How can we explain the emergence and institutional design of regionalism across the globe? There are basically two stylized explanations for regional cooperation and integration (see Chapter 1 by Börzel and Risse, this volume, on these terms). The dominant approaches to regionalism argue that regional cooperation and integration result from independent decision-making within one region or part of the world (Chapter 3 by Börzel, this volume). Accordingly, regionalism and regional institutions are particular answers to functional problems, whether endogenous to a region (e.g. economic interdependence) or exogenous (e.g. globalization).

A second account emphasizes interdependencies between regions or sub-regions. Regional organizations (ROs) do not exist in isolation from each other, but models of regional cooperation and integration spread across the globe (Jetschke and Lenz, 2013). The focus of this work is on the diffusion of institutional models and policies. The most far-reaching diffusion account stems from sociological institutionalism and claims that there are global scripts of what constitute legitimate institutions and that these scripts are emulated across the globe (Meyer, 1987; Powell and DiMaggio, 1991; Boli and Thomas, 1998). Regionalism might be one of these scripts. This chapter focuses on this second account, on the diffusion of regionalism, ROs, and regional governance pertaining to particular issue-areas.

It should be stated at the outset that the two accounts are not mutually exclusive (Chapter 27 by Börzel and Risse, this volume). Functional explanations for regional cooperation and integration can be combined with diffusion accounts focusing on institutional design. In the end, it is a question of emphasis and of the specific research question one wishes to answer, whether one focuses on independent or interdependent decision-making.

This chapter begins by conceptualizing diffusion in terms of initial stimuli, objects of diffusion, mechanisms, and outcomes. I then review the existing literature focusing, first, on the diffusion of regionalism and regional orders per se, second, of institutional
Conceptualizing Diffusion: Stimuli, Mechanisms, and Outcomes

Diffusion is a consequence of interdependent decision-making (Gilardi, 2013, 454; see also Jahn, 2006, 2015; Solingen, 2012). If ROs emerge in complete isolation and independent from each other, there is no diffusion. I adopt Strang’s classic definition of diffusion as “any process where prior adoption of a trait or practice in a population alters the probability of adoption for remaining nonadopters” (Strang, 1991, 325; also Strang and Meyer, 1993; Gilardi, 2013; see Solingen, 2012; Börzel and Risse, 2012a, for the following).

Several consequences follow from this conceptualization of diffusion. First, there has to be a stimulus of diffusion. As Klingler-Vidra and Schleifer point out, it makes a difference whether one envisions a single or multiple sources of diffusion processes (Klingler-Vidra and Schleifer, 2014). The European Union (EU), its institutions and policies would be a single source or stimulus, while there might be many in the case of diffusing preferential trade agreements (PTAs; Chapter 15 by Kim et al., this volume).

Second, we need to identify the object of diffusion processes, what it is that is being diffused. As Duina and Lenz argue, diffusion can occur with regard to problem definition, the framing of the problem, and the articulation of a specific solution (Duina and Lenz, forthcoming). In a similar vein, I distinguish between three such potential objects of regional diffusion:

- the idea of regionalism itself, i.e. regional cooperation or integration;
- institutional design features of specific—mostly formal—ROs;
- regional governance pertaining to specific policy areas.

Third, diffusion relates to processes, not outcomes. This is often overlooked in the literature using institutional convergence as an indicator of diffusion (on policy convergence see Holzinger et al., 2008). The opposite of diffusion is not the divergence of institutional models for ROs, but isolated and independent decision-making on regional designs for ROs, and, third, of regional governance pertaining to specific policy areas.
cooperation and integration. Diffusion processes cannot be measured by concentrating on outcomes alone, but the connection and interaction among actors needs to be taken into account (see Jahn, 2015, for a detailed discussion).

If diffusion of regionalism refers to processes by which regionalism, regional institutional solutions, and policies are affected by prior choices of other world regions, diffusion mechanisms assume center-stage. Building on Gilardi (2013), Simmons et al. (2006), Holzinger and Knill (2008), and Schimmelfennig (2007), I distinguish between two types of diffusion mechanisms and two logics of social action (see Fig. 5.1, modifying Börzel and Risse, 2012a): to begin with, ideas, policies, and institutions might diffuse through direct (or “sender driven”) influence mechanisms. An agent of diffusion actively promotes certain policies or institutional models in her interactions with a receiving actor or group of actors. Moreover, diffusion also occurs through indirect (or “recipient-driven”) mechanisms. For example, agents at an RO look for institutional designs in other regions to solve certain problems or to mimic the behavior of their peers. Finally, I distinguish between the logic of consequences theorized by various rational choice models, on the one hand, and the logics of appropriateness and of communicative rationality, on the other hand, as conceptualized by socio-logical institutionalism and various versions of social constructivism (see March and Olsen, 1998).

