

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

Faculty of Social Sciences

Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies

Chunya Manka'a Forbacha

*Liberal Intergovernmentalism and African
Regionalism: Case of The African Union*

MA thesis

Supervisor: Piret Ehin, PhD

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Author's declaration

I have written this Master's thesis independently. All viewpoints of other authors, literary sources, and data from elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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Abstract

Regional Integration has been categorized as a development strategy. It is also perceived as a means to enhance foreign policy goals through political integration. International Relations scholars have come up with varied integration theories to explain this phenomenon. Some developing worlds in an attempt to create their own regional institutions are fashioning their organizations to the likeness of the European Union, notably the African Union. However, it is intriguing that no integration theory has been developed explaining the integration process of these other regional blocs other than the European Union. As such, other regional organizations most especially the African Union has remained understudied in the field of regional cooperation. In this thesis, I applied Liberal Intergovernmentalism which is one of the grand regional integration theories to the case of the African Union to see what extent it could account for the regional integration outcomes in this region. To do this, this study focused particularly on the Union Government debate, where member states' preferences were examined as determinants of regional integration outcomes. Positions of three powerful states were assessed, revealing that when states' preferences diverge preferences of powerful states prevail. As a result, the empirical analysis led considerable support to the proposition that regional integration is driven by national government and reflects states preferences. When state preferences diverge, the preferences of powerful states have superiority. When applied to the African Union, Liberal Intergovernmentalism can account for regional integration outcome to a significant extent. This shows that Liberal Intergovernmentalism, being one of the preeminent theories of European integration, has the potential to apply to other regional organizations

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List of Acronyms

AEC	African Economic Community
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
CEMAC	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel–Saharan States
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
DV	Dependent Variable
EAC	East African Community
ECOSOCC	Economic, Social and Cultural Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EPAs	Economic Partnership Agreements
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
IV	Independent Variable
LI	Liberal Intergovernmentalism

NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PAP	Pan-African Parliament
PRC	Permanent Representatives Committee
PSC	Peace and Security Council
PT	Process Tracing
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RIOs	Regional Institution Organizations
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TTPT	Theory Testing Process Tracing
UG	Union Government
UGI	Union Government Initiative

1.INTRODUCTION

Since the creation of the first regional organization in Europe, the world is experiencing a proliferation in the number of Regional Institution Organizations (RIOs). These regional organizations were purposely created to foster economic and political relations in these regions and in some cases, used as a development strategy. Regional Integration has been categorized as a development strategy; fostering economic growth for both developed and developing countries. It is also perceived as a means to enhance foreign policy goals through political integration. As such, regionalism has become a big part of International Relations Theories (Slocum And Langenhove 2004)). Ever Since the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), European Economic Community (EEC), scholars have come up with varied theories to explain the European integration process. As more regional integration occurs around the globe especially in the developing world, some organizations are fashioning themselves in a similar structure to the European Union (EU) notably the African Union (AU).

Efforts made by African countries to attain regional integration is not a new issue. This process dates far back to 1963 with the institutional set up known as the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Presidents from the newly independent states of Africa, met to ratify the OAU Charter for the manifestation of a pan-African vision that is, an Africa free and united (African Union, 2019). While the main driving force for the creation of a regional institutional organization in Africa was to end colonialism and apartheid, the OAU with the Sirte Declaration called for the establishment of the African Union as a successor. This new institution was born with a cardinal purpose to speed up the integration process in the continent, enabling Africa to play an equitable role in the global economy (African Union, 2019). Thus, the EU is not the only case where regional integration theories can be tested and/or built upon.

Despite the trend towards regionalism and its connections to the geopolitical outcomes, there is a knowledge gap on regional integration, when it comes to developing worlds. Especially Africa, which very little has been said about the continent in the general debates on regionalism. Also, the impacts of regional integration in the African Continent have not been fully assessed, taking into consideration the indicators of state actions, structural factors such as national interest formation and institutionalization with treaty implementation all leading to deeper or shallow

integration. As such, the African Union has remained understudied in the field of regional cooperation, even though it is the most dynamic regional institution and stands at the frontline for wide-scale intergovernmentalism. The concept of regional integration as an international phenomenon and a scientific research field is usually associated with European integration (Fanta, 2009). This is because the European model is regarded as the primary and most exemplary model of what a regional integration structure looks like, with so many referencing the EU as the “most advanced model of regional integration” (Fanta, 2009. 1).

Consequently, this issue poses a threat of regional integration becoming a concept best suited for the European model or being euro-centric in nature (Fanta E., 2009). Furthermore, although the first attempts by regional integration scholars of a theory built to explain the phenomenon were not confined to Europe. However, as the years passed these theories were increasingly fashioned to fit the dynamics of Europe integration process and the intergovernmental outcomes (Börzel & Risse, 2019). In similar thought, Tanja Börzel and Thomas Risse (2019) mention that ‘Integration became practically synonymous with European integration, and the EU served as the yardstick for measuring regional integration in other parts of the world.’ (Börzel and Risse, 2019, 2)

Moreover, despite integration and regionalism theorists' claims of providing a grand approach that can complement all, if not, most regional integration processes, there is no approach which takes into consideration the integration processes of other intergovernmental organizations other than the EU. Therefore, rather than regional integration theories always being Euro-centric, it is worthwhile to turn the spotlight to another regional integration movement and test one of the grand theories on this set-up, to see the degree to which this approach will be able to explain the collaboration processes there. Thus, the period where the EU was the only case to test and build regional integration theories is over and ending the ‘liberal bias which confines the explanatory power of regional integration theories to other sections of the world’ (Borzel & Risse, 2019). Thus, it is of importance to study the African integration process.

Therefore, this research’s main objective is to test the Liberal Intergovernmental theory in the context of the African Union by providing answers to the research question *‘To what extent does the Liberal Intergovernmentalism theory explain regional integration outcomes in the case of the African Union’*. The study focuses particularly on the so-called Union Government Initiative

which aims at putting Africa under one government- United States of Africa and believed to be the key to economic and political development for Africa. It is puzzling that this initiative meant for the development of the continent received backlashes during the debate as member states preferences diverged, therefore an interesting question will be what determines regional integration outcomes.

Moravcsik's Liberal Intergovernmentalism (LI), which puts national governments as the drivers of regional integration, is the theoretical framework used to identify and describe the process of economic and political integration in Africa. According to the Liberal intergovernmentalism, it is the big states that matter when negotiations take place in the grand bargaining on treaties. While applying the theory, the positions of powerful and influential member states will be investigated. This will enable us to see how they negotiate treaties in this institution to suit their needs and benefits and also to see how the liberal intergovernmental theory explains geopolitical dimensions and the actions of regional hegemonies.

Additionally, this thesis also aims at examining the process of African collaboration, which might show problems of integration in the continent. Recent studies by scholars like Börzel & Risse (2019) and Nzewi (2011) show that the problem with African integration stems from her institutions being weak, as the African Union is highly institutionalized and therefore if only the institutions could be strengthened in accordance to the neo-functionalist framework, integration could work; deeper integration, leading to both economic and political development in the continent. Also, the institutional design does not correspond to the supposed mission of regional collaboration. This has created a huge credibility factor in African Regionalism, where 'to observers, it often appears that African regional institutions have been "designed to fail" (Börzel& Risse, 2019, 11). In similar thoughts 'it is clear that on closer inspection, the institutional fortitude of European regionalism which has spurned neo-functionalist discourse is absent and misplaced in African regionalism. In other words, although there is a preoccupation with creating institutions in African regionalism, there is a lack of understanding and articulation of the gains of deepening integration through institutional empowerment' (Nzewi, 2011, pg. 12).

However, this approach has a number of limitations: although capable institutions are necessary for the implementation of legally binding laws, that does not mean an automatic deeper integration will take place if states' objects and interests hold no relevance in the international

stage. Hence, I argue that neo-functionalism views do not hold in the African Union case, because of the same reasons the neo-functionalist theory was criticized decades ago. As Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, M (Ed). (2006) puts it 'Neo-functionalism was criticized for assuming a degree of automaticity in integration processes and failing to account for increasing protectionism and limitations to integration put up by member states at times.'. I argue that by applying the liberal intergovernmental approach to the African Union situation, the model will highlight that member states are indeed acting in rational behavior, influenced by pressure from domestic groups and that this state-centric behavior is the reason for the kind of regional integration visible in the African continent today. This is in accordance with the liberal theories of International Relations, 'the foreign policy goals of national governments vary in response to shifting pressure from domestic social groups, whose preferences are aggregated through political institutions' (Moravcsik 1993, pg. 481).

As relevant, this thesis serves as an academic enterprise to broaden the knowledge of regional integration outcomes. Furthermore, by tracing the negotiation process in this region, the study will show the problems of integration by tracing the negotiation process and what the implications are for this region. Importantly, by testing Liberal Intergovernmental Theory on the AU scenario, the thesis will provide an understanding to scholars on the validity of the theories and how they can be improved into a grand approach that can be applied to all regional integration processes. Some scholarly articles state that regional integration in Africa holds the key to development for the continent. So, by researching on the negotiation processes of the implementation of Africa's Union Government, this thesis will show what stage the AU is at for the establishment of an initiative said to be the right tool for effective integration. Subsequently, this study will look at how big member states use their relative power to bargain for outcomes that suit their interest.

In other do so, I will be using the case study methodology as they are based on in-depth investigations of events to explore the causes of underlying principles. This study will be using a qualitative research design. As a qualitative study, the analysis for the empirical section relies on process tracing as the methodological framework. This data analysis technique was introduced by Peach and Pedersen who defines process tracing with 'its ambition to trace causal mechanism and not merely proving the existence of the relationship between the IV and DV but unpacks the causal

relation' (Beach and Pedersen 2013, 1). Therefore, the goal of this case study is to explain the negotiation process amongst the African Union member states and to test the Liberal Intergovernmentalism theory on the AU to see if it can account for the regional integration outcomes of this set-up.

This study is divided into five sections. The introductory chapter starts by providing an overview of the study; problem statement, objectives, and relevance of the research as shown above. The second chapter includes the theoretical framework, literature review, and explanation of the key concepts and how they connect to each other, this chapter ends with a presentation of the hypothesis. The third chapter presents an overview of the case study while the fourth chapter starts by explaining the methodological aspects of the research with subsequent presentation of the empirical evidence, The last chapter summarizes the research: testing of the theoretical approach, discussion of the results and mention the limitation of the study with some recommendations and further study.

