Between words and war: Militarism and African security

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1. Introduction

In late October 2017 the African Union (AU) held its eighth *High Level Retreat on the promotion of Peace, Security and Stability* (also coined the Retreat of Special Envoys, Mediators and other Senior Officials). The theme was *The emerging global order, multilateralism and Africa.* One chief conclusion of the summit was that African leaders had to invest in its institutions and structures to be perceived as a legitimate global authority and to be able to achieve their own ambitions. Echoing past debates, this summit also concluded that Africa must be the sole determinant of its destiny and that it cannot afford to wait for security challenges and armed conflicts to be solved by external actors. Further to this, primacy was also given to create more effective coordination between the AU and the regional economic communities (RECs).

This introspective reform debate held in N'Djamena, we note, clearly forms part of a long-standing process of the AU, aimed at strengthening institutional capabilities to meet the demands posed by contemporary security challenges across Africa, not least within its peace and security regime (de Coning, Gelot and Karlsrud, 2015; Touray 2005).

The primary aim of Africa's peace and security regime, or 'African peace and security architecture' ('APSA') as it is usually referred to, is to uphold a set of shared norms among African leaders, on how to build a safe and secure environment for the continent's citizens. Such norms include, for instance, democratic practices, good governance and human rights principles (see the visionary document *AU Agenda 2063* and *Silencing the Gun;* Gelot and Tieku 2017). At the core, APSA embodies a vision for how to deal with continental threats by means of prevention, management and resolution of crises and conflicts, and post-conflict reconstruction. Moreover, the goal of APSA is to create a "comprehensive agenda for peace and security".

However, while the norms and values expressed in official documents are all well and good, practice differs and there are signs of different trends with regard to how involved actors within APSA perceive security threats and what means the AU should have at its disposal to counter

these threats. At present, we deem these practices and perspectives to be militaristic, at the expense of non-military means, to counter continental security challenges. We propose that three trends of militarization can be noted: 1. the increasing militarization of African institutions (APSA), 2. the increasing militarization of the APSA security narrative, and 3. the militarization of the African security landscape. We believe it is important not only to highlight these trends, but also to explain why it is occurring, to understand the nature and character of the various processes of 'becoming' a cohesive security actor. The observation here, i.e. of contemporary ongoing shifts within Africa's peace and security regime, not only identifies an empirically puzzling aspect of APSA, but also poses a specific set of theoretical challenges as to why this militarization manifests itself in the way it does.

Thus, in this paper we present a theoretical framework for analysing militarist practice in African institutions. The guiding question for this paper is *How do formal/informal networks emerge in Africa's peace and security regime, and what explains their militarization/demilitarization practices?*

To answer this question, we propose a sociologically-based theoretical approach, in which we seek to link the concept of militarization to the literatures on security practices and security regimes. We depart from the view that militarization processes occur in varying degrees and that they always meet with demilitarizing practices. Thus, we find that militarizing and demilitarizing practice are most usefully studied within one and the same framework, to avoid exaggerating or misreading political developments ("selection bias").

1.1. Africa militarizing

Many observations can be put forth to make the claim that militarizing processes are worth taking more seriously. As we see it, militarization can be noted in different locations: at the institutional level of the various APSA components, in narratives, and playing out in the African security landscape.

With regard to militarization of *APSA's institutions,* we find an increase in military spending; build-ups of stronger security apparatuses; build-up of continental security institutions (AU and RECs); increasing build-up of build-up of military bases in Africa with support of external actors. The readiness of Africa's own peace and security institutions to lead on counter-terrorism and stabilization interventions is given top priority. Several of these processes and activities are externally driven and motivated, but several are also initiated, sponsored and

upheld by African heads of states, officials and senior advisers as part of expert communities within and surrounding the APSA structure (see framework below).

