo-Gramscian analysis of institutions, they serve as the mechanism for preserving and maintaining a specific order. They reflect the prevailing collective images at a historic time, the power relations, and blend of ideas and material power; while becoming arenas for contestations over new ideas or inspire the formation of rival institutions (Cox, 1981: 137).

4.3.1 South Africa in SADC

When South Africa joined SADC in 1994, the organisation had 10 members, namely, Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The bloc was barely two years old from its transition from the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC). Constituted of Zimbabwe and the rest of the Frontline States of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, and Zambia, SADCC was established in April 1980 with the primary goal to “advance national political freedom in Southern Africa” against the Apartheid regime, in particular (Southern African Development Community, 2012). The Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa (1980-2000) and the Final Act of Lagos (1980), adopted by the OAU, placed African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) at the centre of Africa’s transformation, in support of state-led economic and social development.

By the time of the transition to SADC in 1992, the global context had changed with the neoliberal hegemony led by the US firmly in place. The 1992 SADC Declaration and Treaty recognises the shift. In adopting the founding documents, SADC did not seek or have a different ideological paradigm to achieving regional integration and development, and instead chose to endorse the prevailing global neoliberal order by modelling itself on the European Union (EU) (Lipton, 2012).

The Member States agreed on the need to pursue regional integration as a necessary measure to effectively tackle obstacles to national development; and to restructure regional economies in order to address the disparities and economic dependence put in place by colonialism and Apartheid (Southern African Development Community, 1992). The Treaty further identifies the areas of cooperation for prioritisation; a) food security, land and agriculture; b) infrastructure and services; c) industry, trade, investment and finance; d) human resources development, and science and technology; e) natural resources and environment; f) social welfare, information and culture; and g) politics, diplomacy, international relations, peace and security. These were already issues prioritised by the prevailing hegemonic order. In acceding to the SADC Treaty, South Africa accepted the bloc’s intersubjective meanings on utilising existing hegemonic principles as the vehicle to achieve regional integration and development.

By the end of 2017, SADC had grown to 16 member states, concluding 26 protocols (including those not yet in force), and covering the areas specified in the Treaty. The growth in numbers can be attributed to the global ascendancy of the notion of RECs and increased free trade within regions as the main vehicles for economic growth and development. This is supported by institutions of the neoliberal hegemonic order such as the WTO, World Bank, OECD and the IMF. As the most diversified and industrialised SADC economy at the time, South Africa's support for the policy paradigm has served as the anchor for the promotion of the neoliberal order regionally.

Consequently, South Africa has ratified all 26 SADC protocols (Southern African Development Community, 2017). Protocols are legally binding for member states and are the main vehicle through which cooperation is pursued. In a system inherited from the SADCC, between 1992 and 2001 member states were nominated to coordinate sectoral regional action. Among others, South Africa coordinated Finance, Investment and Health; Namibia was responsible for Marine Fisheries and Resources Legal Affairs; while Angola led on energy (South African Department of Foreign Affairs, 2004). The lead countries were responsible for, inter alia, policy, strategic and project proposals for consideration at the political decision-making level. While decisions have been taken at the political level, they have not translated into regional achievements in terms of policy implementation.

4.3.1.1 Policy adherence to the neoliberal order

In line with the allocated portfolio, South Africa prioritised trade and investment in line with its domestic policy orientation and compliance to the global hegemonic neoliberal principles. Initiatives included the convening of the SADC Consultative Forum on Investment during February 1996 in South Africa. In his welcoming remarks, then-president Nelson Mandela, asserted that "more was needed in the form of further development of investor-friendly policy frameworks and trade-related measures" (Mandela, 1996). The signing of the SADC Trade Protocol on 24 August 1996 was aimed at providing for the development of the investor-friendly frameworks and trade-related measures. In signing the protocol, member states committed to establish a free trade area within 10 years through liberalising intra-regional trade (Hentz, 2005). Since 1996, SADC has made amendments to the protocol in line with global developments on trade policy and implementation, as informed by the trade policies of the US and EU. The Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa (2016: 2) states that the amendments were specifically:

> In 2000, 2007, and 2008, clarifying aspects of Rules of Origin for products to be traded between the Member States of SADC, safeguard measures, and incorporating new annexes on settlement of disputes and trade in sugar. The Annexes on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) were approved in July 2014. Article 3 of the Protocol, which aims at the elimination of barriers to intra-SADC trade, was amended in August 2016.

The adoption of the Trade Protocol by SADC was preceded by the adoption of GEAR by the South African Government. The protocol's underlying foundation was similar to that of GEAR. By the time the protocol was signed, South Africa had assumed a leadership role in the WTO and abided by multilateral trade liberalisation agreements under the WTO's Uruguay Round of negotiations. Moving further, South Africa unilaterally implemented tariff liberalisation beyond its commitments in the Uruguay Round (Lee, 2002). This was in line with South Africa's conviction of the common sense of the market-led growth for development, as propagated by the prevailing neoliberal paradigm. One of the main areas of focus in the SADC Protocol is ensuring complementarity with and adherence to WTO rules by the member states (Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa, 2016).

While it putatively opened markets, the operationalisation of the Trade Protocol has not significantly changed the trade patterns. In 2017, intra-SADC trade was only 10% of total trade compared to about 25% in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or 40% in the European Union (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2017). Countries like Zimbabwe refused to fully implement the provisions of the protocol, arguably in reaction to their inability to compete with South Africa's economic dominance. Technical barriers and phytosanitary measures to trade are the most common non-technical barrier to trade within SADC (Mold and Mukwaya, 2017; Vanheukelom and Bertelsmann-Scott, 2016). SADC adopted a Protocol on Trade in Services in 2012, which has also not altered trade patterns. The trade patterns highlight the entrenched structural factors that member states have yet to adequately address. The first are differences in the share of customs duties for fiscal revenues, which impact on the willingness to implement tariff liberation. The second is the lack of diversification. To date, the majority of member states still depend on raw materials (minerals, agricultural goods) as exports, which means there is limited opportunity for trade complementary and intra-regional trade (Woolfrey and Verhaegen, 2017).

South African's influence on the regional trade integration agenda, in pursuit of domestic capital and locally based multinationals' interests, can be seen in the shift in focus from deep integration to consolidating the FTA, and pursuing the expansion of the FTA through the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC). The TFTA was officially launched in 2015 and 27 countries are currently participating, with South Africa signing the Tripartite Agreement during July 2017 (Mangeni, 2017). The Agreement was ratified by the South African Parliament during October 2018 (SA Government News Agency, 2018).

The TFTA commitment is in line with the expansion drive by domestic capital and multinationals that utilise South Africa as a gateway to Southern Africa in particular. South Africa's agreement to enter the TFTA provides access for the domestic capital and multinationals to a market of 683 million people with 58% of the total African population. The majority of the domestic capital remains owned by white South Africans. According to the World Bank this translates into a combined GDP of US$ 1.2 trillion at market exchange rates of 2015, which is 54.4% of the Continent's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Mold and Mukwaya, 2017: 69). Through this, South Africa continues its position as a conduit of domestic and international capital into other African countries.