2. STATE PREFERENCE AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION OUTCOMES

This chapter elaborates on the issues of national preference formation, intergovernmental bargaining and how these elements contribute to the deepening of regional integration processes. Therefore, as Moravascik's Liberal Intergovernmentalism (LI) claims that national governments are the main actors that drive the integration processes, the following paragraphs explain the main factors from a theoretical perspective. Also, a connection between the divergence of national preferences, preferences of powerful actors prevailing, and regional integration outcomes is discussed and explained as the former is the Independent variable and the latter, the dependent variables. This chapter ends with a presentation on the hypotheses.

2.1 Liberal Intergovernmentalism

It is not possible to talk about the debate surrounding regional integration without mentioning Liberal Intergovernmentalism, it is one of the three grand theories on regional integration. Liberal Intergovernmentalism has been perceived as the base-line theory that is used when explaining the history and development of European Integration (Wiener, Borzel, Risse 2019). Liberal Intergovernmentalism founded by Andrew Moravcsik, in his book titled 'The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht' claims that 'the broad line of European integration since 1955 reflect three factors; patterns of commercial advantages, the relative bargaining power of important government and the incentive to enhance the credibility of interstate commitment.' (Moravcisk, 1998, 3). Integration is possible and advances when national leaders pursue an economic interest, in their capacity to act rationally and bargain on policies that will suit their countries' needs and then create institutions to implement treaties securing their interest. The Liberal Intergovernmentalism theory has been characterized by its 'state centrism' (Cini, 2007 pg. 100) that is, the theory elevates the role of the nation-states in the European integration process, as it sees integration as a 'zero-sum game' (Cini, 2007 pg. 100) claiming that it is limited to policy areas that do not touch on central issues of national sovereignty and argues that the European integration process is molded by the interest and actions of member states (Hix 1999 pg. 15).

Liberal intergovernmentalism is derived from Hoffmann's Intergovernmentalism theory which criticized Hass' Neo-functional explanations of European Integration. Although Hoffmann's explanation of why integration occurred in Europe was based on national interest as states are cardinal to the negotiation process and if at any time the political institution was to touch on matters concerning sovereignty, the integration will be stalled. This concept was quickly put aside when the European Union's Maastricht treaty was signed and then the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was created. However, Moravcsik came up with the term 'liberal Intergovernmentalism' which reiterates the centrality of the nation-states, with the main focus on domestic forces.

Moravcsik describes integration as a set of rational choices made by national leaders who are acting in line to foster the economic interest of their states. That is, leaders of the member states in a bid to negotiate what is in their best interest, they take into consideration the needs of their local voters and the external negotiating powers of competing states in the international arena. Lastly, after the grand bargaining between member states, they ensure that the political institutions are credible enough to enforce the instate agreements (Moravcsik, 1998). Based on the construction of today's European Union, Moravcsik argues that 'a tripartite explanation of integration is economic interest, relative power, credible commitment, accounting for the form, substance and timing of major steps towards European integration' (Moravcsik, 1998, 4). Liberal Intergovernmentalism outlines three clear steps involved in the integration process.

The first stage is called 'National Preference Formation', which is mainly about the goals of the states, what they want out of the negotiation process. Here, domestic actors such as local voters in the member states influence the states preferences by expressing their views on say the monetary policy which ultimately leads to the formation of state's objectives. In this stage, moravcsik draws attention to the term 'issue-specific' showing that states choices during negotiating must not be economically inclined rather geopolitical interest may count as well, as preferences differ on a substantive level. Therefore, the observed outcome of this initial process is the 'underlying national preference' (Moravcsik, 1998, 5).

The second step of regional integration according to Moravcsik's LI theory is 'Interstate Bargaining'. This stage shows how states now on the international plain, bargain with the aim of reaching a mutual benefit while deciding how these gains will be distributed among each member

state. However, negotiation outcomes at this stage depend on the relative bargaining power of each member state as they decide whether there will be cooperation and the terms of this collaboration. However, 'collective and individual interest often conflict, with hard bargaining over the distribution of gains sapping the willingness and ability of states to cooperate' (*Borzel & Risse, 2019, 67*). So, when the deepening of integration among states fails, desired objectives have not been met. According to the LI theory, bargaining power can be determined by many factors. When some member states have an internationally achieved status quo of being a big state, they can manipulate the negotiation outcome for their benefit, by threatening the small states into cooperation or non-cooperation. Thus, hard bargaining does play a pertinent role at this level, as the stage is all about the efficiency of bargaining and the distribution of gains. LI theory mentions that 'asymmetrical independence' explains how such integration comes. Which is when some states compromise during negotiations in order to gain more economically from the integration as opposed to those who gained the least have more power to set the integration conditions. Therefore 'supranatural entrepreneurship' holds very little significance in this type of integration process, because just as non-state actors have vital information on the preference of member states, needed by other member state to decide their national preference, national diplomats can do the same job of collecting sensitive information (Moravcsik, 1998).

The third and last stage of the liberal intergovernmental theory is 'Institutional Choice', where member states choose to either transfer some sovereignty to the international institution for credible implementation of the laws or pool decision making power for themselves as outcome of the interstate substantive bargaining. According to LI theory, this stage deals with the establishment and the design of the institution. Here, the importance of creating regional institutions is to help the member states cooperate by ensuring they reach collective negotiation outcomes to implement, enforce and uphold the agreements negotiated by the states. Political institutions also make information flow easy among states, in this way member states can know each other's national preferences and negotiations strategies.

To summarize the three stages of LI theory, regional integration is driven by the powerful domestic groups who influence the state preferences. These preferences are negotiated upon in an intergovernmental setting in order to have mutual benefit. If these preferences are not met, states could indulge in hard bargaining over the distribution of the in-state gains, with the outcome being

shaped by asymmetrical Interdependence. The states then move forward to design and establish a political institution that will foster credible commitments among them by enforcing, implementing, and upholding the existing agreements. Since its emergence as a theory, Liberal Intergovernmentalism has become one of the most prominent approaches of regionalism. Which is why this approach is suitable to apply on African Regionalism, to see how the political leaders of the AU member states bargain and adopt treaties to suit the needs of their countries and explain integration outcomes.

2.2 Divergence of State preferences

To be able to understand and analyze regional integration outcomes, it is necessary to look into the preference formation process by member states. According to Moravcsik (1993), ‘state actions reflect the rational actions of governments constrained at home by domestic societal pressures and abroad by their strategic environment.’ With the mentioning of the concept, ‘rational states behavior’, this school of thought shows that member states actions in the international sphere are mostly aligned with economic interests, as they are the main determining factor of national preference. Studies have shown that the theoretical literature in political science on regionalism places a great deal of emphasis on the significance of domestic political coalitions in determining government’s preferences. According to Börzel (2012) ‘Voluntary agreement is either achieved by negotiating a compromise and granting mutual concessions on the basis of fixed preferences, or actors engage in processes of non-manipulative persuasion, through which they develop common interests and change their preferences accordingly.’ (Börzel, 2012, 19). LI states that member states bargain on those national preferences until they meet at a mutual ground, this is when those preferences converge. So, when states preferences converge, it means they are beneficial to each other and integration either deeper or wider happens as the regional integration outcome. Preferences have always been a very important concept to Liberal IR theory, just like a variation in preferences have increasingly gained significance in International Relations studies as state behavior and purposes can be understood through their preferences.

Although, economic factors drive national preference formation, they are not the only determinants of states reference to be pursued by member states in the intergovernmental negotiation ground, non-economic issues such as defense policy could make it as top of the agender

(Moravcsik 1998, Wincott, 1995). The liberal theories of International Relations states that national governments have varied foreign policy goals due to the ever-changing domestic pressure 'whose preferences are aggregated through political institutions' (Moravcsik 1993, 481). This shows the state's rational capacity to act as the middleman in the demand and supply chain of integration.

This brings us to the two-level game theory which is the approach that forms demand and supply function for international cooperation. Moravcsik defines demand for integration as 'identifying the potential benefits of policy coordination perceived by the national government', while supply is seen through the process of interstate strategic interaction, 'defined by the possible political response of the union's political system...' (Moravcsik, 1993). Thus, when regional institutions are created it is in the interest of the member states acting on their rational choice. The rational state behavior is explained in two steps that shapes the demand and supply function. First, the states set a specific goal and then bargain to realize that goal. (Moravcsik, 1993).

From the above, states create institutions when their preferences align, and cooperating will be at their mutual benefit. However, what happens when there is a conflict of interest during negotiations. I argue that when member governments' preferences diverge, powerful member states' preferences are given priority. James Walsh claims that 'a domestic-politics explanation holds that preferences varied because of differences in the structure of the domestic political economy and the political costs of achieving price stability' (Walsh, 2001, 51). National preference runs along many aspects of the states' foreign policy goals. States can face differences in ideas - substantive divergence, as well as differences on how to reach these objectives for their mutual benefits. All this puts a stress on intergovernmental cooperation in terms of speaking with a single voice. (Meunier, 2017).

2.3 Regional Integration Outcomes

We have been discussing regional integration without actually saying what the concept is. As defined by Moravcsik "cooperation is a means for governments to restructure the pattern of economic policy externalities –the pattern of unintended consequences of national economic activities on foreign countries to their mutual benefit" (Moravcsik 1998, pg. 35). Slocum, and Langenhove (2004) simply put it as the action of states and their multilevel relations with one

another. It is a process whereby neighboring countries sign agreements aiming to mitigate Obstacles by jointly managing shared resources and assets (European Commission, 2019). Caporaso (1970) states that the “essence of an integrative relationship is seen as collective action to promote mutual interests” (Caporaso 1970: 364).

While the European Union has been able to achieve a set of desired outcomes via her integration processes and interdependence, other regional organizations around the globe strive to do the same but the outcomes are somewhat disappointing, and therefore failing to make progress towards true collaboration. Walter Mattli (1999) provides an argument of what could be the cause of certain regional integration outcomes. That is in order for integration to succeed, two sets of conditions have to be met, which are the demand and supply for integration. ‘Regional groups that satisfy both demand and supply conditions stand the greatest chance of succeeding, whereas groups that fulfill neither set of conditions are least likely to attain any significant level of integration’. (Mattli, 1999).