Let me go briefly through the various mechanisms. The first mechanism is often overlooked by scholars who define diffusion as voluntary responses to external stimuli, and concerns physical or legal coercion. Diffusion through imposition and the use of force might be extremely rare in the case of regionalism, while the enforcement of legal standards through inter-regional cooperation might occur more often. The EU’s imposition of the 1999 Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe on the Western Balkans following the wars in post-Yugoslavia is a rare example of forced regional cooperation.

A second mechanism concerns diffusion through manipulating utility calculations by providing negative and/or positive incentives. It differs from coercion and imposition in that the receiving actors still have a choice. The promoters of institutional models can induce other actors into adopting their ideas by trying to change their utility functions. They offer rewards, e.g. in form of financial and technical assistance, impose

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Sources: Börzel and Risse, 2009b; Börzel and Risse, 2012a.
costs through sanctions, or empower domestic actors who push for the adoption of the institutional solution.

A third mechanism works through the logic of appropriateness and involves socialization and persuasion. Rather than maximizing their egoistic self-interest, actors seek to meet social expectations in a given situation. Closely related to socialization, persuasion is based on communicative rationality or the logic of arguing (Risse, 2000). It refers to situations in which actors try to persuade each other about the validity claims inherent in any causal or normative statement. Mechanisms of persuasion are at work in inter-regional cooperation when ROs try to convince their counterparts of the benefits of increased regional cooperation (Hänggi et al., 2006; Baert et al., 2014).

Turning to the four indirect or “recipient-driven” mechanisms of emulation (Fig. 5.1), competition involves unilateral adjustments of behavior towards “best practices.” Actors compete with each other over meeting certain performance criteria, e.g. creating employment or fostering economic growth to which they unilaterally adjust their behavior accordingly (e.g. Elkins et al., 2006; Busch et al., 2005).

Lesson-drawing resembles competition insofar as actors look to others for policies and rules that have effectively solved similar problems elsewhere and are transferable into their own context (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). Lesson-drawing usually starts with actors who are faced with a particular political or economic problem requiring institutional change to solve it. They then look around for institutional solutions which are suitable to solve their problems.

Actors may also emulate others for normative reasons, e.g. to increase their legitimacy (Polillo and Guillén, 2005). Normative emulation is based on the logic of appropriateness. For example, states might want to be members of an international community “in good standing” and, thus, seek regional cooperation to fight corruption, improve their human rights standards, or institute the rule of law. As a result, they look around for institutional solutions which they then emulate.

While normative emulation still involves an active search process by an RO or other regional actors, mimicry entails a rather passive “downloading” of policy ideas or institutional models. ROs might imitate others because the appropriateness is taken for granted (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Haveman, 1993).

With the possible exception of mimicry, none of these diffusion mechanisms assumes that the actors at the receiving end of diffusion are simply passive recipients of these processes. The adoption of, and adaptation to, norms, rules, and institutional models into regional structures involve active processes of translation, interpretation, incorporation of new norms and rules into existing institutions, and also resistance to particular rules and regulations (Solingen, 2012, 634). Social learning as a process of acquiring and incorporating new norms and new understandings into one's belief systems, for example, involves active engagement, not passive “downloading” of some new rules and institutional “software.” Acharya calls this “localization” processes (2004, 2009; Chapter 6 by Acharya, this volume).

If we conceive of diffusion as active processes, policy or norm adoption as well as institutional convergence are less likely outcomes of diffusion processes (Klingler-Vidra...
and Schleifer, 2014, 9; Jahn, 2015), while selective adoption and adaptation should be a lot more common. I distinguish four types of diffusion outcomes. First, as mentioned, convergence or wholesale adoption of institutional models and policies in regional cooperation and integration is only to be expected in cases of either imposition or mimicry. Second, adaptation concerns the differential and selective adoption of institutions and policies adjusting them to particular regional contexts. Third, the more regional actors “localize” norms and practices, the more the diffusion outcomes resemble transformation. Adaptation and transformation are the more likely, the more we find actors operating as “brokers” or “translators” between and within different regional contexts. Fourth, it might sound odd, but resistance as the explicit rejection of particular institutional models or policies can also be treated as a diffusion outcome. I concede, however, that rejection is hard to measure within particularly quantitative diffusion research, since the non-adoption of policies or institutional models is often indistinguishable from non-diffusion.

As I will show in the following, comparative regionalism has a long way to go to be able to assign the relative weight of endogenous factors as compared to diffusion effects. Therefore, I will mostly report from studies that explicitly examine diffusion processes with regard to formal cooperation and integration at the regional level. In other words, there is an inevitable selection bias in the following.

**The Diffusion of Regionalism and Regional Orders**

Two trends can be observed after the end of the Cold War with regard to regionalism and regional orders (on the latter see Chapter 4 by Solingen and Malnight, this volume; also Chapter 27 by Börzel and Risse, this volume): the quantitative rise in regionalism largely consists of a huge increase in (mostly bilateral) PTAs (Chapter 15 by Kim et al., this volume). As to ROs, particularly multi-purpose ROs have taken on ever more tasks and they have also increased the pooling and delegation of authority (Chapter 22 by Lenz and Marks, this volume). Two diffusion-related arguments are being made in the literature to account for these trends, one pertaining to direct or “sender-driven” influence mechanisms, the other related to “recipient-driven” mechanisms.

