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**Paper No. 2**



# Mainz Papers on International and European Politics (MPIEP)

ISSN: 2193-6684

Edited by the Chair of International Relations, University of Mainz

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Muntschick, Johannes. 2012. *Theorising Regionalism and External Influence: A Situation-structural Approach*. *Mainz Papers on International and European Politics*, 2012/02. Mainz: Chair of International Relations, Johannes Gutenberg University.

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# Theorising Regionalism and External Influence: A Situation-structural Approach \*

Johannes Muntschick

## Abstract

This paper proposes an innovative theoretical approach to the analysis of regionalism by taking the impact of extra-regional relations and the influence of external actors explicitly into account. The major motivation for this research stems from the observation of a new wave of regionalism that emerged after the end of the Cold War parallel to increasing globalisation. In contrast to expectations of mainstream integration theories, many of these recent regional integration organisations comprise less developed countries and are located in the Southern Hemisphere despite allegedly unfavourable preconditions. While regionalisms in the South have nevertheless come into existence and exhibit various degrees of success, there is evidence that institutionalised regional cooperation projects in southern regions seem to be comparatively unstable and not always entirely under control of regional actors. Against the background of this puzzling observation, this paper proposes a theoretical framework that attends to this phenomenon and aims to answer the following questions: What explains the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism in these regions? If regional circumstances remain constant, do extra-regional relations and external actors have a decisive impact in this respect? While the European integration process has been well scrutinised, systematic and theory-driven research on regionalism outside Europe is still widely missing. By applying cooperation theory and a situation-structural approach to analyse and explain regional integration, the author argues that prevalent patterns of strong and asymmetric interdependence between regional and extra-regional actors may impact the structure of genuine regional problematic situations and put external actors in a position to (in-)directly influence the likeliness and progress of institutionalised regional cooperation. Since strong and asymmetric relations generally prevail between the developed North and the less developed South, regionalisms in the latter regions are likely to be more exposed to external influence. Central assumptions and hypotheses deduced from this theoretical model will be elucidated by brief plausibility probes on empirical examples from the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

**Keywords:** regionalism, regional integration, extra-regional relations, asymmetric interdependence, external influence, Southern African Development Community (SADC), European Union (EU), cooperation theory, situation-structural model

## Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War a wave of new regionalism (Hettne, 1999; Hettne and Söderbaum, 1998; Robson, 1993) can be observed in various parts of the globe. Many of these new regional integration organisations focus on economic ‘block-building’ and security cooperation. Regional integration is widely considered as an adequate instrument to target the challenges of

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\* The author thanks particularly Thomas Gehring (Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg) and the Bamberg Cluster for Regional Integration (namely Julia Dinkel, Simon Fink, Sebastian Krapohl, Axel Obermeier and Daniel Rempe), Benjamin Faude and Michael Zürn (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung), and Jonathan M. Kaunda (Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis) for their fruitful comments and manifold suggestions to this article’s argument and earlier works. Cordial thanks to Susan McEwen-Fial (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz) for proof-reading this work.

globalisation, to respond to intraregional interdependence and uncertainty, and to foster socio-economic development and political stability (Mattli, 1999; Schiff and Winters, 2003; Schirm, 2002).

It is quite astounding that many of these new regional integration organisations emerged in the Southern Hemisphere among developing countries (e.g. ASEAN, COMESA, ECOWAS, Mercosur and SADC) although preconditions for successful and effective regional integration are allegedly less favourable according to mainstream integration theories. In contrast to economically very interdependent and highly industrialised northern regions like Europe and North America, regional integration organisations in the so-called South<sup>1</sup> generally comprise less developed and economically less interdependent countries with comparably stronger (economic) relations to extra-regional actors. The specific pattern of strong and asymmetric extra-regional interdependence is a distinct, structural characteristic of countries and regions in the South and apparently distinguishes the latter from the North – most notably in the economic field. Generally speaking, it is assumed that the structural distinctiveness of the South finds expression in the pattern of its regional cooperation problems and is likely to impact the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism as a consequence.

Besides allegedly less favourable preconditions being in place, regionalism in the Southern Hemisphere has nevertheless come into existence and many regional integration organisations have shown considerable institutional dynamics and have more or less successfully achieved their goals in a variety of policy areas (Brinkmann, 2000; Mair and Peters-Berries, 2001). However, there is empirical evidence that the emergence, dynamics, and effectiveness of regionalism in the South seem to be rather unstable and not always entirely under the influence of regional actors (Börzel and Risse, 2009; Doidge, 2011; Farrell, 2007; Muntschick, 2010). These meaningful observations create the puzzling backdrop which evoked the following central question of this paper. What explains the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism in these regions? If regional circumstances remain constant, do extra-regional relations and external actors have a decisive impact in this respect?

A rich body of literature on regionalism already exists and a variety of competing and complementary theories tries to explain the phenomenon of regionalism from different viewpoints: According to Neofunctionalism (Haas, 1964; Haas, 1958), spill-over processes and strong supra-national institutions are the driving forces for successful regional integration while Liberal Intergovernmentalism assumes that sub-national actors and governments of economically highly interdependent states are the decisive players in this regard (Hoffmann, 1966; Moravcsik, 1998). A broad range of social and constructivist approaches explain the emergence of regionalism against the background of common values and culture (Huntington, 1996; Spindler, 2005) while political economists stress economically motivated factors of demand and supply and highlight the increasing constraints of globalisation (Mattli, 1999; Schirm, 2002; Viner, 1950).

Most of these mainstream integration theories were conceptualised against the background of northern regions, developed nations and the successful process of regional integration in Europe. For this very reason, they all have rather strong explanatory power with respect to the European Union (EU) from their particular points of view since the special European context bears a wide range of factors which assumingly favour regional political and economic cooperation and integration. Thus, none of the mainstream integration theories can be thoroughly falsified based on the European example. Due to their inherent Eurocentrism, however, these theories fall fairly short to explain the emergence, dynamics, design and effectiveness of regionalism beyond Europe – if ever applied at all.

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<sup>1</sup> The term *South* shall encompass regions with predominantly developing, non-industrialised countries in the Southern Hemisphere. In an outdated diction it would refer to countries of the ‘Third World’. Today, however, many emerging powers are surely amongst them. In this article, the usage of the term *South* has no normative connotation and does not refer to system or development theories (Söderbaum and Stålgren, 2010:2)

So far, most research on regionalism outside Europe is done by experts from the field of area studies. These works are in general very rich in empirical content (Brinkmann, 2000; Mair and Peters-Berries, 2001; Oosthuizen, 2006; Stahl, 2010) but are often not very analytical and rather descriptive. Consequently, there is a major research gap regarding the systematic and theory-driven analysis of regional integration organisations of the last wave of regionalism – particularly with respect to the Southern Hemisphere (Börzel and Risse, 2009; Jetschke and Lenz, 2011; Warleigh-Lack and van Langenhove, 2010). Only recently have academics involved in the research field ‘Regionalism in Comparison’ increasingly dedicated their attention to regionalisms beyond Europe (Jetschke and Lenz, 2011:449). The current debate in this research area was mainly pursued against the background of New Regionalism theory, interregionalism and the varying mechanisms of diffusion. Many of these approaches highlight the meaning of an additional horizontal perspective for explaining regionalism and particularly attach importance to the pattern of interregional relations between the EU and other regional organisations (Börzel and Risse, 2009; Doidge, 2011; Hänggi, et al., 2006; Jetschke and Lenz, 2011).

The contributions and insights of the ‘Regionalism in Comparison’ body of literature have been particularly fruitful in respect of systematising and understanding various mechanisms and aspects of external facilitation and support of regional integration processes. As a consequence, the horizontal perspective has been increasingly recognised by scholars who analyse and explain regionalism outside Europe (Söderbaum and Sbragia, 2010; Warleigh-Lack and van Langenhove, 2010). In general, the EU as the most advanced regional integration scheme is considered to be the most important international actor and influential source of ideas in this regard (Börzel and Risse, 2009; Fawcett and Gandois, 2010; Jetschke and Lenz, 2011). Several conceptual and empirical studies reach the conclusion that the EU stands as a model for other regional integration organisations and (in-)directly exerts a positive influence on regional integration processes in other parts of the world by various mechanisms of diffusion or specific incentives (Börzel and Risse, 2009; de Lombaerde and Schulz, 2009; Farell, 2007; Pietrangeli, 2009; van der Vleuten and Hoffmann, 2010).