A recent study shows that,

‘Although intergovernmental laws, as interpreted from the studies on the EU show the limiting effects of sovereignty on consensus building, they indicate the effectiveness of state power in ensuring deepening integration through a rational and negotiated process of delegation. However, the effectiveness of state power on deepening integration in Africa has not yielded similar dividends.’ (Nzewi, 2011).

Accordingly, some countries' rational behavior may account for the divergence of preferences-economic interest and foreign policy goals at the institutional level, resulting in the type of regional integration outcomes visible in African Union that is; stalled and therefore does not give way for further integration.

2.4 Regional Hegemony

One of the most topical phenomena in school of international relations today is how big states relate to small states, especially when they are located in the same region. It is an established fact that geopolitical hegemony has a hard to overlook effects on the regional integration process as ‘Regional powers have been studied as both facilitators and obstacles to regional

institutionalization under unipolarity; and their role as middle powers or emerging powers in global governance and international institutions has been discussed.’(Prys, 2007). The term hegemony in international relation studies was used to describe a powerful states and small states relationship before the term was distorted to be synonymous with the United States of America and her bilateral interaction with other states (Prys, 2007). Hegemony shows a hierarchical system be it globally or regionally. Countries that fall under this category are those who take responsibility for the geopolitical activities in their neighboring surroundings and are called by external actors to manage their back house as powerful actors of that region (Prys, 2007). A major puzzle for a realist is why major states would want to pursue integration activities with small states as small states come with smaller economies and thus very little to offer. Borrowing from the intergovernmental view, Pedersen claims that ‘that major states may advance their interest through non-coercive means by applying a strategy of cooperative hegemony which implies an active role in regional institutionalism’ (Pedersen, 2002).

While studying the motive for conceiving South Africa as Africa’s regional hegemon, Ogunnubi & Akinola (2017) states that it is one of the pillars of the African Union. Although she joined the game later on in 1994, through her influence she has been able to ‘play a significant role in the political economy of Africa through South African companies’ and had a huge investment in ending the civil war in Burundi.(Ogunnubi & Akinola, 2017, 32) South Africa was a major actor in the activities that led to a successful referendum on a new constitution in Democratic Republic of Congo. With her efforts expressed through institutionalization, it spearheaded the popular campaign known as “African Solutions to African Problems” and worked towards building a New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) (Ogunnubi & Akinola, 2017). South Africa is one of the countries associated with the term emerging power and is part of an acronym known as the BRICS which includes Brazil, Russia, India, and China also a part of the G20. She is expected to grow in power and influence internationally not just in Africa (IMF,2018).

IMF reports for 2018 showed that Nigeria, South Africa, and Egypt have the largest economy per Gross Domestic Product (GDP) respectively. Also, the African Union’s budget is managed on various portfolios and has six African countries which covers sixty percent of that budget. These states have the highest GDP, namely Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria, and South Africa. Scholars have mentioned the growing importance of these countries and their

influence on African regional dynamics even though plagued by their traditional institutional setup (Wehner, 2017). According to Mail and Guardian Newspaper (2015), Nigeria will be the fourth largest country in the world after India, China, and the United States by 2040, population wise. New research by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) shows that out of Africa's "Big Five" powerful countries, which are in the emerging category; Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt, Algeria and Ethiopia, Nigeria is "the African country with by far the greatest capabilities to play a global role, If only Nigeria were able to take the necessary steps that would see far-reaching changes to the governance issues and social challenges that currently beset the country, it could become Africa's lone superpower"(Cilliers, Moyer and Bello-Schunemann, ISS, 2015). Egypt has been singled out as the most powerful actor capable of challenging Israel in the regions of the red sea and north Africa, therefore expressing hegemon not only in Africa but in the Middle East as well. (Myers & Irwin, 2019)

2.5 Research Question and Hypotheses

This paper seeks to answer the question: 'To what extent does Liberal Intergovernmentalism explain regional integration outcomes in the African context'. Looking at the question, it has two parts. The first part determines the theoretical approach to be applied in the research while the second part deals with the processes involved in reaching intergovernmental outcomes.

Accordingly, my hypotheses are as follow:

H1: Regional integration outcomes are determined by national preferences

H2: In case national preferences diverge, the preferences of more powerful actors prevail.

Looking at the hypotheses, I assume that state preferences are a critical independent variable which influence the dependent variable. The reason why national preference formation is central to the integration process, is because from the above discussions on Moravcsik's LI, states preferences are supposed to converge during bargaining and be made of the same goals in order to meet their mutual benefits. So, in a case of divergence in national preferences, another dependable variable comes up that is powerful actors. These hypotheses will be tested in the

African Union case study. The empirical data selected for this study is an analysis of the Union Government initiative proposed by one of the founding fathers of the AU- Kwame Nkrumah.

While analyzing the main event, the study will look at which member states supported the proposed treaty, who opposed it and why. By tracing the negotiation process of LI three stages, I assume that the causal mechanism chain within this process will be unpack unveiling if this theory can account for the regional integration processes. Also, the position of the above-mentioned countries and their influence on the declaration will be analyzed.

Although the process for the creation of the union government was stalled due to the continents vast cultural background and various political challenges, during the date for the union government, member states' preferences differed. The study will approach the Union Government initiative as not something that died or postponed till right conditions are met, but as a new debate that is coming up. This mirrors the EU's search for the ultimate goal for Europe: the future of Europe. Thus, justifying the application of European Integration Theory on the African Context.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE CASE: THE AFRICAN UNION

3.1 Background of the African Union

As Africa continues to struggle with the various challenges of achieving inclusive development and claiming a spot in an increasingly global capitalist system, the ideologies that ‘Pan-Africanism’ have been said to be the remedy to the continent’s problems. Pan-Africanism is a movement of both ideological force and theoretical underpinnings that expresses the desire and actions of Africans both in the continent and in the diaspora, advocating for freedom and unity for/among all Africans (Oloruntoba, 2020). This philosophy has been driven into lime-light by the likes of Marcus Garvey an Afro-American fighting against racism and discrimination for people of African descent, Kwame Nkrumah the first African president of Ghana, Jomo Kenyatta the first African president of Kenya, Thomas Sankara an African Revolutionist from Burkina faso (Oloruntoba, 2020). The first Pan-African Conference which held in 1945 London paved the way for the protestation against colonialism leading to the decolonization of Ghana as the first African country to gain independence in 1957. Then came the independence of other African countries across the continent, although that of South Africa took more time to achieve (Oloruntoba ,2020).

All these events provided a strong incentive for the birth of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 as ‘the was a general understanding that for the continent to escape the scourge of neo-colonialism, unity is paramount’. (Oloruntoba, 2020, 3). From the start of the independence age for the continent, literally all African countries welcomed regionalism. As can be seen today that the African Union has all fifty-five African countries as member states and most African countries are members of more than one sub regional initiative (Dinka & Kennes, 2007). After the creation of the OAU, the member states were divided into three groups due to the vastness of the continent. The groups were the Casablanca group, the Monrovia group, and the Brazzaville group. The leaders of the first group, respectively, demanded immediate political and economic integration of the continent (Delpeuch & Harb, 2007). This showed that their goal was not only to strengthen unity in the continent and end colonialism but for development purposes as well. According to Marinov (2015) ‘the aim of the first group of countries was mostly to limit the influence of non-African forces on the continent. While this group advocated for supranational institutions with clear powers, the other groups set the priority on economic cooperation, avoiding

the terms "Union", "unification", etc. and perceiving the ideas of intergovernmental cooperation' (Marinov, 2015, 5).

The pioneers of the organization believed that Africa needed a joint front to oppose the indirect control of the west over the continent. For this to happen, they saw the need for economic power as a means to gain political stability. However, few of the leaders like Kwame Nkrumah believed that political integration was much needed rather than economic integration. His reason for thinking so was because with the creation of a supranational institution, it will provide a united approach to negotiate African terms for African development or as George Ayittey, a political economist, puts it; 'African Solutions for African Problem'. To the credit of the OAU, this goal of a united approach to African problems saw to the end of apartheid in south Africa in 1994 (Oloruntoba, 2020).

Nevertheless, the OAU fell short to achieve political integration in areas such as culture, language, education, and borders and even in the economic sector. In a bid to fix such problems, discussions arose on shaping the institutions towards a Euro-model. Results of the discussions saw the transformation of the OAU, into the AU in 2002 as a means of catching up with the west (Mkandawire, 2011). With the establishment of the Africa Union, efforts were made to realize the vision of building an African Economic Community (AEC) as captured under the Abuja Treaty of 1991(Oloruntoba, 2020). This yet again proves how much the AU tries to build herself in the image of the EU, as the AEC mirrors the European Economic Community. The influence of the EU appears to be heavily present in most regional institutions. Thus, making the EU to 'act as a hegemon in both senses of the word: as a dominant external power and as the source of 'legitimate' ideas' (Oloruntoba, 2020). According to Oloruntoba, an example of such power possessed by the EU can be seen when 'it pressed African countries to form custom unions to facilitate negotiations for the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) that replaced the Lomé Conventions' (Oloruntoba, 2020).

3.2 Evolution of the African Union and her Institutions.

The change from the OAU to the AU is arguably one of the major institutional achievements of the continent. The African Union created in July 1999 by the Sirte Declaration and went operational in 2002, envisioned to bring prosperity and peace to the African continent through integration (African Union, 2020). The main objective of this intergovernmental organization is that the changes envisioned for the continent are driven by the citizens as they

strive to establish solidarity and unity amongst her member states (African Union, 2020). In addition, some of the core objectives of the union is ‘to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States and to promote international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations.’ (African Union, 2020).

Inaugurated in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002, the AU was brought into existence for the purpose of taking Africans into a new era of ‘continental integration, leading to a deeper unity and a resolution of its problems’ (Murithi, 2008). The evolution of the African Union from the Organization of African Unity was visionary and timely as the OAU had failed to live up to her expectations of promoting peace, providing security and development in Africa. At that time of the fall of the OAU, the continent was plague with brutal interstates conflicts such as the 1994 Rwanda genocide, poverty, little or no innovation, public health crises like malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS. All these challenges contributed to the demise of the institution (Murithi, 2008). In an attempt to resolve the root causes, ‘the AU has emerged as a homegrown initiative to put the destiny of the continent into the hands of the African people.’ (Murithi, 2008). A current plan to achieve this objective can be found in the blueprints of the 2062 agenda. It is a grand plan to make Africa a global powerhouse for the future (AU Commission, 2020).