**Direct Influence on the World of Regions:**

**The United States and the EU**

The probably most important account focusing on the US role in the diffusion of regionalism since World War II is Katzenstein’s *World of Regions* (2005; also Solingen, 1998). He argues that US structural power largely shaped the regional orders in Asia
and Europe—via Japan and Germany. Today’s regions are porous and, thus, subject to external influence. However, the interaction of US power with regional forces led to two distinct regional orders: ethnic market capitalism in Asia and a legal institutional order centered around the EU in Europe. Katzenstein’s book is about regionalism and regional orders, not particular institutions, and it is about the *longue durée*. At the same time, the outcome of US diffusion is adaptation and transformation, neither convergence nor rejection. Last but not least, Katzenstein’s book deals with all four diffusion mechanisms—from imposition (US occupation of Japan and Germany after 1945) and incentives (e.g. the US Marshall Plan as an incentive for European integration) to socialization (into liberal norms) and persuasion.

While this account can be read as a social constructivist version of hegemonic stability theory—not so much driven by US material power, but by its ideational resources—Mattli’s work also focuses on the supply of regionalism by (regional) hegemons, from Prussia to the US and nowadays Russia (Mattli, 1999). In contrast, Mansfield and Milner interpret the rise of PTAs as at least partially caused by declining US (material) hegemony (Mansfield and Milner, 2012, chapter 3).

A second account for the rise of regionalism focuses on the EU and its explicit attempts to foster regional cooperation and integration. Hettne and Ponjaert go so far as to posit that the US and the EU promote two different world orders through inter-regionalism, one based on sovereignty and unilateralism (the US), the other based on multilateralism (Hettne and Ponjaert, 2014).

The EU Commission has specific programs in place to foster regionalization across the globe (Pietrangeli, 2009). There are Regional Strategy Papers and Regional Indicative Programs in place for all regions of the Global South. While the EU does not promote its own institutional model of supranational integration (but see Bicci, 2006; Hurt, 2003), it advocates regional cooperation and integration going beyond mere free trade agreements (FTAs; e.g. Farrell, 2007, 2009; De Lombaerde and Schulz, 2009; Haastrup, 2013; Buzdugan, 2013). It does so through its various inter-regional arrangements with other ROs (Chapter 26 by Ribeiro Hoffmann, this volume; Hänggi et al., 2006; Baert et al., 2014).

The EU employs the full spectrum of direct influence mechanisms to promote regionalism—particularly incentives, norms socialization, and persuasion through political dialogue (see Haastrup, 2013, for relations between the EU and the African Union [AU]). In exceptional cases, the EU even imposes regional cooperation, e.g. the 1999 Stability Pact for the Western Balkans. Incentives include market access to the EU through European Partnership Agreements (EPA), but also development aid, and the like. The EU serves as a major funding source for the AU (Engel, 2015). In the case of the South African Development Community (SADC) and its dependence on EU financial assistance, an EU threat to withdraw funds almost amounted to imposition from the outside (Lenz, 2012, 163–164; Buzdugan, 2013). Moreover, the European Parliament (EP) has been a quite active promoter of regional integration and of the European model, mostly by employing persuasion as the main direct influence mechanism.
The diffusion outcomes are harder to assess in this case. In particular, it is impossible
to discern whether the rise and expansion of ROs in the Global South would have come
about in the absence of EU efforts to promote regionalism. The EU as a prime example
of peace and prosperity might have a supportive effect on endogenous attempts towards
regional cooperation and integration (Haastrup, 2013 calls the EU a “mentor” with
regard to sub-Saharan Africa; see Chapter 13 by Hartmann, this volume). At the same
time, regionalism in the Global South does not simply copy the European model; quite
on the contrary, Latin American, African, and Asian ROs often reject Western regional-
ism explicitly (Chapter 6 by Acharya, this volume).

One counter-intuitive finding stands out, however: inter-regional cooperation with
the EU tends to strengthen regional cooperation among the EU’s weaker partners, sim-
ply as a way to increase their bargaining power vis-à-vis the Europeans (Krapohl and
Fink, 2013). Moreover, as work on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
and the Asia-Europe Meeting Process (ASEM) points out, inter-regional cooperation
requires that the two regions themselves develop their own regionness including a
regional identity (Hettne and Söderbaum, 2000). In this sense, “ASEM does indeed cre-
ate a ‘regional’ space around which the states of East Asia may coalesce in a number of
spheres” (Gilson, 2005, 309; Chapter 26 by Ribeiro Hoffmann, this volume). In a similar
fashion, EU–Mercosur inter-regionalism contributed to “keeping the regional project
alive” (Doctor, 2015, 2).

