



Critique of the Teleological presuppositions of Peace-Conflict-Development Narrative Discourse in Africa

Oludele Solaja, Ph.D.^a and Damilola Adegoke, Ph.D.^b

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ABSTRACT

Implicit in the dominant conceptualisations of discursive peace about conflict and development is the intrinsic presupposition of peace as "the means" towards the cessation of conflict - "the end", whose by-product is necessarily development. Several works have interrogated and criticised this peace construct. These works often recast peace as a social fact imbued with a teleological implication towards progressive development ideals and the end of conflict. Western social philosophy, particularly Aristotelianism, heavily influenced this reductionist approach, as surmised in Book IV of his (Aristotle's) Political treatise. After examining several prominent works on peace, conflict, and development by scholars, we observe that their works are not immune from this utilitarian influence. Therefore, we argue for a refocusing and hermeneutical re-understanding of peace as a process in a continuum rather than the means towards an end. The paper, thus, critiques the teleological presuppositions of peace-conflict-development narrative discourse in classical and contemporary studies. Explanatory, historical designs and narratives using relevant examples from Africa and other communities in the global south were adopted to facilitate a better understanding of the subject.

Keywords: Conflict, Critique, Development, Peace, Africa

1. INTRODUCTION

Peace-Conflict-Development (PCD) narrative discourse is a framework that is frequently utilised amongst many others for interrogating contemporary complex challenges faced by different people across the globe,

Africa and Africans not exempted.³ This narrative assumes that there is a linear progression from conflict to peace and from peace to development.⁴ The assumption that peace must exist before any form of development can take place is one of the central teleological presuppositions that underpin the peace-

^a Oludele Solaja is an environmental sociologist lecturing in the Department of Sociology, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria, Email: solaja.oludele@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng

^b Damilola Adegoke is a Peter da Costa Postdoctoral Research Associate and the Head of Data Lab at the African Leadership Centre, King's College London, Email: Damilola.adegoke@kcl.ac.uk

³ Francis, D.J. (2008). *Peace and Conflict in Africa*. London / New York: Zed Books, 2008.

⁴ Berdal, M. (2014). Peacebuilding and Development. In Currie-Alder, B. et. Al. (Eds). *International Development: Ideas, Experience, and Prospects*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

conflict-development narrative.⁵ This ignores the fact that development can also lead to conflict, particularly when its benefits are only enjoyed by a select few elites or when it is unevenly distributed.⁶ In addition, it construes the attainment of peace as the ultimate goal, a destination, rather than an aspirational transitory desired progression within the larger spectrum of human experiences and fluxes.⁷ When peace is viewed solely as a means to restore immediate stability and balance, there's a risk that short-term stability will take precedence over long-term development. This focus might not align with the genuine welfare of the population.⁸ The teleological presuppositions of the PCD narrative discourse in Africa presume that peace and development are universal goals that can be attained through a standardised set of actions.⁹

Another teleological presupposition underpinning the peace-conflict-development narrative is the idea that conflict is inherently undesirable and must be eliminated for development to occur.¹⁰ This view overlooks the fact that conflict can also be a catalyst for change and development, particularly when it is rooted in legitimate grievances and demands for social justice.¹¹ In addition, it implies that conflicts can be easily resolved through interventions from the top-down,¹² rather than recognising the significance of bottom-up, grassroots approaches to the resolution and transformation of conflicts.¹³ In the African context, the PCD narrative oversimplifies intricate historical and

social dynamics present among the continent's diverse peoples and cultures. It does so by assuming that conflict resolution automatically translates to peace, which subsequently fosters development.¹⁴ This completely ignores the complex web of connections that exists between war, peace, and economic growth.¹⁵ As an illustration of how development can bring about conflict, consider the phenomenon of people being uprooted because of large-scale development projects.¹⁶ The mobilisation of resources during times of conflict is one example of how conflict can also result in development.¹⁷ In both instances, the connection between war, peace, and economic growth is not straightforward; rather, it is intricate and multi-layered.¹⁸

The PCD narrative discourse in Africa tends to focus on the state while ignoring the agency of regular individuals.¹⁹ It inadvertently or deliberately pushes the misleading belief that the only way to achieve peace and development is through state-led initiatives, which are typically based on Western ideas of governance and development.²⁰ It fails to acknowledge the diverse perspectives and experiences of African people and their active role in shaping their own paths towards peace and development.

The agency of everyday people is particularly significant in the process of conflict resolution and the sustenance of peace.²¹ Given that the majority of

⁵ Collier, P. (2004). Development and conflict. *Centre for the Study of African*, 1-12.

⁶ Duffield, M. (2010). The liberal way of development and the development—Security impasse: Exploring the global life-chance divide. *Security dialogue*, 41(1), 53-76.

⁷ Hettne, B. (2001). Discourses on peace and development. *Progress in Development Studies*, 1(1), 21-36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/146499340100100103>

⁸ Francis, D. J., (2008).

⁹ Reyhler, L., Scharbatke-Church, C., Thomas, P., Clegg, A., & Heilman, B. (2010). External Review of the Peace, Conflict and Development (PCD) Program. *Evaluation findings*, <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/items/0d525c93-f7c0-4916-82f4-266938c37206>

¹⁰ Koponen, J. (2004). Development intervention and development studies. *Development intervention: actor and activity perspectives*, 5-13.

¹¹ Barnes, C. (2005). Weaving the web: Civil-society roles in working with conflict and building peace. *People building peace II: Successful stories of civil society*, 7-24.

¹² de Coning, C., Saraiva, R., Muto, A. (2023). Introduction. Exploring Alternative Approaches to Peacebuilding. In: de Coning, C., Saraiva, R., Muto, A. (eds) Adaptive Peacebuilding. Twenty-first Century Perspectives on War, Peace, and Human Conflict. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-18219-8_1

¹³ Oseremen, F. I. (2023, December 14). *Building Peace from the Grassroots with Informal Peace Infrastructures: Experience from Ojoo Community, Ibadan, Nigeria*. *AJCR* 2023/2.

