



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

**Parliamentary Agency and Regional Integration: The logic of regional
parliaments around the world**

by

BRUNO THEODORO LUCIANO

A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham
for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Political Science and International Studies (POLSIS)

School of Government and Society

College of Social Sciences

University of Birmingham

June 2019

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham Research Archive

e-theses repository

This unpublished thesis/dissertation is copyright of the author and/or third parties. The intellectual property rights of the author or third parties in respect of this work are as defined by The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 or as modified by any successor legislation.

Any use made of information contained in this thesis/dissertation must be in accordance with that legislation and must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the permission of the copyright holder.

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the development of regional integration parliaments around the world. It analyses and compares the expansion and current stage of institutional development of three regional assemblies, which are in Europe (European Parliament), Africa (Pan-African Parliament), and Latin America (MERCOSUR Parliament). The key research question this PhD project seeks to answer is: why, and to what extent, have these three regional parliaments developed differently in terms of their functions and legislative competences? In order to answer these questions, particular attention is paid to the notion of parliamentary agency. To this end, this research proposes four types of parliamentary agency, considering both its external (restricted/stimulated agents) and internal (timid/proactive agents) dimensions. A historical institutionalist lens guides the analysis, focusing on the ‘critical junctures’ in the history of the three assemblies. This thesis draws on new and original empirical data (élite interviews with officials and delegates from the three regional parliaments), official documents, and the academic literature. Thus, this thesis aims to make both an empirical and a conceptual contribution to the emerging literatures on comparative legislative studies and comparative regionalism. The main argument of this thesis is that parliamentary agency has impacted the institutional development of the European Union, MERCOSUR and the African Union, leading the three cases to diverse paths of regional parliamentarisation.

Keywords: Regional Integration, Parliamentary Agency, European Parliament, MERCOSUR Parliament, Pan-African Parliament.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND/CONTEXT FOR THE RESEARCH	3
1.2 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK	6
1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	8
1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS.....	10
1.5 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION	11
1.6 SUMMARY OF THE THESIS	13
2. LITERATURE REVIEW: GLOBAL REGIONALISM AND THE PARLIAMENTARISATION OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION	15
2.1 A WORLD OF REGIONS: REGIONALISM WAVES IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE	15
2.2 THE PARLIAMENTARISATION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS	22
2.3 THE LIMITS OF EUROPEAN NORMATIVE INFLUENCE ON THE SPREAD OF REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS WORLDWIDE	27
2.4 UNDERSTANDING PARLIAMENTARISATION BEYOND EUROPE	33
2.5 CONCLUSIONS	34
3. THEORY AND METHODS: HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONALISM, PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY AND COMPARATIVE REGIONALISM	36
3.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONALISM AND PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY	37
3.1.1 <i>New Institutionalism and the Foundations of Historical Institutionalism</i>	37
3.1.2 <i>The role of critical junctures within institutional development</i>	43
3.1.3 <i>Understanding regional integration through historical institutionalism</i>	45
3.1.4 <i>Reassessing structure and agency over time</i>	51
3.1.5 <i>Conceptualising Parliamentary Agency: Definition and typology</i>	56
3.2 SELECTION OF CASE STUDIES	61
3.2.1 <i>European Parliament (EP)</i>	63
3.2.2 <i>MERCOSUR Parliament (Parlasur)</i>	63
3.2.3 <i>Pan-African Parliament (PAP)</i>	65
3.2.4 <i>Data Collection</i>	67
3.3 COMPARATIVE FRAMEWORK	69
4. PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY MAKING A DIFFERENCE: THE INSTITUTIONAL EMPOWERMENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT	76
4.1 STIMULATED AND PROACTIVE ACTORS: PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY IN EUROPEAN INTEGRATION	78
4.2 THE FOUNDATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND THE ORIGINS OF A SUPRANATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY	82
4.2.1 <i>Parliamentary engagement in the establishment of the European Defence and Political Communities (1952-4)</i>	84
4.2.2 <i>Parliamentary agency in the 1970s: The extension of budgetary/financial powers the approval of direct parliamentary elections</i>	85
4.3 ONE STEP TOWARDS PARLIAMENTARISATION: THE SINGLE EUROPEAN ACT AND THE COOPERATIVE PARLIAMENT	90
4.4 A NEW STAGE FOR PARLIAMENTARY EMPOWERMENT: THE TREATY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE CO-DECISIVE PARLIAMENT	95
4.4.1 <i>Parliamentary Agents in the Successive European Treaties: Enlargement and Deepening</i>	99

4.5 THE CONVENTION OF EUROPE: AN UNSUCCESSFUL CRITICAL JUNCTURE FOR PARLIAMENTARY AGENTS?	101
4.5.1 <i>Parliamentary Assertion in the Lisbon Treaty: Towards a European co-legislature</i>	105
4.6 CONCLUSIONS	107
5. WHEN PROACTIVITY DECREASES: THE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MERCOSUR PARLIAMENT	111
5.1. RESTRICTED AND PROACTIVE: PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY WITHIN MERCOSUR'S INTEGRATION	113
5.2. THE ORIGINS OF PROACTIVE PARLIAMENTARY AGENTS: THE CREATION OF MERCOSUR AND THE JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION	118
5.2.1 <i>Incremental changes in the 1990s: Ouro Preto and Ushuaia Protocols</i>	122
5.3. THE APEX OF PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY: THE REFORMULATION OF MERCOSUR AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MERCOSUR PARLIAMENT.....	124
5.4. FROM PROACTIVISM TO TIMIDITY: CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES AND DYNAMICS OF PARLASUR	132
5.5. CONCLUSIONS	140
6. THE LIMITS TO PARLIAMENTARISATION: ESTABLISHING THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT	143
6.1 RESTRICTED AND TIMID AGENTS: THE DIMENSIONS OF AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY	145
6.2 THE EMERGENCE OF A TIMID PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY: THE CREATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION AND THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT	152
6.2.1 <i>The Constitution of the African Union (2000) and the creation of the Pan-African Parliament</i> ...	153
6.2.2 <i>Parliamentary agency in the establishment of the PAP</i>	156
6.3 A NEW DAWN FOR PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY? RATIFYING THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL OF THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT	161
6.3.1 <i>The reform of the Pan-African Parliament (2014): towards a supranational legislature?</i>	162
6.3.2 <i>Parliamentarian influence in the ratification of the additional protocol</i>	166
6.4 CONCLUSIONS	170
7. PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE	173
7.1 INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PATH DEPENDENCY: THE PERSISTING ROLE OF THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY	174
7.2 INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AND THE EMERGING ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY IN ITS INTERNAL DIMENSION	177
7.3 PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY AND THE LOGIC BEHIND THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS ..	180
8. CONCLUSIONS.....	185
8.1 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS AND THE POTENTIALITIES FOR PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY AT THE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS.....	185
8.2 LIMITS AND CHALLENGES OF ASSESSING PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY IN TIME	187
8.3 WAY FORWARD: INVESTIGATING PARLIAMENTARISATION DURING THE CRISIS OF REGIONALISM	192
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	196
INTERVIEWS.....	222

Acknowledgements

The completion of this doctoral research would not be possible without the assistance of many colleagues and friends who always provided me the academic and emotional support needed to not give up and to move on during these past four years.

My special gratitude to my supervisors, Marco Vieira and Isabelle Hertner, who have been fully on board since the first day of my PhD and supported all my academic initiatives in this period. Their trust in my capacity and their incentive to be bolder about my research contributions were fundamental to overcome all the setbacks encountered. I was lucky to have not only one, but two ‘first’ supervisors during my PhD and I thank you both for that pleasure.

To all my colleagues from the Dept of Political Science and International Studies (POLSIS), I thank for the coffees, chats and pints. In particular, I thank George Kyris, Julian Pänke, Sotirios Zartaloudis, and all the members of the European Studies Research Group for the very useful feedback provided on my project and draft chapters. To my UoB friends and all the ‘10th floor gang’, in special to Maren, Monika, Ilaria, Giulia, Mann, Bruno, Samara, Rubens, Chris, Adry, Anmol, Kamal, Cosmin, Charlotte, Gianluca, Scott, Kate, Onur, Melany, Darcy, Matthias, Chiara, I am thankful for the great time spent together. Also, a special thanks to Tricia Thomas for her kindness and assistance.

Also, my gratitude to my second home in Europe, the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), for having me as a visiting researcher. In particular to Tobias Lenz, Detlef Nolte, Maren Wagner, and to Carolina, Luiz, Leonardo, Aline, Rodrigo, Regina, Grazi, Tim, Ariam, Medha, Jorge, Viviana, Clara, Rafael, Jaemin, Markus, for the discussions and for the company in Hamburg.

My additional thanks to Carlos Closa, Frank Schimmelfennig, Karina Mariano, Haroldo Ramanzini Jr, and the members of the Research Network on Foreign Policy and Regionalism (REPRI, Brazil), who spared their time to comment on early versions of my PhD project.

A very important part of this project depended on conducting fieldwork abroad, so my sincere gratitude goes to all the interviewees who gladly accepted to take some of their time to talk to me. Many insights of this research would not be possible without the experience shared by many of them. Besides, I am grateful for all the practical assistance received during fieldwork from some colleagues and friends. In Brussels, I thank Luis Fernando Blanco, Adrien Sellez and the University of Birmingham’s Brussels Office for assistance in conducting interviews in the European institutions. In Montevideo and Buenos Aires, my gratitude to Rafael Reis, Camilo López, Emanuel Porcelli, and Daniela Perrotta for the support and South American friendship. In South Africa, I am thankful to the University of Johannesburg’s Dept of International Relations, in special to Suzy Graham and Rae Israel, to Muyoyeta Simui at the Pan-African Parliament, as well as to UACES and the James Madison Charitable Trust for sponsoring my fieldwork trip in Africa.

Moreover, I thank CAPES Foundation (Ministry of Education, Brazil) for the full PhD scholarship granted to study in the UK during this entire period.

I also thank all my friends from the lively Brazilian community in Birmingham – Felipe, Rodolfo, Vitor, Jota, Fernando, Paulo, Juliana, Ermano, Adriana, Suzana, Pamela, Rafael, Gaudêncio, and Henrique – whose company was essential while adapting to the life overseas.

Last but not least, my deepest gratitude to my family in Brazil, especially to my parents, Leticia, Carlos Augusto and Valdir, and to my grandparents, who – despite all the distance and ‘saudade’ – have always supported my adventures and cheered all my accomplishments. Finally, my greatest acknowledgement is to my wife and best friend, Fernanda, who accepted to join me in this life project, revised the many versions of this thesis, and equally lived with me all the difficulties and the happiness found in this period. All would be worthless without them.

Figures and Tables

Table 1. Old vs New Regionalism	18
Figure 1. Institutional development of parliamentary institutions over time.....	50
Table 2. Typology of Parliamentary Agency (PA)	59
Table 3. Institutional configurations of the regional parliaments	66
Table 4. Level of parliamentary competences	67
Table 5. Composition of the European Convention (2001-2003).....	102
Table 6. Parliamentary Agency in the European Union	108
Figure 2. MERCOSUR's Organisational Chart.....	131
Table 7. Citizens' Representation inside Parlasur	137
Table 8. Parliamentary Agency in MERCOSUR	141
Figure 3. The African Union's Organisational Chart	155
Table 9. Parliamentary Agency in the AU	171
Table 10. Level of Parliamentary Agency over time	181

Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific states
AEC	African Economic Community
AFCO	European Parliament's Committee on Constitutional Affairs
ALBA	Bolivarian Alliance for the People of our America
ALDE	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
AIPA	ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly
AIPO	ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organisation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAR	Central African Republic
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CCM	Trade Commission of MERCOSUR
CJ	Critical Junctures
CMC	Common Market Council
COREPER	European Union's Committee of Permanent Representatives
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
CVCE	Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EALA	East African Legislative Assembly
EC	European Communities
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defence Community
EDU	European Defence Union
EP	European Parliament
EPP	European People's Party Christian Democrats
EU	European Union
FOCEM	MERCOSUR Structural Convergence Fund

GDP	Gross domestic product
GMC	Common Market Group
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Co-operation
HI	Historical Institutionalism
IC	Incremental Changes
IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
IPIs	International Parliamentary Institutions
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IR	International Relations
IS	Institutional Inertia
JPC	Joint Parliamentary Commission
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
MP	Member of Parliament
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PA	Parliamentary Agency
PAP	Pan-African Parliament
Parlacen	Central American Parliament
Parlandino	Andean Parliament
Parlasur	MERCOSUR Parliament
Parlatino	Latin American Parliament
PRC	African Union's Permanent Representatives Committee
PSC	African Union's Peace and Security Council
QMV	Qualified majority voting
RoP	Rules of Procedure
SADC	South African Development Community
SEA	Single European Act
S&D	Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats
UNASUR	Union of South American Nations
US	United States

1. INTRODUCTION

Parliament must also be an organ of control of general policy within the Community. Let us not be deluded into believing that the strictly institutional limitations on its powers can prevent a Parliament such as ours from speaking out at all times, and in every field of Community action, with the political authority conferred on it by its election. (Veil, 1979, p. 5)

The African masses look to the Pan African Parliament to help to change all that. They want you, their elected representatives, to give them the possibility to control their institutions. They want you, their elected representatives, to help them to change their material conditions so that they escape from the jaws of poverty and their countries and continent from the clutches of underdevelopment. (Mbeki, 2004, p. 1)

The second half of the 20th century saw a proliferation of regional integration projects around the world, which sought to deepen cooperation among the Member States, foster regional trade, and avoid the eruption of new warlike conflicts. European integration has become the pioneering and most developed of the existing regional initiatives. Since the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) until the consolidation of the European Union (EU), the European continent moved from a history of wars and conquests to a path of sovereignty sharing and the construction of a European citizenship and common identity (Hoffmann, 1966; Nugent, 1999). However, regionalism was not a phenomenon restricted to the European continent. Since the 1960s, Asia, Africa and Latin America have also built regional organisations responsible for introducing integrative policies and practices (Nzewi, 2013).

Alongside the establishment of regional intergovernmental cooperation, further dialogue was also set out via inter-parliamentary bodies, vehicles which have been enabling parliamentarians and political parties to develop transnational political linkages across the continents and to defend key principles of democracy, political pluralism and human rights. In fact, the spread of regional parliaments around the world dates back to the 1970s and it continued into the 1990s. On the one hand, some of these regional parliaments created would become mere tools of parliamentary diplomacy, without having any real legislative powers and ambitions, and, thus, with a low potential of increasing or receiving further competences and institutional powers. These toothless parliaments are often referred to as ‘international parliamentary assemblies’, such as the most traditional Inter-Parliamentary Union, founded in

1889. Others, however, which are often referred to as ‘integration parliamentary institutions’, were developed as parts of regional integration projects, such as the European Parliament, which is the parliamentary body of the European Union (Drummond, 2005). While the first group of assemblies has seen little opportunities to influence international/regional policies, the second one has had some potential of deepening and expanding its powers, potentially by gaining the ability to influence supranational decision-making processes (Cofelice, 2012). Considering their capacity to become important actors within regional integration, this project will address the historical development of integration parliamentary institutions on three continents, simply referred to as *regional parliaments* throughout the thesis.

The purpose of this study is to address the different institutional paths that specific regional parliaments in the world have taken over the last decades. Through a comparative analysis of selected cases in Europe (European Parliament - EP), Latin America (MERCOSUR Parliament - Parlasur), and Africa (Pan-African Parliament - PAP), this study intends to answer the following research question:

- Why and to what extent have these three regional parliaments developed differently in terms of their functions and legislative competences?

In order to answer this interrogation, the present research will examine the degree of parliamentary agency throughout the institutional development of these parliaments within their respective region. Parliamentary agency is defined in this research as the capacity of parliamentary actors (such as members of parliament, parliamentary officials, and officials of political parties represented in these parliaments) to exert influence in the decision-making system over regional integration policies, often controlled by executive agents as well as by structural constraints. By assessing the levels of parliamentary agency in the cases studied, this research will assess why the three regional parliaments have reached such different stages of institutional development over the last decades, and specifically, why the European Parliament’s institutional path is unlikely to be taken by parliaments established in other parts of the world. While past studies on parliamentarisation have put much more emphasis on the intergovernmental preferences and perceptions toward providing more competences to parliamentary institutions and actors (Rittberger, 2003; 2005), this research will focus on the role of parliamentary agents in this process, a phenomenon overlooked until the moment.

1.1 BACKGROUND/CONTEXT FOR THE RESEARCH

The European Parliament is the first and most acknowledged example of the parliamentary dimension of regional integration. Since its establishment in 1952 as the Common Assembly of the ECSC, it evolved from being a consultative assembly to becoming a co-legislator alongside the Council of the European Union (Kreppel, 2002; Costa, 2009; Rittberger, 2003). In 1979, the first direct elections of the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) took place, in a manner to increase the legitimacy and representativeness of the emerging European integration project (Follesdal and Hix, 2006; Hobolt et al., 2008; Schmitt, 2005). Nonetheless, as regional integration projects were created worldwide, other regional parliaments were established. For instance, Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia have seen an expansion of regional parliaments, which have followed the development of regional integration schemes (Medeiros, 2008; Mariano, 2011; Vazquez, 2005; Drummond, 2009; Bustamante, 2006; Cera, 2009; Luciano, 2012; Mpanyane, 2009; Nzewi, 2013; Kingah and Cofelice, 2012; Magdagbeola and Onoja, 2008; Rüländ, 2014; Deinla, 2013).

However, in contrast to the European Parliament, regional parliaments established in the Global South have not substantially increased their competences. Although they have been recognised as increasing mechanisms of parliamentary diplomacy, they do not have significant policy-making power, which remains exclusively in national or presidential hands. In this sense, regional integration projects other than the EU are still marked by a strong resistance regarding any pooling of sovereignty (Malamud and Sousa, 2007). Thus, in view of the strong intergovernmental character of these regional integration processes, regional parliaments outside Europe have not surpassed a mere consultative role, even if they present distinct degrees of institutional complexity (such as the provision of direct elections, proportional national delegations, transnational political groups, permanent parliamentary commissions etc.). Their systematic non-consideration by executive branches in regional policies differs significantly from the European Parliament's history of empowerment within the EU's political system (Malamud and Sousa, 2007).

Given this global scenario of diversity of regional parliaments in terms of the institutional competences acquired, the present research provides a systematic comparative analysis between selected cases in Europe, Latin America and Africa with the aim to discuss the reasons why these regional parliaments have developed differently within their

integration projects – regardless of the European Parliament’s institutional path and its influence on the foundation of other regional parliaments outside Europe.

Regional integration and regionalism have been studied extensively by political scientists, scholars of international relations, historians and lawyers. In particular, European integration has attracted much scholarly attention since its beginnings (Haas, 1958; Hoffmann, 1966; Mattli, 1999; Nugent, 1999; Pierson, 1998; Tsebelis and Garrett, 2001). In the meantime, studies of regionalism have also been published focusing on Latin America (Malamud, 2010; Ventura, 2005; Medeiros, 2008; Giardini, 2010), Africa (Badejo, 2008; Muchie et al., 2006; Kabala and Tsedu, 2008), and Asia (Acharya, 2003; Rolfe, 2007; Manea, 2009). Moreover, within regional integration studies, investigations concerning the connection between democracy and integration and questions of representation and legitimacy in regional/supranational scale have been gaining strength over the past two decades (Moravcsik, 2002; Follesdal and Hix, 2006; Schmidt, 2013).

There is also a growth in studies focusing on understanding the role of regional integration parliaments over the past years. The European Parliament’s case, without any doubt, is the most intensively researched. There are several studies which analyse the multiple phases of parliamentary structures in European integration, with particular attention to its gradual empowerment. For instance, these publications focused on the Parliament’s legislative competences vis-à-vis other institutions (Costa, 2009; Delwit et al., 1999; Rittberger, 2003; Corbett, 1998); the transnational party groups (Hix et al., 2006; Bardi et al., 2010); the holding and results of direct parliamentary elections (Schmitt, 2010; Hobolt et al., 2008); and the internal organisation of the parliament (Kreppel, 2002).

When compared to the European case, there are very few in-depth studies of the development of integration parliaments in other parts of the world. In this context, the analysis of regional parliaments in Latin America is most prominent. Amongst these, the Andean Parliament, the Central American Parliament, and the MERCOSUR Parliament have received most attention (Malamud and Sousa, 2007; Erthal, 2006; Dri, 2010; Mariano, 2011; Vazquez, 2005; Drummond, 2009; Bustamante, 2006; Cera, 2009; Luciano, 2012). Meanwhile, research on regional parliaments in Africa is still in its infancy (Mpanyane, 2009; Nzewi, 2013; Kingah and Cofelice, 2013; Magdagbeola and Onoja, 2008), and Asian regional parliaments also deserve more scholarly attention (Rüland and Bechle, 2011; Rüland, 2014; Deinla, 2013). Overall, these studies have started to analyse key issues of these parliaments, such as their formal consultative competences (Malamud and Sousa, 2007;

Mpanyane, 2009; Nzewi, 2013), the insertion of proportional representation and direct elections in their composition (Drummond, 2009; Cera, 2009; Luciano, 2012), and more broadly the relevance of these parliaments to increase democratic inputs to regional organisations (Erthal, 2006; Medeiros, 2008; Magdagbeola and Onoja, 2008; Mariano, 2011; Kingah and Cofelice, 2013; Rüland, 2014).

However, a few studies have compared these regional integration parliaments with each other and discussed the importance of the European case for the development of parliaments in other regional integration projects. This focus in the existing literature lies on the interpretation of the EU as a *normative power* (Manners, 2002; Borzel and Risse, 2009; Whitman, 2013; Cameron, 2010; Selleslaghs, 2014; Farrell, 2009), where representative and parliamentary democracy are normative values defended and diffused globally by Europe through two mechanisms: *socialisation* (which implies an active role of the EU, through technical assistance, political dialogue and cooperation) and *emulation* (which implies a passive role, discursive and symbolic, see Lenz, 2013). For instance, studies by Malamud and Sousa (2007), Erthal (2006), and Dri (2010) pioneered the comparison of regional parliaments of Latin America with the European case. On the other hand, some scholars have also into account the relevance of the European Parliament as a forerunner case and its impact on the development of regional parliaments in other continents (Dri, 2010; Rüland and Bechle, 2011; Lenz, 2013). Yet, in spite of some recent studies on comparative regionalism (De Lombaerde et al., 2010; De Lombaerde, 2011; Van Langenhove, 2012), there is still a significant gap in the study of regional parliaments from a global perspective, even though a recent effort in this direction has been made by Costa et al. (2013) through the publication of a co-authored book on regional parliaments in several regions of the world.

Without discarding the assumptions that the European experience was considered a model for other regional integration projects and their parliaments (Manners, 2002; Börzel and Risse, 2009; Lenz, 2013), this research follows the standpoint of Cofelice and Stavridis (2014) that the European Parliament, despite its particularities, is not necessarily a *sui generis* (n=1) case, and can – and should – be compared with other regional parliaments. Thereby, this thesis contends that the EP's institutional path can be compared with the historical evolution of other regional parliaments in the world, in an effort to better understand the logic behind the creation and development of regional parliaments.

In that regard, we still lack a detailed and systematic study on regional parliaments from across the world, through a *cross-regional comparison* (Sil, 2009; Vullers, 2014), which

takes into consideration more than one geographical region and its specific historical/political context (Sil, 2010). The present research intends to fill this methodological and empirical gap by presenting a comparative analysis of regional parliaments on three continents. It will analyse, through a comparative lens, the development of regional integration parliaments globally, not only considering the EP as a comparable case, but also contrasting the institutionalisation of regional parliaments from the Global South among themselves. Thus, this thesis intends to develop a comparative framework that explores how parliamentary agency has impacted the institutional development of each regional parliament.

1.2 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

This research is grounded in some of the key contributions of historical institutionalism (Pierson, 2004). Based on some of its theoretical assumptions, this project will trace the institutional evolution of regional parliaments, considering that institutional results do not follow strictly the preferences of Member States. Instead, it is argued that regional integration processes can produce relatively autonomous supranational actors and institutions and, furthermore, unintended consequences within the integration institutional design (Pierson, 1998). This research acknowledges that institutions matter when it comes to regional integration projects. They have a fundamental role in shaping, constraining and changing the political behaviour of governmental and parliamentary agents. To understand how these regional parliamentary institutions have evolved over time is essential to explain the extent to which regional parliaments have gained a prominent position.

With regard to the comparative potential of this research, applying the main assumptions of historical institutionalism to the three cases can reveal the similarities and differences of these regional parliaments, explain their regional and national contexts, and also highlight external/international influences. What is more,

By employing a small number of cases, comparative historical researchers can comfortably move back and forth between theory and history in many iterations of analysis as they formulate new concepts, discover novel explanations, and refine pre-existing theoretical expectations in light of detailed case evidence. (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer, 2003, p. 13)

Therefore, contextualised comparisons consider effects of timing relative to one another, analysing institutions according to each particular context (Thelen, 1999). Concerning this perspective, the comparative framework of the present research will emphasise some of the main concepts of historical institutionalism, with special focus on the notions of *critical junctures*, *path dependency* and *incremental changes*, in order to evaluate the differences and commonalities among the institutional paths of the regional parliaments analysed. Distinct from other mainstream theoretical approaches employed to understand the phenomenon of regional integration, and particularly European integration, historical institutionalism is a perspective – due its historical and long-term concerns – which puts a strong emphasis on the role of particularities and contexts in shaping and influencing institutional behaviour. As this study is focused on regional parliaments from diverse regions/continents, particular attention is given to the regional circumstances of the cases selected.

However, regional parliaments are not only shaped and constrained by external and surrounding environments. The existing academic literature, especially based in French-speaking countries, has emphasised the role of parliaments, and specifically of parliamentarians, as significant political agents who are able to influence the regional political system, demanding more powers for their own institution in the decision-making process (Costa, 2009; Costa and Brack, 2013). These studies have mostly focused on the historical empowerment of the European Parliament while very few studies analyse the internal workings and organisation of regional parliaments in Latin America (Medeiros, 2008; Dri and Paiva, 2016). In this sense, this study is also concerned with understanding the extent to which members of these parliaments have sought more power for their parliaments, and whether their fight has led to an increased amount of competences. Therefore, this research considers parliamentary agency as the key explanatory variable for the institutionalisation of regional parliaments. Rather than regarding agency and structure as opposite poles, this study assesses the interplay between these elements with the purpose of understanding the development of these assemblies over time. Despite the fact that presidential and governmental agents have been considered important actors of regional integration (Malamud, 2005; Caballero, 2013), this research states that they are not the only agents influencing regional integration projects. Therefore, attention must also be paid to parliamentary agents, which includes parliamentarians but also officials working for these parliaments, who might have displayed a capacity over time to make an impact, in distinct degrees, when it comes to the empowerment of these assemblies. Thus, through assessing

parliamentary agency over time, this thesis provides a deeper understanding of the institutional development of regional parliaments, moving away from more intergovernmental accounts on regional integration.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In order to understand the expansion and current state of these supranational or regional parliaments in Europe, Latin America and Africa, the main objective of the present study is to identify the factors explaining the *parliamentarisation* of regional integration, i.e. the institutionalisation of parliamentary characters in regional decision-making process (Costa, 2013).

This research's secondary objectives are:

1. Analyse in detail the creation and institutional development of parliaments in selected regional integration projects in Europe, Latin America and Africa.
2. Identify and assess how parliamentary agency has led to the parliamentarisation of the selected cases.
3. Provide a comparative analysis of the institutional path of the selected regional parliaments.

This study draws on official documents of each regional parliament, mainly accessible through their website and online databases, as well as on 46 semi-structured interviews with parliamentarians and officials working for the selected regional parliaments in Europe, Africa, and Latin America. Among the documents analysed, the research focused on the constitutional protocols or treaties which established the parliaments and the rules of procedure of each institution, besides additional documents referring to the institutional design, all of which are available online. Additional original historical documents were consulted in the three regional parliaments' archives and through interviews (see list of documents and interviewees consulted in the references). The aim was to consult former and/or current parliamentarians and officials from each of the three parliaments in order to better understand the internal organisation and activities of these parliaments, as well as their dialogue with other regional integration bodies. More details about the sources consulted are given in chapter three.

Three integration parliaments found on the European, Latin American and African continents will be compared. On the basis of these case studies, the degree of parliamentary agency which influenced the development of regional parliaments around the globe will be assessed. A number of reasons justify the selection of these cases, which include that they are found on three different continents; that they belong to regional organisations with integration ambitions; and that they are part of the most comprehensive/relevant regional projects in their respective regions in terms of demographic and their geographic and economic dimensions. In that regard, a comparative study of these three regions can allow us to make some generalisations about the development of regional parliament across the world. After all, the aim of comparative research is to ultimately produce conceptual or explanatory frameworks that can also be applied to other cases (Lijphart, 1971; Sartori, 1970; Landman, 2000). It is also important to note that these three parliaments produce documents, protocols, and bibliographic references more readily available to researchers than other existing regional parliaments, which made this research possible. Last but not least, recent developments, such as the direct elections of parliamentarians, might point to the further institutionalisation of these parliaments, which makes a comparison more topical and relevant. Again, more specific information on the selection criteria will be provided in chapter three.

The *European Parliament*, the only fully directly elected body of the EU will be the case studied within the European context. From Latin America, the *MERCOSUR Parliament*, which is the parliamentary dimension of the South Common Market (MERCOSUR), will be the second case study. Finally, amongst a number of parliamentary structures identified in Africa, the *Pan-African Parliament*, which constitutes the parliamentary structure of the African Union (AU), will be the third case study for comparison. On the basis of these three case studies, we can establish which factors have significantly shaped the development of regional parliaments. It is argued that, even with the presence of European ideational and material influence on the establishment of other regional parliaments in the world, the significant degree of *parliamentarisation* of these projects has not yet occurred outside of Europe. Indeed, variance with regard to the external and internal dimensions of parliamentary agency in each case has hindered the further institutional development of a strong parliamentary dimension within these regional projects.

After the analysis of each selected case, and on the basis of the aforementioned aspects, the proposed project will more broadly discuss why regional parliaments around the globe have reached different degrees of institutionalisation. The main argument of this

project is that the intergovernmental and presidential structures of the regional political contexts in the Global South, as well as the reduced level of parliamentary agency have shaped the development of the parliamentary assemblies over time, hindering the EU mimetic potential worldwide. These differences produced fundamental limitations in the accomplishment of EU normative diffusion in regions marked by distinct political and historical traditions. In this sense, prominence is given to the level of agency of parliaments and parliamentarians themselves, and their influence on the institutional evolution, internal organisation and the demand of more decision-making influence within the integration projects. Hence, the parliamentarisation of these institutions can be understood as an overall product of a simultaneous and permanent combination of the external and internal dimensions of parliamentary agency over time.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Chapter two starts with an overview of the parliamentarisation of regional integration as a phenomenon observed worldwide. This is followed by a discussion of the development of regional parliaments in the world with reference to the literature on regionalism waves (Hurrell, 2005; Telò, 2007). Regional parliaments were created not just in different geographical zones but also in distinct contexts of regionalism. Moreover, European weight in the establishment of regional parliaments is discussed, and in particular, how the European case of parliamentary empowerment affected the consolidation of similar institutions in other regional projects, by ideational and material means. Nonetheless, current literature on EU norms diffusion has been insufficient to explain parliamentarisation outside Europe. Thus, this thesis will provide an alternative account to understand this phenomenon by focusing on the role of parliamentary agency in this process.

In the third chapter, methodological and theoretical considerations are explained in order to justify the use of historical institutionalism and the notion of parliamentary agency as relevant theoretical/conceptual inputs to better understand the institutional path of regional parliaments. Prominence will be given to key historical institutionalist conceptions as well as to the innovative concept of parliamentary agency, segregated into its internal and external dimensions. In this sense, this thesis will introduce an agent-centric approach to historical institutionalism to assess regional parliamentarisation in time. This is followed by a reflection

on the case study selection of regional parliaments in Europe, Latin America and Africa. Next, the benefits of comparative analysis as a useful methodological approach will be discussed, alongside the comparative explanatory framework that will be applied to all three study cases will be presented. This refers to the two dimensions of parliamentary agency identified in each regional parliament that have fostered or hindered the institutional development of parliaments in integration processes.

The consecutive three empirical chapters will analyse the institutional path of each one of the cases studied (European Parliament, MERCOSUR Parliament and Pan-African Parliament). The narrative developed is grounded in the assumptions of historical institutionalism, with a particular focus on concepts such as *critical junctures* and *path dependency*, as well as the notion of *parliamentary agency*, which will be elaborated and applied to the institutional path of the selected regional parliaments.

The last part of the thesis is dedicated to the comparative analysis of all presented cases. In this final and conclusive chapter, the differences and commonalities among the cases are summarised and explained. The aim is to reveal the logic behind the creation and development of regional parliaments, which led to the different institutional degrees of *parliamentarisation*. The research defends that the variance of parliamentary agency identified, within its external and internal dimensions, is the main explanatory factor as to the different degrees of parliamentarisation observed in the cases analysed.

1.5 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

This research provides an original conceptual perspective to the understanding and the comparison on regional parliaments. While most previous studies have investigated the behaviour of regional parliaments through intergovernmental and neofunctionalist lens, no existing study has employed the assumptions and key concepts of historical institutionalism to better explain the institutional evolution of regional parliaments over time. This angle may, however, bring new perceptions on and long-term justifications of why regional parliaments have reached such diverse degrees of institutional complexity, especially when one contrasts the case of the European Parliament with other examples from Africa and Latin America.

As historical institutionalism places a strong emphasis on the particularities and the context of cases, this research provides in-depth results on the specific behaviour of the cases

selected. Furthermore, this study applies some of the key concepts of historical institutionalism, in particular the idea of critical junctures, to discuss how significant circumstances have shaped the role that regional parliaments have played within regional integration projects. Moreover, this study is the first attempt to apply the concept of parliamentary agency to understand the development of regional parliaments over time and their impact on parliamentary empowerment. In particular, it develops a typology of parliamentary agency that is then applied to the three cases. This classification assumes that the capacity of parliamentary agents to make a difference in terms of the decision-making processes and institutional reforms is derived from the incentives and constraints identified outside (external dimension) and inside (internal dimension) these parliaments. Therefore, as will be detailed in the theory section, this thesis identifies whether parliamentary agency in the cases assessed has been configured externally as either stimulated or restricted and internally as proactive or timid.

The European experience served as an additional justification for the creation of regional parliaments in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. However, when one looks to other regional assemblies in the world, a similar institutional empowerment is not found outside of Europe. This, however, does not mean that the European Parliament cannot serve as a comparable case and cannot be contrasted to other regional parliaments. What matters, is that such a comparison is done comprehensively by taking into account the different regional and national contexts from each region analysed. Yet, whilst many studies have contributed to a better understanding of the development of regional parliaments around the world, none of them have established such a comprehensive comparative framework that reveals why and how such diverse political and institutional contexts have shaped the constitution and the role of regional parliaments. Hence, this thesis intends to establish a framework for comparison, which will help us explain and analyse the roles and purposes of selected parliaments in Europe, Latin America, and Africa. While few researchers have compared cases from the developing world with the European Parliament's institutional evolution, there is still a gap with regard to the comparison of regional projects, and particularly regional parliaments, from the Global South among each other, through a cross-regional comparison.

Despite the existing literature on regional parliaments, most of the attention is still paid to the case of the European Parliament. As the literature review of this project will highlight, comparatively few studies have produced in-depth knowledge about regional parliaments in Latin America and in Africa. In this respect, this research intends to provide a

significant contribution to the study of regional parliaments as a worldwide phenomenon, looking not only at the vastly studied case of Europe, but also emphasising the efforts of parliamentarisation in Latin America and Africa, particularly focusing on the MERCOSUR and the Pan-African Parliaments. Both original documents and semi-structured interviews have the potential to provide new empirical information and innovative insights about the parliamentary cases studied.

Contemporary dynamics in regional integration have shown that more studies on regional parliaments in the Global South are needed in order to address the reasons for their existence and their importance in regional integration. At a time when the notion of a 'European Normative Power' (Manners, 2000) has been contested (Lazarou, 2012), it is important to understand the challenges and limits to the institutionalisation of regional parliaments worldwide. Not only is the European Union, and with it, the European Parliament, suffering from strong public contestation (low turnout in past European elections, rise of Eurosceptic parties, and public discontentment with European institutions), regional projects around the globe, and especially the regional parliaments created in the last decades, are also facing significant criticism from the public opinion. However, whilst the EU is often accused of being too powerful, regional parliaments in other parts of the world are often criticised because of their low degree of influence and presumed irrelevance in political decision-making processes (Malamud and Sousa, 2007). Paradoxically, the members of regional parliaments in Latin America are being selected, for the first time, through direct elections, yet without having experienced any substantial changes in their role and competences (Luciano et al., 2014). These contemporary challenges and transformations require more in-depth studies on the role of parliaments and parliamentarians within regional organisations. Considering this controversial political scenario, this thesis aims to contribute to understanding the global phenomenon of regional parliamentarisation and the role of parliamentary agents within regional integration.

1.6 SUMMARY OF THE THESIS

The purpose of this study is to understand the logic behind the development of regional parliaments worldwide and the reasons why parliamentary institutions have differed in their institutional setup over time. A comparison between three selected parliamentary cases in

Europe (European Parliament), Latin America (MERCOSUR Parliament) and Africa (Pan-African Parliament) will reveal explanations of the parliamentarisation of these assemblies, considering how parliamentary agency has been shaping these parliamentary bodies. Furthermore, this study draws on historical institutionalism to assess the institutional path of these institutions over time, through a long-term comparison of the selected cases. Official documents, such as treaties, protocols and rules of procedures as well as a set of semi-structured interviews with parliamentarians and officials from these parliaments will provide the qualitative data analysed in this project.

The main argument of this thesis is that assessing parliamentary agency in time better explains why regional parliaments around the world have achieved such diverse levels of parliamentarisation, considering the so far limited effects from EU's extra-regional assistance to these regional projects. Indeed, their particular regional context as well as the performance of their own parliamentary agents have restrained the European ideational and material influence on the development of other regional parliamentary cases in the Global South.

This research thus addresses a topic that deserves greater academic attention inasmuch as some of these parliamentary bodies have played a relevant role in regional integration, such as the European Parliament, while others are, for the first time, electing their parliamentarians for an exclusive regional mandate. This study intends to offer relevant theoretical, comparative and empirical contributions to the global understandings on regionalism, and particularly on regional parliamentary institutions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: GLOBAL REGIONALISM AND THE PARLIAMENTARISATION OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION

This chapter discusses the literature on regionalism and regional integration worldwide, with particular focus on the institutionalisation of parliamentary bodies at the regional level. First, this chapter examines the existing academic debate on regionalism, thereby giving a broad overview on how scholars have assessed so far the development of regional integration projects worldwide. Within the literature on regional integration and regionalism, one can observe an emerging attention to the role of MPs and regional parliaments within integration processes, which still need to be thoroughly addressed by empirical and comparative studies. In this sense, this chapter introduces previous research on the creation and re-launch of parliamentary bodies in these regional integration projects, arguing that the existing literature has provided limited explanations to understand the development of these institutions outside Europe. Afterwards, this chapter highlights how European integration has been recognised by previous studies as a pioneer case that has materially and ideationally influenced the institutionalisation of other regional assemblies in the world, especially in Latin America and Africa. Nonetheless, the potential European normative influence at the global scale – particularly through the emulation of the European Parliament’s powers within the EU’s decision-making processes – has been often put at stake, given its diffusion limits and the several crises recently faced by the European Union. Thus, considering the existing body of the literature on this topic and the recent challenging scenario for the global promotion and development of regional organisations and regional parliaments, this chapter teases out the contributions of this thesis when it comes to addressing the identified gaps in the literature regarding the parliamentarisation of regional organisations worldwide.

2.1 A WORLD OF REGIONS: REGIONALISM WAVES IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Previous scholarly works have highlighted that, since the second half of the twentieth century, one can observe the spread of regional organisations and regionalist projects around the globe. In the words of Hettne (2005), “(...) regionalism is a state-led or states-led project designed to reorganize a particular regional space along defined economic and political lines” (p. 545). Although this movement initially emerged in the European context, in a post-World

War II scenario, over the following decades, cooperation and integration at the regional level were also sought outside Europe. Therefore, the academic literature on regionalism has divided regionalist movements according to different waves, i.e. international/regional temporal contexts which favoured the creation of new regional institutions worldwide.

In contrast to previous ‘malevolent regionalism’, promoted by Germany and Japan to establish themselves as regional hegemons in Europe and East Asia, respectively (Telò, 2007), an economic and security regionalism emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, when the dynamics of Cold War consolidated US Hegemony in the Western Hemisphere. Economic and commercial integration was the main focus of this first regionalist wave. The distinct stages of regional economic integration, as categorised by Bela Balassa (1961), were designed as templates for all integration projects. The development of free-trade areas at the regional level were, for instance, followed by trade protectionism at the international level, as symbolised by the idea of a “European Fortress”. However, while the European case seemed to confirm neofunctionalists’ predictions on the deepening of the integration process through increasing *spill over* effects (Haas, 1967), the same dynamics were not found in projects outside the European continent (Malamud and Schmitter, 2006), which pointed out to the limits of traditional theories of European integration to categorise regional projects elsewhere. Examples of organisations created within this regionalist context are the Council of Europe (1949), the European Community of Coal and Steel (1952) and the European Economic Community (1958). In the Americas, the Organisation of American States (1948), the Latin American Free-Trade Association (1960), the Central American Common Market (1960), and the Andean Pact (1969) were launched during that time. On the African continent, the Organisation of African Union (1963) and the Economic Community of Western Africa States (1975) were founded, while in Asia, the Association of the Southeast Asia Nations (1967) was set out in this context.

The second regionalist wave, understood in the academic literature as a ‘New Regionalism’ (Telò, 2007; Hurrell, 1995; Hettne, 2002), emerged from a post-Cold War order, when a multilateral, heterogeneous, and complex international system gained strength. As described by Closa (2015, p. 5), “New regionalism is the general label used to differentiate current scholarship from the older regionalism associated with ‘integration theory’”. This new wave began even before the fall of the Berlin Wall, with the signature of the Single European Act (1986), which has substantially deepened European integration and led to the development of the European Union (EU) in the beginnings of the 1990s

(Warleigh-Lack and Robinson, 2011). This emerging regionalism wave has been intertwined with globalisation, both as a product and a reaction to it. In fact, “(N)ew regionalism can be seen as an attempt by states to react by strengthening regional control when traditional centralized national sovereignty no longer functions and to bargain collectively with extra-regional partners” (Telò, 2007, p.7). While the old or first regionalism wave was dominated by internal/endogenous dynamics within the region, the second wave has been fundamentally shaped by the external environment, inasmuch as globalising forces tended to influence substantially the regional schemes established in the 1990s (Warleigh-Lack and Robinson, 2011). With regard to the economic characteristics of each regionalism wave, Hettne states that:

Whereas the old in economic terms was inward oriented and protectionist, the new is often described as ‘open,’ and thus compatible with an interdependent world economy. In fact, there is no alternative. In a globalised world closure is no longer an option (2002, p. 326).

The context of international trade liberalisation of the 1990s led to the adoption of neoliberal economic policies at the global level, transforming the notion of ‘close’ and protectionist regionalism into an ‘open’ one, in which regional integration was not seen as a commercial ‘Fortress’, but as an instrument to achieve further conditions to compete internationally, through liberal foundations.

Nonetheless, New Regionalism has not been considered an exclusively economic process, but a multidimensional and political one (Telò, 2007). During old regionalism, economic and security-related issues are the most prevalent engines for regional cooperation and integration. New Regionalism, on the other hand, is characterised by multitasking regional organisations responsible for dealing with areas that go beyond the economic and security agendas – such as education, culture, social policy, migration, energy, and infrastructure. Regarding the ‘actorness’ of the region, it is argued that the first regionalist wave was centred in states and bureaucracies/diplomacies as components and protagonists of regional organisations. In contrast, New Regionalism operates in a context where the performance of both states and non-states actors must be acknowledged (Hettne, 2002). “Borrowing from the jargon of Internet users, one may say that regions are transitioning from a 1.0 phase dominated by technocrats to a 2.0 stage characterised by horizontal networks, alternative models and citizens’ contestations” (Fioramonti, 2012, p. 159). For instance, the

European Union (1993), the North American Free-Trade Agreement (1994), the Andean Community (1996), the Southern Common Market (1991), the South African Development Community (1992) and the African Union (2002) are examples of organisations established or re-launched in the New Regionalism context.

In that regard, table 1 (below) compares Old and New Regionalisms, taking into consideration: the international context, the dependence of external/endogenous actors/powers, economic strategies, functionality of organisation, and the role of state and non-state actors in regional organisations created in each of these regionalist waves.

Table 1. Old vs New Regionalism

Old Regionalism	New Regionalism
Results of bipolar, Cold War international system	Feature of multi-polar, globalised international system
Dependent upon superpower patronage	Dependent on participant state preferences
Economically protectionist	Economically open (neoliberal)
Function-specific	Multi-purpose
Composed of states (previously) complete sovereignty	Composed of ‘porous’ states with complex interactions between state and non-state actors

Source: Warleigh-Lack and Robinson, 2011, p. 6.

One of the most significant contributions of the New Regionalism literature is its strong criticism on the assumption that EU integration must be considered as an example or template for understanding regionalism elsewhere in the world. “Regionalism scholars have preached the release of research from the tyranny of “old Eurocentric” integration theory” (Closa, 2015, p.10). According to this perspective, the European model might not necessarily be the most adequate and desired path for other regional projects (Lombaerde, 2011). Therefore, scholars of New Regionalism have questioned whether European integration serves as a role model to other regional integration projects (Telò, 2007).

In this sense, the literature on New Regionalism brought significant insights on the regionalism movements outside the European context. Several academic works were developed with the aim to compare the evolution of regionalism around the globe, emphasising both the presence of mutual learning and the existence of particular dynamics in each case/region (Fioramonti, 2012). In fact, some scholars have demonstrated how little the European experience has contributed to a better understanding of regionalism in Asia, Africa

and Latin America (Acharya, 2012; Malamud and Gardini, 2012; Fioramonti, 2012). These studies have argued that the political conditions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are too different from post-war Europe. Among the main differences presented are, at the regional level, the absence of supranational institutions and community law, and, when it comes to the national level, the prevalence of presidential models, which are seen as a hindrance to regional integration, as well as, in some regional cases, the lack of democratic governments.

However, some criticisms regarding New Regionalism as an innovative approach to explain the Post-Cold War regionalism context have emerged in recent years in Europe. Closa, for example, writes that:

The multidimensional side of the phenomenon is not new (just look at the sea of literature on European identity/culture and on European security), nor the increase in the number of actors. Neither is the involvement of non-state actors (consider the neofunctionalist interest in lobbies and transnational groups). Thus, beyond criticism of Eurocentrism, it is difficult to find conceptual novelty in new regionalism (2015, p. 6).

The New Regionalism body of literature has also been contested outside of Europe, as new regional dynamics occurring over the last decades might not confirm the assumptions of New Regionalism. Critics have argued that, in some regions of the Global South, autonomic dynamics have emerged, which would not necessarily be dependent on the hegemony of a liberal post-Cold War order. This new conjuncture would refute the arguments from New Regionalism literature about the role of external variables – i.e. neoliberal globalisation – on the development of current regional projects around the world. According to some authors, Latin America, in particular, has witnessed a singular regional path, a post-liberal or post-hegemonic one, since the first decade of the twentieth-first century (Veiga and Ríos, 2007; Sanahuja, 2012; Tussie and Riggirozzi, 2015). “Post-liberal regionalism seems to be an intellectual creation peculiar to Latin America”, as Closa (2015, p.7) observes. The emergence of regional organisations, such as the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our Americas (ALBA), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), as well as the reformulation of previous initiatives such as MERCOSUR, could not be explained by the logic of Open Regionalism, as economic openness/liberalisation and deeper economic integration have not been the main drivers of those new regional projects.

Post-liberal regionalism, in this sense, would mean surpassing Open Regionalism's characteristics, contexts and conditions, marked in Latin America by the emergence of the 'Washington Consensus'¹. Post-liberal regionalism has thus been characterised by: the return of politics and a development agenda (against the previous economic/trade agenda); stronger state presence in the formulation of policies; the emphasis on a positive agenda (i.e. institutions/policies-building, instead of a deregulation primacy); growing concern about infrastructure and social issues, such as the reduction of socio-economic asymmetries among Member-states; and the promotion of increasing non-state participation and social legitimacy at the regional level (Sanahuja, 2012). Both concepts of post-liberal and post-hegemonic regionalism sought to differentiate themselves from the previous categorisation of Regionalism waves. Riggiorozzi summarises this conceptual attempt, emphasising that:

(...) what the emergence of post-hegemonic regionalisms shows is that long-standing projects of integration and cooperation cohabit with alternative models of regional organisation that exceeds the 'old' and 'new' characterisations of neoliberal regionalism (2011, p. 20).

However, as stated by Legler (2013), there is no consensus over the extent of this distinct regionalism wave observed in Latin America. While 'optimistic' scholars have argued that the change from a neoliberal, US dominant order (New Regionalism) of the 1990s to a post-liberal one led to significant changes in Latin American regional governance (Sanahuja, 2012; Riggiorozzi and Tussie, 2015), 'sceptic' authors, despite acknowledging these new regional initiatives, are convinced that they are almost irrelevant in the process of pooling sovereignty and region-building (Malamud and Gardini, 2012). According to the second stance, the establishment of new regional projects in Latin America (such as ALBA, UNASUR, CELAC) has led to a more complex and, possibly, overlapping regionalism, blurring the competences, agendas, tasks of the members as well as their objectives. From this perspective, current Latin American regionalism could be better understood through its variable/segmented geometry (Nolte, 2014). Last but not least, more recent projects, such as the Pacific Alliance, which united Mexico, Colombia, Peru and Chile in a market-oriented regional initiative and mentioned the foundations of Open or Liberal Regionalism in its

¹ A liberalisation momentum observed in Latin America during the 1990s. In this context, pro-market institutional reforms were conducted by Latin American governments, which had the support of international and US institutions (Williamson, 2004).

founding treaty, questions the prominence of Post-Liberal Regionalism as the strongest explicative framework of twenty-first century Latin America.

Although the concepts of Post-Liberal and Post-Hegemonic regionalism have been mainly used to analyse Latin American contemporary regionalism, some of their features can also be found in other cases in the Global South. Some authors have argued that the external factors that prevailed in the New Regionalism literature are not necessarily the most prevalent variables to understand regionalism around the world. Therefore, endogenous (regional and national) forces must also be considered, especially in regions where sovereignty transfer was never at stake. For instance, Tussie and Riggirozzi write:

At the same time, a closer scrutiny showed that the emergence and evolution of regional integration agreements in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Central and South Asia were less influenced by global economic pressures than by geopolitical and security considerations. In Africa, regional or continental integration agreements were meant to enhance domestic standing and cement state sovereignty, rather than increase the size of markets or respond to global economic challenges (2015, p. 1054).

In Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America, the issue of national sovereignty has prevented the development of supranational institutions. In fact, regionalism was also seen as a defensive instrument against extra-hegemonic doctrines and actors, such as Western countries and especially the United States. Thus, intergovernmentalism (or interpresidentialism), informal institutionalisation and consensus-based policies were preferred to the development of supranationalism and community law (Wunderlich, 2012; Closa, 2015; Lazarou and Luciano, 2015).

Given this pluralistic, and sometimes confusing, scenario created by the academic literature on regionalism, some alternatives have been formulated. While some authors have argued that mainstreaming regionalism (through the use of theories, concepts and methods from traditional political science) would be a way to strengthen its theoretical, methodological and ontological foundations (Closa, 2015), others have emphasised the use of new concepts, such as 'regional governance' or 'multilevel system', in order to avoid misunderstandings stemming from established concepts such as 'regionalism' and 'integration' (Nolte, 2014).

Within these diverse regionalist contexts aforementioned – old, new and post-liberal ones – different degrees of institutionalisation can be observed, alongside the distinct regionalism waves. In this regard, one of the dimensions which has received an increasing amount of attention within the regionalism projects is the parliamentary one. Alongside this trend, this thesis aims to contribute to addressing the expansion of regional parliaments in the regional organisations established worldwide over the past decades, by providing an alternative explanation to understanding the development of regional parliaments across the globe.

2.2 THE PARLIAMENTARISATION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS

The increasing engagement of Members of Parliament (MPs) and political parties in international relations and regional integration is a phenomenon observed worldwide. Foreign policy can no longer be defined as the exclusive domain of national governments and diplomats. Through parliamentary diplomacy, MPs seek to influence foreign policy and establish relationships with other countries, regions or international organisations (Weisglas and de Boer, 2007). Parliamentary diplomacy has been presented as an important strategy to involve legislative actors in international matters, allowing members of parliaments to position themselves on global issues (usually acting as ‘moral tribunes’, through the defence of human rights and democracy) as well as improving the dialogue among MPs from different nationalities and establishing transnational ideological ties among national parties (Stavridis, 2006; Stavridis et al., 2012). In this sense, the development of International Parliamentary Institutions (IPIs) is an attempt to create parliamentary institutions on a regional or global scale. Through these parliamentary forums, parliamentary agents have been allowed to oversee, support or even oppose external policies conducted by national executives (Sabic, 2008; Cofelice, 2012).

The establishment and institutionalisation of regional parliaments cannot be separated from the waves of regionalism observed worldwide and previously discussed. Despite these parliamentary institutions having predecessors, such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), founded in 1889, most cases of IPIs started to develop after the Second World War, in the context of the Cold War and within the Old Regionalism wave, especially in Europe.

Examples are the parliamentary Assemblies from the Council of Europe (1949), the European Coal and Steel Community (1951), the Western European Union (1954), and the North Atlantic Organisation Treaty. However, IPIs were also pursued outside of Europe, as a significant instrument to increase the dialogue among MPs from different countries or regions (Cofelice, 2012).

Since the 1960s, a spread of parliamentary institutions outside Europe can be observed, mainly in Latin America, but some cases are also found in Africa and Asia. While some of them are independent parliamentary organisations as the Latin American Parliament (1964) and the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (1974), others belong to the organisational structure of regional projects such as the East African Legislative Assembly (1967), the Central American Parliament (1975), the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organisation (1977) and the Andean Parliament (1979), parliamentary dimensions of the East African Community, Central American Integration System, ASEAN and Andean Community, respectively. Contemporary literature on IPIs has stated that these parliamentary organs associated to regional integration projects have a stronger potential to develop increasing institutional competences. Cofelice thus observes:

IPIs belonging to systems of regional integration are more likely to acquire and develop supervisory, budgetary, co-legislative and consultative powers than those parliamentary institutions embedded in organizations whose aims are limited to forms of cooperation, coordination or concertation among states (2012, p. 11).

This aspect is also recently emphasised by Rocabert et al. (2018), when arguing that IPIs from general-purpose international organisations have been achieving more relevant roles than those originated from task-specific organisations. According to the authors, within these broader organisations, one may find a more pressuring demand for national governments to support the establishment of parliamentary channels with the aim of legitimise or scrutinise the decision-making processes.

With regard to regional integration, the increasing participation of MPs and parliaments in the discussions of specific regional policies can be observed. A common institutional instrument used to seek influence on regional decision-making was the creation and development of regional parliaments as the parliamentary dimension of regional integration projects (Drummond, 2005; Malamud and Stavridis, 2011). The consolidation of democracy at the national level increased the demand for more democratic and transparent

characteristics of international and regional organisations (Bummel, 2011). These parliamentary institutions enable national elites and opposing political groups to participate in the regional political game, bringing pluralist values to foreign policy discussions, historically limited to executive political positions (Cutler, 2001).

