GR:EEN

Global Re-ordering:
Evolution through European Networks

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
European Research Area

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK
PROGRAMME

Funded under Socio-economic Sciences & Humanities

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Paper first presented in the panel 'Assessing Contemporary EU-Africa Relations: Perceptions & Cooperation' at the 18th Annual Council for European Studies Conference, Barcelona, 20-22 June 2011

Introduction

> 'Our European Model of Integration is the most developed in the world. Imperfect tough it still is, it nevertheless works on a continental scale...I believe we can make a convincing case that it would also work globally' (Romano Prodi, 2000)[1]

A scholar of regional integration recently asked 'why do regional organizations (sic) share a number of key institutions and policies' (Jetschke, 2010). This paper asks a similar question. Specifically, it is attempting to solve the puzzle of why the European Union is a model for the African Union despite the divergences in their histories. Evidently, Africa is no stranger to regional integration as evidenced by the existence of many such organisations on the continent. Nevertheless, the new continental organisation, the African Union (AU) very much resembles its European counterpart.

This paper shows that one reason for this is the European Union's desire to replicate itself externally (Smith, K, 2003; 2008). There is evidence of self-replication in the way the EU prioritises a substantial part of its external

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[1] 2nd COMECE Congress, Brussels, SPEECH/00/115

relations through groupings.[2] Further, the EU has often declared its support for regional integration and sees itself as a model to the rest of the world (European Commission, 1995; 2008; Smith, K, 2003: 86). Based in the preference for replication and the expressed policy goal of support regional integration elsewhere, this paper relies on the idea that an outcome of the EU's regional integration processes and indeed, its external relations policy to promote regional integration in other regions has been diffusion (Avery, 1973).

While the paper contributes to the work on the EU as a model, it emphasises the diffusion of regional integration processes. This paper further contends that there are constraints to replicating Europe. In the case of Africa and the AU, some of these constraints arise from fact that the impetus for regional integration and the institutionalisation thereof is also borne out of local regional dynamics. Further, it is not necessarily desirable that the EU model is absorbable due to the necessity for local ownership of socio-economic and political processes in Africa. Indeed, the international community's commitment to local ownership and the commitment of African leaders to 'African solutions to African problems' as well as the peculiarities of the African continent constrains the extent to which the EU can be a model to the AU despite the concerted efforts to export the EU model abroad.

Unlike the recent work done by Babarinde (2007) which examines EU-AU regionalisation processes, this paper goes beyond a comparison of the AU and the EU. This paper asks *why* these institutions are similar, and *what* processes compel these similarities. This paper offers both empirical and conceptual insights into the study of regional integration and the external relations of the European Union.

The paper proceeds in five sections. First, it addresses the history of regional integration in Africa, leading to the creation of the African Union. It further

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[2] External Action Service Website – Regions: http://eeas.europa.eu/regions/index_en.htm. While the EU favours region-to-region cooperation, it does not have a systematic way of making such groupings. As such a region could be an arbitrary entity for its own purposes as was the case when the EU's development policies was conducted vis-à-vis the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group.

shows how the AU's creation has benefitted from the European experience. Second, it traces the similarities between the EU and the AU, focusing on the bureaucratic organisational and policy frameworks, while also highlighting divergences in this regard. In the third section, the paper critically examines the mechanisms and parameters of normative diffusion from the EU to the AU through region-to-region cooperation. The fourth section argues that despite the diffusion process explained in the previous sections, there are limits to how much can be absorbed within the AU from the EU. The fifth and final section concludes the essay with the idea that while modelling and mentoring are useful external relations tools to promoting regional integration, it must not be at the expense of broader external relations goals.

Creating a Regional Interlocutor: The African Union

This section provides an overview of the African Union, the impetus for its creation and the purpose of its existence. In 1999, the negotiations to create a new regional organisation to replace the now defunct Organisation of African Unity (OAU) were concluded in Sirte, Libya. Certain countries, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria, and South Africa especially pushed for the creation of the new AU. Following a process of patient negotiations, conciliation and reconciliation (Tieku, 2004) *the Constitutive Act of the African Union*, the AU's founding Charter was adopted on 11th July 2000 (African Union, 2000). On 9 July 2002, in Durban South Africa, 53 African Heads of States[3] held their last meeting of the OAU and ushered in a new regional organisation, the AU.