<https://www.accord.org.za/ajcr-issues/building-peace-from-the-grassroots-with-informal-peace-infrastructures-experience-from-ojoo-community-ibadan-nigeria/>

¹⁴ Berdal, Mats (2014).

¹⁵ Duffield, M. (2010).

¹⁶ Caspary, G. (2007). The impacts of development-induced displacement on human security. *Human Security Journal*, 4, 70-81.

¹⁷ Brown, G. (2011). Development and Conflict: Theoretical and Empirical Linkages. *Securing Peace: State-Building and Economic Development in Post-Conflict Countries*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 53-70.

¹⁸ Thies, C. G., & Sobek, D. (2010). War, economic development, and political development in the contemporary international system. *International Studies Quarterly*, 54(1), 267-287.

¹⁹ Suhrke, A., & Chaudhary, T. W. (2009). Conflict and development. *Introduction to International Development*, Oxford University Press 2012, 415-436.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Oseremen, F. I. (2023).

conflicts arise within communities, it is anticipated that their perspectives on resolving these disputes hold significance and should not be disregarded. The historical and cultural backgrounds of African societies each play a key part in the formation of their perspectives on issues pertaining to both peace and progress.²² Hence, any intervention should take into consideration the local environment and interact with the community to establish context-specific ways of peacebuilding and development.²³ Extant PCD narratives in Africa tend to emphasise economic development at the expense of social and environmental concerns.²⁴ This emphasis on economic development can worsen existing disparities and lead to confrontations on the social and environmental fronts. Hence, it is vital to prioritise social and environmental factors in any development intervention to ensure that economic growth is both sustainable and largely equitable.²⁵ At the core of the PCD narrative is the grand concept – peace qua peace.

2. PEACE TELEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHICAL REDUCTIONISM, AND PCD

One of the philosophers who had the greatest impact on the development of the Western intellectual heritage is Aristotle.²⁶ His philosophical ideas have had a significant bearing on a variety of academic subfields, including politics, ethics, metaphysical inquiries, and epistemological research. As Aristotle's Volume IV of

his Political treatise suggests, the reductionist approach, which is a philosophical viewpoint that attempts to simplify complex phenomena by breaking them down into smaller, more manageable components or variables, is highly affected by Aristotelianism.^{27,28} These complicated events span various disciplines, including biological processes, social phenomena, physical systems, psychological processes, and environmental systems.²⁹ For instance, in biological research, the reductionist approach seeks to understand complex cellular functions or genetic mechanisms by dissecting them into their constituent parts.³⁰ Similarly, in social sciences, reductionism may involve analysing economic trends or political movements by examining underlying factors or individual behaviours.³¹ Physics applies reductionism to examine particle behaviour in quantum mechanics or fluid dynamics. Psychological reductionism breaks down cognitive functions or emotional responses for analysis. Environmental science uses reductionism to study ecosystem dynamics and climate patterns. This approach aims to reveal underlying principles by dissecting complex phenomena into fundamental constituents.^{32,33,34,35} This philosophy influenced a lot of disciplines. For instance, in biological research, the reductionist approach seeks to understand complex cellular functions or genetic mechanisms by dissecting them into their constituent parts.³⁶ In the social sciences, reductionism entails analysing economic trends or political movements by examining underlying factors or individual behaviours.³⁷ Physics applies reductionism to examine

²² Centre of Studies for Peace and Development (CEPAD). 2014. *Local Perspectives on Peacebuilding*. CEPAD: Dili, Timor-Leste. <https://www.tl-cepapad.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/local-perspectives-on-peacebuilding-english.pdf>

²³ United Nations. (2020). *OM Strengthens Community Participation in Peacebuilding and Development*. <https://papuanewguinea.un.org/en/54106-iom-strengthens-community-participation-peacebuilding-and-development>

²⁴ Fitzpatrick, E. (2022). Assessing Sustainability in Development Interventions. In: Uitto, J.I., Batra, G. (eds) *Transformational Change for People and the Planet*. Sustainable Development Goals Series. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-78853-7_7

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Masango, M. (2003). Aristotle's philosophical influence on Western civilization, history and theology placed women in inferior positions. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 24(2), 417-438.

²⁷ Jaeger, Werner. W. (1962) *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of His Development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Agazzi, E. (1978). Systems Theory and the Problem of Reductionism. *Erkenntnis* (1975-), 12(3), 339-358. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20010611>

³⁰ Barendregt, M., & van Rappard, J. H. (2004). Reductionism Revisited: On the Role of Reduction in Psychology. *Theory & Psychology*, 14(4), 453-474.

³¹ Chibbaro, S., Rondoni, L., & Vulpiani, A. (2014). *Reductionism, Emergence, and Levels of Reality: The Importance of Being Borderline*. Cham: Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-06361-4>

³² Ibid.

³³ Montgomery, R. (1990). The Reductionist Ideal in Cognitive Psychology. *Synthese*, 85, 279-314.

³⁴ Di Lorenzo, E., Combes, V., Keister, J. E., Strub, P. T., Thomas, A. C., Franks, P. J. S., Ohman, M. D., Furtado, J. C., Bracco, A., Bograd, S. J., Peterson, W. T., Schwing, F. B., Chiba, S., Taguchi, B., Hormazabal, S., & Parada, C. (2013). Synthesis of Pacific Ocean Climate and Ecosystem Dynamics. *Oceanography*, 26(4), 68-81. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24862098>

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Berntson, G.G., Cacioppo, J.T. (2012). Reductionism. In: L'Abate, L. (eds) *Paradigms in Theory Construction*. Springer, New York, NY. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-0914-4_19

³⁷ Hopkins, A. G. (1966). Economic Aspects of Political Movements in Nigeria and in the Coast 1918-1939. *The*

particle behaviour in quantum mechanics or fluid dynamics. Psychological reductionism breaks down cognitive functions or emotional responses for analysis. Environmental science uses reductionism to study ecosystem dynamics and climate patterns. This approach aims to reveal underlying principles by dissecting complex phenomena into fundamental constituents.^{38,39,40,41}