While the positive transformative power of Europe has been emphasised in several studies, there is so far little knowledge of the reverse and potentially disturbing effects of external actors on regional integration organisations. This aspect has yet been widely neglected by theories of diffusion and interregionalism. Furthermore, a non-Eurocentric theoretical approach on regionalism that takes the impact of interregional relations and external actors into consideration and which is applicable to all regional integration projects regardless of their geographical location is still missing.

This article aims to contribute to the analytical and theory-driven research on regionalism by proposing a middle-range theory on regional integration that takes external influence explicitly and systematically into account. Moving beyond the rather unidirectional and positively connoted idea of diffusing (inter-)regionalism, this approach is quite innovative since a potential impact of interregional relations and external actors on regional integration processes and regionalism has been widely neglected by classical mainstream integration theories (Sbragia, 2008). Besides a few exceptions (Axline, 1977; Nye, 1965; Zimmerling, 1991), these important factors have not yet been thematised nor considered for theory-building.

The article contains an elaborated theoretical section and a rather brief empirical part. The first presents the underlying conceptualisation of regionalism and explains its linkage to collective action problems and the applicability of cooperation-theory as the foundation for the theory-driven analysis. Starting from a situation-structural approach to the emergence of international cooperation and the establishment of non-hierarchic institutions, the impact of asymmetric intra- and extra-regional interdependencies will be elaborated. Central assumptions of this paper’s theoretical approach will subsequently undergo brief, preliminary plausibility probes (Eckstein, 1975:108 ff) in order to enrich and support the argument with empirical evidence.

The empirical part refers to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as one

of most promising examples of the new regionalism in the Southern Hemisphere (Mair and Peters-Berries, 2001; Weiland, 2006) and consists of short case studies with reference to major cooperation projects in the most important issue areas of economy, security and infrastructure. By dividing the SADC into crucial sub-cases, the number of cases for analysis is slightly increased in order to avoid the  $n=1$  problem (Przeworski and Teune, 1982; Yin, 2003). Against the background of the organisation's integration efforts concerning the scheduled customs union, the SADC Standby Brigade and the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), the paper argues that the European Union (EU) is in a position to exert ambivalent influence on regionalism in SADC for particularly structural reasons. The conclusion will finally summarise major insights and propose hypotheses on regionalism and external influence in general.

## **1. Theorising Regionalism and External Influence**

This paper adopts a rather rationalist approach to international cooperation. Accordingly, collective action problems in situations of complex interdependence are assumed to be the decisive factors for the emergence of institutionalised regionalism. The latter will be scrutinised and explained by applying a situation-structural model as a suitable analytical tool (Zürn, 1992, 1993).

### **Conceptualisation of Regions and Regionalism**

The concepts of regions and regionalism are neither consistent nor stationary with regard to their meaning as they are used divergently in different disciplines. In the field of international relations, regions are often understood as macro-regions, i.e. supranational subsystems within the international system, whose constituents are states that are geographically close and share some degree of interdependence (Hettne, 2005:544; Nye, 1968:VII). Following this view, regionalism can be understood as planned, multilateral, and state-led organisation of interdependence within a confined regional space that manifests in various specific regional projects and accompanying institutions (Bach, 2003:22).

Though a variety of theoretical approaches and scholars may challenge this perception of regionalism for sometimes arguable reasons (Hettne and Söderbaum, 1998; Söderbaum and Shaw, 2003), the state-centric approach will be applied in this paper as it favours an analysis of structures and casual relations on the macro-level. It is a major guiding principle in mainstream international relations theories. The term 'regional integration' will be applied in a similar manner as regionalism although the first can refer to a static state of affairs as well as to a process – depending on the respective context.

### **The Nexus of Regionalism and Cooperation Theory**

Regionalism can be understood as a cluster of various, multidimensional regional cooperation projects bounded by a territorial dimension confined by its member states. Such a perception is perhaps reductionist but not farfetched because even the EU can be interpreted as a multi-layered system of nested international cooperation projects and related institutions (Gehring, 1994:216; Hoffmann, 1982:33-35; Moravcsik, 1998:15). With regard to the meaning of institutions, even a dissociation of regionalism and international regimes becomes blurred at this point if regionalism is dissected into a multitude of institutionalised regional cooperation projects (Stein, 1982:317) and international regimes narrowly understood as rather static cooperative agreements (Gehring and Oberthür, 1997:15).

Inherent to this understanding of regionalism is consequently the constraint rational-choice approach to international relations that qualifies to apply this strand of cooperation-theory as

a starting point for the analysis of causes, peculiarities and consequences of institutionalised regional cooperation. Though this is surely not the most comprehensive way to interpret reality, it nevertheless reduces complexity and allows modelling causalities and illustrating trends on a higher level (Keohane, 1982:329-331).

## Complex Interdependence and the demand for institutionalised cooperation

The incentive for international cooperation emanates from the structure of the international system and underlying cooperation and collective action problems. The latter are based on interdependence (Hurrell, 1995:350; Keohane, 1984:51), while a neo-realistic perception of an international system structured by anarchy and characterised by the absence of any hierarchic order or global coercive mechanism is assumed to exist. Against this background, states are basically well-advised to pursue their interests egoistically and without consideration for third parties in order to safeguard their survival and welfare (Waltz, 1979). However, anarchy in the international system does not necessarily imply the inhospitable and war-torn scenario drawn in Hobbes' *Leviathan* but instead allows even egoistic, utility-maximising actors to seek mutual cooperation in specific problematic situations (Axelrod and Keohane, 1993; Keohane, 1982; Oye, 1985; Taylor, 1987).

The reason for prevalent problematic situations in international relations is above all based on the existence of complex interdependence between various actors – i.e. states – in various specific issue-areas (Keohane and Nye, 1987:730-731,737-740). Complex interdependence in international relations implies that policies, actions, and returns of one individual state are not isolated events but rather interlaced and a function of the behaviour and action of its counterparts. According to this understanding, interdependence is certainly not exclusively confined to the economic realm but occurs in virtually every issue area of international relations such as inter alia security, infrastructure, climate and environment<sup>2</sup>. If actors follow plainly ego-centric and uncoordinated strategies, a prevailing pattern of interdependence within a certain issue-area almost inevitably produces policy externalities for all others involved. Against this background, policies aiming for coordination and cooperation – depending on the prevailing situation – may help to achieve Pareto-superior outcomes for all actors' outcomes provided that the (expected) related benefits surpass the payoffs of an uncoordinated *status quo* (Zürn, 1987:9-10).

While rudimentary institutionalised forms of rather solid cooperation may emerge after a long time through repeated interaction on the condition that actors apply reciprocal strategies of tit-for-tat, certain problematic situations demand *ex-ante* solutions in order to put cooperation gains into effect. Particularly dilemma-type situations – where collective cooperative behaviour provides rational actors with higher profits than utterly individualistic strategies – require institutions to facilitate and secure enduring cooperation since unilateral free-riding is always a tempting option (Axelrod, 1987; Gehring, 1994; Hasenclever, et al., 1997:33 ff).