Art. 3 of the *Constitutive Act of the African Union* defines the objectives of the African Union. Inter alia, they include the promotion of 'democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance' (Art 3, g). Further, the central aims of the AU also include the acceleration of African states' political and socio-economic integration (Constitutive Act, Art 3, c). In addition to accelerating integration, the AU is tasked with addressing the experiences of the continent since independence. Consequently, this new member of the international community must combat poverty and HIV/AIDs, attain universal

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[3] Morocco (and Western Sahara) is not included as it is not a member of the African Union.

education for young Africans and tackle state fragility and insecurity. At its very inception then, African Union (AU) has the role of maintaining stability, (peace and) security[4] in Africa (see Engel and Gomes Porto, 2010; Akokpari et al., 2007; Muritihi, 2005). Creating the necessary tools to tackle security challenges is therefore one of the more important innovations of the AU. While the AU is similar to the EU for example, this innovation of the organisation makes the AU distinct from other regional organisations including the EU, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for example. It is clear in the case of the AU that the regionalisation process towards deeper integration favours an initial political trajectory concurrently or prior to an economic one.

The creation of the AU was prompted primarily by the failures of the OAU. The OAU had not addressed the pressing concerns of insecurity on the African continent in the immediate post Cold War era. Founded on 25 May1963, African leaders created the OAU to celebrate African independence from colonial rule. Additionally, the OAU's role was to foster regional integration among African countries to provide a better life for Africans. Yet, as of 2006, 63% of the poorest countries in the world were in Africa (World Bank, 2006). Additionally, there is lack of transparency in the governance structures within Africa including the lack of regard for the rule of law and democratic norms. Further, the lack of material capacity of African states essentially incapacitated the continent was obvious in the first decade after the Cold War. The incapacity to deal with the challenges of development (as identified in the Millennium Development Goals) increased insecurity on the continent. Thus, rather than help improve the general well-being of the African continent, the OAU was inadequate to deal with its many challenges.

One of the main failings of the OAU is that it had a skewed view of post-independence governance especially concerning security. This view affected both the socio-economic and political health of African citizens. As

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[4] Security in Africa is framed within a specific context - human security. Human security is an inclusive narrative of security that extends to securing human lives after natural disasters, working to prevent the spread of deadly diseases, protecting refugees and internally displaced people, helping victims of famine and drought within a regional rather than national framework.

emphasised in Article 3 of the OAU Charter, the protection of territorial integrity was the central security concern for the pan-African institution. Its intention was to dissuade the possibility of interference from former colonial powers, which was the driving force of this collaboration between African States. The Charter prohibits external entities from 'interfering in the internal affairs of States' (OAU Charter, 1963). Non-interference, as expressed in the OAU Charter, meant that African leaders had the 'permission to be dictatorial since accountability to external entities was practically non-existent. Essentially, 'the cardinal rule of non-interference was almost literally killing Africa… and it fostered a culture of impunity on the continent' (Haastrup, 2011: 80).

During the 1990s, the OAU was criticised for not engaging in Africa's most notorious humanitarian crises like the Rwandan Genocide, the state failure in Somalia and the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The shift from the old OAU agenda to the creation of the new AU was therefore a direct move to counter the ineffectiveness of African leaders, governments and institutions dealing with conflict by renouncing non-interference for non-indifference, and impunity for the rule of law [5]. In adopting these new imperatives, the AU 'explicitly recognises the right to intervene in a member on humanitarian and human rights grounds' (Cohen & O'Neill cited in Hanson, 2008) based on its commitments to the *Responsibility to Protect* doctrine. These illustrate the AU's aspirations to represent Africa within the international community by adopting accepted norms.

From the perspective of new regionalism studies and international relations, what is interesting is why the AU resembles the EU. To be sure, the AU is not the first expression of regional integration at the continental or sub-continental level in Africa. In 1910, the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) was established making this the first example of regional integration in the world. Indeed, in Africa today there exist several manifestations of regionalism,

[5] Ironically, Libyan autocratic leader, Col. Ghaddfi spearheaded the call for a more integrated pan-African structure which was more responsive to the demands of security and prosperity for its citizenry.

ranging in various degrees of integration (see Tavares, 2010). Given its various attempts and experiences at regional integration within a unique African context, why does the AU resemble the EU organisationally? Further, why does modelling through mentoring dominate the method of deepening integration in Africa? This paper considers various scenarios to explain the new drive for regional integration in Africa, on the one hand, and its resemblance to the European processes on the other.