Aristotle's Political Treatise attempts to explain the nature of the state and the function that the individual plays in society.⁴² In Volume IV of his book, Aristotle covers the different types of governments and the virtues and vices linked with each type.⁴³ According to Aristotle, the ideal form of government is one that prioritizes both individual liberty and the general welfare of its citizens.⁴⁴ The political system, also known as a polity, incorporates elements of democracy and oligarchy.⁴⁵ The teleological perspective that Aristotle held of the universe significantly impacted the political philosophy he developed.⁴⁶ It essentially affirms that everything in the cosmos serves a purpose and that one of those purposes is for politics to work towards advancing the common good.⁴⁷ This reduces complex phenomena to their underlying purpose or function.⁴⁸ It divides them into smaller, more manageable components or variables.^{49,50} This philosophical approach has influenced several Western orientations and epistemic systems. This reductionism veer towards philosophical fundamentalism or essentialism and could advance simplifications. Pierre-Simon Laplace's deterministic worldview, epitomised by "Laplace's Demon," emphasised predicting the universe's future states through precise knowledge of particle positions.⁵¹ René Descartes' mechanistic philosophy proposed that complex phenomena could be explained by simpler, mechanical principles.⁵² Their ideas laid the groundwork for modern reductionism, positing that

understanding complex systems requires dissecting them into constituent parts, a notion central to modern scientific inquiries.⁵³

The Aristotelian perspective outlined here has significant implications for discussions surrounding peace, conflict, and development (PCD). Similar to Aristotle's approach of simplifying different forms of government to their fundamental functions or purposes, PCD stresses the importance of harmonising policies across various sectors to attain overarching development objectives. By recognising the fundamental goals of each type of government, such as democracy's pursuit of equality and oligarchy's prioritization of the interests of a privileged few, Aristotle underscores the necessity of comprehending the underlying motivations and dynamics of governance structures. Similarly, in dominant PCD discourse, recognising the root causes of conflict and instability, such as inequality and exclusion, is essential for designing coherent and effective development policies that address these challenges.⁵⁴

Aristotle's consideration of the virtues and vices associated with the different types of government is another area in which his influence can be seen to have contributed to the reductionist approach.⁵⁵ According to Aristotle, the virtues and vices of a government can be broken down into their fundamental purpose or function to better understand them.⁵⁶ For instance, he contends that justice - the virtue of democracy, is the opposite of demagoguery - the vice of democracy.⁵⁷

Immanuel Kant's critique of reductionism discusses the pitfalls of oversimplification and argues for the necessity of embracing complexity. In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant interrogates the reductionist metaphysics, cautioning against simplifying human cognition and

Journal of African History, 7(1), 133-152.
doi:10.1017/S0021853700006137

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Everson, S. (1988). Aristotle on the Foundations of the State. *Political studies*, 36(1), 89-101.

⁴³ Pestre, D. (2009). Understanding the Forms of Government in Today's Liberal and Democratic Societies: An Introduction. *Minerva*, 47(3), 243-260.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41821497>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Fazzo, S. (2004). Aristotelianism as a Commentary Tradition. *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies. Supplement*, 83, 1-19. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43768082>

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Van Strien, M. (2014). On the origins and foundations of Laplacean determinism. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part A*, 45, 24-31.

⁵² Bussotti, P., Lotti, B. (2022). Descartes and the New Mechanistic Paradigm. In: *Cosmology in the Early Modern Age: A Web of Ideas. Logic, Epistemology, and the Unity of Science*, vol 56. Springer, Cham.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-12195-1_5

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

experiences to their base forms. Kant critiques the relativism and materialism advanced by reductionism, arguing that such views fail to account for the innate structures of human cognition that shape our understanding of the world.⁵⁸ Kant's view on ethics underscores his critique of reductionism. He rejects ethical utilitarianism- an approach that limits moral principles to calculations of utility or consequences, emphasising instead the importance of moral duty and the inherent dignity of rational agents. Kant's famous statement on moral imperative advances his views on the issue: "act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law."⁵⁹ By grounding moral principles in the rational autonomy of individuals rather than in consequentialist calculations, Kant challenges reductionist ethical frameworks that overlook the complexity of human moral reasoning. His critique of reductionism forms a fundamental challenge to oversimplified explanations in different fields of study. By demonstrating the limitations of reductionist methods and highlighting the significance of embracing complexity, his philosophy inspires scholars to embrace more sophisticated viewpoints that encompass the complexities of human thought, ethics, and behaviour.⁶⁰

Baruch Spinoza's critique of reductionism offers valuable insights into the complexities of human nature and society, particularly regarding peace, conflict, and development. One aspect of Spinoza's philosophy that is relevant to this discussion is his rejection of dualistic frameworks that oversimplify the dynamics of human behaviour and social interactions. He contested reducing complex phenomena to binary oppositions, such as good versus evil or peace versus conflict, advocating instead the interconnectedness and interdependence of all aspects of existence.⁶¹ In the context of peace, Spinoza challenges simplistic understandings of conflict as merely the absence of peace. According to him, "Peace is not an absence of war; it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice."⁶² He suggests that peace and conflict are multifaceted phenomena that

arise from a myriad of factors, including social, political, and economic dynamics. By rejecting reductionist views that seek to explain peace and conflict in simple dichotomies, he encourages a more nuanced understanding that considers the complex interplay of individual and collective interests, power dynamics, and historical contingencies.⁶³

Spinoza's philosophy has implications for the concept of development, particularly in relation to the pursuit of social justice and equality. A Reductionist view concerning development might encourage economic growth and material progress at the expense of social cohesion and human well-being. Spinoza's philosophy challenges this narrow focus by accentuating the importance of holistic and inclusive approaches to development that address the root causes of inequality and injustice.⁶⁴ His concept of "conatus," or the innate drive towards self-preservation and flourishing, provides a framework for understanding human motivation and behaviour within the context of peace, conflict, and development. Rather than reducing individuals to passive actors driven solely by external forces, Spinoza's philosophy recognises the active role of individuals in shaping their own destinies and the world around them.⁶⁵ Spinoza's critique of reductionism offers valuable insights into the complexities of peace, conflict, and development. By challenging simplistic understandings and encouraging a more nuanced and holistic approach, he offers a foundation for addressing the multifaceted challenges of building a more peaceful, just, and sustainable world.