South Africa has further entrenched its policy views in the institution, primarily through utilising the processes related to the 15-Year Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), adopted in 2003. The Plan is the agreed upon framework for deepening regional integration in order to “accelerate poverty eradication and attainment of other economic and non-economic development goals” (Southern African Development Community, 2003). In this, the RISDP prioritised trade and economic liberalisation. The revised RISDP (2015 – 2020) places industrialisation, value chains and infrastructure at the centre of the bloc’s integration project, with emphasis on private sector collaboration (Southern African Development Community, 2017).

This shift is in line with South Africa’s prioritisation of regional and continental infrastructure development as one of the pillars for economic growth, and increased market access for its corporate sector. South Africa has utilised SADC as an institution, to further and maintain its hegemonic values in the region; these values being in line with the dominant global hegemony. Accordingly, South Africa became Chair of the bloc again in August 2017 under the theme *Partnering with the Private Sector in Developing Industry and Regional Value Chains* (Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 2017). With the choice of theme, South Africa underscored the central role played by the private sector. Priorities included the project preparation and bankability with the Development Bank of Southern Africa, also targeting increased opportunities for the private sector.

In protecting the domestic private sector, there is a disconnect between discourse and reality, in that while South Africa does advocate for neoliberal policies premised on free trade and tariff reduction while also recognising sovereignty, it does not hesitate to protect its economic or financial interests when needed in the SADC and with other AU member states. Within the Tripartite Alliance, COSATU and the SACP are powerful advocates for protectionist policies. The high unemployment figures in urban areas and job losses in labour-intensive sectors such as manufacturing continues to put pressure on the governing ANC. South Africa’s influence on SADC policy is reflected in the restrictive Rules of Origin, which serve to protect the domestic market from goods produced in the region using substantial foreign inputs. Other high domestic-entry barriers have been implemented in other sectors like the automobile industry (Vanheukelom and Bertelsmann-Scott, 2016; Woolfrey and Verhaeghe 2017; Saunders and Nagar, 2018, in Adebajo and Virk, 2018).

This is further evidenced in South Africa's decision to lead a SADC military intervention in Lesotho in 1998, against an attempted coup. The action was criticised by some commentators in view of South Africa's economic interests in Lesotho (Neethling, 1999; Taylor, 2011; Saunders, 2014). The intervention was a strategic one for South Africa, principally due to the bilateral Phase II of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project and other standing water agreements. These are key pillars of South Africa's water security strategy, as these agreements sustain the supply of over 700 million cubic metres of water to Gauteng Province, South Africa's economic hub (Desmidt, 2017).

South Africa's strength as a regional hegemon within SADC is the basis for its hegemonic overreach in establishing an agreement with the EU independently of SADC, as well as the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). In this, South Africa overrode a regional consensus in favour of pursuing domestic interests with the EU, thereby acting in a contradictory manner.

In 1999, South Africa signed a Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) with the EU. The TDCA is a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) combined with development aid. South Africa, along with Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland are members of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) that was formed in 1910. SACU members share a common external tariff and members are required to consult others when negotiating with third parties. South Africa unilaterally negotiated and signed the TDCA, which had implications for the other SACU members (Tsolo, et al, 2010). Through the TDCA, South Africa extended preferential access to the EU, which by virtue of the SACU common tariff, resulted in the other member states having to reciprocate without a say.

The TCDA became the template used by the EU in pursuing its Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the regions of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). The 79-member ACP was created in 1975 through the Georgetown Agreement to negotiate and implement cooperation treaties with the EU. Through conventions the EU has informed ACP policies through restricted non-reciprocal trade and aid. The SACU member states and Mozambique, and the EU, signed the SADC-EU EPA after contentious negotiations on 10 June 2016. The Agreement has been provisionally applied since 10 October 2016 (Trade Law Centre of South Africa, 2017).

The Agreement replaced the Trade Chapter of the SA-EU TDCA. The unilateral move on the TDCA highlighted South Africa's use of its capabilities and resources to push through policy that was in its favour. The neoliberal policies embedded in the TDCA had to be incorporated by the other SACU members, despite their opposition.

As the bloc's hegemon, South Africa's policy choices have informed, and will continue to inform, SADC's integration project. The RISDP and its revised version, as with SADC policies, are anchored on neoliberal principles. Critically, SADC as a collective has not interrogated the limits of the market-based approach to structural change in the social relations of production domestically across the Community, intra-regionally and also in terms of the Continent's engagement with the rest of the world. With the revised RISDP, SADC strengthened further its neoliberal focus, while continuing with an integration agenda, at least on the economic side, modelled on the EU, a key bloc in the preservation of the global neoliberal hegemony. Through its relative material capabilities and resources, and organisational capabilities, South Africa has forced through a neoliberal order within the region.

4.3.2 South Africa in the AU

South Africa's focus on the OAU/AU under Mandela was limited, and it was Mbeki who utilised the continental stage to push for South Africa to have a leading role. Mbeki drove a clear, neoliberal framed continental agenda, primarily through the conceptualisation and establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), as part of his African Renaissance project. In line with South Africa's domestic and regional acceptance of the neoliberal hegemony, Mbeki viewed Africa through the same neoliberal lens (Lesufi, 2014). Zuma pursued a different course, implementing an approach that was more pragmatic, choosing to focus less on Mandela's liberalism and Mbeki's neoliberalism, and more on select bilateral relations, consensus and a definite shift to the East, in line with the rise of China as a global superpower challenging the US global hegemony after the global financial crisis of 2008 that originated in the US financial sector.

4.3.2.1 NEPAD and the APRM

NEPAD and the APRM have been the centre of South Africa’s policy subjugation to the global neoliberal order. NEPAD in its final form evolved from three separate initiatives between 2000 and 2001. These are the Millennium Partnership for Africa's Recovery Programme (MAP), led by Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, and Abdelazeez Bouteflika of Algeria; the Omega Plan from Senegal's President, Abdoulaye Wade; and the Global Compact for Africa’s Recovery (GCAR) proposed by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) following a request from African Ministers of Finance in 2000. The GCAR incorporated the idea of peer review (Akokpari, 2004). MAP was concerned with Africa's external debt and the Omega Plan with infrastructure, and education.

There was considerable competition between the three to be chosen as the continental plan. MAP was publicly supported by the UN and organisations like WEF, thus providing its sponsors the platform to obtain support from the leaders of the global neoliberal order, including international capital. The three plans were integrated into the New Africa Initiative (NIA) and adopted by the OAU Heads of State and Government in Zambia in 2001. NIA was later renamed NEPAD at the meeting of the Implementation Committee on 23 October 2001 (Agbu, 2003).

NEPAD’s stated long-term goal was to “eradicate poverty in Africa and to place African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development and halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process” (New Partnership for Africa’s Development, 2001: 14). Among others, NEPAD sought to achieve and sustain an average GDP growth rate of over 7% annually over the course of 15 years; and reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by half between 1990 and 2015. NEPAD was premised on the concept that African states would pursue and implement policy and governance reforms in exchange for increased aid from the West, as well as concessional finance from international financial institutions.

While unveiled by Mbeki and the Steering Committee as the future of Africa, NEPAD faced criticism from the start. The criticism was from all sectors of civil society domestically, and continentally, excluding the private sector. The censure touched on three main areas: the process followed in NEPAD’s development; the lack of continuity with previous proposed frameworks for Africa’s development; and the ideological underpinning of the framework (Lesufi, 2004: 810).