One explanation is that the EU promotes regional integration as a policy objective. By having a specific foreign policy of regional integration, the most probable outcome of the EU's external relations process is the replication of itself. In this, Africa is not the only region where the EU seeks to duplicate its own process as we see similar efforts in Asia (through ASEAN)[6], and Latin America (through MERCOSUR)[7] especially. Another explanation for this pattern of regional integration lies in the theory that regionalism is the new way through which international cooperation is being organised to deal with challenges of the international system. Essentially, then, regionalisation is the outcome of international (re) ordering further facilitated by globalisation (Spindler, 2002)[8]. As such, regional integration in Africa simply forms a part of the general trend within the global political system. Indeed, Africanists have often explained the formation of the African Union as a way for Africa to deal with Africa's problems within a global context. Further, International Relations theory such as neo-realism could suggest that regionalisation is a result of the emergence of a regional hegemon, a states that pushes for regional cooperation through its dominance of other states. This explanation is potentially true of the AU given that one of the push factors for formations was the leadership of Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia and Libya. However, this explanation cannot offer a holistic picture of why the AU was created. In the first instance, it took more than one dominant country and there was no common agenda amongst those countries. Additionally, the membership of

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[6] The Association of Southeast Asian Nations
[7] Mercado Común del Sur (Southern Common Market)
[8] The Regional Integration System compiled by the United Nations University – Institute for Comparative Regional Integration Studies, Bruges, illustrates that of the 191 member nations of the United Nations, only 9 are out of some form of regional organisation. Available at: http://www.cris.unu.edu/riks/web

the AU is not selective. Since everyone is a member, it is not clear that particular interests as suggested by neo-realism drove regional cooperation. Finally, and related to the resemblance between the European and African Unions, given that the EU remains the most integrated regional political and institutional entity, by this virtue it inspires others to be just like it. EU external relations scholars, through the concept of *presence*, suggest that even without purposive action, the EU can shape perceptions and exert influence on the behaviour of third parties (Bretherton & Vogler, 2008: 27; see Allen & Smith, 1990). Consequently, the AU has chosen to model its own regional integration endeavours using what it perceives to be the best template – the EU.

In examining the formation of the new African Union, each of these four explanations contribute to *why* regionalism is occurring in Africa, *why* it resembles the EU, at least institutionally, and *why* and how the EU diffuses its own regional integration as an ideal.

II. Tracing Institutional Similarities in the EU and the AU

Despite the increased volume of literature on the African Union (see Murithi, 2005; 2010 Francis, 2006; Adejumobi & Olukoshi, 2008; Akokpari et al, 2008; Engel & Gomes Porto, 2010; Mangala, 2010a,b for a few) the organisation still seems shrouded in mystery. This limited discourse on the AU indicates that compared to other regional organisations, it is still an under researched. It is therefore, conceptually, challenging to study the AU in comparative perspective and in the context of new regionalism studies. Indeed, some western scholars who have shown an interest in the continental integration process have also questioned the legitimacy of the AU to speak for the whole of Africa (Clapham, 1999; Söderbaum, 2010). Certainly, the AU is plagued by difficulty in maintaining consensus especially given its intergovernmental governance structure (Murithi, 2010). Additionally, state fragility or weakness means it is difficult for African states to promote the regional integration idea within their communities. Yet, those studying the AU in the context of global governance regimes acknowledge that regional organisations are 'important intermediary between the global and the local' (Crossley, 2011). Regional organisations understand the local situation, are often more accepted that

outsiders and more committed to engage for the medium to long term. For this reason, the AU then deserves broader examination. This paper then presents another opportunity to explore the organisational structure of Africa's now core interlocutor with the aim of showing its similarities to its European counterpart.

Article 5 of the Constitutive Act sets out nine institutions including the Assembly of Heads of States, the Executive Council, Specialized Technical Committees, the Pan-African Parliament, the Court of Justice, the Commission, the Permanent Representatives Committee, and the Economic and Cultural Council. Of these, the roles of the Assembly, the Commission and the Parliament are worth noting here.

The Assembly of Heads of States and Governments is a core organ of the AU. As the core organ of the AU, the Assembly has the final decision-making power on legislative and actions on issues, for example, related to conflict resolution. The Assembly meets once annual. The head of the Assembly is a head of state or government who holds a year's term. This accession to head of the Assembly is attained on a rotational basis among all member states. While it is the main decision making organ, the Assembly leaves the implementation to the AU Commission.

The AU Commission like its EU counterpart is the bureaucratic epicentre of the regional institution. The AU Commission is managed by commissioners who are in turn led by the Chairman of the Commission, the main spokesperson for the African Union (currently Jean Ping). The Commission is divided into 8 directorates, which are further divided into departments. Of these the most developed is arguably the peace and security directorate which receives the most from the AU's budget.