With regard to *African security narratives,* we identify this trend as coming about in official documents, such as in speeches by state representatives and AU and REC officials. More precisely, these narratives take hold when African leaders privilege militarist solutions in anti-terror campaigns and frame these as demanding stabilization efforts and a "joint fight" by African and international partners (Project Syndicate, 2016; notes on file with author, 2016). For instance, at the just-concluded 4th Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security in Africa, Senegalese President Sall called for a new African security doctrine to assertively root out terror groups, using the Western intervention in Libya as a chief illustration of external interference with severe negative impacts for regional security (TimesLive, 2017). Moreover, narratives regarding militarization can be noted as taking place in different areas, such as humanitarian assistance, militarized development aid (Abrahamsen in press), peace-promotion, approaches to deal with non-military threats by military means (Ebola, climate change), and public expressions of the need to increase regime security (partly at the expense of human security).

Finally, with regard to a *changing African security landscape,* one can take note of the increasing number of military interventions in complex armed conflicts by regional, continental and international actors (Bachmann 2014; Peter 2015; Karlsrud 2016). This implies direct involvement in combat, indirect involvement through alliance-building, or shadow (by proxy) intervention (Forte 2012), by the financing of security institutions, support to security sector reform, or through external competition, and the building of military bases.

In all then, the purpose here is to develop a theoretical model that can explain why there has been an increasing shift towards militarization, by focusing on internal institutional processes. We seek to theoretically frame and account for how these developments are best understood as originating in social practices among officials, diplomats, and other stakeholders acting at the margins of APSA's formal institutions.

1.2 Short summary of literature – leading assumptions

By drawing on already developed strands of research, we set out to develop a theory approach that can explain the militarized character of AU's security governance and the implications this process may have. Based on a literature review, very briefly summarized here, we claim that authors engaged in the theorization of APSA have mainly been guided by three assumptions:

the literature has been empirically front-heavy; it has taken a conventional approach to state security in describing the security challenges APSA is meant to tackle; and APSA is approached as a static formal arrangement, meaning that it has mainly been explained on basis of formal institutional approaches.

1.1.1 APSA is institutionally one-dimensional when it comes to its security narrative and threat perceptions

The literature on African security governance has so far had a tendency to look at empirical accounts rather than theoretically-grounded analysis. Over the past years, only a few studies aim to theorize the AU's conceptualization of its peace and security vision or its security role (for a recent overview see Arthur 2017), although there are some valuable exceptions (Engel and Porto 2013; Tieku 2017; Brosig 2013). For instance, Makinda and Okumu (2007) examine the types of capacity-building that AU needs and suggest ways of tailoring the goal of African approaches to governance and security. They argue that AU's contemporary security governance has come to be increasingly internationalized and reliant on the international community, both with regard to financing not only its institutions but also many of its APSA activities. Another exception is Franke and Gänzle (2012). They critically analyse important aspects of external actors' interests in shaping APSA and what implications these have for the way the AU addresses security challenges in Africa.

> *(A) Hypothesis: To understand APSA, one needs to account for the complexity of processes and interactions among its actors driving AU's security narratives and threat perceptions.*

1.1.2 Militarization is largely driven by a conventional conceptualization of security

The literature on African security governance has so far taken a state- or regime-oriented conceptualization of security. More precisely, in the field of African continental security governance, it is commonplace to note that APSA's vision of an integrated peace and security framework encompasses institutional mechanisms to tackle a broad range of threats, but that these have demonstrated clear limitations: they are state-biased and largely designed to address local armed conflicts of a conventional character. The creation of the ASF symbolises the use of military institutions to deal with armed conflicts.

Moreover, scholars note that APSA is largely a one-dimensional security structure in terms of the way it conceptualizes security (see Grasa and Mateos 2010). More precisely, there are some built-in assumptions in APSA, which informed experts suggest do not respond to needs on the ground (Olaf Bachmann 2012; Franke and Gänzle 2012). For instance, the narrative, as expressed in formal documents regarding APSA's general perceptions of security suggests that non-military threat (e.g. epidemics) are not taken seriously. In this context it need also to be noted that the predominant security culture that exists does not have to be endogenously driven only, but also by exogenous reasons. Over time, a gradual bias towards militarism emerges which is both driven by endogenous factors (e.g. among African stakeholders and decision-makers), as well as by exogenous factors (e.g. external powers).