Unfortunately, scholarly work on the diffusion of regionalism from one part of the
world to another mostly focuses on the US and the EU. In addition, Russia has become a
major region-builder in Eurasia (Libman and Vinokurov, 2012; Chapter 10 by Hancock
and Libman, this volume) in direct response to and competition with the EU. However,
we know comparatively little about South-to-South diffusion of regionalism. There is
even less work on the United Nations (UN) as a major funding source of, but also obsta-
cle to, regional cooperation and integration.

**Emulation of Regionalism: Competition and Mimicry**

As to emulation mechanisms, there is strong evidence that PTAs and FTAs are conta-
gious and that diffusion is at work here. Mansfield and Milner argue that “PTAs often
form in response to each other at a given point in time and that the decision by a country
to enter one in a given year strongly affects the probability of other countries doing like-
wise in the same year” (Mansfield and Milner, 2012, 91; see also Baldwin and Jaimovich,
2012; Baccini and Dür, 2011; Chapter 15 by Kim et al., this volume). Jupille et al. also
demonstrate that the likelihood that a state joins a multilateral Regional Trade Agreement
(RTA) increases with the number of RTAs in the system (Jupille et al., 2013). Mansfield
and Pevehouse confirm that the same argument holds for the expansion of existing (and
mostly multilateral) PTAs to new members indicating that diffusion is at work here
(Mansfield and Pevehouse, 2013, 598).
The main diffusion mechanism with regard to bi- and multilateral PTAs is competition. The more states join PTAs, the more other states fear loss of competitiveness if they do not join, too, and thus get preferential access to markets. Baccini and Dür claim that exporters facing trade diversion because they are excluded from a PTA are likely to push their governments into signing a PTA with the country where their exports are threatened (Baccini and Dür, 2011). Baccini and Dür also find some support for normative emulation or even mimicry which they measure via spatial cultural affinity such as a common language. There is also direct competition between regions themselves. For example, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) can be regarded as a direct response to the EU’s single market (Duina, 2006; Chapter 7 by Duina, this volume).

We also find South–South emulation of regionalism. The South African Development Coordination Conference, SADC’s predecessor, which was founded in 1980, was not only a reaction to apartheid South Africa, but was also inspired by Latin America’s developmental structuralism, particularly Raul Prebisch and the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL; see Chapter 8 by Bianculli and Chapter 17 by Bruszt and Palestini, this volume; Dosman, 2006). More recently, Brazil and Mercosur developed a competitive counter-model to the US-led diffusion of PTAs in Latin America as a result of which we now find two different patterns of PTA designs in Latin America (Quiliconi, 2014). Last not least, Solis et al. argue that the diffusion of PTA agreements in the Pacific Rim is due to competition, not the least because of Japan’s participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership “mega PTA” (Solis et al., 2009; Solis and Katada, 2014; on “mega PTAs” see Chapter 15 by Kim et al., this volume).

Jupille et al. (2013) advance the emulation-based explanation further, namely sociological institutionalism and world polity theory. Jupille et al. argue that “regionalism” has become part of the global script constituting modern statehood, namely that legitimate members of the international community ought to belong to some RO. The authors claim that this script is promoted by “epistemic communities” (Haas, 1992) and use “Google n-grams” (the use of the term “regionalism” in Google books) as a proxy. Jupille et al. show that the “regionalism” script correlates with the time-lagged rise in states joining regional trade agreements in a statistically significant way. They also demonstrate that this correlation is particularly relevant for states in the Global South which are in greater need for legitimacy than states in the Global North (Jupille et al., 2013).

In sum, particularly International Political Economy (IPE) approaches to regionalism emphasize indirect diffusion mechanisms with regard to PTAs (see Chapter 15 by Kim et al., this volume). However, most of this work focuses on “shallow” regionalism and the analyses are driven by the rise of bilateral PTAs. While there is strong reason to believe that the findings also pertain to multilateral regional arrangements, diffusion mechanisms and effects are under-researched with regard to regionalism per se. In addition, the “world of regions” is no longer driven by the US and the EU, but there is competition among and between regions as the Russian (and maybe Chinese) examples demonstrate. Last but not least, as mentioned earlier, there is little work on South–South diffusion of regionalism and even less scholarship on emulation and mimicry within
particular regions. However, it is hard to imagine that the sub-Saharan “spaghetti bowl” (Baldwin, 2006) or the Latin American and Asian “alphabet soups” of ROs (Acharya, 2010) came about without any diffusion mechanism at play.

In the next section, I deal with the diffusion of specific institutional designs for ROs.