The pan-African parliament was formed in 2004 and is based in Midrand, South Africa. The parliament is organised by 10 permanent policy committees and its members are not universally elected as they are in the EU. Rather, representatives are elected by national legislatures from 52 countries. Although a legislative body, it lacks teeth and must defer to the Assembly of

the African Union before law is adopted. Arguably, it resembles the EU Parliament pre-Lisbon. Efforts are ongoing to give the parliament more power. For example, in October 2009, the South African president Jacob Zuma, called for direct election of parliamentarians through universal suffrage and full legislative powers to the parliament (Mkwate, 2009). Thus far, there has been no indication to increase the powers or accessibility of the pan-African parliament.

The AU clearly follows an organisational design that is very similar to the EU. **Table 1** below identifies comparative organs and their respective roles within their respective organisations[9]. I refer to this similarity as organisational mirroring.

Table 1: Organisational Similarities between the AU & the EU

Role of Organ	African Union	European Union
Political decision-making	The Assembly of Heads of State and Government	The European Council & Commission President
Coordination and formulation of policies	The Executive Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs (and other ministers)	The Council of the EU
The secretariat – the cabinet and bureaucracy	The AU Commission	The EU Commission
Legislature	Pan-African parliament	European parliament
Judicial Review	African Court of Justice	European Court of Justice
Ambassadors	Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC)	Committee of permanent Representatives (COREPER II)
Expert Committees	Specialised Technical Committees (STCs)	CORREPER I
Advisory corporatist structure	The Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC)	Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC)

In addition to the organisational mirroring we find between the EU and the AU, the AU has also borrowed policy frameworks from the European Union. For

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[9] Adapted from Olufemi Babarinde (2007). 'Table 1: Overview of AU & EU Institutions', p. 15

example, similar to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), the AU has its Common African Defence and Security Policy (CADSP). Whereas the EU's CFSP was more of an institutional organ than a single policy, the CADSP outlines the continental strategy to integrate security forces including police and armies of African countries, and resolve conflicts on the continent. CADSP remains an aspiration as no single African has emerged.

Certainly, there are parallels in roles of the European and African regional institutions, which are similarly titled. Nevertheless, there are divergences are also worth noting. I argue that some of these differences exist since they the EU and AU defend and promote interests specific to their regional imperative[10]. In addition, the path to regional integration in Africa has been influenced by the ideology of pan-Africanism. An ideology borne out colonialism, it has influenced the African discourse on decolonisation and post-colonisation state formation and region building. Pan-Africanism seeks 'the unification of African forces against imperialism and colonial domination' (Asante, 1997: 32). Pan-Africanism, in part at least, explains the distinctiveness of Africa's regional integration in that it attaches an *empancipatory* discourse to the concept of regionalism. As Gandois (2005) notes, 'the early link between regionalism and pan-Africanism has left an unending imprint that shaped – and continues to shape – the discourse on African regionalism (8). Africa's regional processes are founded on its colonial legacy and indeed a key component of regional integration is the harmonisation of Francophone, Anglophone and to some extent Lusophone Africa.

The formation of the EU is less complex in that it was built on a shared narrative of post-WWII Europe and the desire for merged economies based on the economic logic of comparative advantage and the idea that inter-dependence prevents conflict. Moreover, institutionally in the EU, the

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[10] While the EU and AU have many mutual interests as we will address, the impetus for their existence are different and are reflective in the ongoing regional integration process which affects the levels of diffusion and absorption of the EU Model of regional integration

decision-making process is shared between member states and the European Commission and thus the EU functions on a mix of supranationality and intergovernmentalism (Bach, 2006). The AU Commission counterpart to the European Commission has no enforcement powers and has to defer to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government – the decision making process is fully intergovernmental. This however is not surprising since a majority of the issues the AU was created to handle have to do with that sensitive area of peace and security. In this policy area, intergovernmentalism, often times, tends to weigh heavily at the expense of supranationality even in the EU.

Yet, Bach notes that the lack of sovereign abilities within the AU should not be automatically viewed as a flaw, but rather its strengths should be gauged by the ability of the member states to adhere to the decisions taken. Bach further argues however, that an institution without power and lack of funding or commitment and ownership by member states could lead to stagnation (Bach, 2006: 358). Stagnation would mean values that the AU aspires to will not be entrenched within the continent and unlike the EU, cannot make any complete claims to shared 'African' values yet. Given that the AU does more than peace and security and indeed seeks to integrate other socio-economic dimensions of African states, the AU can, and seeks to learn from the EU regional integration model.

