

The Uniting of Europe and the Uniting of East Africa – About Political Will, Constraints and Spaghetti Bowls

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1. Abstract:

This article will discuss whether Ernst B. Haas's political integration theory of 'neofunctionalism' can be applied to a new mesotheoretical area or not. To assess the theory's validity it is not applied to its normal explanation area namely the European Union but 'out of area'. This article tries to explain the foundation of the East African Community (EAC) with a neofunctionalist view and he discovers some parallels to the early years of the European Coal and Steel Community. Five main axioms of the theory are taken and projected onto the East African case study. Although the context of the integration processes is different, important similarities can be seen. The aim of this analysis is to identify trajectories of internal processes in regional integration, as well as to develop a concept that acknowledges the impact of external factors on these developments. The main argument of the article is that neofunctionalism is able to explain parts of the integration process in Eastern Africa and furthermore to reveal parallels between the EAC and the EU.

Although the European integration process can be described as an extraordinary development, it can be said that the uniting of Europe is a worldwide phenomena¹. In Africa, after the reorganization of the African Union (AU) in 2002, regional integration became a trend among African nation states².

Currently there are about 14 different regional integration organizations (RIOs) in Africa overlapping and staying in concurrence with each other³ (Asche and Bruecher 2009, 174). The situation is compared by Asche and Engel (2008) with a 'spaghetti bowl'⁴, since the complex and unclear situation of overlapping spaghetti (= RIOs) sharing one bowl (multiplex memberships of African nation-states) hinders a positive economic development of regional

¹ Varwick, Johannes, 'Globalisierung', in: Wichard, Woyke (ed.), *Handwörterbuch Internationale Politik*, (Bonn, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2004), pp.159-169 (p.142).

² Musonda, Flora Mndeme, '*Regional Integration in Africa – A closer look to the East African Community*', (Munich, Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 2004), p.44f.

³ Asche, Helmut and Jonne, Bruecher, 'Myth and Reality of African Regional Integration', *Recht in Afrika 2009*, (Bonn, Köppe, 2009), pp.169-186.

⁴ Asche, Helmut and Ulf, Engel: *Negotiating Regions: The EU, Africa and the Economic Partnership Agreements*, (Leipzig, Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2008), P.108.

integration. In other words the ‘spaghetti bowl effect’⁵ means that more than RIOs which have the same aims and the same geographic sphere are competing with each other and therefore a burden for regional development. Nevertheless there are some longer and thicker (more successful) spaghetti (= RIOs) existing across the African continent and some that remained not more than ‘paper tigers’.⁶ One of the most deepened and advanced new African regional integration processes is managed by the East African Community (EAC) since 1999⁷. To combine a well-established integration theory with a new empirical case, the aim of this article is to explain why the ‘theory of neofunctionalism’ by Ernst B. Haas has sufficient potential used to analyze this new regionalism pasta⁸. As a theory to explain originally the European integration process, it is able to build bridges between Europe and its neighboured regions⁹, especially if neofunctionalism is taken ‘out of area’ to explain other integration phenomena¹⁰.

This article, therefore, draws on neofunctionalism and tests whether it can be projected to the EAC case. The first part of the article discusses the main ideas of neofunctionalism, and the second part then takes a closer look at the EAC through a neofunctionalist lense in order to draw some comparisons with the integration process in Europe. The conclusion tries to show, that neofunctionalism has the potential to explain regional integration processes in Africa. Grand theories like neofunctionalism, can be quite useful, since they offer adequate paradigms that can be used broadly to reach a high degree of abstraction which is necessary for drawing general theses within social sciences¹¹. To understand how to avoid conflicts, be it in East Africa or Europe or anywhere, was one of the main motives for Haas’ research and is still the most important argument to explain why regional integration studies have to be done¹². Using comparative analyses can help to find similar independent or intervening variables to make the phenomena of regional integration more understandable, comprehensible and maybe also influenceable in a positive way¹³.

⁵ Asche and Engel, ‘*Negotiating Regions*’, P.108.

⁶ Asche and Bruecher, ‘*Myth and Reality of African Regional Integration*’, P.174.

⁷ Hofmeier, Rolf, ‘Regionale Kooperation und Integration’, in Mir A., Ferdowsi (ed.), *Afrika ein verlorener Kontinent*, (München, Bayerische Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2004), pp.189-225 (p.210).

⁸ Haas, Ernst B., ‘*The Uniting of Europe*’, [3rd Edition], (Notre Dame, Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 2004).

⁹ Comment: means not only a physical neighbourhood.

¹⁰ Haas, Ernst B., ‘International Integration. The European and the Universal Process’, *International Organisation*, 15/3 (1961), pp.366-392, (366f.).

¹¹ Haas, Michael, ‘Polity and Society – Philosophical Underpinnings of Social Science Paradigms’, (New York, Praeger, 1992), p.224.

¹² Haas, ‘The Uniting of Europe’, Preface.

¹³ Van Evera, Stephen, ‘*Guide to methods for students of political science*’, (New York, Cornell Univ. Press, 1997), P.14.

Comparisons between different regional integration polities like between EU and EAC can show important divergences as well as parallels so both sides could learn from¹⁴. The main challenges and problems of a comparison between European and African regional integration processes lie in the diverging styles of decision-making, the huge gap of economic and social development and the lack of sources and data in the African case¹⁵. Despite these difficulties in making comparisons this paper will show that in the end the results of using the theoretical paradigm on both cases are often similar.