Under the lead of the OAU, African countries have been able to take various initiatives and made substantive progress in many areas’ cardinal to the development of the continent, paving the way for the establishment of the AU. In the quest for political stability, unity, socio-economic development, 14 legal acts have been adopted throughout the continent touching areas such as development and cooperation, Human Rights, peace, democracy and security, citizen participation, conflict prevention and management initiatives, health, debt crisis and terrorism. (African Union, 2020).

Since 1999 with the creation of the AU, three other major submits have been organized for the purpose of creating the union’s constitution, decision making process, implementation roadmap and convened the 1st Assembly of the Heads of States of the African Union. Beginning with the ‘Sirte summit establishing the AU, the Lome Summit of 2000 saw the adoption of the Constitutive Act of the Union, the Lusaka Summit in 2001 drew the road map for the implementation of the AU and the Durban Summit in 2002 launched the AU.’ (African Union Commission, 2020).

The African Union is composed of eleven institutions. The first institution known as The Assembly is made of heads of states and their accredited representatives. This organ is the paramount institution as it provides a political direction for the union and determines common policies. The next is the executive council made up of ministers or authorities designated by governments of the member states. This body coordinates and makes decisions on common policies. After decisions have been made, the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) is in charge of implementing the adopted policies. The parliament is composed of 229 Members of Parliament representing all the 55 African countries. The membership of the Pan-African Parliament comprises five members per country elected by each Member State, of which at least two are women. The Pan-African Parliament is the institution that keeps the link between the union and the African citizens. In order to do so, the organ ‘ensures the full participation of African people in the decision-making process, governance, development and economic integration of the Continent’ (AU Commission, 2020). As opposed to being elected directly by the citizens of African states, the members of the PAP are ‘designated by the legislatures of their Member State and members of their domestic legislatures’ (AU Commission, 2020). However, a ratification in the union’s constitution in 2014 passed Assembly/AU/Dec.529(XXIII) putting the parliament as the legislative body of the union, not just the implementation body. This decision was made using the simple majority vote (AU, Commission, 2020). The Pan-African Parliament is located in Midrand, South Africa.

The AU Commission acts as the secretariat of the AU. It is composed of eight commissioners with each commissioner managing a particular portfolio. According to the African Union, the commission is the cardinal unit of the organization as she is in charge of the daily management of the union’s affairs, represents the union, defends the union and prepares strategic plans amongst others (AU Commission, 2020). The Court of Justice ensures compliance with the laws adopted and implemented. This body is made up of eleven judges, all nationals of states parties (Martin, 2019). The Permanent Representatives Committee provides assistance to the Executive Council. The Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) has a separate department known as the Specialized Technical Committees who are also tasked with assisting the Executive Council but only in substantive issues. Both the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) and the Peace and Security Council (PSC) make decisions on Conflict matters affecting the continent on how to prevent, manage and resolve them. For defense and

peacekeeping, the AU has the African Standby Force (ASF) of military personnel's made up of the five sub regional economic blocs; Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Southern African Development Community (SADC), The East African Community (EAC), Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) and Arab Maghreb Union (AMU). The Financial Institutions consisting of the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund, and the African Investment Bank. (Martin, 2019).

The aspiration of Africans to attain unity over the century has been expressed in three institutional stages. The first being the pan-Africanism movement in the early 1900s, followed by the creation of the OAU a few decades after and then the secession of the AU at the end of the 90s and going fully operational in the early 2000s. Some scholars claim that if the Union Government is to be realized, it will be the fourth and most effective stage of regional integration in Africa (Murithi, 2008). Looking at the grand debate on the Union Government, the main concern raised by member states was the fact that they were not interested in relegating their sovereignty over to the AU. This shows that African nations are not ready to transfer power to the AU because it will take the form of political functionalism. According to Nzewi (2011) intergovernmental laws developed from the studies of European sovereignty, shows the delegation of power to highly institutionalized entities, who push member states to comply with treaties. In contrast, African regionalism historically is characterized by a strong opposition to transferring sovereignty to regional institutions (Nzewi, 2011). Now while the goal of this thesis is to explain how national preference formation and interstate bargaining led to the treaty being stalled as an outcome. The final stage of LI model: institutional choice, is particularly interesting in relation to African Regionalism as the African Union has been described to be institutionally driven as they turn to imitate the structure of the European Union. (Nzewi, 2011).

4. METHODOLOGY and EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Research Design

This study makes use of the qualitative approach. This method is best recognized for its ability to describe, interpret, contextualize data. This will enable researchers to gain an in-depth comprehension of the main phenomena. Although qualitative research methods are constantly seen as somewhat inferior to quantitative research methods, the former is widely known for ‘attempting to infer beyond the immediate data, to something broader that is not directly observed’(King, Keohane, Verba, 1994, 8). It is the explanatory and interpretative power of this method that makes the qualitative approach suitable for this paper. Also, a causal suggestion in studying the relationship between the main variables is the epistemological aspect of the research to be conducted on the observed data.

This is a case study of the African Union’s bargaining process with a particular focus on the Union Government Initiative of 2007. The main advantage of a case study is its ability to enable the researcher to identify and evaluate intervening variables. Thus, case study as the methodology is suitable because, according to Anderson (1983) & Pinfield (1986) it is the best method to test theory and develop theory. This ties neatly with the data analysis method -Process Tracing, as it seeks to explain a causal mechanism between two variables unpacking the process which could reveal intervening variables. Also, Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) claims that if not the best, then it is one of the best research designs that connects a rich qualitative evidence and mainstream empirical research.

4.2 Case Selection

Comparison has been made between the African Union and the European Union as per their institutional setup and that the latter potentially influences the former even though there are major differences between the two (Babarinde, 2007). This makes the AU an interesting case, to test the Liberal Intergovernmentalism Theory on. Integration in Africa can be said to happen at all levels, that is high politics and low politics, political and economic integration, respectively. According to Nzewi (2011), in liberal intergovernmentalism ‘the rules and institutions that support regional integration are indicative of national bargaining powers, as State interests and bargaining

have been a significant feature in major integration events and landmarks in Africa's history'. Another study by Mwita Chacha in 2009 shows that the LI framework is applicable to other regions other than Europe (Chacha, 2009). The study was conducted by Chacha on the East African Community (EAC), a sub-regional organization. This gives this research plausible cause to extend the study further to a bigger regional organization, as it will be interesting to trace the regional dynamics of the African Union with many more countries in play, who have various state preferences.

Furthermore, African integration dates far back to 1963 with the creation of the OAU, hence making the organization almost as old as the EU. While the Constitutional Act was being implemented in Africa leading to the creation of the AU, Europe held discussions in hopes to ratify the Constitutional Treaty because of the image a 'European Constitution' would produce (Chacha, 2009). Although there are many major differences visible between the two unions, all the above-mentioned similarities make it possible for the application of Liberal Intergovernmentalism as a European integration theory on Africa. While comparing the AU to the EU, some scholars have mentioned that the African integration model is not as successful as the European model. This is something this thesis hopes to explain to an extent by testing the LI theory in the African scenario.

4.3. Data Collection

In order not to get lost in huge data by testing the theory on every treaty ever adopted since the creation of the union, this study focuses on just one major event that being the Accra Debate on the Union Government. This will allow for the effective application of the LI theory at all 3 stages (national preference formation, intergovernmental bargaining, and institutional choice) on the African Union's scenario. The primary sources are official reports on the Union Government debate, conference declarations and legislative acts. The data collected for analysis were taken from the official website of the African Union and the African Union's online database. Documents included proposals, conference reports, treaty drafts, conference declarations and they were all in English. These documents were selected because they provide firsthand and in-depth information of the case and event in view. Secondary sources are monographs, scholarly articles, books, and journals providing interpretations of the primary source. These secondary sources were collected from vigorous internet search of key concepts relating to the study and the University of Tartu online library database. Speaking to the quality and reliability of the sources, the legal

documents presented by the AU are well read and are accurately and precisely written. This makes it easy for the researcher to form an interpretable result.

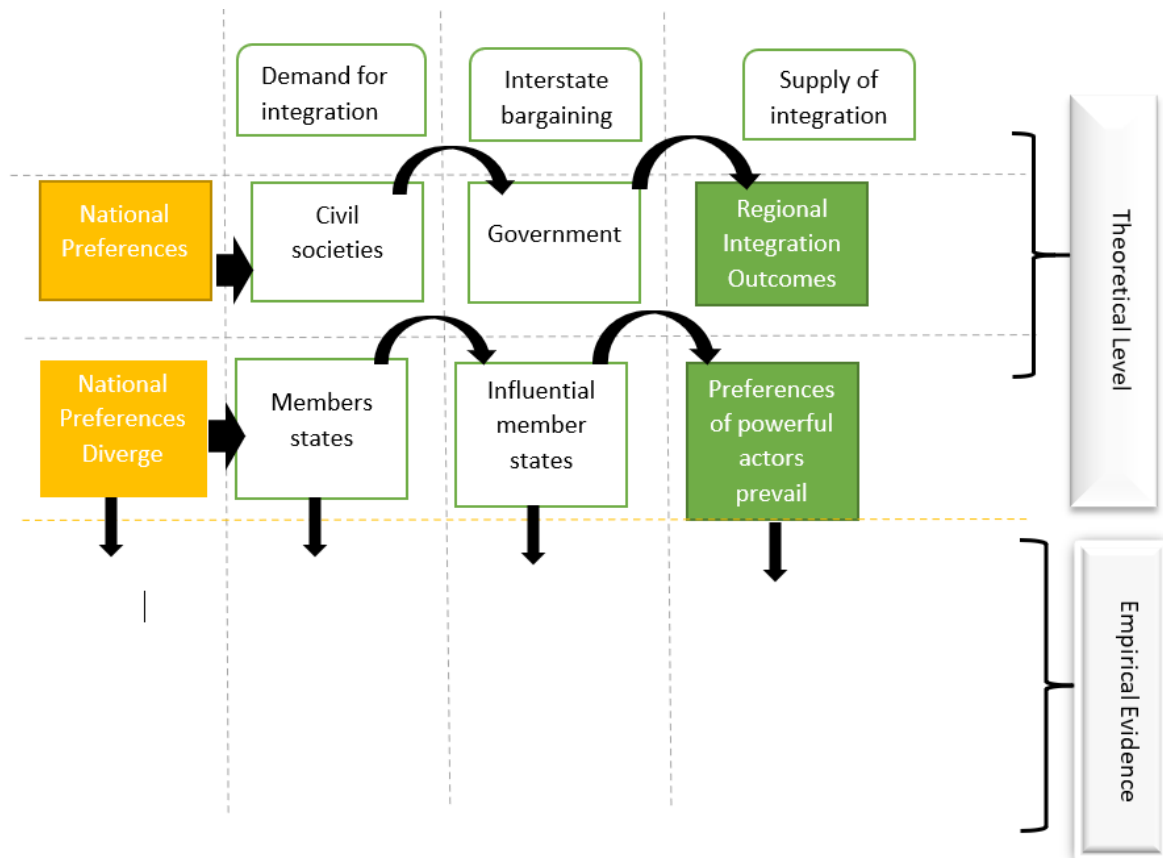
4. 4 Data Analysis Technique – Process Tracing