3. THE FRAMING OF PEACE IN PCD DISCOURSE

Peace as a term in dominant academic discourse is rooted in the conceptualisation offered by Johan Galtung and defined as the absence of hostility and war or violence; embodying qualities of tranquillity, organisation, and steadfastness.⁶⁶ This conceptualisation seems narrow in scope. However, it

⁵⁸ Kant, I. (1908). Critique of pure reason. 1781. *Modern Classical Philosophers*, Cambridge, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 370-456. <https://www.stephenhicks.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/kanti-critique-pure-reason-2nd-preface.pdf>

⁵⁹ Kant, I. (2012). *Kant: Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals*. Cambridge University Press.

⁶⁰ Brook, A. & Julian Wuerth, (Spring 2023). Kant's View of the Mind and Consciousness of Self. In Edward N. Z. & Uri Nodelman (eds.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2023 Edition). Stanford University. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-mind/>

⁶¹ Spinoza, B. (1927). *Ethics*. Commodius Vicus.

⁶² Spinoza, B. (2004). *Theologico-Political Treatise* (Martin D. Yaffe, Trans.). Hackett Publishing.

⁶³ Steinberg, J. (2009). Spinoza on civil liberation. *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 47(1), 35-58.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Galtung, J. (1964). A Structural Theory of Aggression. *Journal of Peace Research*, 1(2), 95-119. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/423250>

has gained widespread acceptance and often serves as a foundational guiding framework for individuals and organisations aspiring to cultivate harmonious environments and address conflicts.⁶⁷ This conceptualisation is also widely embraced in academic discussions on peace and by practitioners engaged in peacebuilding. It notably shapes the strategies adopted in post-conflict scenarios, as illustrated by the case of Paris (2004). Placing a stop to armed hostilities, restoring law and order, and providing the affected population with a sense of security are the conventional views of what it means to achieve peace following violent wars like Liberia's civil war. International peacekeeping missions such as UNMIL were sent to Liberia to help disarm rebels, restore public safety, and rebuild institutions so that the country might be more peaceful and stable.⁶⁸

In protracted wars such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is usual practice to engage in peace talks, diplomatic negotiations, and ceasefire agreements. Their objective is to reconcile the opposing factions and put a stop to the fighting. For instance, a significant attempt to end the war peacefully was the 1993 Oslo Accords, which laid out a framework for Palestinian self-governance and Israeli disengagement from specific territories.⁶⁹ All these efforts are rooted in peace as the negation or cessation of violence.

The discourse surrounding peacebuilding in post-conflict settings underscores the significance of conflict resolution, the establishment of a secure milieu, and the reconstruction of institutions as key components in attaining enduring peace.⁷⁰ The goal is to create a community where people may live in safety and abundance, encouraging an atmosphere where everyone can get along.⁷¹ These are markers of development. To address the root causes of conflict and reduce the chances of it happening again, efforts are usually focused on disarming combatants,

implementing peace agreements, and promoting a reconciliation process.⁷²

Though it has taken some heat for being too narrow, the dominant view of peace has played a significant role in influencing peacebuilding tactics. Those who hold the view that re-establishing social order and preventing violence are insufficient goals overlook the need to address economic, social, and political inequalities as well as the underlying structural causes of conflict.⁷³ Also, this perspective doesn't always see fighting for social justice and ending grievances as crucial to building a durable peace.⁷⁴ The need for a broader definition of peace, one that goes beyond the absence of violence, has been increasingly widely recognised as of late. The idea of positive peace, first proposed by Johan Galtung, stresses the importance of promoting equality, justice, and human rights as cornerstones of lasting peace.⁷⁵ Achieving lasting peace requires attention to multiple domains, such as the economy, society, and the environment.⁷⁶ We want to create an environment that promotes individual and community prosperity and well-being. Recognising the complex interplay between peace and development, the positive peace view stresses the need to address the underlying structural causes of conflict and promote more equitable and inclusive social structures.⁷⁷

The critique of the teleological assumptions in the African discourse on conflict, development, and peace draws attention to the biases and limitations of dominant narratives. Society in transition is typically depicted in teleological viewpoints as following a predefined path from conflict to peace to development. On the other hand, these stories gloss over the complexities of African communities' experiences, agency, and goals.

The fact that teleological narratives have a way of reducing different situations to the same and sustaining

⁶⁷ Benson, G. (2021). Peacekeeping Operations in Africa: Liberian Lessons, a Platform for Deepening Future UN Peacekeeping Engagements. *European Journal of Conflict Management*, 2(1), 1-21.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Knell, Y. (2023, September 13). *Oslo Accords: 30 years of lost Palestinian hopes*. BBC. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-66751704>

⁷⁰ Lederach, J. P. (1997). Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies. *Washington, DC: USIP*.

⁷¹ Richmond, O. P. (2005). *The Transformation of Peace* (Vol. 110). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

⁷² United Nations (2000). *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration at Heart of Peacekeeping Efforts, Secretary-General*

Tells Security Council.

<https://press.un.org/en/2000/20000323.sc6830.doc.html>

⁷³ Paffenholz, T. (2010). *Civil Society and Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

⁷⁴ Lederach, J. P. (2005). *The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁷⁵ Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*. International Peace Research Institute Oslo; Sage Publications, Inc.

⁷⁶ Richmond, O. P. (2012). Beyond local ownership in the architecture of international peacebuilding. *Ethnopolitics*, 11(4), 354-375.

⁷⁷ Mac Ginty, R. (2014). Everyday peace: Bottom-up and local agency in conflict-affected societies. *Security dialogue*, 45(6), 548-564.

