

**THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR STUDYING REGIONAL  
INTEGRATION**

**HUDUDIY INTEGRATSIYANI O'RGANISHNING NAZARIY ASOSLARI**

**ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСНОВЫ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЙ  
ИНТЕГРАЦИИ**

*Shaxobova Shaxzoda Avazovna*

*University of World Economy*

*and Diplomacy Lecturer,*

*Department of International Finance and*

*Investments Tashkent, Uzbekistan*

*+998909293029*

*shaxobova.sh@uwed.uz*

**Abstract.** The study of regional integration has evolved beyond the universalization of the Western European model. Contemporary scholars highlight the need for comprehensive theoretical frameworks that consider historical, political, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions. This article presents a critical overview of classical and contemporary integration theories, examining their explanatory, descriptive, and prescriptive roles in understanding regional integration processes.

**Keywords:** Integration; Federalism; Functionalism; Neofunctionalism; Network Theory; Economic Integration; Social Constructivism

**Annotatsiya:** Hududiy integratsiya tadqiqotlari g'arbiy yevropalik modelni umumlashtirishdan tashqariga chiqdi. Zamonaviy olimlar tarixiy, siyosiy, iqtisodiy va ijtimoiy-madaniy omillarni hisobga olgan keng qamrovli nazariy asoslar zarurligini ta'kidlashadi. Ushbu maqola klassik va zamonaviy integratsiya nazariyalarining tanqidiy sharhini beradi, ularning tushuntiruvchi, tasniflovchi va tavsiya etuvchi rollarini tahlil qiladi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Integratsiya; Federalizm; Funktsionalizm; Neofunktsionalizm; Tarmoq nazariyasi; Iqtisodiy integratsiya; Ijtimoiy konstruktivizm

**Аннотация:** Изучение региональной интеграции вышло за рамки универсализации западноевропейской модели. Современные ученые подчеркивают необходимость комплексных теоретических рамок, учитывающих исторические, политические, экономические и социокультурные аспекты. В статье представлен критический обзор классических и современных теорий интеграции, рассматривающий их объяснительную, описательную и предписывающую функции в изучении процессов региональной интеграции.

**Ключевые слова:** Интеграция; Федерализм; Функционализм; Неофункционализм; Сетевая теория; Экономическая интеграция; Социальный конструктивизм

## Introduction

Historically, integration studies have focused on the experiences of Western Europe. A.A. Baykov, A.D. Bogaturov, and V.G. Shemyatenkov are some of the scholars who say that this "intellectual monopoly" kept a more general philosophy and methodology of integration from growing. Systems theory defines integration as the linking of different parts into a whole. There are more than 40 definitions of the term. Contemporary research amalgamates historical-political analysis with typological studies to discern common traits of regional integration, shaped by globalization and the development of novel theoretical frameworks.

### Classical Theories of Integration

Past Federalism and functionalism are two classical approaches. Federalists like A. Spinelli, K. Friedrich, J. Elezer, A. Mark, G. Brugmans, and P. Duclos thought that a federation was the only way for states to work together to get "perpetual peace," make the most of the synergy between central institutions and member states, increase their global influence, and stop power usurpation. Federalism, on the other hand, only looked at political issues and didn't take into account economic and socio-cultural ones. By the late 1940s, efforts to impose federations "from above" had failed.

Functionalism, created by D. Mitrany, was a more practical, sector-based model that stressed technical, economic, and social cooperation as a way to keep conflicts between states from happening. Political unification was anticipated to arise organically from effective functional cooperation, a notion substantiated by European integration in the 1960s. Functionalism put results ahead of political ideology, showing that practical sectoral successes could slowly weaken national sovereignty.

### Modern Theories

E. Haas was a big supporter of neofunctionalism, which added the political aspect to integration theory. It stressed the importance of non-state actors and "spillover effects," which happen when integration in one area leads to cooperation in other areas. Economic integration, which is less limited by worries about sovereignty, is seen as a good place to start. Karl Deutsch's communication theory talked about how to make interstate contacts more stable and how to create "security communities" to improve social cohesion and integration. Eduard Moravcsik's liberal intergovernmental approach (LIA) centered on harmonizing domestic interests to create a "demand for integration," subsequently leading to negotiation and the delegation of authority to international institutions, thereby bolstering nation-state authority even within multilateral frameworks. J. Peterson and E. Bomberg's network approach sees

integration as a system of political actors who are connected and share information and resources. This methodology aligns with various theoretical frameworks yet is still in a developmental phase. Neo-institutionalism—encompassing historical, sociological, and rational-choice perspectives—augments the analytical framework for comprehending intricate institutional structures in European integration. Social constructivism underscores the co-creation of identities within social systems, emphasizing the possibilities for dynamic interaction in processes of integration. The legalist perspective emphasizes the primacy of law in regulating integration and highlights the influence of legislation in shaping regional identity.

### **Theories of Economic Integration**

B. Balassa's framework for economic integration says that integration is both a process and a state. The process stops discrimination between economic entities in different states, while the condition shows how national economies can interact without discrimination. Integration happens in steps: free trade area, customs union, common market, economic union, and full economic integration. Political integration could also happen, which would mean the creation of a supranational authority. Moving from one stage to the next happens mostly on its own, because it is necessary to keep past successes.

### **Conclusion**

A thorough look at both old and new integration theories shows that they all use a multidimensional approach that includes political, economic, and socio-cultural points of view. For regional cooperation to work well, like it does in the EU, ASEAN, SCO, and CIS, it needs scientifically based models that are specific to each region. Russia's experience in the post-Soviet space shows that we need to rethink integration frameworks to get long-lasting and mutually beneficial results.

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