Scholars have increasingly discussed the democratic deficit at the international/regional level. Within that debate, the establishment of regional parliamentary bodies, selected via direct elections, was viewed as the main response to the lack of democracy at the regional scale (Follesdal and Hix, 2006). Thus, the strengthening of regional parliaments would be instrumental to legitimise regional organisations and insert democratic and representative channels to decisions taken at the regional level. Regional parliaments would therefore have the capacity to enhance democracy of regional integration projects, which ultimately affect the lives of citizens and social groups within member states (Dri, 2009; Mpanyame, 2009).

New Regionalism brought a new momentum for regional parliaments worldwide. Although several regional organisations emerged earlier, the increase in the number of international and regional parliaments is remarkable from the 1990s onwards (Rocabert et al., 2018). “Whereas only one regional organization featured a parliamentary institution in 1950, this number rose to six in 1990 and to 19 in 2010” (Lenz et al., 2019, p. 5). This regionalist conjuncture was deeply linked to globalisation and the new context of democratisation in the world, labelled by Huntington (1991) as a third wave of democratisation. Demands from society to increase participation and representation in regional integration led to, on the one hand, the creation of parliaments, such as the Joint Parliamentary Commission of MERCOSUR, and the first proposal to establish a continental parliament in Africa with the signature of the Abuja Treaty, both in 1991. At the same time, previous regional parliaments have been strengthened, the best example being the European Parliament, which was empowered through the Single European Act (1986) and the Treaty of the European Union (1992) (Rittberger, 2003; Kreppel, 2002).

More recently, a new parliamentary wave can be observed, which is likely to be associated to the context of Post-liberal Regionalism. In the Latin American context, in which the concept was initially applied, it is represented, at the parliamentary level, by the transformation of the Joint Parliamentary Commission of MERCOSUR into the MERCOSUR Parliament (2005) and the subsequent proposal to establish a South American Parliament, included in the Treaty of UNASUR (2008). Nonetheless, the institutionalisation

of other regional parliaments, such as the Pan-African Parliament in 2004 and the transformation of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organisation (AIPO) into the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) in 2006, might be also related to this regionalist moment. The European continent, however, has not necessarily been excluded from this trend. More powers have been given to the European Parliament in recent years – enshrined in the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe (rejected in 2004), but ultimately recovered with the Lisbon Treaty (2007). In fact, as will be addressed subsequently, the European path was considered a reference case for most of these regional parliaments established during this period (Dri, 2010; Rüland and Bechle, 2011; Kingah and Cofelice, 2012).

Since the late 1970s and especially after the first direct elections of the European Parliament in 1979, European integration went through a process of parliamentarisation of its decision-making processes. According to Costa (2009; 2013), parliamentarisation can be understood as the institutionalisation of parliamentary characters in regional decision-making process. In the words of Lenz et al. (2019, p. 12), “Regional parliamentarization is the process by which a parliamentary institution acquires formalized access to participate in the decision making of a regional organization”. The most visible evidence of this trend would be the increasing empowerment of the European Parliament with regard to its legal competences and its capacity to negotiate with both the European Council and the Commission. This parliamentary body evolved over the past decades from a mere consultative assembly to a powerful parliament. Since the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the European Parliament is the EU’s co-legislator, alongside the Council of Ministers.

The EP’s institutional empowerment has been associated to the legitimacy crisis faced by the EU in the past decades. As far as the integration process was deepened, policies were increasingly transferred to the European level. Therefore, the fact that decision-making was detached from citizens’ control and participation led to a ‘democratic’ contestation of regional integration, translated into the concept of a ‘democratic deficit’ of EU integration (Follesdal and Hix, 2006). By contrast, other authors have argued that the EU’s political system is a democratically legitimate one, inasmuch as it presents highly constrained and accountable institutions through a complex check and balances model (Moravcsik, 2002). In the meantime, some have argued that the democratic deficit is due to the fact that policies decided at the European level are not always accessible to public scrutiny (Follesdal and Hix, 2006). According to this reasoning, the elections for the EP and the proposal of directly

electing the President of the European Commission would be means to increase democratic participation within the EU as well as to politicise EU politics (Hix, 2002). Thus, the growth of the EP's powers has been seen as an instrument to reduce the alleged democracy deficit and to oversee and limit the activities of the European Commission (Costa, 2009).

The adoption of parliamentary or semi-parliamentary political systems by almost all member states, albeit having national particularities, has corroborated to the improvement of the role of the European Parliament at the EU level. Therefore, the European assembly, since its origins, sought to obtain all the characteristics that national parliaments have, such as financial independence, a separate administrative organisation, rules for the elections of its members, and the immunity of MEPs (Costa, 2002). The increasing collaboration between the EP and the Council of Ministers and Commission transformed the marginal position of this parliamentary dimension into a more prominent one, where the parliament could, indeed, influence and engage with both the Council and the Commission regarding EU legislation (Costa, 2009).

When the EP's institutional path is compared to other parliamentary bodies worldwide, a significant degree of variation can be observed. Even if the European parliamentary example was considered as a template in some of those regions, no parliamentary institutions outside Europe has developed a similar level of parliamentarisation as the European Parliament, as authors have argued when analysing Latin American, Southeast Asian and African cases. "Whereas both ASEAN and Mercosur initially merely copied European institutions in an act of mimetic or coercive isomorphism, the further path of both integration schemes varied to a considerable degree" (Rüland and Bechle, 2011, p. 17).

Many regional entities of the South, especially those in Africa, now have parliamentary organs showing a clear ambition towards a European Union (EU) Parliament style organ; demonstrating that there is recognition, across many regions, that regional assemblies matter. However regional assemblies or international parliamentary institutions (IPIs) have not been very active (Kingah and Cofelice, 2012, p. 3).

Although some comparisons with the European parliamentary case are observed in the academic literature on regional parliaments and IPIs, there is still a gap when it comes to our understanding as to why the EP is the most 'institutionalised' regional parliament, and why

this institutional behaviour is not seen outside of Europe. Despite a number of comparisons have been made between regional parliaments belonging to the same continent, especially Latin America (Malamud and Sousa, 2005; Erthal, 2006; Dri, 2009; Luciano et al., 2014) and Africa (Kingah and Cofelice, 2012; Nzewi, 2013), only one study compared regional parliamentary bodies from different continents of the Global South (Rüland and Bechle, 2011). Thus, there is a clear demand for further comprehensive studies on the institutional development of regional parliaments at a global scale, which intend to explain this diverse level of parliamentarisation observed worldwide.

In fact, what has been specifically observed in the recent literature on regional parliaments is the importance of the European case for the development of other regional parliaments outside of Europe. Not only has the European Parliament been considered the pioneer and most institutionalised case, but it has been argued that the EU's institutional model served as a template for the establishment and deepening of other regional parliaments abroad. Although this thesis recognises these contributions, it considers them insufficient to fully understand parliamentarisation in the Global South.

2.3 THE LIMITS OF EUROPEAN NORMATIVE INFLUENCE ON THE SPREAD OF REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS WORLDWIDE

As previously observed, the regional dynamics within Europe have sparked regionalism waves elsewhere since the second half of the twentieth century. Regional projects in the world have shared some of their political and economic foundations with the European project, although we must acknowledge some important differences in their regional contexts. With the European Union emerging as a key international actor, EU discourse started to emphasise the spread of European values to similar projects in other parts of the world. Among core principles such as democracy, the rule of law and human rights, regional integration has gained a particular prominence. "Since the 1990s, the European Union (EU) has declared its support for regional integration in other parts of the world, and incorporated this objective as a part of European external policy" (Farrell, 2009, p. 1165). The idea that European integration would be considered a successful regional enterprise encouraged the notion inside and outside of Europe that the EU could serve as a template and as an inspiring source for the establishment or even reformulation of other regional integration projects

around the world. It is also important to note that “the European Union (EU) perceives itself as a model for effective and legitimate governance to be emulated by other countries and regions” (Börzel and Risse, 2009, p. 5).

Exporting the European model became a central focus of European external action. The European Commission fostered the negotiation of agreements with third regions, in which the promotion of regional integration and the institutionalisation of existing regional projects were seen as important aspects of these agreements. Therefore, over the past decades, the EU, represented by the European Commission, has signed several intra-regional agreements with regional organisations of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

In contrast to the colonial past of the European relationship with the developing world, the European model, based on deepened and institutionalised integration, has not been clearly imposed on the Global South (Farrell, 2009). In fact, political and economic elites in these regions have seen the European institutional model as a positive response to increased (democratic) legitimacy and efficiency within their own regional integration projects (Jetschke and Murray, 2012). Within the academic literature of EU’s international engagement, the conceptualisation of the EU as *Normative Power*, coined by Manners (2002), has been recognised as a key contribution which aimed to explain the EU’s ideational influence abroad. The EU’s normative power would differentiate itself from the concepts of civilian (or economic) and military powers, traditionally employed to analyse the EU’s instruments and capabilities. According to Manners, this term changes the analytical perspective from a material and empirical basis to a cognitive or symbolic one, whereby values and principles-shaping would be significant forms of international leverage. “Thus the notion of a normative power Europe is located in a discussion of the ‘power over opinion’, *idée force*, or ‘ideological power’, and the desire to move beyond the debate over state-like features through an understanding of EU’s international identity” (Manners, 2002, p. 239). In this sense, the EU cannot impose its principles, which have been considered by the West as ‘universally accepted’, to third regions or countries. Actually, the EU’s values must be desired by third actors in order to be fully adopted. Therefore, the incorporation of norms exported by the EU had to be perceived by these recipients as an adequate approach for their own regional contexts (Whitman, 2013).

After Manners’ conceptual contribution (2002), one can observe a spread of academic papers which sought to deepen, through conceptual and empirical analysis, the understanding of the European normative power in the world. While some works emphasised the

establishment of theoretical and general approaches to observe the ideational role of the EU (Whitman, 2013; Lenz, 2013), others developed case studies on the EU's normative role in the development of regional integration on the global scale (Börzel and Risse, 2009; Lombaerde and Schulz, 2009; Jetschke and Murray, 2012; Haastруп, 2013).

For instance, with the aim to refine the applicability of the concept of European normative power, Lenz (2013), drawing on diffusion theory, deepened the typology created by Manners in order to create a more accurate conceptual framework for the evaluation of European normative influence on regional projects worldwide. "Diffusion theory is drawn on to conceptualize normative power as the EU's ability to diffuse EU-type norms, institutions and practices by immaterial means – what is termed here 'ideational diffusion'" (Lenz, 2013, p. 212). Thus, European normative power could be diffused through *socialisation* and *emulation*. Although both diffusion mechanisms are ideational ones, the former is exercised by an active role of European institutions, with the establishment of cooperation agreements, political dialogue and technical assistance to third regions; while the latter is marked by a passive position of the EU, inasmuch discourses, narratives and symbols on the 'success' of European integration have diffused EU norms and increased European influence worldwide (Lenz, 2013).

Besides promoting a general framework used to understand the EU's normative role in the establishment of regional institutions abroad, some studies have focused on the empirical analysis of cases where a certain amount of EU institutional influence can be found. Though, not only is it essential to acknowledge the EU's capacity and ways of normative diffusion, but also the particular regional and national contexts must be considered in order to provide a better and factual evaluation of both the performance and the limits of EU normative influence worldwide. Therefore, "Efforts to understand the diffusion process also entail proper attention to another dimension: the medium, context, structure, milieu, or environment through which information about the initial event may or may not travel to a given destination" (Solingen and Börzel, 2014, p. 175).

The EU's influence on other regional projects in the world started through several policy documents and strategies provided by the European Commission in order to assist the deepening of regional integration in third regions, having in mind the European experience. Although the EU's international engagement was expanded in the 1990s, with the founding of the European Union, the promotion of regional integration elsewhere in the world can be observed since the 1960. During this period, the European Communities (EC) established

cooperation and aid agreements with regional institutions from African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries (Lombaerde and Schulz, 2009).

Nonetheless, over the next decades, the EC promoted its project in other corners of the globe, assisting not only continental projects but also sub-regional integration projects. The European impact on regional projects outside the old continent was facilitated through programmes and funding (socialisation), as well as the flows of ideas and principles which were accepted and internalised by the decision-making actors from those regions. Notable in Latin America is the case of the Andean Pact – named afterwards as Andean Community – where European institutional design served as a role model. Most importantly, the aspects of supranationalism and community law were incorporated in Andean Treaties and Protocols. However, as will be further discussed in this research, “the limitations of such influencing become also clear when we look at the unsuccessful attempts by the EU to strengthen the Andean Court of Justice and the Andean Parliament” (Lombaerde and Schulz, 2009, p. 290).

Copying European institutional experience was also a way to increase external and internal legitimacy of regional integration in these regions. “The Andean Community, the African Union and recently also the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have modelled parts of their institutions on the EU to increase their international reputation” (Börzel and Risse, 2009, p. 8). Some regions sought Europe’s template to avoid international and domestic criticism of the regional projects. Assuming some formal characteristics of the European model was envisaged as a strategy to increase the support for the establishment of regional projects in the developing world. Even ASEAN, committed since its foundation to a particular distinct institutional design (the so-called ‘ASEAN way’) – which refused any pooling of sovereignty and deeper institutionalisation (Acharya, 2004) – have moved more recently to a community-building approach and have adopted EU-style institutions, such as ASEAN’s Committee of Permanent Representatives – mimicking, thus, the EU’s Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) (Börzel and Risse, 2009; Jetschke and Murray, 2012).

Indeed, recent literature has revised the assumptions of EU Normative Power and has adjusted them in order to acknowledge the agency of non-European actors and the role of adaptation and localisation of EU norms and institutions. For instance, Haastrup (2013) referred to the EU as a mentor when it comes to African regionalism, in particular the establishment of the African Union, calling attention to the fact that African agents have not fully downloaded European norms, but have adapted the EU’s ‘best practices’ according to

their own interests and needs. Moreover, Lenz (2018) emphasised the role of ‘frame diffusion’ when it comes to institutional choice, in which regional/local actors have reflected whether and to which extent external institutional models may be incorporated in moments of institutional change.

Within these discussions on the diffusion and adoption of EU’s institutional design, the parliamentary dimension of the EU has been also emulated by some regional projects abroad. The institutional path of the European Parliament was viewed by political elites of third regions as a successful experiment regarding increasing representativeness and legitimacy at the regional level. Although Latin America was the region where most regional parliaments have considered the EP’s experience (Malamud and Sousa, 2007), other parliamentary experiences are also seen in Africa and Southeast Asia (Kingah and Cofelice, 2012; Rüland and Bechle, 2011). The EU, through the Commission and the EP, has assisted the international promotion of the EU’s parliamentary model, by the signature of several cooperation agreements with regional organisations that had as central aspects the support to the institutionalisation and the strengthening of the parliamentary bodies of these projects – what indicates a socialisation of parliamentary institutions (Börzel and Risse, 2009; Dri, 2010). Nevertheless, officials working for the parliaments in those regions were also inspired by the EP’s history of empowerment and have supported the development of parliaments in their own regional integration projects, which is a strong evidence of parliamentary emulation (Lenz, 2013).

Despite the significant influence of the EP’s experience on the development of regional parliaments in the world, the institutional empowerment of the European Parliament has not been replicated elsewhere. This lack of empowerment was observed in case studies focusing on Latin America, Asia and Southeast Asia. Following the arguments of Dri (2010) and Lenz (2013), the establishment of the MERCOSUR Parliament would be an emulation of the EP’s model, however, with merely consultative powers. Kingah and Cofelice (2012: 3) echo these concerns arguing that “(in Africa) the majority of sub regional and regional assemblies tend to be weak in terms of what they can actually do”. In addition, Rüland and Bechle (2011) also point out how ASEAN follows the same direction:

Whereas both ASEAN and Mercosur initially merely copied European institutions in an act of mimetic or coercive isomorphism, the further path of both integration schemes varied to a considerable degree. Even though ASEAN and Mercosur shared the experience of increasing domestic pressures on regional governance, in ASEAN’s case

they did not target the regional legislative body. ASEAN could thus confine AIPO to minor rhetorical and symbolic changes (p. 14).

In this context, it is worth asking why the EU's assistance in the spread of similar institutions abroad has not led to empowered regional parliaments in the world: What are the reasons explaining the roles, functions, and competences of regional integration parliaments, especially when compared to the European Parliament?

While the European Parliament is currently a strong decision-making body, comparable institutions in Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia have not reached a significant degree of institutional development and complexity. The differences have been explained with reference to the environments in which these regional parliaments operate. Lenz, for instance, writes that "(...) as structural conditions vary across regions, EU ideational diffusion rarely leads to similar or even comparable institutional practices and outcomes" (Lenz, 2013, p. 223).

In addition, contemporary challenges to the European Union, such as the Eurozone crisis and Brexit, might relativise the idea of a 'successful European integration' and hinder the European normative action abroad (Cameron, 2010; Lazarou, 2012). "(...) in light of the EU's intra-regional pressures and the importance of the external environment, emphasising the normative dimension of the EU may be inadequate" (Maier-Knapp, 2014, p. 232). This trend not only limits the EU's capabilities to actively support regional integration and the parliamentarisation of regional projects around the world; it also means that third regions and countries no longer see the EU as a success story that is worth copying.

Thereby, the literature on EU normative power and EU norms diffusion has been insufficient to explain the distinct levels of parliamentarisation outside Europe. Considering the limitations of previous EU-centred approaches to study regionalism and parliamentarisation worldwide, this study provides a non-Eurocentric perspective to understand the logic of regional parliaments in the world, which puts strong emphasis on the role of endogenous parliamentary actors to the development of these parliamentary assemblies at the regional level. Without fully discarding the influence of EU's institutions in the spread and design of analogue organisations elsewhere, this thesis gives particular prominence to the parliamentary dynamics found in each region of the globe, which have, in fact, been the key drivers to the development of these regional parliaments.

2.4 UNDERSTANDING PARLIAMENTARISATION BEYOND EUROPE

Due to its evident historical empowerment, most of the scholarly focus was given to studying the development of the European Parliament in the context of European integration. In fact, the very notion of parliamentarisation has been fashioned to address the gradual evolution and expansion of the EP's competences within the EU decision-making process (Costa, 2009, 2013). Moreover, Rittberger (2003, 2005) discussed the EP's empowerment based on the legitimacy gaps encountered within the EU over time, which required the development of a stronger regional assembly in order to scrutinise European supranational institutions. Although these studies have offered invaluable insights on the EP's evolution, they have been insufficient to explain parliamentarisation in regional organisations apart from Europe, which usually lack elements of supranationalism, parliamentarism and democracy, key explaining components of the EP's evolution. At the same time, as discussed in the previous section, the literature on European Normative Power and norms diffusion has also shown its limits to fully address the phenomenon of parliamentarisation outside Europe.

Some recent studies aimed at assessing the development of international parliamentary assemblies. For instance, Rocabert et al. (2018) has addressed the issue of parliamentarisation worldwide. They argue that – not far from previous reflections of Rittberger (2003, 2005) – governments have established parliamentary bodies in order to legitimise international organisations, providing them with democratic and representative channels without granting them substantial powers over time. “In other words, when governments establish IPIs, they seek to legitimate IOs by creating the appearance of democracy without effective democratic empowerment” (Rocabert et al., 2018, p. 6). This argument is also defended by Lenz et al. (2019), when defending the existence of a legitimisation strategy from Member States to establish these regional parliaments.

However, what previous literature has in common is that these studies tended to provide explanations that have focused on why national governments decided to create or empower regional parliaments over time. In fact, they all departed from the question firstly posed by Rittberger (2005, p. VII) when assessing the EP's development: “Why did national governments bestow the European Parliament gradually with new competencies and powers?”. This thesis, however, posits that in order to understand regional parliamentarisation in the world, one must take into account not only the rationale from the

point of view of Member States, but also the role of parliamentary agents in each regional context analysed. Thereby, it addresses the questioning raised by Rocabert et al. (2018) on “how likely is it that weak IPIs become more powerful over time despite the reluctance of member state governments to endow them with significant competences from the start?” (p. 20). Thus, by introducing the concept of parliamentary agency into the discussion, this thesis presents a new approach to understand parliamentarisation in time. Although it recognises that variance in the surrounding context of the regional projects is a relevant component which may either restrain or stimulate the development of regional parliaments, this thesis argues that parliamentarisation is also a product of the dynamism of parliamentary agents within each regional organisation. For instance, recent literature on the EU has started to change the focus from Member States’ preferences and perceptions, paying more attention to the role of national parliaments in this process, which supported regional parliamentarisation and the empowerment of the EP in order to cover their own lack of competences to hold European institutions to account (Haroche, 2018). Nonetheless, much can still be said about the role of regional parliaments and parliamentary actors in this process. Thus, by comparing how parliamentary agency has been ascertained in concrete cases in Europe, South America and Africa, this thesis intends to explain the variance of parliamentarisation degrees worldwide and the logic behind the evolution of regional parliaments.

2.5 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has discussed the contemporary academic literature on comparative regionalism and regional integration, with a particular focus on the development of parliaments within regional projects since the second half of the twentieth century. From a global perspective of regionalism waves, this chapter emphasised the institutionalisation of regional parliaments in the world during this period. Each regional wave presented by the academic literature – old, new and post-liberal waves – has brought new regional dynamics, which have led to diverse levels of institutionalisation of parliamentary bodies at the regional level.

The chapter has highlighted that the perception of a ‘European success’ in terms of institutional development has supported arguments for the constitution of regional integration projects in the Global South. Thus, previous literature has emphasised how the European experience served as an additional justification for the creation of regional parliaments in

Latin America, Africa and Southeast Asia. However, when one looks at other regional assemblies in the world, a similar institutional empowerment path is not found outside of Europe. This does not mean that the European Parliament cannot serve as a comparable case and cannot be contrasted to other regional parliaments; thus, a comprehensive framework which takes into account the regional and national contexts from each region/sub-region analysed, must be adopted.

Yet, whilst many studies have contributed to a better understanding of the development of regional parliaments around the world, none of them have established a comprehensive comparative study that reveals why and how such distinct degrees of parliamentarisation have been observed within regional parliaments across the globe. Hence, this thesis intends to not only establish a framework for comparison, which will help to explain the institutional development of selected parliaments in Europe, Latin America, and Africa, but also to provide key inputs to understand regional parliamentarisation as a global phenomenon.

Considering the limitations faced by the literature on EU Normative Power and EU's norms diffusion in explaining the logic of regional parliaments in the world, this thesis provides an alternative explanation to why these assemblies have reached diverse levels of parliamentarisation over time. By employing a historical institutionalist approach, grounded in the notion of parliamentary agency, this thesis will demonstrate how distinct degrees of parliamentary agency can explain the variance in terms of parliamentarisation observed in regional parliaments across the globe. Through comparing the institutional development of the European Parliament, the MERCOSUR Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament, this thesis aims to offer an innovative, contextual, and agent-centric approach to better understand the global phenomenon of regional parliamentarisation, still unexplored beyond the European context.

3. THEORY AND METHODS: HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONALISM, PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY AND COMPARATIVE REGIONALISM

Before analysing the institutional development of the European Parliament, the MERCOSUR Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament, this chapter will consider the theoretical and methodological tools employed in this research. First, it highlights the main characteristics of historical institutionalism, suggesting it as an adequate theoretical approach to analyse regional integration projects in general, and to better understand the development of regional parliaments. Special focus is given to some of its key concepts, such as path dependence and critical junctures, and the role of contextual analysis of institutions over time. In addition, it is argued that both structure and agency have played a crucial role when it comes to the parliamentarisation of supranational or international organisations. Moreover, through the assessment of parliamentary agency in regional parliaments over time, this research intends to establish a contextual comparative analysis of the parliamentary dimension of regional integration, explaining why these parliaments have reached such diverse degree of institutionalisation in the past decades.

Secondly, methodological considerations are made in order to justify the case selection criteria, the data collection, and the comparative analysis used in this study. After explaining the reasons why these particular parliamentary cases were assessed, this chapter discusses the importance of contextualised cross-regional comparisons to understand the global relevance of parliaments in integration processes as a contribution to the literature which has built bridges between comparative politics and in-depth contextual/temporal analysis. Lastly, this chapter introduces the comparative framework applied to the three cases, putting particular emphasis on the merits of cross-regional comparison and comparative regionalism. Thus, by highlighting the variances in the degree of parliamentary agency in the three cases, this study compares the institutional development of these parliaments, uncovers and evaluates the differences and similarities between them.

3.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONALISM AND PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY

This section presents the theoretical framework used for this research. After introducing the main assumptions and claims made by scholars of historical institutionalism (HI), some of the key concepts of HI are stressed, such as the ideas of path dependence, unintended consequences, and particularly the notion of critical junctures. Subsequently, the agency-structure debate found in both the International Relations (IR) and HI literature is also referred to, with the purpose of presenting an alternative to the ontological duality in which this debate was firstly constituted. As argued in this study, considering the role of agency and structure simultaneously over time tends to increase the HI explanatory potential when it comes to analysing the development, change and resilience of political institutions. In addition, a number of theoretical considerations regarding the application of HI to regional organisations are made in order to stress the contribution of HI in evaluating the institutional development of regional parliaments. Last but not least, this chapter introduces the concept of *parliamentary agency* and defends its usefulness to better understand the institutionalisation of regional parliaments over time.

3.1.1 New Institutionalism and the Foundations of Historical Institutionalism

Although it was never considered a unified and consolidated theoretical approach within political science, HI scholarship has shared a set of common concerns, concepts and assumptions in an effort to better understand institutions over time. “Historical institutionalism is neither a particular theory nor a specific method. It is best understood as an approach to studying politics” (Steinmo, 2008, p.118). One main commonality, however, is found in other institutionalist lenses. In general, scholars of HI put an important emphasis on the role that institutions play in shaping social behaviour. The most acknowledged definition of institutions is the one by Douglas North (1990), which states that:

Institutions are the rules of the game of a society or more formally are the humanly-devised constraints that structure human interaction. They are composed of formal rules (statute law, common law, regulations), informal constraints (conventions, norms of

behavior, and self imposed codes of conduct), and the enforcement characteristics of both (North, 1990, p. 3).

As clarified by this conception, both formal and informal institutions matter as they are able to constrain human attitudes and behaviour, to shape actors' decisions as well as their degree of participation on them (Steinmo, 2008). In order to understand social outcomes, one has to consider the rules – formal and informal ones – which may limit individual options, leading to the development of more predictable and expected behaviours.

Based on this overall concern with the role of institutions in political processes, the scholarly field of 'New Institutionalism' has expanded and has been marked by a variety of approaches. Although most attention has been given to some traditional approaches, such as rational-choice institutionalism, sociological institutionalism, and historical institutionalism, new strands – such as discursive institutionalism and feminist institutionalism – have contributed more recently with debate underscoring how the communication of discourses and ideas as well as the relationship between gender and institutions have been overlooked by mainstream institutionalist approaches (Mackay et al., 2010).

In this context, historical institutionalism has been defined as a middle-ground approach, situated between rational-choice and sociological versions of institutionalism. On the one hand, rational-choice institutionalism focuses on the choices of individuals when pursuing their own preferences within particular institutional settings (the calculus approach) (Cairney, 2012). Actors, in this sense, take into account the consequences derived from their actions and how these will eventually affect the fulfilment of their interests. In this case, actors often support the development of institutions as they tend to reduce transactions costs, which consequently establish a stable environment, more prone for cooperation. On the other hand, sociological institutionalism pays stronger emphasis on how institutions and structures frame a set of ideas and norms which are transmitted to actors via socialisation processes. Therefore, agents tend to acknowledge that the norms and institutions surrounding them are legitimate, natural, rightful and expected, and, thus, appropriate to follow (logic of appropriateness) (Cairney, 2012).

While rational-choice institutionalism solely discusses the action of individuals, sociological institutionalism highlights how these actors are shaped by pre-determined norms. "At its most extreme, rational choice institutionalism loses sight of structure altogether, while sociological institutionalism runs the risk of structural determinism, turning into 'action

without agents” (Mackay et al., 2010, p. 578). Considering this dichotomy, historical institutionalism aims to provide an in-between approach, in which there is room for individuals’ agency, but in a context shaped by legacies and decisions from the past.

In contrast to other institutionalist perspectives, such as rational-choice and sociological institutionalisms, HI takes a more historical and temporal perspective on institutions, with special focus placed on how institutions have structured and shaped political attitudes over time (Hall and Taylor, 1996). Unlike rational-choice institutionalism, individual preference formation is not a given, exogenous product but an endogenous one, mostly related to the historical context in which individuals are inevitably inserted (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992). In this sense, overall human behaviour is dependent on essentially three elements: individuals, contexts and rules (Steinmo, 2008). Society would be understood by the interaction of individual performance (constituted by actors’ preferences and interests), the surrounding context of these individuals, and the pre-existing informal and formal rules. Placing a social phenomenon in its own historical context is key to understanding why a particular outcome happened at a specific moment in time, and not after or even before it. As summarised by Steinmo (2008), history is fundamental because social/political actors are able to learn from previous experience. History, in this stance, is not only a series of independent events located in time. The sequence and time order of these events are essential to explaining particular social outcomes, inasmuch as if the same events were utterly independent and isolated phenomena, they might have produced different outcomes. Assuming that choices are necessarily made within specific contexts – social, political, economic, cultural – offers more comprehensive reasons to determine events than if those were treated separately from their own temporal dimension. In this way, contextualising institutions’ choices leads to the inclusion of local particularities into the design of social and political rules (James, 2009).

Thus, “historical institutionalists take time seriously, specifying sequences and tracing transformations and processes of varying scale and temporality” (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 696). Yet, HI is not just about analysing past events, but about looking at how processes over time have evolved or transformed. It is argued that actors’ performances cannot be understood without studying the context and configurations in which they operate. History matters not only because it emphasises the diverse contexts in which decisions can be made, but due to its impact on the beliefs, values and preferences of individuals related to these choices. In sum, ‘context’ is the most important contribution that HI brings to the

understanding of institutions. In other words, HI can be seen as the study of the ‘ecology’ of political behaviour (Steimno, 2014).

Pierson (2004) has provided a significant contribution to the HI approach, reinstating the need to place politics in time – i.e. situating particular moments in a temporal sequence – in order to better understand social dynamics. He argues that the social sciences, by aiming to develop universal and non-temporal explanations, have paid a high price when ignoring the temporal dimension to explain social phenomena. Social mechanisms have a substantive temporal dimension which should not be disregarded by social scientists. In this regard, HI seeks to analyse macro contexts embedded in social realities, by studying the combined results of institutions and processes over time, instead of analysing single snapshots at a time with the intention to generate broad and non-contextualised models. In sum, substantive agendas (macro and meso explanations to social phenomena), temporal arguments and attention to contexts and configurations are central aspects of HI explanatory frameworks. These are crucial given that more contextual causalities tend to put strong emphasis on the multiple variables and levels of causality which may affect institutions. Thus, in order to understand institutional effects, one has to take into account a set of interactions embedded in the context of a particular event (Immergut, 2006). Besides, as HI is grounded in the idea of studying a specific happening which is inevitably embedded in a particular context and time, institutions will be situated in a complex environment with previously existing political institutions and institutional actors, which would ultimately influence the overall outcomes of the events analysed (James, 2009).

Probably the most acknowledged concept by historical institutionalists is the notion of *path dependence*. Taking into account the development of social institutions over time, it implies that dynamics triggered by specific events tend to reproduce themselves in the future, thereby shaping subsequent and related behaviours. Thus, specific actions from the past might be impossible to be reverted over time. As institutions are ‘sticky’, there is a tendency of institutional inertia embedded in every institutional decision made, which will ultimately impact on future choices. By looking at the conception of ‘increasing returns’ mostly applied in economics, Pierson (2004) argues that the cost of switching institutionalised options increases substantially over time, hindering any dramatic change of directions once institutions are settled. The sequence of decisions, in this sense, is crucial as it constrains actors’ margin of manoeuvre over time. The likely institutional outcomes depend on the sequence of choices made by individuals involved in the institutional design. Thus, path

dependence is associated with self-reinforcing processes – such as contingency, timing, sequence, and inertia – which unveil why institutions are so persistent to change and why abrupt transformations are unlikely (Pierson, 2004).

Not only does HI focus on the origins of institutions, but it mainly emphasises their development over time. In this sense, one of the important features brought by institutionalists is that once institutions are constituted, they may produce outcomes that were not predicted at the moment they were designed. Coined by Robert Merton (1936), the concept of *unintended consequences* acknowledges that some of the institutional results observed were not expected by the actors responsible for institutions' design. These diverse consequences could be divided into three types, according to their effects on the intended outcomes: Unexpected benefits (positive effects), unexpected drawback (negative effects), and perverse result (effects contrary to the intended ones). HI – through a macro-historical approach and an analysis of institutions over time – aims also to observe institutional processes and identify unintended consequences of intentional behaviour as well as the existence of intervening dynamics not previously calculated by the institutions' designers (Schmidt, 1999).

Instead of merely analysing the effects derived from the selection of institutions, HI focuses on understanding and explaining institutional arrangements established in particular periods and contexts. As Pierson (2004) suggests, this approach intends to move scholars' attention from institutional choice to institutional development, with the purpose of considering institutional configurations embedded over time. Thus, this perspective is interested in questioning what has determined institutional choices and which factors might explain institutional change over time. Tracing the development of organisations over time may assist academics in explaining institutional phenomena, such as the implications of unintended consequences in institutional design, the resilience of some institutional options, the competition or overlapping of institutions, actors' institutional learning, as well as changing or static institutional environments. In contrast to perspectives more centred on short-term effects, HI aims to identify institutional consequences in the long run, beholding how institutional processes may unfold over time. Following the idea of unintended consequences, institutions in the long run can present unexpected outcomes and paths, having their own life. Institutions are not neutral and can lead to the reflection, reproduction or increasing of particular settings that were not necessarily expected when they were firstly created (Thelen, 1999). Thereby, only an analytical framework which seeks to look at lengthy

processes of institutionalisation can provide insightful explanations of how institutions operate throughout time.

Institutional development is not just characterised by institutional stability or inertia but also by institutional change (Pierson, 2004). In this sense, more contemporary HI authors have sought to explain institutional dynamism over time. With the purpose of understanding institutional change, one must consider that institutions do matter but are not the only cause of long term outcomes. The interaction among institutional and ideational elements plays a significant role in preference formation and transformation of institutions in time. As already stated, previous institutions constrain the way in which future decisions on substantive changes will operate. However, despite the fact that actors' strategies and objectives are also shaped by institutional, historical and cultural contexts, political actors are not only objects but also agents of history. They are able to manoeuvre within institutions in order to achieve their own goals (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992).

According to Thelen and Steinmo (1992), battles over institutions are important because historical paths follow these institutional choices. These are the moments when existing institutions could be substantially transformed by surrounding actors, ideas and contexts. In the long run, agents who participated in the original design of institutions are probably replaced by new actors. In addition, surrounding contexts and ideas might also change, which would ultimately trigger a certain degree of institutional dynamism. Nonetheless, some institutions might not necessarily be considered conservative and, for instance, may encourage further innovation, thereby fostering updates of existing informal and formal rules. The contexts in which institutions are inevitably embedded have an impact on the significance of these rules. Any changing of the social and political context may also transform the meaning of institutions over time. Not only institutions tend to react to contextual changes, but they are also constitutive parts of these dynamic contexts. Finally, the alteration of actors' subjective perceptions found in particular contexts have a substantial weight on institutional change (Immergut, 2006).

Therefore, challenges for contemporary HI scholars are not just to provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of institutional change, but also to embrace the importance of ideas in politics. Most HI literature has been criticised for being too deterministic in its approach. So far, it has emphasised the stability of institutions over time – often sticking to the concept of path dependence – and it has mostly relied on external (exogenous) shocks when it has tried to explain institutional change. In this sense, it has not considered the role of

endogenous explanatory factors and human agency in institutional development. As Steinmo (2008) states, institutional change must also be seen as the product of modification in actors' ideas. Including ideational factors into the assessment of institutional dynamism, in this sense, would bring agents back into institutional analysis. Institutions structure individual decisions, but they are also subject to the change of the actors themselves. Transformations of individual perceptions may lead to a stronger demand for institutional change over time (Steinmo, 2008).

3.1.2 The role of critical junctures within institutional development

The concept of critical junctures is still seen as a key building block of HI, especially when it comes to analysing substantial institutional changes over time. Critical junctures are defined as particular moments in time when structural contexts which constantly constrain political agents are loosened, opening the range of actors' institutional choices and increasing the potential for institutional change (Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007). Also referred to as institutional flux, it is a short period in which a dramatic change of rules is possible and the 'sticky' characteristics of existing institutions are relaxed, allowing change to happen and temporarily relativizing path dependency.

"Junctures are 'critical' because they place institutional arrangements on paths or trajectories, which are then very difficult to alter" (Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007, p. 342). Institutional development is also seen as a 'branching tree' in which trajectories in time shift during critical junctures, leading to diverse directions and paths. Abrupt institutional transformations are only observed in times when economic, social, cultural, political and organisational contexts are significantly altering, allowing for institutional innovation and enabling the autonomy of agents of change. Hereupon, decisions taken within these critical moments have a deep impact on long-term courses of institutions.

The institutional results from critical junctures lead to further feedback mechanisms, reinforcing new institutional patterns over time. Once these new alternatives are settled, they also tend to become irreversible, as costs of change are increasingly high. Thus, "events or processes occurring during and immediately following critical junctures emerge as crucial" (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 699-700). Critical junctures are seen as a corrective element to the question of how path dependency institutions might face substantial change, freeing

themselves of institutional resilience and inertia in particular moments throughout time. Not only does the concept of critical junctures emphasise the configurative moments which place institutional transformations as it also looks at the actors, groups and processes involving these junctures (Schmidt, 1999).

In this sense, the notion of the ‘punctuated equilibrium’ stresses that institutional development is less gradualist or evolutionary than it may appear. Instead of institutional dynamism being characterised by incremental change over time, it is understood as an inexorable balance of long moments of institutional equilibrium or inertia associated to punctuated bursts of change, i.e. critical junctures (Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007). Following this reasoning, Annett (2010) divided institutional development into five stages: Origins, equilibrium, disequilibrium, critical junctures and crisis. Although the next phase after institutional origins tends to be one of equilibrium, it cannot be assumed to be the only probable outcome, as moments of disequilibrium, critical junctures and crises are, even if less likely, unpredictable, and still possible. Diverging from path dependency tendencies, critical junctures are moments of relative indeterminism, when – due to the transformation of structural contexts – agents are able to exercise a greater degree of influence on the modification of institutional frameworks. While in moments of equilibrium the surrounding circumstances do not allow for actors to push institutions towards robust changes, critical junctures offer a unique and short-time opportunity for substantial transformations, granting a good amount of autonomy for individuals to shape institutional results.

Yet, it is important to note that critical junctures are not the only explanatory cause for institutional change, as they are rare moments found within institutions’ development over the long term. Institutional dynamism can also be identified as successive processes of incremental change, when modifications are achieved by actors embedded in an environment of constraints. Mahoney and Thelen (2010) stressed out how first generation of historical institutionalism focused on investigating institutional inertia and tended to explain institutional change exclusively through exogenous factors. Nonetheless, relevance must be given to the gradual evolution of institutions and to the role of endogenous-driven changes. “Gradual changes can be of great significance in their own right; and gradually unfolding changes may be hugely consequential as causes of other outcomes” (Mahoney and Thelen, 2010, p. 3). Therefore, contemporary institutionalist analysis must equally take into account the role of exogenous and endogenous sources in institutional change.

On the other hand, critical junctures not necessarily lead to significant institutional change. As Capoccia and Kelemen (2007) suggest, one can even observe comparable negative cases, i.e. critical junctures which did not result in profound institutional change, not intervening in previous expected institutional results. This relates to the necessity of interested actors in mobilising and perceiving these critical junctures as fundamental opportunities to change the course of existing institutions according to their own interests. Moreover, institutional outputs are also affected by the degree of resilience from incumbent actors in maintaining the current shape of institutions, even in moments more favourable to their substantial transformations.

To sum up, institutional development consists of periods of relative openness and moments of relative stability (Pierson, 2004). Changes in the environmental conditions, balances of social power, unanticipated institutional effects ease further institutional alterations. Institutions tend to stay relatively stable – sticking to positive feedback and path dependency – until the next critical juncture, when the rules of the game are likely to be challenged, leading to deeper institutional change. In this sense, the development of institutions is marked by a dialectical association of stages of creation/modification with periods of stasis (Pierson, 2004). Therefore, despite institutions shaping individuals' behaviour over time, they are also impacted by pressures emanating from the substantive transformations of social contexts.

3.1.3 Understanding regional integration through historical institutionalism

HI has proven to be a relevant approach in the study of regional integration, not only in Europe but also across the world. For instance, some attempts to analyse the development of European integration through a historical institutionalist lens have contributed to our understanding of these processes. In this case, HI looks at “the concept of European integration as a process which does indeed unfold over time, often as a result of the unintended consequences of early integration decisions that become difficult for the EU's constitutive member states to control or overturn” (Pollack, 2008, p. 11). Placing time in the EU's institutional development thus has offered a significant contribution to our understanding of how institutional processes evolve that escape from member states' hands

over time. In order to distinguish it from other historical and institutionalist approaches, Pierson (1998) advocated the dual composition of HI, stressing that:

This scholarship is historical because it recognizes that political development must be understood as a process that unfolds over time. It is institutionalist because it stresses that many of the contemporary implications of these temporal processes are embedded in institutions—whether these be formal rules, policy structures, or social norms (Pierson, 1998, p. 29).

When it comes to the study of European integration, two theories have gained prominence in understanding that particular phenomenon: neo-functionalism and intergovernmentalism. Often described by EU scholars as ‘schools’ or ‘grand theories’, they have equally offered significant contributions to explain the course of European integration (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Neo-functionalism emphasised the gradual transfer of sovereignty to specialised international/supranational agencies, which enabled reinforcing processes towards further integration (spillover effects) (Haas, 1958). It also underscored the role of supranational actors in this process, as relevant actors and policy entrepreneurs who negotiate with state and non-state agents in favour of increasing integration (Hooghe and Marks, 2019). Meanwhile, intergovernmentalism mainly focuses on the interaction and bargaining among Member States, and how integration is a policy primarily set out according to the preferences of governments, which consider either the balance of power in world politics or the expected economic benefits derived from increasing economic interdependence (Hoffman, 1966; Moravcsik, 1991). Thus, intergovernmentalism first takes into account the formulation of domestic preferences by national governments and, secondly, the negotiation process among national actors, which may lead towards further integration. “Whereas neofunctionalism explains integration as the outcome of cooperation and competition among societal actors, intergovernmentalism explains integration as the outcome of cooperation and competition among national governments” (Hooghe and Marks, 2019, p. 1115).

In this regard, HI has been envisioned as a third way approach to European integration. By distinguishing HI assumptions from intergovernmentalist and neo-functional perspectives, Pierson (1998) argued that the prominence of national governments in the design of the EU has been undermined over time inasmuch as European institutions, after having been established, have developed autonomously with regards to the Member States’ initial preferences. Once supranational institutions are designed, they may

produce unintended consequences in the long-term, leading to institutional outcomes relatively independent from government's decisions. Thus, the regional bodies created within the EU are not passive. They begin to set their own preferences and beliefs over time, not necessarily sharing the same concerns as their founders. Concerning the behaviour of the EU's institutions throughout time, Pierson states that:

EC organizations will seek to use grants of authority for their own purposes, and especially to increase their autonomy. They will try to expand the gaps in member-state government control, and they will use any accumulated political resources to resist efforts to curtail their authority (Pierson, 1998, p. 35).

In the case of European institutions, the European Commission, the European Court of Justice and the European Parliament are often seeking chances to increase their own authority and power at the European level. In the past, they have explored gaps identified within the institutions and within the EU treaties – which hinder governmental control – to enhance their own competences. For instance, the EP has grasped these opportunities, thereby guaranteeing that the national governments endowed this parliamentary body with increasing supervisory, budgetary, and legislative powers, which has turned this assembly over the past decades from a consultative assembly to a powerful legislature (Rittberger, 2003).

As Pierson (1998, p. 48) points out, “(...) historical institutionalism emphasizes the need to analyse the consequences of that bargain over time”. A long-term and contextualised observation of the ongoing negotiations among regional actors, governmental or not, can provide a more in-depth understanding of the institutional development of regional institutions. As short-time preferences might not be the same in the long run, institutional options chosen by actors may alter in the future, leading to further institutional change. In addition, EU institutions through path dependency and lock-in effects have generated resilience towards further institutional change, as specific actors start to defend the maintenance of some policies established within the EU framework.

Applying HI to EU studies emphasises that European integration must be seen as a dense institutional environment that should not be viewed through a narrow discourse of interstate bargaining (Pierson, 1998). Regional institutions established by Member States eventually become actors in their own right, ultimately interested in occupying a decisive role in regional organisations. As Annett discusses (2010), HI can be used as a theoretical framework to explain regional integration, through assessing the historical foundations of the

political environment and scrutinising long-term structures with the purpose to better analyse institutional events in time. Furthermore, HI and other institutionalist approaches have shared some assumptions and concepts with other theories applied to the EU integration, comparative politics and international politics. The theoretical compatibility of these frameworks – which look at different political realities from the domestic, regional and international level – allows the development of comparisons with other regional cases outside Europe (Pollack, 2008).

Nonetheless, it is when one employs mainstream EU integration theories to understand non-western contexts that the mismatch between theory and reality becomes abysmal. For instance, as previous studies have highlighted (Haas and Schmitter, 1964; Malamud and Schmitter, 2006), some conditions expected from neo-functionalism in terms of functional spillover and transfer of sovereignty have not been met in other regions of the world, stressing out the limits of neo-functionalism to explain regional integration beyond the EU case.

Although the resistance towards supranational institutions might point to the usefulness of intergovernmentalism to understand regional integration outside Europe, how can one explain regional integration when there is no prior relevant economic interdependence among Member States, such as the cases in Latin America and Africa? While intra-regional trade rate in the EU has recently reached 64%, intra-regional trade within the regional organisations of the Global South has not gone beyond the rate of 20% of total trade, with the only exception of ASEAN (24%). In fact, “Africa and Latin America have experienced challenges in increasing intra-regional trade as they are highly dependent on global commodity exports” (WTO, 2018, p. 75). Therefore, the structural external (and not regional) economic dependency of these regions has not sufficiently explained why governments of the region have decided to develop regional integration initiatives over the past decades, in contrast to what has been stressed by intergovernmentalism.

Considering the limits of EU integration theories to understand regional integration in a global and non-EU-centric perspective, this research intends to apply the key assumptions and discussions brought by institutionalism, and more specifically from HI, to analyse the institutional development of parliamentary institutions from selected regional integration organisations in Latin America and Africa.

Key-concepts of HI aforementioned – such as path dependency, critical junctures, and unintended consequences – will be employed to trace and present the institutional development of parliamentary organisations related to the European Union, MERCOSUR and the African Union. The analysis will be structured in the dual relationship between path dependency and critical junctures with the aim to stress the ongoing correlation between elements of institutional stasis and institutional dynamism within the development of regional parliaments. Following some of the contemporary discussions of HI, this research intends to address not just continuity of institutions but also institutional change over time (Thelen, 1999; Fioretos et al., 2013). Although path dependency impacts on the stickiness of institutions once they are settled, it does not mean that these same rules cannot be altered in the long term. Actually, as contexts constantly change throughout time, subsequent updates from these institutions are expected, which are ultimately related to their own transformative contexts. Therefore, placing parliaments in their respective contexts and timing tends to offer more particular inputs to the evaluation of these institutions over time.

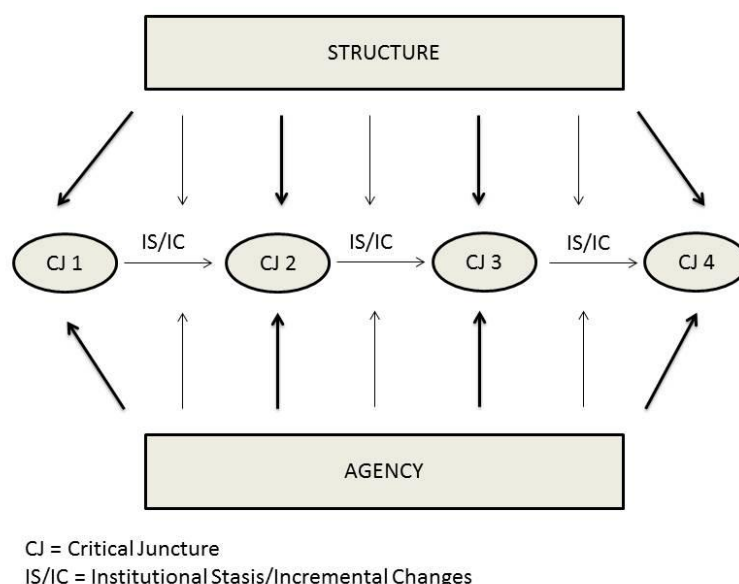
Responding to some criticism addressed to HI, this research acknowledges the relevance of both structure and agency for the development of parliaments within regional integration. Rather than relying on either a purely structural or agent-centric approach, institutional resilience and change over time must be seen as an overall product of the progression of both surrounding structures and agents' interests and perceptions. The combination of these two elements explains the institutional outcomes observed (Hay and Wincott, 1998). Despite particular attention being given to periods of substantive institutional transformation – associated or not to critical junctures – it is important to note that both agency and structure also affect moments of institutional equilibrium, reinforcing pre-established procedures or pressuring for incremental changes of rules. Therefore, escaping from the ontological dualism vastly discussed in the literature and combining agency and structure to assess regional institutions over time is an interesting contribution to stress the benefits of exploring the relationship of agency and structure with the purpose of investigating regional institutions in the long run. As Fioretos et al. (2013) synthesise, “combining structural, agentic, material, and cognitive approaches in new and different ways presents opportunities to expand the methodological scope and empirical reach of historical institutionalism in the years ahead” (p. 21).

Finally, the role of ideas is also highlighted within this analysis, as ideational factors are able to influence the maintenance or the transformation of agents and structures over

time, subsequently impacting the design of institutions (Steinmo, 2008). When one considers the role of parliaments in integration processes, fundamental principles such as democracy, representation, pluralism, and legitimacy are constantly referred to in order to justify the existence and the empowerment of parliamentary institutions at the regional level (Costa and Brack, 2013; Rittberger, 2003).

Figure 1 (below) illustrates my application of some of the key concepts of HI associated with the interaction of agent-centric and structural forces within the institutional development of regional parliaments. Therefore, in this study, critical junctures (CJ) are particular moments in time when both structural and agent-centric forces have played a fundamental role in substantially changing the rules of the game – represented by bold arrows, transforming the constitution of each parliament towards more or less parliamentarisation within the three regional projects. Path dependence trends are also observed in between critical junctures, reducing the likelihood of fundamental institutional change. Institutional stasis/equilibrium and some incremental changes (IS/IC) are often identified in this period. During these intervals, agents and structure have fewer chances to enable deeper institutional transformation, until the observation of a subsequent critical juncture, when rules are again relaxed and institutional dynamism is potentially back.

Figure 1. Institutional development of parliamentary institutions over time



Source: author's own illustration.

Taking into account the particularities of each of the three cases which will be addressed, this theoretical framework will be applied to understanding the evolution of the European Parliament, the MERCOSUR Parliament, and the Pan-African Parliament. Afterwards, a comparison among each institutional path will be developed, with the purpose of identifying the commonalities and differences between them.

3.1.4 Reassessing structure and agency over time

The interplay between structure and agency in the social sciences is an on-going debate. Specifically within the study of International Relations, many scholars either focus on the importance of structure or agency when conducting their research. While the 'structure' is generally characterised by its anteriority, greater endurance and its power to enable and constrain agency (Joseph, 2008), agency is understood as "the capability of the individual 'to make a difference' to a pre-existing state of affairs" (Knafo, 2008, p. 8). Although structures condition and shape social relations, they are dependent on individuals' actions to be reproduced, leading agents to play a relevant role according to their place within social structures (Joseph, 2008). Whereas traditional IR approaches were focused on structural explanatory variables of international affairs, constructivist scholars have presented a stronger concern with the lack of agency in empirical research, supporting a more balanced weight between agency and structure when assessing international politics (Bucher, 2015). In order to justify social change, some authors have claimed that more relevance should be given to agents, as they seem to be able to alter their structural conditions in social processes, by turning their own power and capabilities into social transformation (Knafo, 2008).

Wendt (1987) was one of the scholars who highlighted the importance of the agency-structure debate in IR. Following the assumptions of Anthony Giddens' Structuration Theory, he stressed "that human agents and social structures are, in one way or another, theoretically interdependent or mutually implicating entities" (Wendt, 1987, p. 338). In contrast to previous main theoretical claims put forward by scholars of International Relations (such as neorealism and the world-system theory), which have mostly relied on structural explanations to understand international politics, Wendt defended the constitutive role of agency in IR, suggesting that both agents and domestic/international structures should not be viewed as given, independent, and primary pieces of social reality. In fact, they should

be considered as mutually constituted. Thus, theoretical efforts should be able to look at them simultaneously with the purpose of providing more comprehensive explanations of the leverage of agents and structures in the international realm.

This perspective on the agency-structure debate intends to challenge the dualism established between agency and structure, which has increasingly been seen as unproductive (Knafo, 2008). Rather than characterising agency and structure as two exclusive explanatory forces, contemporary approaches have tried to escape from this dichotomy and understand them as two dimensions of one single social process. “It then becomes possible to view acting persons (instead of agency) and their constitutive social ties (rather than structure) as two dimensions of a single overarching process” (Bucher, 2015, p.8). Instead of trying to explain what agency and structure are – which has frequently led to a relational definition which only reified each of those components to their ontological opposition – scholars should develop more empirical research on ‘what agents often do’ and ‘how structures continually shape social behaviour’ (Bucher, 2015).

In addition, “social structures are inseparable from spatial and temporal structures, and that time and space must therefore be incorporated directly and explicitly into theoretical and concrete social research” (Wendt, 1987, p. 356). Both agency and structure-based evaluations must be grounded in some temporal and spatial contexts. Contextualisation is fundamental to realising the content and configuration of social phenomena. Structures have no meaning when one disregards the context of their implementation. In the same way, agents’ behaviour cannot be separated from their own contingencies which mostly explain the way they interact and perform within determined social structures (Knafo, 2008).

Thus, time is also a crucial factor for our understanding of social structures. Particular structures from the present must be placed in the specific periods of time they operate in. Following the same logic, existing structures are also consequences of actions and configurations settled in the past. According to Bieler and Morton (2001), agency, structure and narrative constitute a sophisticated and intrinsic relationship, inasmuch as they tend to continuously shape each other over time. Therefore, by combining agency-structure relations with an analysis of historical structures, scholars might offer a more expansive interpretation of social reality.

For this purpose, contemporary discussions within historical institutionalism have sought to provide important insights into the role of agency and structure over long-term processes, considering this relation a key element of institutional analysis. In order to avoid being labelled too determinist and structuralist, HI needs to transcend the dualism of institutions and intention, context and conduct, structure and agency, in the studies of institutions over time. Institutional change, for instance, can be understood as a more balanced outcome between agents – architects and institutionalised subjects – and contexts – institutional environments (Hay and Wincott, 1998).

Therefore, the product of the complex interplay between agent and structural sources will ultimately lead to intended or unintended institutional consequences. Transformations of rules are the result of strategic actions formulated on the basis of the agent's ideas and perceptions, which are embedded in determined institutional contexts. As agents may not be completely aware of the institutional structures they are operating in, institutional change may not necessarily lead to the previously imagined outputs. Moreover, when acknowledging the importance of agency in institutional analysis, one realises that institutional actors are able to review their own perceptions of the surrounding institutional context and assimilate new information and ideas. In sum, overcoming the agency-structure duality may push HI to the assumption that institutional development is impacted by the relationship between the institutions and the individuals who are part of them (Hay and Wincott, 1998).