A classical integration theory back on stage

With his studies at the beginning of the European integration process in the 1950s and 1960s, Ernst Bernhard Haas founded a new theoretical school in international relations¹⁶. After two decades (especially during the ‘dark period’ of European Integration in the 1980s) in which the main theory fell out of favour, neofunctionalism actually reemerged as a useful paradigm again¹⁷. The main reasons for this resurgence in popularity were not only the successful development of the EU after the fall of the Berlin Wall but also the new (global) trend to for regional integration between nation-states¹⁸. Through new interdependencies and the causality between globalization and regionalism, the main ideas of classic neofunctionalism seem to be of contemporary relevance¹⁹. The basic assumptions of Haas' book ‘The Uniting of Europe’ are that on the one hand regional integration is a supra-national overlap above former intergovernmental cooperation²⁰. Through spill-over and spill-back effects between the various functional intra state politics, regional integration turns out to become a process of institutionalisation and, ultimately, the construction of a new supra-national unity²¹. On the other hand it is important to note how strong the influence of civic society and other political actors is on important decisions during regional integration²². If we take the example of the European Coal and Steel Community - Haas explains the ongoing integration by the following steps: Political pressure from the coal and steel industries and several other reasons for a new type of working together of national actors led to European coordination within this sector²³. Then after some time governmental and non-governmental actors noticed the benefits of this

¹⁴ Odhiambo, Morris, *Towards Greater Civil Society Participation in the EAC: Challenges and Prospects*, (Kampala, Kituo Cha Katiba, 2010), p.23.

¹⁵ Tetzlaff, Rainer and Cord Jakobeit, *Das nachkoloniale Afrika*, (Wiesbaden, VS, 2005), p.177.

¹⁶ Haas, ‘The Uniting of Europe’.

¹⁷ Rosamond, Ben, *Theories of European Integration*, (New York, St. Martin’s Press, 2001), p.87.

¹⁸ Meyns, Peter, *Konflikt und Entwicklung im südlichen Afrika*, (Opladen, Leske&Budrich, 2000), p.218.

¹⁹ Varwick, ‘Globalisierung’, p.261.

²⁰ Haas, ‘The Uniting of Europe’, p.4.

²¹ See Haas, p.297.

²² See Haas, p.5f.

²³ See Haas, p.283f.

functional cooperation, and hence argued to intensify their cooperation, for example in the Nuclear Energy Sector²⁴. After this spill-over occurred, the European integration process continued through an institutional and dynamic development which led to economic and later political unification. Nation-state actors influenced by the pressure of civil society organizations and interest groups recognize that important issues, for example the coordination of infrastructure projects, industrial development, are more adequately dealt with by a regional institution. Thus sector integration can spill-over into more institutionalised forms of regional cooperation (such as the) developing ECSC beyond the coal and steel sector like EURATOM, the European Economic Community free trade area and in the end into a economic and monetary union²⁵. A supra-national political entity was created through more spill-over and a regional economic and later on political community was formed²⁶. The final question if a political federation can be created remains open and it depends in the long-run on further developments in the integration process²⁷. Could this theoretical paradigm be transferred to an African regional integration process or is it unique to Europe?

The new East African Community (EAC) was founded by Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in 1999 after one decade of flexible cooperation²⁸. At the moment EAC has about 130 Million inhabitants including Rwanda and Burundi that are two further member states since 2005²⁹. Due to a new wave of regionalism starting in the late 1980s and the success of the new RIOs and new supra-national institutions like the European Union, MERCOSUR or the European Court of Justice, neofunctionalism is again seen as a useful paradigm to explain the phenomena of regional integration³⁰. Hence, in Europe and beyond, '[r]egional Integration Theory has a new lease on life; it is no longer obsolescent'³¹. Since neofunctionalism once again a suitable paradigm to explain regional integration in Europe, Latin America or East

²⁴ Weidenfeld, Werner (ed.), *'Die Staatenwelt Europas'*, (Bonn, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2004), p.428f.

²⁵ Haas, 'The Uniting of Europe', pp.451-484.

²⁶ See Haas, p.38.

²⁷ Haas Ernst B., 'Institutionalism or Constructivism?' in, same, *'The Uniting of Europe'*, (Notre Dame, Notre Dame Univ. Press, 2004), pp. i-LX, (p.xxi).

²⁸ Hofmeier Rolf and Andreas, Mehler (ed.), *'Kleines Afrika Lexikon'*, (Bonn, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2004), p.81.

²⁹ World Bank, *'World Development Report'*, (Washington, World Bank, 2010), p.420f.

³⁰ Mattli, Walter, *'The Logic of Regional Integration: Europe and Beyond'*, (Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999). Stone Sweet, Alec and Wayne, Sandholz, *'European Integration and Supra-national Governance'*, (Brussels, Oxford Univ. Press, 1997), p.299.

³¹ Haas, 'Institutionalism or Constructivism', p.Liii

Asia, it is worth attempting to project Haas' paradigm onto the African integration processes³².