The data analysis technique employed in this study is the Process Tracing methods mentioned previously. It is a method used in qualitative research that seeks a ‘historical explanation of an individual case’ (Bennett 2008). What makes this approach apt for this study is that it focuses with the explanation of causal mechanisms and tries to find out if there is a correlation between the independent variable and the dependent variable. It goes beyond that, by unpacking the process that leads to the outcomes of the dependent variable. Beach and Pedersen (2013) while citing George and Bennett (2005: 206– 7), defines process tracing as method that tries to identify the ‘intervening causal process’ between two variables with one being the cause and the other the outcome, by unpacking the causal chain/mechanism (Beach and Pedersen, 2013,1). Process Tracing has three variants within social science which are Theory- Testing, Theory- Building and Explaining- outcomes. For the sake of this paper, the subsequent paragraph will focus just on the first variant - Theory Testing Process Tracing (TTPT).

In the first technique-theory-testing process tracing, the research already knows variable X and Y and has used existing connections to formulate a plausible mechanism and/or theory. according to Beach and Pedersen, ‘The first step in testing whether a hypothesized causal mechanism was present in the case is to conceptualize a causal mechanism between X and Y based on existing theorization along with making explicit the context within which it functions.’(Beach and Pedersen,2013,14). Thus, to be able to test a theory, the first step is to engage in a two-step mechanism which will deduce activities involved in the dependent and independent variables. The second step is to operationalize the causal mechanism and lastly the researcher collects empirical evidence explaining the causal mechanism which will in return prove that hypotheses were present in the case or not or present in just some parts (Beach & Pedersen, 2013). For theory testing process tracing, we first of all start by drawing a correlation between the determinant and the outcome and then the researcher investigates the mechanism between the factor and the outcome, by assessing if the data can be considered evidence. The Process Tracing method can be constructed in a

detailed narrative, analytical explanation, and general explanation. A detailed narrative research method explains how a particular event occurs. This is the Process Tracing technique adopted for this study. A model for process tracing method presented by Beach & Pedersen (2013:15) in respect to theory testing is presented below. This model has been modified to show the causal procedure with the thesis hypotheses showing tracing method in correspondence to the case.

Figure 1 The Relationship between State Preferences and Regional Integration Outcomes



Source: own, based on Beach & Pedersen (2013)

4.5 Empirical Evidence

4.5.1 Background on the Union Government Initiative (UGI)

The Union Government idea was pioneered by Kwame Nkrumah after the establishment of the OAU. The idea was opposed by most member states and other founding fathers at that time bringing it to its abrupt end. However, the idea still lingered around and made headlines in 2005 when the AU launched it again (Murithi, 2008). The proposal on the UGI was relaunched by the then Libyan president Muammar Ghaddafi during the Extraordinary Summit of the OAU held in Sirte, Libya in 1999 and again in 2005 Abuja-Nigeria during the 4th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State (Wapmuk, 2009).

In November 2005, a committee was created to discuss the ‘desirability of a union Government of Africa’ (Murithi, 2008). Based on the findings of this conference the Assembly asked the AU commission to develop a framework defining the purpose of the union Government and a roadmap to guide the achievement of the proposal, in fact a general in-depth overview of the initiative. In article 3 of Assembly/Au/dec.90(v), the Assembly reaffirmed ‘that the ultimate goal of the African Union is full political and economic integration leading to the United States of Africa’ (Africa Union, 2005).

In order to assess the implementation of the Union Government Initiative, the AU assembly assigned a team of 7 member states chaired by Nigeria’s former president Olusegun Obasanjo, who at that time happened to be the president of the AU Assembly. The rest of the team were leaders of Algeria, Kenya, Senegal, Gabon, Lesotho, and Uganda. The following year, President Obasanjo presented a report titled ‘A Study on an African Union Government: towards the United States of Africa’ at the AU Assembly in Banjul, Gambia during the 7th ordinary session (AU, 2006:7). The highlights of the report indicated that the African Continent had become increasingly reliant on the outside world. Especially on expatriate engineers and external technology. Also, the over-dependence on foreign help was because Africa had not fully utilized her skills and potentials. It noted that ‘a united Africa would have the unique potential of producing most types of food and agricultural produce throughout the year’ (African Union 2006:7) and also halt the problem of relying for outside help which have contributed to the marginalization of the continent in the international world order (African Union 2006:8). The study noted that the ‘design and

functioning of a union Government as a tool for integration would have far-reaching implications on the existing institutions and programs of the African union' (African Union 2006:14).

After the presentation of the roadmap of the proposed initiative by the fact-finding team, the AU, passing the Assembly/AU/Dec. 156 (VIII) act in 2007, expressing the need for a Grand Debate on the Union Government by the entire continent. The African people were represented not just by their government but by civil societies as well, who were invited to assess the desirability of the UGI. The first dialogue had in attendance more than 35 African and international civil society organizations from 40 African countries and the Pan-African Parliament (Murithi, 2008). The objective of the first dialogue was 'Building Effective Mechanisms for Civil Society Engagement with Pan-African and Regional Institutions' (African Union, 2007). Subsequently, nine public debates were organized in seven countries running from 25 May and 18 June 2007. These state-financed debates were held in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. According to Assogbavi (2008) 'several of the meetings included participation by policymakers who were in the process of developing their country positions. The proceedings of the debates were collated into a joint report and circulated to key national delegations' (Assogbavi, 2008,124)

After a careful evaluation of the proposals for an Africa, united under one government, recommendations made by participants were directed to the Accra Summit in July 2007 (African union 2007). According to Murithi (2008) 'civil society organizations generally agreed on the importance of accelerating continental integration in order to respond effectively to the political and social challenges of the continent.' (Murithi, 2008). The act of involving African citizens in the debate on continental government shows how fully invested the people of Africa are in realizing this proposal and the significance of the Union Government to the people. The civil society argued that if African citizens do not lay an authentic foundation for the UGI, it will remain a pipeline dream (Murithi, 2008).

4.5.2 Grand Debate on the Union Government

In a bid to achieve political unification: "institutionalized in a Union of African States and a Union Government" Krumah organized two conferences made of independent states in 1958 and 1960. (Walraven, 1996, p. 91). Although the goal remained unfulfilled, the resolutions of these conferences stated that "cooperation between African countries was essential for the maintenance

of their independence and sovereignty" (Johnson, 1962, p. 429). From the early days of the OAU and AU, the Union Government initiative has always been a major milestone. Which they believed that if truly achieved, will bring about true integration among African countries and the development most social scientists envision for the continent. Since the formation of the OAU, there have been two schools of thoughts with separate ideas on how to firmly establish the entity. The Casablanca block led by Ghana's former president advocated for a political institution. Whereas, the other block, mostly made up of francophone African countries, argued to keep their national sovereignty and to benefit from the autonomy of managing their domestic affairs (Murithi, 2008). Decades after, the successor of the OAU, the AU is still grappling with the idea of whether to create a Union Government for the continent and if so, how it would be implemented.

In attendance of the Union Government Debate were more heads of states than ministers. During the debate, there were member states who wanted gradual integration by first focusing on and developing the sub regional economic blocs while other states were more radical about their preference for a deeper political and economic integration and an immediate installation of the UGI (Kambudzi, 2008). The maximalist camp, led by Senegal and Libya, came to the summit prepared to persuade the others to vote on an immediate set up of the Union Government, even if it means just a few countries will be part (African Union 2005a, African Union 2006a, African Union 2007a, b). This group did not care if all member states were not interested in forging the Union Government immediately but wanted to do so on their own with the small fraction of those in support and leaving behind those opposing. However, they provided the possibility of joining later on by those who were initially reluctant. In an interview conducted by a journalist of Radio France Internationale (RFI) with the Libyan Minister of African Affairs, Ali Triki, he repeated the fact that the UNI has to be established immediately. Starting with the appointment of ministers for the Union Government as it is the lack of power of the AU commissioner that makes AU weak (Fall & Correau 2007).

In the same vein, the Guinean Prime Minister Lansana Kouyaté advocated for the immediate establishment of the union government, arguing that the RECs are ineffective. Murithi & Lecoutre (2008) stated that the Senegalese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cheikh Tidiane Gadio thought in the same line when said that,

‘if the AU’s political project is to bring Africans together, the best way of doing so is to form a continental executive, a Union Government. Once more, we are saying that there are duties that are best performed and best managed when they fall under continental competences...The sovereignty of states would not be affected. It is important to understand the substance of the proposal. Nobody said that at the close of the meeting heads of state were to return to their countries as governors, that they would lose their title as president, or their sovereignty. That is not the issue. Each country will maintain its diplomacy.’ (Gadio, 2007, as cited in Murithi & Lecoutre, 2008, 47)

looking at the diplomatic words made by the Senegalese minister, he was attempting to convince the reluctant group of the necessity of an immediate establishment of the Union Government.