Mahoney and Snyder (1999) provided more concrete notions of agency and structure in HI research, arguing that investigations can successfully integrate both agent-centric and structural elements into long-term analysis. In particular, two strategic alternatives are pointed out by the authors to analyse structure and agency over time are useful for this study: Associating variables from diverse and multiple levels of analysis (macro and micro-level factors), and relating historical-structural elements to individual institutional decisions. On the one hand, assuming the complexity of explanatory factors might increase the understanding of social phenomena over time. Integrating factors from different levels of analysis is one of the ways to acknowledge that explanatory forces come from diverse origins. While structuralists tend to overemphasise macro-level variables, such as the global economy and political culture, voluntarist approaches rely more on micro causal factors, such as social groups and individual leaderships. Thus, establishing bridges between macro/external and micro/internal factors is a viable alternative to explain institutional development.

On the other hand, balancing agent-centric and structural assessments while investigating institutional development can help scholars transcend the determinism traditionally associated to HI, grounded more specifically in the notion of path dependency. Therefore, human agency must be taken into consideration during all the stages of institutions' evolution. Although it is assumed that individuals have more margin of manoeuvre at 'critical junctures' in time – when some of the underlying structural conditions are relatively relaxed – it does not mean that agents are not active and should not be studied in periods of institutional stasis. In this sense, "Confining human agency to such junctures obscures the dynamic interaction of agency and institutional structures across time and encourages a reliance on structural explanations for the origins of junctures" (Mahoney and Snyder, 1999, p. 18). Putting more emphasis on agents of change in institutional development leads HI to accept that leadership sometimes might overcome structural constraints and path dependency, leading to significant institutional dynamism (Lustick, 2001).

Contemporary IR and HI scholars have emphasised the importance of the agency-structure debate for the overall understanding of international institutions. In order to overcome this ontological dualism, more pragmatic alternatives and strategies have been designed, aiming to build bridges between agency and structural-oriented approaches, especially when it comes to empirical research. Recognising that the interaction between the two elements drives institutional change is a first step to start providing more comprehensive explanations of institutional development over time. Institutional development, thus, must be understood as an outcome of the relationship between both institutional structures and agents over time. Although agents are responsible for creating and altering institutions, they relate to their own circumstances during these processes. On the other side, structures are not able to shape individuals' perceptions and behaviour. In sum, "(...) in order to understand how institutions work and change, we need to better understand what people who constitute these institutions believe and how they behave" (Steinmo, 2014, p. 18).

Within this ongoing debate, more recent academic endeavours have aimed to highlight the role of agency in the process of institutional development, aspect traditionally neglected by HI studies. In this sense, Büthe (2016), while examining the increase of the European Commission's powers over the past years, argued for the adoption of an 'agent-centric' approach of historical institutionalism to explain the EU's institutional development. This approach aims to overcome the determinist angle often given to HI studies, highlighting

the role of the preferences and perceptions of agents to the evolution of regional and international institutions. Despite the path dependencies trends usually emphasised by prominent HI scholars, institutional inertia and change can also be influenced by the actors directly inserted in the context observed. Thus, identifying who are the ‘agents of change’ – in the words of Mahoney and Thelen (2010) – involved in the process of institutional reforms over time and what are their interests and ambitions within this political environment are essential steps for emerging studies which aim to offer a more comprehensive understanding on the courses taken by specific institutional paths.

For instance, when observing the particular case of the EU, Büthe (2016) contends that even though the supranational actors are continuously restrained by the EU’s institutional context, through ascertaining their own collective agency, they are able to impact institutional change in their favour. Conversely, the same institutional environment may even offer temporal opportunities which may allow these agents to influence in a greater degree the EU’s institutional path, via direct and indirect ways. Despite the difficulties in demonstrating the role of agency in the process of institutional change, this is an essential task with the purpose of unveiling the actors’ dynamics behind the development of institutions at the regional level. “What the newer literature makes clear, however, is that institutional change requires agency, which is often barely visible in HI because agency is what institutions are said to constrain” (Büthe, 2016, p. 46).

Therefore, this new scholarly trend from HI may offer a significant contribution to IR, and more specifically to the study of regional and international institutions. In the words of Büthe (2016, p. 60-61),

HI has more to offer to international relations than an appealing language for “telling the story” of how a particular international institution developed over time. When combined with an emphasis on agency, core tenets of HI can be used to develop ex ante a theoretical explanation of institutional change.

Although much of the recognition given to HI lies on its past efforts to stress the stickiness of institutions and the prevalence of institutional inertia, more recent studies have highlighted the underexplored potential of HI to contribute to explaining the phenomenon of institutional change. In this respect, IR and regional integration studies may benefit from the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of HI. As defended by Zürn (2016, p. 211), “the study of international institutions may especially enrich the important, yet still underdeveloped

understanding of change in HI for reasons that have to do with the more subtle specifics of international institutions”.

3.1.5 Conceptualising Parliamentary Agency: Definition and typology

Considering the importance of the interplay between structure and agency to understand regional institutions over time and the necessity to provide more agent-centric frameworks to assess institutional change, this study will take the notion of ‘parliamentary agency’ as a central concept for understanding the institutional development of regional parliaments worldwide. This research contends that combining the key assumptions of HI with the discussions on agency and structure in IR – that is, by giving particular emphasis to the role of parliamentary agency over time – may be a useful approach to better understand regional parliamentarisation. By including this parliamentary dimension to the temporal analysis of regional organisations, this theoretical framework is considered more suitable than previous approaches, which have mostly explained parliamentarisation as an exclusive product of intergovernmental dynamics. Despite the fact that governmental agents have been considered important actors of regional integration (Moravcsik, 1991; Malamud, 2005; Caballero, 2013), this research states that they are not the only agents influencing regional integration projects. Therefore, attention must be paid to the performance of parliamentary agents and to their interaction with national governments. Thus, based on the characterisations of agency previously mentioned, this research defines parliamentary agency as the capacity of parliamentary actors (such as members of parliament, parliamentary officials, and officials of political parties represented in these parliaments) to exert influence in the decision-making system over regional integration policies, often controlled by executive agents as well as by the structural constraints. When it comes to the role of parliamentary actors within the development of regional parliaments, it highlights the potential ability of these agents to make a difference towards the parliamentarisation of the polity, politics, and policies of regional integration (Costa, 2013).

Although previous literature has stressed out the growing importance of national and subnational parliaments with regard to topics of foreign policy (Olson, 1991; Khan and Sabir, 2013) and regional integration in Europe (Scully, 1998; Jansen and Martinsen, 2015; Borońska-Hryniewiecka, 2017; Haroche, 2018) and elsewhere (Malamud and Stavridis,

2011; Crum and Fossum, 2013), there is no scholarly study which has directly addressed the notion of parliamentary agency as a key concept to explain the performance of national and regional parliaments. Thus, by providing an account of how regional parliaments themselves have influenced their own institutional development, this research aims to contribute not only to the literature on the parliamentarisation of regional integration and regionalism, but also to the broader area of legislative studies.

For this purpose, this research sets out a typology of parliamentary agency in order to characterise and compare the agency of parliamentarians and parliamentary officials in the three cases analysed. Thereby, parliamentary agency has depended on two dimensions, an *external* and an *internal* one. While the external dimension emphasises how the capacity of parliaments to ‘make a difference’ was constrained or incentivised by contexts and actors from outside the parliaments, the internal dimension relates to the performance within the parliaments’ domain which lead agents to exert greater influence and to generate institutional changes, especially at critical junctures.

By taking into account the relational nature of agency and structure, these two dimensions highlight the tensions often faced by agents from their surrounding structures during their parliamentary activities. On the one hand, the external dimension is composed by the regional configurations of the integration projects, which may either stimulate or hamper parliamentary agency over time. Drawing from the historical institutionalist approach of Pierson (1998), while regional structures more inclined towards supranational institutions may favour the agency and the autonomy of parliamentarians in time; more intergovernmental settings would in fact restrain parliamentary agency, thereby reinforcing the prevalence of executive actors. Therefore, depending on the cases studied, parliamentarians may be placed in different positions on the spectrum that ranges from stimulated to restricted agency (see table 1 below). Stimulated agents are agents placed in a favourable context in which further parliamentarisation is incentivised. Stimulated agents arise in a surrounding environment which expects that parliamentary agents will occupy a more protagonist instance in politics and the development of political institutions. In the meantime, restricted parliamentary agents are, in fact, actors discouraged from pushing for more competences, given the limitations imposed by third actors and the surrounding political context. Restricted agents, therefore, would face external disincentives to pursue a more significant role in defining and changing institutions.

On the other side, tensions between agency and structure within parliaments (internally) may also affect the performance of parliamentarians. This mostly relates to the financial, personnel and political resources of parliaments, and, more importantly, the willingness of agents for political mobilisation. Depending on the amount of resources and institutional ambitions of parliamentary agents, they might be characterised as either proactive or timid. Whereas proactive agents are more inclined to push political institutions towards institutional changes which would favour their preferences and ambitions, timid agents would unlikely invest their limited power resources in substantial changes of rules. While proactive agents tend to capitalise on critical junctures to support institutional change, timid agents are more likely to accept institutional inertia, even when junctures may encourage the transformation of institutions. Given the limited resources of these agents, they might not necessarily invest their time and political leverage in changing institutions based on their own preferences and perceptions. Instead, they might focus their activities on other agenda, which are not necessarily related to parliamentarisation. As this research is focused on understanding regional parliamentarisation, agents will be considered timid when they have not employed substantial means aiming at changing regional institutions and shaping regional decision-making systems.

Table 2 (below) illustrates the typology of parliamentary agency put forward by this study, which will subsequently be applied to each one of the three cases studied. This thesis argues that the variety of the levels of parliamentary agency explains why the three regional parliaments analysed have reached such diverse levels of parliamentarisation. Thus, in those cases of higher degrees of parliamentary agency – in which the external dimension has stimulated increasing agency of parliamentarians, and at the internal dimension agents themselves have shown significant proactivity – one may expect the development of more significant levels of parliamentarisation. Reversely, when agents are in fact characterised as restricted and timid (low overall parliamentary agency), parliamentarians are unlikely to achieve a more prominent role within these regional organisations.

Table 2. Typology of Parliamentary Agency (PA)

External	Internal	PA over time
Stimulated	Proactive	High
Stimulated	Timid	Medium
Restricted	Proactive	Medium
Restricted	Timid	Low

Source: author's elaboration.

As pointed out, by employing this conceptualisation of parliamentary agency and the typology of table 2, this research aims to overcome previous explanations which have focused on assessing regional parliamentarisation/parliamentary empowerment according to the point of view of national governments. In fact, this typology aims to capture some expectations regarding how the performance of parliamentary actors might impact the decision-making of regional organisations. Moreover, the typology also departs from the assumption that this performance is independent from the preferences of Member States when it comes to parliamentarisation.

In this sense, three scenarios of regional parliamentarisation can be outlined which relate to the three overall levels of parliamentary agency identified in the table (high, medium and low). The first one, marked by high level of parliamentary agency – in which agents are both stimulated and proactive – is associated with a substantial empowerment of parliamentary institutions in regional organisations. In this case, one may expect that the level of parliamentary agency will likely impact the decision-making process, transforming its nature from an intergovernmental towards a more supranational one, i.e. developing a strong level of regional parliamentarisation, in which parliamentary institutions and agents have effective means to influence regional policies. In this case, both incremental changes and critical junctures may enable the increase of parliamentary competences over time.

In a second scenario – of medium level of parliamentary agency – agents, who are either stimulated or proactive, demonstrate some capacity to impact institutional change. However, the likelihood of producing substantially changes in the decision-making processes is very low. For instance, it is less realistic to assume that parliamentary agents will ultimately reach the same level of competences vis-à-vis national governments in setting out

regional decisions. In fact, institutional changes are only likely to occur during critical junctures, when institutions are more relaxed, enabling limited parliamentary agents to impact institutional outcomes.

Lastly, when it comes to cases of restricted and timid parliamentary agents, the prospects of regional parliamentarisation are very low. Agents are unlikely to possess both the means and the willingness to affect institutional change and regional decision-making is likely to remain exclusively in the hands of national governments, incentivising institutional inertia and intergovernmentalism. In both periods of incremental changes and critical junctures, the capacity of parliamentary agents to impact regional institutions towards further parliamentarisation is very reduced or insignificant, limiting the level of parliamentary competences to a consultative level.

Nonetheless, some important caveats must be made. First, this study considers that parliamentary agency is not a stable phenomenon. Its degree may change over time, depending on variations of its external and internal dimensions. In fact, a historical institutionalist lens on parliamentary agency will provide a temporal analysis of the cases analysed, enabling the observation of any shift in terms of parliamentary agency over the years. Secondly, one may also note that the focus of this analysis lies on institutional changes/parliamentarisation in time. This means that parliamentary agents might opt to give priority to different agendas, i.e. peace and security/parliamentary diplomacy, which might not necessarily trigger significant changes in their parliamentary competences.

Hence, this research aims to identify and assess parliamentary agency through investigating individual and collective behaviours of parliamentary agents (through political statements and élite interviews), the instruments employed by these agents over time (such as parliamentary resolutions and inter-institutional agreements), as well as the external perceptions on parliamentary actors (via interviews and statements from experts and executive agents). It questions whether and to what extent parliamentary agency has impacted the institutionalisation of the three regional parliaments studied. This is conducted by first identifying the internal and external dimensions of parliamentary agency over time and secondly by evaluating whether, and to what extent, the tensions between national and regional settings have led to the further institutionalisation of these regional parliaments over time, especially by focusing on critical junctures and path dependency.

This section has introduced the fundamental concepts and assumptions of historical institutionalism which underpin the theoretical framework of this study. Key-concepts of HI, such as critical junctures, path dependency, and incremental changes, have been emphasised as fundamental instruments to assess the development of parliaments in regional organisations. Not only does this thesis investigate forces of institutional continuity over time, but it also looks at the institutional dynamics found in long term analyses, such as this one. In this sense, this study assesses these three parliaments since they were first established, namely in the 1950s in the European case; during the 1990s in MERCOSUR's case; and in the 2000s in the African case – until today, thereby aiming to trace the overall institutional development. Furthermore, it also acknowledges the importance of both agents and structures during the development of regional parliaments around the globe. The institutional development of parliaments should therefore be understood as a result of the interplay between structural and agent-centric forces throughout time, which will be assessed according to both internal and external dimensions of parliamentary agency found in these regional organisations. Thereby, it refers to parliamentary agency as a key conceptual device to assess regional parliaments worldwide.

3.2 SELECTION OF CASE STUDIES

The theoretical framework previously presented will be applied to the parliaments from three regional organisations: the European Union, MERCOSUR, and the African Union. This small-n comparison allows for further contextualisation about each case analysed as well as the generation of new ideas and the answering of questions about each case study (Halperin and Heath, 2012).

A purposeful strategic selection of cases was made. The cases were selected based on the diverse case method (Seawright and Gerring, 2008) and their political importance (Shakir, 2002), i.e. the most representative regional parliaments in each region of the world that have experienced a wide range of parliamentary empowerment over time. While a diverse case method “has as its primary objective the achievement of maximum variance along relevant dimensions” (Seawright and Gerring, 2008, p. 300), the rationale of selecting the most significant cases refers to providing representativeness and relevance to the sampling selected. In this sense, three relevance conditions were expected to be met: (1) geographic

representativeness, (2) organisational linkage, and (3) demographic/economic expression. Due to the goal of understanding the development of regional parliaments globally, parliamentary examples from different continents were prioritised in the case selection. Secondly, only parliaments which are formally part of a regional integration organisation were chosen, inasmuch as these have been seen as cases with a stronger likelihood of impacting the decision-making system of regional organisations (Cofelice, 2012). Lastly, preference was given to assessing parliaments from regional organisations of greater weight in terms of demographic/economic relevance.

Therefore, the selected cases were the European Parliament, the MERCOSUR Parliament (Parlasur) and the Pan-African Parliament. The three cases, each one from a different continent, are parliamentary bodies of wider regional organisations, respectively, the EU, the AU, and MERCOSUR. No Asian case was considered in this study as the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly is so far not formally part of ASEAN's organisational structure, besides the own resource and time limits of this study.

First, although other regional assemblies exist in Europe (Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe), the European Parliament was selected as the most prominent regional parliament in Europe. Second, even though one may observe the existence of several regional parliaments in Africa (East African Legislative Assembly, Economic Community of West African States Parliament, Inter-Parliamentary Union of Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and South African Development Community Parliamentary Forum), the Pan-African Parliament is the most comprehensive parliamentary assembly of the continent, which in practice gathers all African nations. Third, although other regional parliaments exist in Latin America (Latin American Parliament, Andean Parliament, Central-American Parliament), the case selected was the MERCOSUR Parliament (Parlasur). While the Latin American Parliament is not a part of any regional integration project in the region, Parlasur is the parliament of MERCOSUR, the biggest economic bloc in the region in terms of gross domestic product (GDP), population and geographic area.

Taking this case selection into account, the next subsections provide overall information on the three cases studied with the aim of highlighting the variance in terms of their levels of institutionalisation. After all, the main goal of this research is to analyse why these parliamentary institutions present such diverse degrees of parliamentarisation when compared to each other.

3.2.1 European Parliament (EP)

Founded in 1952, as the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Parliament is nowadays one of the key decision-making institutions of the European Union. Since 1979, the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are elected directly for a period of five years. Member States are represented inside the EP according to the population of each country, varying from 5 (Malta) to 96 (Germany) MEPs. Although the elections of the MEPs are organised by national political parties, the internal activities of the EP are organised by the European political groups or families which follow transnational ideological affinities among parliamentarians (Hix et al., 2006). The current main European political groups are the Christian Democrats (EPP), Socialists and Democrats (S&D), Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), and the Liberals and Democrats (ALDE).

The EP has strong legislative competences. Although it was initially established as a consultative assembly to the ECSC at the beginning, it was significantly empowered over the last decades, occupying a more prominent position after each reform of the European Treaties (Kreppel, 2002; Rittberger, 2003; Costa, 2009). In addition to having – since its foundation – as a key role to oversee the activities of the European executive, it is currently responsible for both approving and amending the EU's annual budget and the European regulations altogether with the Council of the European Union, through the co-decision procedure. In fact, the 2009 Lisbon Treaty established co-decision as the new 'ordinary legislative procedure' of the EU, which is now used for all areas of EU legislation, with only a few minor exceptions (Hix and Hoyland, 2013, p. 173).

3.2.2 MERCOSUR Parliament (Parlasur)

Since the foundation of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the inclusion of a parliamentary dimension in this regional project was envisaged. A Joint Parliamentary Commission (JPC) was established by the Asunción Treaty (1991) which created MERCOSUR, composed at that time by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. The JPC was created with the aim to facilitate the implementation and internalisation of the regional

regulations by the national legislatures of the Member States, and thereby acting as a liaison body to the national congresses of MERCOSUR. It was composed of 18 parliamentarians of each Member State, appointed by their respective national congresses (Vázquez, 2005; Drummond, 2005).

During the first decade of the twentieth-first century, a reformulation process has taken place inside MERCOSUR, which among other issues has resulted in the transformation of the JPC into the Parliament of MERCOSUR (Parlasur) in 2005. Besides the previous objectives of the JPC, Parlasur aims to increase the political legitimacy, transparency, and public debate of regional issues. Parlasur's Constitutive Protocol has established the direct election of its representatives, which have been held so far by Paraguay (2008 and 2013) and Argentina (2015), and the proportionality criteria to the composition of the national delegations, which – when all Member States directly elected their parliamentarians – will vary from 18 (Uruguay and Paraguay) to 74 (Brazil) representatives (Drummond, 2009; Mariano, 2011; Luciano 2012). The Constitutive Protocol of Parlasur established that the representatives may organise themselves into transitional political groups, according to their ideological positions. Two political families have been created so far: The left-wing Progressive Group (2009) and the recently created right-wing Democratic Integration Group (2016). Parlasur convenes monthly in Montevideo and divides its deliberative works into ten permanent committees.

Regarding its competences, although Parlasur can propose and suggest legislative topics to the national executives, it has no control over MERCOSUR's budget. What is more, MERCOSUR's regulations do not need parliamentary approval or consent to be implemented at the national level. Parlasur can organise meetings with civil society and other actors, invite representatives of MERCOSUR's executives to public sessions, as well as publish reports on the state of human rights in the region on an annual basis. Despite having few institutional mechanisms to challenge and scrutinise the representative of national governments, Parlasur is essentially a consultative body inasmuch as its proposals are completely dependent on the Member States' support and approval (Malamud and Sousa, 2007; Dri and Paiva, 2016).

3.2.3 Pan-African Parliament (PAP)

The Pan-African Parliament (PAP) is the only parliamentary body that assembles representatives from the entire African continent. Its creation was first proposed in 1991 by the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (Treaty of Abuja). Once established, in 2004, it became the parliamentary dimension of the African Union, aiming to secure the citizens' involvement in the process of continental integration. It is composed by representatives of all African countries, which equally appoint five national parliamentarians to attend PAP sessions in Midrand, South Africa. Although the PAP's Constitutive Protocol establishes that its parliamentarians should be directly elected, no details about the type of elections or dates for the first elections have been proposed so far (Mpanyane, 2009). In contrast to the two previous cases, the PAP does not foresee the creation of transnational political parties or the insertion of proportional representation among its parliamentarians.

Concerning its institutional powers, the PAP is currently a consultative and advisory body of the AU, without any significant means to influence AU's decision-making or control the regional budget, although it can present recommendations to the AU's executive. In this sense, it lacks the capacity of proposing binding decisions, which means that its propositions need to be fully accepted by the other AU's institutions (such as the Executive Council and the African Commission) before being ultimately implemented. However, the Protocol to the Constitutive Act of the African Union relating to the Pan-African Parliament – signed in 2014 but still in stage of ratification – would give to the PAP the competence of proposing model laws in the areas decided by the executives (Kingah and Cofelice, 2012; Nzewi, 2013).

Tables 3 and 4 summarise and compare the institutional characteristics and powers of each of the three parliaments analysed in this study. Although all of them have been constituted as parliaments of major regional organisations in Europe, Latin America and Africa, some important institutional differences are highlighted here (table 3). While the EP and Parlasur have fully or partially elected their MPs, the PAP has no directly elected parliamentarians so far. Moreover, the EP and Parlasur share the criteria of proportional representation per country, in contrast to the egalitarian criteria found in the PAP. The first two parliaments also set out formalised transnational party groups which assemble members from different nationalities that share ideological positions and concerns, which are not seen in the African case. Concerning the number of permanent committees, the EP has so far

established 22 standing committees, while both Parlasur and the PAP have created only 10 committees.

However, with regard to the level of competences of each parliament, one can identify a significant difference among the EP's powers within the EU's decision-making process and the low degree of legislative, budgetary and oversight powers of both Parlasur and the PAP, although Parlasur contains some means to relatively influence MERCOSUR's decisions (table 4). Thus, this research intends to understand the commonalities and differences found throughout the institutional paths of each of the three parliaments analysed. Based on the aforementioned assumptions of HI and the notion of parliamentary agency, it intends to provide explanatory arguments of why these assemblies have reached particular institutional outcomes over time.

Table 3. Institutional configurations of the regional parliaments

	European Parliament (EP)	MERCOSUR Parliament (PARLASUR)	Pan-African Parliament (PAP)
Foundation	1952 (1962)	1991 (2005)	2004
Member States	28	5	54
Regional organisation associated	European Union	MERCOSUR	African Union
Directly elected MPs	All member states, since 1979	Paraguay and Argentina, since 2008	No
Representation by country	Proportional (from 5 to 96)	Proportional (from 18 to 74)	Egalitarian (5)
Formalised party groups	Yes	Yes	No
Internal voting rules	Different majorities	Different majorities	Different majorities
Permanent Committees	22	10	10

Source: Author's elaboration.

Table 4. Level of parliamentary competences

	European Parliament (EP)	MERCOSUR Parliament (Parlasur)	Pan-African Parliament (PAP)
Consultative	High	High	High
Oversight	High	Low	Low
Budgetary	High	No	No
Legislative	High	Low	No

Source: Author's elaboration.

It is important to note here that this research does not intend to assume that the European Parliament's higher institutional complexity should be seen as the ultimate goal for the other two case studies, or even to any other regional parliament in the world. However, as will be discussed in the next section, one cannot ignore that the political elites from other regions have taken into account the EP's institutional history as a template during the establishment of their own regional assemblies (Dri, 2010; Lenz, 2013; Risse, 2016).

3.2.4 Data Collection

This research is based on primary and secondary data. With regard to the primary sources, this study relied on semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and official documentation from the three parliaments studied.

In the case of the European Parliament, interviews were conducted in Brussels in February 2017 with 12 senior officials from the European institutions and Members of the European Parliament. These were individuals with expertise in constitutional affairs and relations with Latin America and Africa. The data-gathering on the EU/EP also comprised of participant observation in the meetings of the EP's committee on constitutional affairs and the delegation for relations with Brazil on 9th February 2017. When it comes to MERCOSUR, 21 interviews were held with former and current officials and parliamentarians of MERCOSUR in Montevideo and Buenos Aires during February and March 2018. I was

also able to attend the plenary session of Parlasur convened on 12th March and a meeting of the Parlasur's Progressive Group at the day before. Lastly, for the African case, 13 interviews were conducted in South Africa (Johannesburg, Midrand, and Pretoria) with officials, parliamentarians and experts on the African Union and the Pan-African Parliament in May 2018. During the same period, a participant observation was performed in the following meetings: the PAP's opening session, plenary debate on AU's institutional reform, a meeting of the committee on trade and regional integration, a meeting of the regional parliamentary caucus of Southern Africa, as well as an inter-parliamentary forum jointly organised by the PAP and the EP.

A complete list of the individuals interviewed for the purposes of this thesis can be found in the list of references. As this study focus on a temporal and long-term assessment of the three regional parliaments, priority was also given to consulting the actors with longer parliamentary experience, considering that these individuals would offer more inputs on both current and historical episodes of the assemblies. Also, during the completion of the interviews, attention was given to selecting interviewees from different nationalities and political affiliations. This is relevant because the narratives brought by the interviewees might diverge according to their own national and political perceptions of the history of each parliament analysed. While most of the interviewees were directly contacted via email, telephone and *whatsapp*, other individuals were reached through snowball sampling (Atkinson and Flint, 2001), through the networking established with senior officials from the three parliaments during fieldwork. Even though there are challenges related to the potential for subconscious bias and inconsistencies found within the statements of interviewees, elite interviews are a useful source of information for the three cases analysed (Alshenqeeti, 2014). This is particularly important when researching under-developed topics, such as regional parliaments in the global south, and especially in cases where written information about key historical moments is not necessarily documented.

In terms of the documentation, the sources consulted were mostly retrieved from the electronic databases of the EP, Parlasur and the PAP. Particular focus was given to parliamentary documents such as: founding treaties, constitutive protocols, resolutions, rules of procedure, inter-institutional agreements, strategic plans, and activity reports. Complementary documents were assessed on the websites and online archives of the EU, MERCOSUR and the AU, especially those related to presidential/executive declarations and decisions. The historical documents from the EU/EP were retrieved from the online database

of the *Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe* (CVCE), a Luxembourg-based repository. Additional/missing documents were acquired directly from the EP, Parlasur, and the PAP's officials when necessary. A list of these official documents can be found in the bibliography.

This study also recognised the asymmetries in terms of the existing documentation among the three cases. In contrast to the other two case studies, the EP's and EU's history is well documented and debated by internationally known scholars and biographers (Nugent, 1999; Dinan, 2006; Jorgensen et al., 2007; Jones et al., 2012). Historical and digital archives established in Brussels, Luxembourg and Florence, among others, as well as personal archives of key personalities of the European integration process, such as Jean Monnet, Konrad Adenauer and Robert Schuman, extensively document the EU's historical development. However, as this research intends to develop an assessment of the EP's institutional development, it will only take into account some of the key documents of the history of European integration, which were mostly obtained through the online database of the CVCE. Moreover, interviews with EP's members and officials were very relevant to attain personal testimonial on key historical and recent episodes of the EP's development. While some of these interviews were recorded decades ago, but are available online at the multimedia gallery of the European Parliament, others were conducted exclusively for this study as previously referred. On the other hand, due to their more recent institutional history, information related to both Parlasur and PAP is scarcer, although the key documents issued by these assemblies are available in their online databases. Therefore, the interviews and documents acquired during this study's fieldworks were crucial to obtain first-hand information on the development of these two assemblies.

Moreover, this research was also complemented by secondary data, which mostly relates to previous academic works (books, chapters, articles) on regionalism in Europe, Latin America and Africa, but also newspapers articles, blog posts, and interviews retrieved online, all of them fully referenced in the bibliography.

3.3 COMPARATIVE FRAMEWORK

This section presents the comparative framework of this study. First, it emphasises the empirical and methodological advantages of the comparative analysis of cases from different

regions of the world, thereby considering the particularities of their political and institutional contexts. Second, it restates the research question that guides the analysis and the explanatory elements which will be assessed over the next empirical chapters.

As stated by Lijphart (1971), the comparative method is not a technique, but a strategy which scholars apply to develop empirical relations among variables observed in selected cases. The studies produced by comparative scholars are often characterised by presenting many variables and a small number of cases. It is a midway between area studies, which perform more profound assessment of a single case study, and more generalist approaches – such as the statistical method, in which prevails the observation of as many cases as possible, but often, a more reduced number of variables. Therefore, the reasons to conduct a comparative study are threefold. They can: (1) play a relevant role to either test pre-existing hypotheses/theories; (2) inductively discover new hypotheses; and (3) contribute to theory-building (Collier, 1993).

While for many decades area studies were preferred by academics in the social sciences, scholars over the past years seem more willing to develop global and comprehensive analyses. The establishment of comparative studies among cases from diverse regions presents a promising research programme in order to better understand social and political behaviour across the world. As Sartori already emphasised in the 1970s, “we are now engaged in world-wide, cross-area comparisons. And while there is an end to geographical size, there is apparently no end to the proliferation of political units” (Sartori, 1970, p. 56). Therefore, academia should supply the demand for more conceptual tools which would be able to travel across regions, thereby increasing our understanding of social phenomena.

The notion of cross-area comparison, thus, is seen as an instrument to achieve universal/general conceptualisations among heterogeneous cases/regions. Cross-regional comparisons (also called Comparative Area Studies) have the potential to build bridges between area studies specialists – mostly concerned with the specificities of particular regions or countries – and general theorists – which tend to be more focused on universal conceptualisations and patterns (Köllner et al., 2018; von Soest, 2018). In addition, it can establish an innovative dialogue between communities of area specialists from distinct regions (Europe, Africa, Latin America), which might face similar challenges and questions throughout their own research (Sil, 2009). Developing cross-regional, small-N comparisons is a way to conduct a context-sensitive type of historical comparison, as it allows researchers to

identify the mechanisms that have impacted the convergence or divergence of paths among cases from different regions. In contrast to the usual strategies of generalists, which tend to ‘clean’ particular variables to stress universal patterns observed in all regions, cross-regional comparisons highlight the contextual dynamics that substantially influence the behaviour observed in determined regions or countries (Sil, 2010).

Moreover, historical processes can also perform a significant role in cross-area comparative studies. As Collier (1993) explained, comparative historical analysis relates to the study of a small number of cases over long periods of time. It is characterised by the “examination of two or more cases to highlight how different they are, establishing a framework for interpreting how parallel processes of change are played out in different ways within each context” (Collier, 1993, p. 108). This kind of comparative exercise stresses the contrast of contexts, which are key in more interpretative assessments of social sciences. Comparative historical analysis, therefore, relies on the richness of the historical contexts of the cases, aiming to historicise social and institutional behaviours. Furthermore, it is largely inductive, grounded on empirical observations of each case study, and focuses on change through temporality. It aims to contextualise the historical paths analysed in order to develop mid-range theories which might ultimately explain the outcomes observed. As institutional or political results are not usually the products of a single event, but of many unfolding historical dynamics, acknowledging the relevance of contexts is fundamental to the comparison of cases throughout time (Vale, 2015).

More particularly, the use of comparative analysis to assess regionalism in the world – comparative regionalism – has gained a particular vigour in the last years. As stated by Börzel and Risse (2016, p. 622):

(...) comparative regionalism is a research field that increasingly seizes the middle ground between traditional area studies, comparative politics, and the field of international relations (Katzenstein, 2002). While building on profound contextual and historical knowledge, comparative regionalism employs comparative methods to arrive at generalizations about the emergence, institutional design, and effects of regionalism.

Comparative regionalism, in this sense, would be an interesting way to avoid both the over-contextualisation of regional experiences and an overgeneralisation of theoretical assumptions, thereby providing middle-range theoretical and comparative frameworks with a

relative degree of abstraction, without losing the grip of contexts and timing from distinct regions. Through a systematic analysis of the emergence, the institutional design, as well as the effectiveness of regional organisations, comparative regionalism offers significant inputs to assess commonalities and divergences between regional projects, not only located on the same continent or within the same region, but also contrasting institutions from very distinct regions.

However, two challenges must be pointed out before proceeding with the methodological design of this research. First, the prevailing ethnocentrism of the social sciences has inevitably influenced the study of regionalism since its beginning. Thus, ‘western’ concepts, theories and research programmes were traditionally overstated by regionalist scholars (Acharya, 2016). The European case, in particular, was – and still is – the most studied regionalist case by academics in the world (Schimmelfennig, 2016). Therefore, the EU was often seen as ‘the paradigmatic case of regionalism’, and subsequently as a model to understand other regional organisations in the globe (Börzel and Risse, 2016). Nonetheless, contemporary scholars aim to rethink how regionalism has been conceived and studied. Therefore, “rethinking regionalism needs to escape Eurocentrism/anti-Eurocentrism and instead insert European integration theory into a comparative perspective, whilst still maintaining cultural sensitivity” (Söderbaum, 2015, p. 12). Instead of considering the EU experience as a *sui generis* case and a template for the study of other regions, looking simply at the EU as a comparable case of regionalism – even if with an unquestionable degree of deeper integration and institutionalisation – and contrasting it with other regional experiences in the world might offer important insights for our understanding of regionalism as a global phenomenon, without discarding the diversity of contexts in which it might be grounded.

Thus, emphasising non-Western regional experiences is also a way to strengthen the scholarly foundations of regionalism. Including regional cases from the Global South in academic research is fundamental to securing the external validity and the representativeness of generalisations established by regionalists. By ignoring non-Western experiences, academic knowledge cannot be really seen as ‘global’ and ‘universal’ as it usually claims. The comparison of regional organisations, thus, is a feasible route to apply theoretical assumptions to diverse empirical realities, adjusting their analytical categories in order to guarantee their analytical relevance to as many cases as possible (Vuellers, 2014).

The second challenge of comparative regionalism is to avoid considering regional case studies as isolated phenomena. Regional organisations don’t exist in a vacuum. They are

inexorably affected and connected to their external environment, shaping other international and regional processes and being shaped by them in return. The literature of diffusion has already shed light on the existing interaction between regional projects, especially when it comes to the normative power of Europe and its impact on the rest of the world (Manners, 2002; Whitman, 2013; Lenz, 2013; Börzel and Risse, 2016). Therefore, comparative regionalism must acknowledge that regional cases are not isolated from each other, and should include the role of norms and rules diffusion mechanisms within its analyses.

Taking into account the advantages and challenges of comparative regionalism and cross-regional comparisons, this study aims to develop a comparative assessment of the institutional development of regional parliaments in the world. As noted in the previous section, three case studies were selected to illustrate this comparative effort: The European Parliament, the MERCOSUR Parliament, and the Pan-African Parliament. Considering the identification of their diverse degrees of institutionalisation over time, this study aims to answer the following research question:

- Why and to what extent have these three regional parliaments developed differently in terms of their functions and legislative competences?

In doing so, this study also addresses some secondary questions:

- When have these parliaments experienced substantial change with regard to their legislative competences and institutional design?
- Under which conditions did institutional change occur? And when did it not?
- What was the role of intergovernmental and parliamentary actors in this process?

It will be argued in this research that in order to understand the differences in the development of these three parliamentary institutions, one has to assess the interplay between agency and structure which has impacted the institutional development of each case, by putting particular emphasis on the notion of parliamentary agency as a useful tool to understand parliamentary empowerment. Drawing on historical institutionalism, this research will identify how these dynamics have operated over time in each of the three parliaments, in periods of both critical junctures and institutional stasis, through the investigation of the role of parliamentary agents involved and the surrounding structural configurations of their particular contexts.

For this purpose, this study will first trace the institutional development of each case study, considering some of the theoretical assumptions of HI and the notion of parliamentary agency (via its internal and external dimensions) previously identified. After analysing each parliamentary experience (chapters 3, 4 and 5), it then concludes with a comparative analysis of the selected cases, thereby pointing out the differences and commonalities of the three cases.

On the one hand, the original settings of regional organisations and the willingness of Member States to support further parliamentary involvement are fundamental as external boundaries to parliamentary agency over time. Thus, this research refers to the degree of autonomy of the regional/supranational instances and their institutional limitations to play a more prominent role within integration. For instance, the institutional designs chosen during the creation and reassessment of regional organisations may incentivise or hinder further independence of regional/supranational authorities at the regional level. While having more autonomous institutions favours further integration in the long-term, heavily defined and regulated institutional design reduces the likelihood of new and unintended regional practices. Regional institutional design, thus, is dependent on the degree of pooling and delegation given to regional organisations. Whilst pooling is conceived as sharing decision-making with supranational bodies, delegation means that Member States ultimately keep the regional authorities created under their direct control (Lenz and Marks, 2016). Moreover, democracy is a fundamental element of the legitimacy of regional organisations. While some regions face recent contexts of (re)democratisation and therefore seek to launch join a regional organisation, some authoritarian regimes might seek international legitimacy through the development of regional organisations (Hartman, 2016).

On the other hand, the internal dimension of parliamentary agency relates to the mobilisation degree of these agents as well as the multiple resources and capability found inside the regional parliaments, which is derived from the role that parliaments and political parties occupy in the political systems we find at the national level – presidential and parliamentary systems. The political traditions of the Member States tend to impact the mobilisation degree of parliamentary agents and the institutional outcomes of the regional organisation they are part of. Therefore, parliamentary or presidential systems produce distinct interactions between the executive and legislative actors (Saalfeld, 2000). The role of parliamentary institutions in each system, therefore, differs significantly not only at the national level, but also at the regional one (Malamud and Sousa, 2007).

Therefore, this study conceives parliamentary agency as a key element within the institutional development of each of the three parliaments studied here. The dynamics within these parliaments are taken into account in order to assess the individual performance of parliaments and parliamentary leaderships to enhance their powers within regional decision-making. Through investigating the development of the three selected parliaments, this study will analyse how, why, and when political/parliamentary elites have gradually pushed for more powers for the regional parliaments. Hence, by studying parliamentary agency we can identify the performance of agents towards the establishment of more powerful regional legislatures.

In sum, this study intends to investigate the institutional development of three regional parliaments from Europe (EP), Latin America (Parlasur) and Africa (PAP). It applies the key concepts of historical institutionalism, such as critical junctures, and the notion of parliamentary agency to the three cases in order to trace the institutional path of these parliamentary institutions over time. Throughout each institutional trajectory, both agency and structure are taken into account in a relational fashion. The theoretical framework will then be applied to all three parliaments in order to reveal both the periods of institutional dynamism and equilibrium of each case study, focusing not just on the moments of critical junctures but also on institutional stasis and incremental change of these parliaments. After tracing the institutional path of each case over the next three chapters (European Union, MERCOSUR, and African Union), a comparative assessment will be provided. Thus, this research intends to identify the similarities and differences among the three cases, as well as to understand why they have presented such diverse degree of institutionalisation over time, unveiling the logic behind the development of the regional parliaments studied.

4. PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY MAKING A DIFFERENCE: THE INSTITUTIONAL EMPOWERMENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Its beginnings were modest and discreet, in keeping with the limited powers conferred on it by the Treaty of Rome, but through the growing political influence it has gradually acquired, the European Parliament has consolidated its role among the institutions and in the building of the Community. (Veil, 1979, p. 2)

Because if you think about the history of elected parliaments, you see that there are some parliaments that have won the battle and others that have lost it. But all have fought the battle. This parliament will fight the battle to add to its powers, which are the powers of the Community. (Spinelli, 1977, p. 1)

The key focus of this chapter is to understand the institutional development of the European Parliament, which is characterised by a gradual process of complexity of its organisation and its competences within the European decision-making system. The EP began as a consultative chamber to become a co-legislating body. This did not happen overnight. It was a process that changed direction at several critical junctures. These have enabled the transformation and strengthening of the EP vis-à-vis the Council of the European Union and the European Commission. By employing an ‘agent-centric’ approach of historical institutionalism, which combines key concepts of HI (critical junctures and path dependence) with the notion of parliamentary agency, this chapter argues that parliamentary agents have played a key role in EU’s parliamentarisation process. The combination of a proactive internal performance of parliamentary agents with external stimulated conditions found in the European context has supported the gradual empowerment of the EP within European integration.

This analysis of the EP’s evolution starts from its creation as the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (1952) to the last major institutional changes introduced by the Lisbon Treaty (2009). While the first section characterises both the external and internal dimensions of parliamentary agency in European integration, the following sections focus on how parliamentary agency emerged at the critical junctures of the institutional history of the EP. Firstly, each section begins by stating the reasons why the selected period is seen as a critical juncture in the history of the EP. Secondly, it examines the key actors who pushed for change and their positions on the role and competences that the EP

should play within the EU at each particular moment. Thirdly, it stresses how the external and internal dimensions of parliamentary agency have impacted on the institutional path of the EP over the years, thereby transforming the characteristics of this parliamentary institution within the EU's political system. By presenting each stage of the EP's history, this chapter provides an overall synthesis of the EP's institutional development, through the combination of both periods of institutional changes and institutional stasis over time.

Previous scholars who studied the EP's institutional development have either explained this particular phenomenon through a logic of rational preferences of the political actors involved, either intergovernmental or supranational agents (Hix, 2002; Kreppel, 2002), or according to a strategy of legitimacy-seeking (Rittberger, 2005). Nonetheless, this study considers that both arguments are relevant but insufficient to explain why the EP has reached its current stage of institutionalisation, as they are mostly centred in the preferences and perceptions from representatives of Member States and the European Commission. Instead, I propose to apply the notion of parliamentary agency in order to fully address the parliamentarisation of the EU. In this sense, this research highlights the importance of parliamentary actors on the empowerment of the EP. The performance of parliamentary agents at the EU level led to a collective acceptance from both governmental and supranational agents that the EP should be empowered over time. Thereby, as far as the EU became a more complex political system, the EP has been achieving more similar characteristics and competences with the national parliaments, currently constituting itself as a key decision-making actor in most of the agendas of the EU.

Before analysing the European parliamentary case, it is important to point out that the critical junctures have been selected on the basis of the moments in time in which the EP has achieved a substantive transformation in terms of its institutional characteristics and competences. Within approximately 60 years of European integration, one could of course recognise other periods as key to a better understanding of the parliamentary evolution of the European project. However, given the limits of the length of this study, four junctures will be highlighted, as these had a fundamental impact on the EP's roles within the European Communities/Union: First, the creation of the Common Assembly of the ECSC (1952); second, the Single European Act (1985); third, the Maastricht Treaty (1992); and, fourth, the European Convention (2001-2003), which was subsequently followed by the latest institutional reforms adopted with the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. Although the holding of the first direct elections to the EP in 1979, for instance, is a remarkable moment of the EP's

history, the four chosen junctures have established and/or fundamentally transformed the EP's institutional shape over time. Also, it is important to note that although these critical junctures taken place on a specific date, i.e. the year of the entry into force of selected foundational treaties/agreements, these junctures must be understood in a more comprehensive way, through the surrounding temporal context related to the constitution of these documents.

4.1 STIMULATED AND PROACTIVE ACTORS: PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY IN EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Parliamentary agency in the EU has been a result of the combination of external stimuli and internal proactivity. On the one hand, since the beginnings of European integration, parliamentary actors have been inserted in a context of supranationalism and parliamentarianism, which strongly stimulated the empowerment of a parliamentary assembly at the European level. On the other hand, parliamentary agents, especially the members of the presidency of the EP as well as leaders of pro-European political groups and specialised committees, have proactively sought for a more prominent role to the EP over time. While previous studies have majorly emphasised the role of the dynamics external to the parliament towards the parliamentarisation of the EU (Rittberger, 2005), this chapter focuses on demonstrating how the internal dimension of parliamentary agency is also fundamental to understand the empowerment of the EP over the past decades.

Seminal works have highlighted how supranationalism and parliamentarisation has been externally stimulated in the context of European integration by both the supranational and intergovernmental actors involved with the European project since its beginnings (Nugent, 1999, Magnette, 2001; Rittberger, 2005; Costa, 2009). The historical context and circumstances in which European integration happened have favoured the incremental empowerment of its institutions, especially the supranational and parliamentary ones. The Post-World War 2 context favoured the adoption of the pooling of sovereignty in specific policies as a strategy of Western European states to avoid further military conflicts in the region (Nugent, 1999). Thus, the establishment of a supranational executive was the solution created to deal with the management of the Coal and Steel Community and subsequently with the Economic Community. In addition, the European project was not exclusively conceived

by its founding fathers as an essentially economic project, but also as a wider political enterprise.

The coexistence of supranational and intergovernmental structures inside the European project enabled the further strengthening of supranational bodies, such as the European Commission and the European Parliament. Although empowering the supranational assembly was the sole decision of the Member States, through the negotiation of a new intergovernmental treaty or by incremental agreements, some scholars have defended that supranational actors have played a significant role in the process of institutional change (Pollack, 1997; Christiansen, 2002). Nonetheless, as emphasised by one of the parliamentarians interviewed, any strengthening of the EP would need to be agreed by the national governments, considering that the EU is still a major reflection of the will of the Member States (EP 1, interview with the author). From Member States' point of view, the institutionalisation of the European Parliament has been seen as a response from national governments to the increasing powers of the European Commission, which was not accountable to national parliaments (Rittberger, 2003). However, the flexible nature of the still young EU project allowed the gradual and substantial transformation of its institutions and the incorporation of innovative institutional formulas over time. As emphasised by HI, these flexible and supranational characteristics of the EU have facilitated the development of unintended consequences, such as the empowerment of the EP, which were not foreseen by national governments in the moment of its creation (Pierson, 1998).

Moreover, the democratic concerns shared by European Member States stimulated national governments to agree on creating and strengthening legitimate channels to oversee and scrutinise the activities of the European Commission. As pointed out by Magnette,

As democracy had been synonymous with parliamentary politics for two centuries in Europe, the Community could only be democratic, or so it was said, if its Parliament became central in the political system and imported its majoritarian style within Community politics. (2001, p. 292)

In this sense, the parliamentary traditions in most European countries favoured the inclusions of strong parliamentary bodies and parliamentarians in the European project. Acknowledging the limitations of national parliaments to perform this role, Member States decided to establish the European Parliament and to increase its legislative, supervisory and budgetary competences throughout time. Costa and Brack (2013) stressed that “the predisposition of

national leaders to ‘parliamentarize’ the EU because they are familiar with the parliamentarist matrix, which is not necessarily federalist; and the absence of any other credible scenario to address the democratic deficit” (p. 63) have played an important role in terms of parliamentarisation. Therefore, relevant parliamentary configurations observed at the national level were stimulated to be transported to the European level through the gradual empowerment of the EP within the EU’s decision-making system. Besides, as argued by Magnette (2001, p. 295), “The fact that Member States have accepted all the customary practices by the European Parliament to strengthen its own position in the political system makes it clear that national leaders are also deeply influenced by this parliamentary path dependence”. Thus, EU integration path has overall been a fertile environment for increasing parliamentary activism within the EU’s political system.

However, in order to fully understand parliamentarisation in time, one must also take into account not only how institutional context and the actors outside the parliament have perceived and supported parliamentarisation, but also the role of parliamentary agency within this gradual and ongoing process. In particular, this thesis emphasises how Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have employed most of their resources to recurrently pressure national governments and other supranational agents to achieve institutional concessions over time, especially at critical junctures. Hence, not only was the development of the EP determined by the external support of Member States and the European Commission. A fundamental recognition must be made to prominent parliamentary agents over time, especially to key MEPs, such as Robert Schuman and Altiero Spinelli, and leaders of pro-integration European political groups – such as the Christian Democrats, Socialist and Liberals – which have elevated the political profile of the chamber and incessantly demanded for more institutional powers to the EP. Although the literature acknowledged that the responsibility for treaty reforms ultimately has lied in the hands of Member States during intergovernmental conferences (Moravcsik, 1991), this thesis’ argument is that parliamentary agents, through their proactive agency and using specific and recurrent strategies, played a key role in the institutional development of the EP, thereby pushing national governments to increase the EP’s powers over time.

Besides the Presidency and the leaders of the political groups represented at the EP, importance must be noted to the performance of the members of the specialised committees, in the past the Committee on Political Affairs and more recently the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO), who have drafted several reports and projects on the future of

the EU, laying out innovative institutional reforms to be adopted at the European level. Among others aspects, the reforms proposed by MEPs would set out more competences to the EP. As referred by some of the EP's officials interviewed, members of committees such as AFCD are generally more mature and experienced in EU and EP's affairs, which has been an important characteristic given the deeper level of political and 'philosophical' discussions conducted within the committee on the state of the EU and the changing role of the EP in this context (EP 2 and 3, interviews with the author). As will be pointed out in the last section, even in the most recent times of migration crisis and Brexit, MEPs – in particular members of AFCD – have continued to debate and to issue reports on the future of the EU and about the EP's role in this challenging scenario.

When it comes to the history of the EP, this thesis identifies some recurrent strategies adopted by MEPs which ultimately aimed to pressure the other European bodies in order to grant the EP further competences. While investigating the several critical junctures in the EP's history, it is observed the relevance of parliamentary instruments which, taken collectively, served as important means to highlight the MEPs position on the future of the European project and the role of the EP within it. This chapter argues that through ascertaining their agency by fully employing strategies as reforming its internal rules, proposing ambitious political reports on the future of European integration, engaging in co-legislation, and more recently directly negotiating treaty reforms, parliamentarians influenced the posture and the perceptions of the Commission and the Member States regarding the EP's role within the EU, leading to the strengthening of its own competences over time.

Not only are these instruments related to the overall EP's competences established by the founding treaties, but they are also associated to the internal activities and organisation of parliamentary agents over the last decades of European integration. As highlighted by one of the EP's officials consulted, actions such as reforming parliament's rules of procedure and the adoption of political reports on the future of the EU were often employed by parliamentary agents to influence the EU's institutional development and the role of the EP within this framework (EP 3, interview with the author). The fact that MEPs have preferred to invest in the more influential instruments over time, intensively using the new competences acquired by the subsequent EU's institutional reforms (Rasmussen and Toshkov, 2011; Yordanova, 2011), indicates that parliamentary agents have employed the most meaningful instruments available in their 'arsenal' with the aim of strengthening the EP's positions at the EU level. In this respect, the co-decision powers and the active

parliamentary participation through the Convention model assured that the MEPs have become more prominent agents in the EU, starting to resemble the roles occupied by national parliamentarians in the domestic context of European countries. Since then, both the Member States and the European Commission have not been able to marginalise the EP from key institutional decisions, which symbolises the advanced stage of parliamentarisation reached by the EU. Although the EP is still not as powerful as the Member States in some policy areas, one cannot doubt that it has progressively achieved substantial competences when compared to its initial consultative format. Thereby, by providing an in-depth examination at the critical junctures of the EU, the next sections will demonstrate that a strong level of parliamentary agency has led to the EP's substantive empowerment over the past decades.

4.2 THE FOUNDATIONS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND THE ORIGINS OF A SUPRANATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY

The signature of the Treaty of Paris and the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952 is one of the major events of the history of European integration and the first critical juncture in the institutional development of the European Union. One of the most innovative aspects of the ECSC was the constitution of a supranational High Authority responsible for managing the coal and steel common market from an autonomous position vis-à-vis the Member States. As stated by the ECSC Foundational Treaty, "Each member State agrees to respect this supranational character and to make no effort to influence the members of the High Authority in the execution of their duties" (Treaty of Paris, 1951, p. 7). Although appointed by the Member States, the members of the High Authority received full autonomy with regard to the exercise of their activities. However, as a counterpoint to the ascension of the High Authority, the Treaty of Paris also stipulates the creation of a Common Assembly, a consultative body composed by representatives of the national legislatures and responsible for monitoring the activities of the newly-created High Authority (Rittberger, 2003). Its first institutional competences included discussing and debating the general reports submitted by the High Authority as well as the possibility of adopting motions of censure to the High Authority, if approved by two-thirds of its members.

Within these initial institutional settings, parliamentary agency has been ascertained by the high profile of the first representatives appointed to the Common Assembly and the

increasing role of transnational political groups in supporting stronger supranational institutions. Some of the first members of the Common Assembly were key political leaders in their own countries as well as at the European level. For instance, the two first presidents of the Assembly are considered two of the “Founding Fathers” of European integration and notorious political figures at the European and national level: Paul-Henri Spaak and Alcide de Gasperi, former Belgian and Italian Prime Ministers, respectively. Both political figures were deeply involved in the establishment of the European project and had a significant degree of political influence in their home countries. In addition, in 1958, when the ECSC Common Assembly was replaced by the European Parliamentary Assembly – with the constitution of the European Economic Community (EEC) – its first President was no less than Robert Schuman, the very founder of the European project, who gave a higher profile to this parliamentary body in its first years of existence. The presence of such prominent politicians at the Common Assembly was fundamental to ensure a greater influence of this parliamentary body on European integration, aiming to increase the institutional powers of the Assembly over time. These personalities, alongside the European political groups – still embryonic in the 1950s, but increasingly active over the decades – have provided the political resources needed for a proactive parliamentary agency throughout the EP’s institutional path.

This parliamentary pro-activism can be identified since the first actions of the consultative assembly, which were majorly related to the internal organisation of its activities. After approving its first rules of procedure, “the assembly also rapidly came to the conclusion that its one annual session should be broken down into a series of part-sessions, which gradually increased in frequency” (Cox, 2002, p. 2). Moreover, “the Assembly immediately acquired the habit of calling extraordinary parliamentary sessions, adopted a commission- based structure, and recognized the political groups, providing them with a financial contribution” (Guerrieri, 2001, p. 232). The aim was to achieve the full employment of its own competences in order to initiate a campaign to pressure both the High Authority and the Member States with the intention of extending its own institutional powers. According to former President of the EP, Georges Spénale (1979), parliamentary agents – since the beginnings – have applied two strategies to gain more importance: First, they have intensified the use of its current competences and the consultation with other supranational bodies, and, second, they have pressured for consecutives amendments to the Treaties, which would, among other aspects, enhance parliamentary powers within the regional organisation.

Although a supranational parliamentary agency appeared with the establishment of the Common Assembly in the 1950s, the marginal position of the Assembly in the European decision making-system would only be substantially transformed in the 1980s, when a new critical juncture is observed within the European project. However, some specific incremental changes proposed and/or applied might be identified as relevant examples of how parliamentary agents were decisive from the 1950 to the 1970s, when they positioned themselves as proactive agents of the European integration. Two opportunities of institutional change are presented below: The proposal of a European Defence Community (1954) and the holding of the first direct elections in 1979. While the first was ultimately rejected by the French parliament, the second was fully implemented. However, as will be demonstrated, proactive parliamentary agency appeared in both episodes of institutional reforms.

4.2.1 Parliamentary engagement in the establishment of the European Defence and Political Communities (1952-4)

One of the first windows of opportunities given to the members of the Common Assembly to engage in reforming European institutions was drafting the proposal of a European Political and Defence Communities. Based on a French-led proposal, Member States agreed on constituting a European Defence Community (EDC), which would lead to the establishment of a European Army, with supranational command (European Minister of Defence) and budget (Pleven Plan, 1950). In this context, Foreign Ministers from the six founding Member States in 1952 stimulated the parliamentary involvement in developing the new communities:

The Members of the Coal and Steel Assembly are invited, on the basis of the principles contained in Article 38 of the Treaty establishing the European Defence Community and without prejudice to the provisions of that Treaty, to draft a Treaty constituting a European Political Authority (Resolution ECSC, 1952, p. 1).