The particular functions of these institutions are manifold but the added value is fundamentally the same: similar to international regimes (Krasner, 1976), they facilitate, safeguard and may even advance cooperation in problematic situations where unilateral, uncooperative action would otherwise not allow for individually and collectively improved payoffs (Hasenclever, et al., 1996:33-36). Against the background of the structural obstacles to cooperation in the international system, such institutions – particularly due to their inherent norms, principles and

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<sup>2</sup> Security problems in international relations, for example, are based on security interdependence (Wallander, et al., 1999:6-8; Zürn, 1992, 1993). The related cooperation problems are typically referred to as security dilemma (Herz, 1950; Jervis, 1978, 1982). The latter reminds of a classical prisoners' dilemma and describes a situation where states face a security risk due to uncertainty (Wallander, et al., 1999:6-8; Zürn, 1992, 1993).

rules – facilitate and stabilise cooperation by removing mutual uncertainty (e.g. through the provision of information or reduction of information costs), enhancing the ‘shadow of the future’ (i.e. perpetuating the political relationship), avoiding defection (e.g. through monitoring and sanctioning mechanisms), fostering commitment and reputation. At best, they provide a framework that allows for – or even initiates – ulterior proceedings towards deeper cooperation (Oye, 1985:11,20-22; Zürn, 1992:140-150).

In their capacity as facilitators of international cooperation and catalysts of collectively efficient interaction, the regulative and ‘civilising’ elements of international institutions increase collective and country-specific absolute welfare and foster a stable and peaceful international environment. Hence, in case of their effectiveness, international – likewise regional – institutions may ideally contribute to sustainable development in a broader sense (Rittberger, 1990:360-361; Zürn, 1987:6,36,44-45).

## **The Situation-structural Approach to the analysis of Regionalism**

A problematic situation on the ground of complex interdependence in international relations, which can be modelled and illustrated by means of different types of games (Zürn, 1993:69-70), is the *sine qua non* and independent variable that provides incentives for states to engage in cooperation and the establishment of accompanying institutions (Taylor, 1987:19). Against the background of game- and cooperation theory (Axelrod, 1987; Oye, 1985; Stein, 1982), the situation structural approach distinguishes several ideal types of problematic situations that imply various degrees of conduciveness to cooperation and the formation of common regulative institutions: In descending order, cooperation is comparably easy to achieve in problematic situations corresponding to coordination and assurance games while it is more difficult in those resembling to the dilemma-type and most difficult to achieve in so-called ‘Rambo’-games (Rittberger, 1990:359; Zürn, 1992, 1993). Therefore, it depends in principle on the character and structure of an underlying problematic situation – i.e. the type of game – as to what degree a realisation of international cooperation is likely, how strong the demand for regulative institutions will be, and how relevant and influential potential context variables can be (Zürn, 1993:69-70). Institutionalised international cooperation with its design and inherent set of rules at its core – here: regionalism, i.e. the states’ codified response to a specific problematic situation in international relations on a regional level – is therefore regarded as a dependent variable that shall be explained.

In addition, the situation structural model assumes that intervening context variables can have an effect on the likeliness that institutionalised regional cooperation will occur. They are particularly meaningful in mixed motives games, such as dilemma, or Rambo-type situations because the latter collective action problems have no salient solutions and rational utility-maximising actors will unlikely follow a cooperative strategy *ab initio*. Although the number of potentially applicable context variables is not determined and rather elastic, the factor ‘power’ is regarded as particularly relevant and most pivotal context variable – not least since it is a key aspect in international relations (Keohane and Nye, 2001; Stein, 1993:319; Zürn, 1993:70-71). Therefore, it will receive special attention in the conceptualisation of the paper’s theoretical framework (Zürn, 1993:70-71).

### **Context Variable I: Impact of Regional Power Distribution based on asymmetric intraregional Interdependence**

The aspect of power, i.e. the relative power distribution among involved actors, can significantly influence the occurrence of international cooperation and its institutional design. While all rational utility-maximising actors are assumed to share the common interest to obtain absolute gains from collective action and cooperation in corresponding situations, they nevertheless have divergent and self-centred preferences with regard to the distribution of contingent costs and



assets, i.e. the relative gains. These so-called second-order problems, which resemble coordination games with distributional effect, need to be addressed and solved in order to allow any effective international cooperation to take place (Zangl, 1994:284-287). In order to achieve the individually best outcome, actors will consequently engage in negotiations over the institutional embedding and design of a common cooperation project.

Although sophisticated arguments may be influential (Gehring, 1994:216), international negotiations among egoistic, utility-maximising actors concerning these second-order problems are nevertheless above all characterised by bargaining. An actor's bargaining power does not primarily rest on its overall power in classic terms of economic and military capacity but is rather situationally determined by its particularly issue-specific power position. According to intergovernmental bargaining theory, an actor's (bargaining) power position can be deduced from the character of overall – and particularly issue-area specific – asymmetric interdependence between the actors involved. This structural aspect determines the bargaining power of negotiators because it indicates the plausibility of a 'threat of non-agreement' based on the availability of attractive unilateral policy alternatives and exit-options (Hirschmann, 1945:16; Keohane and Nye, 2001:9-10, 268-270).

A weak issue-specific bargaining position is most notably caused by limited exit-options and relative 'dependence' on the cooperative agreement to be negotiated. This is due to comparably strong intensity of preferences, high cooperative benefits, and scarcity or lack of attractive unilateral policy alternatives. On the contrary, a strong or superior bargaining position derives from an actor's 'independence' or indifference with regard to the cooperative agreement to be negotiated. This is based on a comparably lower intensity of preferences for it, less meaning of the related benefits, the existence of attractive unilateral policy alternatives and consequently the availability of plausible exit-options (Keohane and Nye, 2001:9-11; Moravcsik, 1998:60-67; Moravcsik, 1993:499-507).

Led back to structural asymmetric interdependence within an issue-area, the potential of a state to effectively exercise bargaining power thus relates first and foremost to the plausibility of a 'threat of non-agreement' based on attractive unilateral policy alternatives and exit-options. Applied to interstate bargaining on the regional level, those states which are dependent on their counterparts in a certain issue-area and do not have credible exit-options at disposal are likely to find themselves in a comparably weak position during negotiations, particularly in the case that they are not able to plausibly threaten with an alternative coalition formation. In contrast, states in a central position – i.e. those on which others are dependent – occupy a relatively strong power position and represent essential cornerstones for the occurrence and success of particular cooperative arrangements and institutional framing. On a regional level, such key countries can foster or inhibit the process of regional integration and may base their engagement and participation in regional cooperation projects on their weaker regional partners' willingness to compromise and concede (Gehring, 1994:216; Moravcsik, 1998:64-65).

The outcomes – i.e. institutionalised cooperation such as regionalism – will therefore not only reflect the constellation of states' prevailing preferences but also the relative power-position of the negotiators involved. With the factor 'power' being the most meaningful context variable, hegemonic actors such as regional great powers play for structural reasons a pivotal role for the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism and regional integration organisations (Keohane, 1988:387; Zürn, 1993:70).

## **Context Variable II: Impact of External Actors based on asymmetric extra-regional Interdependence**

According to the aforementioned assumptions, one could argue that regional integration in the South basically follows the same logic and faces similar constraints as in the developed Northern Hemisphere, e.g. Europe or North America. While this is *ceteris paribus* principally true, it would nevertheless neglect distinct structural conditions to which regions and many countries

in the South – particularly in southern Africa – are exposed to. In many issue-areas, regional organisations and countries in the Southern Hemisphere exhibit substantial asymmetric extra-regional relations to third, external actors. This is the obvious difference between regionalism among developed and strongly interdependent countries in the North – whereupon most mainstream regional integration theories have been tailored for and unfold their explanatory power – and regionalism between less intra-dependent and more ‘extra-dependent’ countries in the South.

Regarding the central issue area of economy, this asymmetry can not only be demonstrated by the direction and quantity of trade and investment flows but likewise with regard to foreign aid, structural adjustment and donors’ funding. Such kind of economic disequilibrium structurally distinguishes the economic situation in the Southern Hemisphere from the one in North if one dares to generalise (Krapohl and Muntschick, 2009; Muntschick, 2009). A similar pattern can be observed in the issue area of security with regard to military and security interdependence<sup>3</sup>. States and organisations in the Northern Hemisphere, particularly Western great powers, are generally considered to be by far more powerful than their less developed Southern counterparts when it comes to military capabilities and defence spending. The relational aspect of this asymmetry becomes even more obvious if one takes the unidirectional military aid flows, presence and strongholds of external forces in some southern regions into consideration (Crocker, 1974; Gregory, 2000; Keohane, 1990:38). Be it a legacy of colonialism or not, this shadow-structure of asymmetric extra-regional interdependence – in a way a structural ‘background variable’ – is assumed to have significant impact on the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism and regional integration organisations constituted of developing countries (Young, 1969:727; Zimmerling, 1991: chapters 3-5).