The top-down approach utilised by the leading countries in the project, notably, South Africa, remains an issue. Former NEPAD Agency Chair Dr Eddy Maloka recalled that the South African Presidency led NEPAD’s conceptualisation with a small domestic team made up of the Departments of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Industry, and the National Treasury. There were consultations with a limited number of other African governments, mainly Nigeria and Algeria (Maloka, 2018 in Adebajo and Virk, 2018). As with GEAR, the Tripartite Alliance partners were not consulted.

Notably, consultations were held with international capital through a presentation of then then-MAP to the 2001 January WEF Davos meeting. It was the first such public presentation of the plan (Maloka, 2018 in Adebajo and Virk, 2018; Bond, 2005). The Southern African Regional Poverty Network (2002), the South African Council of Churches (2002), the Council for Development and Social Science Research in Africa and the Third World Network-Africa on African Development (2002) are some of the national and continental civil society formations that criticised the process (as well as the content). The lack of consultations with domestic and regional constituencies, and engagements to obtain the green light from promoters of the neoliberal hegemonic order raised questions of accountability and interests (Agbu, 2003).

The NEPAD Framework Document barely considers the policy frameworks that Africa previously produced in seeking alternative paths to the neoliberal hegemony. The Framework “recognises that there have been attempts in the past to set out continent-wide development programmes. For a variety of reasons, both internal and external, including questionable leadership and ownership by Africans themselves, these have been less than successful” (NEPAD, 2001:9). There is no analysis of the substance of the previous frameworks, and critically the ‘variety of reasons’ that made them unsuccessful. These include the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) for the Economic Development of Africa and the Final Act of Lagos (1980); Africa’s Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990; the African Alternative Framework to Structural

Adjustment Programme for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP, 1990); and the African Charter for Popular Participation for Development (1990) (Adedeji, 2002; Adesina, 2003 in Lesufi, 2004). Agbu (2003: 97) notes that:

> Many of these frameworks, which had their background from the failed attempts to address Africa's economic problems in the late 1970s and in the 1980s had significant African input. The emphasis was on African self-reliance and integration, popular participation in development, the importance of the state as a catalyst in development, removing the inequalities and inequities in the global market system, and providing an African alternative to market-led growth.

Not only does NEPAD not engage on these programmes, it also purposely does not interrogate why they were not supported by the West and the role played by some international organisations in undermining them. As an example, the Lagos Plan of Action urged for integration aimed at "self-reliance and self-sustainment" (Lagos Plan of Action, 1980: 4). Dismissing the Plan and in response, in 1981 the World Bank released the report entitled 'Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Plan for Action' (Berg Report), which blamed African governments for not pursuing the necessary economic and policy adjustments that would enable the international community to provide aid, and enable export-oriented trade to flourish (Tandon, 2018: 292). This is a fundamental omission by NEPAD and highlights its orientation and priorities.

The manner in which NEPAD views previous African frameworks highlights the underlying ideological underpinning, which is the third flaw. The origins of NEPAD point to its ideological underpinning. NEPAD is essentially a South African construct, the merging with the Omega Plan and the promotional work or support provided by the Presidents of Algeria, Nigeria, and Egypt notwithstanding. The drafting team in South Africa came from the neoliberal GEAR drafting team of The Presidency, Reserve Bank, National Treasury, and Trade and Industry (Adésínà, 2004). Consequently, as with GEAR and subsequent South African policy framework, NEPAD emphasises trade liberation; "sound" fiscal and monetary policy; export-led growth; integration of financial markets, both within Africa and globally, and the uncritical promotion of private capital inflows (Loxely, 2005: 122). Additionally, in supporting the Washington Consensus policy paradigm, NEPAD does not challenge the negative impact of the SAPs on African societies, but in supporting them, notes that they provided a “partial solution” (New Partnership for Africa’s Development, 2001). This orientation is further proof for critics that in adopting NEPAD, African governments were adopting new SAPs (Lesufi, 2004; Bond 2004, 2009).

A key concept for the neoliberal order is good governance. The APRM was established in 2003 to complement the implementation of NEPAD. A voluntary membership allows AU member states to be assessed by others, with the view to source increased aid from the West. By end 2017, 38 countries were members. In line with the thematic initiatives in the NEPAD Framework Document, the APRM consists of reviews along the themes of Democracy and Political Governance; Economic Governance and Management; Corporate Governance; and Broad-based Sustainable Socio-economic Development (African Union, 2019). Critically, the APRM added a conditionality to African countries seeking new or additional aid. It committed members to self-policing on implementing neoliberal economic policies, further endearing it to the international financial institutions and industrial powers (Loxely, 2005: 123). In this, the APRM explicitly tied aid and FDI to the implementation of NEPAD, and thus to adherence to the global hegemonic order. The NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, and the APRM Secretariat serve as the institutions that promote and protect the embedded values, within the AU and also with the individual countries.

By the end of Mbeki’s first term as President in 2003, NEPAD and the APRM were established as AU institutions and processes. This was supported by the appointment of Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu of South Africa (who led the domestic team that worked on the conceptualisation), as the NEPAD Agency CEO from 2000 to 2005. South Africa lobbied to obtain sector support for programme funding, almost exclusively leading the international promotion of NEPAD (Kondlo and Landsberg, 2007: 8). However, by the end of Mbeki’s presidency in 2008, the APRM and NEPAD were relatively in decline as external resources failed to materialise, and the APRM could not hold states accountable to findings (Saunders, 2014). Countries have also disputed the findings of the APRM Reports, as did South Africa in 2007, raising issues of methodology and disagreeing on assessments made on land reform, crime, education and other issues (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2007; *Mail & Guardian*, 2007). This pointed to South Africa’s self-interest and inconsistencies on matters it did not agree with.

The decline could also be attributed to the lack of prioritisation under the Zuma administration. The Administration’s focus has been on pursuing relations with other centres of power, notably China and Russia, and also through membership of the Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRICS) Group. However, these centres of power are not threatening the neoliberal hegemony, as they are also operating within its framework, and making use of its institutions such as the WTO, which China joined in 2001, and the United Nations. In the absence of an alternative path, and critically, in the continued dominance of the neoliberal factions within the Tripartite Alliance, South Africa’s policy decisions continue to be informed by the neoliberal paradigm.

In addition, Zuma’s approach to the two organisations was less instructive and pragmatically focused on infrastructure, and defence and security. At the continental level, he chose not to frame his engagement with the AU on the NEPAD framework and principles, as promoted by Mbeki. South Africa eased back on the use of NEPAD and the APRM as external-oriented selling points for seeking increased FDI and aid from the West. Instead, the administration focused on promoting accelerated investment and coordination on infrastructure development as a key condition for economic and social development on the Continent.

In this context, South Africa proposed to accelerate infrastructure development through high-level political leadership during the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee meeting held in Kampala, Uganda in July 2010. The proposal developed into the AU Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative (PICI) established in 2010, in which South Africa championed the development of the North-South Corridor. The PICI was endorsed by the AU Summit in January 2011, along with the projects and champions, with South Africa as Chair. It became part of the AU’s Programme for Infrastructure Development for Africa (PIDA) that was also launched in 2011 (New Partnership for Africa’s Development, 2018).