III. Diffusion through Cooperation

Diffusion in this paper refers to the process wherein ideas or norms and practices through policy frameworks and dialogue spread (see Borzel & Risse, 2009b; Strang & Meyer, 1993). In the context of EU relations with the AU then, I argue that inter-regionalism provides the framework for institutional and norm diffusion. The previous sections of the paper have shown how organisational mirroring allows the AU to model the EU. We now turn to the diffusion of norms, i.e. how the EU strives to influence the direction and shape of regional integration in Africa substantively. Indeed, this is the crux of the EU's engagement with other regions and the international community – the idea that its (the EU) regional system of shared values provide the basis for a unique identity whose good practices are exportable.

This paper relies on the model of diffusion, which illustrates the relationship between the mechanisms of diffusion and their outcomes as established by Borzel & Risse (2009b) in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Mechanisms of Diffusion[11]

Social Mechanism and Underlying Theory of Social Action	Promoter of Ideas (Sender)
Coercion (legal and physical imposition)	Coercive authority; legal or physical force
Manipulation of Utility Calculations (instrumental rationality)	Positive and negative incentives
Socialisation (normative rationality	Promote ideas through providing an authoritative model (normative pressure)
Persuasion (communicative rationality)	Promote ideas as legitimate or true through reason-giving

Emulation (indirect influence)
    a. Lesson-drawing (instrumental rationality)
    b. Mimicry (normative rationality)
	Promoting comparison and competition – strictly speaking this mechanism does not require the active promotion of ideas.

Over the course of the EU's interaction with Africa, diffusion has occurred through all the mechanisms identified in **Table 2** with the aim of making Africa a single regional entity conducive to the EU's international relations <mark>status.</mark>

Borzel and Risse (2009b) note that coercion is the most overlooked mechanism since there is the assumption that diffusion of ideas is voluntary. While Borzel and Risse are right in this, they assume wrongly that the EU has not used coercion in its external relations attributing this to its identity as a civilian power. However, in evaluating the EU's actions in the international system, it is evident that it is more than a civilian power (Haastrup, 2010). Indeed, for at least half of its existence, contrary to some of the key literature on its external relations, the EU has been more than a civilian power. Despite the challenges the EU faces to create a unified military structure and utilised its combined capabilities within an integrated framework, the label of civilian power in the sense that Duchêne used it does not accurately illustrate the range of EU performance in international affairs (Haastrup, 2010: 62-63)

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[11] Borzel &Risse (2009a: 6)

In any case, even if one were to accept that the EU's power is dominated by its civilian strength, this does not mean such power is benign. Looking back at the EU's history with Africa, which was for many years conducted within the framework of hybrid inter-regionalism (EU-ACP), there is evidence of the coercive mechanism. In the post-independence era, the EU's foreign aid policies were governed within a regime that brought together the EU on the one hand and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries on the other. With the exception of their colonial history, these three distinct geographical regions hardly had anything in common. Indeed, the even within Africa, there was substantive divergences between the Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone countries (Gandois, 2005 further discusses this). Yet, for its own purposes, the EU (legally at least) imposed the hybrid region African Pacific and Caribbean countries. The series of agreements between the EU and ACP in which the EU clearly benefitted more than the ACP countries is evidence of the EU's coercive legal abilities (see *Dunlop, Van Hove, & Szepesi*, 2004*).* Concerning the current EU-ACP agreement, the Cotonou agreement, for example, Stephen Hurt argues that the EU exercised hegemonic dominance of neo-liberalism where the ACP countries, majority of whom are in Africa and very poor benefit are even more exposed than in previous agreements (Hurt, 2003). The EU has justified its insistence on changes to its existing commitments within the EU-ACP agreements citing its own legal obligations to the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Further, the EU has always capitalised on the weaknesses of the ACP grouping in preparing for trade negotiations. Thus, while the EU may be unable to marshal coercive military force, even in its external relations, its diffusion mechanism to instil its own values can be coercive.

The diffusion of norms or ideas about regional integration does not occur in a vacuum of abstractness but requires specific actions. In this way, arguably the coercive mechanism is used concurrently with other mechanisms. To convince actors to take a certain course of action then, the manipulation of utility calculations is useful. Having imposed its way of doing business by classifying and reinforcing the ACP countries as one group through various

agreements, the EU provides 'negative and positive incentives.' These incentives justify for why forming and remaining in a hybrid region suited Africa's development interests. The positive incentive for Africa is the promise of access to European markets through preferential trade. In addition, the EU provided capacity-building programmes for socio-economic development and substantive monetary aid to mostly unaccountable African governments.