Another vigorous supporter of the immediate establishment of the UGI, is Mu’ammer Gaddafi, the Libyan leader. Before the debate, Gaddafi visited many African countries soliciting for support on the immediate implementation of the Union Government for Africa (Adejumobi and Olukoshi, 2008). During the debate, Gaddafi realized that the radical unionists like him stood at the edge of being the minority voice in the debate. In an effort to counteract this problem, ‘the Libyan government proposed that the African Union Government be structured with fourteen ministries’ (Murithi & Lecoutre, 2008). According to him these sectors will better represent Africa to the world and bring development as well. Gaddafi went as far as proposing a continental referendum that would settle the divided position on the issue, nevertheless, this idea fell on deaf ears as no other member states supported it. To add to the list of supporters of the immediate formation of a continental government, were the likes of leaders from Mali, Chad, Central African Republic, Liberia, Equatorial Guinea, and Guinea-Bissau (AU, 2007d).

As the various heads of states and national ministers debated over the Union Government, the radical unionist gathered from the arguments made that there will not be enough time to persuade the others to join their band. Thus, the minimalists took a different position ‘which was to study how African states might begin the process of forming a continental government. In a bid to sell their product the maximalists thus gave an apparently more gradualist tint to their speeches.’ (Lecoutre, 2008, 48)

Several reasons accounted for the strong opposition received by the group championing for an immediate establishment of the Union Government. First of the reasons was ‘the lack of homogeneity in understanding the concept of an African government’ (Murithi & Lecoutre, 2008,

49). Secondly, two different approaches were proposed by the two main countries: Libya and Senegal championing this cause, on how to achieve an immediate Union Government, revealing a divergence of ideas in the same camp (AU, 2007; Murithi & Lecoutre, 2008).

On the opposing end was South Africa, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, The Gambia, Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Mauritius arguing for a gradual process in achieving the UGI by first building functional RECs (AU, 2007a). Murithi and Lecoutre (2008) explained that ‘the gradualists felt that integration should be achieved in stages, with priority given to the harmonization of policies and regional integration.’ (Murithi & Lecoutre, 2008, 49).

In an interview with RFI correspondent, Mundia Sikatana, the then Zambian Minister of Foreign Affairs, described how he believed integration should be achieved and its realities. He said:

‘Zambia believes in integration, but this cannot be achieved immediately. We are of the opinion that, since Africa already has regional economic unions, we should strengthen such unions to make them our foundations. When you travel to a region like Southern Africa, there is no infrastructure in certain zones. Can you talk of continental unity when regions themselves do not have access to one another? We do nothing other than singing slogans, holding endless conferences which bear no fruit. Today, we have a unique opportunity to talk of an integration with a human face. We want to hope that we will start the integration bit by bit. If you come to West Africa, you will see what ECOWAS is doing for the people, same with SADC, same with the new East Africa Economic Community. We think that the more you try to unify regional communities, the better’ (Sikatana, 2007 as cited in Lecoutre, 2008, 49).

The Uganda President, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, in an attempt to justify their preferences, he explained that integration should not be about compatibility as the continent is very diverse and if member states insist on immediate application of the UGI, it will bring problems of incompatibility which may result to lack of solidarity rather than unity in future (AU 2007b). Citing an example of similarity not being a major factor for integration, he said the Arab nation in the north of Africa do not have an effective regional economic bloc despite the fact that they speak the same language (AU 2007b). Museveni proposed that the principle of subsidiarity be implemented which will solve the problem of competence and sovereignty in the AU. Member states from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) were of the opinion that a

Union Government for Africa should be formed only when high levels of political and economic integration has been attained. In this case they will be willing to transfer some of their sovereignty to the AU.

In the same line, the Prime Minister of Lesotho, Pakalitha Mosisili, mentioned that a union government cannot be formed when economic integration is still at a low standard. According to him, the best option was partial sovereignty and before they do so, the AU Commission has to be audited to avoid discrepancies (AU,2007D). In an explanation of Mosisili' position In the UG debate, Lecoutre (2008) mentioned that 'Mosisili argued that one could draw lessons from the European experience and start with economic integration, for example, as a basis for forging stronger links' (Lecoutre, 2008, 40).

Egypt took the position of a gradual realization of a principle such as the United States of Africa. However, rather than advocating for the strengthening of the RECs first like other countries mentioned such as Nigeria and South Africa, Egypt preferred the strengthening of the AU Commission as she was skeptical of the concept of the Union Government (AU, 2007d). In the same line, Cape Verdean minister of foreign affairs, Victor Manuel Barbosa Borger, was of the opinion that, instead of creating a new institution, the AU should be maintained as it was way too young to be dismantled and they have not given her enough time to provide desired results. Other countries were notoriously neutral on the debate such as Benin, whose leader Yayi Boni showed some reservation and ambiguity (AU,2007). According to Murithi & Lecoutre the reason why some countries prefer to be at the side lines and be neutral was because they did not want to be blamed for the failure of the debate (Murithi & Lecoutre, 2008).

As the debate became more polarized, some leaders asserted on the need to adopt a realistic strategy of establishing a union government as eventually, Africa must begin with economic regional integration. For the maximalist this was a ploy used by the gradualist to stall the formation of the UGI, as some member states took the opportunity to swap positions from the maximalist to the gradualist camp (Lecoutre, 2008). The discussion on the Union Government Initiative in 2007, the main disagreement points were on the nature of how the proposed Union Government will be realized and the time frame for the attainment of this initiative. According to the African Union 'Another critical area of divergence was the question of how much sovereignty would be ceded to

the Union Government, the preservation of Nation States and their identity, as well as the identification and prioritization of areas/fields that could be better handled and effectively executed at the continental level.’(AU, 2008c).

With the frustration expressed by the Libyan president during the debate, the Gabonese president Omar Bongo, a long-time friend to Gaddafi, partisan to the immediate establishment of the UG joined the maximalist group. According to Lecoutre (2008) when Bongo sensed that ‘Gaddafi was more or less being ‘abandoned’ by the CEN-SAD camp which included Burkina Faso, Libya, Mali, Niger, Sudan, Chad, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Eritrea, Nigeria, Djibouti, The Gambia, Senegal, Egypt, Morocco, Somalia, Tunisia, Benin, Liberia, Togo, Sierra Leone, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Guinea-Bissau, Bongo undertook an operation to rescue the maximalists.’ (Lecoutre, 2008, 41). To do so, Bongo presented a speech stating that:

‘Today, our continent, like the others, should accelerate its integration process. In effect, when Africa speaks with one voice, the entire international community listens and understands. This has led to a consensus in favour of the political and economic integration of Africa ... we are however aware that in order to arrive at a broad-based consensus, we still need to reassure one another, dispel doubts and fears, with a view to ironing out our divergent approaches. Indeed, the real difficulties are technical. The formation of an African Government does not mean the end of national sovereignties. States, governments, and their ministers will, at this stage, continue to have all their current national authorities. The federal government, with a number of federal ministers, will be based on the principle of subsidiarity. We should therefore decide which portions of sovereignty we are ready to give up.’ (Bongo 2007 as cited in Lecoutre, 2008, 41)

Bongo’s speech was an attempt to assure the member states that the union government does not mean an automatic loss of national sovereignty. Bongo continued by saying that:

‘the federal ministries that would be chosen will have only the powers and authorities bestowed on them by states. This principle implies that not all duties will be under the Union Government. The Union Government will only handle those that members states can handle better collectively than individually. The African Union implies that we should stand united before the outside world (Bongo 2007 as cited in Lecoutre, 2008, 41)

Apart for the gradualist wanting more time to build a functional economic bloc as it was in their national interest to do so, one could say there was another reason why Gaddafi the leader of

the radical unionist group was facing strong opposition from Nigeria, South-Africa , Egypt and even Algeria. According to Wapmuk (2009) ‘South Africa’s Thabo Mbeki, Nigeria’s Olusegun Obasanjo, Algeria’s Bouteflika and Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak were gaining more popularity than Gaddafi as demonstrated in the collaboration in the crafting and launching of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD),’. Gaddafi under this thinking pressed for the immediate formation of the Union Government where he thought will grant him more political backing when dealing with the West. Thus, he used every African Union summit to make the argument for the Union Government. On the other hand, the leaders of the 4 countries mentioned above were not comfortable with the idea of handing more power to the Libyan leader. (Wapmuk, 2009)

After the debate, the African Union drafted a report was indicative of the outcomes of the debate. This report is notoriously known as the 2007 Accra Declaration. In the declaration, the outcomes stipulated, it mirrored the Abuja treaty of 1991, which have not yet been implemented and was stored for years. The declaration pointed out that the African union member states took as obligation:

‘to rationalize and strengthen the Regional Economic Communities ... so as to lead to the creation of an African Common Market, through the stages set in the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (Abuja Treaty), with a reviewed and shorter timeframe to be agreed upon in order to accelerate the economic and, where possible, political integration’ (African Union 2007c: point 2a).

According to the gradualist, the text had no new obligations to it in contrast to the Abuja treaty, except the fact that member states all requested for all the institutions of the African Union be audited by board appointed by the African Union’s Commission (African Union 2007c: point 2b). The outcomes of debate written in the Accra Declaration was disappointing to the Maximalist who wanted an immediate establishment of the Union Government. They began the debate with high hopes of swaying other members states and thought the outcomes will be historically as the philosophy of a United States of Africa was the ultimate outcome for Africa the pioneers of the Pan-African institution envisioned. More so, threats made by the maximalist to break away from the African Union and great their own Union Government did not pull through as the separation of the institution was evaded. As the Accra Declaration found a common ground between the two groups by stating that there is a plan for the establishment of the Union Government in the nearest

future (African Union 2007c). Though the future had not been determined and the calendar not specified, at any rate, the pace was realistic and achievable by most members states (Murithi and Lecoutre, 2008).

Some analysts of the debate claim that there were winners and losers. That the Accra declaration was a mere political strategy, engineered for the gradualist who from their perspective gained more time. (Murithi and Lecoutre, 2008). In terms of figures, 24 countries expressed their position against the immediate formation of the Union Government. These groups were classified as the gradualist. This group led by Nigeria and South was said to have carried the day as their preferences prevailed over those of the radical unionist. (Lecoutre,2008). Pascal Fletcher reporting on the declaration made by the African Union after the 3 days debate, said that ‘African leaders have vowed to speed up the economic and political integration of their continent to pursue the goal of a United States of Africa, but they also agreed to study more closely how to achieve it’ (Fletcher, Reuters, 2007). According to him this came as a compromise between the positions taken by member states during the debate leaning towards the gradualist approach (Fletcher, Reuters, 2007).