By 2015, there was a total of nine projects championed by eight heads of state and governments, covering transport, energy, information and communication technology

(ICT), and trans-boundary water. PICI originated from a concept paper jointly developed by the NEPAD Agency and DIRCO (Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative Report, 2015). South Africa's participation in PICI includes the involvement of its business private sector; national departments like Trade and Industry; and finance institutions, notably the DBSA. While Zuma might not have promoted the ne-liberal paradigm underpinning NEPAD, he did utilise the platform and organisational structured of NEPAD to pursue the PICI. In this respect, South Africa used institutionalisation to preserve and perpetuate a particulate order, informed by its continued pursued of export-led growth and development.

The decline can also be attributed to the insufficient human resources allocated by South Africa to drive the institutionalisation of the neoliberal paradigm in both the AU and in SADC. For all its financial resources allocated to the SADC and AU projects, South Africa has not made the same effort with human resources. It has not invested in placing South Africans in technical and leadership positions.

The election of Dr Dlamini Zuma as the Chair of the AU Commission in 2015 was the first time a South African had held a position of influence in the AU Commission. By 2017 in SADC, only the Department of Science and Technology had seconded an official to the Secretariat. In 2008 Cabinet approved the Secondment Policy for South African officials to international organisations, in particular SADC and the AU (Government Communication and Information System, 2008). The implementation has lagged behind and as a result, South Africa lost opportunities to second officials that would promote the norms and values it sought to institutionalise as a promoter of the neoliberal hegemony. Other countries have also been wary of South Africa seconding officials in influential positions, as that would have strengthened the country's ideological positions in the two organisations.

4.4 Chapter conclusion

The global hegemonic order relies on surrogates for its functioning. South Africa's roles as handmaiden for the global order, and hegemon in SADC and the AU, highlights the contradiction in the assumed roles. South Africa's conformity to the neoliberal agenda was confirmed through the acceptance of the IMF loan conditions in 1993, followed by the adoption of GEAR in 1996. The shift from the socially inclined RDP ensured South Africa's immersion in the global order as a subaltern state to date. The underlying neoliberal paradigm subsequently informed its interpretation and analysis of its role in the SADC, and AU. It also informed South Africa's analysis of the regional integration projects in both organisations.

This approach ensured that the same errors made domestically, which include conformity to neoliberal policies at odds with the specific domestic needs while promoting the interests of capital, were transmitted to the regional and continental stage. As ideation was not autonomous or alternative, it was simply transposed into projects such as RISDP, NEPAD and APRM. The collusion between the incoming government prior to 1994 and the economic sources of power has continued, reflected in all the post-RDP macroeconomic policy frameworks, which continue to place markets at the centre of economic growth, and power. This power dynamic continues to influence all state decisions.

South Africa's capabilities in relation to the use of its material capabilities and resources for domestic development have diminished since 1994, due to internal and external factors. Internal issues include corruption, social discontent and continued contestation of the neoliberal conformity within the Tripartite Alliance and civil society. The erosion of the capabilities of the SOEs, which have been a central actor in the expansion to the rest of Africa, has had considerable impact. The institutionalisation of NEPAD and the RISDP along neoliberal lines has been facilitated by the two organisations' dependence on the material power of donors, who are part of the core countries in the neoliberal paradigm.

While at the semi-periphery, South Africa has ensured its surrogacy through continued support and promotion of the core values of the hegemony in its actions and positions in the two organisations. This position was supported by the Western donors, who as the core countries in the neoliberal paradigm, supported the institutionalisation of NEPAD, the APRM and the RISDP.

South Africa's role as an intermediary of the global hegemonic order continues to be contested at national level, as symbolised by the combination of forces that drove

Thabo Mbeki from power, on an anti-neoliberal platform. This contestation continues amidst the level of agreements that the state is tied to, the neoliberal practices it continued to adhere to, and institutions the state remains aligned to that promote the neoliberal order (such as the Group of 20 and the World Economic Forum). Notably, the contestation on the state's promotion of a neoliberal economic model continues from COSATU and civic organisations. The social discontent that has increased between 1994 and 2017 points to the persistent contestation. Despite South Africa's attempts at crafting an independent hegemonic project in SADC and the AU, it cannot escape its submission to the global hegemonic order because of the macroeconomic policy decisions that were made pre-1994 and are still being made to date by the Government, led by private sector interests, both national and international.

The next chapter will present the findings and conclusions of the study, as well as possible areas for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The intention of this study was to analyse and understand the nature and expression of South Africa's attempted hegemonic project in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU). A neo-Gramscian perspective, specifically borrowed from neo-Gramscian Robert Cox's application of Gramsci's concept of hegemony to international relations, was utilised as the theoretical framework. The aim was to provide a better understanding of South Africa's struggle to achieve hegemony in SADC and the AU from this perspective, and deliver an empirical enquiry into the constraints faced by South Africa in its ambitions in the two organisations, in relation to its participation in the global political economy. Through this lens, South Africa's actions were analysed as they relate to the three elements of hegemony proposed by Cox; ideation and consent, material capabilities and resources, and institution building. In undertaking the analysis, two questions were asked as follows:

I. How does a neo-Gramscian conceptualisation of hegemony explain South Africa's self-proclaimed hegemonic role in the AU and SADC?
II. How have South Africa's actions in the AU and SADC since 1994 illustrated the role of hegemon or subaltern state, respectively?

This chapter will present the findings of the study according to the questions asked, the conclusion and thereafter the recommendations for possible future research.

5.1 Summary of findings

The section will present the findings of the two research questions asked in the conduct of this study.

5.1.1 First research question

The first research question focused on how the conceptualisation of hegemony explains South Africa's self-proclaimed hegemonic role in the AU and SADC. In answering the question, Chapter Three first looked at the neo-Gramscian conceptual framework and key concepts utilised in the study to accommodate the data presented in Chapter Four. Thereafter was an application of the concepts to South Africa's approach to SADC and the AU. The findings for each of the three elements of hegemony proposed by Robert Cox are presented below:

I. Ideation and consent

Cox (1981) defined two kinds of ideas, the first being intersubjective meanings or shared notions of the nature of social relations that tend to preserve habits and expectations of behaviour; and the second being the collective images of social order held by different groups of people at a given historical point. Whereas intersubjective meanings are broadly common throughout a particular historic structure and constitute the common ground of social discourse, collective images may be several and opposed to each other.

The research highlighted an important aspect of hegemony, that hegemonic structures have to be understood within their historical contexts, as these inform the underlying social relations of production that characterise the structures at a given historical point. The articulation of South Africa's post-Apartheid domestic and foreign policies has to be considered in the context of the period they occurred. The global triumph of neoliberalism informed the changes in peripheral states like South Africa, leading to changes at the level of the nation state. The formation and reconstitution of these nation states could only be affected within this world order.

Specifically, for South Africa, the intersubjective meanings or shared notions of the nature of social relations of production that informed the incoming government in 1994, centred unambiguously on the Washington Consensus paradigm that was led by the US hegemony after the disintegration of the USSR and the demise of socialism as a counter-hegemonic force. There was an explicit lack of ideation that was autonomous from the global hegemony by the dominant faction with the ANC. The ANC took the disintegration of the USSR as the starting point for South Africa's post-Apartheid reintegration into the global political economy, as reflected in the party's two key foreign policy documents released in 1993 (ANC's *Foreign Policy in a new democratic*

South Africa: A discussion paper, and Mandela's article on *South Africa's Future Foreign Policy*).