This positive inceptive made the ACP group desirable to join in the belief of attaining the positive rewards of engagement with the EU. Yet, the EU also used this mechanism to induce the ACP countries to accept its preferences or normative values, using conditionalities. Conditionalities are the requirements put on how aid money is spent. For example, in the post-Cold war years, the EU's conditionalities to ACP countries included better human rights records, more transparency and the move towards democratic governance. This was a leverage on Africa given the dearth of democratic governance that existed.

Presently, the main method of diffusion of the EU regional integration models in Africa is through the implementation of the *Joint Africa-EU Strategy* (JAES). The JAES is an inter-regional partnership agreement that forms the framework of EU-AU relations. It is based in part on the institutionalisation of existing EU-Africa relations, but has also been driven by the changing international system, which encourages more cooperation amongst states. This framework came into force in December 2007 during the Portuguese Presidency of the EU. The JAES especially provides the EU with the opportunity to mentor Africa into deepened integration as it calls for constant dialogue and engagement. Unlike previous agreements between Europe and Africa, the JAES aims to eliminate the mechanism of coerciveness, manipulation and move towards a process using *socialization*, *persuasion* and *emulation* concurrently. These three mechanisms have hardly been empirically observed and indeed are difficult to measure. Yet, their assessment could tell help to link further the literature between specific regional organisations and the new regionalism literature.

Socialization is the process undertaken by actors so that they are acceptable to other international actors. Essentially then, actors seek to be normatively 'good'. These actors learn to internalise norms that may be new to their previous existence so that they fit in with the rest of the international community. Ostensibly, in internalising new norms and rules, these actors have to re-define their interests, so that it converges with those of the external actors. In assessing regional integration in Africa, the AU vis-à-vis the EU shows that there are elements of normative alignment resulting from socialisation and persuasion. Manners (2002) has identified nine norms (5 major, 4 minor) which the EU seeks to promote including, peace, liberty, democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development, and good governance (242-243).

Manners argued that through these norms, the EU shapes what is 'normal' in the international system thereby defining its own international status (2002: 240). Essentially, the EU presents these norms as not 'European' norms per se, but universal[12]. In the post-Cold War era, the AU has adopted, in rhetoric at least, the need for Africa to embrace and institutionalise certain values already attributed to economic growth, political stability and development in the global North. Thus, the *Constitutive Act of the African Union*, commits to 'promote and protect human and people's rights'(Art. 3, h), 'promote sustainable development' (Art. 4, j), 'promote unity, solidarity, cohesion and cooperation among the peoples of Africa and African States' 'respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance' (Art. 4, m). Thus, the *Constitutive Act*, which is the equivalent of the Treaty of Europe/Lisbon Treaty establishes and reflects the African internalisation of the EU's 'normative difference' (Manners, 2002). In action, the AU is more proactive about these norms than its predecessors. For example, in 2009, the AU was vocal about coup d'état in Mauritania, with the Peace and Security Council (PSC) issuing sanctions against the military regime which froze assets and impose travel bans on the government officials. Indeed, a pro-coup parliamentarian expressed 'shock' at the AU's sanction. Additionally, the

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[12] While norms are presented as universal, the EU does not shy away from making it known that it plays a role in shaping this universality. It is an important part of its international status.

AU asked the EU to help impose the sanctions, which the EU supported. On this, former EU Development Commissioner, Louis Michel stated, 'I fully support this decision by the African Union ...' (European Commission, 2009).

Evidently, the AU seeks to internalise the norms promoted within its partnership with the EU. The process of diffusion through which the AU is able to internalise the EU's normative difference happens within the dialogue process and the implementation of joint programmes between the EU and AU, as well as the EU and the sub-regional organisations. The framework for this is clearly outlined in the JAES and attached Action Plans. *Persuasion* is a mechanism and the art of one party arguing to convince another that their position is valid. Validity is defended by establishing the legitimacy of the normative position through constant dialogue. According to Börzel and Risse (2009a), socialisation and persuasion have internal and external dimensions. What concerns us here is the external dimension, which the EU attempts to achieve through the *Joint Africa – EU Strategy.*

Emulation, the final mechanism, is a process in which the EU has little control over. It is more passive than active; however, it relies on 'indirect influence' (Börzel & Risse, 2009a: 12). They further argue that while new institutionalist literature has contributed substantively to discourse on institutional isomorphism and emulation, these assessments tend to be agency rather than structured centred. As the emulator, the external actor, (the AU) fosters emulation through comparison and competition.