European and African Actors of integration

Firstly, according to the political actors involved in decision-making it can be said that, like Haas declared in his book *The Uniting of Europe*, nation-states are no longer maintain a monopoly on decision-making³³. In the EAC case, three interdependent countries, which are very vulnerable to external influences created a new regional organization since they had to respond to several international trends, such as globalization, growing international interdependencies, as well as internal developments³⁴. Furthermore, beyond the East African nation-states, seemingly weak and incapable without international aid, there were several external governmental and non-governmental donors and national interest groups that pushed the integration process forward³⁵. National trade unions, business groups, labour unions as well as international social and economic non governmental interest groups and donors were among those the EAC process forward³⁶. Altogether, a mixture of political will versus internal and external interest pressure shaped the political and economic integration in Eastern Africa during the last 15 years. According Grant and Söderbaum (2003) 'the ability [of nation-states] to negotiate transfers of sovereignty is frequently emerging as the only alternative to de facto disempowerment.'³⁷ Hence, regionalism is often the only way to avoid further vulnerability and to create positive economic, social and political changes for developing regions³⁸. Compared to Europe we have a similar mix of different political actors, although the origins of their influence are different. In both cases, we can find a complex constellation of diverse actors that shaped the integration process³⁹. Although, it can be emphasised that the

³² Zimmerling, Ruth, 'Externe Einflüsse auf die Integration von Staaten – Zur politikwissenschaftlichen Theorie regionaler Zusammenschlüsse', (Munich, Albert, 1989).

³³ Haas, 'The Uniting of Europe', p.113.

³⁴ Musonda, 'A closer look'.

³⁵ Mair, Stefan, 'East African Co-operation', (Berlin, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2001).

Kopsieker, Fritz, 'Regionale Integration in Ostafrika - Die „East African Community“ (EAC) vor entscheidenden Herausforderungen', in, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 'Kurzberichte aus der internationalen Zusammenarbeit', (Bonn, FES, 2007).

³⁶ EAC. EAC Update No.35/2010, p.10. EAC: Accessed: 14 June 2011

<http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CC8QFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.eac.int%2Fnews%2Findex.php%3Foption%3Dcom_docman%26task%3Ddoc_download%26gid%3D133%26Itemid%3D70&rct=j&q=eac%20newsletter&ei=GSL3TcbrI4qx8gPP1OnYCW&usq=AFQjCNGaHJAU4VpXPnaLlabRvdhjGdUwHg&cad=rja.>

³⁷ Grant, Andrew and Frederik, Söderbaum, 'The new regionalism in Africa', (London, Palgrave, 2003), P.24.

³⁸ Fugazza, Marco, 'Globalization and Developing Countries', in, Della Posta, Pompeo and Milica, Uvalic, Milica and Amy, Verdun (eds.), 'Globalization, Development and Integration – A European Perspective', (Eastbourne, Ashgate, 2008), pp.141-158 (p.154).

³⁹ Haas, 'The Uniting of Europe', p.297f.

neofunctionalist definition of actors applies to the EAC as well as Europe as it was always meant to apply to Europe, and it is the fact that can apply to the EAC being argued here. In the end here are still the nation-states in Eastern Africa that have the right of veto concerning regional decision-making processes⁴⁰. However beyond the consensual decision-making of the EAC summit and its ministerial committees, institutions such as the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) or the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) are equipped with majority rules of decision-making and their influence on the nation-states is increasing. Especially the EALA can be compared with the European Parliament due to similar competences and roles within their institutional frameworks.⁴¹ This is a strong argument for the EAC being more than an intergovernmental organization⁴²

Secondly reflecting on the reasons why nation-states are keen to create RIOs it is useful to project Haas' definition of regional integration onto the European and the East African case⁴³. For Haas, integration is a mix of necessities, internal and external constraints and the political will to find new solutions for national and regional problems⁴⁴ a mix of voluntary and forced cooperation. Haas' definition goes beyond the pure game of will and looks out for several roots for regional integration on different decision-making levels⁴⁵. In East Africa we can find a mixture of precisely the same main reasons for integration as in the Europe of the 1950s:

- a) Regional constraints like water or food supply, strong economic, social and financial dependency on international partners⁴⁶ and responsibilities that can only be fulfilled in commune (like the usage of Lake Victoria or the struggle against HIV)⁴⁷;
- b) National economic considerations, such as how to achieve economic growth through new resources and markets⁴⁸;
- c) The will of the political actors confronted with interest conflicts and constraints⁴⁹

⁴⁰ Dunn, Kevin C. and James, Heutz, 'Regionalization, the State and Human Security Development', in, Hofman, Ribeiro and Anna, Van der Vleuten (eds.), *'Closing or widening the gap? Legitimacy and Democracy in Regional Integration Organizations'*, (Hampshire, Ashgate, 2007), pp.179-191,(p.181)..

⁴¹ Dähne, Florian, *'Gesellschaftliches Beraterprogramm östliches Afrika'*, (Bonn, FES Annual Report, 2007), p.5.

⁴² Hofmeier, Rolf and Tibor, Haunit and Phillip, Reichmuth, 'Afrika', in, Gieler Wolfgang (ed.), *'Internationale Wirtschaftsorganisationen: Entstehung - Struktur - Perspektiven'*, (Munster, LIT, 2005), pp.11-66, (p.46).

⁴³ Haas, Ernst B., 'The Study of Regional Integration: Reflections on the Joy and Anguish of Pretheorizing', in, *International Organization Vol. 24/4* (1970), pp.607-646, (p.610).