**Diffusion of Regional Institutional Designs**

As a first hint at diffusion effects, we can observe striking similarities in the institutional design of ROs across the globe. They do not all look alike, but they certainly form clusters (see Baccini et al., 2014 for trade agreements; Alter, 2012, 2014 for courts; also Chapter 15 by Kim et al. and Chapter 23 by Alter and Hooghe, this volume). Moreover, we can observe an increase over time in both scope and breadth of regionalism (refer-
ing to the number of policy issues dealt with at the regional level) and the level or depth of integration (concerning the degree of pooling and delegation of political authority to ROs; see Börzel, 2013, 507–512; Chapter 27 by Börzel and Risse, this volume). This trend not only concerns the EU, but also other multi-purpose ROs such as the League of Arab States, ASEAN, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Mercosur, and even NAFTA (Chapter 22 by Lenz and Marks, this volume). How can this development be explained, and what does a diffusion perspective contribute? Of course, similarities in institutional design and in policy issues taken up by ROs per se do not prove diffusion, since these could be purely coincidental. Moreover, institutional convergence is not the most likely diffusion outcome, as argued earlier. Nevertheless, I argue in the following that the diffusion perspective offers a powerful account for the institutional design of various ROs.

**Direct Influence Mechanisms**

ROs such as the EU as well as global and regional powers such as the US, Russia, Brazil, South Africa, and Japan have tried to promote their preferred institutional models in their own regions and other parts of the world, particularly the Global South. In a styl-
ized version, the US encourages rule-based FTAs without strong regional organizations (such as NAFTA), while the EU promotes supranationalism (Börzel and Risse, 2009, 22; Duina, 2006). Baccini et al. (2014) show that PTAs with members who have close relations to the US tend to adopt the NAFTA model, which also might be due to some direct influence mechanism (also Chapter 7 by Duina and Chapter 15 by Kim et al., this volume).

However, it is not obvious that particularly the EU tries to actively export its particular institutional model of supranational integration and the same holds true for
the US which is less active in promoting regionalism going beyond FTAs (see e.g. De Lombaerde and Schulz, 2009; Baert et al., 2014 for details on the EU; on the US see Beeson, 2006). As I argue in the following, in most cases the EU reacts—positively, of course—to emulation attempts by ROs in the Global South. Moreover, the few studies analyzing South–South inter-regionalism do not document many direct influence mechanisms at work, say, between Mercosur and the SADC (Mattheis, 2014, chapter 5; Chapter 26 by Ribeiro Hoffmann, this volume).

Last not least, direct diffusion attempts by the EU and the US often meet with resistance in the Global South, given the history of colonialism and economic dependency. As Acharya points out, the “ASEAN way” of non-intervention in internal affairs and of informal—“soft”—institutionalism largely originated in direct opposition to EU and US efforts at pushing regional integration (Acharya, 2009; Chapter 11 by Jetschke and Katada, this volume). The same holds true for sub-Saharan Africa (see the origins of SADC as an anti-South African as well as anti-Western development community based on collective identity of struggles against colonialism and apartheid), as well as the Middle East (Fawcett and Gandois, 2010; Fawcett and Hurrell, 1995). This resistance against Western, particularly European, regionalism partly results from the logic of Southern regionalism as autonomy-seeking and sovereignty-preserving rather than embracing supranationalism (Chapter 6 by Acharya, this volume).

A more powerful diffusion account with regard to institutional models and design pertains to emulation as the following discussion shows.

### Emulation of Regional Institutional Designs

With regard to indirect diffusion mechanisms such as competition, lesson-drawing, as well as normative emulation and mimicry, quantitative as well as qualitative studies allow for at least tentative conclusions. Overall, these studies emphasize lesson-drawing as well as normative emulation, but also mimicry. With regard to diffusion outcomes, these mechanisms result mostly in adaptation and transformation, but also wholesale adoption of institutional models in a few cases.

Unfortunately, most of the available work on diffusion of institutional designs focuses on diffusion from the Global North to the Global South. Studies on horizontal diffusion among regions in the Global South are rare—except for Asian ROs. Acharya argues, for example, that ASEAN largely inspired the establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 1986 (Acharya, 2009, 108–109; see also Ahmed, 2013, chapter 8). The ASEAN+3 framework has also diffused ASEAN’s institutional design to Northeast Asia. Last not least, the institutional design of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) has emulated ASEAN to some degree. In this sense, ASEAN has become a model for regional cooperation, if not integration, in the Asia-Pacific region (Chapter 11 by Jetschke and Katada, this volume). There has also been some diffusion from Mercosur to the newly formed Pacific Alliance (Tvevad,
2014), but little mimicry or isomorphism across the South Atlantic between Mercosur and the SADC (Mattheis, 2014, 244–245)

With regard to PTAs, Baccini et al. (2014) show the emergence of three distinct clusters of similar institutional designs. One PTA cluster consists of rather narrow agreements whereby the members agree on the reduction of tariffs with regard to some goods. The second cluster contains rule-base agreements without strong regional institutions modeled after NAFTA (also Duina, 2006; Chapter 7 by Duina, this volume), while the third PTA cluster emulates the EU. Baccini et al. (2014) find that more recent PTAs mostly resemble the NAFTA model, while EU-type ROs are more common among PTAs with many member states. Interestingly enough, EU-style agreements do not seem to depend on strong interactions between the respective PTAs and the EU itself.