In order to take external influence to the analysis of regionalism into account in an appropriate manner, this structural feature shall be conceptualised as an additional intervening context variable. It applies to the structure of the problematic situation, the subsequent level of second-order problems as well as for the effectiveness of the institutional arrangement and thus shall be considered with regard to the analysis of the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of institutionalised regional cooperation. Amplifying the scope of the present theoretical and analytical framework, the following additional assumptions unfold:

**External Influence on the Structure of Problematic Situations:** A prevailing ‘backdrop’ of strong and asymmetric extra-regional interdependence between regional and third actors can impact the genuine structure inherent to a regional problematic situation towards a more cooperation-averse situation and thus impede the solution of a regional collective action problem. Accordingly, a genuine dilemma-type situation can be transformed into a ‘Rambo’-type structure with those actors being the uncooperative Rambos on a regional level which have attractive extra-regional alternatives at their disposal (Axline, 1994:26; Muntschick, 2010; Rohlfing, 2009). This can be the case if regional actors prefer to cooperate with promising external parties on the grounds of strong extra-regional relationships instead of engaging in (mutually exclusive) integration within their less promising region (Muntschick, 2010).

Alternatively, however, a presence of strong asymmetric extra-regional interdependence can principally also become conducive to the formation of regional cooperation projects if third parties are acting altruistically and assist to overcome collective action problems by e.g. providing side payments, increasing cooperative payoffs, reducing costs of implementation and compliance, and improving institutional functionality (Axline, 1994:24-25; Burns and Buckley, 1974). Thus, a genuine dilemma-type or even ‘Rambo’-type situation can be mitigated to a more conducive situation, i.e. a coordination game with distributive conflict, with external inflows con-

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<sup>3</sup> All risks and threats to national security have the common feature that states are interdependent so that any unit can cause negative security externalities that affect others. Security interdependence is primarily based on (reciprocal) perceptions of rivalry, threat and fear that are intensified by uncertainty (Buzan, 1992:170)

stituting the good to be distributed by coordinated means. In practice, this can be the case if external actors make the provision of financial or logistical resources conditional on regional cooperation efforts or the existence of regional institutions. In the extreme, regional actors may thus solely become enticed to cooperate because cooperation gains are significantly fuelled from 'outside'. Nevertheless, a problematic situation that offers potentially fruitful chances for cooperation needs to be pre-existing on the regional level as a necessary condition.

**External Influence on Bargaining Power and Regional Interstate Negotiations:** A 'backdrop' of strong and asymmetric extra-regional interdependence between one or more regional parties on the one hand and external actors on the other hand has the potential to gain momentum in interstate bargaining on the regional level. Since it can be linked to the distribution of power in a related intra-regional issue area, it can alter the conditions of interaction on the problem solving level during interstate negotiations. Strong extra-regional relations can principally improve a state's bargaining power position on the regional level and regarding regional issues since it implies that additional alternative policy strategies and plausible exit-options beyond the scope of the region could be available. For these states, the scope of action is significantly extended because they are assumed to be comparably less dependent on region-specific cooperation problems and related negotiation outcomes and institutionalisation (Moravcsik, 1997:523; Sebenius, 1983). However, externally boosted bargaining power is considered to be rather unstable since it is determined by a rather uncontrollable relationship to third actors. It may fade as soon as extra-regional policy alternatives, exit-option or incentives are unilaterally made impracticable by the latter.

A strong and asymmetric relationship to extra-regional actors does not only hold the above-mentioned advantages for regional actors engaged in negotiations on regional level. This is because it implies that the relevant external actors are in a position to decide over the accessibility of these exit options if interdependence is characterised by strong unidirectional asymmetry. Furthermore, this structural pattern puts extra-regional actors in a position to be able to potentially exert measures of coercion or persuasion. The impact of external actors on genuine regional issues is most notably amplified if their influence directly permeates to the level of regional second-order problems. In practice, this external influence materialises if regional actors take positions in regional interstate negotiations that are significantly motivated by external actors' input and their means of pressuring or enticing (Axline, 1994: 23-26).

**External Influence on Regional Institutions and their Effectiveness:** Strong and asymmetric extra-regional interdependence between regional and external actors can impact the operability and effectiveness of regional institutions. Effectiveness can be interpreted as goal attainment and can be assessed by analysing to what degree a regional cooperation project actually attained its goals over time (Downs, 2000:43; Young, 1992). External impact can transform underlying problematic situations towards more cooperation-averse structures and thus inhibit the establishment of any institutions *a priori* or undermine the effectiveness of already existing institutions at a later stage (Young, 1992:185-189). The latter manifests if regional actors are not committed to a regional cooperation project's institutions (anymore) because cooperative gains diminish or fail to materialise due to an availability and precedence of more attractive or mutually incompatible alternative options based on extra-regional relations. While members of regional institutions who let their commitment slide or finally opt out for the sake of extra-regional cooperation are directly responsible for institutional malfunction and ineffectiveness, it is nevertheless the structural pattern of strong and asymmetric relations to external actors that indirectly exerts influence.

On the other hand, external support to existing regional institutions may enhance the institutions' functionality and have a catalytic impact on their effectiveness, particularly if regional actors are unsure about the potential payoffs or unable to bear necessary initial investments. This is particularly in the case where intraregional interdependence is weak and expected bene-

fits of institutionalised regional cooperation are difficult to calculate against the costs of ex-ante institution-building. Against this background, dedicated external actors can foster regional integration by raising the incentives or lowering the costs of institutionalised regional cooperation projects. Possible measures could inter alia include a provision of information, capacity and side-payments to regional actors and/or their common institutions. Be it for altruism or realpolitik, external actors' support to an institutional framework will not only enhance its overall effectiveness but most likely also increase the regional actors' commitment since the beneficiaries are more likely to behave according to the institutions' provisions in order to keep its external source of support bubbling (Young, 1992:189). Nevertheless, for regional institutions primarily fuelled by external patrons, an end to such external support may cause institutional breakdown if benefits are not yet self-generated effectively and independently.

## **Synopsis: Central Assumptions on Regionalism and external Influence**

With reference to the model of the situation-structural approach, the likeliness of institutionalised regional cooperation, i.e. successful regionalism in general, depends in principle on the underlying pattern of the problematic situation. Be it in the North or in the South, regional cooperation is more difficult to achieve in Rambo-type situations than in situations such as of Prisoners' Dilemmas, assurance- or even coordination games. The emergence of regionalism and related institutional frameworks will generally follow the same logic and can be expected to provide in the same way solutions for collective action problems in a comparably less developed South as in the more developed and highly interdependent North. So far: nothing new.

Against the theoretical background of the situation-structural approach, the major assumptions from what I call the internal line of the argument unfold as follows:

- Institutionalised regional cooperation is likely if the structure of the genuine regional problematic situation corresponds to a dilemma-type, assurance- or even coordination game. It is not likely in a situation structure resembling to the 'Rambo' type.
- In the case of strong asymmetric intraregional interdependence among the involved states on the regional level, the state in a relative power position will be able to influence the institutional design and success of the regional cooperation project.
- In the case of the presence of a regional problematic situation and demand for mutually beneficial regional cooperation, the accompanying institutions are likely to exhibit effectiveness.