From this starting point, both the Mandela and Mbeki administrations promoted and sustained the government's adherence to the global neoliberal hegemonic order led by the US. By 1995, South Africa's vision of regional integration at the OAU/AU and SADC was firmly along neoliberal policies that include trade liberation, and "disciplined approaches" to fiscal and monetary matters (Mandela, 1995: 2). Mandela's approach was also informed by the domestic financial requirements arising from the transition (Schneider, 2018). He had to provide assurances to domestic and international capital that the government would continue with pro-capital policies, in exchange for anticipated funding (that did not materialise) for the domestic reconstruction and development agenda. The Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy of 1996 was in response to these funding needs and capital's expectations on government policy.

The Mbeki administration intensified the government's adherence to the global hegemonic order. South Africa led the conceptualisation and establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), to institutionalise neoliberal ideas continentally. Both frameworks were aligned to the global hegemonic project in order to receive the support of the countries at the core of the hegemony, as reflected by the endorsement received at the 2002 G8 Kananaskis Summit. Further, with South Africa leading the establishment of the AU in 2002, its Charter is infused with the neoliberal and normative values that also underpin the 1996 South African Constitution. The moves by South Africa to embed neoliberal policies in SADC and the AU during the period 1994 to 2017 were met with opposition. A prime example is the decision to integrate NEPAD into the AU. While the 2003 January AU Summit made the decision for the integration, the implementation proved quite divisive (Maloka, 2018, in Adebajo and Virk, 2018).

The Zuma administration sought to redraw the parameters of South Africa's adherence to the global hegemonic order. He decidedly did not elaborate on his predecessors' neoliberal agenda as the state was firmly on course. Zuma came into power when collective images of social order were being contested in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis that originated in the US; the rise of other centres of global powers, notably China; and the development of a post-Washington Consensus within the neoliberal world order that presented other collective images of development and economic growth, particularly for developing countries (Lopes, 2012). In this context, the Zuma administration explicitly displayed discourse in favour of these new or alternative centres of powers, specifically China and Russia. The discourse communicated consistently through the then-Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, directly countered the extremely cordial relations with the West, relative to the East, of the previous administrations.

The global contestation through the Beijing Consensus and establishment of the Brazil, India, Brazil and Russia Group (BRIC) had significant impact on the course taken by the Zuma administration. The Beijing Consensus offered an alternative paradigm to pursuing development for developing countries, focused on three areas; innovation; looking beyond per capita GDP as the sole indicator of development; and self-determination (Ramo, 2004). For developing countries that had been negatively impacted by or witnessed the impact of Washington Consensus policies, the Beijing Consensus offered an alternative approach to the constitution of the nation state, and world orders, independent from what been the accepted paradigm (Turin, 2010). While the Beijing Consensus has not altered the global hegemony of the neoliberal order, the discourse continues on its relevance to developing countries in the persistence of the neoliberal hegemonic order, especially through the institutionalisation and preservation of ideas globally, and through regional organisations.

The Zuma administration tapped into this dissention in pursuing membership of the BRIC Group in 2010. In joining BRICS, South Africa sought to join influential countries offering a counterweight to the globally neoliberal global order, especially as expressed through international organisations. The Zuma administration viewed the bloc as “playing an important role towards the shifting and distribution of power internationally, towards the rise of a multi-polar world order”, and transforming global governance (Nkoana-Mashabane, 2013: 2). In seeking a counterweight, the administration was making a statement that alternative centres of power, institutional arrangements, and approaches to global governance were possible.

The Zuma administration's approach did not proceed unopposed domestically, as evidenced in the internal contestation at the level of the state, as well as the rising groundswell of political opposition after 2014. Domestic opposition, from the social forces that have participated in the (re-) production of the domestic adherence to the neoliberal hegemony, to the Zuma administration's attempts to redefine South Africa's relations with the global order was evident from 2009 to 2017. This opposition manifested itself through opposition to policy initiatives not in favour of dominant domestic and international capital, such as the 2016 Mining Charter that sought to transform ownership and benefits for local communities. Successful lobbying and legal challenges by the Chamber of Mines against the Charter led to its eventual revisions. The published and adopted 2018 version was the third version of the Charter and "the compliance targets are lower and less challenging for rights holders to comply with that those of previous draft charters" (Lanel and Nel, 2019: 4). Other domestic opposition was linked to the recognition that Zuma utilised socialism expediently, as he had no ideological allegiance to socialism. The corruption that characterised the Zuma administration enhanced the domestic opposition.

The contestation over the Mining Charter is one example of the control exerted by domestic and international capital on the ideation to related economic and social development. While the political elite in the state have found appeasement in the finalisation of the Charter, communities where mining is conducted have rejected it (Whittles, 2017). This lack of a domestic hegemony continues to be a challenge for South Africa's outward projection of its ambitions in SADC and the AU. This refers to the lack of a clearly defined and articulated, as well as concretely manifest in its implementation, of a national or domestic hegemonic project – such as that of the Apartheid administration. The South African state is unable to conceptualise a hegemonic discourse because of the numerous competing discourses and the contradictions at the level of the state – fractured capital (white monopoly, black) versus unions and still extant communist aspirations.

Ideation and consent are prerequisite for a hegemonic structure. The starting point of South Africa's re-engagement internationally was the disintegration of the USSR and the triumph of capital-led neoliberalism. This starting point, coupled with the lack of an independent intellectual project by the incoming elite, has limited the government's policy-making since 1994. The government's policy-making is aligned to the interests of domestic and international capital, despite the continued and increasing social discontent. At the domestic level, there are varying collective images, none of which has managed to develop into intersubjective meanings. This is because the dominant elite's interests have yet to transcend their narrow economic interests and enable the establishing of cross-sectional solidarity, thereby overcoming the "economic-corporative" (Gramsci, 1971 in Adamson, 1980; and in Morton, 2007). Until this is addressed, consent (domestic, regional and continental) cannot be achieved.

II. Material capabilities and resources

The second element of hegemony that was applied in the study, as proposed by Cox (1981: 136), is material capabilities and resources. In this application, the study defined material resources and capabilities as follows:

> In their dynamic form these exists in the technological and organisational capabilities; and in their accumulated forms as natural resources that technology can transform, stocks of equipment (e.g. industries and armaments), and the wealth which can command these.

Access to and command of material capabilities and resources is critical for the pursuit of South Africa's hegemonic objectives in SADC and the AU.

Unfortunately, the strength of South Africa's material resources and capabilities has altered significantly since 1994. The State-Owned Entities (SOEs) that the Apartheid regime utilised to drive industrialisation are no longer the market leaders they were between 1994 and 2008. Maladministration, corruption, weakened technical and managerial expertise, and lack of investment in the SOEs, have eroded their performances and impact since 2009. Critically, such developments have eroded their ability to spearhead South Africa's hegemony, at a time when other African countries such as Ethiopia have invested to become regional leaders in specific sectors.

Furthermore, South Africa's material resources and capabilities have been impacted by trade policies it implemented post-1994, in adhering to the neoliberal paradigm.