Moving towards qualitative research on the diffusion of RO institutional design, ASEAN represents a fascinating example of lesson-drawing and normative emulation leading to selective adoption and adaptation of institutional designs, which originated elsewhere, particularly in Europe. Of course, ASEAN has not yet embraced supranational decision-making in a substantial way and, thus, remains wedded to national sovereignty. However, more recent research shows that ASEAN member states have selectively emulated institutional models from the EU—even in cases in which ASEAN members explicitly argued that this was not the case (Jetschke, 2009, 2010; Jetschke and Murray, 2012; see also Chapter 11 by Jetschke and Katada, this volume). Prominent examples include the ASEAN Committee of Permanent Representatives (modeled after the EU Committee of Permanent Representatives [COREPER]; Murray and Moxon-Browne, 2013) and the ASEAN Charter (Wong, 2012).

In each of these cases, the initiative to emulate emerged from some cooperation problem in Asia itself, e.g. the Asian financial crisis. However, the selective adaptation of EU institutional design features followed a normative emulation rather than a rationalist lesson-drawing path, since the EU was considered a legitimate actor among ASEAN member states. Driven by this attempt at normative emulation, ASEAN members directly linked up with counterparts in the EU who then advised them as to particular institutional design issues (Jetschke and Murray, 2012, 177). ASEM also became part of this diffusion process (Gilson, 2002, 2005).

Similar normative emulation mechanisms have been at play in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and even the Middle East (Chapter 8 by Bianculli, Chapter 12 by Valbjørn, and Chapter 13 by Hartmann, this volume). As in the ASEAN case, the diffusion of EU institutional design models to the Global South started with cooperation problems in the regions themselves. In sub-Saharan Africa, it was not so much collective action issues emanating from economic interdependence, but mostly security issues or—in the case of the SADC—the necessity to cooperate among the front states facing apartheid South Africa. In contrast, region-building processes in Latin America were primarily driven by liberal market-oriented governments in Argentina and Brazil coming into power in the late 1980s.
As Lenz argues, both South African and South American governments faced two choices regarding institutional design, the NAFTA model supported by the US and the EU model (Lenz, 2012). Both the SADC and Mercosur emulated the EU common market design, not because of a lengthy rational learning process, but for reasons of legitimacy (and against US pressure in the South American case; on Mercosur see also Duina, 2006; on SADC see Weiland, 2006). Similar emulation processes can be observed with regard to the East African Community (EAC), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), and the Andean Community (CAN; on the EAC see Van Hoestenbergh et al., 2009; Chapter 13 by Hartmann, this volume; on WAEMU see Claeys and Sindzingre, 2003; on CAN see Bustamante and Giacalone, 2009; Chapter 8 by Bianculli, this volume). With regard to the latter, almost wholesale mimicry took place and CAN member states “downloaded” the EU’s design with regard to several institutions (see the following discussion).

As in the case of ASEAN, normative emulation was facilitated greatly by various European–Latin American as well as European–African epistemic communities of experts in regional integration, lawyers, and parliamentarians (Botto, 2009; Lenz, 2012, 164; Costa and Dri, 2014; Smis and Kingah, 2014; on epistemic communities see Haas, 1992). These transnational groupings served as agents of diffusion counseling ROs in the Global South and their member states.

Eurasia is a particularly counter-intuitive case of mimicking the EU (Chapter 10 by Hancock and Libman, this volume): Eurasian ROs such as the recently founded Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) have been explicitly formed as a counterweight to the EU, but have largely emulated the EU’s institutional design—despite few institutional contacts between Brussels and Eurasian ROs.

Finally, regional courts and dispute settlement systems as well as parliamentary assemblies are further examples for the diffusion of institutional designs (Chapter 23 by Alter and Hooghe and Chapter 25 by Rittberger and Schroeder, this volume). As to courts, regional economic cooperation and integration certainly create a functional demand for dispute settlement mechanisms. But the institutional design of such arbitration is mostly due to emulation, both lesson-drawing and normative emulation. Alter has identified altogether 24 international (including regional) courts out of which 22 are “new style” courts with compulsory jurisdiction and/or access for supranational or private actors (Alter, 2014, chapter 3; also Chapter 23 by Alter and Hooghe, this volume). Half of those “new style” courts represent institutional copies of the European Court of Justice (ECJ), 11 altogether (Alter, 2012). Prominent examples of ECJ diffusion include the Andean Tribunal of Justice and various African courts (Lenz, 2012; Alter and Helfer, 2010; Saldias, 2010). While wholesale adoption of the ECJ has been rare (e.g. the Andean court), many ROs emulated its central features. In most cases, the initial impulse to establish ECJ-style supranational courts resulted from some functional problems, e.g. the attempt to signal a commitment to market integration (Alter, 2012, 145). However, transnational networks of judges, lawyers, and other epistemic communities stepped in counseling the RO on the design of courts. In a few cases, the EU and the ECJ themselves advised the design of the courts (Saldias, 2010).
We also see the increasing diffusion of parliamentary bodies related to ROs, even in authoritarian contexts (Chapter 25 by Rittberger and Schroeder, this volume). As Lenz points out, this development is hard to explain by any functional account, but appears to represent normative emulation “all the way down” (Lenz, 2013; also Rüland and Bechle, 2014; for a different account see Dri, 2010). The wholesale adoption of institutional models, however, mostly leads to largely symbolic parliamentary bodies without any serious role in decision-making. In other words, “parliamentarization” reinforces intergovernmentalism in the end (Rüland and Bechle, 2014).