Drafting the proposal of a new European supranational organisation was the most significant opportunity for members of the Common Assembly to impact the future of European integration during its first years. Not only were parliamentary agents entitled to deliberate and present to Member States their own views regarding the nature of the new political community, but they also had the chance to indicate the powers which the Assembly should

possess in this new European Political Community. In this sense, members of the Assembly internally organised the ‘Study Committee for the European Constitution’, responsible for formulating a list of resolutions on the main features of a new European community to be established. Within the propositions issued, members of the Study Committee demanded new competences for the Assembly within the decision-making process. For instance, the third resolution presented by the Committee was ambitious when called for the establishment of a Community Parliament. Besides dividing the Parliament into a bicameral system (House of People and House of States), parliamentarians suggested that among its new competences, “The Parliament discusses and votes the laws and taxes of the Community, adopts the budgets, certifies, in cases of aggression, a state of war, approves peace treaties and appoints the Government” (Study Committee for the European Constitution, 1952, p. 5). Having in mind the existing consultative competences of the ECSC Assembly, the institutional reform proposed by parliamentary agents would be a major step in terms of parliamentarisation. “The assemblies of the EDCT and the EPC were endowed with powers to supervise and control the respective ‘executive’ authorities, and they were given the right to propose amendments regarding the expenditure side of the budget” (Rittberger, 2006, p. 1213).

Although Member States agreed with the project co-designed with members of the Assembly, the ambitious EDC’s proposal was ultimately rejected by the French parliament in 1954, which in fact highlighted that the European integration was never a consensual project in Europe. However, this episode showed that parliamentary agents represented at the Common Assembly were eager to promote institutional reforms which would not just deepen the European project, but also would transform the consultative nature of their parliament. Despite this setback, parliamentary agents did not coalesce with their current powers but continuously demanded further competences in the following years until a new important incremental change occurred in the 1970s.

4.2.2 Parliamentary agency in the 1970s: The extension of budgetary/financial powers the approval of direct parliamentary elections

Over the 1970s, the consultative assembly has seen important incremental changes, even before a new juncture emerges and structurally transforms its role within the Communities’ decision-making system. On the one hand, in 1970, Member States, via an inter-institutional

agreement, gave parliament control over the non-compulsory expenditures. More importantly, in 1975, the Member States conceded further budgetary powers to the EP, giving it the right to reject the budget as a whole (Lindner, 2003). On the other hand, incessantly pushed by MEPs, the decision over the direct elections for the EP was approved by governmental actors in 1976, only materialising itself with the first EP's elections of 1979.

One of the episodes of strengthening the Assembly's – referred to as 'European Parliament' since 1962 – competences is observed in the 1970s. This concerns the EP's gaining of budgetary and financial powers in the Communities' through the institutional reforms of 1970 and 1975. Right after the failure of the European political and defence communities, the Assembly, through successive parliamentary reports, called again for the extension of supranational competences. For instance, in the resolution of 27 June 1963, Parliament demanded the increase of its own competences, not only in the assessment of the Community's budget, but also when it comes to the appointment of members of the Commission and the Court of Justice (European Parliament, 1963). Through specific strategies such as the establishment of specialised committees, the drafting and deliberation of political reports, and the development of inter-institutional dialogue with both the Commission (which replaced the High Authority as the bureaucratic body of the European project since the Treaty of Rome) and representatives of the Member States, Parliament envisaged a major role for itself in European integration.

Since its creation, the Assembly has stressed the need to expand the ECSC's powers and create a budgetary control for the Common Assembly (Piodi, 2007; De Feo, 2015). However, parliamentary pressure was not enough to guarantee a more powerful role in the new European Community created. Thus, whilst the subsequent treaty signed by the Member States, the Treaty of Rome (1957) – which established the European Economic Community (EEC) – expanded the integration project to further domains and established the single market, it did not alter the parliamentary assembly. The Treaty of Rome fundamentally maintained the consultative and supervisory role of the Assembly as inherited from the ECSC.

The EP was the actor most interested in further institutional change, especially in the budgetary area. Acquiring budgetary competences was seen by parliamentarians as a crucial instrument to enhance their powers. In the words of former EP President Spénale (1979, p. 5), "Parliament has never lost sight of that fact. It sees the increase in its budgetary powers as a part of its long-term strategy for obtaining legislative powers". Having the competence of

deliberating and amending the total amount or part of the Communities' budget was considered by MEPs as a fundamental asset to increase its overall influence in the legislative process in the future. In this vein, Parliament thus defended a substantial change in budgetary approval, through a formal reform, formalised in a new treaty, which would be a major opportunity to review the EP's competences. "(t)he Assembly affirmed the urgent need to expand its powers so that it could carry out the tasks of a genuine Parliament, including, in particular, a degree of legislative power and powers of political and budgetary control" (Spénale, 1979, p. 4).

However, "'Formal change' of the treaty provisions, the EP's ultimate goal, was within the exclusive decision-making realm of member states and the EP did not have the bargaining power to force member states into enacting a new budget treaty" (Lindner, 2003, p. 921). Thus, the EP's competences were not strengthened through a new Foundational Treaty, but through an inter-institutional agreement, an informal negotiation between the community institutions in the 1970s. Member States acknowledged some of the parliamentary demands and, via an inter-institutional agreement, gave parliament control over the non-compulsory expenditures in 1970. More importantly, in 1975, the Member States conceded further budgetary powers to the EP, giving it the right to reject the budget as a whole. In this sense, the Joint Declaration of the EP, Council and Commission of 1975 established a conciliation mechanism which would fully include the EP in the assessment of the Community budget:

the increase in the budgetary powers of the European Parliament must be accompanied by effective participation by the latter in the procedure for preparing and adopting decisions which give rise to important expenditure or revenue to be charged or credited to the budget of the European Communities (European Communities, 1975, p. 1).

No critical juncture occurred in this period that would ultimately be translated into a new foundational document and would substantially change the state of the Community as well as parliamentary competences. Nevertheless, periodic incremental changes – through informal agreements between the Community institutions – were implemented, altering the institutional equilibrium between the European actors, and mostly favouring supranational bodies, such as the EP. Thereby, not only could the EP count on amendments to the Treaties, but also on agreements between institutions and intergovernmental agreements to enhance its powers over time (Spénale, 1979). Thus, ascertaining parliamentary agency via negotiating

with the Commission and the Council proved effective as a way to push for further parliamentarisation in both moments of institutional inertia and change. This aspect was pointed out Former President of the EP, Simone Veil, when stating that:

It was this growing influence which led to the signing of the Treaties of 21 April 1970 and 22 July 1975 which strengthened the Assembly's budgetary powers. Furthermore, through a number of practical arrangements, the part played by the Assembly in the exercise of the Community's responsibilities has been given sharper form and wider scope. (Veil, 1979, p. 2)

For the first time in its history – having in mind the failure of the EDC project – the EP pro-activism has resulted in the gain of formal competences beyond those originally conceived in the foundational Treaties. Nonetheless, parliamentary agents were not satisfied with these outcomes. As then MEP Spinelli emphasised, “Parliament has already obtained certain budgetary powers and will request stronger powers for intervening in the economic domain” (1977, p. 1).

Moreover, since the beginnings of European integration one might observe a call for holding direct elections to the Assembly. Parliamentarians, within working groups and specialised committees, had deliberated and debated the provision of a directly-elected assembly at the European level. In this case, parliamentary agency is identified in the deliberation over political reports by MEPs, which urged Member States to implement the EP's first direct elections. By drafting several political reports, parliamentarians sought to express their concerns about parliament's lack of democratic legitimacy as well as their demand for further parliamentary powers. The role of parliamentary reports has been neglected by scholars as a key parliamentary instrument adopted by members of the EP since its conception. Yet, they have been a powerful means to proactively demand further institutional powers over time. Often drafted within the meetings of the EP's political or constitutional affairs committees, political reports have been often employed by parliamentarians to state their own views on the future of the European integration and the role of the EP in this process.

Since the 1950s, members of the Common Assembly via issuing parliamentary reports (such as the Teitgen and Klompé reports) stressed the need for direct elections as a way to legitimise parliament and increase the efficiency to the European project, something even stipulated in the Treaty of Rome (1957): “The Assembly shall draw up proposals for

elections by direct universal suffrage in accordance with a uniform procedure in all Member States” (Art.138, p. 49). Insisting in this demand, in 1960, parliamentarians adopted a new report, drafted by Belgium’s MEP Fernand Dehousse, emphasising the necessity of organising the first direct elections to the parliamentary assembly. This report highlighted the connection between the holding of direct elections and the increase of the EP’s competences. Thereby, it stated that a directly elected EP would gain a greater degree of democratic inputs and autonomy, which would provide it with enough conditions to receive further institutional powers from Member States (Costa, 2015).

The call for parliamentary elections was not only defended inside the Parliament’s ranks. This demand was also supported externally. In 1972, the European Commission set out an *ad hoc* working party composed by prominent academics and specialists, tasked to assess the issue of extending parliamentary powers. Although recognising that both direct elections and the EP’s empowerment should be achieved, the report supported that one should not be considered as a precondition to the other (Vedel Report, 1972, p. 36). In fact, the two elements should be pursued simultaneously in order to democratise the European project.

Some years later, members of the EP returned to this discussion, updating the proposal included in the Dehousse Report of 1960 about the importance of the first parliamentary elections. Through a report drafted by its political affairs committee, and led by Dutch MEP Schelto Patijn in 1975, parliamentarians submitted to the Member States a new convention project on the direct elections by universal suffrage. These successive deliberations over political reforms have constantly pressured the national governments to address the issue of direct elections, showing how parliamentary agents, by the leadership of members of the Political Affairs Committee, were incessantly demanding further institutional changes in their favour. As a result of this pressure, in 1976, Member States had finally reached an agreement on holding the first direct elections to the European Parliament, adjusting the EP’s proposal of 1975: “After a concerted effort on the part of a majority of Parliament, the Council signed the draft Convention into an Act on 20 September 1976” (European Parliament, 2015, p. 1). Pragmatically, the intergovernmental act of 1976 and the EP’s draft did not define common electoral legislation to the first elections. Rather, such legislation would be regulated by each national electoral system until a uniform procedure would eventually be agreed by all Member States (Costa, 2015).

The first direct elections were finally held in 1979, after the ratification of the then nine Member States (Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom joined the European

Communities in 1973). However, considered by scholars as *second-order elections*, the EP's electoral campaigns organised were treated like second-order national contests, focusing on national themes and politicians (Herman, 1979; Reif and Schmitt, 1980). Although the EP's first elections increased the legitimacy of the parliament towards the other European institutions, it was not automatically followed by new parliamentary competences (Guerrieri, 2001). Parliamentary empowerment would only happen at a next critical juncture, during the 1980s, when European integration would face a fundamental transformation after several years of relative institutional stability.

4.3 ONE STEP TOWARDS PARLIAMENTARISATION: THE SINGLE EUROPEAN ACT AND THE COOPERATIVE PARLIAMENT

A new critical juncture in the history of European integration emerged in the 1980s, when the establishment of the internal market and the direct elections of MEPs pressured for further reforms in the European supranational architecture. The signing of the Single European Act (SEA) in 1986 was an important step forward in the empowerment of European institutions and the expansion of the European project to new policy areas. With regard to the role of the EP, the SEA introduced a new legislative procedure – the cooperation procedure – thereby increasing the EP's leverage towards the Council and the Commission. Although the optimistic context shared by the political leaders in the 1980s encouraged further integration and provided an external favourable momentum for institutional reform (Moravcsik, 1991), the role that the EP and some entrepreneurs MEPs internally played at this moment is also fundamental to understanding the institutional transformations of the European project during this period. In contrast to the previous critical juncture identified, when the assembly was firstly created according to the sole decision of the Member States, this second juncture saw the EP developing into an established and directly elected supranational agent, aiming to achieve a more prominent role in European integration. As stated by Guerrieri (2001, p. 236), “The Parliament elected by universal suffrage in 1979, with a membership increased from 198 to 410, suffered greatly from the fact that the introduction of the direct election was not accompanied by the granting of any new responsibility”. Thus, the EP's dissatisfaction made parliamentary agents keep pressuring European governments for further powers.

Within this juncture, parliamentary agency is observed within the proactive role of a group of pro-integration MEPs who proposed to Member States an ambitious project of institutional reform, aiming to establish for the first time a European Union. A major role in the 1980s is attributed to the Italian Communist MEP Altiero Spinelli. By gathering parliamentarians from different ideologies and nationalities at the Crocodile Restaurant in Strasbourg, Spinelli and the *Crocodile Club* defended a large-scale reform of European institutions, which would necessarily include stronger competences for the newly elected EP in order to democratise and legitimise the European project. Consequently, MEPs set up an *ad hoc* working group – chaired by Spinelli – responsible for drafting a new European Treaty that would afterwards be presented to the consideration of Member States (Lodge, 1984; Pinder, 2009).

In contrast to previous incremental changes to the European Treaties, the EP's new proposal contained a rather maximalist approach. Instead of simply adjusting previous intergovernmental agreements, the members of the EP supported the elaboration of a new treaty, which would lead to a deeper institutional transformation of the European institutions than seen before. By empowering the European Community more generally, the EP would have higher chances to increase its own institutional powers (Lodge, 1984). Approved by the European Parliament's plenary in 1984, the 'Draft Treaty Establishing the European Union' – also called Spinelli Report – was one of the EP's major contributions to the European project. Key aspects of the current EU were suggested for the first time in this proposal: such as the co-decision procedure between Parliament and the Council; the concept of citizenship of the Union; the obligation of Member States to follow democratic principles and fundamental rights domestically; and the requirement of parliamentary approval to international agreements signed by the Commission (Bieber, 2009).

Member States responded to this particular parliamentary initiative by organising an intergovernmental conference on the issue. However, the overall parliamentary enthusiasm with the Spinelli Report differed significantly from the reluctant governmental reception of this document. Although strongly supporting the consolidation of the internal market, governments preferred a narrower notion of 'European Union' (Lodge, 1986). After this intergovernmental meeting, Member States reached a common position on the next steps of the European project by signing the SEA. When compared to the Spinelli Report, the SEA was much more limited in terms of its capacity to substantially change the nature of European integration. For instance, although the EP's legislative influence was extended by the SEA,

this agreement guaranteed that the national governments' position still prevailed within European decision-making system, leading to the disappointment of Spinelli and the *Crocodile Club*. Despite the high level of parliamentary activism identified in this period, the negotiations which led to the SEA were ultimately conducted and promoted by the key Member States (France, Germany and the United Kingdom), according to an intergovernmental and minimalist approach, excluding parliamentarians from the decisive forums (Moravcsik, 1991).

On the other hand, from a long-term perspective, one realises that the adoption of the Spinelli Report and EP's dynamism in the 1980s have pushed forward the integration project by provoking the Member States and making them react to parliamentary pressure for further integration. Although the short-term outcomes were not as substantive as Spinelli and others had imagined, the SEA put an end to the institutional stasis of the European project and led to the consolidation of the single market and the increasing involvement of the EP in the legislative process.

The SEA established, for the first time, a certain level of parliamentary influence in the EU's legislative process. The cooperation procedure allowed the Parliament to present amendments to the Community norms proposed by the Commission, which would have subsequently to be taken into account by the Council of Ministers in its deliberations on the issue (Ernshaw and Judge, 1995). Although the national executives remained in control the final decision on European laws, the EP achieved an institutionalised way to impact the decision-making process, through new practices such as proposing amendments to European legislation. Despite the fact that giving legislative powers to the directly-elected EP would help address the democratic and legitimacy concerns with the European Communities, the cooperation procedure may also be seen as a reaction from the Member States to the introduction of qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council (Rittberger, 2003). QMV had eliminated States' veto powers over some policy areas, such as internal market, social policy, economic and social cohesion. Therefore, "A majority of Member State representatives wanted the EP to play a more prominent role in the Community legislative process once the Member States opted for the pooling of sovereignty" (Rittberger, 2003, p. 20). According to Lord Henry Plumb, the EP's President (1987-1989), with the ratification of the SEA, MEPs realised that they were not merely a 'talking shop' anymore. Therefore, Parliament responded very positively to the new responsibilities granted, in particular to the cooperation procedure and the insertion of the second reading, which gave the EP a more prominent role and

intensified the dialogue between MEPs with both the Council and the Commission (Plumb, 2015).

Although the SEA granted the EP a more powerful institutional position, most of MEPs were not fully satisfied with the outcome of the intergovernmental agreement, considering that the Spinelli Report had demanded more extensive competences for the EP, towards the transformation of the Parliament into a full legislative body. Thus, one of the responses from parliamentarians was to take the opportunity created by the SEA to reform its own rules of procedure in order to guarantee that the new parliamentary powers – and particularly the cooperation procedure – would be fully exploited by the EP over the following years. In this regard, as Kreppel reminds us (2003), reforming its own internal rules would be one of the parliamentary instruments that the parliamentary agents are able to use according to its own objectives and ambitions. For instance, a parliament wanting to increase its political relevance may adapt its rules of procedures to make sure that its internal organisation is structured with the aim of making the most of its current powers and to consequently pressure the executive for further empowerment. The EP's relative disappointment with the SEA led to a far-reaching reform of its rules of procedure, in an attempt to both adapt its procedures to the new powers granted as well as to unilaterally enhance its powers beyond the limits expressed in the treaties. For instance, one quarter of the parliamentary reforms after the SEA were related to its unilateral empowerment within the European decision-making system (Kreppel, 2003).

On the other hand, the increasing sophistication of the EP's organisation raised a strong concern about the level of parliamentary efficiency. Therefore, the EP's internal reforms have successively reduced the liberty of parliamentarians and increased the powers of the EP's presidency, secretariat and political groups. Over time, periods of open debate were reduced – by decreasing the speaking time of individuals MEPs in parliamentary sessions – and the EP's main political and institutional decisions started to be exclusively taken by the EP's bureau and the leaders of political groups (Brack et al., 2015). As will be subsequently discussed, this reform of the EP's internal working has shifted power from individual MEPs to the political groups and the EP's presidency, which started to become the key collective agents pushing for more institutional powers.

The Spinelli Report on the European Union and the reform of EP's rules of procedures after the implementation of the SEA are clear examples of parliamentary pro-activism during the 1980s aiming to not position the EP as a passive body in European integration. Although they showed limited impact on the outcome of institutional change, it enabled MEPs to constantly pressure the national governments for further institutional reforms. Therefore, the EP and entrepreneurs MEPs such as Altiero Spinelli must be seen as important collective and individual agents of change. They pushed national governments in the direction of a deeper reform of the European project in a moment of 'euro-paralysis', which ultimately led to the establishment of the internal market and the expansion of Community policies. They also led to the Parliament's new role in legislative matters, through the introduction of the cooperation procedure. Indeed, this was confirmed by Jacques Delors in a speech at the College of Europe in Bruges, in which he declared that:

In the meantime, however, how could we not mention the growing influence exercised by the European Parliament, in its present form, on the course of European construction? I am asking you: would it have been as easy to convene the intergovernmental conference which resulted in the Single Act if the European Parliament had not brought all its weight to bear, on the basis of the draft Treaty it adopted at the initiative of this great European, Altiero Spinelli? (Delors, 1989a, p. 6)

However, the path dependency of European institutions and the external resilience from Member States have reduced the likelihood of a major reform which would grant substantial competences to the EP. Hence, the actual reforms introduced by the SEA were not considered sufficient by the EP. As a consequence, the EP translated its disappointment, investing in a major reform of its own rules of procedure, aiming to unilaterally expand its competences vis-à-vis the other institutions. Hence, although Spinelli's ambitious plans were not accomplished during his lifetime – he died in 1986, a few months after the signature of the SEA – most of the ideas found in the Spinelli Report were taken up in the 1990s, at a new critical juncture: the creation of the European Union.

4.4 A NEW STAGE FOR PARLIAMENTARY EMPOWERMENT: THE TREATY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE CO-DECISIVE PARLIAMENT

The end of the Cold War and German unification altered the dynamics of Europe and opened a new window of opportunity towards deeper integration and significant institutional reform. In order to attach the unified Germany to the European project and avoid a renaissance of German nationalism, European leaders – and in particular French representatives – favoured further integration and the establishment of an Economic and Monetary Union (Baun, 1995; Ludow, 2013). Therefore, the ideas proposed in the 1980s by Spinelli and others were rediscovered and reformatted with the aim to move the European project to the next level. This time, parliamentary agency was externally stimulated by both European supranational and intergovernmental bodies.

Supranational actors, such as members of the European Commission and of the European Parliament, played a significant role in the negotiations held in Maastricht. For instance, similarly to the preparations of the SEA, European Commission President Jacques Delors played a fundamental and influential role in guaranteeing a comprehensive but pragmatic compromise agreed by the Member States, which included a more prominent role for the EP. In a statement to the European Parliament (1989), Delors acknowledged the EP's involvement in European integration:

I, for my part, cannot but welcome the decision taken then to increase Parliament's involvement in the decision-making process. Those who predicted that this would slow down our work have been proved wrong, as the Commission can testify. Over the last four years, Parliament has played a very positive role, as we expected it to. (Delors, 1989b, p. 7)

Also supported by the German government, the EP's empowerment and the institutionalisation of a new legislative procedure were central aspects of the intergovernmental negotiations in the 1990s. For instance, in 1983, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl had already expressed during a speech to the European Parliament that “As far as I am concerned, I stick to my conviction that the position and authority of the European Parliament must be strengthened” (Kohl, 1983, p. 6). Although the cooperation procedure created by the SEA enhanced significantly the EP's involvement in EC legislation, “this

increase in parliamentarians' influence had only whet the appetite of MEPs and their numerous backers for further movement in the same direction" (Ludow, 2013, p. 16).

Bargaining over a new foundational treaty is a great opportunity for supranational entrepreneurs to impact on the decisions taken and to assure the implementation of institutional innovations over time (Mazzucelli, 2007). Therefore, members of the European Commission and the EP have seen moments of treaty reform as junctures at which institutions are more prone to be changed and substantial transformations as well as institutional innovations are more likely to happen. This is precisely what was identified in the negotiations of the Maastricht Treaty (1992). As highlighted by Forster (1998), "negotiations in the EP dossier were complicated by the active role of the EP in campaigning for greater powers, and the fact that the German government had made a public commitment to strengthen the powers of the EP" (p. 356). According to Enrique Barón Crespo, President of the EP from 1989 to 1992, the EP played a very proactive role when it came to the conception of the Political Union after the fall of the Berlin Wall. As the Parliament was perceived by others as a resonance box of proposal and ideas, it succeeded, for the first time, in actively participating in the negotiations of Maastricht as a protagonist (Barón Crespo, 2015). By increasingly engaging in treaty reforms, parliamentarians were able to directly dialogue with other decision-making actors and influence the changing features of European integration.

Furthermore, in a joint message on the political union, French President François Mitterrand and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, besides supporting the enlargement of the competences of the Union, proposed that the competences of the European Parliament should be reinforced by the process of co-decision (Mitterrand and Kohl, 1990). Thus, parliamentary activism associated to the political support of the biggest Member States secured the strengthening of the EP in the European decision-making process in the 1990s.

The Treaty of Maastricht, which established the EU, introduced a new legislative procedure: the co-decision procedure. The EP achieved a stronger legislative role in areas related to the internal market, environment, research and education policies, deciding on equal terms with the Council of Ministers on the laws proposed by the Commission. In contrast to the cooperation procedure, in which the Council could refute parliamentary amendments at a final reading, the co-decision procedure required that Parliament and Council, as a last resort, jointly reached a final legislative position, through a conciliation meeting. The creation of this new legislative process indicated that, step by step, the EP has

progressively and steadily acquired more means to influence the European decision-making system (Maurer, 2003).

The new legislative procedure has had an important impact on the organisation of EU bodies, and in particular the EP. The implementation of co-decision and the extension of co-decision to other EU policies throughout time have led to a 'functional specialisation' within the EP (Maurer, 2003). Thus, MEPs started to spend more time and resources on the practices associated to the co-decision procedure, aiming to increase their expertise and influence in this area. For instance, Rasmussen and Toshkov (2011) stressed "that the EP spends more time reaching its first reading opinion in co-decision than it does in the consultation procedure, where it has less power" (p. 71). In addition, MEPs and political groups started to compete for the allocation of legislative reports, given that being a rapporteur² became one of the most effective ways for individual MEPs to influence in EU legislation. Consequently, there was a stronger demand for drafting legislation ruled by the co-decision procedure than for those related to the less influent legislative procedures, such as consultation (Yordanova, 2011). Thus, since the establishment of the co-decision procedure, one may identify parliamentary pro-activism when agents opted for investing in more influential instruments, which would generate a deeper parliamentary impact on the EU's decision-making system.

The empowerment of the EP also increased the role of political and governmental agents in the voting procedures of EU legislation. Decisions taken under the co-decision method have presented more consistent patterns of coalitions between the European political groups when compared to those ruled by the consultation procedure, in which parliament is less powerful and political groups tend not to pay much attention to the votes of their MEPs (Costello, 2011). Therefore, the role of European political groups as collective parliamentary agents has increased over time. Although the European parliamentary elections are still fought at the national level and whereas both candidates and electoral campaigns are organised by national political parties, once MEPs are elected, they join transnational party groups with MEPs from their sister parties. As argued by Hix et al. (2006), "The European party groups are the key agenda-setters in the European Parliament. They control the allocation of committee positions, finances, speaking time, and the space on the legislative agenda" (p. 496). Hence, as parliamentary organisation became more complex, political groups replaced (to a large extent) individual leaders as the key agents within the EP.

² Rapporteurs are the MEPs responsible for drafting a report on the legislation which will be deliberated in the specialised committees and the EP's plenary sessions.

European party groups, thus, would be seen as the most effective players, more adequate to deal with the complexity of a bigger, more powerful parliament.

One of the most interesting aspects of the internal politics of the EP is the forging of coalitions among the biggest European political groups. As Kreppel (2000) and others have argued, the institutional reforms of the EP were defended, through the formation of ‘grand coalitions’ between the EP’s biggest groups (Christian Democrats and Socialists, often followed by the Liberals). The main European political groups have been strongly committed to the European cause and have defended the parliamentarisation of the EU since its beginnings. Rather than competing on institutional issues, this grand coalition of the key political groups has strengthened the EP’s demand for more competences. For instance, “a grand coalition was more likely to form on legislative votes where the institutional rules required an oversized majority, and more likely to form on final votes, thereby sending a strong signal to the Council and the Commission” (Hix and Hoyland, 2013, p. 179). Political groups, therefore, became key agents in the process of the EU’s parliamentarisation.

On the other hand, since the implementation of co-decision, the Council of Ministers has also become more politicised and less technocratic. Legislation under the co-decision procedure – where the European Parliament has a *de facto* veto power – has demanded greater attention from national governments, requiring that decisions should be taken by ministers themselves instead of being delegated to national bureaucrats (Hage, 2011).

Once again, parliamentary agents seized the juncture of treaty reform to strengthen its powers, thereby aiming to make the most of the competences acquired by the Treaty of Maastricht. Through informal and formal instruments, parliamentary agents kept allocating their own resources (political influence and time) with the ultimate goal to increase its weight in European decision-making system. In this sense, the co-decision procedure not only partially satisfied Parliament’s demand for a greater role in certain areas but it also became a key instrument to strengthen its position vis-à-vis the Council and the Commission. As Maurer (2003) summarised,

The EP’s performance clearly indicates that by building on precedents – conditional vetoes in codecision, linking policy-making with institutional, financial and procedural aims and inter-institutional agreements – Parliament has been able to steer the geometry of institutional relations from a two-sided into a triangular form (Maurer, 2003, p. 244).

4.4.1 Parliamentary Agents in the Successive European Treaties: Enlargement and Deepening

The two following European treaties, Amsterdam (1999) and Nice (2003), did not substantially change the role of the EP within the EU political system. They were mostly related to the adaptation of the EU rules for the successive enlargements of the 1990s and the early 2000s, when the number of EU countries rose from 12 in 1992 to 25 in 2004. With the increase in Member States, adjustments on the QMV and on national representations in both the European Parliament and the European Commission had to be addressed in order to secure the efficiency of an enlarged union.

Moreover, both treaties confirmed the tendency of incremental changes to the EP's powers over time. As discussed by Hix (2002), the Amsterdam Treaty is a clear example of how treaties are incomplete contracts, which enable the MEPs to interpret and manipulate the rules in order to extend its own legislative and supervisory powers, thereby constituting itself as a key agenda-setter. Each treaty reform, in this sense, is an opportunity that agents have to change the rules of the game in their favour. Thus, Amsterdam was a window that Parliament found to assure the fast implementation of the co-decision procedure, as well as to extend the areas under this legislative process. According to Farrell and Héritier (2007), the Treaty of Amsterdam, in fact, formalised an already existing informal practice used by the EP when dealing with the Council under the co-decision procedure since the Maastricht Treaty, i.e. negotiating legislation right after the first reading, aiming to accelerate the inter-institutional dialogue between the Parliament and the Council. Therefore, from the point of view of the EP, Amsterdam was important to reform and extend the co-decision procedure (Kreppel, 2003).

Although the focus of the Treaty of Nice was to prepare the EU for the biggest enlargement process of its history – ten Central and Eastern European countries joined the EU at once in 2004 – the EP's powers were again extended in 2001. However, parliamentarians again showed its dissatisfaction with the way that intergovernmental conferences were conducted, specifically with the lack of transparency of the negotiations and the limited involvement of non-governmental bodies, such as the EP (European Parliament, 2001). Not only was the EP concerned with expanding its own institutional powers within the EU, but it also supported a substantial reform in the way that EU treaties are negotiated, besides

criticised the manner in which supranational actors and citizens had few means to impact and scrutinise the outcome of negotiations. According to Pat Cox, former President of the EP (2002-2004), there was a sense of disappointment within the EP and the perception of a missed opportunity amongst MEPs. Since then, in order to ascertain their agency, MEPs started issuing reports calling for the replacement of the intergovernmental method for future treaty reforms (Cox, 2015). As referred by one of the EP's officials interviewed, MEPs kept using parliamentary reports and resolutions to express its positions on treaty reforms (EP 3, interview with the author). Parliament, thus, started to demand a more open constitutional process which would enable the European project to move on to a next stage of integration, and in which the EP would become a key supranational actor. This trend is observed in a parliamentary resolution approved after the signing of the Nice Treaty, when the EP:

Insists that the holding of a new IGC should be based on a radically different process which is transparent and open to participation by the European Parliament, the national parliaments and the Commission and which involves the citizens of the Member States and the candidate countries, as provided for in Declaration 23, and that the new IGC should initiate a constitutional development process (European Parliament, 2001, p. 1).

The Treaty of the European Union promoted the most important institutional transformation regarding the EP's legislative role through the co-decision procedure. Within the juncture of Maastricht, increased parliamentary agency was externally accepted and stimulated by Member States and the European Commission. Since then, the EP has become a protagonist in most policy areas, sharing with the Council of Ministers the power to approve and amend EU legislation. The new competences had a profound impact on the bureaucratic and political organisation of the EP, which had to review and improve its strategies in order to make the most of its acquired powers. Thus, particular attention was given to allocating most of its resources to the areas ruled by co-decision. Thereby, European political groups become key internal actors in distributing rapporteurships and in guaranteeing coherent voting patterns, replacing individual leadership over time.

The successive treaties (Amsterdam, Nice) aimed to improve the Maastricht Treaty in the context of Eastern enlargement. Once again, Parliament gained more powers and co-decision was effectively implemented by parliamentary actors as the EP's most important political instrument. Informal parliamentary instruments were formalised, such as the

negotiations with the Council after the first reading of co-decision and the procedure to appoint the European Commission (Hix, 2002). As highlighted by one of the EP's resolutions in that context, "the Amsterdam Treaty not only extended but also reformed the application of the codecision procedure, in that it has been simplified and the European Parliament's position is now equal to that of the Council, as is appropriate in a two-chamber legislative system" (European Parliament, 1998, p. 1). As Rasmussen and Toshkov (2001) summed up, "there is no doubt that the EP has been an active agent and has adapted strategically to inter-institutional changes over the years by changing its procedures and working methods in order to maximise its influence" (p. 72). However, parliamentary proactivity towards further parliamentarisation continued. MEPs were still not satisfied with the conduction of previous intergovernmental negotiations, and kept demanding a deeper reform of the European Union, but this time embedded in a constitutional fashion.

4.5 THE CONVENTION OF EUROPE: AN UNSUCCESSFUL CRITICAL JUNCTURE FOR PARLIAMENTARY AGENTS?

The Convention on the Future of Europe (2001-2003) was a key critical juncture in the history of the EU. It presented a high potential to change the nature of the European Union as a supranational and constitutional political entity. The Convention was an opportunity that enabled the EU's profound institutional re-design, towards an innovative constitutional model of European governance (Lehmann and Schunz, 2005). In contrast to the previous intergovernmental conferences conducted behind closed doors, the Convention was organised in a distinct manner: Not only were the Member States active participants of the negotiations, but other supranational and national actors were formally invited to take part in the discussions (Christiansen and Gray, 2003), such as members of the European Commission, the European Parliament, national parliaments, as well as from governments and parliaments from the accession candidate countries (see Table 5).

Table 5. Composition of the European Convention (2001-2003)

Institutions	Number of Representatives
Presidency	3
Head of States and Governments	15 (1 per country)
National Parliaments	30 (2 per country)
European Parliament	16
European Commission	2
Governments of candidate countries	13 (1 per country)
Parliaments of candidate countries	26 (2 per country)

Source: European Convention (2001), available at: <http://european-convention.europa.eu/EN/Static/Static6c13.html?lang=EN&Content=Composition>. Access: 03/11/2016.

The Convention proved to be an opportunity for MEPs – for the first time – to engage directly in the discussions of a major EU reform (Costa and Brack, 2013). In comparison with the previous intergovernmental conferences, where the EP had no formal participation in the discussions held by Member States and mediated by the Commission, the European Convention opened to parliamentary agents a space of engagement. Negotiating within the framework of the Convention was an innovative instrument which fully incorporated MEPs in the discussions over the EU's key institutional reforms. In terms of individual representatives, the EP delegation – as a single body – was composed by the highest number of representatives at the Convention (16), especially when compared to the number of delegates from the Commission (3) and of each Member State (1). In comparison to previous treaty conferences, representatives of national governments were a minority in this case (Menon, 2003).

Therefore, during the Convention times, the MEPs' strong presence brought significant privileges in terms of participation in working groups and speaking time. In addition, Costa and Brack (2013) emphasised that the EP had an informational advantage vis-à-vis the other delegations, strengthening the impact of its opinions in the Convention's outcomes:

It was further reinforced by the fact that national parliaments and governments did not produce similar documents and that the Commission presented its own position in a

very unskillful way, leading some working groups of the Convention to rely on the preparatory work made by the EP. Given their expertise, their knowledge and their experience of transnational deliberation, representatives of the EP greatly contributed to the debates and played a key role in the construction of the final compromise (Costa and Brack, 2013, p. 59)

This privileged position of the MEPs, especially when compared to the national government delegations, increased the likelihood of members of the EP to achieve its main goals at the Convention, such as the expansion of the co-decision procedure and the enhancement of its budgetary powers.

However, once again, parliamentary pro-activity towards deeper EU integration and parliamentarisation was met with internal and external resilience. Although the vast majority of MEPs appointed as the EP's representatives in the European Convention were members of the biggest European political groups (especially from the European People's Party and the Party of European Socialists), the EP's delegation was also composed of MEPs from far-right and far-left European political groups, which resisted further integration. Furthermore, the Member States did not yield completely to the EP's numerical advantage. The overwhelming presence of the EP in the Convention was balanced within the Convention's most decisive body: the Praesidium. When it comes to the composition of the Praesidium – the political council of the European Convention – the EP's delegation was composed by just two representatives, the same amount of representatives from the EU Commission and the national parliaments, while the Presidency of the Council of Ministers was represented by three representatives.

Nonetheless, importance must be given to the President of the Convention, former French President Giscard d'Estaing, and his influence on the final outcome of the negotiations. His position over the status of the EP was that it would eventually become a "true" Parliament which would work transparently to vote on European laws (Giscard d'Estaing, 2005), confirming how further parliamentary agency was also stimulated by some agents from outside the EP. For instance, besides stating that the main purpose of the Convention would be to present a Constitutional Draft, Giscard d'Estaing was the person responsible for dividing the activities of the Convention into three stages: listening, studying, and proposal (Closa, 2003; Magnette and Nicolaïdis, 2004). The plenary of the convention was very active in the first phases of the negotiations, but when it came to the final stage, the

focus was on the members of the Praesidium, who included President d'Estaing, the Vice-presidents, alongside representatives of the European Parliament, national parliaments and national governments (Schönlau, 2004, p. 261).

Furthermore, a clear constitutional principle was embedded in these negotiations, which ultimately led to the signing of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, thereby promoting the logic of constitutionalisation at the European level. Alongside this direction, Roederer-Rynning and Schimmelfennig (2012) discussed how the Convention on the Future of Europe was crucial to the parliamentarisation of one of the most significant policy areas, i.e. the Common Agriculture Policy. Although agriculture policy was one of the areas more associated to the interests of the Member States, the constitutional logic defended by most of the members of the Convention, including the vast majority of the EP's representatives, supported the idea that the expansion of the co-decision procedure to further key policy areas, such as agriculture, should be an automatic path in the European project. In this sense, the EP's position in the Convention was clearly in accordance with the general ideas behind the negotiations, i.e. constitutionalisation, democratisation and simplification, taking into account that the strengthening of the EP was considered a means to increase the democratic legitimacy of the EU and a constitutional response to further integration (Costa and Brack, 2013).

Through one of its parliamentary resolutions, the EP expressed its approval on the general outcome of the Convention, supporting its ratification by the Member States. It has also acknowledged that, in contrast to previous treaty reforms,

(...) the result of the Convention, in which the representatives of the European Parliament and of national parliaments played a central role, shows that open discussions within the Convention are far more successful than the method followed up to now of intergovernmental conferences held in camera (European Parliament, 2003, p. 2).

The European Convention thus represented a new stage of parliamentary influence in the EU's treaty reforms, through the formalisation of a new channel for the EP to negotiate alongside the Member States and the Commission over further institutional changes at the EU level. Before the Convention, MEPs were only able to indirectly influence treaty reforms through drafting reports on European integration, reforming its own rules of procedures, issuing resolutions on the EU treaties, and establishing inter-institutional relations with the

Commission and the Council. However, according to the Convention's new *modus operandi*, MEPs were able to formally propose and discuss key issues of EU reform, impacting directly on the final outcome of the negotiations in their own favour. According to the opinion of one of the EP's officials consulted, members of the EP felt heard due to the Convention's new format (EP 3, interview with the author). Although the Constitutional Treaty was not ratified, after being rejected by the Dutch and French voters in referendums in 2005, most of its key elements were covered subsequently by a new treaty signed in Lisbon, four years later. Therefore, one cannot situate the context of the Convention as a negative case, i.e. a critical juncture that did not result in institutional change (Cappoccia and Kelemen, 2007). The fact that the Convention was not ultimately ratified by Member States did not necessarily mean that this critical juncture was lost, inasmuch as some aspects of the Convention method started to be adopted in treaty reforms since then. As a consequence, supranational actors – such as MEPs as well as national parliaments – have gained a formal place in treaty negotiations. They were now able to directly engage in the deliberations and decisions on treaty changes.

4.5.1 Parliamentary Assertion in the Lisbon Treaty: Towards a European co-legislature

The Lisbon Treaty, signed in 2007, was the pragmatic solution found to accommodate some of the most important institutional decisions made by the Convention, without the need to adopt the constitutional format rejected by the referendums in France and the Netherlands. Nonetheless, in contrast to the framework of the Convention, Lisbon was a return to the stage of intergovernmental negotiations (EP 3, interview with the author). Amongst the key changes brought by this reform treaty are: the extension of the areas covered by the co-decision procedure – which now became the ordinary legislative procedure; the expansion of the EP's budget powers (Benedetto, 2015); the requirement of the EP's ratification of international agreements; the attribution of an international personality to the EU, and the approval of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Regarding the EP's legislative powers, two institutional transformations must be highlighted: the process of selecting the President of the European Commission and the fact that co-decision became the ordinary legislative procedure. Both topics demonstrate how the EP keeps campaigning to become an even more influential actor, maintaining its proactive parliamentary agency.

On the new way of appointing the President of the Commission, the Lisbon Treaty stated that the nomination of the President must take into account the results of the elections to the EP. Thus, the EP and the biggest European political groups relied on this institutional reform to assure parliamentary influence on the appointment of a new President amid the 2014 European elections. Despite the resilience of some national governments, parliamentary assertion succeeded in ensuring the implementation of new procedure for selecting the Commission President (Hobolt, 2014). Therefore, during the 2014 European elections, most of the European political groups – supported by the European Commission – selected their own top candidates (*Spitzenkandidaten*) for the position of the Commission President, aiming to Europeanise and politicise the debate and to increase participation. Through electoral debates broadcasted on television and on the internet, the candidates presented their policies. Although it is still in discussion whether the introduction of the *Spitzenkandidaten* succeeded in enhancing citizens' attention to EU issues, the most impressive element is that the 'victorious' candidate, the EPP's Jean Claude Juncker, was ultimately appointed to the position of the President of the European Commission, even after facing a strong and formal opposition from the British and Hungarian governments (BBC News, 2014). Thus, MEPs interpreted the Lisbon Treaty rules to their own favour and established a new method of selecting the chief of the European executive, in which the European political groups and the outcome of EP elections play a decisive role. Indeed, the precedent set out in 2014 persisted in the 2019 European elections, when once again the biggest European political groups launched their candidates to the EC's Presidency (Fleming, 2019).

In addition, the expansion of co-decision – to key policies such as agriculture (mentioned before), fisheries, security and justice, and commercial policy – and its new denomination as 'ordinary legislative procedure' can also be seen as significant steps in the empowerment of the EP. The concept of ordinary legislative procedure, in particular, carries the assumption that this procedure shall be the normal way of passing EU legislation and that the legislative capacity of the EP should be explored more often. Consequently, it has created an expectation that all further legislative processes, in which the Parliament has a low profile, must eventually be replaced by the ordinary procedure, making the EP a stronger legislative actor.

In contrast to previous treaty reforms and bearing in mind the failure of the Constitutional Project, the EP was overall satisfied with the institutional changes of the Lisbon Treaty. In a resolution approved in February 2008, 525 of the MEPs agreed that:

(...) taken as a whole, the Treaty of Lisbon is a substantial improvement on the existing Treaties, which will bring more democratic accountability to the Union and enhance its decision-making (through a strengthening of the roles of the European Parliament and the national parliaments), enhance the rights of European citizens vis-à-vis the Union and improve the effective functioning of the Union's institutions (European Parliament, 2008, p. 1).

The 2000s were marked by a challenging environment for European integration. While most European political leaders have supported the widening and deepening of European integration, this preference was not shared by all European citizens. The rejection of the European Constitutional Treaty in France and the Netherlands and the growth of Eurosceptic and nationalist political parties at the national and the European level – 15% of MEPs elected in the 2014 European elections belong to Eurosceptic parties (the proportion was 7% in 2009) – indicates that an anti-European sentiment is gaining strength on the continent and that the recent transformation of European institutions have not been aligned with citizens' concerns (The Economist, 2014), a trend which is not expected to revert in the 2019 European elections.

However, this challenging context has not hindered members of the EP to become more prominent agents. The active and formal participation of the MEPs in the negotiations of the European Convention and subsequently of the Lisbon Treaty has guaranteed a significant enhancement of its competences over the last decade. Besides, the support of members of the Convention, in particular its President, externally favoured the parliamentarisation of the EU. Despite the setback of the European Constitutional Project, the Lisbon Treaty has kept some of the main demands of the European convention, thereby avoiding a complete failure of this critical juncture in terms of substantially changing European integration.

4.6 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has examined the institutional development of the European Parliament since its conception until the last reforms introduced by the Lisbon Treaty. After identifying the critical junctures of the parliamentarisation of the EU, this research highlighted the role of parliamentary agents on treaty reforms. It has demonstrated how MEPs have proactively

demanded more competences for the EP over time. In addition, it shows how parliamentary agency was externally stimulated by the supranationalism of the European project and the parliamentary traditions of Europe, besides majorly accepted by the Member States over time. Therefore, this research stresses that the institutional empowerment of the EP is explained by the high level of parliamentary agency observed in European integration over time. In this regard, table 6 illustrates the external and internal dimensions of parliamentary agency in the institutional development of the EU as well as its overall level in time.

Table 6. Parliamentary Agency in the European Union

External	Internal	Over time
Stimulated	Proactive	High

Hence, when examining each critical juncture in the history of European integration, one cannot fail to notice that over time, the EP has progressively gained more powers. In contrast to the previous literature which mainly focused on the decision-making power of the Member States to grant more powers to the EP (Moravcsik, 1991), and how EP's strengthening was led by legitimacy-seeking motivations from national governments (Rittberger, 2005), this chapter emphasised that MEPs were highly proactive actors who fought for the empowerment of the EP. Through their intense activities, they supported the deepening of integration and demanded more competences from national governments. The current stage of parliamentarisation of the EU was only possible because MEPs, mainly from the largest political groups (Christian Democrats, Socialists and Liberals) – through the establishment of ‘grand coalitions’ – were actively fighting for more power, convincing Member States about the importance of empowering the EP.

However – as argued by one of the MEPs interviewed – when compared to national parliaments, the EP is often not seen as a full legislative actor, mainly because it lacks the right to initiate legislation and additional budgetary powers (EP 1, interview with the author). As Kreppel has recently argued, “Despite the dramatic increases in legislative power obtained by the EP since the late 1980s, it remains in some regards the junior partner in the legislative game” (2018, p. 17). Thus, parliamentary agents keep demanding further powers for the EP from the Member States. For instance, the EP's former president Martin Schulz,

in an opening speech at the inter-institutional conference on the EU's own resources, reminded the audience of the following:

EU own resources should be subject to parliamentary scrutiny at EU level. The European Parliament has full powers of codecision over EU expenditure, but has virtually no say in the decision-making process on the revenue side. This paradoxical situation should be remedied and the European Parliament's role on the revenue side strengthened; this will only be possible if we create a genuinely European source of own resources and significantly reduce the share of own resources accounted for by GNI contributions (Schulz, 2016, p. 2).

More recently, parliamentary agents continue to fight for an increase of the EP's institutional powers. Two parliamentary reports, which explore the new and future parliamentary competences in a post-Lisbon context, have been discussed at the EP's AFCD. In the words of one of the EP's officials interviewed, both reports – especially the latter – have intended to go beyond the treaties, aiming to expand and set out new competences for the EP. For instance, members of the EP want to be more involved in issues of economic governance and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) (EP 3, interview with the author).

On the one hand, the Bresso-Brook report has reinforced the need to implement a number of articles of the Lisbon Treaty, which had not been fully incorporated into the EU decision-making system and exploited by the EP. The report insists that Parliament must have a stronger say on the Economic and Monetary Union, and “is of the opinion that intergovernmental solutions should only be an instrument of ultima ratio” (Bresso-Brook Report, 2017 p. 9). On the other hand, the Verhofstadt report is more focused on targeting the future powers of the EP, given the challenging context of the exit of the United Kingdom from the EU (Brexit). In this sense, it goes further and demands a future revision of the European treaties after Brexit. Thereby, it “proposes that the next revision of the Treaties should rationalise the current disorderly differentiation by ending, or at least drastically reducing, the practice of opt-outs, opt-ins and exceptions for individual Member States at EU primary-law level” (Verhofstadt Report, 2016, p. 11). It also assesses the proposal of creating a European Defence Union (EDU), and “stresses that the European Parliament needs to be fully involved in all steps of the creation of the EDU and must have the right of consent in the event of operations abroad” (Verhofstadt Report, 2016, p. 15). To sum up, just as it has done in the past, the EP still uses most of its formal and informal resources to enhance its own

powers, even in the current context of the EU's financial, economic and political crises (Rittberger, 2014).

In conclusion, this chapter combined key concepts of historical institutionalism - and in particular the notion of critical junctures – to the notion of parliamentary agency to assess the EP's institutional path. The next two chapters will apply the same theoretical framework to the institutional development of parliaments in selected regional organisations in Latin America (MERCOSUR) and Africa (African Union), aiming to assess variations of parliamentary agency in regional organisations worldwide.

5. WHEN PROACTIVITY DECREASES: THE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MERCOSUR PARLIAMENT

Parliament has played a decisive role in the projection of Mercosur in our societies. It not only brings Mercosur closer to the citizens; it also allows our societies to feel part of our common project. (Amorim, 2008, p. 1, author's translation)

While the previous chapter assessed the institutional development of the European Parliament, this chapter provides an analysis of the historical path of the parliamentary dimension of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR). By employing key assumptions of historical institutionalism to investigate the MERCOSUR integration project, this chapter assesses parliamentary agency over time, with particular attention paid to critical junctures in MERCOSUR's development. In this sense, two key critical junctures are identified within the institutional trajectory of MERCOSUR. First, the creation of MERCOSUR and its Joint Parliamentary Commission (JPC) in the 1990s. Second, the institutional reform of MERCOSUR from the 2000s, which saw the establishment of the MERCOSUR Parliament (Parlasur) occurred in 2005.

Through the assessment of MERCOSUR's critical junctures, this chapter argues that parliamentary agents have played a significant role in MERCOSUR's institutionalisation. However, their agency has been externally restrained and internally unstable throughout the parliament's existence. The reasons for this specific performance are twofold. First, externally, the intergovernmental and interpresidential character of MERCOSUR has systematically restrained the agency of parliamentary actors. This dynamic led to a rather limited and consultative parliamentary assembly for the bloc since its beginning. Secondly, until the establishment of Parlasur, particularly proactive parliamentary agency is observed at the internal level, derived from the activism of the members of the JPC's Executive Board, composed by the presidents of the national parliamentary delegations from Member States. This level of proactivity successfully consolidated a parliamentary dimension within MERCOSUR, as will be demonstrated by parliamentary leadership in drafting Parlasur's Constitutive Protocol. However, more recently, Parlasur has opted to invest its resources and time on parliamentary diplomacy and conflict resolution, which are important in the context of South American politics, but have not led to an expansion of Parlasur's own competences.

Thus, Parlasur moved from being a proactive agent seeking self-empowerment to becoming a timid one, with very few chances to influence the decisions taken by Member States.

Despite the fact that some authors have stressed the relevance of intergovernmentalism as well as presidential and governmental agency within MERCOSUR (Malamud, 2005; Caballero, 2013), there is a lack of studies discussing whether, how, and to what extent, the agency of parliamentarians also mattered throughout the development of MERCOSUR's integration. In particular, this chapter aims to understand not only how and why parliamentary agency matters, but also the extent to which it has been relevant in the development of MERCOSUR. In addition, although some important academic works have been devoted to the analysis of the creation and the first years of Parlasur (Drummond, 1996; Mariano, 2011), there is still a gap in contributions focusing on understanding the role of parliamentary agents when evaluating Parlasur's contemporary challenges. Therefore, this chapter aims to contribute to the knowledge of this particular regional parliament.

The existing literature on Parlasur argues that some of Parlasur's institutional configurations, such as the holding of direct elections, will potentially lead to further parliamentary empowerment (Drummond, 2009; Mariano, 2011; Dri, 2011). This study, by contrast, posits that no further competences should be expected in the long term without any substantial change in terms of parliamentary agency. On the one hand, this is due to the strong intergovernmental, and more specifically, interpresidential structures of MERCOSUR, which have so far externally restrained parliamentary agency. As a consequence, Parlasur and other non-executive institutions of MERCOSUR remain consultative and accessory institutions. On the other hand, while some internal parliamentary agency is identified when we consider Parlasur's role in defining its rules of procedures and in negotiating its Constitutive Protocol, which was fundamental to consolidating the current role of Parlasur, these instances did not allow the parliament to play a key role in MERCOSUR's decision-making processes.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section introduces the internal and external dimensions of parliamentary agency within MERCOSUR. The subsequent sections focus on analysing parliamentary agency at each critical junctures of MERCOSUR. Therefore, the second section assesses the role of parliamentarians in the creation of MERCOSUR and its Joint Parliamentary Commission (first critical juncture). The third one discusses parliamentary agency in the context of the institutional reformulation of MERCOSUR, which led to the establishment of Parlasur (second critical juncture). The

fourth section, which has not been considered as a critical juncture, discusses the contemporary dynamics of Parlasur, highlighting the most recent challenges for parliamentary agency within MERCOSUR. Finally, the last section summarises the key findings on the role of parliamentary agency in the institutional development of Parlasur.

5.1. RESTRICTED AND PROACTIVE: PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY WITHIN MERCOSUR'S INTEGRATION

This section categorises the external and internal dimensions of MERCOSUR's parliamentary agency. Even though the democratic context of MERCOSUR's foundation has supported the inclusion of parliamentary actors within regional decisions, scholarly works have highlighted that the political presidential traditions of this region and the intergovernmental format of integration established in South America have been external obstacles to the creation of supranational bodies as well as to parliamentary empowerment (Malamud, 2005; Dabène, 2012). Therefore, parliamentary agency over time has been externally restrained by the institutional settings of MERCOSUR regional integration. However, as this thesis contends, important parliamentary agency internally emerged with the establishment of MERCOSUR in the 1990s and has increasingly called for the creation of a MERCOSUR Parliament, which was agreed by Member States at the juncture of the 2000s.

Previous literature on MERCOSUR emphasised that the key features of this bloc as an integration project are “(i) mixed objectives (both economic and political); (ii) exclusively inter-governmental decision-making structure; and (iii) incremental process of integration” (Doctor, 2013, p. 518). First, although the core of MERCOSUR was constituted by trade and economic integration, an important political dimension also exists within its objectives and institutions. As will be discussed subsequently, this non-trade agenda was expanded over time, through increasing the number of bodies and policies associated to MERCOSUR. Second, the intergovernmental and interpresidential features of this regional organisation ensured that the decision-making processes would be dominated by the Member States. Third, gradualism was seen as a fundamental principle of MERCOSUR. Having set the Common Market as the ultimate goal, MERCOSUR's leaders organised regional economic liberalisation following systematic stages, with the aim of protecting sensitive areas and preparing the smaller Member States for the future elimination of customs. Therefore, in

contrast to the previous regional experiences in Latin America and Europe, “MERCOSUR’s promoters voluntarily decided to prevent the over bureaucratization of such arrangements as CAN (Andean Community) or the high costs of European institutions” (Dabène, 2009, p. 90).

The context of MERCOSUR’s foundation justified the inclusion of a parliament and, at the same time, its marginal role within the integration process. The democratisation wave of most of Latin American countries in the 1980s and 1990s was essential to the inclusion of democratic institutions to the public policies implemented by the newly-democratic governments of the region (Dabène, 2012). Thus, the first regional agreements signed by the MERCOSUR countries, including the Asunción Treaty, required additional representative channels to legitimise the integration project in the context of (re)emerging democratic systems. In this sense, the establishment of a parliamentary commission was one of the main measures to guarantee parliamentary involvement in the decisions taken by MERCOSUR.

However, while other regions, such as Europe, have mostly being associated with strong parliamentary traditions, Latin America has been dominated by presidential political systems, following the United States’ model. In contrast to Europe, but also the U.S – parliamentary institutions have occupied a marginal position in the political systems of Latin America, which is even more pronounced when it comes to foreign policy and regional integration issues. Hence, as stressed by one of Parlasur’s officials interviewed, the role of presidentialism in the region has restricted the parliamentary experience with international or regional affairs (Parlasur 1, interview with the author). Also, as pointed out by Nolte and Llanos (2016), ‘hyperpresidentialism’ has been another term coined to better understand Latin American politics. “It emphasises the superiority of the executive, which is enshrined in the constitution, and the excessive use of unilateral mechanisms in the adoption of decisions” (p. 7). In Latin America, one can observe a prominence of executive and presidential institutions vis-à-vis parliamentary agents. With reference to the European experience, Dabène (2009) stressed that “(S)ince all the parliamentarians came from parliamentary regimes, they imported the rules that made it possible to control the executive power” (p. 136). Meanwhile, parliamentary bodies in Latin America, such as Parlasur, would not be expected to assume the same roles given their domestic institutional and presidential context (Malamud and Dri, 2013). As stressed by one of the interviewees, the extreme intergovernmentalism has never been challenged within MERCOSUR, as any attempt of supranationalisation would have been discarded by the Member States’ foreign ministries (Parlasur 2, interview with the author).