An increasing number of studies have begun taking stock of the institutional development of the African Union and APSA capacity (Sabelo 2011; Engel and Porto 2013, Bah et. al. 2014; Williams 2011, 2014).

Thus, the literature tends to assume that the AU is a unitary actor that has so far developed institutional capabilities, mechanisms and activities for the purpose of addressing conventional security threats (Boutellis and Williams 2013; Tieku, Obi and Porter 2014).

(B) Hypothesis: To understand the militarization process taking place in APSA, a broadened conceptualization of security is needed, that traces contemporary and shifting security discourses and their threat perceptions and framings.

1.1.3. APSA is commonly understood and assessed by its formal institutional performances

Conventional security studies assume that institutions and regimes are mainly instruments of state power (Kasaija 2013). This builds on theories such as geopolitical interests, national interests, military rivalry, power projections and grand strategies. The framework for addressing challenges to peace and security in Africa has gravitated to this conventional conceptualization of security. This move takes place both by means of political support and resource investment, and through security-agenda setting practices. As noted above, a common argument is that institutional resources should be dedicated to addressing 'new' asymmetric and hybrid security challenges relating to terrorism, organized crime, climate change, mass

migration, droughts, piracy and pandemics such as Ebola and HIV. Militarization and the current securitization of issues are presented by state representatives and intellectuals as necessary and justifiable (Handy 2011). For example, the solution to epidemics are not proposed to be investment in the health sector and crisis response mechanism, but meet with further securitization of epidemics as a threat.

There are clear signs that APSA is shaped by practice. Institutions are militarized, as the dominant view is that peace and stability are best addressed by military means. Yet, this is currently less acknowledged in the main strand of literature explaining APSA.

For example, social constructivist and postmodernist-inspired accounts in the African security governance literature focus on processes and practices, and trace interlinkages between global, regional and local actors, in order to reveal normative agendas and actual effects. Rather than being taken for granted, structures, networks and discursive dimensions need to be problematized, offering a different understanding of security and how it could be understood in an African context. Thus, for the purpose of our research framework, we build on previous work by scholars such as Engel and Porto (2013). They reveal how norms, values and social processes are embedded among African security actors, resulting in a gradual emergence of an African peace and security regime. We also build on Antonia Witt's scholarship (2012), where she demonstrated how the ongoing social struggles over concepts, projects and practices of regional security governance produced competing narratives about order and change (Witt 2012). Finally, we also take note of the findings by Abrahamsen (2017) who argues that today's militarization processes in Africa are suffused with values of security (Abrahamsen 2017). The militarism turn, she argues, is clouded in and embedded in liberal political instruments.

Adding to the shortcomings of a formal institutional perspective, what is still lacking in the study of African governance is a theoretical approach that challenges formal institutional perspectives such as 'actorness' and forefronts the inner 'life worlds' of global governance institutions (Niezen and Sapignoli 2017). Thus, rather than focusing on institutional lead, formal institutional relations and structures for responding to common threats, there is a need to look at the processes preceding institutionalization of practice; for instance, analyses of shared and routine ways of framing, knowing and responding to security among practitioners and decision-makers, at different levels of hierarchy. To put it differently, the aim is to

understand the drivers behind practices, which leads to policy prescription, norms and institutionalization, but also a redrawing of formal/informal boundaries.

For instance, Okeke (2016) argues that a high degree of experimentation and innovation occurs when existing regimes are not considered adequate in addressing a specific challenge. The creation of a Lake Chad Basin Commission is an example of adaptation and experimentation by West African diplomats, officials, donors, etc. An intergovernmental mechanism became a proxy 'African' governing instrument to lead stabilization efforts and counter Boko Haram activities, in so doing effectively realigning or collapsing the 'formal/informal' boundaries of Africa's peace and security regime. We revisit below how theory of regime security complex has developed to provide structured accounts of why this occurs.