South Africa took on a significant liberalisation schedule when it joined the World Trade Organisation in 1994, which had consequences for sectors such as manufacturing and agriculture. The loss of the competitive advantage South Africa had, has led to a deindustrialisation of the South African economy (Imbs, 2013), impacting negatively on the quality of material capabilities and resources at the state's disposal in pursuit of a hegemony.

While South Africa's material capabilities and resources have weakened considerably, the domestic private sector has strengthened its position in southern Africa particularly. The expansion was the primary motivator for domestic capital to drive the efforts towards a negotiated settlement with the ANC leadership in exile. The expansion has been, and still is, supported by the neoliberal policy framework that has informed South Africa's domestic and regional agenda since 1994.

Domestic capital, which was and still is in the hands of the white minority, remains the main beneficiary of the expansion and neoliberal policy framework. This is because domestic capital drove the negotiations and transition to democracy, as part of the historic bloc that sustained the Apartheid state (inclusive of civil society). The incoming South African elite did not constitute a new historic bloc, as South Africa did not fully go through the social, political and economic revolution that leads to the creation of a new historic bloc (Cox, 2002).

In the absence of a historic bloc, the transition to democracy then did not dislodge the seat of economic power, thereby creating a "passive revolution". As stated by Cox (2002), this occurs when the outgoing national bourgeoisie (in terms of state power) simply hands political power to a new incoming national bourgeoisie, without the structure of ownership changing. In relation to the post-Apartheid era, Cox's presentation of Gramsci's conceptualisation of "passive revolution" applies (Cox, 2002: 367). In the absence of the development of a historic bloc, the incoming national bourgeoisie was co-opted by the old guard whether through board membership of companies, foundations, or ownership through "empowerment programmes" to ensure that the historic bloc remained engaged in the activities related to the exercise of power. The relative economic weakness of the national bourgeoisie in South Africa is evident in the fierce and often violent contestation for power at the level of the state

(Fadakinte, 2017). The continuous realignment of alliances (internally and externally) since the ANC's 2007 Polokwane Electoral Conference bears evidence.

Domestically, this weakness and absence of a historic bloc has enabled the continuation of the Apartheid era structure of the relations of production of ideas, material capabilities and resources; and the creation of a politically connected elite that survives as the supporters of the status quo. The ownership of the businesses that have expanded into the rest of the Continent largely remains that of white South Africans, posing further challenges to the government's assertions of transformation. The scale and nature of the corporate expansion has led to resentment in other countries, with charges of South Africa colonising other countries; of exporting racially discriminatory labour practices; and de-industrialising the affected economies (Bond, 2004; Games, 2017; Vickers and Cawood, 2018, in Adebajo and Virk, 2018). Collectively, these issues have impacted negatively on the material capabilities and resources that South Africa has at its disposal to make gains on the hegemonic project.

III. Institution building

The third important element of a hegemonic structure presented by Cox (1981), is institution building. In order to endorse, propagate and preserve a specific hegemonic order, there is a need to institutionalise its values or beliefs. Institutions are built on ideas, material capabilities and resources. Institutions reflect the prevailing power relations and collective images at a given historical point, and eventually become "specific blends of ideation and material power, which in turn influence the development of ideas and material capabilities" (Cox, 1981: 137). In this context, international organisations that are part of the Washington Consensus and that originated after WWII, such as the IMF and the World Bank, are vital for expressing and maintaining a hegemonic order in the international arena. Hegemonic states either initiate organisations and their values, or are strong proponents of them.

In applying this concept to the AU and SADC, it is evident that both organisations were not established in line with Cox's conceptualisation of international organisations of a hegemonic order. Although both organisations have no autonomous values separate from the neoliberal order in which they were formed, South Africa's immersion in the global hegemonic order has ensured that both organisations retain a neoliberal character. In this light, South Africa has been a strong proponent of specific values that it actively strove to embed in both organisations.

In pursuing this, South Africa influenced the establishment of AU structures modelled on international organisations aligned to the global hegemonic order, particularly the UN, and the European Union (EU). The conformity to the prevailing neoliberalism is further reflected in SADC's adoption of the EU's linear regional integration model, in embracing neoliberal free market policies. This has ensured that the AU and SADC have become part of the organisations in the semi-periphery that endorse and implement global hegemonic values. The policies, such as NEPAD, APRM and RISDP, and institutional structures established in both organisations, are aligned to the global hegemonic order, as seen in the Treaties and Protocols signed.

The alignment of the structures and policies of SADC and the AU to the global order has been in line with South Africa's acquiescence on one hand, to the global neoliberal order, and its influence on the two organisations on the other. South Africa's inability to develop original ideas for institutionalisation points to what Frantz Fanon (2004) viewed as the existential problem of the post-colonial national bourgeoisie in African states. This is essentially the fact that the national bourgeoisie was underdeveloped at the time of taking over from the colonialists, or in South Africa's case, from the Apartheid regime. The lack of class development and consciousness amongst the incoming elite and the resultant ideological vacuum ensured that the governing elite could only become an intermediary for domestic and foreign capital in the global order.

In addition, the lack of an autonomous project has meant that since 1994, South Africa has served as an intermediary for the global hegemonic order, in the interests of domestic and foreign capital. Domestically, this has been through policies such as the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR), Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA); New Growth Path (NGP); and the National Development Plan (NDP). Importantly, this intermediary role has ensured that the structure of South Africa's social relations of production have not changed, and remain largely locked in limited innovation and value addition, as foreseen by Fanon (2004).

With the social relations of production not changing domestically and amidst increasing inequality since 1994, South Africa has struggled to convince other AU and SADC member states of the benefits of pursuing similar neoliberal policies. This is despite the material capabilities and resources invested in the two organisations, financially or otherwise. The institutional weaknesses in both organisations ensure that South Africa does not have opposition from other governments in terms of possible different ideation. The weaknesses also ensure that when needed, South Africa can utilise the structures for its own interests, as in ensuring SADC support and eventual election of Dr Dlamini Zuma as the AU Chairperson in 2016. The divisive nature of her election is, however, further evidence of the lack of consent to South Africa's hegemonic ambitions. South Africa has arguably not achieved the institutions needed to sustainably propagate and preserve the neoliberal policies it is promoting as a surrogate of the US's hegemony. The resistance from countries such as Zimbabwe on issues such as the implementation of the SADC Free Trade Protocol and the SADC Secretariat's inability to enforce the implementation highlight the limitations of the hegemonic ambitions at the institutional level.

5.1.2 Second research question

The second research question focused on: How have South Africa's actions in the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) since 1994 illustrated the role of hegemon or subaltern state, respectively? In exploring this, empirical data on South Africa's priorities and decisions regarding the two organisations was sourced. The data looked at South Africa's policy developments domestically, and the influence on decisions taken in the two organisations in relation to ideation and consent, material capabilities and resources, and institution building.

This section presents the findings on domestic policy developments, and the decisions taken by South Africa at SADC and the AU.

5.1.2.1 Domestic policy developments

South Africa's post-Apartheid policy framework was undoubtedly decided upon prior to the democratic transition in 1994. There were considerable vested interests in South

Africa's future development path from domestic white-owned capital in the hands of the predominantly Afrikaans and English national bourgeoisie, international capital and international organisations that were established to serve the global hegemonic order. The secret negotiations that preceded Mandela's release in 1990, and those held with the African National Congress (ANC) in exile from the mid-1980s onwards, discussed these interests and sought appeasement.