MERCOSUR's restrained parliamentary agency left only a very small room for manoeuvre to the parliamentarisation of the bloc over time. As emphasised by one of the interviewees, governmental actors were not willing to accept the emergence of a new regional decisive actor, preferring to establish a weak parliament (Parlasur 3, interview with the author). Thus, even though the context of re-democratisation in the region has favoured the inclusion of parliamentary participation in the bloc's activities, the analysis of two critical junctures in the subsequent sections will stress how executive actors over time marginalised parliamentarians when it came to the formulation of key regional decisions.

However, despite the intergovernmental features of MERCOSUR, it does not mean that parliamentary actors are completely dissociated from the institutionalisation of the bloc. Therefore, this chapter stresses that parliamentary agents were able, to some extent, to influence the constitution of the bloc, even when surrounded by an external unfavourable political climate. This is particularly observed through the prominent role of these agents in the creation of Parlasur. In this sense, this thesis defends that since the beginnings of MERCOSUR integration, parliamentary agents have been proactive regional actors.

Importance must be given to the role of the presidents of the national delegations represented in the Joint Parliamentary Commission (JPC) and Parlasur – gathered in the Executive Board – as well as parliamentary officials from the national congresses who were deeply involved in the transformation of the JPC into the MERCOSUR Parliament over the years. Thus, the driver of parliamentary proactivity has been the political will of a small number of parliamentarians, especially the Presidents of the JPC and Parlasur, who have sponsored and advocated for the parliament's key ambitions (Parlasur 4, interview with the author). As emphasised by one of the interviewees, although parliamentarians were not very familiar with regional integration issues, they have shown since the beginning strong interest in participating in MERCOSUR's political discussions (Parlasur 2, interview with the author). According to one of Parlasur's officials, the Parliament's development was marked by the existence of several engaged agents, and in particular, very committed parliamentarians and officials who supported the strengthening of Parlasur (Parlasur 5, interview with the author).

Moreover, the first transnational political group created in MERCOSUR, the centre-left Progressive Group, has also been prominent in the institutional development of Parlasur, and in particular during the negotiations on the adoption of the proportionality criteria in the Parliament. Although it has never represented the majority of members of Parlasur, one of the

interviewees highlighted that the Progressive Group had the capacity to articulate its proposals for further parliamentarisation, by gathering the necessary votes to approve them (Parlasur 1, interview with the author).

Furthermore, the level of autonomy granted to the parliamentarians since the parliament's constitution enabled the development of their own parliamentary agenda and ambitions towards achieving further institutional competences. As one of the officials consulted highlighted, members of the technical group responsible for drafting Parlasur's Protocol possessed a significant amount of autonomy and succeeded in establishing an informal dialogue with the national executives, which allowed them to present to the representatives of the Member States their own views on the future role and competences of Parlasur (Parlasur 6, interview with the author).

For instance, since it set out its first rules of procedures, the Joint Parliamentary Commission of the 1990s independently stipulated as one of its main ambitions to establish a Parliament for MERCOSUR. Some years later, during the negotiations of the Constitutive Protocol of Parlasur in the 2000s, officials and members of the JPC – eager to establish a relevant regional parliamentary body – were responsible for drafting the referred protocol and for submitting it to the executive for approval. The designers of Parlasur's constitutive document expected that their action would help to overcome the consultative nature of Parlasur, leading to a more powerful parliament over time (Malamud and Dri, 2013). Hence, only a more engaged and committed parliament may be able to go beyond its original competences and become more influential (Dabène, 2009).

The exploitation of its current competences and instruments and the strengthened dialogue with the executive institutions seem to be more useful strategies to empower Parlasur over time. Overall, these were the strategies adopted by parliamentary agents with the aim of increasing their engagement with regional policies, thereby establishing a regular dialogue with the executive as well as pressuring for more competences at the MERCOSUR level. As this research aims to demonstrate, while some of these strategies were mostly associated with a specific juncture, such as the negotiation of Parlasur's Constitutive Protocol, others have been used more frequently, such as reforming the rules of procedures and approving deliberative acts, particularly declarations and recommendations.

Although the instruments referred were often used by parliamentary agents to consolidate their institutional competences, this research argues that other parliamentary

instruments, which would be essential to the empowerment of Parlasur, were not adequately employed. For instance, in terms of the approval of its parliamentary acts, members of Parlasur have preferred to approve deliberative types of proposals (recommendations and resolutions) which have no direct impact on the activities of the executive and only require a simple majority for approval. When it comes to Parlasur's deliberations, "(R)esolutions and declarations still correspond to more than 70% of the acts approved by the Parliament, whereas no opinions have ever been asked or delivered, and only five bills were proposed to the CMC since 2006" (Malamud and Dri, 2013, p. 230). This means that instead of investing its resources in the more powerful instruments, such as submitting parliamentary projects to the executives instances, as the European Parliament has historically done when it acquired its first legislative powers (cooperation and co-decision procedures), Parlasur preferred to 'save its breath' and focused on deliberating over less meaningful propositions, which do not present the same potential to increase parliament's role within MERCOSUR's decision-making process. As stated by one of Parlasur's officials, a recent delay in approving the parliamentary projects as well as a decrease in the quality of the proposals presented to the plenary have impacted the overall level of parliamentary deliberations (Parlasur 6, interview with the author). Therefore, by not fully and competently using its powers, parliamentary agents have over time moved from a proactive to a rather timid stance with regard to the parliamentarisation of MERCOSUR.

Although Parlasur's agency was categorised as proactive since the beginning of MERCOSUR's integration – which contributed to the creation of Parlasur and its first competences – this characteristic has altered more recently when parliamentary agents lost their interest in strongly advocating for further powers and started to focus on different regional and domestic agendas, moving to a more timid behaviour with regard to further parliamentarisation. Hence, this chapter contends that if parliamentary agents do not return to their proactive mode, it is very unlikely that Parlasur will become a more relevant body over the next few years, given its significant external restrictions.

5.2. THE ORIGINS OF PROACTIVE PARLIAMENTARY AGENTS: THE CREATION OF MERCOSUR AND THE JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION

This section addresses the role of parliaments and parliamentary agents in the early days of MERCOSUR. It demonstrates that the establishment of a parliament was included in the first documents signed by Member States in an attempt to democratise the organisation. However, over the 1990s, the parliamentary commission established in the beginnings of Mercosur was very incipient and marginalised in the decision-making process. Therefore, the first parliamentary agents proactively aimed over time to increase its competences, and pushed for the creation of the MERCOSUR Parliament. Thus, it is argued that parliamentary agents, such as the members of the Executive Board and the presidents of the national delegations, focused their attention on issuing parliamentary resolutions and reforming their first rules of procedures, having in mind the ambition of creating Parlasur. Although some important incremental changes are seen in this early period, a more substantial institutional change was only possible in the early 2000s, when a new juncture enabled important institutional reforms within MERCOSUR integration.

The foundation of MERCOSUR was one of the key critical junctures of regional integration in South America. Due to the international and domestic political changes taking place at the end of the 1980s, the long-standing rivalry between the two biggest countries in the region (Brazil and Argentina) was replaced by a more cooperative environment (Schenoni, 2016). The democratisation of both Argentina and Brazil in the 1980s favoured the rapprochement of both countries. This would lead to the signature of successive cooperation agreements in various areas such as industry, tariffs, and nuclear energy (Dabène, 2012). The further inclusion of Paraguay and Uruguay in the integration agreements led to the signature of the Asunción Treaty and to the creation of MERCOSUR in 1991. At the time, the economic policies of Latin American countries were changing towards a more open, less regulated market (Hurrell, 1995). MERCOSUR was envisioned as a platform for trade liberalisation at the regional level. In this sense, the creation of a Common Market was defined as the ultimate goal of the cooperation between the four countries. This Common Market would be constituted through, as stated by the Asunción Treaty, (a) the elimination of customs, (b) the establishment of a common external tariff, (c) the coordination of macroeconomic policies and, (d) the harmonisation of national legislation in specific policy areas.

Two intergovernmental bodies were included in the original Asunción Treaty: The Common Market Council (CMC) and the Common Market Group (GMC). While the CMC represents the political sphere of MERCOSUR integration, composed by the Ministers of Economy and Foreign Affairs of each Member State, the GMC is the technical and executive dimension of MERCOSUR, constituted by representatives of national ministries and agencies. However, in order to guarantee that the policies decided at the regional level would be duly approved by the national legislatures without compromising the efficiency of the newly-created bloc, Member States agreed upon inserting representatives of national congresses within the activities of MERCOSUR. Therefore, the last article of the Asunción Treaty stipulated the future creation of a Joint Parliamentary Commission.

The inclusion of a parliamentary dimension to MERCOSUR is not a complete novelty in the regional integration of the Southern Cone. It is predated by a historical legacy of parliamentary involvement in Latin American regionalism. Hence, one must note that Latin America has a tradition of establishing regional assemblies. Since the 1960s, with the creation of the Latin American Parliament (Parlatino), which was followed by the establishment of regional parliaments within the Andean Community (Parlandino) and the Central American Integration System (Parlacen), Latin America has seen an impressive expansion of parliamentary organisations at the regional level (Malamud and Sousa, 2007; Erthal, 2006). With regard to the particular context of MERCOSUR, the Treaty of Integration, Cooperation and Development signed by Argentina and Brazil, still in 1988, had already established a Bilateral Parliamentary Commission, composed by 8 senators and 8 deputies of each country and responsible for monitoring the subsequent agreements between the two parties (Drummond, 1996). The proposal of creating a parliamentary commission within MERCOSUR, therefore, followed an institutional pattern of including national parliaments into the integration negotiations already set through the previous Argentina-Brazil cooperation. This specific institutional response has been observed over the last decades, when the discussions on institutional reforms have regularly referred to further parliamentary institutionalisation at the regional level.

After the signature of the Asunción Treaty, parliamentary involvement increased. Without clear institutional competences within MERCOSUR, parliamentary engagement was limited to establishing formal and regular dialogue and discussion among the representatives from national parliaments. This emergence of parliamentary agency was mainly achieved through three sets of activities: the organisation of regular parliamentary meetings, the

discussion of parliamentary resolutions, and the approval/reform of the first rules of procedures. In the following, each activity will be briefly described.

First, a number of meetings were organised since 1991 by the parliamentarians of MERCOSUR countries in order to plan the parliamentary involvement for the following years. The scheduling of regular meetings between the parliamentary delegations from the Member States was an important contribution to the interaction and socialisation of parliamentarians from the region. These meetings fostered the transnational dialogue of parliamentarians and enabled the establishment of an important level of cooperation between them. Within the framework of these meetings, parliamentarians were able to decide in which ways they would engage with regional policies collectively and how the parliamentary commission would be institutionalised. It was also an opportunity to reinforce their support for democratic governments and for regional integration initiatives, such as MERCOSUR. Second, during these first sessions, parliamentarians also deliberated over resolutions on topics such as the functioning of the JPC and other institutions of MERCOSUR, and the respect for democratic values and human rights within their countries. In this respect, the final document approved in the second meeting of parliamentarians of the bloc emphasised that legislatures are crucial actors for the establishing of MERCOSUR. Moreover, it highlighted the political desire of parliamentary agents from the four Member States to participate actively in MERCOSUR integration, by demanding the institutionalisation of regional parliamentary channels (MERCOSUR, 1991)

Third, in the third meeting (December, 1991), members of MERCOSUR's national congresses finally deliberated and approved the JPC's first rules of procedures. Inspired by the composition of the Argentina-Brazil parliamentary commission, the JPC would be composed of 16 representatives of the national parliaments of each Member State (Drummond, 1996). Just as in the decision-making system of the intergovernmental structure of MERCOSUR, decisions taken within the JPC were guided by the consensus principle. Thus, each national parliamentary delegation should vote and define its national position. If all four delegations agreed upon the terms of the proposal, the proposition would be approved. This dynamic led to the development of two political debates, one previously organised within each national delegation and the second within the JPC, through the discussion between the national representations. This two-level deliberation system was particularly important to reinforce the linkages between national legislatures and the newly-formed JPC. Through these initial settings and deliberations, parliamentary agents have right

from the beginning attempted to surpass their institutional boundaries. This is especially seen in terms of the competences of the JPC, as its first rules of procedures went beyond the broad directives set by the Asunción Treaty, through listing a range of activities that could be carried out by the members of the commission (Vazquez, 2001), such as asking the authorities of MERCOSUR, in particular the CMC, for more information on specific policies, conducting studies on the transposition of regional legislation, establishing relations with private and international organisations, cooperating with other regional parliaments, signing cooperation and technical agreements with third parties, and approving its own budget.

Through parliamentary deliberation, members of the JPC focused their attention on the establishment and confirmation of the JPC's own institutional identity, approving and reforming its rules of procedure, and organising its first ordinary meetings (Porcelli, 2014). According to its RoP, the JPC should convene at least twice a year, in the Member State responsible for the rotating presidency of the Commission. Due to the inexistence of independent headquarters and staff, the JPC was extremely dependent on the financial and personal resources of national congresses. In fact, over its first years, its existence was based on the political will of a small group of parliamentarians, who composed the JPC's Executive Board, and parliamentary staff members who supported the further institutionalisation of the JPC, pushing its transformation into a MERCOSUR Parliament.

As already referred to, since the beginning, the parliamentarians most active in the JPC were the ones elected as presidents of the national delegations (Parlasur 4, interview with the author). This parliamentary leadership is corroborated by the fact that the first rules of procedure of the commission were approved during a parliamentary meeting which only gathered the presidents of the national delegations from the four Member States in November 1991. Consequently, the leadership role of these actors was formalised by article 16 of the JPC's first RoP, which established the Executive Board of the parliamentary commission. Composed by the presidents and secretary generals of the four national delegations – who are elected by the members of each representation – the Executive board would be responsible for controlling most of the decisions taken by the JPC as well as representing the JPC within the inter-institutional relations with other MERCOSUR bodies.

Another key parliamentary strategy employed by the members of the newly-constituted commission to ascertain their agency within the bloc was debating over its political and institutional ambitions within MERCOSUR through its first rules of procedures. Thus, it is fundamental that the intention of establishing a MERCOSUR Parliament was there

since the second parliamentary meeting in Buenos Aires in September 1991, when the very first rules of procedure of the JPC was approved. In its preamble, parliamentarians set out as one of their purposes to strengthen the parliamentary dimension of the integration process, aiming for the future creation of the Parliament of MERCOSUR. Interestingly, JPC's rules of procedure also indicated the parliamentary intentions to perform studies on legislative harmonisation and the creation of norms of community law (Mariano, 2011).

However, despite its political ambitions and parliamentary activism, the JPC was mostly neglected in its first years by the executive arm of MERCOSUR. The norms adopted by MERCOSUR during this period were decided without any parliamentary participation. The JPC's involvement was indirect and restricted to facilitating the approval of MERCOSUR decisions by the national parliaments. In this sense, the JPC was a laboratory for the eventual establishment of a Parliament for MERCOSUR (Dabène, 2007). It would be a first parliamentary experience at the MERCOSUR level and an important attempt to engage parliamentarians and national congresses in the integration process. This means that the success of the parliamentarisation of MERCOSUR would derive not only from intergovernmental interactions and the deepening of the integration process over time, but also from the parliamentarians' own initiative within its first years of activity.

5.2.1 Incremental changes in the 1990s: Ouro Preto and Ushuaia Protocols

Given the gradualist principle embedded in the creation of MERCOSUR, the institutions created were eventually adjusted, and incremental changes to the original integration treaties were made over the 1990s. Therefore, two particular documents are of utmost importance: the Ouro Preto Protocol of 1994 and the Ushuaia Declaration of 1998. While the first referred to the institutional reform of MERCOSUR, the latter dealt with the democratic concerns of the Member States due to the political instability of Paraguay in the 1990s.

The protocol signed in Ouro Preto aimed to clarify and adjust the institutions once established in Asunción. One of the most important changes is the incorporation of the Joint Parliamentary Commission. While the Asunción Treaty, in its last article, indicated that a JPC shall be set out in the future, the Ouro Preto Protocol considered the JPC as one of the main bodies of MERCOSUR, altogether with the CMC, the GMC, the Trade Commission of MERCOSUR, the Economic and Social Consultative Forum, and the Administrative

Secretariat. However, as stressed in the following article of the referred protocol, the decision-making bodies of MERCOSUR would remain the CMC, GMC plus the Trade Commission, formalising the exclusion of the rest of MERCOSUR's institutions from the decision-making system. Nonetheless, this document created a clearer connection between the parliamentary and the executive organisations of MERCOSUR. According to the Ouro Preto Protocol, the JPC would be able to send recommendations to the CMC, via the GMC. However, the fact that the Council was not obliged to take into consideration any of the propositions sent by the Parliamentary Commission, would undermine the parliamentary consultative role of MERCOSUR.

From the parliamentary side, members of the JPC wanted to be more involved in the design of the new Protocol. On the one hand, parliamentary actors, such as the presidents of the national parliamentary delegations, showed interest in following the extraordinary diplomatic conference organised by the Member States in 1994, in which the reforms of MERCOSUR's institutions, including the competences of its parliamentary commission (JPC, 1994) were discussed. More concretely, via issuing a parliamentary resolution, members of the JPC "exhort the Parliaments of the four countries to carry out the negotiations to guarantee the participation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee in the referred meeting" (JPC, 1994, p. 1, author's translation).

On the other hand, right after the signature of the referred protocol, parliamentarians invested in reforming their own rules of procedures, with the aim of aligning their internal rules to the incremental changes decided in Ouro Preto (Vazquez, 2001).

Moreover, the functions of the JPC would not only be limited to facilitating the internalisation of norms within the national legislatures (Drummond, 1996). Parliamentarians would also be fundamentally concerned with the democratic stability and respect of human rights within MERCOSUR's Member States. Since the constitution of the JPC, the importance of democratic values was highlighted by parliamentary actors. For instance, in 1992 the JPC had issued a parliamentary recommendation stating that democracy should be a necessary condition for countries to join MERCOSUR. Some years later (June of 1996), given the scenario of political instability and military coups in Paraguay, parliamentarians formally demanded Member States to adopt a democratic clause as an additional protocol of MERCOSUR (JPC, 1996). Considering that MERCOSUR's constitutive treaty did not refer to any significant democratic commitment for the bloc, only in the midst of the political crisis in Paraguay the bloc's presidents started to play an important role advocating for the region's

democratic stability (Weiffen, 2016). Therefore, as an outcome of the Paraguayan case, the Member States of MERCOSUR signed in Ushuaia in 1998 a declaration expressing the democratic commitment of MERCOSUR countries, also joined by Bolivia and Chile, associated members of MERCOSUR. The Protocol of Ushuaia set the legal standards to suspend any Member State from MERCOSUR in cases of violation of democratic rules domestically, bringing the protection of democratic principles to the core of MERCOSUR integration.

Despite some incremental changes during the 1990s, the institutions created by MERCOSUR's leaders proved to be particularly resilient (Dabène, 2012). As Pierson (2004) highlighted, institutions are far from plastic. In fact, when placed for a long time most of the changes are likely incremental. Thereby, given the path dependence trends of this integration project, the intergovernmental structure of MERCOSUR would remain intact. Over the 1990s, several attempts were made by parliamentarians, in particular from the presidents of the national delegations to the JPC, to further influence the direction taken by the executives of MERCOSUR, but they were unable to challenge the institutional inertia of the intergovernmental format of MERCOSUR. Through the organisation of regular meetings, the deliberation of parliamentary resolutions and the approval and reform of their own rules of procedures parliamentarians proactively aimed to reinforce their institutional position and to impact the positions of Member States, however without much success. Henceforth, only a major critical juncture would provide enough circumstances towards a profound transformation of the strict decision-making structure of MERCOSUR.

5.3. THE APEX OF PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY: THE REFORMULATION OF MERCOSUR AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MERCOSUR PARLIAMENT

In this section, MERCOSUR's proposals for institutional reform from the 2000s are discussed. It is argued that members of the JPC were able to influence the formation of MERCOSUR's Parliament, as they were directly responsible for drafting Parlasur's Constitutive Protocol. In addition, the importance of the EU's experience for the initial set-up of Parlasur is highlighted. Drafting and negotiating Parlasur's protocol, in this sense, was the key instrument employed by parliamentary actors to transform the settings of the JPC, which is a key evidence of proactive parliamentary agency at the internal level. However, at the

external level, the strong intergovernmental structures of MERCOSUR have restrained the agency of Parlasur, as well as other newly-created bodies, which remained outside the decision-making system.

The first years of the 21st century were marked by intense political and economic transformations in South America, which would ultimately impact the integration projects of the region, such as MERCOSUR, providing a critical juncture for the reformulation of these initiatives. Economically, the early 2000s saw a robust growth of Latin American countries, which had faced harsh economic turmoil since the end of the 1990s (Moreno-Brid and Garry, 2016). Politically, most of the countries of the region elected left-wing governments since the democratisation wave of the late 1980s. Characterised for some as the ‘pink tide’ (Gardini, 2012), this new political context would produce important changes within the political environment of the region, especially due to the relaunch of regional integration projects.

Particularly in the case of MERCOSUR, the political ascension of Presidents Lula da Silva in Brazil and Nestor Kirchner in Argentina was important for the political re-dimensioning of MERCOSUR after the neoliberal momentum and the financial crises of the late 1990s. The political declaration signed by the two Presidents in Buenos Aires in 2003 was one of the signs for the redefinition of the political integration of both countries. As portrayed by Caballero (2013), the shared perception of these Presidents was that boosting regional integration would be an instrument to overcome the economic crises of the end of the 1990s. Aligning with the HI assumption that “institutional change is the product of changes in ideas held by actors” (Steinmo, 2008, p. 170), political leaders, in particular the Presidents of the two biggest Member States, showed a vital willingness to support institutional change. Through this first political encounter, the leaders of Argentina and Brazil called for a rather socio-political agenda for MERCOSUR, putting particular emphasis on issues such as the democratic and social deficits of the regional institutions and the pre-existing asymmetries between the four Member States. This juncture unleashed a window of opportunity for the discussion of the further institutionalisation of MERCOSUR, which would potentially lead to the creation or even the development of stronger participatory and deliberative bodies and to a deeper reform of the Ouro Preto Protocol (Dabène, 2005).

In this respect, the programme set by the Brazilian Pro-tempore Presidency of MERCOSUR (2004-2006 Brazilian Working Program) reaffirmed that the proposal of establishing the MERCOSUR Parliament would be one of the key ideas discussed within the context of the institutional reformulation of MERCOSUR. As referred to in the same

document, this goal – supported at this point by the MERCOSUR leaders – would be achieved via an inter-institutional agreement between the CMC and the JPC.

In this scenario, parliamentary, technical and diplomatic agency would play a key role within the negotiations for the creation of the MERCOSUR Parliament. The overall outcome of these negotiations would derive from the clash of opinions over the future role and competences that Parlasur would have. As pointed out by Mariano (2011), the proposal for the creation of Parlasur was coordinated by the JPC, which would have to deliver a final proposition until 2006. This fact enables both members and officials of the national parliaments involved with the JPC to frame with relative autonomy the proposition to be negotiated by the national executives, adding to the draft on Parlasur their particular interpretation of how relevant and complex this regional parliament should be. On the one hand, the previous experience of the JPC provided the background to assess what aspects of the previous parliamentary organisation had worked successfully and which elements should be improved through the establishment of Parlasur. On the other hand, this institutional reform was also a window of opportunity seized by parliamentarians and officials to add innovative elements to the constitution of this parliamentary body.

In fact, the proposal to establish Parlasur, already presented by parliamentary agents in the conception of the JPC, was back on the table since 1999, a few years before the new juncture of MERCOSUR's integration. Members of the Executive Board of the JPC decided to set up a group of experts responsible for presenting a first schedule for the creation of Parlasur (JPC, 1999; Parlasur 2, 6 and 7, interviews with the author). Since then, the negotiations over Parlasur's Constitutive Document were considered as a priority in the agenda of the JPC. The overall aim of the parliamentarians involved was to present a proposal of reforming the Ouro Preto Protocol, in order to substitute the JPC with a newly-constituted parliament. However, it is only at the critical juncture of MERCOSUR's institutional reform that the proposal of creating Parlasur became a reality. The opportunity provided by this context is highlighted in the JPC's recommendation No. 13 of 2003, when parliamentarians expressed that the creation of a supranational parliament, alongside other supranational bodies, such as a Court of Justice, would make MERCOSUR a more dynamic project.

Following the first drafts presented and discussed by the members of the JPC, a proposal of interinstitutional agreement between the JPC and the CMC was submitted to the consideration of the Member States in November of 2003. Besides presenting an overall

picture of MERCOSUR's institutional challenges, this agreement focused on the importance of internalising MERCOSUR decisions at the national parliaments, where members of the JPC could play a decisive role. In December of the same year, the Argentinean and the Brazilian delegations presented two drafts for the Constitutive Protocol of Parlasur to be considered by the members of the JPC. Although both projects envisaged Parlasur's creation, some important differences were evident. The Argentinean draft was much more ambitious in terms of gradually conceding to the parliament the competences of issuing binding opinions and of approving or rejecting the decisions from the CMC and GMC that do not require internalisation by the national congresses. Meanwhile, the Brazilian project conceived Parlasur as a merely consultative and deliberative body, responsible for speeding up the internalisation and harmonisation of MERCOSUR norms (JPC, 2003a). Both projects were discussed by the experts and parliamentarians over the following months and JPC's Executive Board expressed that one consensual document should emerge from parliamentary and technical discussions with the aim of being submitted to the consideration of the Member States (Parlasur 2 and 7, interviews with the author).

Within this context, the Group MERCOSUR Parliament (2004) played a key role in reaching Parlasur's draft protocol. It was composed of parliamentarians, officials and experts from the Member States of the bloc and coordinated by the representative of the *Pro Tempore* Presidency of the CMC. Through regular meetings, this group had the purpose of debating over the previous proposals submitted to the JPC until reaching a final draft of Parlasur's constitutive document (JPC, 2004a). Putting together the proposals presented by the Brazilians and Argentineans, the JPC finally agreed on a single draft protocol. For instance, in the field of parliamentary competences, the final project excluded the ambitious articles brought by the Argentinean delegation and considered the Brazilian proposal of a more consultative parliament. This means that, taking into account the external intergovernmental constraints of MERCOSUR, parliamentary agents opted for choosing a less aspirational proposal, without attempting to establish a parliamentary assembly with stronger competences, knowing the unlikelihood of Member States agreeing with the former (Parlasur 2 and 7, interviews with the author). Thus, the intergovernmental and interpresidential structures of MERCOSUR constrained the development of a stronger parliament at the regional level. In fact, the protocol approved by parliamentarians majorly transposed the competences granted to national parliaments to the regional level.

Nonetheless, the final project of Parlasur's Constitutive Protocol was not exempt from the criticism of some parliamentary delegations. Members of the Paraguayan delegation, in particular, resisted to a number of articles of the protocol, especially those stipulating majority voting and proportional representation, arguing instead for maintaining the principles of consensus and the equality of parliamentary delegations (Parlasur 1, interview with the author). Finally, in the Puerto Iguazu Declaration of 2004, members of the JPC acknowledged the important moment for transforming MERCOSUR's institutions and reaffirmed that one of the pillars of its institutional reform is the establishment of Parlasur. More importantly, attached to this declaration was the first draft of Parlasur's Constitutive Protocol (JPC, 2004b).

And yet, the negotiations for the creation of Parlasur were not only led by pro-integration parliamentarians and civil servants. The executive and national diplomats were also important players who were able to hinder the development of a rather empowered parliamentary body within MERCOSUR (Parlasur 2 and 3, interviews with the author). As stressed by Malamud and Dri (2013, p. 228), "professional diplomats of all Mercosur states and parliamentarians with nationalist beliefs lobbied for the deletion of the draft articles that would reinforce the Parliament competences". Thus, although some important elements, such as the provision of direct elections and proportional representation, were accepted by the Member States, Parlasur would still be a consultative legislature and MERCOSUR's decision-making system would remain intergovernmental.

It is also important to point out that the European Union served as a model within this juncture of MERCOSUR's institutional reform, and particularly for the establishment of Parlasur. In fact, since the creation of MERCOSUR, the European Commission has been actively providing technical, financial and diplomatic assistance to this regional project (Santander, 2005). This support varied from training on computing, documentation and archives for MERCOSUR's Secretariat to the organisation of conferences and seminars on regional integration. Thereby, when it comes to the creation of Parlasur, Dri (2010) argues that:

(...) the influence of the European Union (EU) was relevant in the creation of this assembly in Mercosur. The attempt at reproducing characteristics from the European governance is one of the exogenous elements that have determined the institutionalization of the Parlasur (p. 53).

What is more, the European Commission has financially contributed to the creation of Parlasur and to the training of the members of its Secretariat. In 2005, the EU and MERCOSUR signed another convention agreement which led to the transfer of additional €900,000 with the aim of assuring the success of the first activities of Parlasur (Dri, 2010; Parlasur 1 and 6, interviews with the author).

At the inter-parliamentary level, since the establishment of the JPC, parliamentarians from MERCOSUR and the EU were able to exchange views. In this context, the European Parliament has emphatically supported the political ambitions of MERCOSUR parliamentarians and encouraged more significant powers for Parlasur (Dri, 2015). In addition, not only were parliamentarians encouraged to consider the EU as an institutional template. Members of the MERCOSUR Secretariat, especially within the discussion of the reformulation of MERCOSUR, have also defended the creation of a stronger MERCOSUR Parliament, which would rather resemble the European model (Dabène, 2009).

While the EU was not so much considered as an institutional model during the creation of MERCOSUR in the 1990s, over the 2000s the negotiators started to become interested in incorporating some institutional characteristics of the EU into MERCOSUR (Lenz, 2012). It is interesting to note that although MERCOSUR – just as other regional organisations in Latin America – has strong, sovereignty-protective features, this did not hinder the diffusion of EU institutions. In fact, MERCOSUR leaders have recognised the EU as a successful integration project and encouraged the adoption of its formal institutions within MERCOSUR's organisational structure. For instance, in a meeting with parliamentarians from Europe in 2005, members of the JPC acknowledged that the European experience would be significantly important to the design and the development of the future Parliament of MERCOSUR (X Reunión Interparlamentaria Parlamento Europeo - Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR, 2005).

However, in contrast to the EU's powerful supranational institutions, all of MERCOSUR's institutions created in this period have ultimately not overcome the intergovernmental and interpresidential supremacy. Therefore, high expectations rose from some actors in favour of stronger and autonomous regional institutions, based on the EU's integration success. But a substantial re-negotiation of the Ouro Preto Protocol did not take place at this particular juncture (Dabène, 2009). In fact, the institutional reform of MERCOSUR was a rather timid one, and actually only restated the intergovernmental characteristics of the bloc (Parlasur 2 and 3, interviews with the author). The creation of

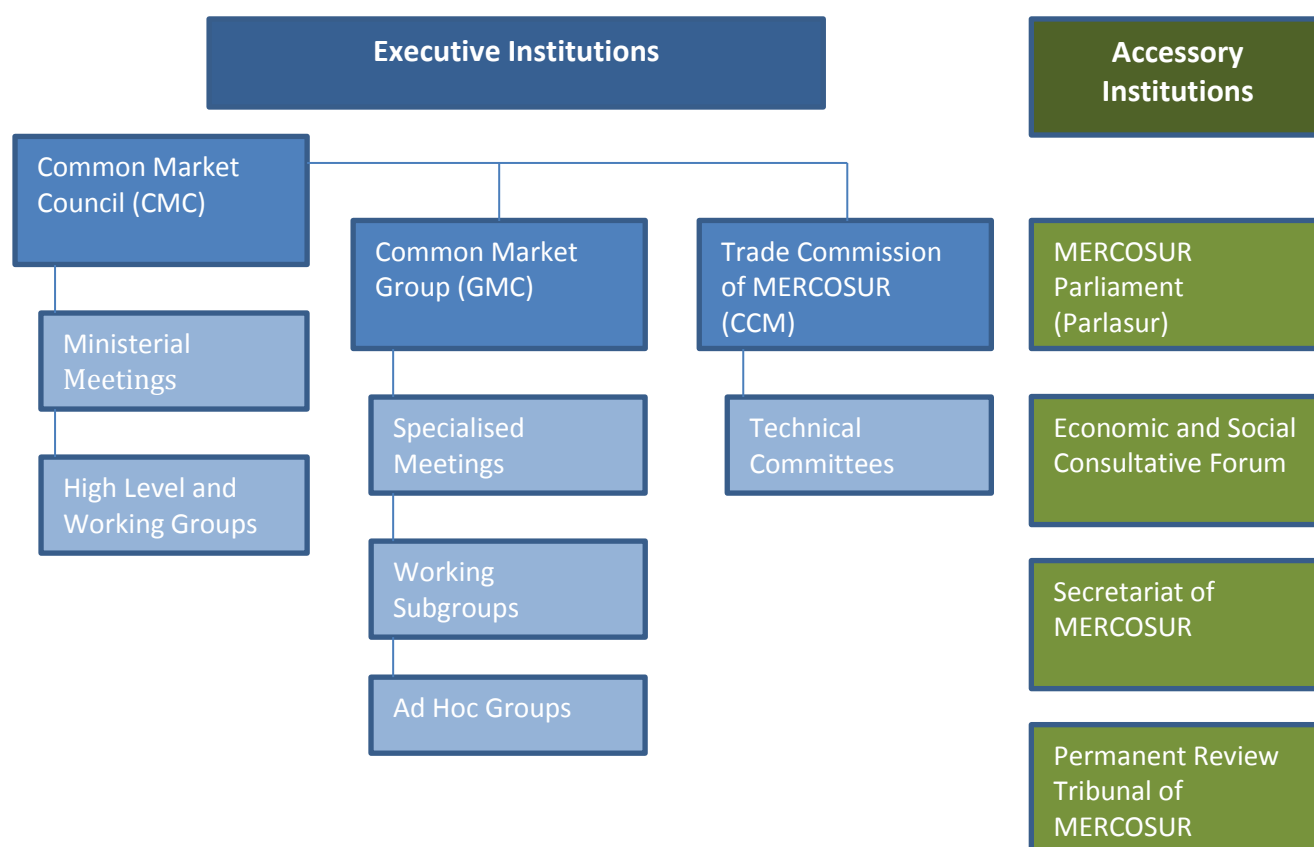
additional institutions such as Parlasur, mostly served the purpose of lending MERCOSUR decisions more democratic legitimacy, but not to incorporate parliamentary actors within the core of the decision-making system. In this sense, the foundation of Parlasur was followed by the creation of several other bodies, such as the Permanent Review Tribunal (2002), the Forum of MERCOSUR Municipalities, Provinces and Departments (2004), and the MERCOSUR Structural Convergence Fund (FOCEM) (2005). Although these bodies intended to enable the participation of citizens and local actors as well as to reduce the asymmetries among Member States – thereby adding legitimacy to this project over time – all of them remained outside MERCOSUR’s key decision-making processes.

The Constitutive Protocol of Parlasur was signed in 2005, and Parlasur had its first plenary session in 2006 in the Brazilian National Congress. The statement made by Brazilian President Lula da Silva on this occasion was symbolic of the consolidation of this parliamentary dimension. Firstly, he emphasised the efforts and dedication of the members of the JPC, thereby acknowledging parliamentary involvement in the establishment of Parlasur. Secondly, although Lula recognised that initially Parlasur would not have legislative powers, he stressed Parlasur’s role in the adoption of regional norms and as a key political laboratory that would become important in the advancement of supranationality (Lula da Silva, 2006). From a discursive point of view, the defence of supranationalism by the President of MERCOSUR’s biggest Member State represents a symbolic transformation in the logic of integration. This is one of the very few occasions where executive leaders of MERCOSUR acknowledged the importance of Parlasur for the deepening of the integration project.

However, as previously discussed, one of the key path dependent characteristics of MERCOSUR’s integration – which differentiates it from other regional projects, such as the EU – is the supremacy of intergovernmental instances. In contrast to the EU – which built its supranational institutions since its creation – the integrity of the sovereignty of MERCOSUR’s Member States was never questioned. In this sense, the principle of autonomy was always overstated by MERCOSUR political elites and especially by its biggest Member States such as Brazil, which never seriously considered sharing sovereignty with regional institutions (Doctor, 2013). This concurs with a historical institutionalist statement which emphasised that “once actors have ventured far down a particular path, however, they are likely to find it very difficult to reverse course” (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 6), meaning that all non-executive institutions of MERCOSUR would be mostly excluded from the decision-making process. As shown in figure 2, the CMC, the GMC and the CCM, which

are all intergovernmental instances, are the only bodies responsible for the executive decisions taken by MERCOSUR.

Figure 2. MERCOSUR's Organisational Chart



Source: author's elaboration, based on: <http://ismercotur.org/doc/estructura-mercotur-sep2012-ES.pdf>

Although Medeiros et al. (2016) have argued that “the Parliament is a broader and more institutionalized version of CPCM, intended to assume leadership in Mercosur's regional integration as expressed in its constitutive protocol” (p. 8), some innovative aspects are also observed in the newly-constituted Parliament, differentiating it from the former JPC. Thus, four novelties must be highlighted: the provision of direct elections; the proportional representation of national delegations; a complex majority voting-system; and the creation of transnational political groups. These new dynamics would allow Parlasur to escape from the national-consensus mode of other MERCOSUR institutions, leading to a parliamentary composition based on the population criteria, and permitting parliamentarians to vote

according to their own ideological and partisan positions rather than exclusively based on nationality. It is interesting to point out that all these innovative features were copied from the European Parliament, which highlights its status of institutional template (Dri, 2010).

Even though the critical juncture of MERCOSUR's institutional reform did not lead to the strengthening of any supranational dimension – being unable to surpass MERCOSUR's path dependent intergovernmental trends – it did create a myriad of new bodies, aiming to address the democratic legitimacy concerns and increase the participation of non-national executive actors within the integration process. Considering the historical institutionalist claim that the “outcomes at a “critical juncture” trigger feedback mechanisms that reinforce the recurrence of a particular pattern into the future” (Pierson and Skocpol, 2002, p. 6), MERCOSUR's reform inevitably open up regional integration to the further involvement of new non-governmental actors such as parliamentary agents. Regarding its parliamentary dimension, the creation of Parlasur was the main achievement of parliamentarians of the region. Therefore, parliamentary agency played an important role in this juncture inasmuch as the national delegations of the JPC were responsible – altogether with a group of technical experts – to draft the constitutive protocol of Parlasur and to submit it to the approval of the national executives. Based on the experience with the JPC, they replicated the positive dynamics and at the same time added some innovative elements to the newly-constituted Parliament, copying some characteristics of the European Parliament.

The establishment of Parlasur, however, has not substantially changed the decision-making system of MERCOSUR, still centred on the executive's decisions. In this sense, even behaving proactively parliamentary agents were not able to surpass the institutional inertia of MERCOSUR and the supremacy of the presidential regimes of the Southern Cone, which have externally restrained further parliamentary agency. This would lead to several pitfalls in the institutional development of this parliamentary body in the following years.

5.4. FROM PROACTIVISM TO TIMIDITY: CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES AND DYNAMICS OF PARLASUR

This third section addresses the current situation and the key challenges faced by Parlasur. It aims to demonstrate how timid parliament has been in recent years, given the demobilisation of parliamentary agents associated with the recent turbulent times of MERCOSUR

integration. Whilst this recent period deserves some attention, it has not been considered as a critical juncture in the history of Parlasur's development. This section highlights that instead of proactively using its own resources to employ more meaningful parliamentary instruments, more related to legislation and oversight activities, parliamentarians have preferred to keep debating and approving resolutions related to parliamentary diplomacy and conflict resolutions, which have less potential to promote further empowerment, decreasing the level of parliamentary agency within MERCOSUR. Given Parlasur's internal institutional challenges and shift in terms of parliamentary ambitions, parliamentary agency in MERCOSUR has moved from a proactive mode to a rather timid one. When it comes to institutional development, this change of parliamentary strategy does not present much potential to change MERCOSUR's decision-making system, and Parlasur remains detached from the decisions taken by the executive.

Since Parlasur was installed, it had the potential to enhance parliamentary activism at the regional level. When compared to the meetings of the JPC, one can observe a significant increase in the number of parliamentarians attending Parlasur's plenary meetings. For instance, while the last plenary meeting registered the attendance of 21 members of the four national parliaments of the bloc, the first ordinary plenary session of Parlasur had the participation of all 72 parliamentarians. Moreover, in contrast to the semester sessions of the JPC, Parlasur's Constitutive Protocol defined that monthly plenary meetings should be held at MERCOSUR's headquarters in Montevideo. The intensification and amplification of parliamentary participation led to a rise in political and geographical diversity within the national delegations and an increase in the number of parliamentarians involved in policy-making. However, like the previous JPC, much of the political and institutional agenda of parliament remained in the hands of the Executive Board, rather than these newcomer agents.

Furthermore, after its first years of existence, Parlasur has faced several external and internal challenges in strengthening its parliamentary influence. First of all, just as the JPC, Parlasur mostly remains a consultative body within MERCOSUR's decision-making process. At the same time, and in contrast to its predecessor, the JPC, Parlasur disposes of a more complex typology of deliberative acts. According to Parlasur's Constitutive Protocol and rules of procedure, the parliament can propose: opinions, legislative projects, legislative draft projects, declarations, recommendations, informs, and dispositions. While opinions and legislative projects are ultimately submitted to the consideration of the CMC, instruments such as declarations and recommendations are only of a declaratory nature and have little to

no potential to influence on the activities of the executive. In this sense, as summarised by Malamud and Dri (2013),

When it comes to decision-making, the Rules establish a complex system of majorities that is not connected to the content of a decision but to its form. The system makes it easier to approve the less consequential legislative instruments, i.e. declarations and recommendations (p. 232).

Therefore, depending on the existing quorum of plenary sessions, parliamentarians would prefer to introduce legislative tools that only require a simple majority in order to make it easier to approve legislation. Also, proposals such as declarations and recommendations do not require any reaction from the executive, the CMC, which means that the actual impact of Parlasur on the legislative process of MERCOSUR is very modest. As most of the proposals approved by Parlasur are declarations and recommendations – 70 percent of the propositions from 2007 to 2010 (Malamud and Dri, 2013) – a deeper inter-institutional dialogue with the CMC has not been put in place by the parliamentarians. Thus, in terms of parliamentary agency, it means that the members of Parlasur have chosen not to push for greater influence in the making of MERCOSUR decisions. Instead, they opted to issue declarations and recommendations rather than engaging in legislative procedures (voting of opinions and legislative projects) (Parlasur 1 and 6, interviews with the author). This trend starkly contrasted to parliamentary agency in the EU, which was grounded in intensively investing in the most meaningful tool at the disposal of parliamentary agents.

Still, it is important to note that Parlasur aimed at exerting greater control over the executive activities of MERCOSUR. Thus, the competences stipulated by the Constitutive Protocol (article 4), related to the monitoring of executive performance, is that Parlasur is able to summon the rotating Presidency of the CMC in the beginning of its six-month term. Moreover, Parlasur can request information or written opinions from the executive on topics related to the development of MERCOSUR's integration. Although parliamentarians cannot formally change the presidency's agenda, both competences are significant in terms of guaranteeing further access to and transparency over the agenda and the activities of the national instances of MERCOSUR. It is also an opportunity for parliamentarians to voice their opinions and positions on specific integration issues to the executive. Besides, as seen in one of Parlasur's declarations (Parlasur, 2008a), parliamentary agents have also demanded to

be invited and to attend on a regular basis MERCOSUR's High Level Summits, which would be another formal opportunity to influence the decisions taken by national governments.

Even though Parlasur's Protocol established some important channels to strengthen the dialogue between the parliament and the executive, in practice, there is no opportunity for the parliament to actually constrain the activities of the CMC and the GMC, as Parlasur's role remains as merely a consultative one. Furthermore, it can be observed that parliamentarians and executives (representatives of the Member States) have so far established only an incipient inter-institutional dialogue. Importantly, and in contrast to the European Parliament, Parlasur has received no formal powers to oversee or even approve MERCOSUR's annual budget (Mariano, 2011). Budgetary powers would mean a significant parliamentary input on MERCOSUR's decisions. Thereby, gaining budgetary powers would give parliamentarians an overall influence and involvement in the performance of the bloc, through controlling the executive's spending. In this sense, members of Parlasur have not fully employed their new oversight instruments.

Despite the fact that the parliament also acquired powers to impact MERCOSUR's legislative process, the parliamentary instruments most frequently used during the first years of Parlasur were limited to reforming its rules of procedure, deciding over the proportionality criteria, and adopting parliamentary resolutions and declarations. First, the parliament put a great amount of effort into approving its new rules of procedure, which aimed to reflect the new institutional configurations established by the Constitutive Protocol. After some parliamentary resistance regarding the approval of majority-voting, especially from parliamentarians of Uruguay and Paraguay, who feared the impact of the implementation of the proportional criteria, the rules of procedure were finally approved in August 2007.

Second, the parliament took a long time to reach a final agreement on the formulation of the proportionality criteria. These negotiations would not only be made by the members of Parlasur, but also via an inter-institutional agreement with the national executives (CMC). Meanwhile, even before the confirmation of the final numbers of each national delegation, Paraguay held direct elections to select its 18 parliamentarians in 2008, assuring that the number of its delegation would not be reduced under the proportionality criteria (Drummond, 2009; Mariano, 2011). The difficulties of reaching a common ground on the proportional criteria and the direct elections impacted the parliamentary appointment of members by national parliaments as well as the organisation of the first direct elections in most of the countries. Only in 2009, members of Parlasur agreed upon the final details of the proportional

criteria to be adopted by the parliament, delaying the overall deadlines for the introduction of direct elections set in the Constitutive Protocol of Parlasur. After finally agreeing on the proportional representation, members of Parlasur, via issuing a recommendation to the CMC, urged Member States to immediately implement the new criteria as well as to start the preparations to hold direct elections for Parlasur at the national level (Parlasur, 2010). In fact, as reminded by one of Parlasur's officials, the decision over the proportionality criteria and the direct elections was the last institutional battle fought by members of Parlasur (Parlasur 1, interview with the author). And as emphasised by historical institutionalism, "battles over institutions are important because path follow these institutional choices" (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992, p. 22).

As discussed previously, the huge population asymmetries among Member States would generate a profound change in the voting system and hence, in the patterns of influence of the national delegations inside Parlasur, which would greatly benefit MERCOSUR's most populated country, Brazil (Medeiros et al., 2016). This discrepancy generated stern reactions from the small Member States, which asked for compensation for the introduction of the proportional criteria. Therefore, the political agreement submitted to the CMC by Parlasur not only included the calculations for the number of parliamentary seats, but also – as demanded by parliamentarians from Paraguay and Uruguay – a paragraph supporting the establishment of a Supranational Court of Justice for MERCOSUR (MERCOSUR Parliament, 2009). Although the parliament showed its support for the creation of a supranational court, this proposal was overlooked by the national executives. Hence, no supranational court was created, once again indicating the restricted negotiating capabilities of Parlasur.

In this context, the proportional composition of Parlasur would be gradually put in place, not only considering the accession of Venezuela to the bloc in 2012, but also the holding of direct elections. Table 7 illustrates the process of introducing the proportional criteria – or the "citizen's" representation", as labelled by members of Parlasur (Drummond, 2009) –, taking into account the recent delays of complying by the Member States. Moreover, just as other changes introduced to Parlasur, the principle of *citizen's representation* was inspired by the European Parliament's proportional representation of Member States (Drummond, 2009).

Table 7. Citizens' Representation inside Parlasur

Member States	Population (approx. in millions)	First Stage (2006-2010)	Second Stage I (2011-2014/2020) *	Second stage II (post-2020)
Uruguay	3,3	18	18	18
Paraguay	6,4	18	18	18
Venezuela	27,6	-	23	31
Argentina	41,7	18	26	43
Brazil	203,4	18	37	74
Total	282,4	72	122	184

* In December 2013, members of Parlasur extended the period of this stage until 2020, in order to guarantee that all countries would eventually elect their representatives directly.

Source: Adapted from Luciano (2012).

Given that the organisation of direct elections for Parlasur is the responsibility of each Member State, four elections were held until today: three in Paraguay (2008, 2013, and 2018) and one in Argentina (2015). As mentioned earlier, the first direct elections in Paraguay were organised even before the final agreement on the proportionality criteria, setting the minimum number of national delegations to 18 parliamentarians. According to Mariano (2011), the elections in Paraguay were treated as 'second-order elections' (Reif and Schmitt, 1980), inasmuch as MERCOSUR integration topics were not debated and the population was not fully aware that they should vote for representatives to Parlasur. The same trend was also identified in the elections in Argentina, where national topics were at the core of the political debate, instead of the integration of MERCOSUR (Schiff, 2014). One of the main causes for this lack of focus is the fact that the elections for Parlasur in both countries were held together with the national/presidential elections, which diverted citizens' attention to the national executive campaigns (Parlasur 2, 8 and 9, interviews with the author). Another reason is the citizens' lack of knowledge about MERCOSUR and Parlasur – according to Latinobarometer (2015), 28% and 23% of citizens interviewed do not have any knowledge about MERCOSUR in Argentina and Paraguay, respectively – which would discourage a political debate focused on regional integration.

Third, the constitution of transnational political groups, stipulated in the Constitutive Protocol would emerge in 2009 with the creation of the Progressive Group, a political group made up by parliamentarians from centre-left parties of all Member States (Caetano et al., 2009). The creation of Parlasur's first transnational political group would symbolise the

development of important transnational political interactions among parliamentarians from different nationalities within Parlasur. More recently, a new transnational political group was set up in 2016 – the group Democratic Integration – which aimed to gather politicians from centre-right parties of the region, in an attempt to counterbalance the Progressives.

According to Dri and Ventura (2014) complexity and socialisation effects (internal conditions of the Parliament) evolved more rapidly than the autonomy and functionality of Parlasur. Thus, while internally, parliamentary agents have intensified their political and institutional interactions through the approval of its rules of procedures, deliberations over the proportional criteria, and the constitution of transnational political families – they were still constrained externally, inasmuch as Member States' presidential regimes were not ready for the emergence of a stronger autonomous parliamentary organisation within MERCOSUR. Therefore, MERCOSUR would still be marked by a structural imbalance between the executive and the legislative (Dri and Ventura, 2014). Although parliamentary agents have kept in favour of supranational institutions within MERCOSUR – for instance when issuing a declaration supporting the gradual development of supranational bodies such as a Court of Justice at the MERCOSUR level (Parlasur, 2008b) – these demands were not taken seriously by Member States.

In addition, since 2010, Parlasur has faced a very unstable stage of its institutional life. Due to changes in the composition of national legislatures of Argentina and Brazil, both countries took a long time to select their delegates for Parlasur, thereby jeopardising the regularity of the plenary sessions. Afterwards, the political crises in Paraguay and the impeachment of President Fernando Lugo in 2012 also affected Parlasur's activities, when the governments of MERCOSUR decided to suspend the country from all instances of the bloc, despite the fact that the Paraguayan parliamentarians at that point were the only ones elected directly (Luciano, 2016). Indeed, this period from 2010 to 2013 marked a stage of reduction of parliamentary regional engagement, which led to a decrease in the proactive pace of parliamentary agency in MERCOSUR. Due to the difficulty of having all national delegations to Parlasur appointed/elected, the parliament has reached a stage of standoff. This is illustrated by a lack of the initiatives deliberated by Parlasur, the scarcity of plenary sessions, and ultimately, the demobilisation of parliamentarians, who have turned their attention to national politics (Dri and Ventura, 2014; Parlasur 6, 10 and 11, interviews with the author).

Thus, one can divide the institutional life of Parlasur into three stages: an installation stage; a phase of development of certain competences and socialisation of parliamentarians; and a stage of paralysis and stagnation (Porcelli, 2014). While the first two stages were marked by intense parliamentary proactivity and significant institutional ambitions, the internal setbacks of Parlasur to proceed with the process of proportional representation and the direct elections added to the political turmoil of MERCOSUR caused by the simultaneous suspension of Paraguay and the accession of Venezuela in 2012 led to the institutional deadlock and inactivity of this parliament. Thereby, these internal and external dynamics contributed to the paralysis of the parliament, temporarily impacting its performance. This period of stagnation was only overcome with the end of the Paraguayan suspension (2014) and the direct elections of the Argentinean parliamentarians (2015), which gave a renewed impetus to Parlasur. However, some of the officials consulted emphasised that the level of parliamentary activity observed before the institutional paralysis has not been recovered so far (Parlasur 1 and 5, interviews with the author).

Since the resumption of its regular activities and the settling of its internal composition under the principle of proportional representation, Parlasur has focused on dealing with areas such as parliamentary diplomacy and conflict resolution. Particular attention has been given to the current political crisis in Venezuela. Parlasur is one of the few venues where political elites from both the Venezuelan government and the opposition are able to sit together and freely discuss the country's political turmoil. Moreover, as argued by one of the interviewees consulted, Parlasur enables that the political parties of all Member States of MERCOSUR join this conversation, supporting specific actions and proposing political mediation (Parlasur 7, interview with the author). Despite the fact that the Venezuelan government was formally suspended from MERCOSUR in 2016, members of Parlasur deliberated and decided that the Venezuelan representatives in the regional Parliament would be authorised to continue their activities in the bloc, considering them as representatives of the citizens of Venezuela, rather than representatives of the government (Agencia Parlasur, 2017).

In contrast to what happened previously with the Paraguayan representatives during President Lugo's removal, Parlasur decided to assume the role of a protagonist, by challenging MERCOSUR's executive and supporting the further dialogue between parliamentarians from the government and the opposition at the regional level. Thus, while the executive dimension of MERCOSUR was temporarily paralysed due to the Venezuelan

crisis, Parlasur continued to convene regularly, gathering representatives of all five Member States, despite the political instability of the bloc (Taiana, 2016).

The recent Venezuelan case demonstrates that – despite the lack of greater competences – the majority of parliamentarians consider Parlasur as an autonomous institution of MERCOSUR, responsible for representing the citizens of the bloc and not the national governments. Although there are clear limitations to the constitution of Parlasur as a legislative body of MERCOSUR – as previously discussed – one may argue that Parlasur constitutes a supranational institution, inasmuch as its performance presents a significant margin of autonomy from the national executives. Through some recent parliamentary action, such as the deliberation over the terms of the proportionality criteria, and more recently the political declaration of not accepting the exclusion of Venezuelan parliamentarians within Parlasur after the suspension of Venezuela from the bloc, Parlasur has positioned itself as an autonomous institution in MERCOSUR, responsible for the defence of the principle of democracy and political pluralism in the region.

5.5. CONCLUSIONS

Through introducing the institutional development of Parlasur from its beginnings, this chapter provided an overall assessment of the parliamentary development inside MERCOSUR. This analysis was grounded in some of the key assumptions made by historical institutionalists and by identifying the external and internal dimensions of Parlasur's parliamentary agency. In particular, it took into account three aspects: the critical junctures of the history of MERCOSUR integration; the elements of parliamentary agency associated to the institutionalisation of Parlasur; and lastly, the instruments employed by parliamentary agents in order to achieve a greater parliamentary involvement.