However, since countries in the Southern Hemisphere – particularly less developed countries – are more prone to exhibit a pattern of rather endemic, strong and asymmetric extra-regional interdependence to powerful external actors in many central issue areas (particularly in the field of economy), the latter are likely to be, for structural reasons, in a position of having the potential to exert influence on the establishment, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism in the South. Hence, Southern regionalisms' success is more likely to depend to a significant degree on external actors' policies that are beyond the region's scope

Taking into account the external impact against the background of a potentially prevailing structural pattern of strong and asymmetric extra-regional interdependence<sup>4</sup>, the following assumptions can be added from what I call the external line of the argument:

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<sup>4</sup> In its extreme form, extra-regional interdependence can be solidified into institutional arrangements.

- External actors' influence may
  - disturb institutionalised regional cooperation, in case it transforms the structure of a genuine regional problematic situation towards a more cooperation-averse situation (resembling a Rambo game), provides for more attractive alternative exit options for regional actors during negotiations on second-order problems, or undermines the capacity of regional institutions to achieve effectiveness.
  - facilitate institutionalised regional cooperation, in case it alters the structure of a genuine regional problematic situation towards a more cooperation-affected situation (resembling a Prisoners' Dilemma or coordination game), prevents an availability and practicability of attractive alternative exit options for regional actors during negotiations on second-order problems, or supports the capacity of regional institutions to achieve effectiveness.
- In case of strong and asymmetric extra-regional interdependence of states on the regional level, external states in a power position can influence the design and success of a regional integration project.
- In case of a parallelism of strong and asymmetric intraregional and extra-regional interdependence related to states on the regional level, the influence on regionalism will be contested between the decisive regional and external actors.

Since all actors are principally assumed to act in a utility-maximising manner according to this rather rationalist theoretical framework, a disturbing impact of external actors on regionalism is for plain structural reasons more likely to occur under the aforementioned conditions. This is because the external actors' possible support to regionalisms in other parts of the world should not be understood as a matter of course but rather like manna from the sky that may materialise under certain conditions but may certainly disappear by means beyond a region's control.

## 2. The Southern African Development Community (SADC): Regionalism in the Shadows of South Africa and the European Union

Founded in 1992, SADC is the predecessor of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) and historically even dates back to the Frontline States (FLS) alliance. Today, SADC consists of 15 member states<sup>5</sup> and covers an area of nearly 10 million Km<sup>2</sup> with a population of about 230 million inhabitants. Most member states – with the exception of Botswana, Mauritius, the Seychelles and the fairly industrialised Republic of South Africa (RSA) – are classified as least or less developed countries (Mair and Peters-Berries, 2001:330; Vogt, 2007:90). SADC is regarded as one of the most constant, realistic and promising regional cooperation projects in Africa (Mair and Peters-Berries, 2001; Weiland, 2006). Its overall aim is to foster socio-economic development by measures of regional cooperation in a broad range of policy areas.

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<sup>5</sup> Member states are Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Currently, Madagascar is suspended from the organisation due to the recent military putsch.

## **Regional Economic Integration in SADC and the interfering Impact of the EU**

Since the mid-1990s, SADC put a focus on economic integration which is regarded as a central cornerstone of SADC's regionalism (Oosthuizen, 2006; Vogt, 2007). According to the organisation's Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) (Southern African Development Community, 2004), the formation of a SADC customs union (CU) is scheduled for 2010 and shall deepen regional economic integration beyond the SADC-FTA that was already successfully established in August 2008 (Muntschick, 2009).

Mutual trade liberalisation among states on a regional level can be interpreted as a dilemma-type situation in international relations. In southern Africa, the problematic situation assumingly unfolds as follows: All SADC-states could improve their welfare by mutually liberalising trade on a regional level. Their demand is based on actual (and estimated) intraregional economic interdependence and the assumption that comparative advantages can be exploited. Comparative advantages within the region exist for the most part between the Republic of South Africa (RSA) and the rest of SADC. South Africa's exports to SADC consist mainly of capital-intensive value-added manufactured goods while imports compose largely of labour-intensive, lower-value primary commodities such as raw materials and unprocessed agricultural products. (Oosthuizen, 2006:255 ff; Qualmann, 2003:141-143). Keeping these figures and prospects in mind, demand for institutionalised regional economic cooperation can be assumed for virtually all SADC-members due to the expected absolute benefits. Against this background, the underlying structural pattern of the genuine regional problematic situation resembles a prisoners' dilemma.

Formal intraregional trade<sup>6</sup> in the SADC area is comparably low with 13-15 % of total exports and 15-21 % of total imports in the time period between 2000 and 2007 (Krapohl and Muntschick, 2009). Yet, a closer look reveals a pattern of highly asymmetric intraregional economic interdependence in the SADC region: The regional trade intensity index reveals comparably strong figures between 17 and 23 in the time period between 2000 and 2007.<sup>7</sup> Roughly half of SADC's member states' total trade with partners within the organisation's sphere exceeded the volumes traded with other, external actors. Focussing on export shares only (as % of total exports), the SADC market was a major or top destination for Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe in the year 2007.<sup>8</sup> Particularly the South African market is a very attractive and major/top export destination for these SADC countries. The Cape Republic is an economic giant in regional terms and currently contributes about 70 % to the region's total GDP and about 65 % to its total trade volume (Oosthuizen, 2006:255 ff).

Taking intraregional Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows into account, the majority of SADC states are strongly dependent on South African FDI. Pretoria provides the major share of FDI to the region and was the top foreign investor in seven SADC countries between 1994 and 2003 (Grobbelaar, 2004:93 ff; Page and te Velde, 2004:22-26). Furthermore, the BLNS-countries<sup>9</sup> are in a particularly intense relationship of dependency to South Africa for being members of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) because the RSA is the guarantor for the BLNS-states' indispensable earnings from the institution's common customs revenue pool (Erasmus, 2007:230).

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<sup>6</sup> The character of economic interdependence can be measured on the basis of trade- and investment-flows although other, additional or more sophisticated indicators – particularly intraregional trade intensity – are useful as well (de Lombaerde and van Langenhove, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> Data collected with RIKS – Indicators and Statistics of Regional Arrangements. <http://www.cris.unu.edu/riks/web/data> (10/02/2012).

<sup>8</sup> Data collected with World Integrated Trade Solutions (WITS) on the basis of UN COMTRADE. <https://wits.worldbank.org/WITS/> (10/10/2011).

<sup>9</sup> Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland are commonly known as BLNS-states.

The pattern of intraregional economic interdependence between South Africa and the rest of the SADC countries is strongly asymmetric and of 'hub-and-spoke' character. Hence, the RSA assumingly occupies a power position in the region in this important issue-area.

Taking SADC's extra-regional economic relations into account, the region reveals a second pattern of asymmetric interdependence. The EU is the major extra-regional trading partner and export destination for the whole SADC region as one entity, for South Africa as the regional economic hegemon, and for about half of SADC's member states (Krapohl and Muntschick, 2009). Focussing on export shares only (as % of total exports), the EU is a major or the top destination for Botswana, the DR Congo, Madagascar, Mauritius, the Seychelles, Namibia, Malawi and South Africa in the year 2007. In total, about 29 % of the region's total trade and 33 % of its total exports are destined to Europe (2008).<sup>10</sup> However, the character of the relevant SADC-countries' dependence on the European market is not homogenous as varying arrays of commodities and products are affected (Keck and Piermartini, 2008:92-94). SADC itself is only a very marginal trading partner for the EU since only about 3 % of its exports are destined to southern Africa, mainly South Africa.<sup>11</sup>

The asymmetric economic interdependence between the EU and SADC becomes even more obvious if one takes the one-sided flows of FDI and development aid, funds of structural adjustment programs, etc. into consideration (Oosthuizen, 2006:155-159; Sidiropoulos, 2002). South Africa, the major source for intraregional FDI to the rest of SADC, virtually sources all of its FDI from countries outside the region. This makes SADC in total dependent on extra-regional – particularly European – FDI if one looks at absolute figures. (Goldstein, 2004:45-46).

In sum, South Africa, SADC as an aggregate, and about half of the organisation's member states show a pattern of strong and asymmetric economic interdependence to external actors, namely to the EU. The other half of SADC countries depict a double-asymmetry of economic interdependence since they are economically most dependent on the South African and SADC market which both depict asymmetric trade relations to the EU. This pattern implies that the EU is in a position to potentially exert significant influence on regional economic integration in SADC.