The interests correspondingly found expression in the contestation within the Tripartite Alliance of the ANC, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) over the policy paradigm to be pursued. Economic policy was a particular site for the contestation. In its 1993 report, the ANC's Macroeconomic Research Group (MERG) advocated for the adoption of a Keynesian policy approach to enable strong state leadership and intervention in the transformation and development of the economy (Padayachee, 2013). The dominant elite faction in the ANC that had been convinced of the virtues of market freedom and already co-opted in the global hegemonic order, contested the Report. Consequently, the Report was discarded in favour of the policy prescripts that came with the IMF loan agreed to by the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) in December 1993. The dominance of the co-opted ANC elite and the National Party (NP) in the TEC ensured this development, which had consequences for the Tripartite Alliance and South Africa's reconstruction and transformation agenda.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) that the Tripartite Alliance utilised to win the elections in 1994 was unable to be fully implemented for a variety of reasons. Chief amongst these was the lack of the envisaged support from domestic capital. Instead of support, the 50 most influential domestic companies (calling themselves the South African Foundation) publicly attacked the RDP at the start of 1996, insisting on neoliberal policies. This added to the pressure on the Government to fully align with the global hegemonic order, which was achieved through the adoption of the Washington Consensus-inspired GEAR policy framework later in 1996 (Thomas, 2012).

Since GEAR, and despite assertions to the contrary by the successive Governments, South Africa has continued its adherence to the neoliberal hegemony through GEAR, ASGISA, NGP and the NDP. All have placed domestic and international capital at the centre as policy influencers and beneficiaries. These choices have informed, and continue to inform, South Africa's decisions in SADC and the AU.

5.1.2.2 Influence on decisions taken in SADC

South Africa's adherence to the global hegemonic order has informed the approach to SADC and the AU. In joining SADC in 1992, South Africa welcomed the bloc's intersubjective meanings on the prevailing neoliberal hegemonic principles as the vehicle to achieve regional integration and development. SADC's inability to develop an alternate path prior to South Africa's joining ensured that it became submerged into the latter's own policy choices as a surrogate to the US global hegemony. In the period since the establishment of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference in 1980 and SADC in 1992, to South Africa's entry into SADC in 1994, the global triumph of neoliberalism was cemented by the failure of socialism-inspired policies in influential countries such as Tanzania and Ghana.

SADC did not have a collective counter-narrative to global neoliberalism. Consequently, as the most diversified and industrialised SADC economy, South Africa's support for the SADC policy paradigm has served as the anchor for the promotion of the neoliberal order regionally. South Africa has prioritised trade and investment in line with its domestic policy orientation and compliance to the global hegemonic neoliberal principles. The adoption of the SADC Trade Protocol in 1996 was preceded by the adoption of GEAR by South Africa. The Protocol's underlying foundation was similar to that of GEAR.

In addition, South Africa influenced the shift in focus from deep integration to pursuing consolidated trade liberalisation through the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) between SADC, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC), in pursuit of domestic capital and locally based multinationals' interests. The agreement to enter the TFTA provides access for the domestic capital and multinationals to a market of 683 million people with 58% of the total African Continent's population. With a well-developed supply side value chain, South African corporates will have a distinct advantage for market access.

South Africa further entrenched its policy views on SADC's main development and integration framework, in the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), first adopted in 2003 and revised in 2015. The first RISDP prioritised trade and economic liberalisation as per South Africa's focus; and the current version places industrialisation, value chains and infrastructure at the centre of the bloc's integration project, with emphasis on private sector collaboration (Southern African Development Community, 2017). This is in line with the South Africa's prioritisation of regional and continental infrastructure development as one of the pillars for economic growth, and increased market access for its corporate sector.

While South Africa does advocate for neoliberal policies premised on free trade and tariff reduction while also recognising sovereignty, it does not hesitate to protect its economic or financial interests when needed in the SADC and with other AU member states. Within the Tripartite Alliance, COSATU and the SACP are powerful advocates for protectionist policies due to high unemployment figures in urban areas and job losses in labour-intensive sectors such as manufacturing. This is reflected in policies, such as the restrictive Rules of Origin, which serve to protect the domestic market from goods produced in the region using substantial foreign inputs, and other high domestic-entry barriers implemented in sectors like the automobile industry (Vanheukelom and Bertelsmann-Scott, 2016; Woolfrey and Verhaeghe, 2017; Saunders and Nagar, 2018, in Adebajo and Virk, 2018).

South Africa's unilateral decision to sign a Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) with the EU provided further evidence of its hegemonic overreach. Through the deal, South Africa extended preferential market access to the EU, which by virtue of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) common tariff, resulted in the other SACU Member States (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland) having to reciprocate to the EU without having been part of the deal making. Furthermore, state institutions were utilised to drive political leadership and dominance. While the South African military intervened in Lesotho following a coup in 1998, ostensibly to provide stability to the Lesotho government as part of a SADC mandate, the move ensured water security for the country's most economically important province, Gauteng (Desmidt 2017; Vhangani and Molapo, 2017).

As the bloc's hegemon, economically and politically, the South Africa's policy choices have informed and will continue to inform SADC's integration project, as evident in the RISDP and its revised version, which are anchored on neoliberal principles. Through its relative advantage in relation to material resources and organisational capabilities, South Africa has managed to elicit consent to a neoliberal order within the region, utilising the SADC as an institution to further and maintain its hegemonic values in the region, in line with the dominant global hegemony, illustrating both the ability of the South African state to serve as a regional hegemon whilst serving as surrogate for global hegemonic capital and foreign interests.

5.1.2.3 Influence on decisions taken in the AU

While SADC has been the regional institution that South Africa has driven its surrogacy to the global neoliberal hegemony, the AU has been at the centre of the drive for the neoliberalisation of the Continent's architecture, structure and policies, in particular NEPAD and the APRM.

The choice of domestic policies outlined above served to recommend South Africa to the G8 and the World Bank, whose influence was evident in shaping the establishment and constitution of the AU. NEPAD, as the centrepiece of policy framework, was challenged on three main areas: the process followed in its development; the lack of continuity with previous proposed frameworks for Africa's development; and the ideological underpinning of the framework (Lesufi, 2004: 810). In revealing its ideological underpinnings, the NEPAD document drafted by Presidents Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Thabo Mbeki, and Olusegun Obasanjo took the side of the Bretton Woods Institutions and the G8 in calling for debt management under the IMF/World Bank Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC), rather than debt cancellation, as mandated by the OAU that existed at the time (Adésínà, 2002).

Through NEPAD, South Africa promoted a return to the neoliberal policies that informed the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) implemented from the 1980s through the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The SAPs represented the subjugation of African countries to the ideological paradigm of the West, and the policy prescripts of the WB and the IMF. To complement this, the APRM added a conditionality to African countries seeking FDI, and new or additional AID. It committed members to self-policing on implementing neoliberal economic policies, further endearing it to the international financial institutions and industrial powers (Loxely, 2005). In this, the APRM explicitly tied AID and FDI to the implementation of NEPAD, and thus to adherence to the global hegemonic order. The NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, and the APRM Secretariat served as the institutions that promoted and protected the embedded neoliberal values. NEPAD and the APRM thus became the pillars of South Africa's policy subjugation to the global neoliberal order in relation to the Continent. Against this background, South Africa's attempts to assume the position of hegemon from 1994 have been deeply resented, as it represented ideological and material 'bullying', seen as aligned to the neoliberal policies of the West.