In this chapter, I argued that assessing parliamentary agency is important for our understanding of the current level of institutionalisation of MERCOSUR. Hence, in contrast to most scholars who stressed the importance of executive agents within MERCOSUR integration, I defend that parliamentary agents were also key actors in the institutionalisation of the bloc, and in particular, during the establishment of the MERCOSUR Parliament in the 2000s. However, the agency of parliamentarians was not as effective in creating a more powerful legislature. This is mostly due to the fact that the intergovernmental and

interpresidential features of MERCOSUR have externally restrained parliamentary agency, leading so far to a toothless Parliament. Although the introduction of direct elections, proportional representation and transnational party groups to Parlasur aimed to establish a more autonomous and supranational institution, these reforms were not able to overcome the marginalisation of the Parliament within MERCOSUR's decision-making process. This situation is highlighted by the statement in plenary session of Alfonso González Núñez (2017), then president of the Paraguayan delegation at Parlasur's plenary session, about how 'hypocritical' MERCOSUR's integration has been inasmuch as Parlasur was never endowed with stronger legislative powers.

As demonstrated in this chapter and illustrated in the table 8 (below), parliamentary agency in MERCOSUR was, on the one hand, externally restrained by the intergovernmental settings of integration in South America. On the other hand, it has not limited parliamentary agents to behave proactively at the internal level, which has led, for instance, to their direct participation within the drafting of Parlasur's Protocol. Nonetheless, since 2010, parliamentary agency has internally moved from a proactive attitude towards a more timid stance, given the institutional paralysis of the parliament and the lack of ambitions from parliamentary agents to enhance their own powers within MERCOSUR. Consequently, based on the typology provided in the theoretical chapter, the level of parliamentary agency in MERCOSUR over time has moved from medium to low, which makes very unlikely any significant parliamentary empowerment for the next years unless a return to the proactive stance is seen from parliamentary agents.

Table 8. Parliamentary Agency in MERCOSUR

External	Internal	Over time
Restricted	Proactive to timid	Medium to low

Despite parliament's engagement in the negotiation and approval of Parlasur's Protocol, what one can observe after the creation of Parlasur is a rather timid parliament (Dabène, 2007). The difficulties of appointing representatives of the national delegations, negotiating the terms of the proportional criteria, and holding direct elections in each Member State led to the irregularity of the plenary sessions and specialised commissions as well as to the low

engagement and attendance of the parliamentarians (Gardini, 2010). Thus, parliamentary agency in MERCOSUR has been unstable and underwhelming so far, thereby preventing Parlasur from pushing the national executives for further competences.

More recently, Parlasur recovered its impetus and has invested its resources in parliamentary diplomacy and conflict resolution, as witnessed in its strong concern with the political turmoil in Venezuela, pushing for a political conciliation between the political actors in this country. In this sense, it has assumed autonomous positions from the national executives – such as the decision that the Venezuelan members of Parlasur would not be suspended from the bloc – thereby asserting itself as an independent voice from the MERCOSUR governments. Although the political instability in South America derived from the crisis in Venezuela has on the one hand constrained MERCOSUR as a whole, it has enabled Parlasur to become the voice for pluralism and democracy in the region. However, this new parliamentary focus might not necessarily lead to Parlasur's empowerment. As argued by Malamud and Dri (2013), “contributing to conflict resolution and facilitating negotiations through political dialogue may constitute important roles, but they cannot promote integration if decision-making authority is not strengthened” (p. 234).

In contrast to the chapter on the European Parliament, the parliamentary experiences of MERCOSUR provided by this chapter may tell us something about how parliamentary agency has developed in non-Western and non-supranational contexts. In this sense, the next chapter will take into account the findings of this chapter and the overall theoretical framework of this research to address the development of parliamentary institutions within one regional organisation from the African continent, the African Union.

6. THE LIMITS TO PARLIAMENTARISATION: ESTABLISHING THE PAN- AFRICAN PARLIAMENT

The ultimate aim of the Pan-African Parliament shall be to evolve into an institution with full legislative powers, whose members are elected by universal adult suffrage (Protocol relating to the Pan-African Parliament, Article 2, p. 4).

Those who elected you, the women, the youth, the peasants, the workers, the religious communities, the artists and intellectuals, and others, must accompany you through their actions to bring about the veritable revolution spelt out in the vision that has given birth to the Pan African Parliament. Together with these masses, you have the duty to ensure that nobody contemplating the future of Africa should, once again, say - things fall apart! (Mbeki, 2004, p. 1)

This chapter addresses the creation and development of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) in the context of the African Union (AU) and African continental regionalism. By investigating the critical junctures of African continental integration, it will identify the role of parliamentary agency in the AU's constitution, and in particular, the development of the PAP.

Although some insightful literature has been published on African regionalism and the overall process of African regional integration (Bach, 2005; Thonke and Spliid, 2012; Bach, 2016; Söderbaum and Brodin, 2016) as well as the establishment and recent development of the African Union (Magliveras and Naldi, 2002; Makinda and Okumu, 2008; Badejo, 2008; Fioramonti and Mattheis, 2015), the number of scholars researching the institutionalisation of the PAP remains small, especially when compared to the many researchers working on the European Parliament. Some initial works have emphasised the role of governments and technocrats in the creation of the PAP (van Walraven, 2004; Nzewi, 2008) and the PAP's inter-parliamentary relations with the European Parliament since its beginnings (Navarro, 2010). There is, however, a lack of research focused on the PAP's internal dynamics and parliamentary agency in its own institutional development. As stated by Navarro (2010, p. 210), "More research needs to be done on the membership, functioning and decisions of the PAP in order to better understand these mechanisms".

This chapter demonstrates how the degree of parliamentary agency over the past decades impacted the development of the PAP within the AU. The main argument of this chapter is that the low degree of parliamentary agency in Africa – externally restrained by the

prominence of intergovernmental and sovereignty-protecting institutions and internally marked by the lack of capacity of parliamentary agents to be involved in the key decisions taken by African executives – has hindered parliamentary empowerment in the AU. Thus, although the protocols signed by African leaders expressed great ambitions for the future role of the PAP as a truly legislative actor, the PAP has not gone beyond its consultative nature. As shown in this chapter, some parliamentary agents, in particular the PAP's members of Bureau and the Committee on Rules and Discipline, have pushed for the revision of the PAP's protocol. However, parliamentarians have so far been unable to establish stronger formal and informal links with national governments or national parliaments across Africa, or even the rest of the AU's institutions. The PAP, therefore, remains a marginalised actor within the process of African integration.

This chapter is organised like the previous two empirical chapters. The first section identifies the dimensions of parliamentary agency in Africa. The focus lies on the external constraints faced by parliaments since the beginnings of African continental integration, as well as the parliament's internal dynamics, such as the PAP's lack of political leadership and financial constraints, which have also limited the performance of African parliamentarians at the regional level. The second and third sections draw on two critical junctures of African regionalism. First, the constitution of the African Union and the creation of the Pan-African Parliament in the 2000s – when the African continental parliament was finally established; and second, the signature of the Malabo Protocols of 2014, which intended to reform the structure, competences, and composition of the PAP. Particular emphasis is put on the role of parliamentarians in strengthening the competences of the PAP by implementing a reforming protocol.

This chapter will highlight the role parliamentary agents have played during the institutional reforms of the African Union over the last decades. While the existing literature on the AU has neglected the role of the PAP in African continental politics, this chapter aims to shed some light on the capabilities but also the challenges of the PAP when it comes to consolidating its institutional position. As in the previous two chapters, an account of the type of parliamentary agency, and the tensions within the overall structures of African regionalism, will be provided.

6.1 RESTRICTED AND TIMID AGENTS: THE DIMENSIONS OF AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY

The purpose of this section is to characterise African parliamentary agency, by taking into account both its external and internal opportunities and constraints. First, it highlights the fundamental components of regional integration in Africa since decolonisation, i.e. sovereignty-protection and intergovernmentalism. These elements are essential for our understanding of the driving forces behind the African Union's constitution. They imposed external constraints upon parliamentary agents in time, and explain the PAP as a case of restricted parliamentary agency. Secondly, this section addresses the internal challenges to the development of parliamentary agency at the African continental level, thereby exposing the timidity of the PAP's agents when it comes to their parliament's own empowerment. Hence, this section points out both the external and internal dimensions that have limited the overall capacity of the PAP to become a key actor within the AU's decision-making system.

In contrast to Europe and Latin America, regionalism in Africa has emerged simultaneously with the decolonisation of the continent from the European empires since the 1950s. While fighting for the liberation of African peoples and nations, the Pan-African movements of this period often sustained the idea of a continental shared identity and history derived from colonial domination (Bach, 2016). Although supporting a similar cause of decolonisation, Pan-Africanist initiatives since their beginning have diverged in terms of their ultimate political goals. While more idealist leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah from Ghana defended the creation of a Pan-African federation, other leaders of African independence movements favoured a more pragmatic strategy, i.e. the empowering of African national states alongside a flexible and comprehensive cooperation at the continental level (Kitipov, n.d). In this sense, the first African continental organisation, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) – which represented the prevalence of the second strategy – embodied since its conception some of the key structural aspects of African regionalism: the strong intergovernmentality of its decision-making processes, the protection of African states' sovereignty, and the diversity of levels of commitment and paces of integration. Fioramonti and Mattheis explain:

The OAU (Organization of African Unity) emerged in 1963 as an uneasy compromise between the two stances. It was an eminently inter-governmental institution, with no

plan to integrate or pool sovereignty in any field, and it upheld the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs. The OAU privileged breadth of geographical reach at the expense of depth of implementation (Fioramonti and Mattheis, 2015, p. 6).

The first decades of African regionalism were marked by the exclusive domination of state-led initiatives, particularly in the economic field (Adar et al., 2017). Although some sub-regional parliaments first appeared during this period, such as the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) in 1967, they have shown limited capacity to become more prominent actors. Only from the 1990s onwards have regional projects in Africa taken a more political orientation, enabling the increasing participation of non-governmental agents at the regional level. This trend also included opening channels to both national and regional parliamentary bodies. Given this context, Karuuombe (2008) observed that “The wave of regional integration embarked upon in the 1990s ushered in the establishment and consolidation of regional integration institutions including Regional Parliamentary Assemblies (RPAs) as institutions to uphold good governance, accountability and transparency” (p. 7). For instance, several African regional parliaments emerged in the first years of the 1990s, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Parliament in 1993 and the South African Development Community (SADC) Parliament Forum in 1993. Even the EALA, was renewed in 1999 by a new constitution protocol.

When it comes to continental integration, then represented by the OAU, the prominence of the executives also remained the rule, highlighting how restricted parliamentary agency has been in Africa. Thus, parliamentary activism was nulled and the voice of the opposition forces was still silenced at the African level (van Walraven, 2004). Moreover, national parliaments had very little knowledge about the content of the international agreements signed by the Head of States, limiting their own leverage in the ratification of the treaties.

Besides, African politics since decolonisation has been marked by the personalisation of the executive power in the hands of ‘big men’, i.e. great rebel/independence leaders who have been celebrated as fathers of the emerging African nations (Lynch and Crawford, 2011). In this respect, the presidential and semi-presidential political systems established in almost all African countries (Botswana, South Africa, Lesotho and Mauritius are some parliamentary exceptions) have mostly concentrated the political powers in the hands of the presidencies, leaving parliaments as secondary institutions at the national level (van de Walle, 2003). As

pointed out by Cofelice and Kingah (2013, p. 201), “(I)n many countries, parliaments simply rubber stamp government initiatives given that the parties of the presidents are often dominant in the national parliaments”. Therefore, the role that parliamentarians might play at the domestic and regional level has been undermined by the presidential nature of African regimes. Along these lines, Adar et al. (2017, p. 20) have stressed that “(I)n less democratic or strongly presidential oriented national contexts, parliaments’ playing field is even narrower, and this is reflected in the governance of their respective regional organisations”. Thus, African continental organisations have tended to reflect at the regional level the concentration of power in the hands of African leaders, marginalising parliaments and civil society actors from the decision-making processes. In particular, the role of national parliaments in areas such as foreign policy and regional integration has been negligible. This trend has also constrained the possibilities of strengthening a parliament at the continental level. As argued by one of the members of the PAP consulted, the dominance of presidential systems on the continent has raised reservations regarding the future role and competences of the continental parliament:

As the majority of African countries adopt presidential systems, there are always some reservations from the Heads of State in giving parliamentarians the power to legislate in a parliament which they do not have any control. (PAP 1, interview with author)

Moreover, regionalism in Africa has addressed democratic concerns in a particular fashion. According to Freedom House (2016), only ten out of 49 Sub-Saharan African countries (12 per cent) and only one country from North Africa (16 percent of six countries) are in fact considered ‘free’ nations. However, as this study aims to demonstrate, the lack of democracy in many African countries has not prevented the institutionalisation of several democratic and representative bodies at the regional level. The fact that African states and regional organisations are substantially dependent on foreign Official Development Assistance (ODA) can explain why several countries of the region have been rhetorically defending the incorporation of nuanced democratic practices at the national level. Actually, African elites aim to reconcile traditional channels of representation with the monopoly of political power held by the incumbent leaders and ethnic groups. So far, this strategy has guaranteed the continuous flow of international aid without the need of substantial political changes (Hartmann, 2016).

However, the non-democratic nature of many African countries has been an impediment to the parliamentarisation of the AU. For instance, according to some of the officials interviewed and as will be highlighted in the next sections, African executives and parliamentarians are very cautious when it comes to ratifying the new protocol of the PAP, which would enable the continental parliament to hold to account African Member States on sensitive topics such as human and political rights (PAP 2, interview with the author). Moreover, some examples of parliamentary activism, which will be provided in this chapter, such as the strong reaction of the PAP regarding the recent political and electoral situation in Zimbabwe, have shown that a more powerful PAP would likely pressure national governments to respect humanitarian and democratic principles at the domestic level – something that is not necessarily appreciated by some of Africa’s ‘strong men’ leaders.

Thus, by taking into account HI claims that particular courses of action might be impossible to reverse, given that the cost of switching alternatives increases markedly over time (Pierson, 2004), path dependence trends in African regionalism have hindered any substantive transformation when it comes to the sovereignty-protection behaviour of Member States vis-à-vis African regional organisations. Hereby, parliamentary agency was substantially restrained by the main features of African regionalism, which have not been supportive of the parliamentarisation of the AU.

The intergovernmental foundations of African regionalism since the creation of the OAU – which have not been altered during its transformation into the AU – have shaped the AU’s institutions since their conception. The claims to provide the AU with supranational institutions by, for instance, mimicking the EU’s institutions, were never taken seriously by African leaders. Likewise the case of MERCOSUR and despite EU’s mentoring, the establishment of bodies such as an African commission, court and parliament has not altered the intergovernmental and sovereignty-protection format of African continental integration, (Haastrup, 2013). Besides, as will be further elaborated in the last sections, some Member States are not comfortable with the terms of the new protocol for the PAP signed in 2014. In fact, “some countries say that they need to amend the constitution to accommodate the Pan-African Parliament” (PAP 3, interview with the author), which would delay the whole process of ratification. Moreover, resilience towards a more competent parliament has also been observed in the advocacy campaign of the PAP’s revised protocol. According to one of the senior officials of the PAP who has participated in this process, there is significant resistance from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice, as well as national parliaments to

ratifying this instrument, which could affect the intergovernmental logic of the AU (PAP 4, interview with the author).

On the other side, when one observes its internal dimension, the case of the PAP can be considered as an example of timid parliamentary agency, given its low degree of political mobilisation, lack of capacity to dialogue with representatives of the Member States and the African commission, and limited financial and personnel resources. First, the lack of institutional instruments and stronger competences, as well as the reduced financial and personnel resources since the constitution of the PAP have prevented the parliament from demanding further powers. Thus, since its creation, the PAP has been suffering from a lack of human and financial resources to develop its functions autonomously. Several activity reports and Strategic Plans of the PAP have stated this internal constraint as one of the most significant challenges to the development of this parliament. In particular, the PAP has been in need of more resources in the areas of Finance and Administration (PAP 5, interview with author). Within its own self-assessments, the PAP has stressed among its main weaknesses: “1. Inadequate technical capacity for provision of oversight and advisory services; 2. Unreliable support from member country national parliaments; 3. Inadequate institutional mechanisms to enhance PAP’s capacity to develop coherent legislative frameworks and model laws” (Pan-African Parliament, 2014, p.12). Thus, the PAP is very much aware and vocal about its financial limitations.

In fact, according to one of the interviewees, in order to overcome the lack of resources, members of the PAP have relied on the assistance of international agencies and donors, which have donated funds directly to the PAP, with the aim of sponsoring some of its activities (PAP 6, interview with author). “Thanks to mainly support provided by its development partners, the PAP has improved its structures and processes in the areas of financial management, procurement, administration and accounting” (Pan-African Parliament, 2014, p. 8). Hence, the dependence on external, and mainly European, funding has become one of the characteristics of the PAP’s internal organisation. “Barely able to make basic payments for the secretariat, the PAP, relies heavily on technical support from European organisations such as the German Agency for Technical Co-operation (GTZ)” (Nzewi, 2008, p. 268). If, on the one hand, the inflow of external funding has enabled the PAP to proceed with its parliamentary activities, on the other hand, it has reified the dependency of African institutions on external donors, who – in the words of one of the

PAP's officials – do not necessarily share the same agenda and interests of African peoples (PAP 9, interview with author). This raises questions of accountability and democracy.

When it comes to parliamentary personnel, although an increase in the number of staff is observed over time, this has not altered the degree of parliamentary dynamism. In this respect, Nzewi points out the necessary presence of more proactive actors in the quest for further parliamentary prominence, which has not necessarily been seen so far in the PAP's case:

This turn is made possible by the existence of experts and technocrats, who use opportunities like constraints in decision making due to expanding tasks at the centre to redirect decision making from the centre to the periphery. In the light of this, the “dismantling” of AU institutional power culture, by the PAP, among other things, will require skills in terms of expertise and strategy. Presently, the PAP is very far from its capacity building goals as contained in its strategic plans and overcoming these institutional hurdles will be an uphill battle (Nzewi, 2008, p. 258).

Secondly, with regard to the parliamentarians represented inside the PAP, one of the officials consulted highlighted that the fact that all of them are members of national parliaments has led to logistical and regularity problems (PAP 7, interview with author). As the turnover of parliamentarians is frequent and mostly dependent on the political configurations of African national parliaments – who appoint representatives of the PAP from amongst their national parliamentary benches -, the PAP has often faced membership discontinuities, which has been an impediment for parliamentary proactivity, in the view of one of the interviewees (PAP 3, interview with author). The way parliamentarians are selected for the PAP has also been criticised by the institution itself:

Unfortunately, this method of electing the PAP parliamentarians precludes the involvement of members of the public and ensures that national parliaments maintain a tight grip on the delegates it sends to the Institution. This problem is further exacerbated when the interest of the people and the state are at odds with each other and thus the delegate sides with the appointing authority (Pan-African Parliament, 2014, p. 7).

Although there is an expectation to hold direct elections for members of the PAP in the future, one of the interviews conducted stressed that it is still not clear to parliamentarians

how MPs will represent or enter a dialogue with citizens in the possible context of direct elections (PAP 8, interview with author).

In contrast to the two previous cases studied, parliamentarians have not established transnational political groups inside the PAP. However, geographical affiliations, via the establishment of Regional Caucuses, which represent the five regions of Africa (Northern, Southern, Central, Eastern, and Western Africa), have played a key role in voting behaviour and for the appointment of particular positions such as the Presidency of the PAP (PAP 6, interview with author). Although ideological cleavages regarding regional integration were never set out by members of the PAP, parliamentarians could perform more proactively if they intensify the use of PAP's current power. In order to do so, one of the interviewees stated suggested they would need especially more leadership from the members of the Bureau, which has so far been the political motor of the parliament (PAP 9, interview with author).

In this context, the first institutional signal of the inclusion of parliamentary agents within African regional integration emerged only in 1991 within the treaty of the African Economic Community (AEC), signed in Abuja. This document was the first official text that referred to the establishment of the Pan-African Parliament as one of the organs of African integration (articles 7 and 14), indicating the potential contribution of this assembly to connecting African citizens to the regional initiatives and the provision to select its members by universal suffrage in the future. Even though the functions and competences of the parliament were not mentioned in the treaty, as stressed by van Walraven:

What was important was that the AEC treaty stipulated that a Pan-African Parliament be put on the rolls, although seemingly limiting its role to involvement in the continent's 'economic development and integration' and postponing its beginning until a Protocol had defined its composition, functions and power (van Walraven, 2004, p. 201).

Although the Abuja treaty entered into force in 1994, the specific protocol constituting the parliament was not drafted by the Member States over the following years, highlighting the lack of commitment from national governments to set up a parliamentary body which would ultimately oversee the executives' performance. As discussed in the next section, only a decade later, when a new juncture of African integration is observed, did African leaders

once again reflect upon the institutional development of African integration and proceed with the development of the Pan-African Parliament.

On the one hand, intergovernmentalism and the prevalence of presidential regimes, which emerged from the context of decolonisation, have been key features of African regionalism which have externally restrained the agency of parliaments in the institutional development of African integration. On the other hand, given the lack of strong political mobilisation as well as parliament's limited resources, parliamentary agents have also faced substantial internal limitations to perform more proactively at the regional level. These elements have favoured path dependency in terms of the original settings of African regional organisations, reinforcing institutional inertia, and undermining attempts of substantial institutional changes towards parliamentarisation and supranationalism. In fact, "the PAP exists exactly in the form that its designers wanted. It is an indeterminate state especially in terms of its powers" (Nzewi, 2008, p. 238). As will be demonstrated in the next sections when examining the two critical junctures of the AU, not only have these two dimensions impacted the institutional path of the former OAU, but they have also shaped the subsequent proposals to establish and reform the African Union, upholding the low levels of parliamentarisation of African continental institutions.

6.2 THE EMERGENCE OF A TIMID PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY: THE CREATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION AND THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT

This section addresses the juncture of the establishment of the African Union in the 2000s as a key episode which led to the effective establishment of a parliamentary body within the AU. In this sense, the creation of the Pan-African Parliament addressed the demands to incorporate non-executive elements into African integration. However, due to the strong intergovernmental character of African regionalism and the parliament's own constitutional limitations as a consultative body, members of the PAP were externally restrained by the AU's structures, being pushed aside in their activities by other AU's institutions. Although some parliamentary activism may be observed in this period, which represented the PAP's first political priorities and agenda, the parliament has focused its attention on solving issues regarding its financial and personnel capabilities, not entirely mobilising itself towards

gaining further competences during its first years. Therefore, this low degree of parliamentary agency prevented the key agents – in particular, the members of the PAP's Executive Bureau and its Committee on rules – to turn the PAP into a full legislative body through the modification of its own constitutive protocol.

6.2.1 The Constitution of the African Union (2000) and the creation of the Pan-African Parliament

Given the security and economic challenges faced by African countries in the 1990s, exemplified by the genocide in Rwanda, the security crisis in Somalia, and the drastic increase in the external debts of African countries, the ambitious proposals to reform the OAU stalled. They were only recovered in the beginning of the 21st century, when major African countries, such as South Africa, Libya, Egypt, and Nigeria agreed on strengthening African continental institutions in order to autonomously address the main security, political and economic challenges of the region (Landsberg, 2012). However – as in the case of the first proposals of African regionalism in the context of decolonisation – African leaders did not share a common perspective on how to reach these collective goals.

In this regard, two main positions must be highlighted within the juncture of the transformation of the OAU into the AU. On the one hand, the perspective led by leaders such as Libya's Muammar Gaddafi (1969-2011) defended the revival of the federalist ideals of Pan-Africanism, by supporting the creation of supranational institutions at the continental level (Landsberg, 2012). He also advocated for the establishment of several additional organs, such as a commission, a court, a social and economic forum, and a continental parliament, following the purpose of adding the participation of non-governmental and social actors into African regional politics.

On the other hand, politicians such as South Africa's Thabo Mbeki (1999-2008) also promoted the relaunch of African integration, but in a more pragmatic and gradual way. As the post-apartheid context enabled South Africa to restore its ties with its neighbours, Mbeki, since the beginning of his presidency, put the continent at the core of South Africa's foreign policy (Nzewi, 2015). “(W)hile Mandela articulated an agenda for sustained engagement with Africa – and particularly southern Africa – Mbeki pursued grand diplomatic ambitions on the continent” (Kraxberger and McClaughry, 2013, p. 22). South Africa's regional perspective,

labelled by Landsberg (2012) as ‘African Continentalism’, endorsed the intensification of African states’ cooperation without threatening their national sovereignty:

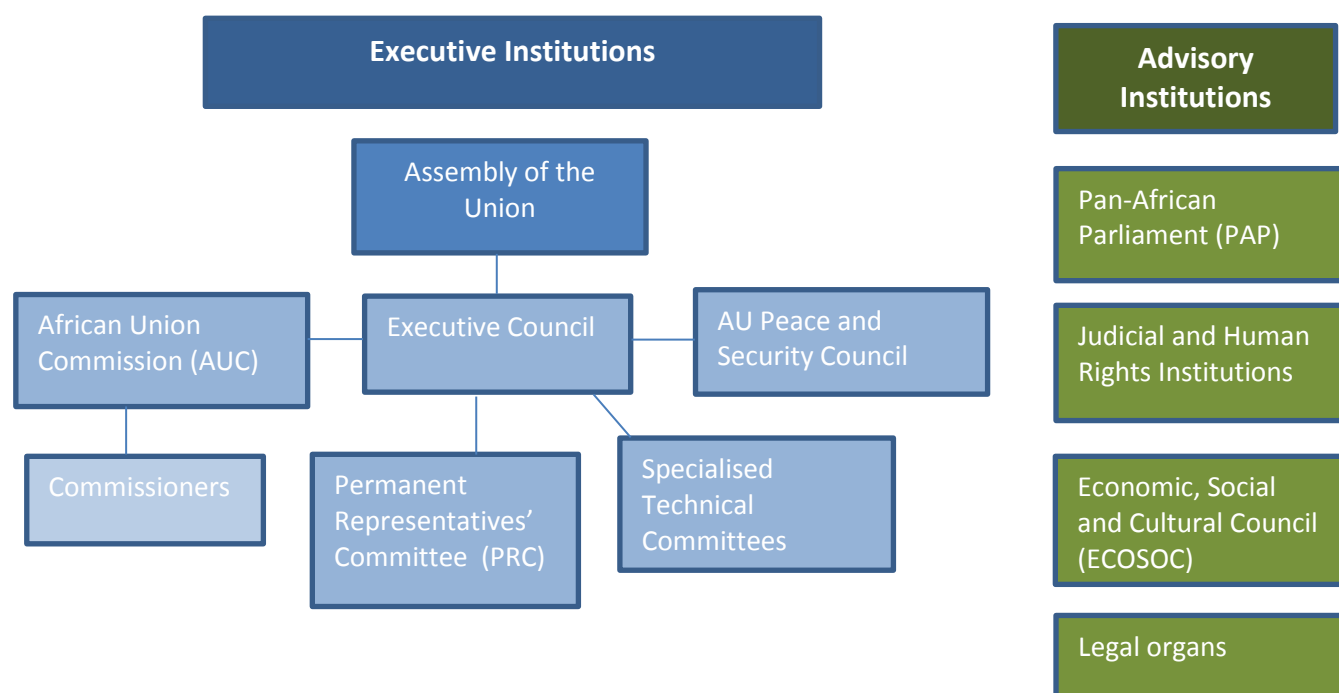
This process of building a society of states, or a community of African states, could be referred to as ‘African Continentalism’, and could be contrasted here with classical Pan-Africanism, which originally aims at constructing a supra-national order, or common command, in Africa. African Continentalism takes the independence of African states as a reality and seeks ways to get them to co-operate more effectively and build common approaches to addressing problems, while classical Pan-Africanism hoped to transcend the independence of African states through amalgamation (Landsberg, 2012, p. 437).

Taking into account the plurality of continental strategies supported by African leaders, the high level summits convened in Sirte (1999) and Lomé (2000) aimed to achieve a common position regarding the reform of African institutions. Thus, the Treaty signed in Lomé represented the encounter of the Continental and Pan-Africanist perspectives on the future of African regionalism. While some additional regional political institutions were set up, including the Pan-African Parliament, the protection of African nations’ sovereignty was also guaranteed, as no supranational institutions and principles were inserted within the AU’s Constitutive Act, reinforcing the path dependency of African intergovernmental institutions. However, an important institutional change is observed. The principle of non-interference – fundamental during the times of the OAU – was relativised inasmuch as some of the AU’s instruments such as its Peace and Security Council (PSC) were launched with the intention to effectively respond to African inter and intra-state conflicts. Although the AU was not conceived as a federalist project, unlike its predecessor institution, it was granted the tools to intervene in internal affairs of Member States (Mathews, 2005).

As figure three illustrates (below), the AU has incorporated some of the institutional features of the European Union in its Constitutive Act, such as its denomination as a ‘Union’ but also the establishment of institutions such as a commission, a court and a parliament (Fioramonti and Mattheis, 2005). Nonetheless, the maintenance of the foundations of African regionalism (intergovernmentalism and sovereignty-protection) within the AU’s institutions has impacted substantially on the performance of African continental politics over the following decades (Haastrup, 2013). As was discussed earlier, this path dependent trend presented itself as one of the key impediments for a stronger institutional position of

parliamentary agents in AU's executive politics, hindering further institutional change towards further parliamentarisation.

Figure 3. The African Union's Organisational Chart



Source: Author's elaboration, based on: <https://au.int/en/organs/>

With regard to the PAP, the Constitutive Act of the AU successfully achieved its intention to establish a continental parliament, which dated back from the beginnings of the 1990s. The Protocol relating to the Pan-African Parliament was signed by the Member States in March 2001 and named the main purposes, functions and competences of the PAP. Composed by five parliamentarians from each AU Member State (egalitarian representation), which are appointed among the members of national parliaments, PAP's composition aims to reflect the plurality of political opinions found within African countries. In contrast to the members of the EP, but similarly to some national delegations of Parlasur, representatives of the PAP are not exclusively working for the regional parliament, as they primarily occupy the position of national legislators. Even though it emphasised the consultative and advisory character of the parliament, article 3 of PAP's Protocol foresees the parliament's desire to achieve full legislative competences and elect its members by universal suffrage. This significant

institutional ambition, which referred back to the original parliamentary references found in the Abuja Treaty of the 1990s, positioned the protocol of the PAP as the first step to gradually empower the parliamentary dimension of AU integration.

However, the PAP's protocol goes beyond the mere recovery of the Abuja Treaty's words, stipulating more concrete functions and instruments available to members of the PAP to discuss and deliberate over AU policies (van Walraven, 2004). Among these instruments, it was decided that the PAP may: express its opinion on any continental matter; deliberate over its own budget and the budget of the AU; facilitate the internalisation of African instruments at the national level; and make political recommendations to other AU institutions. Although the PAP's positions are not binding to the rest of the AU's institutions, they offer an opportunity for the PAP to become a more influential and proactive actor in the AU's decisions, but in a subtle way, allowing the parliamentarians to debate, make suggestions, and convince the other decision-making organs of their opinions on sensitive issues.

In addition, one must observe that the goals set by the AU's founding fathers regarding the future role of the PAP are much more aspirational than those originally formulated by the EU and MERCOSUR. For instance, there are no references in the treaties and protocols of the previous regional organisations to the European Parliament and the MERCOSUR Parliament as full legislative bodies in the near future. Nonetheless, as addressed in the next sections, merely announcing the objective of becoming a legislative actor does not mean that this stage will ever be achieved. Actually, this study posits that without a high degree of parliamentary agency, one cannot expect a significant increase of PAP's institutional competences.

6.2.2 Parliamentary agency in the establishment of the PAP

This section highlights the role played by parliamentary agents over the first years after the constitution of the PAP. It demonstrates that since its beginning, the PAP was constituted as a case of restrained and timid parliamentary agency, which explains why this parliament has remained a consultative assembly within the AU. Although some parliamentary activism is observed, it was insufficient to alter the institutional inertia of AU's continental intergovernmental and sovereign-protective institutions.

When it comes to the institutional development of the PAP, attention must be paid to the agency of members of the parliament's Executive Bureau and its Committee of Rules. Over the history of the PAP these were the two instances where parliamentary agents were more likely to enter a dialogue with other AU institutions with the aim of increasing the parliamentary leverage over AU decisions. On the one hand, the Executive Bureau is composed by the President of the PAP and four Vice-Presidents, each one of them representatives of the continent's five regions (Northern Africa, Western Africa, Eastern Africa, Central Africa, and Southern Africa). According to some PAP officials interviewed for this study, the Bureau has been the political motor of the parliament (PAP 6 and PAP 9, interviews with the author). Even though the plenary is the instance where parliamentary decisions are ultimately approved, members of the Bureau – and particularly the President of the PAP – have been responsible for setting up the political agenda of the parliament alongside the PAP's senior officials. Article 12 of PAP's constitutive protocol expressed that members of the Bureau “shall be responsible for the management and administration of the affairs and facilities of the Pan-African Parliament and its organs” (Protocol relating to the Pan-African Parliament, p. 9). Moreover, the Bureau also sets the political agenda of each legislature. While the first Bureau (2004-2009), presided over by Tanzania's Gertrude Mongella, had concentrated its resources on building the basic administrative, logistical and personnel structures of the parliament, the subsequent Bureaux have focused on pushing the AU's institutions to revise the PAP's protocol. As political head of the PAP, the Bureau since its beginning had a privileged position to interact with representatives of the African Union's Commission (AUC) and the Member States. According to one of the interviewees, by participating in high level meetings with AU leaders and presenting the PAP's activity reports to the Member States, members of the Bureau have highlighted the positions of parliamentarians on several African topics, in particular regarding the future role of the PAP on AU politics (PAP 9, interview with the author).

On the other hand, the Committee on Rules, Privileges and Discipline has been the body of the PAP which has led the most debates on the position of the parliament within the AU's institutional framework. Besides being responsible for interpreting and revising the PAP's own rules of procedures, this organ has organised several workshops with officials from AU institutions and legal experts to discuss the future reform of the PAP's constitutive protocol, aiming to increase its competences in the future (PAP 8, interview with the author). The engagement of members and officials of this particular committee with representatives

from the Commission is a clear evidence of the PAP's involvement in inter-institutional negotiations. Not only have the members of the PAP pushed for the reformulation of its own protocol; they were also able to participate in the drafting of this document, aligning the articles of the new protocol with their own institutional preferences and ambitions of empowering the PAP.

Since its launch, members of the PAP have regularly issued activity reports and strategic plans as instruments to enter a dialogue with the Member States and other AU's instances, setting out their own institutional propositions. While the activity reports submitted to the Assembly of the AU (Summits of African Head of States) both address the performance of the PAP in the referred periods and introduce suggestions to the Member States on the future of AU integration, the strategic reports are more systematic attempts to highlight the ambitions and goals of the PAP within the AU's institutional framework. They even aimed to indicate the possible steps to achieve them.

The first years of the PAP were marked by the challenges of setting up its basic organisational, financial and personnel structures. In this sense, the first key decision to be taken related to the location of PAP's headquarters. After a contest between Egypt, Libya and South Africa to host this organisation, it was decided that the parliament would be settled in the last of these (Cofelice and Kingah, 2013). Although South Africa agreed to provide the costs of the PAP related to "the venue, office accommodation, IT support, local transport for the Members of the Bureau and accommodation for the President" (Pan-African Parliament, 2006, p. 2), this decision also complicated the PAP's initial activities, as most of the AU's key institutions – including the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) – are located in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), 5,000 kilometres from PAP's headquarters in Midrand, South Africa. This makes the distance between the EU's institutions – Brussels, Strasbourg, and Luxembourg – looks minimal.

Given the PAP's initial set up, its 2006-2010 Strategic Plan pointed out the key objectives of the parliament for the first years of its existence, aiming to achieve its ultimate goal of becoming a full legislative body, as expressed in AU documents. The goals identified can be divided into two main ones, with each one of them carrying the internal and external dimensions of parliamentary agency. On the one hand, the first members and officials of the PAP were concerned with strengthening the funding and the personnel capacity of the PAP. Similarly to the rest of African regional organs, over its recent history the PAP has suffered from the lack of regular funding to cover its parliamentary activities. Since its foundation, the

AU has had to deal with the persistent reality that many African countries do not meet their financial obligations. In fact, countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Libya (before Gaddafi's demise), Nigeria, and South Africa's contributions historically represented more than 60% of the AU's funding (Akokpari, 2017). Moreover, some of the key issues that are dealt with by the AU, such as peace and security, are almost entirely sponsored by international donors, such as the EU, the UN, and development agencies of developed countries such as Norway and the United Kingdom (Dersso, 2013). Having this challenge in mind, the PAP even proposed in its first Strategic Plan the creation of a Trust Fund to attract sponsors for its own activities, aiming to avoid the extreme dependency on the irregular transferring of financial resources from the AU authorities. It wrote:

Nevertheless facing the challenges of a young, continental institution still in its process of institutional development the PAP is also looking for alternative ways to attract national and international partners who would like to support the Parliament on its way to an organ with full legislative powers (Pan-African Parliament, 2006, p. 8).

In addition, the first stage of the PAP was dedicated to establishing its own administrative and parliamentary capabilities, through actions such as boosting the knowledge of members of parliament on AU regional integration and institutions; strengthening administration, support services and programme areas; developing ICT infrastructure and use; as well as increasing the PAP's research capacity (Pan-African Parliament, 2006). Within this domain, a reference must be made to the establishment of a technical cooperation with the European Union, and particularly, with the European Parliament on the development of PAP's parliamentary and administrative skills (Emmanuel, 2010; Navarro 2010). Besides, members of the PAP were concerned with the effective implementation of PAP's constitutive protocol, considering it as a necessary step to the full use of its formal competences. "(t)he PAP has mobilised its structures to proactively undertake its self-evaluation in the implementation of the Protocol. This self-evaluation has enabled the PAP to identify and highlight the strengths and weaknesses in the implementation of this legal instrument" (Pan-African Parliament, 2009, p. 6).

On the other hand, the PAP as a brand-new AU institution had to initiate inter-institutional dialogues with other AU institutions, especially with the AU Commission and the Assembly of the AU, but also with African national parliaments. While a strong communication with all of the AU's institutions was seen to be essential for the positioning

of the PAP as a relevant regional actor and to increasing its capacity to participate in AU decisions, even if consultatively, a strong and regular interaction with national parliaments was fundamental to guaranteeing the rapid ratification of continental treaties and protocols, which would also include the future protocol reforming the competences of the PAP. In this sense, the importance of the annual conference of speakers of African parliaments as well as of the clerks' consultative dialogue (both organised by the PAP) must be recognised. These events aim to gather high-profile members and officials of African national and regional parliaments with the intention of strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation, to accelerate the ratification of regional treaties and protocols and to express the parliamentary support for African regional integration (Pan-African Parliament, 2012).

However, when it comes to the PAP's relationship with the AU's other institutions, and in particular, with the Assembly of the Head of States, little has been achieved. In order for the parliament become a stronger political institution, it is essential to establish a deeper relationship with the AU's most powerful bodies. As mentioned by Zondi (2011, p. 40), "While the PAP's relationship with the AU Chairpersons has been improving, there is no indication that this has been extended to the collective in the form of the Assembly and the Executive Council". Although many recommendations have been issued by the parliament since its creation, very few of them actually reach the agenda of the AU Summits, limiting the actual parliamentary influence on the AU's high level agenda.

In terms of its political agenda, the first years of the PAP were especially dedicated to topics such as human rights, democracy and good governance. For instance, the PAP organised fact-finding missions to countries such as Libya, Tunisia and Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic in the context of the Arab Spring (Pan-African Parliament, 2012). Moreover, parliament followed some of the elections held on the African continent, aiming to provide its own positions on the status on electoral democracy in African countries. In particular, PAP's observation mission to Zimbabwe in 2008 is an interesting case to highlight, as the parliament issued a very critical opinion on the political conditions of these elections, taking a very different tone from other AU institutions (The Telegraph, 2008; Emmanuel, 2010). Consequently, parliamentary posture led to friction with the AU's governmental actors, which reacted negatively to PAP's stance on the elections. Since this episode, the PAP has been unable to organise its own observation missions. It now has to participate in the AU's official and collective electoral missions and reports on the electoral situation of African countries. Unsurprisingly, members of the PAP showed their

dissatisfaction with this decision, when affirming that “(...) The current AU system of centralized election observations in the Commission is not effective at all. Reports of election observations are either never released or are released very late” (Pan-African Parliament, 2012, p. 4).

PAP's first years were marked internally by constant financial and personnel limitations, and externally by a marginalised role in the AU's decision-making system due to its consultative nature and lack of deeper interaction with AU's executive actors. The delay in starting the negotiations of a new protocol which would transform the PAP's competences is another evidence of the lack of governmental commitment to institutionalising the AU's parliamentary body. The deliberation over parliamentary recommendations and the presentation of activity reports to the Member States were seen as instrumental to demand the prompt reform of the PAP's protocol. Although important signals of parliamentary activism might be found in its first stages, MPs were significantly restrained by the structures of African integration and focused most of their attention on solving PAP's internal problems rather than establishing deeper interactions with other AU's bodies. In fact, the strongly intergovernmental nature of the AU meant that the PAP's opinions were systematically ignored by African executives. Moreover, the continental statements supporting democracy, human rights and good governance are often contradicted by the electoral and political practices we find in some of the AU's Member States. Therefore, the PAP's attempts to push forward democratic principles have faced strong reactions from the Member States, which were not familiar with accepting political criticism and facing open opposition.

6.3 A NEW DAWN FOR PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY? RATIFYING THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL OF THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT

The discussions over the AU's agenda 2063, the negotiations of the Malabo Protocols of 2014 related to the reforms of the PAP and the African Court of Human Rights, and the more recent debate on the AU's institutional reform led by Rwandan President Paul Kagame offered a renewed opportunity for parliamentary agents to strengthen the PAP's competences. Taking this new critical juncture into account, this section assesses parliamentary agency in the reform of AU's institutions, demonstrating how parliament has tried to influence the AU's institutional reforms, in particular those related to the transformation of the PAP's

legislative functions. As discussed in this section, negotiating the PAP's new protocol has been the key strategy employed by parliamentary agents, in particular members of the Bureau and the Committee on Rules, with the aim of enhancing the competences of the parliament. Nonetheless, parliamentary agency at this juncture has once again remained significantly restrained by the foundations of African regionalism. Thus, African Member States and national parliaments were very reluctant to transfer stronger competences to the PAP in the context of the negotiation and ratification of its new protocol. In this respect, this section stresses how the structures of African continental regionalism have hindered further parliamentary empowerment, even though a few members of the PAP have repetitively demanded a profound transformation of the PAP's powers towards a full legislative body. Although the PAP's protocol was ultimately updated, it has failed to provide the parliament with significant instruments to become a fully-fledged legislature. Hence, this section highlights the limits of parliamentary agency within a context of strong external and internal constraints.

6.3.1 The reform of the Pan-African Parliament (2014): towards a supranational legislature?

The proposals to reform the AU's institutions in the 2010s marked a new critical juncture for African continental regionalism. A decade after the conception of the African Union, the Member States reassessed both the results and the challenges of African regionalism and formulated new goals for the continental project. As stated by AUC's Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat, the continent is living at a juncture of reform of the AU (statement, opening session of PAP's plenary meeting, May 2018.) Among the main aspects under discussion, priority was given to: the reform of the AU's institutions to bring more efficiency and legitimacy to the organisation; the need of African States to sufficiently fund African institutions, reducing dependency from foreign donors; and the acceleration of the implementation of African agreements at the domestic level.

In this context, the protocols signed by the Executive Council of Malabo (June 2014), especially those related to the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights and the Constitutive Act of the Pan-African Parliament represented significant contributions to the reform of AU's accessory bodies. At the same time, the AU's Assembly of States set out

the Agenda 2063, which was framed as a reinvigorated proposal to achieve deeper levels of African integration. In the words of Fagbayibo (2017),

The AU Agenda 2063, which was adopted by the AU Assembly in 2015, is the latest document that attempts to provide a supranational path for African integration. The Agenda is a culmination of a series of consultation with stakeholders across the continent. This participatory drive included stakeholders such as the private sector, civil society, Africans in the Diaspora, national technocrats, and RECs (...). The resultant, final document provided a general outline of seven aspirational goals that are necessary for the attainment of an integrated Africa (p. 2).

More recently, the AU Assembly reinforced the need to reform the AU's institutions, entrusting to President Paul Kagame the task of diagnosing the AU's challenges and proposing future reforms. The role of President Kagame nowadays within the AU has been described by one senior official of the PAP interviewed as similar to the key role that Gaddafi played in the context of the constitution of the AU (PAP 4, interview with the author). In this sense, the Kagame report issued in 2017 pointed out the key institutional challenges of the AU and the reforms needed to tackle these issues. According to the referred report, four topics should be addressed by African Member States in order to strengthen the AU: "Focus on key priorities with continental scope; realign African Union institutions to deliver against those priorities; manage the African Union efficiently at both political and operational levels; finance the African Union ourselves and sustainably" (Kagame, 2017, p. 5). Regarding the second topic, the report highlighted that Member States need to reflect upon the future role of institutions such as the African Court and the Pan-African Parliament in the context of a renewed AU. In this respect, the report also asked whether the PAP should be provided with legislative powers and in which areas this should be the case, and whether the criteria of the elections of members of PAP should also be altered.

As observed, these discussions on the AU's institutional reform offered a window of opportunity to transform the PAP's competences, a development that could provide the parliament with legislative powers, thereby achieving its ultimate goal. As stated by one of its activity reports, "The PAP also believes that Agenda 2063 provides a unique platform to actualize the vision of the founding fathers of the AU" (Pan-African Parliament, 2014, p. 25).

Ten years after its establishment, we are convinced that the time has come for the Pan African Parliament to begin the gradual and phased acquisition of legislative functions in clearly defined areas, to enable it meet its mandate, hence the current transformation process for the attribution of legislative competence as envisaged under Article 11 of the existing Protocol. Thus, we are of the view that a transformed Pan African Parliament with legislative competence has a pivotal role to play and is indeed strategically needed as a catalyst for the achievement of the much desired African socio-economic continental integration as encapsulated in agenda 2063, by providing the required institutional and legislative framework. (Pan-African Parliament, 2014, p. 5)

Thus, the activism of parliamentary agents was instrumental to using this juncture to demand a reform of the PAP's protocol which would increase its institutional competences over time. In this regard, PAP's Strategic Plan (2014-2017) indicated that the Parliament's first strategic objective for the period was "to strengthen parliamentary legislative functions of the PAP" (Pan-African Parliament, 2014, p. XIII), a goal which would need to be fulfilled via a reforming protocol.

African parliamentarians, especially those that were also members of the PAP's Bureau and Committee on Rules, were particularly involved in drafting the first proposals to reform the PAP's Constitutive document (PAP 3, PAP 7 and PAP 8, interviews with the author). Thus, at the juncture of the AU's reforms, the involvement of the Committee on Rules in the drafting of the PAP's revised protocol guaranteed a direct engagement of parliamentarians in the AU's institutional reforms. During this period, negotiation over the terms of the new protocol was the key strategy employed by parliamentarians with the aim of actively participating in the reform process. Members of the Bureau – especially the PAP's President, Roger Dang – attempted to interact with the AU's most powerful actors (the AU's Assembly and members of the AUC) to stress the relevance of reforming the PAP. For instance, through the activity reports of 2014 presented to the AU Permanent Representatives Committee, members of the PAP urged Member States to approve the draft protocol related to the PAP: "(...), we implore Your Excellencies to use your good offices to support the adoption of the draft Protocol amendment in its entirety by the Assembly" (Pan-African Parliament, 2014, p. 23). Moreover, members of the PAP had visited several Member States and discussed with representatives of national governments the reform of the PAP's protocol and granting legislative powers to the parliament. In the meantime, parliamentarians

from the Committee of Rules had organised several workshops with legal experts and members of the African Commission aiming to discuss the details of a revised protocol. This particular committee played a key role in drafting the Malabo Protocol, by creating a task force on the revision of PAP's protocol (PAP 7, interview with the author). Therefore, negotiating the draft protocol gave the parliamentarians the chance to voice their preferences and their views on the future role of the PAP and have them inserted into the articles of the protocol to be signed by the Member States.

Although the parliament participated in the discussions to reform its own protocol, the new protocol approved in Malabo did not fully reflect the ambitions of the parliament to become a powerful legislative body. The AU's ministerial meeting indicated the reluctance of the Member States to grant stronger competences to the parliament. According to the opinion issued by representatives of the Member States: "ii. The PAP should continue to exercise consultative and advisory powers for the time being; iii. There ought to be more confidence in PAP as a result of which it should be granted power to legislate for the Union" (African Union, 2014, p. 7). As a consequence, the protocol signed in Malabo indicated that the parliament would receive only limited new legislative competences, i.e. it will be able to propose draft model laws (legislative proposals that need to be evaluated and approved by the Member States before implementation), but only in the areas determined by the Assembly of the AU after the ratification of the Protocol.

Despite the parliament was given new competences, it remained an advisory institution of the AU, subordinated to the decisions of the AU's executive bodies. This means that there are no consequences if African Member States, other AU institutions, and the Regional Economic Communities simply reject the PAP's recommendations (Fagbayibo, 2017). Even though the instruments of the PAP have changed with the signature of its new protocol, its consultative nature prevails. In this sense, one of the PAP's reports showed parliamentary disappointment with its own lack of competences when it comes to supervising the AU's executive activities. "The PAP Protocol does not permit the institution to oversee the appointment of AU officials nor to have oversight functions on the executive. This has restricted the workings of the PAP to only attending AU meetings" (Pan-African Parliament, 2014, p. 7).

Thus, the dominance of African executives within the AU's decision-making processes has not been challenged so far by the proposals of institutional reform. The assessment of this particular critical juncture has shown that not only the PAP – but even

more consolidated African institutions such as the AU's Commission – have seen both their lack of technical and financial resources as well as their institutional competences hindering a deeper involvement within AU politics.

6.3.2 Parliamentary influence in the ratification of the additional protocol

Another recent challenge faced by members of the PAP is the ratification of its new protocol. The PAP's institutional development is still dependent on the approval of its protocol by at least 28 African national parliaments. Therefore, since the signature of the additional protocol of the PAP, members of the PAP have engaged in establishing stronger links with African national parliaments with the aim of pushing these legislatures to rapidly ratify PAP's new legal instrument. The current dynamic of ratification provided another example of how parliamentarians have acted in a continent-wide manner, but it also revealed the external and internal constraints that these agents have often faced within African regionalism. Therefore, this subsection stresses that although some members of the PAP, and in particular its Bureau, have promoted a stronger advocacy campaign for the ratification of its new protocol, the low pace of the implementation of this document by the Member States is aligned with one of the foundations of African regionalism, i.e. the trend that the protocols signed during AU high level summits are not necessarily ratified domestically, delaying and undermining the decisions taken at the continental level. Although parliamentary agents have been pushing for the protocol's ratification, this episode illustrates how the structures of African integration have in practice restrained any movements towards further parliamentarisation.

Since the approval of the Malabo protocol, members of the PAP have focused their resources on dialoguing with national parliaments to accelerate the ratification of its new protocol. For instance, the PAP organised regional meetings across the continent in order to promote the ratification of the AU's instruments, and in particular, the PAP's new protocol (Pan-African Parliament, 2015). These political meetings have been instrumental to amplifying the knowledge of members of African national parliaments and political parties of the functions and the activities of the PAP. Furthermore, setting up regular meetings convened by the PAP with speakers and clerks of African parliaments has been crucial to accelerating the ratification process of the PAP's protocol.

The members of the Bureau and the Committee on Rules were named by the PAP's Strategic Report 2011-2013 as the key agents to be engaged in the implementation of the protocol and in the preparation of the PAP for the moment when this document is ratified (Pan-African Parliament, 2011). While the Bureau – and to some extent, the Committee on Rules – have been responsible for developing the advocacy strategy to ratify the revised protocol, via discussing reports on institutional reforms with AU organs, the Committee on Rules has been in charge of amending the PAP's rules of procedure with the aim of adjusting its internal regulations to the PAP's new protocol.

Therefore, the members of the PAP's Bureau, and mainly its President, led a personal campaign and visited as many African countries as possible to meet representatives of national governments and national parliaments and demand a rapid ratification of PAP's protocol. The meeting of the President with African Ambassadors in South Africa is evidence of how PAP's Bureau has been campaigning for the ratification of the Malabo Protocol:

During an Ambassadors' Briefing, President of the PAP, Roger Nkodo Dang, made an urgent call to all African ambassadors to accelerate the ratification of the protocol in their respective member states. Hon President Dang said it is unacceptable that the PAP has been in existence for 12 years, has not been able to achieve its goal to become the continent's legislative body, and that regional parliamentarian bodies such as EALA and ECOWAS have more power (Pan-African Parliament, 2016, p. 1).

As another example, in February 2018, the PAP's President made an official visit to Zimbabwe to meet the new President of the country, the speaker of the national parliament and the ministers of Justice and Foreign Affairs, with the aim of advocating for the prompt ratification of PAP's protocol. As stated by the President, "(...) Pan-African Parliament has a new protocol and we are going country by country to lobby and ratify the Malabo Protocol. Zimbabwe is one of the founding members of the PAP" (The Herald, 2018, p. 1).

However, the slow pace of ratification pointed out how challenging it is to increase the PAP's profile and to convince the Member States of the importance of ratifying the PAP's reforming document. As stated by a senior official of the PAP consulted, African governments have signed the protocol, but are afraid of implementing it, due to persisting sovereignty concerns and lack of knowledge of the current and future roles of the PAP within the AU (PAP 9, interview with the author). Moreover, in contrast to other domestic issues,

reforming the PAP is not a political priority of the Member States, which also explains why since 2014 only 12 countries have ratified the protocol (Pan-African Parliament, 2019).

On the other hand, the PAP's performance in this recent time period should not be limited to the campaign of ratification. Two other topics have been on the PAP's agenda over the past years. First, the members of the PAP have continued to monitor the political and security crisis of the continent. For instance, the parliament has organised fact-finding missions to those countries that have faced severe security issues, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, and the Central African Republic (CAR). In this respect, the parliamentary mission to the CAR is an interesting example of how, on the ground, members of the PAP have produced pro-active and critical statements on the role of the AU in the management of crises in Africa. The resolution approved by the PAP on this parliamentary mission concluded that the AU – and in particular the African Committee on Human and People's rights – should be more involved in monitoring the situation and assisting the resolution of this crisis. Moreover, it defended that the AU should lift its economic sanctions, considering this measure counter-productive to the economic and political stability of the CAR. In line with the mission's report, "Sanctions imposed by the African Union against the Central African Republic have exacerbated the economic crisis in the countries whose populations are victims and have resulted in the inability of the Government to deal with its sovereign duties" (Pan-African Parliament, 2014, p. 62). Through this resolution, parliamentary agents have stressed their own political opinion on how to deal with the crisis in the CAR, which did not necessarily converge with the strategy followed so far by the AU's executive bodies.

Secondly, the PAP has also invested in expanding its oversight functions, which is a strategy that has not been used to the same extent by the members of the MERCOSUR Parliament. In this sense, prominence was given to PAP's oversight role and to the discussion on the AU's budget. On the one hand, the PAP has pursued further engagement with other AU's institutions – in particular the AU's Commission – as a way of becoming more informed and involved in the topical discussions and policies led by these bodies. As stressed in one of its Activity Reports, "the PAP has regularly invited the various Departments of the AUC and relevant organs of the Union to attend our sessions and to make presentations on issues relating to their functions, which were normally debated and necessary recommendations made" (Pan-African Parliament, 2015, p. 12).

On the other hand, although the parliament has no competences to amend or reject the AU's budget, it has the right to have access to and debate over the annual budget. According to one of PAP's activities reports, "(...) the PAP as part of its oversight functions, 'to discuss the budget of the Union and make recommendations thereon prior to its approval by the Assembly', has for the second time, debated and made an input into the African Union budget" (Pan-African Parliament, 2015, p. 12). Thus, while discussing the 2015 budget, parliamentarians recommended to the AU executives that all AU bodies, and especially the parliament, should be more involved in the preparation of the AU's budget in order to guarantee that the preferences of African citizens are addressed.