**The EPAs interfering impact on SADC's scheduled Customs Union** So far, the EU as the organisation's traditionally most important donor took an ostentatiously supportive stand towards SADC's efforts on regional market integration (European Community – Southern African Development Community, 2008: IV). One could suggest that this generous support facilitates the creation of the SADC-CU as the inherent dilemma-type structural problem will be cushioned by external support to regional cooperation. However, the EU is currently adjusting its trade relations to the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries since the non-reciprocal Lomé Convention has run out. Several SADC-countries<sup>12</sup> are affected by this realignment of their important North-South trade. In line with WTO rules, the new Cotonou Agreement (European Community, 2000) demands preferential market access on the basis of reciprocity but allows for specific conditions and adjustments a negotiation of EPAs as corresponding institutional frameworks (European Community, 2000; Keck and Piermartini, 2008:86). Developmental aspects and Aid-for-Trade (Council of the European Union, 2007) policies are embedded in the EPAs and increase the attractiveness of these bilateral North-South agreements for ACP-countries in general and affected SADC members in particular (Council of the European Union, 2010).

Against the background of the underlying pattern of strong and asymmetric extra-regional

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<sup>10</sup> Data collected with World Integrated Trade Solutions (WITS) on the basis of UN COMTRADE. <https://wits.worldbank.org/WITS/> (10/10/2011).

<sup>11</sup> Data according to Eurostat. [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/external\\_trade/data/database](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/external_trade/data/database) (08/04/2012).

<sup>12</sup> SADC-states that do not qualify for the Everything but Arms (EBA) initiative will have to sign an EPA with the EU to safeguard preferred market access.

economic relations of several SADC members to Europe, the EU's offering of these new North-South trade regimes to southern African countries regardless of their actual membership in particular regional South-South trade regimes has an interfering impact on regional market integration in SADC. In order to successfully implement the SADC-CU, all members would be determined to a common, fixed external tariff and unanimous trade policies towards third actors (Viner, 1950). However, at the present time this scenario is unrealistic since SADC members are more tempted to negotiate EPAs in different groupings than forming one encompassing SADC-grouping (Jakobeit, et al., 2005:20-21). Thus, the genuine regional problematic situation regarding deepened regional economic integration in SADC has shifted towards a Rambo-game with SADC-countries that have more promising and profitable extra-regional options, i.e. the EPAs, at their disposal than a future SADC-CU could probably ever provide being the uncooperative Rambos on a regional level (Muntschick, 2010).

Besides impacting the structure of the underlying problematic situation, the EU also exercises its power position in this relationship more directly by insistently demanding ACP-states to ratify the gradual and reciprocal North-South trade liberalisation in due time and to conclude at least provisional Interim-EPAs. In case of non-agreement, the EU threatens to 'close' its market for the reluctant states insofar as they would face high tariffs and thus barriers to their exports. In case of agreement, the lucrative development element of the EPA materialises (Oosthuizen, 2007:156-158; Stevens and Kennan, 2006:75-77).

Against this background, the situation in SADC no longer seems conducive to the intended creation of a SADC-CU as a regional cooperation project. Currently, SADC is split into several EPA country-groupings who negotiate separately and rather independently with the EU:

- Southern African Development Community (SADC)-EPA grouping: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, South Africa
- Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA)-EPA grouping: Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, the Seychelles, Zambia, Zimbabwe
- East African Community (EAC)-EPA grouping: Tanzania
- Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC)-EPA grouping: DRC

Several countries of the respective groupings have already signed the provisional Interim-EPAs. In the SADC EPA-grouping, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique already completed this step in 2009 (European Commission, 2011). If separate EPAs are implemented, SADC will consist of several groups of member states that have varying trade regimes with the EU. This would preclude a comprehensive SADC-CU and thus undermine the organisation's effectiveness in the field of economic integration.

## **Regional Electricity Cooperation in SADC and the supportive Impact of the EU**

An essential part of regional infrastructure cooperation in SADC falls to the energy sector (Isaksen and Tjønneland, 2001:39). While several countries in Southern Africa have traditionally relied on long-term bilateral contracts for electricity trading, the end of apartheid in South Africa paved the way for a more comprehensive approach to the problem of regional energy shortages on the one hand and excess supply on the other hand. This led to the foundation of the *Southern African Power Pool* (SAPP) as a SADC body in 1995.

Demand for regional electricity cooperation in SADC can be deduced from the countries' structural characteristics rooting in the ratio of electricity generation and consumption of individual SADC countries. During the mid-1990s, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland,



Mozambique, Namibia and Tanzania were (in descending order) the continental SADC-countries with shortages regarding internal electricity generation capacity in relation to demand. Regarding oversupply, South Africa, former Zaire, Zambia, Angola, and Malawi had (in descending order) surplus generation capacities, with South Africa's ESKOM being by far the most significant source of comparably cheap electricity (Southern African Power Pool, 1998:20). Demand for additional near-term access to electricity crystallised in many SADC-countries against the background of increasing black-outs, operational problems of power generation systems and lack of national reserve capacities (Southern African Power Pool, 1998). Projections for 2015 revealed considerable potential for intraregional electricity trade in SADC (Rosnes and Venemo, 2009:46). According to recent studies and scenarios, US\$ 1.1 billion in annual energy costs could be saved by deepening regional electricity integration in SADC (Ranganathan and Foster, 2011:41). Against this background, the genuine problematic situation in the issue-area of regional electricity characterises a prisoners' dilemma in SADC during the mid-1990s. All member-states could improve their national security of supply and welfare by facilitating and improving short-term cross-border trade and connecting their power grids within the framework of a common power pool.

In the issue-area of electricity, the SADC region depicted strong patterns of asymmetric intraregional interdependence prior to institutionalised regional electricity cooperation. Until 2006, South Africa was the regional centre of electricity supply and several countries. Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland, were particularly heavily dependent on Pretoria's surplus generation (Economic Consulting Associates, 2009:9-13). As early as 1996, South Africa's parastatal ESKOM had a monopolistic position in the regional energy market with an available net installed capacity of about 32,000 MW. This was more than ten times more than the installed capacity of the following three, the (former) Zaire (2480 MW), Mozambique (~2000 MW) and Zambia (1774 MW) (Southern African Power Pool, 1998:17). Until recently, the interconnected system so far is dominated by South Africa which provides for about 84% of installed net capacity (Economic Consulting Associates, 2009:10).

Besides the aspects of demand and supply, intraregional asymmetry in electricity relations additionally is reflected in the physical pattern of existing transmission lines in southern Africa. The RSA is the hub in an incomplete spoke and maintains connections to all of its neighbouring countries.<sup>13</sup> Thus, the structural characteristics of physical electricity interdependence in southern Africa emphasise South Africa's dominant position in the region in addition to its role as SADC's (initially) most important surplus producer. For this reason, South Africa has been the major driver for regional electricity cooperation in SADC from the mid-1990s onwards.

Extra-regional relations of SADC member countries in the issue area of electricity are comparably weak. The region and its constituents are neither dependent on electricity imported from the Northern Hemisphere nor does an important external export market for surplus electricity trade exist.<sup>14</sup> Since physical or trade-based extra-regional electricity relations are virtually non-existent, a significant interference in SADC's regional electricity cooperation by extra-regional actors is not likely for structural reasons.

However, SADC has attracted considerable funding for regional energy and particularly electricity cooperation from external actors: Most support has come from Europe, namely the Scandinavian countries and the EU. The government of Norway provided NOK 35 m (US\$ 7.5 m) for the establishment of SAPP's competitive regional electricity market and particularly the institutionalisation of DAM during the time period 2004/2005 (Economic Consulting Associates, 2009:40-41; Tjønneland, et al., 2005:37). The EU provided US\$ 0.7 m directly to SAPP within

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<sup>13</sup> Reference to a map produced by SAPP: <http://www.sapp.co.zw/images/pp-sapp-grid.gif> (16/04/2012).