Eurocentric views of growth and progress is one of the main arguments against them. Western ideas of development and peacebuilding, according to Mahmood Mamdani, tend to put an emphasis on technological solutions and outside interference, while ignoring indigenous ways of knowing and resolving conflicts.⁷⁸ As seen in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, this Eurocentric attitude can make interventions less legitimate and successful, which in turn increases tensions and keeps violence cycles going.⁷⁹

In addition, teleological narratives tend to address the symptoms rather than the reasons of disputes, and they offer easy fixes rather than thorough analyses. Future wars may be fueled by peacebuilding attempts that put short-term stability ahead of long-term structural transformation, which can lead to the perpetuation of inequities, marginalisation, and grievances⁸⁰. Social discontent and political instability may result, for example, from a failure to address systemic problems like poverty, corruption, and historical injustice in favour of superficial ones like democratic elections and democratisation.⁸¹

Economic development and material wealth are often emphasised in these end-goal narratives at the expense of social justice and human rights, which in turn perpetuates power imbalances and marginalises marginalised communities. The failure of development strategies that prioritise economic gains over human rights and environmental protection is illustrated by the displacement of communities, pollution of water sources, and worsening of social tensions caused by large-scale mining operations in countries such as South Africa and Nigeria⁸². Terje Tvedt notes that development projects frequently put infrastructure and resource extraction ahead of local populations' needs and opinions.⁸³ For example, in Central African nations like the Great Lakes and Nigeria's Niger Delta, peace talks and reconciliation efforts have often left out young people, women, and ethnic minorities, reducing the

likelihood of a lasting peace.⁸⁴ There is little hope for long-term stability and progress when policies are dictated from on high, which can worsen existing social and environmental injustices and lead to the loss of cultural traditions.⁸⁵

The example of Rwanda after the genocide exemplifies the teleological assumptions underpinning discussions about peace, conflict, and development. Some have argued that the administration is putting too much emphasis on reconciliation programmes and fast economic growth, which puts unity and stability ahead of political freedom and human rights.⁸⁶ The long-term viability of Rwanda's peacebuilding initiatives and the inclusiveness of its development programme are open concerns, notwithstanding the country's impressive economic progress.⁸⁷ More context-sensitive, inclusive, and holistic approaches are needed to tackle the complex difficulties in Africa, as the critique of teleological presuppositions in the peace-conflict-development discourse highlights. Beyond progress narratives that focus on linear development, we may create more fair, resilient, and peaceful communities by putting local voices at the centre, using participatory processes, and pursuing transformative justice.

3.1. The Implications of Teleological-Reductionist PCD Viewpoints

Teleological-reductionist approach has significant repercussions for the way in which we comprehend and approach the study of complex phenomena, including peace, conflict and development (PCD).⁸⁸ On the one hand, it makes it possible for us to simplify complicated occurrences and determine the purpose or function that underpins them.⁸⁹ While understanding politics, society, and other complex systems benefits from information, the reductionist approach has limitations. It oversimplifies the richness of human experiences and diverse perspectives, potentially leading to a lack of

⁷⁸ Rajab, Ahmed (2010). Mahmood Mamdani, Saviours and Survivors: Darfur, Politics and the War on Terror. *Radical Philosophy* 159:64.

⁷⁹ Reno, W. (1998). *Warlord politics and African states*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

⁸⁰ Lederach, J. P. (1997).

⁸¹ Chabal, P., & Daloz, J-P. (1999). *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument*. Indiana University Press.

⁸² Tvedt, T. (1998). *Angels of Mercy or Development Diplomats? Ngos & Foreign Aid*. James Currey Ltd. & Africa World Press, Inc.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Prunier, G. (1997). *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*. Columbia University Press.

⁸⁷ Reyntjens, F. (2013). *Political governance in post-genocide Rwanda*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁸⁸ Putnam, H. (1973). Reductionism and the nature of psychology. *Cognition*, 2(1), 131-146. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0277\(72\)90033-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0277(72)90033-9)

⁸⁹ Lewontin, R. C. (2006). The analysis of variance and the analysis of causes. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 35(3), 520-525.

sensitivity to nuances.⁹⁰ This may restrict a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena.⁹¹ For instance, if we simplify democracy to an ideology with the main goal of promoting equality, we fail to take into account the intricate interplay of power, representation, and participation that is inherent to democratic institutions.⁹²

Finding a middle ground between development, peace, and conflict has been a major focus for many, including politicians and scholars. These three concepts are interdependent and linked. There is a complicated link between these three ideas because each one can affect and shape the other two.⁹³ Conflict has the potential to impede and interrupt sustainable development, even though peace is required for it.⁹⁴ The establishment of peace is essential as a prerequisite for progress. It is impossible to achieve lasting economic growth, social advancement, or human development without first establishing a calm and stable environment.⁹⁵ War and violent conflict may destroy infrastructure, hinder investment, and commerce, and erode societal cohesiveness; thus, peace is essential for progress to be made. Peace is essential, both as a goal in and of itself, for the United Nations (UN) to achieve its development objectives. To put it another way, peace is an essential component of the development process since it creates a favourable environment for forward movement and economic growth.⁹⁶

However, conflicts can have a devastating impact on progress. Political violence, civil wars, and military conflicts wreak havoc on social and economic institutions, forcing populations to flee their homes and killing countless people. When people are afraid and apprehensive about the future, the rule of law can be undermined, and governance can be ruined. Violence has huge social and economic costs on top of the personal pain it causes. The World Bank estimates that

the world economy has lost almost \$14.3 trillion, or about 11.3% of GDP, due to war. Developing nations bear a disproportionate share of this loss.^{97,98}

