

thread is the realization that “a critical mass of women workers is vitally concerned with work-related issues and interested in actively pursuing these issues through mainstream mixed unions, women-only unions or non-union organizations such as NGOs.” (p. 11). This is particularly articulate in Elizabeth Hill’s chapter on the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) in India, in which the author asserts that “contrary to mainstream belief, women workers can be highly motivated and find the time to engage in strategies for work-life reform through their union.” (p. 116). Kaye Broadbent’s chapter on “Women workers and autonomous organizing” in Japan (p. 156ff.) comes to a similar conclusion, but this theme finds explicit expression in other chapters as well (China, p. 42, Thailand, p. 101). The authors of this volume largely dismiss the notion of “union apathy” (p. 116) among women workers, which has been used in previous scholarship to explain the labor movement’s failure to organize women (*ibid.*).

Most chapters give a historical overview which is most useful for establishing a transnational image of Asian unionism and female labor activism. The major part of the book is as much about the national union movements in general, as it is about female labor activism and therefore provides only a general overview. Much of what is discussed in the first part of the book deals with separate organizing strategies within the mainstream national unions and is not gender-specific. Although it mentions a few prominent female figures (Lilis Mahmudah in Indonesia (p. 25), Aruni Srito and Wilaiwan Saetia in Thailand (p. 105ff.), Ela Bhatt in India (p. 118)), we hear few authentic voices and individual experiences of women workers in contemporary Asia. The few interviews with male and female union officials generally center on discussing the necessity of separate women’s structures in unions and the obstacles to mobilizing women in general. Notable exceptions are interviews with “eight informants” on informal networks in China (p. 45), the interviews with Korean

unionist (p. 140f.) and the interviews with founding members of the Japanese women-only union *Onna Kumiai*. The book provides an overview and can serve as an introduction to the topic for economists, historians of the Asian labor movements, and scholars in the field of gender studies.

(Karin-Irene Eiermann)

Reimund Seidelmann, Andreas Vasilache (eds.): European Union and Asia. A Dialogue on Regionalism and Interregional Cooperation

Transformation, Development, and Regionalization in Greater Asia, Bd. 3, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2008, 363 S., EUR 59,00

The *EU-Network of European Studies Centres in Asia (NESCA): A Research Dialogue* is a project launched in 2006 consisting of a series of conferences, workshops and related research on EU-Asian relations. The aim of the project is the widening and deepening of the research cooperation between the European research area, the Network of European Studies Centres in Asia (Nesca) and the European Studies associations in Asia. The book presented here is the fourth Volume in the *EU-NESCA: A Research Dialogue* Book Series and contains revised papers of workshops and conferences, and articles written for the book. This volume gives an overview of concepts and perspectives of regionalism and interregional cooperation with a focus on the interregional cooperation between Europe, Asia and the Asia-Pacific Region. Scholars from Asia, the Asia-Pacific Region and Europe combine a theoretical and conceptual approach with a strong empirical insight and explore the political, economic, security and cultural aspects of regionalisation processes and interregional cooperation. The Editors see the book as “one of many necessary steps for building a better common understanding and a new common interregional responsibility” (p.10). They think this is necessary because interregion-

alism as well as regionalisation processes are important and necessary elements of reforming and decentralising the international system with the aim to improve its efficiency in solving common problems.

The book consists of four parts. The first part contains three articles about theories and concepts of regionalisation processes and interregionalism. The first article introduces the idea of a light supranationalism to describe the uniqueness of the EU. This is necessary because of the contradiction of national sovereignty and pure supranationalism. The second article describes the international system and theorizes the transforming impact regionalisation processes have on it. The last article gives an overview of the different phases of regionalisation processes and describes the new regionalism. Institutionalist and constructivist approaches are used to overcome the limits of the view of globalizers, medievalists and mere economic analysis.

The second part of the book is about identities and perceptions and consists of three articles. The notion of identity is theorized and the first two articles give concepts about a European identity. They examine questions about the evolution of a European identity and what is necessary to develop it further. The last article in contrast is about the perception of the EU in Australia, New Zealand, Thailand and Korea. It gives some results of an empirical survey in the four countries and shows that the EU is perceived mostly as an economic actor.

Regionalisation and Regional Integration in Asia and Europe: Policy – Economy – Security is the title of the third part which consists of five articles. The first article introduces the *three level game* which underlines the “inter-retro-reaction between the domestic, regional and international domains” (p.161). Cross-regional dynamics are examined in the second article. It shows their history, their evolution, their classification, their different formal constellations and their functions. It concludes that cross-regional

initiatives are international regimes which can have an important impact on global governance depending on the determination of their constituent actors. The last three articles of part three examine respectively the issues of human rights, monetary integration and international security in regard of the EU and the role of the EU.

The last part of the book is about nation-state views on the EU. The five articles examine the relations between the EU and respectively China, India, Japan, Indonesia and Korea. Besides the insights they give about the special relationships between them they all show very well the different dimensions, motivations and limits of the EU in partnerships with the different nation-states.

In sum the book is an essential reading for all researchers dealing with regionalisation processes, interregional cooperation, the new regionalism and the EU. It also gives some interesting insights of Asia and the Asian-Pacific region but it focuses more on the EU. The case studies give important information about special issues and certain relationships of the EU but put together the book is especially interesting in the domain of theories of international relations, regionalism and interregional cooperation.

(Rabea Tessa Volkmann)

Kadambari Sinha: Konversationskurs Hindi

Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 2007, 174 S., EUR 29,80

Viele Hindi-Lernende haben lange darauf gewartet: ein Übungsbuch Hindi-Deutsch, in dem zum einen die Konversation zur Hauptsache gemacht wurde und das zum anderen in ernst zu nehmenden Dialogen viele kulturelle und gesellschaftliche Aspekte Indiens aufgreift. Endlich!

Das Buch ist einfach und übersichtlich gegliedert. 15 Kapiteln mit unterschiedlichen Schwerpunkten umfassen 2-4 Dialoge. Da-