⁴⁴ Haas, 'The Uniting of Europe', p.51.

⁴⁵ Haas, 'The Study of Regional Integration', p.611.

⁴⁶ Nohlen, Dieter (ed.): *'Lexikon Dritte Welt'*, [3rd Edition], (Hamburg, Rowohlt, 2000), p.459f., 775, 821f.

⁴⁷ Tietze, Sarah, 'Die AIDS Pandemie in Sub-Sahara Afrika', in, *'Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte No. 32-33'* (2006), pp.32-38. Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation. Accessed 13 December 2008:

< <http://www.lvfo.org/>; >

⁴⁸ Musonda, 'A closer look', p.122.

d) A regional conflict affected environment that constraints the nation-states to cooperate with each other⁵⁰.

Whether in Africa, or in Europe or Latin America, the main reasons for voluntary integration are very similar, and if the coalescence of constraints, needs and will is high, advances in the regional integration process are likely to occur⁵¹. Additionally in both cases, an external sponsoring of the regional integration process accompanied the nexus of will, necessities and problems. While the United States supported Europe after the Second World War through Marshall aid, the EU (and other national and international donors) nowadays try to support the EAC by funding, technical and knowledge transfers and the establishment of an Economic Partnership Agreement⁵². Whether or not this kind of support is effective is discussed by other authors like Zartman⁵³ or Erdmann⁵⁴, regional economic integration is often seen by international donors as one of few alternatives for developing regions to get out of the poverty trap⁵⁵. As a result, both exogenous and endogenous 'aims' of regional integration are similar in Europe and Eastern Africa. Nevertheless, there is one crucial difference concerning the motives that makes regional cooperation in the great lakes region much easier and possibly more harmonious than in the post war constellation in Europe. There is no post conflict constellation to keep one power out (like Russia), another in (the US) and again another down (like Germany) in the East African region⁵⁶. The political systems, main languages (English and Kiswahili) and administrations of the EAC members are similar⁵⁷, as well as the relative power among each other and the motives to cooperate⁵⁸. Furthermore, the conflict afflicted neighbourhood of the region, namely in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and

⁴⁹ Mehler, Andreas and Henning, Melber and Klaus, van Walraven, *'Africa Yearbook 2004'*, (Boston, Leiden, 2005), p.260f.

⁵⁰ Hofmeier, 'Regionale Integration', p.209.

⁵¹ Haas, Ernst B., 'The Uniting of Europe and the Uniting of Latin America', in, *'Journal of Common Market Studies 5/4 (1967)*, pp.315-343.

⁵² EAC, 'EAC Update', p.13. Eid, Uschi, 'Sub-Sahara Afrika in der Wirtschaftspolitik: MDGs und NEPAD', in, Herta, Däubler-Gmelin (ed.) and Ekkehard, Münzing and Christian, Walther, *'Afrika – Europas verkannter Nachbar Part 2*, (Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 2008), pp.83-106, (p.103).

⁵³ Zartman, William I., 'The African State', in, Jeggan C., Senghor, and Nana, Poku (ed.), *'Towards Africa's Renewal'*, (Burlington, Ashgate, 2007), pp.17-34.

⁵⁴ Erdmann, Gero, *'Demokratie und Demokratieförderung in der dritten Welt'*, (Bonn, Deutsche Kommiss. Justitia et Pax, 1996).

⁵⁵ Makgoeng, Larona, 'SADC Current State and Perspectives', in, Ariane, Kössler (ed.) and Martin, Zimmer, *'Global Voices on Regional Integration'*, (Bonn, Zentrum für Europäische Integrationsforschung, 2007), pp.37-47, (P.44).

⁵⁶ Reynolds, David, *'The origins of the Cold War in Europe'*, (Yale, Yale Univ. Press, 1994), p.13.

⁵⁷ Meyns, Peter, 'Afrika zwischen Autokratie und Demokratie', in, *'Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte No. 32/33*, (2006), pp.3-8.

⁵⁸ Musonda, 'A closer look', p.106f.

Somalia puts pressure on Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda to deepen their relationship⁵⁹. The ‘island of stability’⁶⁰ EAC is hitherto also a reaction to the conflict-loaded environment the nation-states are confronted with. Therefore East African nation-states also used their EAC membership and the stable structure of the organization to consolidate as well as to improve the bilateral relationships towards their neighbours. The integration process geographically spilled over to Rwanda and Burundi since there is no alternative RIO for them to attach themselves to⁶¹. Although the spaghetti bowl effect⁶² hinders the East African integration process too, the EAC does not face any meaningful competition at the moment⁶³. While RIOs in Central Africa and at the Horn of Africa are not more than ‘paper tigers’⁶⁴, Southern African Communities are almost too far away from being interesting⁶⁵. The only ‘competing spaghetti’⁶⁶ was the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), however Tanzania quit this community and thereby strengthened EAC in 2000⁶⁷. Although all EAC members have additional memberships in other regional integration communities, it seems that Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and the new member states Burundi and Rwanda prefer the East African Option⁶⁸. Compared to Europe, the lesser intricacy of the regional constellation eases the way to integrate; however, the rather messy ‘spaghetti bowl’⁶⁹ situation complicates it.