In contrast, differences of opinion can occasionally serve as the catalyst for groundbreaking innovations. For example, political and social changes brought about by conflicts can sometimes result in better government, more accountability, and more social justice. War can cause political and social changes that improve governance, accountability, and social justice; post-WWII Europe is a good illustration of this. After the devastation of war, European nations realized they had to make drastic changes to put an end to the killing and bring wealth to everyone. Because of this, groups like the European Union (EU) came into being the EU's declared mission is to foster unity, cooperation, and economic harmony among its member nations.⁹⁹ The Marshall Plan and similar development and reconstruction financial assistance initiatives laid the groundwork for sustained economic growth and stability in post-war Europe.¹⁰⁰ In addition, progressive measures including social security systems, labor rights safeguards, and universal healthcare were implemented because of the trauma that European countries experienced during wartime.¹⁰¹ In conclusion, wars cause unimaginable misery, but they also have the potential to spark good political and social transformations that lead to more responsible leadership and more equitable society in the long run. New industries, like the trade in guns, have sometimes emerged because of wars, which can contribute to economic growth generally. When communities and individuals struggle to adapt and survive under adverse conditions, conflict can also create possibilities for innovation and creativity.¹⁰²

There is no simple answer to the question of how peace, conflict, and development are connected; instead, there

⁹⁰ Bechtel, W., & Richardson, R. C. (2010). *Discovering Complexity: Decomposition and Localization as Strategies in Scientific Research*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

⁹¹ Wilson, E. O. (1999). *Consilience: The unity of knowledge* (Vol. 31). Vintage. <https://www.wtf.tw/ref/wilson.pdf>

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Galtung, J. (1996).

⁹⁴ Van Tongeren, P. (2013). Potential cornerstone of infrastructures for peace? How local peace committees can make a difference. *Peacebuilding*, 1(1), 39-60.

⁹⁵ Lederach, J.P. (1997).

⁹⁶ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (1994). *Human Development Report 1994: New Dimensions of Human Security*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁹⁷ Richmond, O. P. (2013). Failed Statebuilding versus Peace Formation. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 48(3), 378-400.

⁹⁸ World Bank. (2017). *World Development Report 2017: Governance and the Law*. Washington, DC: World Bank Publications.

⁹⁹ See Council of the European Union, "Historical Background," available at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/president-of-the-council/historical-background/> (accessed March 14, 2024).

¹⁰⁰ Trachtenberg, M. (1999). *A constructed peace: the making of the European settlement, 1945-1963* (Vol. 79). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

¹⁰¹ Mazower, M. (2009). *Dark continent: Europe's twentieth century*. Vintage.

¹⁰² Collier, P. (2009). *Wars, Guns and Votes: Democracy in dangerous places*. London: Random House.

are frequently intricate and conflicting agendas at play. For instance, certain individuals may benefit from conflict and work to ensure its continuation, whilst other actors may be more interested in achieving peace and stability. In a similar vein, certain efforts in development may unintentionally lead to conflict, whereas others may help to promote peace and reconciliation. The challenge for policymakers and practitioners is to negotiate these complicated processes and identify ways that can promote sustainable development and peacebuilding to achieve their goals.

Approaches that consider potential sources of conflict are one method for advancing both peace and development. One way to advance peace and development is to take approaches that think about possible roots of conflict. First, to identify and lessen the possibility of conflict stemming from development initiatives; second, to back efforts to promote peace and resolve conflicts; these are the aims of conflict-sensitive development. Both the possibility of conflicts hindering growth and the possibility of conflicts exacerbating it are considered in this approach. Taking a conflict-sensitive approach allows policymakers and practitioners to pinpoint potential sources of conflict and create solutions that tackle these challenges while fostering development and peace. The term for this strategy is the conflict-sensitive method.¹⁰³

The goal of peacebuilding should be to promote development and concord by bolstering reconciliation initiatives, strengthening social cohesiveness, and tackling the root causes of conflict.¹⁰⁴ For example, Gacacas were community-based reconciliation forums that brought together genocide victims and perpetrators to promote healing and forgiveness as part of the rebuilding efforts.¹⁰⁵ Microfinance programmes for women entrepreneurs, as well as other economic development initiatives that aim to alleviate poverty and promote equitable growth, have contributed to more peace and stability.¹⁰⁶ The connection between growth and stability, nevertheless, is intricate. Redressing historical injustices and laying the framework for social transformation are two outcomes

of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which was established in post-apartheid South Africa (as reported by the UNDP), demonstrating how conflict may spur success. Nonetheless, long-term prosperity cannot be achieved in an atmosphere devoid of conflict¹⁰⁷ Thus, peacebuilding initiatives must be all-encompassing, tackling structural causes and acknowledging the complex relationship between conflict and development if they are to promote long-term stability and prosperity.

A more complex view of peace as a continuum can be achieved by considering both positive and negative peace. When we speak of a negative peace, what we mean is that there is no overt manifestation of conflict, like war or physical violence. However, when we speak about a peaceful society, we are referring to more than only a lack of violence; we are also referring to social justice, equality, and peaceful dispute-resolution methods.¹⁰⁸ These various definitions of peace emphasise that achieving lasting harmony requires addressing systemic problems and striving for collective betterment rather than merely focusing on preventing violent confrontations.¹⁰⁹ When we talk of peace, we're referring to either the immediate end of bloodshed or the establishment of circumstances for lasting harmony and stability.¹¹⁰ Policymakers and practitioners can address structural inequities and promote inclusive governance systems through comprehensive peacebuilding methods that comprehend both elements.¹¹¹ This holistic perspective acknowledges the interconnectedness of different aspects of peace and underscores the importance of addressing underlying factors to achieving lasting peace.¹¹²

Strategies based on liberal, democratic, and capitalist values gained popularity in the early 1990s as the idea of peacebuilding gained traction.¹¹³ Democratic governance, political involvement, decision-making, trade promotion, and peace dividends were the stated goals of this strategy, which sought to fortify governments by the establishment or improvement of such processes, institutions, and practices.