Emulation is best found in the organisational mirroring, which this paper has already addressed. In the case of the AU, the most tangible example of emulating the EU is the attempt to find a common voice. The AU Commission, and especially the Commission chairperson, through Memorandums of Understandings (MoUs) work to integrate the regional economic communities so that the AU can gain and retain some of the credibility that the EU enjoys in Europe and internationally. Indeed, despite the shortfalls of disparate voices within the EU, some third party actors have complained contrary to the discord so often portrayed, the EU member states' accord with each other, can be

stifling for external negotiations. For example, it becomes difficult to negotiate during the DOHA round of trade negotiations since all 27 member states have already been through a rigorous negotiation process leading to the common EU position. Consequently, the EU is less flexible at the multilateral level. Nevertheless, AU policymakers and scholars admit that finding that common voice through which action may or may not be propelled is admirable *and* desirable.

The diffusion of regional integration through the JAES illustrates the role of the EU as both a model and a mentor to the African Union. Within the interregional framework, the EU diffuses its own model passively and actively. Yet, while the relations between the EU and the AU appear to be *in sync* and ease the process of diffusion, there are challenges to be considered as these have knock on effects on the international role of the European Union as an actor and the process of regionalism in Africa broadly.

IV. Challenges to Diffusion within an Inter-regional framework

As Africa's interlocutor, it is essential then that the African Union possess strong institutional characteristics to harness the political will of African leaders and exercise its mandate effectively. Importantly, the AU needs a strong institution to act vis-à-vis other international actors including and especially the European Union. Arguably, only when both the EU and AU are at their optimum to effectively represent their citizens. Although we know that the EU seeks to diffuse its norms and sometimes succeeds, we know less about what challenges to the absorption and retention process or the unintended consequences of trying to promote a certain normative identity.

Adapting diffused norms within Africa's regional integration process can be difficult. Yet, the inability to adapt to these norms quickly can negatively affect the AU's potential roles as a regional and international actor. This in turn makes it difficult to fulfil the pan-African promise of less dependence on external actors and more local ownership.

In the African Union, the biggest challenge to its institutional development in all areas is the organisational and financial constraints. In the first instance, the AU unlike the EU is still young and therefore needs more time to find its feet. A further complication is that the AU has to joggle institutional capacity building with the implementation of it programmes for security and development on the continent. For example, despite its limited resources, the AU has deployed troops to troubled zones like Somalia and the Sudan. Further, unlike the EU, the AU lacks the accession requirements and processes such as the Copenhagen criteria, which provide the framework for candidate countries' accession to the EU. Consequently, the AU consists of member states that effectively contradict its aims. A case in point is that of embattled Libyan leader, Col. Mumar Ghaddafi, who is only one of several African leaders that shun democratic governance and human rights.

Having long campaigned for a better-integrated Africa that can tackle its own security challenges, i.e. intervene during humanitarian crises and where there are violations of human rights, it is no wonder that the African Union is currently unable to act decisively against the government in Tripoli. While African Union has actively criticised NATO military action in Libya for interfering with mediation efforts and local African engagement, the AU has also failed to do more for the cause of peace. Representatives of the AU have made a show of engaging with Col. Ghaddafi, and drawing a road map for peace, which interestingly is unable to offer a majority of Libyans what they want the most – the departure of Ghaddafi. It therefore remains to be seen how an institution whose leaders are so compromised can effectively internalise (absorb) and reproduce the democracy, peace and transparency as norms of its integration process for the benefit of Africa. Further, this example shows that on a political level, European and African leaders do not always share the same views or solutions to a problem despite shared values. Indeed, NATO, and by extension European, action in Libya is deemed as undermining regional integration process in Africa.

Regarding the African Union's financial constraints Murithi notes that although Africa has the resources to fund and implement its regional

strategies access to these resources are 'distorted by forces of globalization' (2010: 203). Additionally, on a continent of 53 states, some states are not taking membership or the role of the AU in the international community serious. Thus, they do not pay the relevant dues. They also fail to implement the norms accepted by the AU institutions on the continental level or financial contribute to the sustenance of the AU. This too undermines integration.

Another challenge is the EU's 'over-ambition' to promote regional integration (Börzel & Risse, 2009b). While the normative ideals being promoted by the EU might themselves be unproblematic, diffusion through the EU faces the potential criticism of being neo-colonial and arrogant. This is then problematic if the essence of EU-Africa relations, and indeed the cultivation of African integration is to give Africa a better seat at the table to represent its citizens. Further, the EU faces challenges to its own integration. A recent report in the Economist suggested that the difficulty the EU had in reaching a conclusion on the Greek bailout and the Eurozone crises endangers the integration project. Perhaps exaggerated, reports like these engender the negative perception of third parties, especially budding regional institutions like the AU, to the 'EU as a Model' paradigm.