There is a need to reveal the interstices between formal/informal, internal/external modes of governance. The interesting part is why informalities expand on formal premises and what implications this has. We may gain understanding of whether informal practices are rational, unintentional, or resorting to inadequacies of formal institutions.

Hypothesis C: the militarization of APSA can be [better] understood if practice and discourse-led processes are taken into account.

Having outlined some of the main observations and derived three assumptions from the literature, the next section discusses in more depth theoretical approaches useful for understanding the militarization of APSA.

2. Towards a conceptual framework

We use militarism as a lens to study security practices inside Africa's institutions, and we draw on practice theory and regime theory to move towards an explanatory framework. These theoretical approaches, we believe, are most useful in answering the question of how formal/informal networks emerge in Africa's peace and security regime and what explains their militarization/demilitarization practices.

2.1 Militarism and militarization

The contours of a reinvigorated research agenda on militarism in IR are appearing (Stavrianakis and Selby 2013; Eriksson-Baaz & Verweijen 2016; Åhell 2016; Abrahamsen in press). Importantly, a diverse number of scholars never lost sight of the advantages of studying militarism, and today innovative approaches are produced by feminists and political

geographers as well as proponents of the burgeoning fields of Critical Military Studies and Critical War Studies (Enloe 1988; Whitworth 2004; Forte 2002; Basham et. al. 2015). We are seeking to advance this research agenda by studying security practices in Africa through the lens of militarism. Militarism is a characteristic of global North and global South alike, and the concept of militarism is most usefully understood as being simultaneously social and transnational (Stavrianakis and Selby 2013:3-11).

There is a long-standing interest in militarization in the areas of war and peace studies. The study of militarism in Africa has typically been on formal institutional militarization rather than on non-material practices. For instance, militarism in Africa has mainly been pinned down as military spending, number of military coups, involvement of the military in conflicts etc. Interesting work exists on how such features negatively affected non-conventional sectors (Cervenka 1987). In this regard, though, militarization has been analysed from an institutional perspective with its own traditions, routines and practices. However, militarism within defense institutions has often been studied as a specific form predicated upon a distinct form of institutional culture, apart from the state and its governance culture (Wilson 2008). Military culture, for instance, has been defined as a non-material determinant of military behaviour on the ground (Ruffa 2017). Sometimes, also, specific domains or populations in African locations are conceived of as being militarized. For instance, Muggah (2006) has investigated how refugees in different African locations have become pawns of warfare. Riggan (2016) finds that certain African states use nationalism and mass militarization to nurture national security.

We are interested in the militarization processes within spaces normally considered civic and democratic. We therefore conceive of militarism in a sociological sense: militarism as embedded in society. Martin Shaw, for instance, provides the following definition: 'the penetration of social relations in general by military relations' (Shaw 2013). The military is 'all social relations, institutions, and values relating to war and its preparation' (Shaw 2013:106) and militarism is the tendency or extent to which these military relations influence social relations as a whole.

The anthropologist Catherine Lutz analyses militarization as involving "an intensification of the labour and resources allocated to military purposes, including the shaping of other institutions in synchrony with military goals" (2006:320). Pervasive patterns of militarization are seen as being predicated on, and justified through, ideological arguments—for instance, about desirable order, and amity/enmity, that further legitimizes militarist action (Lutz 2002:723). This grasps both the discursive and material processes through which societies

prepare for war. The process is seen as equally marked by shifts in general societal values and peoples' self-images (discursive) as by quantities of guns and tanks (material) (Lutz 2006:320). Translated and delimited to the study of African peace and security institutions, our framework draws on this to unpack the socialization of a set of actors into self-identifying with certain symbols and values, and advancing a security narrative of what is necessary and justified, in combination with justifications about the required material resources.