Thirdly, the close focus on regional integration not as a grand ‘bargaining game’⁷⁰ but as a process is one of the most decisive advantages of the theory of neofunctionalism when applied to developing regions. According to Haas and Schmitter, regional integration is much more than negotiations⁷¹; it is a long-lasting, complex and dynamic process with different types of actors and influenced by different factors. For example, the East African project commenced, with loose coordination in different sectors like infrastructure, energy supply and

⁵⁹ Matthies, Volker, *‘Kriege am Horn von Afrika’*, (Berlin, Köster, 2005).

⁶⁰ Saligmann, Ralf, ‘Deutsche Außenpolitik in Ostafrika’, in, Claudia, Gomm, *‘Sicherheitspolitische Entwicklungen in Ostafrika’*, (Bonn, Akademie für Sicherheitspolitik, 2001), pp.27-37 (p.29ff.) (own trans.).

⁶¹ Asche and Bruecher, ‘Myth and Reality’, p.175.

⁶² (see: Introduction of the article)

⁶³ Musonda, ‘A closer look’.

⁶⁴ Donaiski, Peter, ‘Papiertiger braucht mehr Biss’, in, *‘FES info’* No.3 (2010), p.70.

⁶⁵ Mair, Stefan and Christian, Peters-Berries, *‘Regionale Kooperation und Integration in Afrika südlich der Sahara: EAC, SADC, COSATU und ECOWAS im Vergleich’*, (Berlin, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2001), p.405.

⁶⁶ Asche and Engel, ‘Negotiating Regions’, p.108.

⁶⁷ Sidiropoulos, Elisabeth and Richard, Meissner, *‘SADC Barometer No. 8/2005’*, (Braamfontein, South African Institute of International Affairs, 2005), p.1.

⁶⁸ Adelman, Martin, *‘Regionale Kooperation im südlichen Afrika’*, (Freiburg im Breisgau, Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institut für kulturwissenschaftliche Forschung, 2003), p.36.

⁶⁹ Asche and Engel, ‘Negotiating Regions’, p.108f.

⁷⁰ Hoffmann, Stanley, ‘Reflections on the Nation-State in Western Europe Today’, in, *‘Journal of Common Market Studies’* No. 1/2 (1983), pp.21-37, p.29.

⁷¹ Haas, Ernst B. and Phillippe, Schmitter, ‘Economics and Differential Patterns of Political Integration: Projections about Unity of Latin America’, in, *‘International Organization’* Nr.18/4 (1964), pp.711-719.

telecommunications⁷². One of the earliest examples of states cooperating to solve problems they could not manage to on their own was in their use of institutions such as the regional development bank or the Lake Victoria Commission⁷³. The result was the EAC integration treaty implemented in 2001, because states recognised that the more cooperation is intensified, the more problems can be solved effectively on a regional level⁷⁴. In addition, two other important arguments emerged for further integration: a) the hope to minimize economical and political vulnerability vis-à-vis external developments and b) the wish to create regional economic development through an economic-led integration⁷⁵. With the EAC treaty, several regional institutions were established such as the emergent EACJ, the EAC summit or the EALA⁷⁶. The ongoing process led to a new bottom-up dynamic, with new national and regional pressure groups trying to influence regional integration. After the establishment of the EAC secretary, for example the number of regional NGOs fighting poverty increased while the effectiveness through the new coordination centre (namely the EAC Secretariat) also improved⁷⁷. The EAC is, as Haas explains in ‘the Uniting of Europe’⁷⁸, a dynamic integration process in which various actors and regional institutions try to extend their own influence⁷⁹. National democratic transition processes in Kenya and Tanzania strengthen the pluralist concerns (and the influence of interest groups) in reference to the EAC process⁸⁰. Haas predicts that ultimately this can lead into a new supra-national ‘political community’⁸¹ with regional identity and regional loyalties. Rolf Hofmeier points out that in the case of EAC the process of regionalization has recently been accelerated by ‘a commune and existing regional East African Identity’.⁸² While the initiation of a new supra-national community is still in its infancy with regards to the building of new identities and loyalties, the East African integration phenomenon is even more advanced than the European unification. The region is more homogenous than Europe ever was, hence the cooperation and coordination between political actors as well as interest groups was easier, since their

⁷² Hofmeier / Haunit / Reichmuth, ‘Afrika’, p.44.

⁷³ Dietrich, Wolfgang, ‘*Periphere Integration und Frieden in Weltsystemen*’, (Vienna, Promedia, 1998), p.188f.

⁷⁴ Smith, Patrick, ‘Africa must unite’, in, ‘*The Africa Report*’ No. 27 (2011), pp.21-24, (p.22).

⁷⁵ Meyns, ‘Konflikt und Entwicklung’, p.219f.

⁷⁶ EAC, ‘*Treaty establishing the East African Community*’, (Arusha, EAC, 2001), §16.

⁷⁷ Eberlein, Walter, ‘Armutsbekämpfung – Neue Strategische Ansätze in Ostafrika’, in, *Claudia, Gomm (ed.), ‘Sicherheitspolitische Entwicklungen in Ostafrika*’, (Bonn, Akademie f Sicherheitspolitik, 2001), pp.37-47.

⁷⁸ Haas, ‘The Uniting of Europe’.

⁷⁹ See Haas, p.30

⁸⁰ Nasong’o, Shadrack W., ‘Contending Political Paradigms in Africa – Rationality and the Politics of Democratization in Kenya and Zambia’, (Nairobi, Routledge, 2001).

