

REZENSIONEN

Heiner Hänggi, Ralf Roloff and Jürgen Rüländ (Eds.): *Interregionalism and International Relations*

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This book outlines the new research agenda in international relations namely interregionalism and attempts to explain this phenomenon with several articles contributed by renowned scholars in that specific field. It endeavors to clarify empirical stocktaking of interregionalism in its various forms, to draw some theoretical conclusions and to identify further research questions. This volume comprises nineteen chapters and is divided into five parts by categorizing its thematic outlines in terms of conceptual framework and thorough analyses of comparative case studies.

Its introductory chapter (Part I) takes a glimpse of the emergence of interregionalism as a phenomenon in international politics and observes various theoretical approaches. It also explores two overriding research questions: *forms* and *functions* of interregionalism. It argues that the most elaborate and intensive inter- and transregional forums link the so-called Triad regions: the leading regions in the world economy, namely North America, Europe and East Asia (Northeast and Southeast Asia), while such forums are linking the Triad with non-Triadic regions and are connecting regions at the periphery of the Triad with each other. Moreover, the form of interregional relationships can be classified on the basis of four patterns of dialogues: (1) group-to-group dialogues established by the European Union (EU) with other partner regional organizations; (2) forums like Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the Asia-Pacific Eco-

nomie Cooperation (APEC), the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC); (3) continental dialogues such as the Europe-Africa and the Europe-Latin America summits; and (4) transatlantic dialogue between regional grouping and large power such as the EU-US dialogue. Jürgen Rüländ gives an account of five major functions of interregionalism: (1) balancing, (2) institution-building, (3) rationalizing, (4) agenda-setting and (5) collective identity-building. As these functions are more theoretically deduced than empirically real, they are the result of an eclectic combination of arguments derived from the major schools of international relations such as neorealism, liberal institutionalism and constructivism.

Part II includes two chapters and provides a theoretical and conceptual framework for the study of interregionalism by presenting a systemic explanation of interregional relations and proposing a typology of interregionalism. Roloff seeks to explain why and under which conditions interregionalism has emerged, and what are the preconditions and the limitations for successful interregional relations. He argues that regionalism and interregionalism with transnational elements are responses of the *nation states* to the external challenges imposed on them by globalization and regionalization. Hänggi gives a very detailed analysis for setting up a typology that covers the broad spectrum of all empirical cases of institutionalized interregional relations. His noteworthy classification of interregional relations in the wider and narrower sense paves the right way for further discussion of conceptual discourse in the studies of interregionalism.

Part III consists of ten chapters and covers various case studies of interregional relations between major world regions such as Asia-

America, Asia-Europe, America-Europe and Africa-Europe. Aggarwal and Kwei briefly review APEC's role in trade liberalization and the intersection of trade and security. Low examines the origins and functions of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC). Robles reveals the EU's relationship with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as being far from altruistic; it is more of an asymmetric, interest-driven policy strengthening Europe's economic foothold in Asia in which the EU gains more than the ASEAN.

Dent views the ASEM as a potentially significant element of a developing architecture of multi-level cooperative diplomacy within the world system. Kupchan explains how and why a transition to the new transatlantic interregionalism is likely to come about by focusing on the rise of Europe as an emerging power and the erosion of liberal internationalism in the US. On the contrary, Link argues that a more balanced transatlantic relationship will be a propelling force for EU-US interregionalism and facilitate competitive cooperation with a more equal distribution of gains. Faust portrays EU-MERCOSUR relations as the outcome of political bargaining processes between regionally organized domestic business groups interested in market-opening policies and their protectionist opponents. Crawley explores the unique form of North-South interregionalism derived from European-Latin American relations. Weiland examines the interregional relations between the EU and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), while Olsen argues that the Europe-Africa summit was established as a gesture of symbolic politics to compensate for the neglect of Africa by the EU.

Part IV comprises five chapters describing comparative analyses and special cases, which seem to transcend the commonly accepted manifestation of inter- and transregionalism. Comparing the APEC and the ASEM, Maull and Okfen assume that interregional relations have not enabled individ-

ual powers or groups of states to increase their influence in another region. From their perspective, the APEC and the ASEM should not be viewed as institutions enhancing governance capacity directly, but rather as vehicles for "soft politics". Dieter and Higgott conclude that East Asian monetary regionalism and bilateral free trade agreements are sidelining transregionalism led by the APEC. Holland dubs the EU's relations with the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific states (ACP) as imagined interregionalism and questions the rationale for its very identity. Schirm examines power, domestic interests, and ideas in the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) while Wagner analyses the historical development, its characteristics and functions and future prospects of IOR-ARC.

In the concluding chapter (Part V), Rüländ summarizes and evaluates the findings of the previous chapters and formulates some more suggestions for further research. It also remarks that interregionalism has the potential to contribute to the emerging system of global governance but its potential is by no means fully utilized. All in all, the attempt to identify and incorporate every dimension of interregional relationships covering all regions of the world into broader picture of international relations is an endearing quality of this volume. So this book should be essential reading for students and scholars of regional integration and international relations.

Soe Moe Oo

Alexandra von Ilsemann: Frauen stützen die Hälfte des Himmels – Asiens Frauen zwischen Tradition und Moderne

Frankfurt a. Main: R.G. Fischer, 2005, 360 S., € 22,80

"Frauen stützen die Hälfte des Himmels" – mit dieser Aussage von Mao Zedong betitelt