<sup>14</sup> The DRC joined SADC in 1997 and should therefore not be regarded as extra-regional actor prior to the institutionalisation of regional electricity cooperation in SADC. Furthermore, the DRC was involved in negotiations on establishing SAPP from the beginning (Njiramba, 2004).

the framework of the ACP-EU Energy Facility under the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF) from 2000-2007, mainly for capacity building in network operations (European Commission, 2009:19-20). Against this background, a comparably strong and asymmetric extra-regional interdependence on external actors, namely European countries, can be ascertained with regard to the most recent and planned regional electricity cooperation in SAPP. Thus, Europe is today in a likely position to exert influence on the establishment, design and effectiveness of institutionalised regional electricity cooperation in SADC.

**The SAPP's DAM kept alive by a European Cash Infusion** In August 1995, all SADC countries<sup>15</sup> – apart from the island states of Madagascar, Mauritius, and the Seychelles – signed an Intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding (IMoU) which enabled the establishment of the SAPP (Pool, 1995). It has been widely acknowledged that South Africa was able to assert itself and significantly influence SAPP's institutions according to its interests, especially regarding the Operating Guidelines, which define the rules for plant operation, transmission, safety and sharing of costs (Hammons, 2011; Tshombe, 2008). This is not surprising since important parts and hubs of SAPP's power network are on South African soil and are operated by ESKOM, an established South African parastatal (Economic Commission for Africa, 2009; Hammons, 2011).

A Short-Term Energy Market (STEM) was established in April 2001 in order to provide a market for trading surplus electricity not covered by long-term contracts (Economic Commission for Africa, 2004: 28-29). During the early months of operating, up to 120 GWh were traded through STEM with averages between 20 and 60 GWh per month up until mid-2005. Since then, however, regional electricity trading through STEM diminished to an average of only < 20 GWh per month until the end of 2006 when STEM was finally closed down.<sup>16</sup>

Despite increasing overall power shortages in the SADC region and diminishing trade via STEM, regional electricity cooperation in SAPP was propelled with the Day Ahead Market (DAM) becoming operational in 2009 as the institution's new trading platform. It allows a more direct trade between interacting partners with SAPP's Coordination Centre acting as market operator (Economic Consulting Associates, 2009:29-30). This implied the birth of a competitive market. However, the pattern of demand and supply had already changed by 2005/2006 when South Africa's internal electricity production capacity was not able to generate vast supply surplus anymore due to a strong increase in national consumption (Hofmann, 2009:68-69). This had an impact on the functionality and effectiveness of the newly established DAM. Up until now, DAM traded volumes are still comparably low and have oscillated only between 2 and 10 GWh during the time period August 2010 and August 2011 (Southern African Power Pool, 2011:3).

While the SAPP as an institution is generally regarded as a success (Economic Commission for Africa, 2004:XI; Community, 2004), its effectiveness is actually yet rather doubtful. Short-term electricity trade over DAM is currently well behind the proportion of regional electricity traded by STEM (Economic Consulting Associates, 2009:29; Southern African Power Pool, 2011). Since surplus electricity generation in the region already diminished by 2006, the establishment of the DAM parallel to the closure of STEM is puzzling. Although the regional problematic situation based on imbalances in regional demand and supply of electricity was therefore mitigated and a DAM market not a salient solution to the problem of regional power shortages, its institutionalisation nevertheless materialised. Nonetheless, primarily external incentives and support from donor countries – namely from Norway – led to the build-up of DAM (Hammons, 2010: 402). The underlying genuine problematic situation was thus transformed

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<sup>15</sup> Today, South Africa, the DR Congo, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland are operating members of the SAPP while Tanzania, Angola, and Malawi are still only non-operating members. The countries are represented by their national electric power utilities.

<sup>16</sup> Data according to various Southern African Power Pool annual and monthly reports.

into a coordination game with distributive effects and facilitated deeper regional electricity cooperation in the SAPP. The result is an institutionalised, functional DAM that does not perform well but is likely to be maintained as long as external incentives for regional cooperation are provided. An end of DAM as it stands now is likely if external donors' support would abruptly dry up while power shortages in the SADC region remain constant.

## **Regional Security Cooperation in SADC and the ambivalent Impact of the EU**

Regional security cooperation in SADC roots back to the times of SADCC and the FLS alliance (Khadiagala, 2007; Malan, 1998:2). After South Africa joined the organisation, SADC experienced a major stimulus in this issue area of cooperation. In 1996, SADC established the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS) as a specific institution dealing with regional security cooperation (Southern African Development Community, 1996:2). The guidelines of the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO) were approved in 2004 and the process for establishing a SADC Standby Force initialised. The latter is currently regarded as one of the most important projects of regional security cooperation in SADC.

Demand for regional security cooperation can be deduced from structural characteristics of security interdependence within the SADC region. After the demise of apartheid, internal threats accruing from inter-state tensions, border disputes, distrust, uncertainty and political instability gained importance (Ressler, 2007:82-88). Furthermore, South Africa itself remained a proximate cause for regional insecurity due to its sheer size, defence capabilities and advanced military power (Vale, 1996:364-366). Since states in southern Africa faced similar threats and shared a common interest of secureness and prosperity, the underlying problematic situation depicted a prisoners' dilemma, i.e. a classical security dilemma (Buzan and Wæver, 2003) that gives plausible reasons for actors to aim for regional cooperation and the establishment of corresponding institutions in order to handle classical security issues.

The character of security and military relations within the SADC region reveals a clear picture of asymmetric intraregional interdependence. Since colonial times and during the time of apartheid, South Africa was the most powerful country in the region and was in command of comparably large, well-trained and well-equipped armed forces. In the mid-1990s, South Africa had the second largest military forces in the region and was only surpassed by Angola – a country entangled in civil war by that time. Besides the DRC, Madagascar, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, most countries in the region did not have – and still do not have – sizable armies but rather small defence forces or militias (Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009:277-328).

Looking at absolute military expenditures, the picture of intraregional asymmetry is further confirmed. By the mid-1990s, South Africa's defence budget amounted to US\$ 3,251 m and was more than three times larger than Angola's, which had the second biggest in SADC with about US\$ 963 m. By 2009, the RSA remained the country with largest military expenditures in absolute terms in the region although Angola's defence budget had become nearly as large as Pretoria's. All other SADC countries maintain comparably small military expenditures. Since absolute military expenditure helps determine armed forces' levels and capabilities, it can be regarded as reliable indicator for estimating the operational capability and strength of a country's military.<sup>17</sup>

Against this asymmetric pattern of intraregional security interdependence, South Africa is the military hegemon in regional terms and as a key-country assumed to have the most influence on institutionalised regional security cooperation.

Countries in southern Africa do not exhibit notable security relations, military linkages or (bilateral) defence agreements to former colonial powers or other extra-regional actors. SADC

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<sup>17</sup> Data collected from various Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Yearbooks.

members do not have extra-regional powers' armed forces or military bases on their territories (Gregory, 2000). With an absence of institutionalised security or military relations to external actors, issues of regional security cooperation in SADC are unlikely to be significantly affected by the latter. However, SADC has strong relations to external donor countries. In 2006/07, nearly 60% of SADC's whole budget was financed by external actors, namely by the EU and individual member countries. The rest was procured by SADC members, for the most part South Africa (Tjønneland, 2006:2). The EU lavishly supports regional security cooperation in SADC and established the African Peace Facility (APF) in response to the African Union's (AU) creation of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in 2004. The 10<sup>th</sup> EDF (2008-2013) programme provides € 116 m for the SADC region of which € 17.4 m are destined to support regional political cooperation and the implementation of major projects of the organisation's agenda on peace and security cooperation (European Community – Southern African Development Community, 2008:IV). Furthermore, under the 10th EDF, the APF contracted *inter alia* € 20 m directly for regional standby brigades (European Commission, 2010).