Regionalism in the international system has held an appeal for many years and in Africa especially, it is a fervent aspiration. Critics of the EU diffusion of regional integration to Africa (through the AU) argue that this model of diffusion is problematic because it artificially divides the influence of state and non-state actors. Clapham (1999) notes that this model of regional integration is challenged by state weakness in Africa (53). Indeed, rather than promoting universally 'good' norms, regional integration in Africa seems to aid problematic elements of governance in Africa. Then, the EU as a model for regional integration undermines the EU's own stated priorities in Africa: an image of itself and greater cooperation within the international system through inter-regionalism. Modelling regional integration on the EU, while accepting the underlying ideology of pan-Africanism potentially creates two types of problematic regionalisms: regime- boosting and 'shadow regionalism' (see Söderbaum, 2010; Gandois, 2005).

Regime-boosting regionalism as the soubriquet implies seeks to bolster the position of ruling elites at international and domestic levels. Söderbaum (2010) claims that African leaders praise regionalism and the formation of regional organisations as part of 'summitry regionalism', but lack a commitment to the process. This, he further contends is due to the development of statehood as well as state weakness on the African continent. This scenario emphasises formal command of territorial borders, evidence of which lies in the very essence of pan-Africanism and stated in both the OAU Charter and the Constitute Act of the African Union. State leaders desire to consolidate their position, i.e. stay in power.

While Söderbaum rightly notes that some African leaders show a lack of commitment to the integration project, this view of regional integration offers a very jaded view of Africa itself. It suggests that Africans themselves cannot desire regional integration just as Europeans. When Söderbaum, for example, contends that regional integration in Africa rides on the principle of non-interference, he does not acknowledge the change in that principle resulting from the creation of the AU or acknowledge recent AU actions[13], albeit limited, that have indeed proven the contrary to this principle of non-interference. Further, the structural regional integration in West Africa for example has yielded concrete changes in the lives of the ordinary citizens as in the EU. One notable example is the free movements of people similar to the Schengen area within Europe. To leave unacknowledged these developments within the formal regionalisation process that has been created in part as result of diffusion of norms and practices from the EU would be missing the holistic context of recent regional integration in Africa.

A challenge that remains present within the context of regime boosting regionalism is the multiple regional organisations to which African states belong. Multiple memberships can create disorder and competing regional agendas. Multiple memberships, in addition, make it difficult to implement

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[13] The AU has intervened in Somalia (AMISOM), the Sudan (AMIS), instituted sanctions against Mauritania to the surprise of the military junta, and sent election observers to Comoros (MAES).

concrete policies that benefit the states the region. On one level, this could indeed be the case – however, another explanation for multiple memberships is that until recently, African states where looking for a perfect regional institution. Based on this assumption, prior to the formation of the AU, it made sense to keep looking for something better. In the future, one might expect this to change as the AU's task is to integrate the regional economic communities.

Bach describes shadow regionalism best:
> [it] grows from below and is built upon rent-seeking or the stimulation of patron-client relationships. As it undermines the regulatory capacity of the state and formal regionalism/regional integration....The profits involved in shadow networks are considerable. These networks are also inequitable and extremely uneven since they accumulate power and resources at the top, to the rich and powerful, and those who have jobs rather than to the unemployed, the urban poor, and rural producers. Indeed small-scale cross-border trades have a disadvantage since the economies of scale are "only for those who pay the necessary bribes" (Bach, 1997: 162)

Bach's analysis of shadow regionalism highlights the unsavoury elements of regionalism in Africa. However, it should be noted that the formation of the AU and indeed the intervening decade and half have had an effect on regionalisation process. Indeed, the framework of the *Joint Africa-EU Strategy* through its eight partnership areas seeks to address the conditions, which make shadow regionalism favourable to its adherents. While the 'promotion of war, conflict and destruction' was the way of being of being in Africa for most of the post-independence era, the new resolve to non-indifference, the promotion of new norms such as the *Responsibility to Protect* conceivably diminishes the prospects for continuation of regionalism based on criminality.

V. Conclusion

Despite the alternative challenges suggested by the critical perspective to African regional integration, there is good case to be made for the new attempt at regional integration in Africa. This new attempt found in the formation of the African Union relies on the diffusion of normative ideas and institutional mimicry from the European Union, while keeping with its pan-

African ideology to retain a unique international institution. Nevertheless, the wholesale adoption of the EU model cannot be the ultimate target of the EU's mentorship. The local environment and broader EU external relations' aims, which promote ownership and equality between partners within an interregional framework ought to be the basis of EU efforts to support regional integration in Africa. Working within this frame the EU can support the AU in becoming a substantive international actor.

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