In sum, emulation appears to be the primary mechanism in the diffusion of institutional designs of ROs that then triggers direct influence through persuasion and norms socialization via epistemic communities and other agents. Moreover, diffusion outcomes are mostly selective adaptation and transformation of institutional models, less so wholesale adoption. Thus, localization matters hugely (Rüland, 2014; Acharya, 2004)—so does domestic politics. The latter is largely under-theorized in the literature on diffusion of regional institutions (but see Solingen, 1998; Chapter 4 by Solingen and Malnight, this volume).

Similar dynamics can be observed with regard to the diffusion of regional governance in particular issue areas.

**DIFFUSION OF REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**

**Direct Influence Mechanisms**

With regard to “sender-driven” mechanisms pertaining to regional governance arrangements in various issue-areas, the UN, its specialized agencies, and other global international organizations (IOs) such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and others assume center-stage in the diffusion of institutional models. In particular, the UN and other global IOs have strongly shaped regional governance in the Global South. This holds true for regional security governance (Chapter 14 by Kacowicz and Press-Barnathan, this volume), development governance (Chapter 17 by Bruszt and Palestini, this volume), social policy and gender issues (Chapter 18 by van der Vleuten, this volume), regional environmental governance (Chapter 19 by Haas, this volume), migration governance (Chapter 20 by Lavenex et al., this volume), as well as for regional human rights and democracy promoting institutions (Chapter 21 by Pevehouse, this volume).

With regard to ROs and direct influence mechanisms, the EU is once again actively diffusing particular governance regimes directly in its dealings with other ROs, mainly through inter-regional cooperation (Chapter 26 by Ribeiro Hoffmann, this volume; overviews in De Lombaerde and Schulz, 2009; Baert et al., 2014; Rigner
and Söderbaum, 2010; Telò et al., 2015). For example, the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) of the EU with the various African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) ROs in the framework of the Cotonou Agreement which have been concluded or are still being negotiated,3 include provisions for human rights promotion and sustainable development. In addition, the EU seeks to promote good governance and regional security and stability in its dealings with other ROs (Börzel and Van Hüllen, 2015). And it has instituted migration clauses in its trade agreements with regional partners (Chapter 20 by Lavenex et al., this volume; Jurje and Lavenex, 2014).

Emulation

I have already dealt with the diffusion of institutional designs for PTAs where two global scripts emanating from the Global North compete, namely the NAFTA and the EU designs. In addition, the promotion of democracy, human rights, and good governance has become a global script which ROs increasingly try to foster with regard to their member states and in their external relations (Chapter 21 by Pevehouse, this volume; Börzel and Van Hüllen, 2015; Pevehouse, 2005; McMahon and Baker, 2006; van der Vleuten and Ribeiro Hoffmann, 2010). The same holds true for gender rights (Chapter 18 by van der Vleuten, this volume). Emulation is the main mechanism by which human rights and democracy governance diffuse. While the script originated in the West, it has gone global. Even ROs encompassing authoritarian states such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) now adopt their own election monitoring (Chapter 10 by Hancock and Libman, this volume).

Emulation mechanisms include competition (democracy, human rights, and good governance clauses as means to invite trade and foreign direct investment), lesson-drawing (to lock in democratic governance among RO member states, see Moravcsik, 2000; Pevehouse, 2005), and normative emulation as a quest to gain global legitimacy (see McMahon and Baker, 2006). Stapel (2014) has shown through a quantitative study that there is not only isomorphism on a global level, but that geographic contiguity of ROs matters, too. He also demonstrates that functional needs (learning) explain the diffusion of democracy and good governance standards among ROs, while power asymmetries appear to hamper adoption. His is one of the first studies that do not adopt an EU-centric view of policy diffusion among ROs.

Once again, ASEAN constitutes a fascinating example of normative emulation, selective adaptation, and localization resulting from resistance Western pressures to incorporate human rights norms. As Manea argues, ASEAN transformed its collective identity as it selectively adapted to human rights norms (Manea, 2008, 2009; also Katsumata, 2009).