Another analyst of the debate, states that nothing have been won nor lost as the was no concrete decision and a way forward, because nothing happened, and nothing changed (Wapmuk, 2009). According to Wapmuk, (2009) the gradualist had more to bargain with and thus financially and materially supported the strengthening of Regional Economic Blocs, as they are major donors of the African Union and so other member states saw them to be more advanced and better developed (Wapmuk, 2009)

15 states categorized as radical unionists expressed their adherence to an immediate establishment of the Union Government. Although a decision could not be reached, the Union Government Initiative is still looked at as the future of the continent. The Inability of the Accra 2007 summit to deliver a comprehensive and decisive declaration on an action plan for the realization of the African Union Government Initiative, left the African Union with just one way to address the fears and concerns of the member states. A ministerial committee made up of 10 states namely Cameroon, Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Libya Senegal, Uganda Nigeria Egypt, and South Africa tasked with providing clarity to the debate on the Union Government.

4.5.3 Position of Nigeria, South Africa, and Egypt on the Union Government

During the ninth ordinary session of the Assembly of the Union, in Accra Ghana, a report on the debate revealed the preference of all member states as presented above. However, for the purpose of this thesis' objectives, which is to evaluate the positions of powerful states in AU during the Union Government debate a detailed narrative is provided on Nigeria, South Africa, and Egypt as Africa's. The main focus here is to see if H2 can be observed, that is the preferences of powerful states prevails when member states' preferences diverge.

4.5.3.1 Nigeria

Nigeria, a key economic player in Africa: being the number one producer of oil and gas in the company with offshore oil reserves at the Gulf of Guinea, unfortunately is said to be plagued with institutional corruption (Akinyeye, 2010). According to Akinyeye (2010) 'this institutionalized plunder may be partly why Nigeria has, unfortunately, not been able to convert its preminent weight and status into critical advantage or credible influence to advance and fast-track regional integration' (Akinyeye, 2010, 225). Aside from Nigeria's internal politics and dynamics being one of the major factors hindering deeper integration, at the initial discussion of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's ideology of a United Africa, the then prime minister of Nigeria: Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa rejected this philosophy based on the question of how they plan on realizing this dream. As Ghana's Nkrumah advocated for a 'total political union of all African states' Nigeria' Alhaji Abubakar argued for a gradual approach to achieving this dream as he thought Ghana was trying to upstage Nigeria's status quo as a big state (Akinyeye, 2010). Akinyeye (2010) stated that 'Sir Abubakar arrogantly retorted that Nigeria was big enough and did not need to join with others' (Akinyeye, 2010, 227).

When the UGI initiative was first proposed under the OAU in 1956, a delegation from the Federal Republic of Nigeria led by Maitama Sule attended a negotiation summit. Here, Nigeria took their first stance on the proposal. Sule outrightly expressed that '*At this moment the idea of forming a Union of African states is premature. At the moment, we in Nigeria cannot afford to form a union by government with any African states by surrendering our sovereignty*' (as cited in Adejumobi and Olukoshi, 2008, 8). This position was again confirmed during the 2007 debate in Accra-Ghana.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria represented by her head of states at that time, president Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, was of the opinion that a gradual incrementalism was the best way to go about establishing a continental government. In his words 'a gradualist approach to evolving union government for Africa' (as cited in Akinyeye, 2010, 227). He also said he understood the need of the AU to accelerate the process for both political and socio-economic integration in the continent, however, for the AU to achieve that she has to find ways to build an effective Regional Economic Communities (RECs). (AU Assembly, 2007). In response to the question of whether the AU should fast-track the 'process of integration towards the United States of Africa or to pursue the same objective through gradual incrementalism'(AU,2008). The Nigerian president stated that; *'it was more important for the African countries to focus on the strengthening and consolidation of internal governance and growth structures, and on a more robust sub-regional integration.'*(AU, Assembly/AU/Draft/Rpt(IX, 2007).

Back at home, Michael Okpara , a political leader in Nigeria also endorsed the idea of a gradual realization of the UGI, a view shared by the Brazzaville and Monrovia states, arguing that before the establishment of a political union on a continental level can be realized, the battle for economic autonomy has to be won at the sub regional levels (Udogu, 2010). A Nigerian former minister of finance and anti-corruption advocate Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, explained to the Independent News why an immediate formation of a Union Government was not a good idea. She said "It's definitely something to aim for, a worthwhile endeavor for the future, but we have a lot of work to get to that point. Just look at the EU - it took them years. First, we need the key countries to be politically and economically strong, and we need to put regional infrastructure projects in place. Once you have, got that momentum, then we can start talking about a proper union,"(Iweala, 2007, Konneh, Independent News, 2007)

During the debate Nigeria did not waver in their position for a gradual approach to the UGI and a fortification of the REC bloc. A look at the AU's member states, reveals most if not all African nations are dependent on their natural resources for economic growth. Nigeria is an oil rich country producing 3% of the world's oil reserves. She depends mainly on this natural source for their income which is 83% of government revenue (Gary and Karl 2004). In light of this, it explains why presidents of such oil producing countries will not be particularly excited to lose control over the income brought by the resource by accepting political integration. This also

explains the pool of sovereignty amongst other oil rich countries like Nigeria ‘if it meant losing control over oil rents and thus his maneuvering space to dispense rewards to his internal and external clients’ (Ayangafac, 2008,165)

Nevertheless, Nigeria has no doubt been committed to regional integration. This can be seen from her ‘Pan-African activities that aided in the formation of the OAU in 1963, in 1975 establishment of ECOWAS, the adoption of the Lagos plan in 1980 and the signing of the treaty of the proposed African Economic Community’ (Akinyeye, 2010, 226)

4.5.3.2 South Africa

After the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994, resulting from the hard work of the OAU, South Africa joined the OAU as her 53rd member states. South Africa was one of the countries where civil societies took the initiative to discuss the desirability of the Union Government sponsored by the South African government. Resolution submitted to the South African Government by the Non-Governmental Organizations stated that ‘It recognizes that this will take a long time and that we should in the meantime embark on strengthening three sets of institutions: executive institutions, judicial institutions and financial/ technical institutions.’ (CPS & ActionAid International, 2007, 3)

In an interview with the independent News, days before the debate on the Union Government was to officially take place, the South African leader Thabo Mbeki informed the world where he stood on the establishment of the Union Government Initiative. He said, "Before you put a roof on a house, you need to build the foundations," (Mbeki:2007, Konneh, Independent News, 2007) This very position was expressed during the debate as South Africa positioned herself with the gradualist group just like Nigeria.

During the debate, President Thabo was considered to be leading the charge against Gaddafi’ Union Government proposal. According to Abdul-Raheem (2010) Thabo ‘did this in the interest of South Africa capitalist system and her interest to expand across this continent, without any obligation towards our social commune’ (Abdul-Raheem, 2010, 82). That is, South Africa was not going to support any treaty that will disturb her national interest which were according to Adul-Raheem (2010) ‘businesses to be free to exploit the rest of the continent, Their attitude is like that of Britain towards Europe’ (Abdul-Raheem, 2010, 82)

Also, another topic of discussion during the debate was the revenue stream for the African Union Government. Most of the countries not in support of an immediate establishment of the UGI were major donors with South Africa falling in this category. Lecoutre (2008) stated that ‘opponents have argued that only a few African countries have developed advanced service sectors where taxation on insurance services and import duties could yield substantial revenue for the AU. In fact, South Africa may be the only country to which this would apply’ (Lecoutre, 2008,100). Therefore, smaller states in monetary terms were indirectly pressured to follow the position of member states with larger pockets. If these major donors were to stop giving money to the AU and in future the Union Government, it will be difficult to manage the institutions financial affairs, as member states were unwilling to adopt laws increasing the tax revenue allocated for the support of the continental body. (Lecoutre, 2008).

It is worth mentioning that when the Libyan leader-Muammar Ghaddafi first relaunched the proposal for a Union Government in 1999, his ideas were welcomed by not just Thabo Mbeki of South Africa but by Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria as well. These leaders, nonetheless, were unenthusiastic to embrace the idea of a fast formation of the Union Government. According to Wapmuk (2009) ‘Former President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa sought to promote the idea of African renaissance and President Obasanjo supported the call for restructuring of OAU to deal with Africa’s security, stability, and development challenges’ (Wapmuk, 2009, 655)

4.5.3.3 Egypt

Egypt, being one of the biggest contributors of the AU’s revenue, was of the opinion that the principle of a United States of Africa can be illustrated through the Union Government Initiative which should be implemented in a gradual approach, but by first strengthening the AU Commission in a transitory manner (Lecoutre, 2008). Her position could be considered a ‘fairytale’ because the member states from north of Africa have been known to pool sovereignty and skeptical of the creation of regional institutions owing to the fact that there have been an absence of regional blocs in the area until the recent creation of the Arab Maghreb Union (Murithi & Lecoutre, 2008).

Algeria was notably silent on the issue which was surprising as she has always strongly advocated for a political integration of the continent. Egypt being a major donor probably did not want to tow the gradualist line but created a different position for others to follow. It is worth mentioning that Egypt is not a member of any sub-regional economic bloc, reason why it makes

sense that she would want the only institution she is part of, to be strengthened, so that the AU can deliver on promises that will be beneficial to Egypt.

All in all, these three countries have always been the major financial donors of both the OAU and AU with an addition of Ghana, Algeria, and Morocco. According to Emmanul Akwetey (2008) being the major donors to the union, provides the countries with ‘a viable platform for pursuing their individual national and pan-African interests.’(Akwetey,2008,95).

4.6 Results

The main research question of this thesis was:

‘To what extent does the Liberal Intergovernmentalism theory explain the regional integration outcomes in the case of the African Union’

This study shows that there are elements of LI theory embedded in the African regional integration process.