In sum, neither SADC nor individual member countries exhibit strong patterns of security and military interdependence to extra-regional actors at the present time. Although the financial means for SADC's regional security cooperation and related projects are for the most part covered by member states (Interview with Tankie J. Mothae, Director of the OPDS at SADC, Gaborone, 29 September 2010), some projects – especially the SADC Standby Force and adjunct bodies – have been strongly supported by political and financial means from external actors. Aside from some specific externally fuelled regional cooperation projects, it can be assumed that regionalism in SADC in the issue area of security is not likely to be significantly interfered with from the outside.

**Promoted and paralysed: SADC's Standby Force and its Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre** The need for establishing the SADC-Brigade is not likely to have solely originated from the region's genuine structural security dilemma. Confidence-building measures and other existing regional institutions have contributed to overcome this problematic situation fairly successfully (de Coning, 1999; Makhubelam, 2009). In fact, demand for creating a regional standby brigade in SADC was initiated externally by the AU and its *African Peace and Security Architecture* (APSA). Aiming to support this AU-initiated project, the EU provided issue- and project-related funding to SADC via the EDF and particularly the APF (Brosig, 2011; Franke, 2007). Due to externally provided support and resources, the underlying problematic situation *prior* to the formation of the SADC-Brigade has partially shifted to a coordination game with distributive effect with the funding provided and supplied by external actors acting as major incentive and cooperative gain.

Initial considerations on how to organise and institutionalise a SADC standby-brigade took place at a SADC Summit meeting in 2004 (Southern African Development Community, 2004:Article 5.10.11). On August 16<sup>th</sup> 2007, SADC countries signed a *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU) that led to the creation of the SADC-Brigade, later known as *SADC Standby Force* (SSF) (Southern African Development Community, 2007). With regard to its conceptualisation, procedures and standards, South Africa was able to assert itself as by far the largest contributor. Depending on their means, member countries contribute contingents of personal and material to a 'standby pool' (Mandrup, 2009:18; Salomon, 2009:215-225). The MoU led *inter alia* to the establishment of a *Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre* (RPTC) for training and preparation for SADC operations, i.e. military and political capacity building, in Harare (Southern African Development Community, 2007:Articles 6, 9, 13). The SSF was scheduled to be fully operational by 2010.

While the institutional framework has been successfully adopted by SADC member states, the full operation capability and deployability of the SSF is still questionable (African Union, 2010:40). Shortfalls in the SSF are due to implementation delays and especially a shortage of resources (Mandrup, 2009:16-17). Despite South Africa's important formative function, extra-

regional actors play the significant role in sustaining the SSF and its adjunct bodies. The ambivalent impact of external donors to regional security cooperation in SADC becomes exemplarily clear with regard to the SSF's *Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre* (RPTC) located in Harare, Zimbabwe. Strongly supported by external funding from Britain and particularly Denmark (since 1997), the RPTC became very active during 1997-2001 and hosted numerous training sessions, peace-keeping operations courses and supported many regional military exercises and capacity building for the SSF. However, European funding was abruptly reduced in January 2002 as a response to violations of human rights and autocratic rule in Zimbabwe (Vines, 2008). With the major extra-regional incentive for regional cooperation being withdrawn, a major incentive for regional cooperation within this project was gone. The RPTC had to quit its work and became paralysed for several years. The body was directly transferred under the SADC Secretariat in 2005 and was afterwards funded by SADC's own financial contributions. However, member states are not able to maintain the RPTC at the level previous to 2002. Consequently, not only did the RPTC become less effective but also the build-up and general operability of the SSF was reduced (Salomon, 2009:222).

In sum, South Africa took a lead position in the build-up of the SSF which confirms the assumption that regional powers will most notably shape and influence institutionalised regional cooperation projects. However, the establishment of the SSF is not a primarily regionally motivated measure to overcome SADC's inherent security dilemma but a cooperation project encouraged by external stimulus. Thus, it is not surprising that the RPTC was effective as long as externally provided funds let to the materialisation of cooperative gains. It is likely that the SSF will face a similar fate if external funding dries up and South Africa does not compensate.

## Conclusion and Hypotheses

This paper has offered a theory-driven explanation of the emergence, design and effectiveness of institutionalised regionalism in SADC on the basis of three brief case studies against the background of intra- and particularly extra-regional relations to third actors, namely the EU.

With regard to the situation ahead of the scheduled SADC-CU, an interfering impact of external actors came into effect. Due to the strong extra-regional economic interdependence of several SADC-states to the EU, the entailed benefits of the offered bilateral EPAs led to a Rambo-situation with extra-regional policy alternatives being more attractive for some of SADC's member states than intensified South-South integration towards a SADC-CU on regional level.

With regard to regional electricity cooperation, SADC members established the SAPP initially against the background of internally motivated demand. The project was primarily driven by South Africa. With a power crisis in the region leading to diminishing surplus trade by 2006, extra-regional funding nevertheless provided incentives for continuous and deeper regional electricity cooperation in the region. The problematic situation was transformed towards a cooperation game with distributive effects which explains for structural reasons the establishment and maintenance of the DAM during a time of power shortages and lack of tradable surplus electricity.

Regarding the build-up of the SSF and related bodies, particularly the RPTC, extra-regional actors initiated and facilitated regional cooperation primarily through considerable, project-specific donor's support. This caused the underlying problematic situation to shift temporarily towards a situation similar to a cooperation game with distributive effects. Since the establishment of SADC's regional brigade did not primarily originate from a genuine regional security dilemma, partial institutional and operational paralysis was the consequence in the aftermath of a decrease in essential European donor-funding.

These case studies demonstrate the ambivalent role of external actors, namely the EU, on regionalism in SADC: while the EU has a rather interfering impact on the scheduled SADC-

CU in the most central issue area of regional economic integration, Europe is nevertheless a catalyst for specific projects of regional cooperation in the issue areas of electricity and security – in the latter case at least temporarily. Taking the evidence of these theory-driven analyses on SADC for theory-building on regionalism and external influence into account, it becomes clear that a prevalence of strong and asymmetric extra-regional interdependence has the potential to become effective in two ways for plain structural reasons.

First, it can act as a catalyst for regionalism when external actors facilitate cooperative action on regional level by transforming genuine problematic situations towards more cooperation-affected games by means of enticement through external provision or enrichment of cooperative gains. However, this positive impact becomes only effective as long as external stimuli are continuously provided.

Second, it can interfere with regionalism when external actors exacerbate cooperative action on a regional level by transforming genuine problematic situations towards more cooperation-averse games by providing attractive extra-regional alternatives which surpass benefits from regional cooperation. However, an interfering impact of external actors on regionalism is for plain structural reasons more likely to occur. This is because external actors are generally expected to act in a utility-maximising manner and are not likely to unconditionally fuel regionalism elsewhere for altruistic reasons. Thus, structural reasons explain why regionalisms in the South are relatively more exposed and vulnerable to external interference than regionalisms in the Northern Hemisphere.

Against the background of patterns of asymmetric intra- and extra-regional issue-specific interdependence, the following hypotheses on regionalism and external influence are proposed:

- H 1: The weaker the overall intraregional interdependence is in relation to weak extra-regional interdependence, the less likely it is that the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism will occur.
- H 2: The stronger intraregional asymmetric interdependence is in relation to weaker extra-regional asymmetric interdependence, the more a state in a regional power position will influence the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism and the less vulnerable it will be to negative external interference.
- H 3: The stronger extra-regional asymmetric interdependence is in relation to weaker intraregional asymmetric interdependence, the more vulnerable the emergence, dynamics and effectiveness of regionalism are to negative external interference and it is less likely that a state in a regional power position will be able to exert influence.

This middle-range theoretical framework and its proposed, preliminary assumptions and hypotheses can be applied to all regionalisms in the world. In order to go beyond plausibility probes and test the explanatory power of this approach, further research on external influence on regionalism should be conducted. It can be a task for the field of comparative regionalism to analyse other southern regionalisms like ASEAN, ECOWAS, COMESA or Mercosur on the impact of external influence. However, most insights for theory-building are likely to be gained by testing the EU and its major cooperation projects – whether facilitating or interfering external impact has ever occurred.

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