The decline of NEPAD and the APRM continentally and with the targeted investors from 2007 onwards, points to the resistance faced by the South Africa in convincing the majority of AU member states on the two frameworks. The majority of the external resources that were anticipated in reward for the implementation of neoliberal policies and self-policing did not materialise, and the APRM could not hold states accountable to findings (Saunders, 2014). South Africa disputed its 2007 APRM assessment, raising issues of methodology and disagreeing on assessments made on land reform, crime, education and other issues (Department of Foreign Affairs, 2007; *Mail & Guardian*, 2007). This pointed to South Africa's self-interest and inconsistencies on matters it did not agree with.

Such inconsistencies and the end of Mbeki's presidency marked the end of South Africa's leading from the front on NEPAD and the APRM. For the past decade, South Africa has eased back on the use of NEPAD and the APRM as selling points for seeking increased FDI and AID from the West. This has also been in recognition of the resistance continentally, and the global rise of other sources of FDI and AID, notably China.

While Zuma might not have promoted the neoliberal paradigm underpinning NEPAD, he did utilise the platform and organisational structure of the NEPAD Coordinating Agency to pursue the infrastructure priority; and also continued with South Africa's adherence to neoliberal policies domestically (NGP, NDP) and internationally through participation in fora such as the WTO and the G20. In this respect, South Africa continued to use institutionalisation to preserve and perpetuate a particulate order, informed by its continued pursuit of export-led growth and development, a key aspect of neoliberalism that is currently still being pursued by the Government.

South Africa cannot escape its submission to the global hegemonic order because of the macroeconomic policy decisions that were made pre-1994 and are still being made to date, led by private sector interests, both national and international. Consequently, South Africa remains invested in the promotion of the AU structures and policies as conceived in 2002, in continued support to the global neoliberal hegemony, even though they are not altering the structure of Africa's engagement with the rest of the world. For the most part, the social relations of production for the majority of African economies remain as they were during colonialism and Apartheid.

5.2 Chapter conclusion

This study looked at South Africa's hegemonic ambitions in the AU and SADC from a neo-Gramscian conceptualisation of hegemony, as developed by Cox (1981). The focus was specifically at the engagement between 1994 and 2017 on three areas constituting the three elements of hegemony of consent and ideation; material resources and capabilities; and institutions. As a critical theory, the neo-Gramscian theory enabled the study to locate South Africa's choices (implicit and explicit) at the AU, SADC and the global level in historical perspective, while questioning the status quo and its underlying factors.

The global hegemonic order relies on surrogates for its functioning. South Africa's roles as handmaiden for the global order and hegemon in SADC and the AU, highlight the contradiction in the assumed roles of regional domination and global subjugation. South Africa's conformity to the neoliberal agenda was set prior to the 1994 transition, informed by the collapse of the USSR and the triumph of the neoliberal global hegemony led the US at the time. This historical point is critical in understanding the continued disconnect between the macroeconomic policy choices of the 1994 to 2017 administrations, and the public rhetoric from the ANC as the governing party.

Against this background, the lack of class development and class consciousness has proved pivotal in the failure to establish a historic bloc that could constitute a truly transformational state. The combined historical effects of colonialism and Apartheid challenged the development of a class structure in South Africa from which an internally developed historic bloc could emerge that could produce its own hegemonic ideas. The lack of the structure and thereby class consciousness, and autonomous ideation among the incoming political elite, who were economically dependent on a faction of the national bourgeois class representing international capital, ensured that South Africa could only become a conduit for the US global hegemonic order.

As ideation was not autonomous, the domestic adherence was simply transposed into the SADC and the AU, as reflected in the RISDP, NEPAD and APRM. The institutionalisation of NEPAD and the RISDP along neoliberal lines was further facilitated by the two organisations' dependence on the material power of donors, who are part of the core countries in the neoliberal paradigm.

In transposing its domestic choice to the two organisation, South Africa has shown it cannot escape its submission to the global hegemonic order. Domestic capital and locally based transnational or multinational capital continue to drive the state's impetus towards hegemonic status. Thus, all decisions made post-1994, including the watered-down RDP White Paper, have been led by private sector interests, both national and international.

The decline of NEPAD and the APRM since 2007 points to the continued resistance continentally and a recognition of South Africa's submergence to the global hegemonic order by other African states. The resistance to the full implementation of the RISDP and the SADC Trade Protocol by countries such as Zimbabwe points to the limits of South Africa's influence. The decrease in South Africa's material resources and material capabilities since 1994 has curtailed the extent of the national wealth that could be marshalled for a hegemonic project, something that other AU and SADC member states are fully aware of.

South Africa's role as an intermediary of the global hegemonic order continues to be contested at national level, as symbolised by the combination of forces that drove

Thabo Mbeki from power in 2008, on an anti-neoliberal platform. This contestation continues amidst the level of agreements that the state is tied to, the neoliberal practices it continues to adhere to, and the institutions the state remains aligned to that promote the neoliberal order (such as the Group of 20 and the World Economic Forum). Notably, the contestation on the state's promotion of a neoliberal economic model continues from COSATU and civic organisations. The social discontent that has increased between 1994 and 2017 points to the persistent contestation. It is ultimately this continued and intensifying contestation that reinforces the lack of a domestic hegemonic project that could be projected externally to SADC and the AU.

5.3 Recommendations for future research

Neo-Gramscian theory was chosen because as a critical theory it provides a framework for a historical analysis of the exercise of power by the state in any society, and for relationships between states, whilst seeking alternatives to the status quo by revealing the nature of hegemony and consent, as well as the mechanisms of domination and subordination. Neo-Gramscian Robert Cox's (1981) three elements of hegemony dialectically engage in three spheres of activity within a historical structure: the social relations of production; the forms of state; and the world orders. Continuing within this framework, there are a number of potentially valuable areas for future research.

For post-liberation countries like South Africa, and the rest of the Continent, the perspective offers tools to explore a number of issues, which include resistance to the regional hegemon; the role of transnational capital in defining the post-colonial state; and the institutionalisation of the resistance to the global neoliberal world order in community organisations.

Furthermore, the comprehensiveness of the perspective enables it to successfully and more convincingly explain current phenomena such as the trade war between the US and China as the two global hegemons; Russia's attempts to reassert its status as a regional hegemon towards oil-producing states; and the conflict between the US and France over the preservation of the multilateralism and international institutions that have preserved the neoliberal global order.

In addition, a continued application of this perspective to analysing IR would add value to the field in providing insights and better understanding of increasingly complex international developments. This is particularly relevant if the study of IR seeks to analyse how power relations, their inherent social relations, and institutions within and between states come about. This perspective provides a thorough analysis of contending social forces, forms of class consciousness, passive revolutions that inform state–civil society relations, and the nature of the historic bloc that directs the hegemonic structure at a particular time. In adapting Gramsci's theory of hegemony to international relations, Cox enabled the application of a much more critical and holistic approach to IR.

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