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R. Fawn: Globalising the Regional

Most edited volumes on the phenomenon of regionalism in the world suffer from overemphasising the European experience or the particular theories associated with that experience. The volume edited by Fawn constitutes a notable effort to provide a global understanding of regionalism. The editor departs from the assumption that regions are central to the understanding and the practice of global order and globalisation at large (p. 25f.). He pins down the relevance and particularity of regions to the constant changes in their shape, logics and purpose. This fluidity poses a particular challenge to theorising (p. 33).

The volume is divided into two parts that bring together a range of renowned scholars on regionalisms from different academic backgrounds. The first part consists of conceptional contributions that chiefly deal with the entanglements of regions and security. The second part contains cases studies that investigate a particular rationale in one selected region.

The editor aims for a balanced approach in his choice of contributions and draws from most world regions and from various theoretical positions. Fawn also equally includes all kinds of actors (states and non-state actors) (29) and topics (economics, politics, security and culture) (p. 31) into his concept of region. The rest of the book somewhat disappointingly focuses on the conventional topics of economics and security and on states and primary actors.

In his introductory chapter Fawn offers a complete literature survey on the role of regions in the broader IR literature. He reiterates the conventional dichotomies of old and new regionalisms (8) and of regionalism and regionalisation (p. 13). He underlines the relevance of institutions, territoriality and identity in the definition of regions, which all reappear throughout the volume. The main rationale of the volume is conceived as assembling varieties of regions and as investigating the interactions of regions with other actors on different scales (p. 34). Regions are thus constituted as actors in their own right and not only as a scene. However, not all contributions adhere to this spatial approach to regions. Lake follows a neorealist approach and focuses on regions as power structures in international anarchy. These structures reflect a hierarchy that is produced by an external hegemon, chiefly the U.S. (p. 45).

Miller even further detaches from the introductory understanding and presents a typology of states based on their degree of nation-building and state-building (p. 89f.) and determines their relation with conflict. In his state-centric approach, the region is reduced to a container for comparison or a scene for wars. Adler and Greve take an intermediate stance between the previous approaches. They distinguish different types of security orders according to their time, space and function (p. 72). Due to the overlapping conceptions and practices of the region, they argue for a comprehensive analytical approach that comprises all these orders under a common repertoire (p. 69). The boundaries of regions would hence be defined by these practices rather than through identity or geography.

The richest conceptual contribution of the volume is not to be found in the theoretical sections but it is hidden under a European case study. Even though Paasi empirically draws from sub-state regionalism in Finland, his chapter consists of a broad exercise of theorising. He deals with regions as a process of spatial re-scaling beyond the state and brings together the concepts of regions, borders and identity. He proposes an analytical approach to the shape of a region based on its territory, its symbols, its establishment and its institutions (p. 134f.) A central role is accorded to the identity of a region and the identification with a region (p. 140f.)

The chapter of Capling and Nossal comes back to the dichotomal terminology and argues that North America is characterised by regionalisation without regionalism. The elite-driven projects faced resistance by social ac-

tors. While empirically rich, the contribution is analytically confusing regarding the key terms. Unlike in the conceptual chapters, regionalism is seen as a successful "deeper integration" (150) stemming from regional projects rather than as the projects themselves. The involvement of new actors in shaping existing regionalisms is portrayed as a halt to regionalism (160) rather than a negotiation of the institutions, which brings about a distinct identification, including a "trinational" (p. 161) one.

Tussie develops a more nuanced understanding of regionalism with reference to Latin America and proposes a typology that is broadly distinguishing between a market-driven open regionalism (177f.) and a counter-hegemonic defensive regionalism (p. 182f.). As in previous chapters, U.S. hegemony is given a pivotal role for the motives of regionalism, which are located in a threefold reactive framework of compliance, resistance and acceptance.

Hentz convincingly takes up Fawn's comprehensiveness and argues for a common approach to economic and security regionalism. Both aspects are closely entangled in accordance to the dominant regional order. In the case of regionalism in Southern Africa, the focus on trade and infrastructure produces insecurity by reinforcing transnational non-state threats to security (p. 212f.).

Ravenhill adds another twofold approach to regionalism. He analyses governmental regionalism in East Asia and argues that while the main topics have been trade and increasingly finance, the motives are largely political (217f.) Institutionalisation has been a reaction to crisis (p. 224) but while it has advanced in the regional external relations, it remained superficial inside of East Asia (p. 234). Unfortunately, little explanation is given for this intriguing constellation except a reference to the emulation of the "ASEAN way" (p. 228).

Finally, Kubicek examines post-Soviet regionalism through various theoretical lenses ranging from neorealism, constructivism and functionalism to political economy. In his analysis of the domestic and global framework (p. 239f.) he finds unfavourable conditions for regionalisms in all theoretical approaches.

Kubicek's findings in the last chapter best summarise the main dilemma of the book and perhaps the theorising of regions at large. The conceptual enthusiasm about the "rise of regions" (6) hits a rough empirical ground. Regionalism is seemingly "shallow" (North America: 235, Latin America: 169, East Asia: 235) or "poorly functioning" (CIS: 255) everywhere.

The volume lacks a concluding chapter that would pave the way towards addressing this dilemma and that could bring together the insightful but fragmented strings presented. It undoubtedly remains a valuable collection of well-argued papers with linked topics. The main benefit of this collection is to gain a comprehensive and balanced overview of the state of the art in the field. However, the lack of research perspectives and direct interaction between the authors leave the reader short of a convincing joint effort.

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