Feminist sociologists (Cockburn 2010; Enloe 1988; Segal 2008) have strongly contributed to keeping militarism as a topic in IR theoretical discussions, and have contributed depth and breadth in terms of exploring how societies support and prepare for war. Linda Åhell (2016) argues that what feminist scholarship adds to knowledge about militarism and militarization is how such concepts are often linked to nationalism and always linked to gender as a critical factor in the construction and perpetuation of, but also as the potential reversal of, militarism. From a feminist perspective, militarism is not easily measurable and is not merely about ideology or value systems, but is ultimately also about social relationships in the everyday, organized around war and preparation for war.

Feminists have also stressed the linkage between militarism and ideas, process and values. For example, militarism as 'the belief that the most appropriate solution to a problem or response to an event is the military one' (Shepherd 2009), and militarization as 'the process by which beings or things become associated with the military or take on military characteristics' (Shepherd 2015:xxv). Thus, militarization is a process entailing a profound transformation of values, which will have gendered effects. Even if profound in nature, such transformation is always reversible, and just as the gendering effects of militarization are crucial, one should never lose sight of the demilitarization moves by relevant agents.

Enloe (2000) has argued that the more militarized an individual or a society is, the more 'normal' military needs and militaristic presumptions become. Processes of militarization can be found anywhere in the everyday (Enloe 2000:4). Militarization involves cultural, institutional, ideological, and economic transformations. From this perspective, militarizing practices can be embedded within the very institutions considered the hallmarks of liberal and democratic governance (Enloe 2000:289). Demilitarization, on the other hand, means democratization and decentralization, and a setting for meaningful conversations about transparency and accountability.

2.1.1 In sum

From empirical observation, we find it useful to speak of a normalization of militarist attitudes and values currently ongoing within African peace and security regime. This occurs in the everyday and is made possible through seemingly trivial and patterned security-related activities. Therefore, we can speak of 'microcosms of war preparation,' inhabited by peace and security officials, diplomats, oft-used security consultants and experts, donors and external partners. To be able to zoom in on how militarization (and demilitarization) occurs at the micro-level of the peace and security regime, we turn to security practice theory. Next we explain how this helps us explore further how we might study *militarist practices* in the everyday functioning of African security institutions.

We need a social theory of practice to develop analytically how we pin down manifestations of militarist values, symbols, activities, knowledge (including temporally and spatially), and how they generate realignment of formal/informal spaces. Our suggested microcosms are practice-based, namely: conduct/best practices of state officials comprising the Permanent representatives committee, activities to strengthen the civilian dimension of the African Standby Force by the AU peace support operation division, and the embedding of counter-terrorism research capacity within Africa's peace and security institutions.

2.2 Security practice theory

To the security practice theorist, the primary object of analysis can be defined as follows: everyday practices of a collective of actors that share an order of knowledge, systems of symbols, meanings, or cultural codes, that generates rules for action (Bueger and Gadinger 2015:451). Shared knowledge is located in the patterns of practices, and is 'practical knowledge' ('know-how') (Bueger and Gadinger 2015:451). We aim to use practice theory as a heuristic device and a sensitizing framework (Reckwitz, cited in Bueger and Gadinger 2015:457). Its usefulness to us lies in its combination of an inductive sociological approach to policy processes, with analytical methods to zoom in on specific social groups, processes, or sets of actions, located in time and space (Bicchi & Bremberg 2016). Here, we draw on Andreas Reckwitz' (2002) definition of practice, as 'a routinized type of behavior which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge.' Enacting a practice depends on interconnectivity of all of these (Reckwitz 2002:249).

Contrary to other conventional IR approaches, the practice approach plays up the importance of everyday and informal interaction, the shared repertoires of interaction (know-how), the practical knowledge that it produces, and routine activities as well as mutual learning (Græger 2016, see also Adler and Pouliot 2010). Since practice is at the origin of policy, one has to study social struggle and social patterns to locate when an idea becomes 'settled' and normalized, and ultimately institutionalized (Bueger 2015). The literature on security practice proposes that one way to analyse security governance is by discerning communities of practice in the making, and teasing out what actors actually do together, how they cooperate and with what effects (Bueger 2015). For example, Græger's (2016) analysis of EU–NATO cooperation discusses the extent to which shared repertoires of practice may evolve into loose communities of practice that cut across organisational and professional boundaries. Gelot (2017) has zoomed in on an emerging civilian protection practice: accountability mechanisms for civilian harm by African security operations. Her analysis follows what officials and diplomats do in the everyday to respond to field level accusations of civilian harm by AMISOM staff. The emerging accountability initiatives embody at once militarizing and demilitarizing logics.