⁸¹ Haas, ‘The Uniting of Europe’, P.16.

⁸² Hofmeier, Rolf, ‘Tansania’, in, Wolfgang, Gieler (ed.), ‘*Die Außenpolitik der Staaten Afrikas – Von Ägypten bis Zentralafrikanische Republik*’, (Paderborn, Schöningh, 2007), p.426.

socialization as well as their cultural background were similar⁸³. Hence reservations not to integrate were soon gilded by a collective sense of community.

Fourthly, another important element of neofunctionalism is the so-called ‘expansive logic of sector integration’⁸⁴. It means that states are more likely to begin their coordination within policy areas that are not deemed sensitive, such as economics, infrastructure or a less sensitive area environmental politics⁸⁵. After a process in which states learn from and increase their trust in each other, the initial cooperation can spill-over into other areas through government actions but also through the pressure exerted by interest groups⁸⁶. Several years before the organization was founded, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda already cooperated informally in regional road building, the usage of Lake Victoria or energetic supply⁸⁷. This flexible coordination lead to a more clearly defined and institutionalized integration body, and spill-over to the telecommunication, transport and economic cooperation sectors has been observed⁸⁸. However, in Eastern Africa the main impact on integration was induced by the political coordination between the states, and not - as Haas argued by economic pressure or civil society interest groups⁸⁹. Unlike the European Coal and Steel industry in Europe, Eastern Africa does not have a strong economic development status, which could generate a primary functional spill-over for regional integration⁹⁰. Therefore, at least at the beginning of the integration process, the political will expressed through political spill-over, dominated the regional landscape⁹¹. Significantly, an expansive logic of sector integration can be observed more through political cooperation than through interest groups, unlike in Europe in the 1950s when the coal and steel industry played a lead role⁹². Given that armed conflicts have been ongoing in the region especially in the 1970s (between Tanzania and Uganda, as well as Kenya and Tanzania), it has to be underlined that peaceful coexistence although not directly mentioned by the member states, is one of the most powerful motives in favour of further integration⁹³. For Haas, integration is one alternative ‘for resolving conflicts between’⁹⁴ states

⁸³ Mair / Peters-Berries, ‘Regionale Kooperation und Integration’, p.91.

⁸⁴ Haas, ‘The Uniting of Europe’, p.283f.

⁸⁵ See Haas, p.240.

⁸⁶ See Haas, p.313

⁸⁷ LVFO. Accessed: 30 May 2012.

⁸⁸ <<http://www.lvbcom.org/>>. Dietrich, ‘Periphere Integration’, p.189.

⁸⁹ Kopsieker, ‘Regionale Integration in Ostafrika’, p.3

⁹⁰ Dähne, ‘Gesellschaftliches Beraterprogramm’, p.4f.

⁹¹ Rosamond, ‘Theories of European Integration’, pp.51-54.

⁹² Mehler, Andreas and Henning, Melber and Klaus, van Walraven, ‘Africa Yearbook 2005’, (Boston, Leiden, 2006), p.316.

⁹³ Haas, ‘The Uniting of Europe’, p.103.

⁹⁴ EAC Secretary, ‘East African Co-Operation Development Strategy (1997-2000)’, (Arusha, EAC, 1997), p.2.

which through cooperation learn and profit from each other. Although this argument seems to be rather idealistic, in both regions intra-state wars have ceased the initiation of the collaboration⁹⁵. Hence in Europe as well as in East Africa the integration processes contributed to a more peaceful region, which in the end stabilized the member-states and partly their environment as well.⁹⁶

The idea of peace leads finally, to another important element of Haas' theory, which is particularly relevant in the context of the African Union after 2002. The 'ever expanding islands'⁹⁷ of regional integration proposed by Haas which could prompt global or continental integration can be associated with the African Economic Community plan the African Union has drawn up until 2028. According to this plan, the existing African regional integration communities shall serve as regional columns for a continental economic community, to be created at a later stage⁹⁸. The final status of integration according to Haas' theory and other (neo)functionalists was that, under ideal conditions, these islands of regional integration shall merge into a bigger unit.⁹⁹ In this context it is crucial to note that the EAC Island grew in 2005 through geographical spill-over by about 20 million inhabitants.¹⁰⁰ Although theory and praxis seem to be similar in this case, it also shows the big discrepancies between policies and politics in Africa's regional integration contexts¹⁰¹. There were no ideal conditions or functional arguments which caused this geographical spill-over. On the contrary, it can be questioned if the political will to integrate or the greed for new prestige and resources controlled this decision to enlarge the community, since it is arguably that the EAC was not prepared for it¹⁰², whereby the integration process slowed down for several years. The EAC summit further stands for enlargement to incorporate South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. It remains to be seen whether in the EAC or the EU case such as the

⁹⁴ Haas, 'The Study of Regional Integration', p.610.

⁹⁵ Kiwanuka, Semakula, 'Amin and the Tragedy of Uganda', (Munich, Weltforum, 1979).

⁹⁶ Haas, 'The Uniting of Europe', Preface.

⁹⁷ Haas, 'International Integration', p.366ff.

⁹⁸ African Union: 'Treaty Establishing the African Union', (AU, Addis Ababa, 2001), Preface.