Despite all parliamentary efforts, one may observe that the AU is still marked by the decisions taken by African Heads of States and Government, the lack of implementation of the continental goals, the general under-funding of the AU's institutions, and the low level of transparency when it comes to regional integration policies. Following these external constraints on African regionalism, not many African leaders are ready to give meaningful powers to both their national parliaments and the PAP, which decreases the likelihood of a rapid ratification of the Malabo Protocol (Fabricius, 2017). Also, the fact that some Member States do not have functioning, democratically elected parliaments at the domestic level aggravates the real chances of the PAP to become a stronger assembly (Magliveras and Huliaras, 2016).

As a self-assessment of its own limitations, members of the PAP in their 2014-2017 Strategic Plan acknowledged the external and internal elements that have significantly challenged the parliament's quest to become a stronger regional actor:

Lessons learnt revealed the inadequacy of the PAP's mandate as a Legislative Body with oversight functions; duplicity in the function of PAP with those of other AU Policy Organs dual role of Members of the Pan-African Parliament with its attendant complications; inadequate institutional capacity; lack of full commitment to the principles of democratic governance among Member States; and the need to create more awareness among the citizenry of the continent and its institutions (national and regional parliaments, RECs, Civil Society Organisations, etc.) (Pan African Parliament, 2014, p. IX).

These several constraints have frustrated parliamentary agents. In fact, some of the PAP's parliamentarians have even considered reviewing again the protocol in order to reduce the

competences of the PAP to guarantee a successful and faster ratification process (The Independent, 2017). This would be a setback for the PAP. In sum, these last developments have shown how difficult it is to substantially change the nature of integration when it comes to a regional context marked by strong intergovernmentalism, sovereignty-protection, and presidentialism associated with the lack of solid democratic and representative institutions.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has assessed the institutional evolution of the Pan-African Parliament within African Union politics. By analysing the critical junctures of the African Union, it has given particular attention to parliamentary agency in Africa, revealing how parliamentary agents were involved in the process of continental integration, and exposing the limitations that they faced when participating in the AU's decision-making processes. Two critical junctures were revealed by this study: the constitution of the AU in the 2000s, and the reform of the AU's institutions in the 2010s. As critical junctures "are moments of relative structural indeterminism when willful actors shape outcomes in a more voluntaristic fashion than normal circumstances permit" (Capoccia and Kelemen, 2007, p. 347), the two moments highlighted in this chapter are considered fundamental in the institutional development of the AU. While the Abuja Treaty was the first document to foresee the establishment of a continental parliament, the Pan-African Parliament was only constituted in the 2000s with the creation of the African Union. In 2014, a protocol reforming the PAP's competences was signed by the Member States, but to this date, it is pending ratification by a majority of national parliaments. All these junctures offered a window of opportunity to significantly change the AU's institutional set-up, and they could have been seized by parliamentary agents to increase their political leverage.

However, this research has argued that the parliamentary agency in the AU has been constrained externally and internally. On the one hand, the intergovernmental and sovereign-protective bases of African integration have hindered parliamentary activism during the past years, restraining deeper institutional changes which would have enhanced the power of the Pan-African Parliament towards a full legislative body. On the other hand, the internal challenges faced by African parliamentary agents have also undermined further actions to push for more competences. Hence, table 9 illustrates AU's parliamentary agency,

categorised as externally restricted and as timid at the internal level. This chapter has argued that the reduced level of parliamentarisation of the AU is a product of the low level of parliamentary agency identified over time.

Table 9. Parliamentary Agency in the AU

External	Internal	Over time
Restricted	Timid	Low

This chapter has demonstrated that the PAP – and especially the members of its Bureau and Committee on Rules – has tried to engage with other AU institutions at the juncture of the AU’s institutional reform, aiming to reform PAP’s constitutive protocol, and more recently, to ratify it. Nevertheless, although a new protocol was ultimately approved by the Member States, it has not provided the PAP with the stronger competences it had initially expected. Therefore, the parliament remains a weak, underfunded, largely unnoticed, and consultative body within the AU, without the clear perspectives to achieve its ultimate goal of becoming a full legislature in the next years. Moreover, the significant delay of national parliaments to ratify the Malabo Protocol provided additional examples on how African elites are still very reluctant to accept a stronger regional parliament.

Contrary to the previous literature on African regionalism, this case study has shown key evidence which demonstrated that parliamentary agents have tried to influence the AU’s institutional reforms. Nonetheless, given the significant structural limitations of African regionalism, there is very small margin of manoeuvre for parliamentary assertion within the AU, even during critical junctures, when new actors emerge, gain influence, new interactions are made (Vale, 2015) and institutions tend to relax, opening room for significant institutional transformation. In contrast to the European case, the African Union’s institutional path has been marked by the overconcentration of powers within the hands of the African Heads of State and Government, even after successive reforms of AU institutions. Although at the rhetorical level African leaders have been supporting the establishment of additional bodies within the AU, such as a parliament, a court and an ECOSOC, these institutions still lack a real chance of influencing the continental decision-making processes. As the majority of African governments have little or no tradition in sharing constitutional powers with their

national legislatures, it seems unrealistic to expect that the national executives would grant strong powers to a supranational parliamentary institution such as the Pan-African Parliament.

By investigating parliamentary agency over time, this chapter aimed to understand why the reforms defended by the members of the Pan-African Parliament have not been able to transcend the consultative nature of this assembly. The African case has shown that in cases of significant external and internal constraints, the instruments employed by parliamentary agents have been insufficient to lead towards further parliamentarisation. For instance, in contrast to Parlasur, the PAP has been unable to achieve key accomplishments, such as the ratification of its new protocol, which would provide this parliament with some legislative instruments (such as draft model laws). Thus, in a case where the balance between agency and structure has significantly leaned towards the structures, even during critical junctures, parliamentary agents were unable to substantially push for higher degrees of parliamentarisation.

Considering the lessons provided by the investigation of the three cases analysed, the last chapter will conclude with a comparison between the three parliaments in order to highlight not only their differences and similarities, but also the reasons why regional parliaments in the world have developed so differently. By contrasting the role of parliamentary agency in the parliamentarisation process of each case analysed, this research aims to provide relevant insights into the logic behind the development of parliaments at the regional level.

7. PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

After the individual assessment of the institutional development of the EP, Parlasur, and the PAP, giving particular emphasis to the role of parliamentary agency to the parliamentarisation of the three cases over time, this chapter provides a comparative assessment of the cases, aiming to highlight this thesis' conceptual and analytical contributions. This comparison is structured around the factors which explain the diverse degrees of parliamentary agency found in the parliaments analysed. Through moving away from the separate examination of each regional parliament, this chapter intends to unveil the most significant issues which have impacted the development of these assemblies. In this sense, the chapter will respectively reflect upon the external, internal and overall parliamentary agency of the cases studied, underscoring key differences and similarities among them.

As previously stressed, although there is some significant research on each regional parliament analysed – even though asymmetric in terms of quantity and depth – there is no study that has systematically compared regional parliaments from different continents with the aim of understanding the logic behind the development of regional parliaments in the world, and with the explicit purpose of unveiling the reasons why these parliaments have reached different degrees of institutionalisation in time. Some studies have provided initial comparative analysis of some cases, especially in Latin America, with the EP (Malamud and Sousa, 2007). However, their explanations exclusively focused on the institutional design and governmental dynamics of each regional project to stress their main differences. By bringing parliamentary agency to the fore of the analysis, this study contributes to the literature of comparative regionalism and parliamentarisation through presenting a more comprehensive and nuanced analysis of the institutional development of international parliamentary assemblies. Looking not only to the intergovernmental dynamics of integration is fundamental while offering an alternative analytical angle to the dominant 'govern-centred' approach to these regional parliaments. In fact, this thesis contended that there is some room for parliamentary agency in any regional context, even though with diverse levels of opportunities and constraints. Thus, the added value of this work lies in unveiling the role that parliamentary agents have played in regional organisations. This contribution is fundamental considering the potential policy implications associated to regional parliamentarisation. While these regional organisations have been gradually expanding the

scope of their policy agenda, parliamentarians – despite the varying degrees in terms of formal competences – have been placed in a position to influence and shape the decisions taken at the regional level on topics which may directly affect citizens' lives.

Beforehand, it is important to mention some acknowledged issues of conducting such comparative analysis. First, although some scholars have considered the EU as a unique and *sui generis* case of regional integration, incomparable to other regional organisations of the world (Caporaso et al., 1997; Phelan, 2012), this research converged with studies on comparative regionalism and cross-regional comparisons (Börzel and Risse, 2016; Köllner et al., 2018; von Soest, 2018), which have defended the potential to compare the EU's evolution to other regional projects, as a useful attempt to reveal more general and global explanations for phenomena such as supranationalism and parliamentarisation. Secondly, in terms of timing, one must recognise that while the EP's institutional path initiated from the 1950s, when the first European Communities developed, Parlasur and the PAP are more recent regional enterprises, dating back from the 1990s and the 2000s, respectively. As pointed out by Malamud and Sousa (2007), these differences in decades of existence might contribute to the diverse levels of institutional development among the cases, indicating that there is an issue of 'maturity' involved in processes of parliamentarisation. However, by including the examination of the first critical junctures of European integration, this thesis highlighted how, from the beginning, parliamentary agents in Europe have already displayed internal proactivity under external stimulation with the aim of achieving greater competences over time. The fact that this trend is something not clearly seen in the other two regional parliaments during the periods analysed makes even more topical the comparison among the cases.

7.1 INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PATH DEPENDENCY: THE PERSISTING ROLE OF THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY

Preceding empirical chapters have stressed how the external dimension of parliamentary agency – composed by the context and the governmental/supranational actors outside the parliament – has either stimulated or restrained parliamentarisation in the cases analysed. When it comes to the regional organisations assessed, it was observed that while the European case has been marked by an external stimulation towards the creation and

empowerment of the EP, the cases of Parlasur and the PAP have faced significant external constraints in terms of parliamentary agency. This is not only due to the historical contexts in which each regional project was inserted, but also to how regional integration was designed in each case and the willingness of governmental actors to support further parliamentarisation.

In the European case, all factors identified have majorly contributed to externally stimulate parliamentary agency. As previous pointed out, the historical context of the foundation of the European Communities favoured the establishment of supranational institutions, among them a Common Assembly. At the same time, national governments were in general open to increased parliamentary engagement in regional integration. The parliamentarian matrix of most of the EU Member States incentivised further parliamentarisation of the EU, accelerating the decision of the Member States to empower the EP over the past decades. In addition, national governments felt the need to democratically legitimise European integration, by inserting powerful representative institutions, such as a parliamentary body.

Meanwhile, parliamentary agency in MERCOSUR has been more restricted. Although the re-democratisation of South American context supported the inclusion of parliamentary channels in the regional initiatives set up in the 1990s, national governments opted to centralise the decision-making system within their own hands, halting parliamentary and non-executive agents to impact the regional decisions. Therefore, MERCOSUR's design was grounded in clear intergovernmental and interpresidential institutions, resulting that sovereignty was never intended to be shared by the Member States and national diplomats. Consequently, a regional parliament was meant to be secluded to functions such as the internalisation of norms at the domestic level, without fully participating in the regional decision-making system. Even the transformation of the JPC into Parlasur has not succeeded in challenging this consultative nature.

Likewise, the AU case has seen severe restrictions to parliamentary agency. In this particular example, not even the context of AU's creation has been beneficial to the inclusion of parliamentary agents within African continental politics. The protection of the sovereignty of the new nations on the continent was key to African leaders, which marginalised more federalist proposals of African integration, leaving the decision-making system of both the OAU and the AU in the hands of Member States. Although legitimacy concerns appeared in discourses of African governments, the lack of democratic and representative traditions in

most of the Member States has externally hindered further parliamentarisation. Most Member States supported PAP's creation; however, as this research has identified, they were never interested in providing the parliament with legislative and supervisory powers. The case of the delay in ratifying the new protocol of PAP discussed in the empirical chapter is a crucial example on how national governments, and even national parliaments, are cautious about the consequences of having a stronger parliament at the AU level which would supervise the actions of African governments.

Despite these key differences between the European case and the two cases of the Global South in terms of the degrees of external stimulation and restriction to parliamentary agency, one important commonality observed is that in none of the cases analysed is there a substantial change in the nature of the external dimension over time. In fact, at the external level it was found persisting trends towards institutional inertia and path dependency. Either the external stimuli from the supranational nature of European integration and the restrictions associated with the intergovernmental fashions of MERCOSUR and AU regionalism have never been severely challenged, which aligns with historical institutionalism assumptions on the unlikelihood of overhauling institutional foundations once they are settled. Even the AU's case, which has surprisingly attempted to overcome the sovereign-protection instincts of African regionalism when revisiting the principle of non-intervention in African internal affairs, has not transformed the intergovernmental decision-process of the AU.

This finding is relevant in terms of parliamentarisation. On the one hand, the maintenance of a supranational model of integration in the EU has contributed to the progressive incremental of parliamentary competences to the EP. Meanwhile, in both the cases of Parlasur and PAP, the continuous external restriction to parliamentary agency has presented itself as a permanent hindrance to parliamentarisation in these two cases from the Global South. Although the critical junctures identified in the empirical analyses have created opportunities for substantial institutional changes, they have not altered the essence of either the intergovernmental and supranational structures of regional integration in all cases studied. This converges with the historical institutionalism assumptions about the constraining and sticking role of institutions (Pierson, 2004). In this sense, parliamentary agency has been either consistently stimulated or restricted over time by external actors and contexts. The fact that this initial stimulus/restriction continues throughout the institutional development of parliaments constantly influenced the institutional outcomes related to parliamentarisation,

opening or reducing gaps which may be explored by parliamentary agency in order to gain further powers.

7.2 INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE AND THE EMERGING ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY IN ITS INTERNAL DIMENSION

Even though path dependency trends have favoured institutional inertia over time, more agent-centric approaches to historical institutionalism (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992; Immergut, 2006; Büthe, 2016) have been drawing attention to the role of agents of change when it comes to institutional development. Therefore, this thesis has defended that there is an internal dimension of parliamentary agency – overlooked by previous studies – which is also a key explanatory component to regional parliamentarisation. Although the critical junctures identified in the three empirical chapters have not altered the nature of the regional integration projects assessed, they have enabled opportunities for substantial and incremental modifications in the decision-making process, opening room of manoeuvre for non-governmental actors, including parliamentary agents, to assert themselves at the regional level. In this regard, this section compares the internal dimension of parliamentary agency in the three cases, highlighting differences and similarities in terms of the agents involved in these processes, the parliamentary instruments and strategies employed, and finally the level of internal agency observed, classified as either proactive or timid agents.

Regarding the parliamentary agents identified, rather than looking at the role of specific individuals, this research has centred its attention in the collective agents who have supported increasing parliamentarisation. In the European case, the parliamentary agents most involved in the EP's empowerment process were members of the transnational political groups and of both the Committee of Political Affairs (in the first years of the parliament) and the Committee on Constitutional Affairs. On the one hand, the political groups have been the key ideological and political forces of European integration. In particular, the so far most representative groups, i.e. Christian Democrats, Socialists and Liberals, were those mostly in favour of both the supranationalisation and parliamentarisation of the EU. Although it is important to recognise that resistance from nationalist/Eurosceptic groups were found in many occasions, the majority of MEPs have so far defended the empowerment of the EP, ensuring a collective response from the EP in this direction. On the other hand, the

Committee of Constitutional Affairs was the environment where reports on the future of the EU – considered as key instruments to parliamentary assertion – flourished. These reports were essential to introduce parliamentary position on EU's institutional reforms, in which the EP would be an increasing central actor.

In contrast to the EP's experience, this research identified that the Executive Board, composed by the presidents of national parliamentary delegations, has always headed the political and institutional ambitions of Parlasur. Its members led the first demands to establish Parlasur, were fully involved in the negotiations of Parlasur's protocol and organised the expert group to draft this key document. Although Parlasur has established transnational groups in the past years, they have not been crucial with regard to Mercosur's parliamentarisation. As the interviews conducted revealed, the left-wing transnational group (Progressive Group) was only involved in the negotiations over the proportionality criteria. However, more recently, both members of the Executive Board and of transnational groups have not been deeply engaged in establishing stronger relations with the Member States in order to increase the competences of Parlasur as they have done in the beginning of the 2000s, decreasing their chances to make a difference when it comes to MERCOSUR's decision-making system.

Such as Parlasur's Executive Board, this thesis revealed that PAP's Bureau has been the political motor of this parliament. It has been the focal point of relations with other AU bodies, heading the PAP in its collective demands for a new protocol and new competences. The Presidents of the PAP and members of the Bureau have been the leading actors in the campaign on the implementation and ratification of the decisions which involved the PAP, such as the Malabo Protocol, which aims to reform PAP's competences. On the other hand, and likewise the EP, the Committee on Rules was the specialised body that was deeply involved in the details of the reforms of PAP's protocol, promoting PAP's institutional ambitions via its involvement in the drafting and discussing the articles of the new protocol.

In terms of the strategies employed by the referred parliamentary agents to pursue further parliamentarisation, some contrasts can also be made among the cases. In the case of the EU, over time and even facing unsuccessful junctures, MEPs have increasingly employed strategies such as deliberating over rules of procedures, drafting political reports, and more recently participating in the legislative process and negotiating treaty reforms. These instruments were crucial to exert more influence over the institutional changes faced by the EU over the past decades. Parliamentary agents have used these activities to guarantee that

their institutional ambitions were taken into account during the critical junctures analysed. For instance, the last critical juncture assessed – the period surrounding the European Convention – was a clear example of how MEPs, after finding a window of opportunity, employed the most meaningful tools available to support the parliamentarisation of the EU.

Concerning Parlasur's evolution, it was observed that parliamentary agents have moved from initial deliberative strategies of the 1990s to negotiating ones in the 2000s, which was fundamental for members of Parlasur to set out their preferences during the drafting of Parlasur's protocol. Challenging Mercosur's intergovernmental, egalitarian, and consensus-based principles, it was agreed that Parlasur would be composed by proportional representation of the Member States, would organise its members by transitional political groups, and select its members via direct elections. In fact, negotiating the competences of Parlasur within MERCOSUR's reform of the 2000s was a breakthrough. For instance, the EP was only able to achieve this capacity of influence during the drafting of the European Convention, after many decades of existence, as seen in the previous chapter. However, more recently, due to its own fragilities and parliamentary demobilisation, Parlasur has turned back to less meaningful strategies, detaching itself from deeper inter-institutional relations with Member States. As highlighted in previous chapter, this has reduced the chances of Parlasur becoming a more influential parliament in the region.

PAP's members since the beginning, and even facing significant financial and personnel limitations, have demanded more powers from African Member States, aiming to achieve their goal of becoming a full legislature. They have also moved from deliberative practices in the 2000s to more active participation in the negotiations of PAP's new protocol. However, contrary to Parlasur's evolution, the settings of the new protocol were majorly decided by the Member States, who designed it much more limited than parliamentarians' initial expectations. Moreover, the pending ratification of the protocol in practice hindered the PAP to assume its few competences acquired. The case of the PAP is an illustrative example of how, within contexts very unfavourable to parliamentarisation, the chances for a regional parliament to gain more competences are very unlikely, even when parliamentary agents attempted to push for more powers.

Although the strategies implemented by parliamentary actors seemed very similar, they have differed in terms of the intensity of their use to demand higher degrees of parliamentarisation. Under these conditions, this thesis has characterised parliamentary agents as proactive or timid ones. Variation on the mobilisation and assertion of

parliamentary agents to make a difference regarding the decision-making processes is an important explanatory element of why these parliaments have achieved different levels of parliamentarisation, an aspect often overlooked by previous studies more concerned with the external dimension. In this sense, the proactive parliamentary agency observed in the case of European integration has contributed to the achievement of EP's strong constitutional powers over time. Meanwhile, the first competences acquired through Parlasur's Protocol were only possible due to the pro-activism of parliamentary agents during the first years of MERCOSUR integration. Nonetheless, after an initial period of significant parliamentary mobilisation and pro-activism, Parlasur has recently become a case of self-restrained agency, moving itself from a proactive to a more timid stance, therefore reducing the chances of expanding its own parliamentary competences. On the other hand, the PAP's case has been an example of timid parliamentary agency, not only due to its internal financial and personnel circumstances, but because of the low mobilisation and effectiveness of parliamentary agents to pressure AU's executive bodies for more competences. Through examining whether parliamentary agents were mobilised with the purpose of becoming more prominent regional actors, this thesis has contributed to develop a narrative which considers that parliamentarisation is not only a process dependent on the external resolution of Member States, but also a product of the degree of parliamentary activism.

7.3 PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY AND THE LOGIC BEHIND THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS

After contrasting the external and internal dimensions of parliamentary agency in the three case studies, this section focuses on the overall degree of parliamentary agency observed in order to emphasise its connection with regional parliamentarisation, highlighting what is the logic behind the development of regional parliaments in the three cases. This goal directly addresses the main research question of this thesis on what explains the diverse institutional paths of these parliaments analysed. In contrast to previous studies which solely focused on the preferences and perceptions of Member States in creating regional assemblies in time, this thesis proposed an alternative explanation which gives increased attention to the role of parliamentary agency in this process. By examining variations in parliamentarisation processes across the globe, this thesis aimed to provide an argument applicable not only to

understand parliamentarisation in Europe, which was significantly investigated by previous scholars, but also to address parliamentary cases in the Global South, positioning itself as a non-EU-centric perspective to contribute to the literature on comparative regionalism and regional integration.

In this regard, this thesis has argued that parliamentary agency has shaped the parliamentarisation of regional integration organisations over time. Following the typology proposed in the theoretical framework, two dimensions of parliamentary agency were identified operating in the cases analysed over time. Through merging the external and internal dimensions observed, the degree of parliamentary agency over time is revealed for the three cases, which is illustrated in Table 10 (below). Therefore, this thesis argues that the variance on the overall level of parliamentary agency explains why the regional parliaments analysed have reached diverse levels of institutionalisation over time. The high degree of parliamentarisation of the EP is due to its strong parliamentary agency in both its internal and external dimensions, which has incentivised the EP's empowerment. The more reduced levels of parliamentarisation in Mercosur is explained not only by some external restrictions to parliamentary agency, but also due to the pro-activism found in the parliamentary agents from the 1990s until the mid-2000s, who succeed in achieving Parlasur's first competences. However, over time, it was observed a decrease of proactivity of MPs, who lost interest in empowering Parlasur over the past years, reducing the likelihood of further parliamentarisation. Finally, the narrow parliamentarisation degree of the AU is caused by the low parliamentary agency of members of the PAP. While the external dimensions strongly restricted parliamentary agency, the internal constraints and lack of stronger mobilisation found in the case of African MPs also favoured their timid performance, hindering any potential of parliamentary empowerment within the AU.

Table 10. Level of Parliamentary Agency over time

	External dimension	Internal dimension	Over time
European Parliament	Stimulated	Proactive	High
Parlasur	Restricted	Proactive to Timid	Medium to low
Pan-African Parliament	Restricted	Timid	Low

Source: Author's elaboration.

Therefore, the EU's high degree of parliamentarisation is due to the pro-activity of MEPs to employ its most meaningful resources to pressure other supranational and governmental institutions to grant more competences to the EP in moments of institutional changes, added to an external context which strongly favoured the empowerment of supranational and parliamentary institutions. This is why the EP over the past decades has moved from a consultative body to become a prominent legislature at the EU level.

Meanwhile, the activism of members of Parlasur in negotiating its new protocol in the 2000s led to a relative increase of its competences and an important change in its configurations, which included some legislative functions, proportional representation, and the provision of direct elections. However, as parliamentarians have not fully explored its current powers – as the EP has continuously done in the past – parliamentary activism has decreased and no further competences have been achieved since then. Besides, the intergovernmental and presidential formats of MERCOSUR have continuously restrained the possibilities of Parlasur to achieve competences similar to the EP. Although there is some opportunities to parliamentarians seize in order to become more autonomous from Member States' will, there are fewer chances to deeply influence the decision-making process. Nonetheless, Parlasur's case is topical as it proves that, even in non-favourable contexts to parliamentarisation, there is room for agents to achieve some degree of parliamentarisation, escaping from path dependent trends. However, when internal agency is reduced, the probability of the parliament to become more powerful is also compromised, increasing the scenarios of institutional inertia. Thus, the demobilisation of parliamentary agents in MERCOSUR had substantial impacts in terms of parliamentarisation. Particularly in cases that there is relevant external restriction to parliamentary agency, increases in parliamentarisation levels are highly dependent on the internal dimension of parliamentary agency, i.e. the capacity and willingness of parliamentary agents to assert themselves and push forward their desire to transform its parliament in a more meaningful and resourceful body. For instance, as previously argued, the negotiation of Parlasur's Constitutive Protocol, at the juncture of MERCOSUR's institutional reform, was a window of opportunity that parliamentarians and officials were able to use in their favour, succeeding in pushing the national governments to accept the terms of the constitutive document drafted by the members of the JPC (Malamud and Dri, 2013). Although the new protocol has not challenged the intergovernmental nature of MERCOSUR's integration process, the referred juncture enabled significant parliamentary activism, which led to the creation of Parlasur. Thus, by

turning to a more agent-centric approach to analyse institutional development, it was possible to demonstrate the role that parliamentary agents played in the parliamentarisation process in this particular case. If, as previous literature suggested, only the external dynamics are considered to understand Parlasur's evolution, there is no sufficient explanation to understand the competences so far acquired by Parlasur and the centrality of parliamentarians in the drafting of Parlasur's protocol.

On the other hand, the performance of members of the PAP to employ more meaningful strategies to influence AU's decisive bodies was insufficient to reach any relevant level of parliamentarisation in the AU. This is due both to low mobilisation of MPs as well as the stronger constraints of African regionalism – especially when compared to previous cases – which have not favoured the development of a prominent regional legislature. The PAP's example demonstrates the limits to parliamentarisation in contexts in which parliamentary agency is externally and internally undermined. Therefore, without any substantial changes in the external and internal dimensions of parliamentary agency in the AU, being the former more unlikely, one may not expect in the future substantial institutional transformations in African continental regionalism when it comes to parliamentarisation. In fact, the significant gap between rhetoric and deeds in African regionalism is one of the elements that have challenged previous scholarly analyses on this case, which intensively focused on deciphering the statements and the agreements signed by African leaders, but not the performance of these political agents. This second dimension is crucial to fully understand African regional politics, inasmuch as African regionalism has traditionally privileged rhetoric and symbolism over the implementation of deeper continental commitments. Even though ambitious summits and statements have been promoted by African leaders, there is a large gap when it comes to the translation of the goals publicly defended by the Member States and the effective implementation of common policies. Söderbaum and Brodin (2016) labelled this intrinsic characteristic of African regionalism as *rhetorical* or *symbolic regionalism*. This narrow level of actual regional integration has sustained the national sovereignty without the requirement of profound political obligations and financial costs. In particular, when it comes to the PAP's development, this rhetorical aspect is also identified when the protocols agreed by Member States formally expressed that the PAP should become a fully-fledged legislature – something not even seen in the EU treaties regarding the EP – without ever giving the parliament any meaningful competences.

In sum, by employing an agent-centric HI approach to understand regional parliamentarisation, this thesis provided an argument centred on the notion of parliamentary agency, divided into its external and internal dimensions, with the purpose of enlightening how the parliamentary agency at the regional level has contributed to the institutional development of regional parliaments in the world. The typology of parliamentary agency developed in this thesis might also be useful to understand the development of other regional parliaments around the globe not assessed in this study, contributing to the overall comprehension of regional parliamentarisation as a global phenomenon.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Considering the previous case studies and the comparative analysis among the cases, this conclusive chapter highlights the key research contributions of this thesis and outlines the potentialities as well as emerging challenges brought about by the most recent dynamics in regionalist initiatives worldwide, which may have significant implications for future research on the topic. It suggests that the notion of parliamentary agency can be useful to understand not only the empowerment of regional, but also national parliaments in current times. Besides, it contends that regional parliamentarisation must be seen as a process in time, which – given the contemporary challenges of regionalism in many parts of the world – might even reverse, following a downgrading trend towards de-parliamentarisation.

8.1 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS AND THE POTENTIALITIES FOR PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY AT THE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS

The key aim of this thesis was to provide an alternative framework to assess regional parliamentarisation, by putting forward the notion of parliamentary agency and combining it to the key assumptions and concepts of historical institutionalism to unveil how regional parliamentary institutions have evolved over time. Instead of following previous explanation centred in the role of national and supranational authorities in this process, this research has demonstrated how parliamentary agents were enabled to influence the shape and competences of their own parliaments at critical junctures of regional integration. By examining concrete and relevant cases from three distinct continents, this study contributed to the comparative regionalism research programme, providing a comprehensive interpretation of the development of regional parliaments in diverse parts of the globe, besides aiming at overcoming the marginalised role of parliamentary agents for regionalism scholars. However, in addition to contributing to a better understanding of regional parliamentarisation and the role of regional parliaments within regional organisations, the notion of parliamentary agency proposed in this study also contains a broader potential to assess the performance of national parliaments in regional and domestic politics.

On the one hand, parliamentary agency within regional integration may not be restricted to the performance of supranational/regional parliamentary agents. In fact, national parliamentarians have also pushed for more influence in regional integration politics over time. For instance, one of the most symbolic developments of the Lisbon Treaty is formally incorporating national parliaments within the EU's decision-making process. Although a dynamic relationship has been developed between national parliaments and the European Commission at the informal level, EU's treaty reform has historically put more emphasis on the increasing role of the EP in European integration. Nonetheless, the Lisbon Treaty has changed this trend, by acknowledging the role of national parliaments in EU integration:

The Treaty of Lisbon provided a legal recognition of the democratic significance of national parliaments. It mentions national parliaments on several occasions related to their information rights, their participation in the procedures of revision of the treaty, their control over the field of Freedom, Security and Justice and their possibility to cooperate with each other and with the European Parliament (EP). (Rozenberg, 2017, p. 7)

For instance, through newly-established procedures such as the Early Warning Mechanism – which foresees that national parliaments may challenge the actions of the Commission when they perceive that this institution is trespassing the principle of subsidiarity (yellow-card mechanism) – national legislatures have their powers increased within EU decision-making system.

Parliamentary agency from national parliaments has also been observed elsewhere, such as in the case of Parlasur. As previously examined, national parliaments have occupied a key role not only in appointing the members of the regional parliament, but also in ratifying MERCOSUR's regional norms at the domestic level. For instance, the mechanism of 'preferential treatment' adopted in 2007 by the Brazilian National Congress to discuss and ratify MERCOSUR's decisions via a fast-track system represents the interests of national parliamentarians in pushing national legislatures to become more involved in the deliberation of regional norms (Drummond, 2013).

Therefore, the revision of the role of national parliaments in regional politics indicates that regional parliamentarisation is not only derived from the institutionalisation of regional parliaments, but it can also be affected by the empowerment of national parliaments in the same process.

On the other hand, the notion of parliamentary agency may also be relevant to understand current dynamics observed within national/domestic politics, which may also impact regional integration policies in positive and negative ways. The discussions related to ‘parliamentary sovereignty’ identified within the debates on Brexit have shown another dimension of parliamentary assertion. Not just is this seen when members of the British Parliament supporting Brexit have demanded the return of powers which were allegedly transferred to EU institutions over the past decades, but also when the same parliamentary agents – after the results of the Brexit referendum – have been pressuring the subsequent UK Prime Ministers to involve Parliament as much as possible within the negotiations of the EU’s withdrawal agreement, beyond the ratification stage. In this sense, as observed McConalogue (2019, p. 1), “The mechanisms of negotiating that withdrawal process – through parliamentary votes, scheduling of ongoing debates and legislation – have reinvigorated, not denied, the process of Parliament in determining its sovereignty”. In that context, parliamentary agency not necessarily leads to regional parliamentarisation, but to the recovery of national parliamentary leverage (national parliamentarisation) in regional politics.

Last but not least, the employment of parliamentary agency may not necessarily be connected to regional politics, as covered by this study. It could also be seen as a useful device to compare the performance of regional parliaments with the role of parliamentary institutions in national politics and the role of parliamentary actors in inter-institutional dynamics at the domestic level. For instance, the most recent developments in the US regarding President Donald Trump’s impeachment process led by a Democrat-controlled House of Representatives (Cheney et al., 2019) show how proactive parliamentary agents may in some cases significantly challenge Presidential powers by intensively employing the most meaningful mechanisms at their disposal. In this sense, national political systems are also dynamic in the institutional point of view. Overtime they may enter in periods in which parliamentary agents might pursue the parliamentarisation of domestic politics.

8.2 LIMITS AND CHALLENGES OF ASSESSING PARLIAMENTARY AGENCY IN TIME

The conduction of this cross-regional study on regional parliaments was not exempt from difficulties. In this regard, this section points out some of the key limitations and challenges

faced in the development of this research, especially concerning the conceptual/theoretical underpinnings, the comparative framework, and the empirical shortcomings encountered during both fieldwork and data collection. Reflecting on the setbacks identified during the research process may be relevant for other studies interested in investigating not only the three cases analysed in this thesis, but also other analogue parliamentary bodies across the globe.

In terms of the conceptual foundations of this study, although Historical Institutionalism has shown itself as a useful theoretical foundation for the task of assessing the development of parliamentary bodies in time, the fact that most of HI scholarly works have been considered too deterministic challenged the initial intentions of developing an analysis more focused on highlighting the role of parliamentary agents within institutional changes. Nonetheless, contemporary interpretations of HI have been dedicated to address the challenges of explaining institutional change as well as to identify the role and performance of the agents of change (Büthe, 2016; Zürn, 2016). Thus, this research aligned itself with more agent-centric approaches to HI in order to overcome its traditional focus on institutional inertia/stasis. In this respect, putting more emphasis on the relevance of the critical junctures in the history of the three assemblies as key episodes that facilitated substantial institutional reforms as well as giving key attention to agent-centric forces in this process was considered corrective paths to balance the structuralism often associated to HI, and in particular to its notion of path dependency.

Moreover, no previous study had offered precise conceptual devices to directly investigate the performance of parliamentary actors within regional integration. With the purpose of dealing with this conceptual limitation, this study conceived the notion of parliamentary agency as an innovative tool to effectively assess and explain regional parliamentarisation over time. In fact, the typology of parliamentary agency proposed aimed to build bridges between existing research on the topic with new assessments which have taken into account the role of internal dynamics found in these regional parliaments to understand its own institutional development. With that purpose in mind, it has divided parliamentary agency into an external and internal dimension.

However, having in mind that the cases studies analysed departed from very diverse geographical, political and cultural contexts, some challenges were also faced in the application of a common typology of parliamentary agency to three distinct regional organisations. Thus, some important time of the research was consumed adjusting the

classification proposed, in order to ensure that the typology would travel to the three continents analysed, successfully explaining how these parliaments have evolved over time. In terms of the external dimension, many characteristics could be associated to the three cases. Nevertheless, only some were identified as the most relevant explaining factors to parliamentarisation. Considering both the information gathered from interviews and key documentation and previous literature, attention was paid to the institutional design of these organisations and the perceptions of Member States regarding their parliamentary bodies. Thereby, the definition of agents as either stimulated or restricted was considered as a key – but partial – component to understand the development of these assemblies. On the other hand, a strong concern was also given to the internal dimension, much more related to the dynamics driven by parliamentary agents themselves. In this sense, identifying who were the collective agents more involved in parliamentarisation, the strategies employed to achieve their institutional ambitions and their degree of mobilisation over time were crucial to classify whether these actors were considered either proactive or timid.

Regarding the comparative assessment provided by this study, some limitations must also be acknowledged. Overall, they revolved around the challenges to employ a similar framework to contrast cases from the Global South and the North among themselves, having in mind their striking contextual diversity. As discussed in the previous chapters, one of the key concerns in this study was to dissociate itself from previous Eurocentric perspectives which have focused on the uniqueness of European integration and its overall perception of the EU as a successful model of regional integration. The many crises faced by the EU recently have in fact contributed to dissolving this narrative and favoured the development of non-Eurocentric perspectives which have genuinely aimed to understand regionalism in the Global South. Moreover, the only way of considering regional parliamentarisation as a global phenomenon is through moving beyond the research on the EP's experience, already vastly conducted by European studies scholars, as an attempt of expanding the geographical representativeness and validity to assess this process.

However, contextualised cross-regional comparisons have not been seen as simple academic initiatives. In this regard, two of the pitfalls highlighted by von Soest (2018) also emerged in the completion of this thesis. First, some disconnection among the academic communities approach to regionalism in the three continents has provided additional challenges to contrast the regional parliaments analysed. In order to succeed in highlighting the differences and commonalities among the three cases, some bridges had to be built

between the academic discussions found in the literature on European, Latin American and African regionalism. Although, as referred before, some works have compared European integration and its parliament with other analogous initiatives in the world (Malamud and Schmitter, 2006; Malamud and Sousa, 2007; Wunderlich, 2012; Luciano, 2016), there is a scarcity of cross-regional works examining both Latin American and African regional organisations. This is problematic inasmuch as lack of communication between the members of academic communities on both areas tends to jeopardise the interconnection of the knowledge produced among these scholars (von Soest, 2018). To some extent, this study contributes to this knowledge exchange, as the literature on regionalism in the three continents were continuously intertwined while seeking to unveil the logic of regional integration parliaments.

Secondly, when it comes to the practical feasibility of the research, some limitations in terms of language barriers, travel infrastructure, and data access were identified. For instance, while in South America only Portuguese and Spanish are working languages of MERCOSUR's institutions, AU's official languages is comprised by very diverse idioms such as Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swahili, without mentioning the 24 official languages of the EU. Although it has not affected the analysis of official documents issued by the three organisations due to the availability of official translations, language barriers might to some extent have impacted the conduction of semi-structured interviews with some actors.

In addition, having in mind the time and resources limits of this PhD, fieldwork was focused on visits to Brussels, Montevideo and Johannesburg, where the headquarters of the three parliaments analysed are based. Although the three fieldworks conducted were sufficient to gather relevant information on the case studies, additional fieldwork to key cities such as Addis Ababa (AU's capital), Brasília and Strasbourg (where the EP monthly convenes its plenary sessions) could have complemented the information gathered for this research.

More importantly, additional challenges were also found in the collection of empirical information from interviews and parliamentary documents. Regarding the interviews conducted, there were some difficulties during fieldwork to access key politicians and some senior officials, who would be able to provide more in-depth inputs on the case studies. In fact, one of the aspects observed in this process was that academic requests are usually not a priority to parliamentarians. In fact, it was even more problematic to interview

government/diplomatic officials directly involved with regional integration issues. When reaching these authorities, it was evident the lack of availability and interest from representatives of national/regional bureaucracies to respond to the questions posed by this study. Despite these constraints, the amount of interviews planned in the initial research project was achieved – with a higher number than previously expected for the MERCOSUR case – which was very helpful to sustain the arguments developed throughout this thesis.

As referred to in the methods chapter, important asymmetries in terms of documents availability and transparency were envisioned as potential challenges to the development of this research. Besides, differences on the temporalities of the cases, especially with regard to the European one, could bring further challenges to assess one of the parliamentary cases. As the EP's evolution is also comprised of older episodes, which dated back to the 1950s and 1960s, it was obviously harder to obtain first-hand testimonials on the EP's history. Therefore, for the first junctures of European integration, there was a need to rely on historical files and official speeches and recorded interviews available on the EP's website or other archive institutions. In fact, the interviews held in Brussels were mostly useful to examine the last juncture assessed, i.e. the European Convention and the Lisbon Treaty, as well as to provide additional insights on the more recent developments of European integration.

In the case of both MERCOSUR and the AU, fieldworks to the headquarters of both regional parliaments were even more crucial than to the EU institutions. Actually, without them detailed information on the two cases would not be obtained. In this sense, insights acquired from the interviewees were fundamental to understand with detail the parliamentary activities over the past years and how parliamentary agency developed in South America and Africa, something majorly neglected by previous studies on the topic. In addition, attending the plenary and committee's sessions in both parliaments was a complementary way to observe first-hand the performance of parliamentarians within these regional parliaments. In those cases, participant observation was particularly relevant to better assess the internal dimension of parliamentary agency, unveiling the key strategies employed by parliamentary agents, but also the level of (de)mobilisation of these actors.

Unlike other national and international organisations, parliaments are usually more transparent bodies, and one may find easier to access their historical and key documents. Despite this assumption, this research had to deal with the fact that not all key parliamentary documents are available to the public. When it comes to online archives, occasionally the

Parlasur's and PAP's official websites were not functional and documents were often missing, which introduced additional setbacks to the conduction of a thorough documentary research. Therefore, during this research, there was also a necessity to directly reach officials from the documentation area in these parliaments and request them unpublicised documents, such as strategic reports, activities reports, and proposals still under discussion inside specialised committees. Sometimes the interviewees were keen to personally share the documents which they referred to during the interviews, enriching the data collection conducted during fieldwork.

In short, this research has faced some significant conceptual, comparative, empirical and practical challenges, which had to be overcome in the process of developing this study. Highlighting these limitations seems to be topical for the purpose of sharing both the positive and negative experiences acquired over the conduction of an empirical and comparative investigation of regional parliaments. Pointing out the challenges encountered and the lessons learned in this process might be useful as a way of anticipating potential setbacks which future research on this topic may experience.

8.3 WAY FORWARD: INVESTIGATING PARLIAMENTARISATION DURING THE CRISIS OF REGIONALISM

This thesis aimed to introduce an innovative approach to assess regional parliamentarisation, by bringing the notion of parliamentary agency to the analysis of the institutional development of regional parliaments in Europe, South America and Africa. Incorporating this agent-centric dimension to parliamentarisation was considered as an alternative to overcome the explanations which have been centred in the role of intergovernmental decisions and perceptions in the development regional parliaments. As stressed by Lenz et al. (2019, p. 13), “(E)ven though governments empower international parliamentary institutions (and have the power to withdraw their competences), these institutions are not the agents of governments but of national parliaments and, ultimately, of the citizens of member states”. Thereby, the performance of parliamentary agents at the regional level has not been subordinated to the will of national governments. In fact, as this thesis has argued by examining several critical junctures, parliamentary autonomy and pro-activism may lead to unintended consequences concerning institutional change, going beyond the initial expectations and provisions of

Member States. By offering a new account on regional parliamentarisation, this research intended to contribute to the emerging literature on regional parliaments, providing conceptual and empirical inputs useful to assess regional parliaments worldwide.

However, future research on regional parliaments and regional parliamentarisation should address other empirical cases not specifically analysed in this study, such as other regional parliaments found in Latin America and Africa, but in particular the parliamentarisation of regionalism in Southeast Asia, still an understudied case. Covering other parliamentary experiences across the globe is crucial to achieve more global representativeness to fully understand this phenomenon. Besides, during the conduction of this research, it was noticed that aspects such as the inter-institutional dialogue between regional parliaments and Member States/regional Secretariats, the transnational dialogue across parliamentary delegations, gender gaps/asymmetries in parliamentary representations, and the impact of proportional representation inside regional parliaments are still under-researched elements which deserve more scholarly attention for the future. Although most of these topics have been already studied in the case of the EU, few analytical studies in this direction have been conducted when it comes to other parliamentary assemblies across the world.

On the other hand, one of the invaluable aspects introduced by this research was providing an in-depth empirical account on the regional parliaments analysed, via the conduction of semi-structured interviews and participant observation in the three cases. This methodological choice proved particularly relevant to better characterise and demonstrate parliamentary agency in all cases. Therefore, for future studies on these or other regional parliaments in the world, important attention must be given to the collection and observation of first-hand experiences of these actors inside their regional organisations, as a way to bring parliamentary agents and their performance to the fore of regional integration politics.

Moreover, future studies must take into account the increasing challenges faced by regionalism in the world. As pointed out by Rocabert et al. (2018, p. 21), “the end of the post-Cold War democratization wave, the crisis of European integration, and the challenges to multilateral international institutions more broadly, diminish exogenous incentives for further IO parliamentarisation”. Considering these global transformations and the re-emergence of nationalism in international politics, parliamentary agency may become increasingly restricted from its external and internal dimensions over the next years.

The rise of Euroscepticism across the European continent, which has been translated into the increasing number of Eurosceptic – or even ‘Europhobic’ as suggested by one of the former parliamentarians interviewed (EP 4, interview with the author, 2016) – politicians and political groups at the European Parliament might substantially impact parliamentary agency in the EU for the near future. The fact that, as an outcome of the latest European elections (May 2019), approximately 23 % of the posts at the EP will be occupied by Eurosceptic parliamentarians (The Economist, 2019), who aim to overhaul the EU and ‘take back control’ of the powers historically granted to the European institutions, including the EP itself, will represent significant challenges to the parliamentarisation of the EU.

In South America, the scenario seems no different. Recent elections of right-wing leaders, especially in Argentina and Brazil, have shaken the structures of MERCOSUR integration. Proposals to allow Member States to individually negotiate trade agreements with third countries or to turn MERCOSUR into a mere free trade area were often raised in past presidential campaigns. On the other hand, the severe criticism from the public opinion faced by the bloc has reduced the chances to maintain the direct elections of MERCOSUR’s MPs in both Argentina and Paraguay. Also, it seems unlikely in the present context that Brazil and Uruguay will for the first time directly elect their regional parliamentarians in the near future. In that negative context, Member States decided to suspend the direct elections to Parlasur until all countries hold them simultaneously as agreed in the Constitutive Protocol (MERCOSUR, 2019); a harsh blow to Parlasur’s autonomous development. Although Parlasur has rapidly reacted to the decisions of MERCOSUR’s foreign ministers, stating that members of Parlasur should have been consulted before any changes in its own Constitutive Protocol (Parlasur, 2019), the decision was not reversed and the 2019 national elections in Argentina have not included the selection of members for Parlasur. Without possessing an entire full-time chamber for the next years, the chances of parliamentary agents to return to the proactive pace of the 2000s will certainly decrease.

Although in Africa the regionalist scenario has been more optimistic, with the most recent signature of the African Continental Free Trade Area, a breakthrough in terms of continental economic integration, the prospects are less positive for parliamentary agents. The low pace of implementation of PAP’s protocol and the suggestions from MPs to renegotiate the protocol to an even less ambitious document in order to appease Member States’ concerns point out to a very challenging context for the parliamentarisation of the AU, despite recent remarkable achievements of African regionalism.

In fact, these recent trends emphasise how regional integration must be regarded as an ongoing process, which goes back to one of the key issues of historical institutionalism about the recognition of institutions as incomplete contracts. This seems also valid when it comes to regional parliamentarisation. As parliamentary agency is a collective phenomenon, one must take into account that it is not guaranteed that the majority of these agents will always be as proactive as possible in order to achieve stronger powers, as one may assume when individually examining the EP's case. In fact, the case of Parlasur has shown that parliamentary agency is not something static and may decrease in the absence of enough incentives for the mobilisation of agents. Meanwhile, the example of the PAP demonstrated that parliamentary agency may, in fact, never unleash its potential when facing very adverse environments. What is more, one can even hypothesise that if the majority of parliamentary agents move from a proactive to reactive stance in terms of seeking further competences, there are real possibilities of '*deparliamentarisation*', i.e. the decrease of parliamentary functions and powers within regional organisations. Indeed, a scenario in which 'anti-regionalist' leaders emerge inside these regions could even lead to this disintegration path. Nonetheless, despite these challenging times to regionalism, past dynamics observed in the three cases indicated that the crises encountered by these regional organisations led to new critical junctures which, in many occasions, were in fact opportunities for institutional reforms towards deepening and enlargement of regional integration. In that regard, as this thesis defended, unveiling the performance of agents of change, including the parliamentary ones, is crucial to fully comprehend the development of regional initiatives and the logic behind regional parliaments, especially in turbulent times.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Acharya, Amitav (2004), 'How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism', *International Organization*, 58 (2), pp. 239-275.
- Acharya, Amitav (2012), 'Comparative Regionalism: A Field Whose Time has Come?', *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, 47 (1), pp. 3-15.
- Acharya, Amitav (2016), 'Regionalism Beyond EU-Centrism', In Börzel Tanja A. and Risse, Thomas (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* (Oxford University Press).
- Adar, Korwa; Finizio, Giovanni; Meyer, Angela (eds) (2017), *Building Regionalism from Below: The Role of Parliaments and Civil Society in Regional Integration in Africa* (P.I.E-Peter Lang S.A.).
- African Union (2001), Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community relating to the Pan-African Parliament, Sirte, Libya, 2 March.
- African Union (2014), *The Report, The Draft Legal Instruments and Recommendations of the Specialized Technical Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs*, Executive Council, Twenty-Fifth Ordinary Session, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, 20 - 24 June, EX.CL/846(XXV).
- Agencia Parlasur (2017), *PARLASUR aprueba permanencia de Parlamentarios de Venezuela en el bloque*, Montevideo, 27 March.
- Akokpari, John (2017), 'The Pan-African Parliament as an Institution of African Integration Prospects and Constraints', In Adar, Korwa; Finizio, Giovanni; Meyer, Angela (eds), *Building Regionalism from Below: The Role of Parliaments and Civil Society in Regional Integration in Africa* (P.I.E-Peter Lang S.A.).
- Alshenqeeti, Hamza (2014), 'Interviewing as a Data Collection Method: A Critical Review', *English Linguistics Research*, 3 (1), pp. 39-45.
- Amorim, Celso (2008), Discurso do Ministro Celso Amorim por ocasião da XII Sessão Ordinária do Parlamento do Mercosul, Montevideo, 18 August.
- Annett, Iona (2010), 'Historical Institutionalism as a Regional Integration Theory: An outline of theory and methodology', Paper prepared for the Fifth Pan-European Conference on EU Politics, Porto, Portugal, 23-26 June.
- Atkinson, Rowland; Flint, John (2001), 'Accessing Hidden and Hard-to-Reach Populations: Snowball Research Strategies', *Social Research Update*, 33, pp. 1-4.
- Bach, Daniel (2005), 'The Global Politics of Regionalism: Africa', In Farrell, Mary; Hettne, Björn; van Langenhove, Luk (eds) *Global Politics of Regionalism: Theory and Practice* (Pluto Press).
- Bach, Daniel (2016), *Regionalism in Africa Genealogies, institutions and trans-state networks* (Routledge).

Badejo, Diedre (2008), *The African Union* (Chelsea House).

Balassa, Bela (1961), *The Theory of Economic Integration* (Richard D. Irwin).

Bardi, Luciano; Bressanelli, Edoardo; Calossi, Enrico; Gagatsek, Wojciech; Mair, Peter; Pizzimenti, Eugenio (2010), *How to create a transnational party system* (European Parliament: Committee on Constitutional Affairs).

Barón Crespo, Enrique (2015), *Interview with Enrique BARÓN CRESPO, former EP President (1989-1992) on the EP call for a political Union*, European Union, 2015. Available at: <http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/Assetdetail.aspx?id=1863fc5c-f30d-4064-ac1f-a44300e9ed1e>

Baun, Michael (1995), 'The Maastricht Treaty as High Politics: Germany, France, and European Integration', *Political Science Quarterly*, 110 (4), pp. 605-624.

BBC News (2014), *MEPs elect Jean-Claude Juncker to head EU Commission*, 15 July. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-28299335>.

Benedetto, Giacomo (2015), 'The Balance of Power over the EU Budget: European Expenditure since the Lisbon Treaty', *European Policy Analysis*, 15, pp. 1-8.

Bieber, Roland (2009), 'The Spinelli draft treaty: a remnant of better times or inspiration for a constitutional settlement?' In *Altiero Spinelli - European Federalist* (European Parliament).

Bieler, Andreas; Morton, Adam (2001), 'The Gordian Knot of Agency-Structure in International Relations: a Neo-Gramscian Perspective', *European Journal of International Relations*, 7 (1), pp. 5-35.

Borońska-Hryniewiecka, Karolina (2017), 'Regional parliamentary empowerment in EU affairs. Building an analytical framework', *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 23 (2), pp. 144-161.

Börzel, Tanja (2016), 'Theorizing Regionalism: Cooperation, Integration, and Governance', In Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* (Oxford University Press).

Börzel, Tanja; Risse, Thomas (2009), 'Diffusing (Inter-) Regionalism: The EU as a Model of Regional Integration', *KFG Working Paper Series*, 7, Kolleg-Forschergruppe (KFG), The Transformative Power of Europe, Free University Berlin, September.

Börzel, Tanja; Risse, Thomas (2016), 'Three Cheers for Comparative Regionalism', In Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* (Oxford University Press).

Brack, Nathalie; Costa, Olivier; Dri, Clarissa (2015), 'Le Parlement européen à la recherche de l'efficacité législative: Une analyse des évolutions de son organisation', *Bruges Political Research Papers*, 39, pp. 1-46.

Bresso, Mercedes; Brok, Elmar (2017), *Report on improving the functioning of the European Union building on the potential of the Lisbon Treaty* (2014/2249(INI)). European Parliament, Committee on Constitutional Affairs.

Bucher, Bernd (2015), 'Moving beyond the substantialist foundations of the agency-structure dichotomy: figurational thinking in international relations', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 20 (2), pp. 1-26.

Bummel, Andreas (2011), 'Towards a Global Democratic Revolution. A Global Parliament and the Transformation of the World Order', *CADMUS*, 1 (2), pp. 103-108.

Bustamante, Ana (2006), 'Desarrollo Institucional de la Comunidad Andina', *Aldea Mundo*, 8 (16), pp. 16-28.

Büthe, Tim (2016), 'Historical Institutionalism and Institutional Development in the EU: The Development of Supranational Authority over Government Subsidies (State Aid)', In Thomas Rixen, Lora Anne Viola, and Michael Zürn (eds) *Historical Institutionalism and International Relations: Explaining Institutional Development in World Politics* (Oxford University Press).

Caballero, Sergio (2013), 'Mercosur, the role of Ideas and a More Comprehensive regionalism', *Colombia Internacional*, 78, pp. 127-144.

Caetano, Gerardo; Carrau, Natalia; Bermúdez, Marcela (2009), *La bancada progresista del Parlamento del Mercosur: Un actor regional* (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung).

Cairney, Paul (2012), *Understanding Public Policy: Theories and issues* (Palgrave Macmillan).

Cameron, Fraser (2010), 'The European Union as a Model for Regional Integration Fraser Cameron', *Council on Foreign Relations*, September.

Capoccia, Giovanni; Kelemen, Daniel (2007), 'The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism', *World Politics*, 59 (3), pp. 341-369.

Caporaso, James; Marks, Gary; Moravcsik, Andrew; Pollack, Mark (1997), 'Does the European Union Represent an n of 1?', *ECSA Review*, 10 (3), pp. 1-10.

Cera, Silvana (2009), 'Las elecciones directas en el Parlamento Andino: un camino para fortalecer su papel como institución promotora de la integración', *Revista de Derecho*, 32, pp. 306-333.

Cheney, Kile; Caygle, Heather; Brenahan, John (2019), 'Democrats open impeachment inquiry into Donald Trump', *Politico*, 25 September.

Christiansen, Thomas (2002), 'The role of supranational actors in EU treaty reform', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 9 (1), pp. 33-53.