Among several contributions, practice theorists have studied 'anchoring practices' (Swidler 2001). Anchoring practices refer to the infrastructure for repeated interactional patterns" (Swidler 2001, p. 94) and thus to how a taken for granted quality of a context can undergo change and overlap if it links to another context. This may happen when structural or geopolitical circumstances change, and we suggest that the militarized politics in African security could make up such a geopolitical shift. For instance, by privileging counter-terrorism knowledge and programming, alternative peace and security practices are rendered possible (through strategies of adaptation or experimentation), and tools and resources are also provided and structured (Bicchi & Bremberg 2016, drawing on Sending and Neumann 2011). New shared repertoires and interactional patterns gradually emerge, and re-establish constitutive rules. In understanding the militarization of APSA, anchoring would in practical terms make it possible to locate when practices previously connected to civilian values—such as prevention and mediation —become related with, and normalized as, military ones. Anchoring might for example refer to how a previously inter-governmental water governance mechanism such as the Lake Chad Basin Commission changes character, enabling resource flows towards stabilization and counter-terrorism purposes advanced by formal as well as informal agents through a previously civilian framework.

This literature provides a way to bridge policy and practice, and to start building conceptual tools to strengthen a gap identified with the literature under Assumption C above: how, methodologically, do we trace and explain diverging perspectives and competing narratives and their conception of security and order? Practice theory reconnects us to the definition of militarization and enables a fine-grained analysis of militarization, since practices weave together discursive as well as material processes that enable structures to be stable or to evolve and agents to reproduce or transform structures (Adler and Pouliot 2011: 5).

2.2.1 In sum

On the basis of security practices, we propose a definition of the collective of actors, institutions and practices that make up Africa's peace and security regime, as a collective of interrelated transnational actors, that share an order of knowledge, systems of symbols, meanings or cultural codes that generate rules for action (adapted from Bueger and Gadinger 2015:451). We approach this space as a 'site of practice' (Bueger 2015; Neumann 2013; Schatzki 2005) and explain the generation of ways of doing and knowing security, with illustrations from selected mechanisms and processes.

2.3 Security regime complex theory

'Security regime complex theory has had the advantage of moving away from a focus on unitary institutional 'architectures,' formal organizations and structures, to being able to account for relations between the mechanisms that allow diverging sets of actors to claim authority over or ownership of an agenda.

Malte Brosig's typology goes further than earlier security regime theory applied to Africa, which focused on single institutions. He argues that we need to 'understand the African security regime complex as consisting of those organizations active in security governance in Africa. This includes African but also non-African actors.' (Brosig 2013: 174). At the same time, his theory is narrower than the work by Engel and Porto (2013) on APSA as a security regime. While Brosig's analysis of security convergence, in particular instances has good empirical depth, this approach is less well-adapted to weigh in the significance of ideational dimensions in the wider collective security environment (Engel and Porto 2013).

Conceptualizing APSA as a regime complex usefully reveals that there is no single dominant architect for this complex: it consists of a number of actors crossing sub-regional, regional, interregional, and global levels. This means that non-African organizations such as the UN, the EU, and global and regional states can under specific circumstances appear as important as APSA itself (Brosig 2013:174-175). The loose and unstructured character of security governance brings out the high dependency of APSA on individuals, or on the flows of donor funding. The absence of strategy fosters experimentation and ad hocism, and an informal structuring and positioning of the regime's component actors (Brosig 2013). The interaction that is produced and reproduced through practices of relevant actors gives rise to interdependency and integration. Brosig notes that 'convergence is growing out of issue urgency, which might very well be unintended and not necessarily a consequence of deliberate design. It is coevolving with the issue in place, leading to densely institutionalized spaces with membership and policy overlap' (Brosig 2013: 176).