Policy diffusion among ROs is not confined to the spread of human rights, democracy, and good governance standards. A very interesting example in the realm of
security cooperation concerns the spread of military confidence-building measures (CBMs) which originated in the Conference (now Organization) for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) during the Cold War. CBMs have been adopted by ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as well as the SCO, the primary mechanism being mimicry (Chapter 14 by Kacowicz and Press-Barnathan, this volume; see Katsumata, 2011; Acharya and Johnston, 2007, 20; Acharya, 2009, chapter 5). From ASEAN, these conflict management policies have spread to South Asia (Jetly, 2003). A case of South–South diffusion concerns the spread of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones, starting with the Latin American Treaty of Tlatelolco in 1967 (Lacovsky, 2014). As Bruszt and Palestini argue, regional development banks also diffused within the Global South (Chapter 17 by Bruszt and Palestini, this volume). In a similar way, Regional Consultation Processes as transgovernmental networks linked to the security aspects of migration governance spread across the globe (Chapter 20 by Lavenex et al., this volume).

ASEAN selectively adopted EU market regulation policies, and the variation in outcomes can be explained by domestic politics (Pente, 2013). It also emulated the EU’s disaster management mechanism in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami 2004 (Pennisi di Floristella, 2014), while ASEAN’s adoption of HIV/AIDS norms diffused from the global level, namely UNAIDS (Collins, 2013).

These examples confirm, once again, the necessity to combine endogenous explanations focusing on collective action problems in a particular region with accounts assuming interdependent decision-making. Problem identification usually originates within the region itself, while both framing and institutional solutions can only be explained from a diffusion perspective (Duina and Lenz, forthcoming). Even then, the result is not wholesale adoption of policy regimes, but their selective adaptation and transformation to adjust them to regional circumstances.

**Conclusion**

This chapter provided an overview of the state of the art on the diffusion of regionalism, the institutional design of specific ROs, and of particular regional governance regimes. The chapter yields some tentative conclusions.

First, the diffusion of regionalism, institutional designs, and regional governance is primarily determined by indirect or “recipient-driven” mechanisms of emulation rather than by direct and “sender-driven” influence mechanisms (see Fig. 5.1). While particularly the EU tries to promote regionalism, institutional designs, and regional policies, the effects appear to be limited. The EU as an institutional model of integration is most attractive when it is not promoting any particular regional solution, but is being emulated by other ROs which consider it a legitimate problem-solving model.

Second, as far as emulation is concerned, we observe few examples of mimicry leading to institutional isomorphism. Competition, lesson-drawing, and normative emulation
are the most important diffusion mechanisms by which particular institutional models and policy regimes spread. In this context, ROs engage in a search process for the best available institutional or policy solution (lesson-drawing) and also emulate those ROs which they consider normatively legitimate. This is where the “power of attraction” of the EU and of contiguous ROs plays a role.

Third, as to diffusion outcomes, we rarely observe full-scale adoption or convergence around specific models of regional cooperation and integration. If convergence happens with mimicry as the pertinent diffusion mechanism, decoupling between institutional rules and behavioral practices is the most likely result. This explains why many ROs in sub-Saharan Africa and in Latin America have so few behavioral consequences (Chapter 8 by Bianculli and Chapter 13 by Hartmann, this volume). The most likely outcome of diffusion with regard to regional cooperation and integration is adaptation and transformation. In other words, the “recipient-driven” diffusion mechanisms of competition, lesson-drawing, and normative emulation lead to selective adoption, adjustments, and “localization” (Acharya, 2004) of particular institutional models into the particular regional contexts. Diffusion is an active process of translation and transformation, not a passive “downloading” of some institutional software for ROs.

Fourth, how do functional explanations and diffusion accounts relate to each other? I conclude from the literature that the demand for regional cooperation and integration usually originates in the particular region in response to some internal or external problem (“problematization” in Duina and Lenz, forthcoming; Börzel and Risse, 2012b; also Chapter 27 by Börzel and Risse, this volume). Diffusion effects occur when actors look around for appropriate institutional solutions. Diffusion takes place on the supply side of meaning construction and the identification of specific solutions with regard to institutional designs and governance regimes.

Finally, let me delineate some areas of future research. If, as I have argued in this chapter, functional and diffusion accounts for regionalism have to be combined, the appropriate research strategy would be to determine the relative weight of independent as compared to interdependent decision-making and to explore in more detail how functional and diffusion explanations relate to each other. Moreover, future research on the diffusion of regionalism and regional institutions should focus on processes of translation and localization. At the moment, diffusion research neglects the domestic politics of regionalism—a central theme of conventional theories of cooperation and integration. While the latter approaches regularly ignore diffusion, the domestic politics of localization remains probably the largest gap in the emerging literature on diffusing regionalism (Chapter 4 by Solingen and Malnight, this volume). Finally, while qualitative work on diffusion in comparative regionalism rightly concentrates on mechanisms rather than outcomes, most empirical work is still rather Euro- and Western-centric, despite all pledges to the contrary (Chapter 6 by Acharya, this volume). We know much more about the spread of Western (particularly EU) regionalism across the globe than about South–South, intra-Asian, intra-African, or intra-Latin American diffusion.
Notes

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