¹⁰³ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2007). *Conflict and Fragility: Do No Harm – International Support for Statebuilding*. OECD Publishing. <https://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/do%20no%20harm.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2005). *Human Development Report 2005: International Cooperation at a Crossroads – Aid, Trade and Security in an Unequal World*. <https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2005>

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ide, T. (2019). The impact of environmental cooperation on peacemaking: Definitions, mechanisms, and empirical evidence. *International Studies Review*, 21(3), 327-346.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Richmond, O. (2011). *A Post-Liberal Peace* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203810262>

Nevertheless, it fails to produce substantial outcomes in the long run due to its excessive dependence on governmental and state-run institutions¹¹⁴ Involving regional and local actors to boost legitimacy and ownership also failed. Some have claimed that this "liberal" strategy for peacebuilding was ineffective since it ignored the part that locals played and instead focused on economic cooperation triggers.¹¹⁵ It was largely due to the work of critical peace scholars that the idea of local agency rose to prominence in discourse around peacebuilding. Interactions on a global and local scale are considered as crucial to the peacebuilding process.¹¹⁶ A greater comprehension of how identities and viewpoints vary across situations has resulted from the rise of bottom-up peacebuilding strategies that center on the local level.¹¹⁷ Peacebuilding is seen as a complex process arising from global and local interactions. Bottom-up approaches to peacebuilding have emerged, focusing on the local level, leading to a better understanding of how identities and perspectives change across different contexts.

The Gacacas in Rwanda after the genocide are an example of a community-based reconciliation forum that exemplifies a bottom-up approach to peacebuilding. Traditional community courts known as Gacacas provided a forum for genocide survivors and their perpetrators to address the atrocities, seek redress, and foster local peace. After the conflict, these gathering places helped people talk about their feelings, recover from the wounds, and get back together socially. Gacacas helped bring about trust and unity on a local level by giving local communities the tools they needed to lead the reconciliation process. The part played by community-based women's organisations in peacebuilding initiatives in post-conflict areas is another illustration. Within these societies, women frequently mediate disputes, promote discussion, and cultivate reconciliation. Peace advocates, negotiators, and advocates for gender-inclusive methods of conflict settlement can look to groups like Afghanistan's Women's Network and Liberia's Women's Peace Network for guidance. Interpersonal dynamics,

opposition to global peace initiatives, and foreign norms and institutions are all potential sources of difficulty.¹¹⁸ Sceptics contend that this method simplifies "the local," making it seem like it's all about the countryside, being in tune with nature, and being naturally eco-conscious.¹¹⁹

4. RE-ENVISIONING PEACE AS AN ONGOING PROCESS

Rather than viewing peace as a static endpoint, there has been a noticeable shift in modern thinking towards a process-oriented understanding of peace. Several reasons, including shifting views on what constitutes peace and how to resolve conflicts, have contributed to this shift in both theoretical and practical approaches to peacebuilding. The realisation that conventional, state-centric peacebuilding strategies have their limits—for example, prioritising short-term stabilisation over long-term structural transformation—has been a major factor in this change.¹²⁰ Socioeconomic inequality, political marginalisation, and historical grievances are some of the fundamental causes of conflicts, and both academics and practitioners have recognised this.

Since this has been acknowledged, process-oriented methods that aim to construct inclusive and participatory procedures for resolving conflicts and fostering reconciliation have received more attention. Furthermore, postcolonial and critical peace studies have begun to make a mark, casting doubt on the prevailing peacebuilding narratives and drawing attention to the significance of cultural dynamics, indigenous knowledge systems, and local agencies in determining the course of peace processes.^{121,122} As a result of this change, peacebuilding initiatives are rethinking their hierarchies and power relations, with a focus on giving local communities and marginalised groups more say in policymaking.¹²³ Peacebuilding strategies, including community-based peacebuilding initiatives, participatory action research, and conflict-

¹¹⁴ Dodge, T. (2021). Afghanistan and the failure of liberal peacebuilding. *Survival*, 63(5), 47-58.

¹¹⁵ Mac Ginty, R. (2011). *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance: Hybrid forms of Peace*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 47.

¹¹⁶ Hancock, L. E. (2017). Agency & peacebuilding: the promise of local zones of peace. *Peacebuilding*, 5(3), 255-269.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Interpeace. (2018). *Local Leadership to Local Ownership – An Essential Element for Effective Peacebuilding and Conflict*

Prevention. Geneva: Switzerland.

https://www.interpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Why_Local_ownership_matters-policy_note-21-Sept.pdf

¹²¹ Mac Ginty, R., & Richmond, O. P. (2013). The Local Turn in Peace Building: A Critical Agenda for Peace. *Third world quarterly*, 34(5), 763-783.

¹²² Paffenholz, T. (2021). Perpetual peacebuilding: a new paradigm to move beyond the linearity of liberal peacebuilding. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 15(3), 367-385.q

¹²³ Interpeace. (2018).

sensitive development, reflect this shift in practice by bringing more people into the process.¹²⁴

There is a budding recognition that a thorough comprehension of the intricate interaction of political, social, and economic elements is essential for the establishment of long-term peace. The need to involve other parties in this process is also emphasised. The current scholarly discussion on peacebuilding demonstrates a shifting viewpoint that underscores the significance of continuous involvement and enduring commitment to communities impacted by conflict.¹²⁵ The perspective acknowledges the necessity of a holistic comprehension of the intricate dynamics among political, social, and economic elements to establish enduring peace. It also emphasises the importance of engaging a wide range of stakeholders in this process.¹²⁶

As cornerstones of peacebuilding efforts, the process-oriented perspective stresses the significance of trust-building, discussion, and reconciliation.¹²⁷ Building trust allows people who may otherwise be at odds with one another to talk things out, reach compromises, and ultimately work together towards a common objective. For instance, in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, trust-building strategies like track II diplomacy and confidence-building measures (CBMs) have been vital in easing tensions and promoting communication. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission have played a similar role in resolving past injustices and re-establishing trust post-apartheid.^{128,129}

Efforts to generate trust are fundamental to development programs that try to encourage cooperation among communities, civil society organisations, and governments. For instance, in Rwanda, community-based participatory planning by building trust through open communication, mutual

respect, and mutual accountability between grassroots organisations and local government has been credited with effective and inclusive development outcomes.