- Christiansen, Thomas; Gray, Mark (2003), 'The Convention on the Future of the EU: The European Commission and Treaty Reform', *Eipascope*, 3, pp. 10-18.
- Closa, Carlos (2003), 'Improving EU Constitutional Politics? A Preliminary Assessment of the Convention', *Webpapers on Constitutionalism & Governance beyond the State*, 1, pp. 1-26.
- Closa, Carlos (2015), "Mainstreaming Regionalism", *EUI Working Papers*, 12, pp. 1-15.
- Cofelice, Andrea (2012), 'International Parliamentary Institutions: Some Preliminary Findings and Setting a Research Agenda', *UNU-CRIS Working Papers*, 3, pp. 1-37.
- Cofelice, Andrea; Stavridis, Stelios (2014), 'The European Parliament as an International Parliamentary Institution (IPI)', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 19 (2), pp.145-178.
- Collier, David (1993), 'The Comparative Method', In Ada W. Finifter (ed) *Political Science: The state of the discipline* (American Political Science Association).
- Common Market Council (2003), *MERCOSUR Working Program 2004-2006*, Montevideo, 15 December.
- Corbett, Richard (1998), *The European Parliament's Role in Closer EU Integration* (Palgrave Macmillan).
- Costa, Olivier (2002), 'Les relations entre la commission et le parlement européen au prisme du Parlementarisme', *Politique européenne*, 2002, 1 (5), pp. 25-42.
- Costa, Olivier (2009), 'Le parlement européen dans le système décisionnel de l'Union européenne: la puissance au prix de l'illisibilité', *Politique européenne*, 2 (28), pp. 129-155.
- Costa, Olivier (2013), *La parlementarisation de l'Union: pour une approche dynamique du régime politique européen*, Centre Emile Durkheim UMR 5116, Political science. Université de Bordeaux; Sciences Po Bordeaux.
- Costa, Olivier (2015), 'The history of European electoral reform and the Electoral Act 1976: Issues of democratisation and political legitimacy', *Historical Archives of the European Parliament*, European Union History Series, November.
- Costa, Olivier; Brack, Nathalie (2013), 'The Role of the European Parliament in Europe's Integration and Parliamentarization Process', In Olivier Costa; Clarissa Dri; Stelios Stavridis (eds) *Parliamentary Dimensions of Regionalization and Globalization: The Role of Inter-Parliamentary Institutions* (Palgrave Macmillan).
- Costa, Olivier; Dri, Clarissa (2010), 'L'Union européenne peut-elle être démocratique? La participation aux élections au Parlement européen', *Revista de Estudos Constitucionais, Hermenêutica e Teoria do Direito (RECHTD)*, 2 (1), pp. 9-18.

Costello, Rory (2011), 'Does Bicameralism Promote Stability? Interinstitutional Relations and Coalition Formation in the European Parliament', *West European Politics*, 34 (1), pp. 122-144.

Cox, Pat (2002), 'Fathers with foresight showed the way', In European Commission (ed), *Fifty years of the European Coal and Steel Community: 34 different perspectives* (Office for Official Publications of the European Communities), p. 21-30.

Cox, Pat (2015), *Interview with Pat COX, former EP President (2002-2004) on the institutional reform and the European Convention*, European Union, 2015. Available at: <http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/Assetdetail.aspx?id=8299baad-d639-49f6-90e7-a42f00bd6860>

Crum, Ben and Fossum, John (2013), *Practices of interparliamentary coordination in international politics: the European Union and beyond* (ECPR Press).

Cutler, Robert (2001), 'The Emergence of International Parliamentary Institutions: New Networks of influence in World Society', In Smith, Gordon S. and Wolfish, Daniel (eds) *Who Is Afraid of the State? Canada in a World of Multiple Centres of Power* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press).

Dabène, Olivier (2005), 'La relance du Mercosur. Ouro Preto II ou le temps des réformes politiques', *Critique internationale*, 1 (26), pp. 35-43.

Dabène, Olivier (2007), 'Virage à gauche et integration régionale en Amérique latine', *Transcontinentales*, 4, pp. 45-58.

Dabène, Olivier (2009), *The Politics of Regional Integration in Latin America Theoretical and Comparative Explorations* (Palgrave Macmillan).

Dabène, Olivier (2012), 'Consistency and Resilience through Cycles of Repoliticization', In Ruggirozzi, Pía and Tussie, Diana (eds) *The Rise of Post-hegemonic Regionalism: The Case of Latin America* (Springer).

De Feo, Alfredo (2015), *A History of Budgetary Powers and Politics in the EU: The Role of the European Parliament* (Publications Office of the European Union).

Dedman, Martin (1996), *The Origins and Development of the European Union 1945-95*, (London: Routledge).

Deinla, Imelda (2013), 'Giving the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly a Voice in the ASEAN Community', *International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance* (International IDEA).

Delors, Jacques (1989a), *Address given by Jacques Delors (Bruges, 17 October 1989)*, Europe Documents. Dir. of publ. Riccardi, Lodovico; Riccardi, Ferdinando. 21.10.1989, No 1576, Brussels.

- Delors, Jacques (1989b), *Address given by Jacques Delors to the European Parliament (17 January 1989)*, Bulletin of the European Communities, 1989, No Supplement 1/89, Luxembourg: Office for official publications of the European Communities.
- Delwitt, Pascal; Waele, Jean-Michel; Magnette, Paul (eds) (1999), *À quoi sert le Parlement Européen* (Editions complexe).
- Dersso, Solomon (2013), *Annual review of the Peace and Security Council 2012/2013* (Institute for Security Studies).
- Dinan, Desmond (ed) (2006), *Origins and Evolution of the European Union* (Oxford University Press).
- Doctor, Mahrukh (2013), 'Prospects for deepening Mercosur integration: Economic asymmetry and institutional deficits', *Review of International Political Economy*, 20 (3), pp. 515-540
- Dri, Clarissa (2009), 'Funcionalidade Parlamentar nas Experiências Europeia e Andina: Quais Perspectivas para o Mercosul?', *NEJ*, 14 (1), pp. 169-184.
- Dri, Clarissa (2010), 'Limits of Institucional Mimesis of the European Union: The case of the Mercosur Parliament', *Latin American Policy*, 1 (1), pp. 52-74.
- Dri, Clarissa (2011), *Changement Institutionnel et Régionalisme en Amérique Latine: La Construction du Parlement du Mercosur* (Université de Bourdeaux, PhD Thesis).
- Dri, Clarissa (2015), 'The European Parliament and regional cooperation: The case of Latin America', In Stavridis, Stelios; Irrera, Daniela (eds) *The European Parliament and its international relations* (Routledge).
- Dri, Clarissa; Paiva, Maria Eduarda (2016), 'Parlasul, um novo ator no processo decisório do Mercosul?', *Rev. Sociol. Polit.*, 24 (57), pp. 31-48.
- Dri, Clarissa; Ventura, Deisy (2014), 'The MERCOSUR Parliament: A challenge position between late institutionalisation and early stalemate', In Costa, Olivier; Dri, Clarissa; Stavridis, Stelios (eds) *Parliamentary Dimension of Regionalization and Globalization* (Palgrave Macmillan).
- Drummond, Maria Claudia (1996), 'A Comissão Parlamentar Conjunta do Mercosul Bases jurídicas e seu papel no processo de integração do Cone Sul', *Revista de Informação Legislativa*, 33 (132), pp. 253-258.
- Drummond, Maria Claudia (2005), *A Democracia Desconstruída. O déficit democrático nas Relações Internacionais e os Parlamentos de Integração* (University of Brasília, PhD Thesis).
- Drummond, Maria Claudia (2009), 'Representación Ciudadana en el Parlamento del Mercosur: la construcción del acuerdo político', *Puente @ Europa*, 12, Dec.

Drummond, Maria Claudia (2013), 'The Brazilian Parliamentary Delegation to MERCOSUR: Its functions in the Brazilian National Congress', In Olivier Costa; Clarissa Dri; Stelios Stavridis (eds) *Parliamentary Dimensions of Regionalization and Globalization: The Role of Inter-Parliamentary Institutions* (Palgrave Macmillan).

Emmanuel, Kisiangani (2010), *The European Union and the Pan-African Parliament: Adding Value to the Partnership* (International IDEA).

Ernshaw, David; Judge, David (1995), 'The cooperation Procedure', *Political Series*, 11 (4), European Parliament, Brussels.

Erthal, Juliana (2006), 'Democracia e Paramentos Regionais: Parlacen, Parlandino e Parlasul', *Observador On-line*, 1 (9), Nov.

European Coal and Steel Community (1952), *Resolution adopted by the six Foreign Ministers (Luxembourg, 10 September 1952)*, Selection of texts concerning institutional matters of the Community from 1950 to 1982, European Parliament Committee on Institutional Affairs, 1982.

European Communities (1975), *Joint Declaration, issued on 4 March 1975, on the institution of a conciliation procedure between the Parliament and the Council, applicable to acts with significant financial implications* (Official Journal of the European Communities)

European Parliament (1963), *Résolution du Parlement européen, du 27 juin 1963, sur les compétences et les pouvoirs du Parlement européen* (Journal officiel des Communautés européennes).

European Parliament (1998), *Resolution of 16 July 1998 on the new codecision procedure after Amsterdam* (Official Journal of the European Communities)

European Parliament (2001), *European Parliament resolution on the Treaty of Nice and the future of the European Union* (2001/2022(INI)).

European Parliament (2003), *European Parliament resolution on the outcome of the Intergovernmental Conference*, P5_TA(2003)0593.

European Parliament (2008), *European Parliament resolution of 20 February 2008 on the Treaty of Lisbon* (2007/2286(INI)).

European Parliament (2015), *40th Anniversary of the 1976 Act on Direct Elections to the European Parliament* (European Parliament History Series, Historical Archives Unit).

Fabricius, Peter (2017), 'Does Africa really want a continental Parliament?', *Institute for Security Studies*, Pretoria, 19 October.

Fagbayibo, Babatunde (2017), 'Nkrumahism, Agenda 2063, and the Role of Intergovernmental Institutions in Fast-tracking Continental Unity', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 53 (4), pp. 1-14.

- Farrell, Henry; Héritier, Adrienne (2007), “Codecision and institutional change”, *West European Politics*, Vol.30, No.2, p. 285-300.
- Farrell, Mary (2009), ‘EU policy towards other regions: policy learning in the external promotion of regional integration’, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 16 (8), pp.1165-1184.
- Finnemore, Martha (1996), *National Interests in international Society* (Cornell University Press).
- Fioramonti, Lorenzo (2012), ‘Conclusion – Building Regions from Below: Has the Time Come for Regionalism 2.0?’, *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, 47 (1), pp. 151-160.
- Fioramonti, Lorenzo; Mattheis, Frank (2015), ‘Is Africa Really Following Europe? An Integrated Framework for Comparative Regionalism’, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 54(3), pp. 674–690.
- Fioretos, Orfeo; Falleti, Tulia G.; Sheingate, Adam (2013), ‘Historical Institutionalism in Political Science’, In Orfeo Fioretos, Tulia Falleti and Adam Sheingate (eds) *Oxford Handbook on Historical Institutionalism* (Oxford University Press).
- Fleming, Adam (2019), ‘Candidates spar for European Commission president job’, *BBC News*, 16 May.
- Follesdal, Andreas; Hix, Simon (2006), ‘Why There is a Democratic Deficit in the EU: A Response to Majone and Moravcsik’, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 44 (3), pp. 533–62.
- Forster, Anthony (1998), ‘Britain and the Negotiation of the Maastricht Treaty: A Critique of Liberal Intergovernmentalism’, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 36 (3), pp. 347-368.
- Freedom House (2016), *Freedom in the World*, Report.
- Gardini, Gian Luca (2010), *The Origins of Mercosur Democracy and Regionalization in South America* (Palgrave Macmillan).
- Gardini, Gian Luca (2012), *Latin America in the 21st Century: Nations, Regionalism, Globalization* (Zed Books).
- Gearing, Robin E. (2008), ‘Bracketing’, In Given, Lisa (ed) *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (SAGE Publications).
- Giscard d’Estaing, Valéry (2005), ‘Entretien avec Valéry Giscard d’Estaing dans Le Quotidien’, *Le Quotidien*, 22.04.2005, n° 93. Luxembourg: Lumedia S.A.
- Gueddes, Marc; Rhodes, R. (2017), ‘Towards an Interpretive Parliamentary Studies’, In J. Brichzin, D. Krichewsky, L. Ringel and J. Schank (eds) *The Sociology of Parliaments* (Springer).

- Guerrieri, Sandro (2001), 'The development of the role of the European Parliament', *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 21 (1), pp. 229-238.
- Guerrieri, Sandro (2008), 'The start of European integration and the parliamentary dimension: the Common Assembly of the ECSC (1952–1958)', *Parliaments, Estates and Representation*, 28 (1), pp.183-193.
- Haas, Ernst (1958), *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic Forces 1950-1957* (Stanford University Press).
- Haas, Ernst; Schmitter, Phillippe (1964), 'Economics and Differential Patterns of Political Integration: Projections About Unity in Latin America', *International Organization*, [18](#) (4), pp. 705-737.
- Haastrup, Toni (2013), 'EU as Mentor? Promoting Regionalism as External Relations Practice in EU–Africa Relations', *Journal of European Integration*, 35 (7), pp. 785-800.
- Hage, Frank (2011), 'Politicising Council Decision-making: The Effect of European Parliament Empowerment', *West European Politics*, 34 (1), pp. 18-47.
- Hall, Peter; Taylor, Rosemary (1996), 'Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms', *Political Studies*, 44, pp. 936-957.
- Halperin, Sandra; Heath, Oliver (2012), *Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills* (Oxford University Press).
- Haroche, Pierre (2018), 'The inter-parliamentary alliance: how national parliaments empowered the European Parliament', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 25 (7), pp. 1010-1028.
- Hartmann, Christof (2016), 'Leverage and linkage: how regionalism shapes regime dynamics in Africa', *Z Vgl Polit Wiss*, 10, pp. 79–98.
- Hartmann, Christof (2016), 'Sub-Saharan Africa", In Börzel, Tanja A. and Risse, Thomas (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* (Oxford University Press).
- Hay, Colin; Wincott, Daniel (1998), 'Structure, Agency and Historical Institutionalism', *Political Studies*, 46, pp. 951-957.
- Herman, Valentine (1979), 'Direct Elections to the European Parliament: Comparative Perspectives', *Common Market Law Review*, 16 (2), pp. 209–226.
- Hettne, Björn (2002), 'The Europeanisation of Europe: Endogenous and Exogenous Dimensions', *Journal of European Integration*, 24 (4), pp. 325-34.
- Hettne, Björn (2005), 'Beyond the 'new' regionalism', *New Political Economy*, 10 (4), pp. 543-571.

Hix, Simon (2002), 'Constitutional Agenda-Setting Through Discretion in Rule Interpretation: Why the European Parliament won at Amsterdam', *British Journal of Political Science*, 32, pp. 259-280.

Hix, Simon (2002), 'Why the EU Should Have a Single President, and How She Should be Elected', Paper for the Working Group on Democracy in the EU for the UK Cabinet Office, Oct.

Hix, Simon; Hoyland, Bjorn (2013), 'The Empowerment of the European Parliament', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 16, pp.171–89.

Hix, Simon; Noury, Abdul; Roland, Gérard (2006), 'Dimensions of Politics in the European Parliament', *American Journal of Political Science*, 50 (2), pp. 494-511.

Hobolt, Sara (2014), 'A vote for the President? The role of Spitzenkandidaten in the 2014 European Parliament elections', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 21 (10), pp.1528-1540.

Hobolt, Sara; Spoon, Jae-Jae; Tilley, James (2008), 'A Vote Against Europe? Explaining Defection at the 1999 and 2004 European Parliament Elections', *British Journal of Political Science*, 39, pp. 93-115.

Hoffmann, Andrea R. (2016), 'Inter- and Transregionalism', In Börzel, Tanja A. and Risse, Thomas (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* (Oxford University Press).

Hoffmann, Stanley (1966), 'Obstinate or Obsolete? The Fate of the Nation-State and the Case of Western Europe', *Daedalus*, 95 (3), pp. 862-915.

Hooghe, Liesbet; Marks, Gary (2019), 'Grand theories of European integration in the twenty-first century', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 26 (8), pp. 1113-1133.

Huntington, Samuel (1991), *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (University of Oklahoma Press).

Hurrell, Andrew (1995), 'Explaining the resurgence of regionalism in world politics', *Review of International Studies*, 21 (4), pp. 331-358.

Immergut, Ellen (2006), 'Historical-Institutionalism in Political Science and the Problem of Change', In Wimmer, Andreas and Kössler, Reinhart (eds) *Understanding Change: Models, Methodologies, and Metaphors* (Palgrave Macmillan).

Jackson, Patrick (2006), *Civilizing the Enemy: German Reconstruction and the Invention of the West* (University of Michigan Press).

James, Scott (2009), 'Historical Institutionalism, Political Development, and The Presidency', In Edwards III, George C. and Howell, William G. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the American Presidency* (Oxford University Press).

Jansen, Mads; Martinsen, Dorte (2015), 'Out of Time? National Parliaments and Early Decision-Making in the European Union', *Government and Opposition*, 50 (2), pp. 240–270.

- Jetschke, Anja; Murray, Philomena (2012), 'Diffusing Regional Integration: The EU and Southeast Asia', *West European Politics*, 35 (1), pp.174-191.
- Jones, Erik; Menon, Anand; Weatherill, Stephen (eds) (2012), *The Oxford Handbook of the European Union* (Oxford University Press).
- Jorgensen, Knud; Pollack, Mark; Rosamond, Ben (2007), *The SAGE Handbook of European Union Politics* (SAGE publishing).
- Joseph, Jonathan (2008), 'Hegemony and the structure-agency problem in International Relations: a scientific realist contribution', *Review of International Studies*, 34 (1), pp. 109-128.
- JPC (1994), 'MERCOSUR/CPC/DEC. N° 2/94', In Ramos, Hugo and Rivas, Eduardo (eds) *Actas y Documentos emanados de la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR (1991 - 2006)*.
- JPC (1996), 'MERCOSUR/CPC/REC. N° 6/96', In Ramos, Hugo and Rivas, Eduardo (eds) *Actas y Documentos emanados de la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR (1991 - 2006)*.
- JPC (1999), 'IX Reunión de la Mesa Ejecutiva de la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del Mercosur', In Ramos, Hugo and Rivas, Eduardo (eds) *Actas y Documentos emanados de la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR (1991 - 2006)*.
- JPC (2003a), 'MERCOSUR/CPC/ACTA N° 03/03', In Ramos, Hugo and Rivas, Eduardo (eds) *Actas y Documentos emanados de la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR (1991 - 2006)*.
- JPC (2003b), 'MERCOSUR/CPC/DISP. N° 12/03', In Ramos, Hugo and Rivas, Eduardo (eds) *Actas y Documentos emanados de la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR (1991 - 2006)*.
- JPC (2004a), 'II Reunión de Presidentes de las Secciones Nacionales de la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del Mercosur y Representantes de los Congresos de Chile y del Perú', In Ramos, Hugo and Rivas, Eduardo (eds) *Actas y Documentos emanados de la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR (1991 - 2006)*.
- JPC (2004b), 'MERCOSUR/CPC/DEC. N° 1/04', In Ramos, Hugo and Rivas, Eduardo (eds) *Actas y Documentos emanados de la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR (1991 - 2006)*.
- Kagame, Paul (2017), *The Imperative to Strengthen our Union: Report on the Proposed Recommendations for the Institutional Reform of the African Union*, 29 January.
- Kampala Post (2017), 'Pan African Parliament Wants Malabo Protocol Reviewed', 11 Oct. Available at: <https://kampalapost.com/content/africa/pan-african-parliament-wants-malabo-protocol-reviewed>

- Karuuombe, Barney (2008), 'The role of parliament in regional integration – the missing link', In *Monitoring Regional Integration in Southern Africa Yearbook 2008* (Trade Law Centre for Southern Africa, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit).
- Khan, Zahid; Sabir, Munawar (2013), 'President Vs Congress in US Foreign Policy: Cooperation or Confrontation', *Journal of Political Studies*, 20 (1), pp. 143-158.
- Kingah, Stephen; Cofelice, Andrea (2012), 'EU's Engagement with African (Sub)Regional Parliaments of ECOWAS, SADC, the EAC and the AU', *UNU-CRIS Working Papers*, 8, pp. 1-27.
- Kingah, Steven; Cofelice, Andrea (2013), 'The Role of Regional Parliaments in Enhancing Democracy in the South', In Fanta, Emmanuel; Shaw, Timothy; Tang, Vanessa (eds) *Comparative Regionalisms for Development in the 21st Century* (Routledge).
- Kitipov, Julian (n/d), *African integration and inter-regionalism: the regional economic communities and their relationship with the European Union*, University of Pretoria.
- Knafo, Samuel (2008), 'Critical Approaches and the Problem of Social Construction: Reassessing the Legacy of the Agent/Structure Debate in IR', *The Centre for Global Political Economy*, Working Paper 3.
- Kohl, Helmut (1983), *Report by Helmut Kohl to the European Parliament (30 June 1983)*, Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC), Debates of the European Parliament, 30.06.1983, n° 1-301. [s.l.]. "Report by Helmut Kohl to the European Parliament (30 June 1983)", p. 16-21.
- Köllner, Patrick; Sil, Rudra; Ahram, Ariel (2018), 'Comparative Area Studies: What it is, what it can do', In Ahram, Ariel, Koellner, Patrick and Sil Rudra (eds) *Comparative Area Studies: Methodological Rationales and Cross-Regional Applications* (Oxford University Press).
- Kraxberger, Brennan; McClaughry, Paul (2013), 'South Africa in Africa: a geo-political perspective', *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue canadienne des études africaines*, 47 (1), pp. 9-25.
- Kreppel, Amie (2000) 'Rules, Ideology and Coalition Formation in the European Parliament: Past, Present and Future', *European Union Politics*, 1(3), pp. 340–362.
- Kreppel, Amie (2002), *The European Parliament and Supranational Party System: a study in institutional development* (Cambridge University Press).
- Kreppel, Amie (2003), 'Necessary but not sufficient: understanding the impact of treaty reform on the internal development of the European Parliament', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 10 (6), pp. 884-911.

Kreppel, Amie (2018), 'Bicameralism and the balance of power in EU legislative politics', *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 24 (1), pp.11-33.

Landman, Todd (2000), *Issues and methods in Comparative Politics: an Introduction* (Routledge).

Landsberg, Chris (2012), 'Afro-Continentalism: PanAfricanism in Post-Settlement South Africa's Foreign Policy', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 47 (4), pp. 436 –448.

Latinobarometer (2015), *Informe Latinobámetro* (Santiago, Chile). Available at: <http://www.latinobarometro.org/latNewsShowMore.jsp?evYEAR=2015&evMONTH=-1> (Accessed: 26/06/2017).

Lazarou, Elena (2012), 'A Paradigm in Trouble? The Effects of the 2010 Euro-crisis on the European Model for Regional Integration in South America', In Fioramonti, L. (ed) *Regions and Crises* (Palgrave MacMillan).

Lazarou, Elena; Luciano, Bruno Theodoro (2015), 'Regionalism as an Instrument: Assessing Brazil's Relations with its Neighbourhood', *Global Society*, 29 (3), pp. 390-408.

Legler, Thomas (2013), 'Post-hegemonic Regionalism and Sovereignty in Latin America: Optimists, Skeptics, and an Emerging Research Agenda', *Contexto Internacional*, 35 (2), pp. 325-352.

Lehmann, Wilhelm; Schunz, Simon (2005), 'Anticipating the European Constitution: Parliamentarization or Re-nationalization?', In: UNSPECIFIED, Austin, Texas (Unpublished).

Lenz, Tobias (2012), 'Spurred Emulation: The EU and Regional Integration in Mercosur and SADC', *West European Politics*, 35 (1), pp. 155-173.

Lenz, Tobias (2013), 'EU normative power and regionalism: Ideational diffusion and its limits', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 48 (2), pp. 211-223.

Lenz, Tobias (2018), 'Frame diffusion and institutional choice in regional economic cooperation', *International theory*, 10(1), pp. 31-70.

Lenz, Tobias; Burilkov, Alexandr; Viola, Lora (2019), 'Legitimacy and the cognitive sources of international institutional change: the case of regional parliamentarization', *International Studies Quarterly*, online first, pp. 1-14.

Lenz, Tobias; Marks, Gary (2016), 'Regional Institutional Design', In Börzel, Tanja A. and Risse, Thomas (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* (Oxford University Press).

Lijphart, Arend (1971), 'Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method', *The American Political Science Review*, 62 (3), pp. 682-693.

- Lindner, Johannes (2003), 'Institutional stability and change: two sides of the same coin', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 10 (6), pp. 912-935.
- Lodge, Juliet (1984), 'European Union and the First Elected European Parliament: The Spinelli Initiative', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 22 (4), pp. 377-402.
- Lodge, Juliet (1986), 'The Single European Act: Towards a New Euro-Dynamism?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 24 (3), March, pp. 203-223.
- Lombaerde, Philippe (2011), 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly in Comparative Regionalism: a Comment on Sbragia', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 49 (3), pp. 675-681.
- Lombaerde, Philippe; Schulz, M (2009), *The EU and world regionalism: the makability of regions in the 21st century* (Ashgate).
- Luciano, Bruno Theodoro (2012), 'A Inclusão da Representatividade Direta no Parlamento do Mercosul', *Boletim de Economia e Política Internacional*, 11, pp. 49-58.
- Luciano, Bruno Theodoro (2016), 'Desafios contemporâneos del Parlasur y experiencias comparadas – Europa y Latinoamérica', *Pensamiento propio*, 43, pp. 229-258.
- Luciano, Bruno Theodoro; Mariano, Karina; Bressan, Regiane (2014), 'Entraves e perspectivas atuais à democratização da integração Andina: o caso do Parlamento Andino', *Anuario de la Integración Regional de América Latina y el Caribe*, 10, pp. 249-276.
- Luciano, Bruno Theodoro; Mariano, Karina; Bressan, Regiane (2014), 'Los parlamentos Regionales en la Integración de América del Sur: análisis de la percepción popular', *Revista Trimestral de Estudios Economía Latinoamericanos*, 17, pp. 1-15.
- Ludlow, Piers (2013), 'European Integration in the 1980s: on the Way to Maastricht?', *Journal of European Integration History*, 19 (1), pp. 11-22.
- Lula da Silva, Luís Inácio (2006), *Discurso do Presidente da República, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, na sessão de constituição do Parlamento do Mercosul*, Brasília, 14 December.
- Lustick, Ian (2001), 'Taking Evolution Seriously: Historical Institutionalism and Evolutionary Theory', *Polity advance online publication*, pp. 1-31.
- Lynch, Gabrielle; Crawford, Gordon (2011), 'Democratization in Africa 1990–2010: an Assessment', *Democratization*, 18 (2), pp. 275-310.
- Mackay, Fiona; Kenny, Meryl; Chappell, Louise (2010), 'New Institutionalism Through a Gender Lens: Towards a Feminist Institutionalism?', *International Political Science Review*, 31 (5), pp. 573-588.
- Magdagbeola, Nelson; Onoja (2008), 'Democratic Regionalisation in West Africa: Evidence from the ECOWAS Parliament', *ZEI Regional Integration Observer*, 2 (1).

Magliveras, Konstantinos; Huliaras, Asteris (2016), 'Understanding Success and Failure in the Quest for Peace: The Pan-African Parliament and the Amani Forum', *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 11, pp. 1-17.

Magliveras, Konstantinos; Naldi, Gino (2002), 'The African Union—A New Dawn for Africa?', *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 51 (2), pp. 415-425.

Magnete, Paul (2001), 'Appointing and Censuring the European Commission: The Adaptation of Parliamentary Institutions to the Community Context', *European Law Journal*, 7 (3), pp. 292-310.

Magnette, Paul; Nicolaïdis, Kalypso (2004), 'The European Convention: Bargaining in the shadow of Rhetoric', *West European Politics*, 27 (3), pp. 381-404.

Mahoney, James; Rueschemeyer, Dietrich (2003), 'Comparative Historical Analysis: achievements and agenda', In Mahoney, James and Rueschemeyer, Dietrich (eds) *Comparative Historical Analysis in Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press).

Mahoney, James; Snyder, Richard (1999), 'Rethinking Agency and Structure in the Study of Regime Change', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 34 (2), pp. 3-32.

Mahoney, James; Thelen, Kathleen (2010), *Explaining institutional change: ambiguity, agency and power* (Cambridge University Press).

Maier-Knapp, Naila (2014), 'The European Union as a Normative Actor and its External Relations with Southeast Asia', *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, 10 (2), pp. 221-235.

Makinda, Samuel; Okumu, Wafula (2008), *The African Union: Challenges of Globalization, Security, and Governance* (Routledge).

Malamud, Andrés (2005), 'Presidential Diplomacy and the Institutional Underpinnings of Mercosur: An Empirical Examination', *Latin American Research Review*, 40 (1), pp. 138–164.

Malamud, Andrés (2010), 'Latin American Regionalism and EU Studies', *Journal of European Integration*, 32 (6), pp. 637–57.

Malamud, Andrés; Dri, Clarissa (2013), 'Spillover Effects and Supranational Parliaments: The Case of Mercosur', *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research*, 19 (2), pp. 224-238.

Malamud, Andrés; Gardini, Gian Luca (2012). 'Has Regionalism Peaked? The Latin American Quagmire and its Lessons', *The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs*, 47 (1), pp. 116-133.

Malamud, Andrés; Schmitter, Philippe (2006), 'La Experiencia de Integración Europea y el Potencial de Integración del Mercosur', *Desarrollo Económico*, 46 (181), pp. 3-31.

- Malamud, Andrés; Sousa, Luís de (2007), 'Regional Parliaments in Europe and Latin America: Between Empowerment and Irrelevance', In Hoffmann, Andrea Ribeiro and van der Vleuten, Anna (eds) *Closing or Widening the Gap? Legitimacy and Democracy in Regional International Organizations* (Ashgate).
- Malamud, Andrés; Stavridis, Stelios (2011), 'Parliaments and parliamentarians as international actors', In Reinalda, Bob (ed) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Non-State Actors* (Ashgate), pp. 101-15.
- Manners, Ian (2002), 'Normative Power Europe: a Contradiction in term?', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40 (2), pp. 235-258.
- Mariano, Karina (2011), 'A eleição parlamentar no Mercosul', *Rev. Bras. Polít. int.*, 54 (2), pp. 138-157.
- Mariano, Karina (2011), 'The Parliamentary Dimension of Mercosur', Paper Presented at Joint IPSA-ECPR Conference, São Paulo, 16 February.
- Mathews, K. (2005), 'Renaissance of Pan-Africanism: the African Union', *India International Centre Quarterly*, 31 (4), pp. 143-155.
- Mattli, Walter (1999), *The Logic of Regional Integration: Europe and Beyond* (Cambridge University Press).
- Mattli, Walter (2012), 'Comparative Regional Integration: Theoretical Developments', In Jones, Erik, Menon, Anand and Weatherill, Stephen (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the European Union* (Oxford University Press).
- Maurer, Andreas (2003), 'The Legislative Powers and Impact of the European Parliament', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 41 (2), pp. 227-47.
- Mazzucelli, Colette (2007), 'Maastricht as Turning Point, International Symposium Imagining Europe: Turning Points in the Evolution of a Continent', Vanderbilt University, November 1-4, Nashville, TN.
- Mbeki, Thabo (2004), Address by the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki at the Pan African Parliament, Gallagher Estate, Midrand, 16 September.
- McConalogue, Jim (2019), Brexit and prorogation: constitutional outrage or parliamentary sovereignty?, *The UK in a Changing Europe*, 30 August.
- Medeiros, Marcelo (2008), 'Legitimidade, Democracia e Accountability no Mercosul', *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais*, 23 (67), pp. 51-69.
- Medeiros, Marcelo; Mota, Mariana; Meunier, Isabel (2016), 'Modernization Without Change: Decision-Making Process in the Mercosur Parliament', *Brazilian Political Science Review*, 10 (1), pp. 1-22.

Menon, Anand (2003), 'Britain and the Convention on the Future of Europe', *International Affairs*, 79 (5), pp. 963-978.

MERCOSUR (1991), *Tratado Para a Constituição de um Mercado Comum entre a República Argentina, a República Federativa do Brasil, a República do Paraguai e a República do Uruguai*, Asunción, Paraguay, 26 March.

MERCOSUR (1991), *Documento Final de la II Reunión Parlamentaria del Mercosur*, Buenos Aires, 19-20 September.

MERCOSUR (1994), *Protocolo Adicional ao Tratado de Assunção sobre a Estrutura Institucional do Mercosul – Protocolo de Ouro Preto*, Ouro Preto, Brazil, 17 December.

MERCOSUR (1998), *Protocolo de Ushuaia sobre Compromisso Democrático no Mercosul, Bolívia e Chile*, Ushuaia, Argentina, 24 July.

MERCOSUR (2019), *Declaración Conjunta Relativa al Funcionamiento del Parlamento del Mercosur*, 17 April.

MERCOSUR Parliament (2005), *Constitutive Protocol of the MERCOSUR Parliament*, Montevideo, 9 December.

MERCOSUR Parliament (2007), *Rules of Procedure of the MERCOSUR Parliament*, Montevideo, 6 August.

MERCOSUR Parliament (2009), *Acuerdo Político para la Consolidación del Mercosur y Propositiones Correspondientes*, Asunción, 28 April.

Merton, Robert (1936), 'The Unanticipated consequences of purposive social action', *American Sociological Review*, 1 (6), pp. 894-904.

Mitterrand, François; Kohl, Helmut (1990), *Message conjoint de François Mitterrand et Helmut Kohl (Paris, 6 décembre 1990)*, (Ministère des Affaires étrangères de la République française).

Monnet, Jean (1952), *Letter from Jean Monnet to Jacques Camille Paris (Paris, 1 August 1952)*, (Archives historiques du Conseil de l'Europe - Historical archives of the Council of Europe).

Moravcsik, Andrew (1991), 'Negotiating the Single European Act: national interests and conventional statecraft in the European Community', *International Organization*, 45 (1), pp. 19-56.

Moravcsik, Andrew (2002), 'In Defense of the "Democratic Deficit": Reassessing Legitimacy in the European Union', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40 (4), pp. 603-24.

Moreno-Brid, Juan Carlos; Garry, Stefanie (2016), 'Economic performance in Latin America in the 2000s: recession, recovery, and resilience?', *Oxford Development Studies*, 44 (4), pp. 384-400.

- Mpanyane, Saki (2009), 'Transformation of the Pan-African Parliament: A path to a legislative body?' *ISS Paper*, 181, pp. 1-15.
- Navarro, Julien (2010), 'The Creation and Transformation of Regional Parliamentary Assemblies: Lessons from the Pan-African Parliament', *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 16 (2), pp. 195-214.
- Nolte, Detlef (2014), 'Latin America's New Regional Architecture: A Cooperative or Segmented Regional Governance Complex?', *EUI Working Paper*, RSCAS2014/89.
- North, Douglass (1990), *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance* (Cambridge University Press).
- Nugent, Neill (1999), *The Government and Politics of the European Union* (Palgrave Macmillan).
- Núñez, Alfonso González (2017), *Speech at the L Plenary Session of Parlasur*, Montevideo, 9 Oct. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Snx7JEEi2E>.
- Nzewi, Ogochukwu (2008), *The Role of the Pan African Parliament in African Regionalism (2004-2006): an Institutional Perspective* (University of Pretoria, PhD Thesis).
- Nzewi, Ogochukwu (2013), 'Influence and Legitimacy in African Regional Parliamentary Assemblies: The Case of the Pan-African Parliament's Search for Legislative Powers', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 49 (4), pp. 488-507.
- Nzewi, Ogochukwu (2015), 'The Renaissance Factor in South Africa and the Changing Landscape of African Regional Governance (1999-2008)', *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies - Multi-, Inter- and Transdisciplinarity*, 10 (1), pp. 25-46.
- Olson, William (1991), 'The US Congress: an independent force in world politics?', *International Affairs*, 67 (3), pp. 547-563.
- Pan-African Parliament (2006), *Pan African Parliament Draft Strategic Plan 2006 – 2010*, August.
- Pan-African Parliament (2009), *Report of the Pan-African Parliament*, Presented to the 15th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union, 24-30 June, Sirte Libya.
- Pan-African Parliament (2011), *Strategic Workplan 2011-2013*.
- Pan-African Parliament (2012), *Report of the Work of the Pan-African Parliament: July 2011 to July 2012*, Presented to the 21st Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union July 2011/July 2012; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Pan-African Parliament (2014), *Report of Pan African Parliament for the Period June 2013 to June 2014*, presented to the 28th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC), Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.

- Pan-African Parliament (2014), *Strategic Plan 2014-2017*, Midrand: South Africa, January.
- Pan-African Parliament (2015), *Report of Pan African Parliament for the Period July 2014 to May 2015*, presented to the 27th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council.
- Pan-African Parliament (2016), *PAP calls on African ambassadors to accelerate the ratification of its legislative power*, 2 May. Available at:
 <<http://panafricanparliament.org/news/presidents-news/24-parliament-sessions-news/presidents-news-only/130-pap-calls-on-african-ambassadors-to-accelerate-the-ratification-of-its-legislative-power>> (Accessed: 25 July 2018).
- Pan-African Parliament (2019), *Parliamentarians praise results of PAP Bureau, as activity report is debated in the House*. Available at:
 <<http://www.panafricanparliament.org/index.php/news-and-events/44-parliamentarians-praise-results-of-pap-bureau-as-activity-report-is-debated-in-the-house>> (Accessed: 20 May 2019).
- Parlasur (2008), *Declaración no. 101/2008*, Montevideo, 5 September.
- Parlasur (2008), *Proposta de Declaração no. 01/2008*, Montevideo, 18 December.
- Parlasur (2010), *Propuesta de Recomendación no. 262/2010*, Montevideo.
- Parlasur (2019), *Recomendación no. 05/2019*, Montevideo, 29 April.
- Patijn Report (1975), *Rapport fait au nom de la commission politique, du 13 janvier 1975, relatif à l'adoption d'un projet de convention instituant l'élection des membres du Parlement européen au suffrage universel direct (Rapporteur : M. Schelto Patijn)*, (Parlement européen, Documents de séance 1974-1975. 13.01.1975, n° Document 368/74. [s.l.]. p. 5-35, 52-53, 65-70).
- Phelan, William (2012), 'What is Sui Generis about the European Union? Costly International Cooperation in a Self-Contained Regime', *International Studies Review*, 14 (3) pp. 367-385.
- Pierson, Paul (1998), 'The Path to European Integration: a historical-institutionalist analysis', In Sandholtz, W. and Sweet, A (eds) *European Integration and Supranational Governance* (Oxford University Press).
- Pierson, Paul (2004), *Politics in Time: history, institutions, and social analysis* (Princeton University Press).
- Pierson, Paul; Skocpol, Theda (2002), 'Historical Institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science', In: Katznelson I. and Milner H. (eds) *Political Science: State of the Discipline* (W.W. Norton), pp. 693-721.
- Pinder, John (2009), 'Altiero Spinelli's European Federal Odyssey', In *Altiero Spinelli - European Federalist* (European Parliament).

- Piodi, Franco (2007), *Towards a Single Parliament: The Influence of the ECSC Common Assembly on the Treaties of Rome* (European Parliament Directorate-General for the Presidency Archive and Documentation Centre, Cardoc)
- Piodi, Franco (2010), 'From the Schuman Declaration to the birth of the ECSS: The role of Jean Monnet', *CADOC Journals*, 6, May, pp. 1-217.
- Plumb, Henry (2015), *Interview with Lord Henry PLUMB, EP President (1987-1989) on the Single European Act and the challenges faced by the European Parliament*. Available at: <http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/Assetdetail.aspx?id=7048b973-a7a9-4e06-890a-a46000fa1a13>
- Pollack, Mark (1997), 'Delegation, Agency, and Agenda Setting in the European Community', *International Organization*, 51 (1), pp. 99-134
- Pollack, Mark (2008), 'The New Institutionalisms and European Integration', *Webpapers on Constitutionalism & Governance beyond the State*, 1, pp. 1-31.
- Porcelli, Emanuel (2014), 'Los borrosos límites entre la política nacional y la política regional: El caso del Parlamento del MERCOSUR', FLACSO-ISA, Buenos Aires.
- Rai, Shirin M. (2010), 'Analysing Ceremony and Ritual in Parliament', *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 16 (3), pp. 284-297.
- Rasmussen, Anne; Toshkov, Dimiter (2001), 'The Inter-institutional Division of Power and Time Allocation in the European Parliament', *West European Politics*, 34 (1), pp. 71-96.
- Reif, Karlheinz; Schmitt, Hermann (1980), 'Nine second-order national elections: A conceptual framework for the analysis of European election results', *EJPR*, 8, pp. 3-44.
- Ribeiro, Elisa (2008), 'O Parlamento do Mercosul como Recurso para a Construção do Direito Comunitário', *Universitas Jus*, Brasília, 16, pp. 181-206.
- Riggirozzi, Pía (2011), 'Region, Regionness and Regionalism in Latin America: Towards a New Synthesis', *New Political Economy*, 17 (4), pp. 421-443.
- Risse, Thomas (2016), 'The Diffusion of Regionalism', In Börzel, Tanja A. and Risse, Thomas (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* (Oxford University Press).
- Rittberger, Berthold (2003), 'The Creation and Empowerment of the European Parliament', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 41 (2), pp. 203-25.
- Rittberger, Berthold (2005), *Building Europe's Parliament: Democratic Representation Beyond the Nation State* (Oxford University Press).
- Rittberger, Berthold (2006), "'No integration without representation!' European integration, parliamentary democracy, and two forgotten Communities", *Journal of European Public Policy*, 13 (8), pp.1211-1229.

Rittberger, Berthold (2014), 'Integration without Representation? The European Parliament and the Reform of Economic Governance in the EU', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 52 (6), pp. 1174–1183.

Rittberger, Berthold; Shroeder, Philipp (2016), 'The Legitimacy of Regional Institutions', In Börzel, Tanja A. and Risse, Thomas (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* (Oxford University Press).

Rocabert, Jofre; Schimmelfennig, Frank; Crasnic, Lorian; Winzen, Thomas (2018), 'The rise of international parliamentary institutions: Purpose and legitimation', *The Review of International Organizations*, online first.

Roederer-Rynning, Christilla; Schimmelfennig, Frank (2012), 'Bringing codecision to agriculture: a hard case of parliamentarization', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 19 (7), pp. 951-968.

Rozenberg, Olivier (2017), *The Role of National Parliaments in the EU after Lisbon: Potentialities and Challenges*, European Parliament Study, PE583.126.

Rüland, Jürgen (2014), 'The Limits of Democratizing Interest Representation: Asean's Regional Corporatism and Normative Challenges', *European Journal of International Relations*, 20 (1), pp. 237-261.

Rüland, Jürgen; Bechle, Karsten (2011), 'Defending State-Centric Regionalism through Mimicry and Localization: Regional Parliamentary Bodies in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Mercosur', Paper presented at IPSA-ECPR Conference, São Paulo, Feb.

Saalfeld, Thomas (2000), 'Members of parliament and governments in Western Europe: Agency relations and problems of oversight', *European Journal of Political Research*, 37, pp. 353–376.

Sabic, Zlatko (2008), 'Building Democratic and Responsible Global Governance: The Role of International Parliamentary Institutions', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 61 (2), pp. 255–271.

Sanahuja, José Antonio (2012), 'Regionalismo post-liberal y multilateralismo en Sudamérica: El caso de UNASUR', *Anuario de la Integración Regional de América Latina y el Gran Caribe*, CRIES, Buenos Aires.

Santander, Sebastian (2005), 'The European Partnership with Mercosur: a Relationship Based on Strategic and Neo-liberal Principles', *Journal of European Integration*, 27 (3), pp. 285-306.

Sartori, Giovanni (1970), 'Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics Source', *American Political Science Review*, 64 (4), pp. 1033-1053.

Schenoni, Luis (2016), 'Regional Power Transitions: Lessons from the Southern Cone', *GIGA Working Papers*, 293, pp.1-32.

- Schiff, Pablo (2014), 'Parlasur: el debate sobre los fueros y las polémicas que llegan al Congreso'. *Infonews*, 3 Dec. Available at: <http://www.infonews.com/nota/175167/parlasur-el-debate-sobre-los-fueros-y-las-polemicas-que-llegan-al-congreso>
- Schimmelfennig, Frank (2016), 'Europe', In Börzel, Tanja A. and Risse, Thomas (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism* (Oxford University Press).
- Schmidt, Vivien (1999), 'Approaches to the Study of European Politics', *ECSA Review*, 12 (2), pp. 2-9.
- Schmitt, Hermann (2005), 'As eleições de Junho de 2004 para o Parlamento Europeu: ainda eleições de segunda ordem?', *Análise Social*, 40 (177), pp. 765-794.
- Schönlau, Justus (2004), 'Time Was of the Essence: Timing and Framing Europe's Constitutional Convention', In Closa, Carlos and Fossum, John Erik (eds) *Deliberative Constitutional Politics* (ARENA and Universidad de Zaragoza).
- Schulz, Martin (2016), *Opening speech at the interinstitutional conference on EU own resources held at the European Parliament*, Brussels, September, 7th.
- Scully, Roger (1998). 'MEPs and the building of a 'parliamentary Europe'', *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 4 (3), pp. 92-108.
- Seawright, Jason; Gerring, John (2008), 'Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options', *Political Research Quarterly*, 61 (2), pp. 294-308.
- Shakir, Maha (2002), 'The selection of case studies: Strategies and their applications to IS implementation cases studies', *Res. Lett. Inf. Math. Sci.*, 3, pp. 191-198.
- Sil, Rudra (2009), 'Area Studies, Comparative Politics, and the Role of Cross-Regional Small-N Comparison', *Qualitative & Multi-Method Research*, Fall.
- Sil, Rudra (2010), 'The Status of Area Studies and the Logic of the Comparative Method: The Distinctive Role of Cross-Regional Contextualized Comparison', Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington D.C., September 4.
- Söderbaum, Fredrik (2015), *Rethinking Regionalism* (Palgrave Macmillan).
- Söderbaum, Fredrik; Brolin, Therese (2016), *Support to Regional Cooperation and Integration in Africa - What Works and Why?* (EBA).
- Solingen, Etel; Börzel, Tanja (2014), 'Introduction to Presidential Issue: The Politics of International Diffusion—A Symposium', *International Studies Review*, 16, pp.173–187.
- Spénale, Georges (1979), 'Georges Spénale, President of the European Parliament from 1975 to 1977, outlines the evolution of this institution from its first meeting in 1952 until 1977', In Mélanges Fernand Dehousse, *La construction européenne*, (Fernand Nathan/Editions Labor).

Stavridis, Stelios (2006), 'Parliamentary Diplomacy: any lessons for regional parliaments?', In Kölling, M. and Stavridis, S. and Fernández Sola, N. (eds) *The International Relations of the Regions: Subnational Actors, Para-diplomacy and Multi-level governance* (Zaragoza).

Stavridis, Stelios; Pace, Roderick; Santonja, Paqui (2012), 'The Role of Parliamentary Bodies, Sub-State Regions, and Cities in the Democratization of the Southern Mediterranean Rim', In Panebianco, Stefania and Rossi, Rosa (eds) *Winds of Democratic Change in the Mediterranean?* (Rubettino), pp. 171-200.

Steinmo, Sven (2014), 'Historical Institutionalism and Experimental Methods', In Fioretos, Orfeo, Falletti, Tulia and Sheingate, Adam (eds) *Oxford Handbook on Historical Institutionalism* (Oxford University Press).

Steinmo, Sven (2008), 'What is Historical Institutionalism?' In Della Porta, Donatella and Keating, Michael (eds) *Approaches in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press).

Study Committee for the European Constitution (1952), 'Resolutions adopted by the Study Committee for the European Constitution (Brussels, November 1952)', In *Selection of texts concerning institutional matters of the Community from 1950 to 1982* (European Parliament - Committee on Institutional Affairs), 1982, p. 80-93.

Taiana, Jorge (2016), 'Speech at EUI Executive Training Seminar', *The value and functions of parliaments in regional organisations*, European University Institute, Florence, 16 -18 November.

Telò, Mario (ed) (2007), *European Union and New Regionalism: Regional Actors and Global Governance in a Post-hegemonic Era* (Ashgate).

The Economist (2014), *A certain idea of disunion*, May 26th. Available at: <http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2014/05/daily-chart-16>.

The Economist (2019), *The coming Eurosceptic surge in the European Parliament*, May 21th. Available at: https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2019/05/21/the-coming-eurosceptic-surge-in-the-european-parliament?fsrc=scn/fb/te/bl/ed/thecomingeuroscepticsurgeintheeuropeanparliamentdailychart&fbclid=IwAR1nfoFOtPQI49NEm-du33QyY65eaN2soJLoJ0mAX22_dKu7B2AVNQDInVE (Accessed: 21 May 2019).

The Herald (2018), *PAP endorses Mnangagwa administration*, 5 February. Available at: <https://www.herald.co.zw/pap-endorses-mnangagwa-administration/> (Accessed: 25 July 2018).

The Independent (2017), *Pan African Parliament wants Malabo Protocol reviewed*, 13 October.

The Telegraph (2008), *Zimbabwe election should be re-run, say African observers*, 29 June. Available at:

<<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/zimbabwe/2216248/Zimbabwe-election-should-be-re-run-say-African-observers.html>>.

Thelen, Kathleen (1999), 'Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2, pp. 369-404.

Thelen, Kathleen; Steinmo, Sven (1992), 'Historical Institutionalism in comparative politics', In Steinmo, Sven and Thelen, Kathleen (eds) *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in comparative analysis* (Cambridge University Press).

Thonke, Ole; Spliid, Adam (2012), 'What to expect from regional integration in Africa', *African Security Review*, 21 (1), pp. 42-66.

Treaty of Paris (1951), 'Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (Paris, 18 April 1951)', In *Treaty constituting the European Coal and Steel Community and connected documents* (Publishing Services of the European Communities), pp. 1-90

Tussie, Diana; Riggirozzi, Pia (2015), 'A global conversation: rethinking IPE in post-hegemonic scenarios', *Contexto Internacional*, Rio de Janeiro, 37 (3), pp. 1041-1068.

Vale, Hélder (2015), 'Temporality, causality and trajectories: comparative historical analysis in social and political sciences', *Revista Debates*, Porto Alegre, 9 (1), pp. 61-87.

van de Walle, Nicolas (2003), 'Presidentialism and Clientelism in Africa's Emerging Party Systems', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 41 (2), pp. 297-321.

van Walraven, Klaas (2004), 'From Union of Tyrants to Power to the People? The Significance of the Pan-African Parliament for the African Union', *Africa Spectrum*, 39 (2), pp. 197-221.

Vazquez, Mariana (2001), 'La Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR: Reflexiones sobre su trayectoria político-institucional', Paper prepared for the 2001 meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Washington, Sep.

Vázquez, Mariana (2005), 'The Parliament Dimension of Regional Integration. A Comparison of the European Union and MERCOSUR', Lisboa: *CIES e-Working Paper*, 2.

Vedel Report (1972), 'Report of the Working Party examining the problem of the enlargement of the powers of the European Parliament', *Bulletin of the European Economic Community*, April, No. 4, (Office for Official Publications of the European Communities), pp. 7-85.

Veiga, P.; Rios, S (2007), 'O Regionalismo pós-liberal na América do Sul: origens, iniciativas e dilemas'. *Serie comercio internacional*, 62, Jul, LC/L-2776-P, Santiago de Chile. CEPAL.

- Veil, Simone (1979), *Speech: 'Debates of the European Parliament*, Sitting of Wednesday, (Strasbourg, 17 July 1979)".
- Verhofstadt, Guy (2016), *Report on possible evolutions of and adjustments to the current institutional set-up of the European Union* (2014/2248(INI)) (European Parliament, Committee on Constitutional Affairs).
- von Soest, Christian (2018), 'Comparing Across World Regions: Assets and Pitfalls', In Ahram, Ariel, Koellner Patrick and Rudra Sil (eds) *Comparative Area Studies: Methodological Rationales and Cross-Regional Applications* (Oxford University Press).
- Vullers, Johannes (2014), 'Geographical Patterns of Analysis in IR Research: Representative Cross-Regional Comparison as a way forward', *GIGA Working Papers*, 254, pp. 1-24.
- Warleigh-Lack, Alex; Robinson, Nick (2011), 'Introduction', In Warleigh-Lack, Alex, Robinson, Nick and Rosamond, Ben (eds) *New Regionalism and the European Union: dialogues, comparisons and new research directions* (Routledge).
- Weiffen, Brigitte (2016), 'Institutional Overlap and Responses to Political Crises in South America', Paper presented at the *IPSA World Congress*, 23-28, Poznan, Poland.
- Weisglas, Frans; de Boer Gonnie (2007), 'Parliamentary Diplomacy', *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 2, pp. 93-99.
- Wendt, Alexander (1987), 'The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory', *International Organization*, 41 (3) (Summer), pp. 335-370.
- Whitman, Richard (2013), 'The neo-normative turn in theorising the EU's international presence', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 48 (2), pp. 171-193.
- Williamson, John (2004), 'The Washington Consensus as Policy Prescription for Development', *Institute for International Economics*.
- Winzen, Thomas; Roederer-Rynning, Christilla; Schimmelfennig, Frank (2015), 'Parliamentary co-evolution: national parliamentary reactions to the empowerment of the European Parliament', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 22 (1), pp.75-93.
- WTO (2018), *World Trade Statistical Review 2018* (Geneva).
- Wunderlich, Jens-Uwe (2012), 'The EU an Actor Sui Generis? A Comparison of EU and ASEAN Actorness', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 50 (4), pp. 653–669.
- 'X Reunión Interparlamentaria Parlamento Europeo - Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR' (2005), Montevideo, 24 Nov, In Ramos, Hugo and Rivas, Eduardo (eds) *Actas y Documentos emanados de la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del MERCOSUR (1991 - 2006)*.

Yordanova, Nikoleta (2011), 'Inter-institutional Rules and Division of Power in the European Parliament: Allocation of Consultation and Co-decision Reports', *West European Politics*, 34 (1), pp. 97-121.

Zondi, Siphamandla (2011), 'The Pan African Parliament and the African Union: An Embryo in an Infant's Womb?', *Insight on Africa* 3 (1), pp. 23-42.

Zürn, Michael (2016), 'Historical Institutionalism and International Relations—Strange Bedfellows?', In Thomas Rixen, Lora Anne Viola, and Michael Zürn (eds) *Historical Institutionalism and International Relations: Explaining Institutional Development in World Politics* (Oxford University Press).

INTERVIEWS

EP 1, Member of the European Parliament from Portugal, Brussels, February, 2017.

EP 2, Senior official of a European political group at the European Parliament, Brussels, February, 2017.

EP 3, Senior official of the European Parliament, Brussels, February, 2017.

EP 4, Former member of the European Parliament from the United Kingdom, November, 2016.

Parlasur 1, Senior official of the MERCOSUR Parliament, Montevideo, Uruguay, January 2018.

Parlasur 2, Former Member of the Group MERCOSUR Parliament, Montevideo, Uruguay, February 2018.

Parlasur 3, Member of the MERCOSUR Parliament from Argentina, Buenos Aires, Argentina, February 2018.

Parlasur 4, Senior official of the MERCOSUR Parliament, Montevideo, Uruguay, January 2018.

Parlasur 5, Senior official of the MERCOSUR Parliament, Montevideo, Uruguay, February 2018.

Parlasur 6, Senior official of the MERCOSUR Parliament, Montevideo, Uruguay, February 2018.

Parlasur 7, Former Member of the Group MERCOSUR Parliament, Buenos Aires, Argentina, February 2018.

Parlasur 8, Member of the MERCOSUR Parliament from Argentina, Buenos Aires, Argentina, February 2018.

Parlasur 9, Member of the MERCOSUR Parliament from Argentina, Buenos Aires, Argentina, February 2018.

Parlasur 10, Senior official of the MERCOSUR Parliament, Montevideo, Uruguay, February 2018.

Parlasur 11, Senior official of the MERCOSUR Parliament, Montevideo, Uruguay, February 2018.

PAP 1, Member of the Pan-African Parliament, Midrand, South Africa, May 2018.

PAP 2, Expert on the African Union, Pretoria, South Africa, May 2018.

PAP 3, Senior official of the Pan-African Parliament, Midrand, South Africa, May 2018.

PAP 4, Senior official of the Pan-African Parliament, Midrand, South Africa, May 2018.

PAP 5, Official of the Pan-African Parliament from Southern Africa, Midrand, South Africa, May 2018.

PAP 6, Official of the Pan-African Parliament from Southern Africa, Midrand, South Africa, May 2018.

PAP 7, Senior official of the Pan-African Parliament, Midrand, South Africa, May 2018.

PAP 8, Member of the Pan-African Parliament, Midrand, South Africa, May 2018.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]