2.3.1 In sum

Brosig's typology begins to unpack the most important institutional interlinkages and mechanisms, also cutting across traditional levels of analysis. This provides an analytically useful model of how APSA functions. However, we want to go from institutionalization and formal interlinkages to account as well for the origins and constructions of militarization processes. As suggested by Hypothesis C above we wish to place greater emphasis on social processes and discursive factors. We therefore draw on security practice theory to complement and develop security regime complex theory.

3. Introducing the militarization practice framework

In this section we attempt to outline how the complexity of APSA can be better understood by introducing a framework that takes us beneath current formal approaches. The objective is to illustrate why one should proceed beyond formal institutional explanations of APSA for the purpose of understanding not only how but why APSA is militarizing. Thus, with this framework, the aim is not only to explain drivers of militarization through its various institutional features, but also by explaining why it takes place. Hence, the framework adds to the theoretical puzzle and the approaches that are illustrated in the previous section (as illustrated in figure 1).

There are many different domains, levels and forms of interaction taking place inside APSA that lead to militarization practices and the establishment of existing security cultures over time. These intersections are hereby understood as formal and informal institutional practices. As noted, a shortcoming of existing literature on African peace and security is that formal institutional practices are being overly studied at the expense of the internal and informal practices that we argue also explain militarization.

The main pillar of APSA is the AU Peace and Security Council. The AU-PSC consists of the five main institutional bodies recognized in the PSC protocol, that is: the AU Commission, the Panel of the Wise, the CEWS, ASF and the Peace Fund. Over the years, scholars have noted that existing security cultures have developed within these bodies (Williams), reflecting long-standing debates among the founding mothers and fathers of African integration and security.

Yet, to better understand the AU Commission and its practices of security, we need to look not only at official documents, declarations and formal exercises (formal implementation of institutional practices), but also at the dynamic that goes on inside a body like the AU Commission (see table 1). More specifically, this would mean trying to pinpoint drivers of militarization inside this body. In practical terms, drivers of militarization can for example include resources available to the Commission; existing ideologies within it; the role of decision-making hierarchies; existing norms, value and belief systems among its servicemen; intra-institutional power-balances; flow and dissemination of information; and negotiation boundaries.

In the same way, a similar investigation can be conducted within the other PSC bodies. For this to take place, however, such investigation would require clear indicators, in order to identify how drivers of militarization (or non-militarization) prevail. These can be both formal quantitative and qualitative indicators. When it comes to understanding the informal side of APSA's institutions, we depart from rules, norms and the occurrence of orders (practice) (see Kratochwil, 2011). For instance, decision-makers may share a set of beliefs and values, which accede to particular actions. Moreover, they may share a set of beliefs and values that they bring into their understanding of security. Their shared tools are also shared, which contributes to problem identification and solving mechanisms (Haas 1992). A challenge in this type of examination is accessing data.

To contextualize the formal and informal practices in the behavior of the PSC bodies, there is also a need to recognize the interaction between these bodies. For instance, how is the security

culture within each of the PSC bodies being negotiated between these institutions? Does it create a common security culture (which we deem is likely to be militarizing APSA more generally)?

However, probing below the formal bodies of the AU PSC will not be enough either. Clearly, militarization is likely to be driven and negotiated in relation to other concerned agents and epistemic communities. Here, we suggest that the informal and informal institutional practices exercised by Regional Economic Communities, African states (governments/elites), external African actors (EU, super-powers such as US, France, UK, China, Russia), local civil society actors, and multilateral bodies are to be interrogated as well. Each of these bodies have formal and informal sides that need to be understood, each side also interacts formally and informally with different bodies of APSA. A distinction can be made here between external states and multilateral bodies such as UN, IMF and the World Bank.