In respect to Moravcsik’s national preference formation concept and the aspect of domestic actors molding state preferences had some explanatory power, as academic and civil society organizations, media and diaspora representatives from most African states were in attendance of the 2005 conference under the theme 'desirability of a Union Government of Africa'. Participants of the conference expressed the need for an establishment of the Union Government. The participants also mentioned that the UG must be realized in a gradual process and must be for the African People. The conclusions drawn from the conference, made up of domestic actors, were reflected during the 9th ordinary submit in 2007 for the grand debate on the UGI by the Head of states and government. A majority of 24 states were in favour of a Continent Government but the implementation of the initiative has to be done in a graduate step by effectively building the sub-regional economic blocs. Although some states' national preferences were influenced by domestic pressure, the empirical evidence shows that some member states did not have a position before the debate and even during the debate by remaining neutral. Some even switched positions during the debates while other states’ preferences were formed at the international stage.

For the second step of LI, interstate bargaining on the implementation of the UGI shows that the state preferences did not converge and thus there is no regional outcome for mutual benefit.

However, all 53 member states agreed on the fact that a Union Government is necessary but the main point of disagreement was how it should be implemented, the time frame and the scope of the UG (which areas will it concern and the level of competence). Furthermore, the aspect of distribution of mutual gains cannot be accessed at this stage because the UGI was stalled due to differences in opinions on the implementation of the UGI. Nevertheless, AU member states can be seen debating based on their national interest. Most countries who advocated for a gradual instalment of the UGI while focusing on the functionality of the RECs are known to have good economic integration in their respective sub-regions, gaining from trade collaborations.

Therefore, South Africa, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, The Gambia, Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Togo, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Botswana and, Mauritius were not willing to transfer sovereignty over to a political institution who will dictate their markets. While those who were in support of an immediate establishment of the African Union Government could be said to have been working on a political agenda such as the president of Libya. It could be identified that the bargaining power of some states resulted from asymmetrical interdependence. When CEN-SAD member states who had information about the preference of the Libyan leader prior to the Accra summit, did not rally behind him rather swapped positions by joining the opposition camp. Similarly, the Libyan president used his status quo to threaten AU member states except Nigeria who according to him has always had a fixed position on this since 1963. The Gabonese president who is commonly known to be an ally, heeded to Gaddafi's threats, and tried to persuade the other states to join their team. There is evidence that downplays the role of informational asymmetries in this case.

It can be observed that the third stage of LI, which is creating credible institutions, had no evidence to support this concept as the process for creating a political and economic institution which will implement legally binding treaties and manage unwanted consequences, was stalled. Countries like Egypt and Cape Verde even wanted the maintenance of the current institution which is the AU. They proposed that instead of creating new institutions either immediately or sometime in the future, more authority should be alleviated to the AU Commission who will in return have the power to implement legally binding treaties and enforce them. According to them, empowering the AU Commission will solve the problem of Africa's failed regional integration process. It was evident that a major aspect of divergence among the member states was the reluctance by the

majority gradualists, who never wanted to transfer neither all nor some of their national sovereignty to the political institutions.

Therefore, based on the above, Liberal Intergovernmentalism can explain to a larger extent the regional integration outcome in the African Union specifically the case of the African Union Government Initiative. However, in respect to a historical context, evidence suggests that the LI theory cannot account for the drive of regional integration in African because it was born of a political will and not economic.

Table 1: Evaluation of Hypotheses

Expectations	Outcomes
<i>H1: Regional integration outcomes are determined by national preferences</i>	<p>It was observed that those states who had an ordered set of values before the debate and stuck to these national preferences during the summit, dictated the regional integration outcomes. Therefore, H1 cannot be rejected in the case of African Union.</p> <p>The Union Government Initiative was stalled as in postponed until the right conditions are met. This is the outcome of the debate because the majority of member states preferences was first to work on achieving functional Regional Economic Communities before implementing a Union Government for Africa.</p> <p>The empirical analysis shows the positions of all member states on the implementation of a United States of Africa. Some countries were neutral, others had firm positions during the debate and other member states changed their position. This differences in opinion leads to the second hypothesis</p>
<i>H2: In case national preferences diverge, the preferences of more powerful actors prevail.</i>	<p>It is evident that Nigeria and South Africa, the leaders of the opposing camp were able to use their position as major donors of AU's revenue to argue for their positions. From the narrative evidence the sceptic group had to lean towards the gradualist view</p>

	<p>of the importance of forming a UG but in the future. As the gradualist provides a compelling argument against the pro-unionist. Nigeria and South Africa' preference of step by step approach by strengthening the RECs prevailed when 22 others were in member states support. The also advocated for more detailed study of the UGI. This was the main declaration after the debate by the AU as a way forward to realizing the UGI.</p> <p>Egypt's preference on the other hand did not prevail as no declaration was made in relation to her position. Egypt was not able to pool support for her position of transferring sovereignty to the AU by strengthening the AU Commission for a better functioning of the institution.</p> <p>However, if we are to consider Libya to be a powerful actor in the early 2000s, it can be observed that she tried using her influence to sway other states to change their minds in her favour. Gaddafi made threats that he was going to abandon the AU and stop donating money if other states did not join his position. In response to this threat, the Gabonese president can be seen trying to convince other states to join the position of an immediate establishment of the UGI.</p> <p>Nevertheless, Libya's preferences did not prevail.</p> <p>To conclude, Nigeria and South Africa can indeed be said to be powerful actors in Africa judging from the above evidence. Therefore, H2 cannot be rejected in the context of African Regionalism.</p>
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In conclusion, the empirical analysis led considerable support to the proposition that regional integration is driven by national government and reflects states preferences. When state preferences diverge, the preferences of powerful states have superiority. The debate on the union government initiative, as an event in itself is evidence of the centrality of member states driving

integration. The fact that member states were able to express their positions and argue for or against it shows some characteristic of Liberal Intergovernmentalism.

5. CONCLUSION

From the above discourse it has been revealed that Liberal Intergovernmentalism can explain the regional integration outcomes in Africa as nation states have very much to say on which treaty gets adopted or not. This is not surprising as supranational actors' positions on the Union Government debate were not accounted for. Even though the AU has been characterized as institutionally driven, there is no evidence that shows that the institutions hold significant power. This is related to the fact that member states are still deciding if they should transfer sovereignty to the AU as discussed above.

The main objective of this thesis was to test how well the Liberal Intergovernmentalist's model of regional integration applies in the case of the African Union. Liberal Intergovernmentalism rests on the theory that states are the essential actors in an anarchy environment. As states bargain to pursue goals beneficial to them rather than via a centralized government. Liberal Intergovernmentalism is one of the preeminent theories of European integration. As proven above, it has the potential to apply to in another context as well. The research question was to what extent Liberal Intergovernmentalism explain regional integration outcomes in the case of the African Union. The thesis focused on a particular event: the 2007 grand debate on the Union Government. The debate was for leaders of the African Union member states to decide on the establishment of a centralized political institution that will govern all African states. The union government determines Africa's institutional future. The study focused on the positions of Nigeria, South Africa and Egypt considering these states to be Africa's hegemons. Two hypotheses were tested: States' preferences and the divergence of state preferences were considered the independent variables while prevalence of powerful actor's preference and regional integration outcome were examined as the dependent variables. As such the theoretical expectations were that: regional integration outcomes are determined by national preferences and in case national preferences diverge, the preferences of more powerful actors prevail. These were used to solve the puzzle. This study employed the case study as the methodological approach, which analyzed the regional dynamics of the African Union based on the empirical evidence. The type of empirical data presented in this study were account evidence

collected from the African Union's reports, conference declarations and the African Union Assembly drafts. Scholarly articles and monographs were used also.

The results of the empirical analysis confirm the majority of the theoretically expectations of the study. The main expectation was that Moravcsik's Liberal Intergovernmentalism when applied to the African Union can account for regional integration outcome to a significant extent. Empirical analysis showed patterns of member states driving the integration outcome with each state falling either under the gradualist, maximalist or neutral position. Patterns such as national preference formation are indeed influenced by domestic actors as evident. Throughout the debate, intergovernmental bargaining was clearly present with each state bargaining on their position and institutional choice is in fact the topic of the debate as member states argue for creating a new political institution or allocated more power to the current African Union or strengthening the sub Regional Economic Communities until they are functional. With the last stage of the LI theory, it was evident that the member states of the African Union positions on the Union Government Initiative shows them arguing for the kind of institution they want for the implementation and enforcement of treaties.

Furthermore, the evidence shows member states worrying over decisions to pool or transfer sovereignty. This also shows the problems of integration as they are careful not to adopt policies in this case, institutions that will affect their national sovereignty and also the willingness of states to comply with adopted treaties. It was also evident that mostly economic national interests were the driving force behind members' positions. By advocating for attention to be put on building economic blocs first, proves their rational state behavior.

To a minor extent, the Liberal Intergovernmental Theory cannot account for some of the regional dynamics in the African context. Although civil society organizations and other domestic groups were included in accessing the desirability of the Union Government, not all states preferences expressed during the grand bargaining of the Union Government Initiative, were in favor of what domestic actors wanted. This means that some states preferences were not in response to shifting pressure from domestic groups. Moreover, some states' national preferences were not fixed as required by the Liberal Intergovernmentalism. This can be seen when Benin switched groups to join the majority camp during the debate. This shows a less than rational behavior of the states. Also, some states had no official position on the issue at hand and decided

to remain neutral. while other states made up their preferences and acquired a position during the dates such as Gabon.

Significantly, my thesis contributes to the literature on African Regionalism. It shows that states' preferences drive regional integration outcome that preferences of large and powerful states prevail when member states' national preferences diverge. By testing one of International Relation's major integration theories in the African scenario, it shows the applicability of the Liberal Intergovernmentalism on other regional groups globally, not just the European Union. A possible caveat of this study is the impossibility to explain all sectors of African regional integration in just one single research.

In a nutshell, it is of no doubt that regional integration is driven by member states and integration outcomes are determined by states preferences in the African context as prescribed by Liberal Intergovernmentalism. However, given the fact that most African Union member states have historic record of corruption, I would recommend that in order to build an economic and political institution that will actually bring development, there should be some kind of an Acqui Communautaire like in the European Union, which will guide candidate states ascension in to the African Union or in future the Union Government. Else the African Union or any other future regional institution might just fail as the former institutions who were not able to deliver on their promises. This was due to the fact that there were no legally binding treaties. We can see that African states are reluctant to transfer some of their sovereignty to the African Union who will have the power to hold member states to the standards of the legally binding treaties. In as much as states want to protect their economic national interest, heads of states want to protect their positions and overstay in power and studies have shown that they are the ones benefiting from the profits of the natural resources.

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