⁹⁹ Mitrany, David, 'The Functional Theory of Politics', (New York, Robertson, 1976). or: Schmitter, Phillippe, 'Three Neo-Functionalist Hypotheses about International Integration', in, 'International Organization' No.23/1 (1969), pp.161-166. or:

Lindberg, Leon and Scheingold, Steward, 'Regional Integration, Theory and Research', (New York Harvard, 1971).

¹⁰⁰ Von Soest, Christian, 'Wacklige Bausteine und schwache Mauer: Die AU hat ein Integrationsproblem'. (Hamburg, GIGA, 2008), p.2. Accessed: 16 June 2011.

<http://www.giga-hamburg.de/dl/download.php?d=/content/publikationen/pdf/gf_afrika_0804.pdf>.

¹⁰¹ Djadjaglo, Kléber K., 'Die Schaffung einer afrikanischen Einheitswährung', (Göttingen, Optimus Mostafa, 2009), p.261.

¹⁰² Daily News Tanzania. Accessed: 16 June 2011.

<<http://www.dailynews.co.tz/business/?n=19675&cat=business>>.

‘empty chair policies’¹⁰³ can still hinder both integration processes. The big difference is that in the EAC region such strategies can danger the whole integration process, since the regional institutions’ remain relatively weak and the degree of supra-national decision making possibilities is still low because member states fear a loss of sovereignty except the EALA and the EACJ¹⁰⁴. One of the main problems in the EAC and other regions, such as Southern Africa such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a huge gap between the ideas created with integration treaties and the real willingness or capacity to implement them¹⁰⁵. There exists an ongoing tension between necessities that force states to cooperate and the political will to save national sovereignty¹⁰⁶. On the one hand a strategy for the national political elite is an empty chair policy, whilst on the other hand the needs of new resources or influences through regional integration can be an opportunity for access to new resources and influence to extend its own sovereignty. As Europe in the 1960s and 1970s, national interests are still tempting the integration process in Eastern Africa¹⁰⁷. The lack of willingness and the incapability to go ahead with too few financial resources can only be balanced with more openness of the member states, pressure from the societies, inherent necessities and often by external donors¹⁰⁸. The EU is not only seen as a role model for regional integration in Africa possibly – together with other international actors it can speed it up through financial, technological and assistance¹⁰⁹ (Murray 2008, 273f.). Here, one partly supra-national and regional actor helps another new regional organization, since regional integration is often seen as all-round solution for regional and national problems¹¹⁰. The EAC is in this context an interesting partner for the EU, because the community is in a state of transition between being a weak intergovernmental arena and a new supra-national regional political actor¹¹¹.

¹⁰³ ENA. Accessed: 16 June 2011

<<http://www.ena.lu/>>.

¹⁰⁴ Lamin, Abdul Rahman, ‘African sub-regional Human Rights Courts: The ECOWAS Court of Justice, the SADC Tribunal and the EAC Court of Justice in Comparative Perspective’, in, John, Akokpari and Daniel Shea, Zimber (ed.), *Africa’s Human Rights Architecture*, (Cape Town, Fanele, 2008), pp.233-245, (p.236).

¹⁰⁵ Von Soest, ‘Wackelige Bausteine’, p.3. Nnadozie, Emmanuel, ‘NEPAD, APRM and Institutional Change in Africa’, in, Said, Adejumbi and Olukoshi, Adebayo (ed.), *The African Union and New Strategies for Development in Africa*, (New York, Cambria Press, 2009), pp.207-244, (p.240).

¹⁰⁶ Söderbaum, Frederik, *“The Political Economy of New Regionalism” The Case of Southern Africa*, (Göteborg, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.176.

¹⁰⁷ Hrbek, Rudolf, ‘Europäische Union’, in, Wichard, Woyke (ed.), *Handwörterbuch Internationale Politik*, (Bonn, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2004), pp.96-121, (p.98).

¹⁰⁸ Qobo, Mzukisi, ‘Regional Integration, Trade and Conflict in Southern Africa’, in, Saheen, Rafi Khan, *Regional Trade Integration and Conflict Resolution*, (New York, Routledge, 2009), pp.45-69, (p.59).

¹⁰⁹ Murray, Philomena, ‘Model Europe? Reflections on the EU as a Model of Regional Integration’, in, Della Posta, Pompeo and Milica, Uvalic and Amy, Verdun, *Globalization, Development and Integration – A European Perspective*, (Eastbourne, Ashgate, 2008), pp.273-286, (p.274).

¹¹⁰ Eid, ‘Sub-Sahara Afrika’.