Finally, to thoroughly explain how the ongoing militarization takes place, two other contextual factors need to be brought into the analysis. One is the character of the security landscape, and the other is about the ongoing military operations in Africa and how these shape rules, norms and orders of the APSA regime in general.
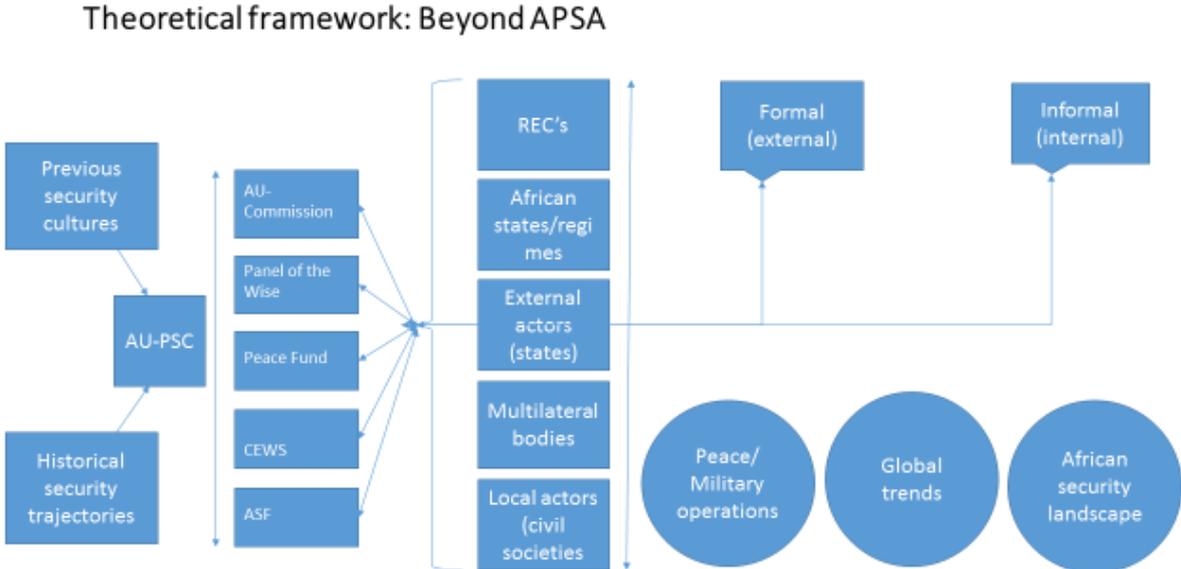
Figure 1.

Theoretical framework: Beyond APSA

Table. 1.

APSA Body	Formal	Informal
AU Commission	- Summit declarations - Chairpersons speeches - Compliance of ruling principles - Examination of official values - Type of operations	- Perception of militarisation among the officials of the executives functions - Power-balances between different Portfolios (e.g. Peace and security, political affairs, social affairs, etc.) - Finances at the disposal of each portfolio - Hierarchy between Chairperson and Commissioners - Professional background of staff members - Existence of a military culture - Security references, markers, symbolism - Interaction with the security community
Panel of the Wise	- Official engagements - Selection of conflicts - Character of official reporting - Type of workshops - Narratives of thematic reports - Type of proposals and recommendations	- Personality experiences - Informal reporting, classified reporting - Subjugation to state pressure - Available resources - Shared beliefs systems - Type of information dissemination and to who + impact - Symbolic interventions vs. deep qualitative peace (positive/negative peace) - Norms influence in APSA - Sources of influence on PoW.
CEWS		
ASF		
Peace Fund		

4. Conclusion

What we see is an ongoing militarization process of the AU and APSA that is both testified through institutional practice, public policy discourses and in its investment of resources to deal with continental threats. For instance, on the one hand we see the emerging norms of non-indifference to human suffering and reactions to challenges to sovereignty, while on the other hand, we also find a growing sense of urgency on the part of the AU to demonstrate efficiency and legitimacy in the face of pressure from global actors with vested interests. Against the background of these observations a comprehensive and systematic study is proposed to understand   why   this   is   the   case.

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