These initiatives foster confidence and cooperation, enabling all parties to set aside differences and work towards a common goal of peace and progress.¹³⁰ Ultimately, trust-building is a continuous and reciprocal process that requires commitment, empathy, and genuine engagement from all parties involved.

Instead of solutions being forced on local communities, they should be empowered and encouraged to be involved in decision-making.¹³¹ Collectively tackling systemic problems like injustice and violence, as well as having their opinions heard in decision-making and resolving conflicts amicably, are all made easier when communities are empowered. A key component in the healing process, social reconstruction, and pursuit of peace and forgiveness for the people of Rwanda and other countries hit hard by violent war has been community-based reconciliation initiatives.¹³² Colombian indigenous women and people have used community-led development projects to stand up for themselves, get justice for wrongs committed against them, and create more just communities.^{133,134} Community members can reap the benefits of participatory peacebuilding and development strategies when they tackle conflict's origins, advance sustainable development, foster dialogue, and cooperation, and tap into local resources.

What this further highlight is the point that different groups' hopes, dreams, and historical experiences impact the idea of peace rather than the other way around. A process-oriented view of peace, however, is not without difficulties, and this must be understood because peacebuilding processes are dynamic and intricate; they call for long-term dedication and funding.

¹²⁴ Belloni, R. (2001). Civil society and peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Journal of peace Research*, 38(2), 163-180.

¹²⁵ Bar-Tal, D. (2013). *Intractable conflicts: Socio-psychological foundations and dynamics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹²⁶ Richmond, O. P. (Ed.). (2010). *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding: Critical Developments and Approaches*. Palgrave Macmillan

¹²⁷ Lederach, J. P. (1997).

¹²⁸ Snyder, A. C. (2017). *Setting the agenda for global peace: Conflict and consensus building*. Routledge.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Rwanda Governance Board. (2018). *Rwanda Governance Review: Good Governance and Decentralization in Rwanda*. https://www.rgb.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/RGB/Publica

tions/RWANDA_GOVERNANCE_REVIEW/Rwanda_Governance_Review_2018.pdf

¹³¹ Elman, M. F., Gerard, C., Golan, G., & Kriesberg, L. (Eds.). (2019). *Overcoming Intractable Conflicts: New Approaches to Constructive Transformations*. Rowman & Littlefield.

¹³² United Nations. (2012). *The Justice and Reconciliation Process in Rwanda*.

<https://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/pdf/bgjustice.pdf>

¹³³ ISEGORÍA. (2016). Final Evaluation: Indigenous Women, Violence and Access to Justice (Colombia). UN Women. <https://untf.unwomen.org/en/learning-hub/evaluations/2016/12/final-evaluation-indigenous-women-violence-and-access-to-justice-colombia#view>

¹³⁴ Tovar-Restrepo, M., & Irazábal, C. (2014). Indigenous women and violence in Colombia: agency, autonomy, and territoriality. *Latin American Perspectives*, 41(1), 39-58.

Resolving these issues will require a combination of strategies, such as encouraging open communication, increasing confidence among relevant parties, and getting to the bottom of why disagreements arise in the first place.¹³⁵ To successfully navigate the complexity of process-oriented peacebuilding, it is vital to ensure that impacted communities are actively involved, to promote accountability and openness in peacebuilding efforts, and to adapt tactics to local settings. The chances of long-term peace and development can be improved if all parties involved work together to tackle these issues methodically.

5. CONCLUSION

The intellectual dialogue surrounding the narrative pertaining to peace, conflict, and development in the African context has undeniably exerted a profound influence on the literary landscape of the continent. This discourse has effectively furnished a conceptual structure through which the intricate obstacles encountered by Africa can be comprehended and analysed. Nevertheless, there have been notable criticisms associated with the teleological assumptions that underlie these narratives. These criticisms highlight peace teleology and PCD's inclination towards a linear outlook on progress, their prioritisation of external actors, their tendency to marginalise local communities, and disregard for the social and cultural dimensions of development. The criticisms underscore the imperative for a more all-encompassing and culturally appropriate methodology towards the pursuit of peacebuilding and development within African societies. It is imperative to transcend a simplistic and linear comprehension of development and, instead, recognise the multifaceted and intricate historical, cultural, and socio-political frameworks that shape the African nations. It is crucial that strategies aimed at fostering sustainable peacebuilding and development accord utmost importance to local agency, thereby involving communities as proactive participants in formulation and execution of their own peace and development endeavours.

Moreover, it is important to adopt a comprehensive perspective that encompasses social equity, gender parity, and human rights as fundamental constituents of both peace and development. By elucidating the intricate interplay of social and cultural determinants that engender conflict and perpetuate inequality, such

as the multifaceted dimensions of identity, the enduring ramifications of historical injustices, and the pervasive disparities in power dynamics, one can engender the development of more equitable and efficacious strategies. To accomplish this objective, it is of utmost importance to maintain a continuous engagement with the profound literary legacy of Africa and to harness the sagacity and acumen of African writers, scholars, and intellectuals. The profound insights and perspectives offered by individuals possess the potential to enlighten and guide the process of designing and executing peacebuilding and development endeavours. This invaluable input guarantees that such initiatives are tailored to the unique circumstances of the given context, encompassing inclusivity and cultural sensitivity.

By embracing these critiques and integrating a multitude of perspectives, one can embark upon a more intricate and comprehensive endeavour to address matters of peace, conflict, and development within the African continent. By surpassing the confines of conventional storytelling and actively involving oneself with indigenous communities, societal and cultural intricacies, and the vast reservoir of intellectual achievements from Africa, we can strive towards cultivating enduring tranquillity, alleviating discord, and propelling sustainable progress across the continent.

Author Contribution Statement:

Author 1 (Oludele Solaja): Literature review, sources, and references.

Author 2: (Damilola Adegoke): Theory, philosophy, and editing of draft.

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¹³⁵ Paris, R. (2014). The 'Responsibility to Protect' and the structural problems of preventive humanitarian intervention. *International Peacekeeping*, 21(5), 569-603.

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