¹¹¹ Hofmeier / Haunit / Reichmuth, ‘Afrika’, p.46

Conclusion: Similar in context but different in detail

This article has discussed whether neofunctionalism can be used to analyse new regional integration process in Africa, or whether it is only applicable to the European case. Compared to other integration theories, such as new regionalism approach¹¹² or intergovernmentalism¹¹³, neofunctionalism as developed by Haas is an adequate abstract theoretical framework which can explain dynamic processes and the different actors involved in several political arenas and levels of governance. It is neither 'obsolete nor obsolescent'¹¹⁴ but an appropriate theory that can help us to analyze regional integration phenomena beyond Europe. In the EAC case especially, the broader definition of political actors, the dynamical process of integration and the primacy attached to the pursuit of peace in neofunctionalism showed the strengths of the theory. Admittedly there are some elements that neofunctionalism fails to explain, such as the expansive logic of sector integration or the great focus on the analysis of regional institutions as active region and peace builders. Especially in developing areas like Eastern Africa, weak states often create weak regional institutions, which cannot even fulfil their basic duties and responsibilities¹¹⁵. However, especially the dynamical character of the integration process (the development of the region and the institutions beyond the yearly summits), the mixture between constraints, needs and political will and the different roles of various actors in the Eastern African context are similar to the process of European integration in the 1950s. The EAC member states are confronted with the same challenges and problems and all of them are economically and politically vulnerable to the effects of globalization, hence there is optimism that the organisation will become an effective actor in the future¹¹⁶. Furthermore, East Africa is also a developing region with a dynamic democratization process and intensified cooperation in political, social and economic matters on the national and regional levels. Furthermore the member states need each other for several reasons, as they are all confronted with external influences and pressures. A less conflict-afflicted constellation of power and with fewer external actors having geo-strategic interests in the region the integration process might well be even smoother than in Europe. The core region (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) offers a relatively high cultural, economic and political homogeneity

¹¹² Söderbaum, Frederik and Timothy M., Shaw (ed.), *Theories of New Regionalism. A Palgrave Reader*, (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), P.22-42.

¹¹³ Moravcsik, Andrew, 'Liberal Intergovernmentalism and Integration: A Rejoinder', in, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, No. 33 /4 (1995), pp.611-628.

¹¹⁴ Haas, 'Institutionalism or Constructivism', p.liii.

¹¹⁵ Ressler, Volker, *Die Perspektiven Regionaler Integration im südlichen Afrika*, (Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 2007), p.255f.

¹¹⁶ Society for International Development, *The State of East Africa Report 2006: Trends, Tensions and Contradictions*, (Nairobi, Society for International Development, 2006), p.78.

between states that have not yet finished their own nation-building process¹¹⁷. While the official languages in the three states are Kiswahili and English, complementarities like this between the administrations and bureaucracies can ease the integration process¹¹⁸. Although the economic development of the region is not comparable to post-war Europe, the EAC member states seem to have more in common than the European Union member states. Despite economic development remains relatively limited, ‘the cross-border flows [of traditional regional trade] that are truly bottom-up, constitute a significant bottom-up pressure for regionalism’¹¹⁹. Altogether, the region has significant potential to manage deeper integration, if the nation-states and other actors are able to use it to their advantage. Nevertheless a pure economic integration model (through a common market, a free trade area, zero tariff systems or a common currency) cannot provide a single remedy for the massive socio-political and economical problems Eastern Africa faces¹²⁰. Hence there is no equivalent to the Marshall Plan sponsoring economic development in the region, so other external funding through stakeholders have to be acquired as well as a balanced integration model that ensures advantages for all the member states¹²¹. In this context the EAC and its institutions will remain a decisive actor or agency between the nation-states in their continental spaghetti bowl and their international environment.

To answer the original question, the example of East Africa demonstrates that the basic assumptions of Haas’ ‘The Uniting of Europe’¹²² can be transferred to other regions. Although spill-over can only be found between the political actors that lead the nation-state, small steps to create supra-national institutions and a regional political community are also evident. The stronger the influence of interest groups and new regional institutions gets, the more the integration process turns towards a political union¹²³. The aims of the organization are ambitious and integration is ongoing¹²⁴. ‘[The] EAC countries established a Customs Union in 2005 and are working towards the establishment of a Common Market in 2010,

¹¹⁷ Boås, Morten, ‘A ‘real’ political economy of African Regionalization’, in, Grant, Andrew and Frederik, Söderbaum, *The new regionalism in Africa*, (London, Ashgate, 2003), pp.31-46, (p.42).

¹¹⁸ Mair, ‘East-African Co-operation’, p.91.

¹¹⁹ Iheduro, Okechukwu, ‘New Regionalism, States and Non State Actors in West Africa’, in, Grant, Andrews and Frederik, Söderbaum, *The new Regionalism in Africa*, (London, Ashgate, 2003), pp.47-66, (P.59).

¹²⁰ Balassa, Béla, *The Theory of Economic Integration*, (Abingdon, Routledge, 2011).

¹²¹ Asche, Helmut, ‘Die SADC? Welche SADC? Afrikanische Regionalgemeinschaften im Übergang’, in, Hanf, Theodor and Hans, Weiler and Hertha, (ed), *Entwicklung als Beruf*, (Baden-Baden, Nomos, 2009), pp.69-84, (p.80).

¹²² Haas, ‘The Uniting of Europe’, p.4f.

¹²³ Ocitti, Jim, *Press Politics and Public Policy in Uganda – The Role of Journalism in Democratization*, (New York, Mellen, 2005). Nasong’o, Shadrack W. and Godwin R. Murunga (ed.), *Kenya – The Struggle for Democracy*, (Nairobi Zed Books, 2007).

¹²⁴ Smith, ‘Africa must unite’, p.24.

subsequently a Monetary Union by 2012 and ultimately a Political Federation of the East African States.¹²⁵ Regarding the future of the process, European integration as a former role model might maybe be followed up by an East African one for other African RIOs.

¹²⁵ EAC. Accessed: 13 March 2010
<<http://www.eac.int/about-eac.html>>.