



THE ASHGATE
RESEARCH COMPANION *to*

REGIONALISMS

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Edited by

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Introduction and Overview: The Study of New Regionalism(s) at the Start of the Second Decade of the Twenty-First Century

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For a long period the study of regions and regional orders occupied a small if not insignificant place in international relations theory and scholarship. Now we have ... books which argue that regions are central to our understanding of world politics. (Acharya 2007, 629)

In the 1980s and 1990s, globalization and internationalization fused, and that fusion manifested itself in the growth of porous regions World politics is now shaped by the interaction between porous regions and America's imperium The United States plays the central role in a world of regions. (Katzenstein 2005, 24–5, 42–3)

the plurality of regions ... going beyond a state-centred approach involves recognition that other non-state actors also develop regional projects. (Bøås, Marchand, and Shaw 2005, 6)

Introduction

Analyses, as well as the policies and practices of 'regionalism(s)', are enjoying a renaissance. A variety of scholars from a diversity of analytical perspectives and existential regions seeks to capture and project heterogeneous forces both advancing and restraining regionalism at the turn of the present decade. This

Companion is symptomatic of the development and promise of the burgeoning field, which has been transformed from 'first-wave' formal, Eurocentric/European studies in the 1960s and 1970s (Cantori and Spiegel 1970) to comparative, global contrasts in what may be considered a 'second wave' (Wunderlich 2007, 4–5) over the last three decades.¹ Revisionist laments at the end of the first decade of the new millennium (see Acharya 2007; Acharya and Johnston 2007) now seek to establish a conceptual 'breakwater' against the expanding breadth and scope of second-wave analyses.

Söderbaum and Shaw (2003) co-edited an initial *Reader* on the 'regionalisms' field near the start of this decade. Notably, the field has become even more comprehensive and diverse in the intervening eight years with an emphasis on non-state actors (see Deacon et al. 2009; Walker and Thompson 2008; Yeates 2007; Clarke and Jennings 2007), inter-regionalisms (Gaens, Jokela, and Linnell 2009; Gaens 2008; Wunderlich 2007) and micro-regionalisms (Söderbaum and Taylor 2008; Grant 2008). This scholarly development is pushing the boundaries of the regionalisms literature, and represents, arguably, the embryonic stages of a 'third wave' in the field.

Yet, as expansive as the field has become and as voluminous the number of studies, it remains beset by rather stark divisions. These are determined by differential approaches as well as divergent scholarly, ontological, and epistemological positions on elemental aspects such as the nature and parameters of 'regionality', the relationship between globalisation and regionalism, and the contrasts and significance of the formal and informal sources of regions. Despite a number of recent analyses (discussed below) that have cogently illustrated new regionalism's promising precepts – drawing our attention to the multiplicity and multilayered character of regions and emphasising the importance of non-state actors and spaces – the main theoretical implications of 'new' regionalisms still seem to bypass many contemporary (and conventional) studies of regions (see for example the special issue on regions in *Review of International Studies*, edited by Fawn 2009). The orthodoxy of the state as the principal builder and shaper (or dismantler) of regions remains central in many of these studies, as reflected in Acharya's 2007 review article and 2007 co-edited collection with Johnston.

This *Companion* both provides a state-of-the-art review of regionalisms – old and new – and seeks to transcend the unhelpful analytical schisms that have generally been maintained in regionalism studies as a whole. We advance a new regionalisms agenda, which emphasises the overtly formal as well as informal nature of regions, paying attention to state and non-state constituents and processes, and covering both established and emerging regional entities. While comprehensive, the coverage is not exhaustive: out of necessity, a selection of case studies has been made. Yet, through the review of established political blocs and emerging regional forms – shaped, for example, through the creation of export processing zones (EPZs), inter-regional and intra-regional flows of migrants, and ecological

¹ See for example The United Nations University–Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS), www.cris.unu.edu

border regions – we hope to illustrate overlapping processes of formal and social institutionalisation and the discursive practices that underpin them. We address some of the pressing theoretical questions that have been raised in relation to regional studies of late, posing questions that examine the role of variegated capital and capitalisms in producing regional outcomes; the way in which regionalisation reflects or reinforces territorial fragmentation and/or reconstitution in the era of globalisation; and the cognitive dynamics that underlie the making of regions (on the latter, see for example Bach 2008). In short, we juxtapose new regionalisms with emerging discourses about emerging economies/societies/powers (Pieterse and Rehbein 2009).

New Regionalisms Defined and Defended

the new regionalism literature challenged the rationalist bias of neo-liberal institutionalism. Compared to the earlier regional integration literature, the literature on 'new regionalism' viewed regionalism to be a more multifaceted and comprehensive phenomenon taking into account the role of both state and non-state actors, as well as a whole range of political, economic, strategic, social, demographic and ecological interactions within regions. It shifted the focus away from formal institutions toward studying informal sectors, parallel economies and non-state coalitions. (Acharya and Johnston 2007, 9–10)

This introductory chapter reflects on 'new regionalisms' as an analytical and applied response to: (i) uneven globalisations – not just economic and strategic but also cultural, ecological, and technological; (ii) the proliferation of states, especially small and weak ones; and (iii) the rise in the number of non-state actors, both private companies and civil societies (Bøås, Marchand, and Shaw 2005). Given our own connections, field research experiences, participatory observations – as well as limitations – we especially privilege insights from Africa (Dunn and Shaw 2001; Grant and Söderbaum 2003) and the Caribbean (Byron 2004; Farrell 2005; Girvan 2006; Jessen 2008; Pantin 2005), which might inform a variety of analytical approaches – uni-disciplinary as well as inter-disciplinary – and policies, non-state as well as inter-state. With that said, we also bring in the two 'sides' of an increasingly divergent world: the 'emerging economies' (BRICs: Brazil, Russia, India, and China) on the one hand, and the 'fragile' states on the other (Cooper, Antkiewicz, and Shaw 2006 and 2007; Shaw, Cooper, and Antkiewicz 2007).

We seek to advance analyses within the burgeoning 'new regionalisms' genre without being overly partisan or defensive (Bøås, Marchand, and Shaw 1999 and 2005), despite the critique of Acharya (2007), Acharya and Johnston (2007), and oversight by Fawn (2009). Indeed, no singular perspective arising from the continuing discourse can claim an ontological monopoly on insights (Katzenstein 2005, 6, 41; Schulz, Söderbaum, and Ojendal 2001; Söderbaum and Shaw 2003). Notably, this framework remains innovative as it marks its tenth anniversary,

having coalesced in the late 1990s (Hettne, Inotai, and Sunkel 2000a and 2000b). The relative 'youth' of this approach notwithstanding, the 'new regionalisms' literature has already made contributions to policy development as well as to a set of overlapping perspectives such as development and security studies, regional and global governance, comparative area and global studies – not to mention the 'disciplines' of international relations and comparative politics, and the 'sub-disciplines' of international organisation and international political economy. We return to this discussion in the final section of the chapter.

In its novel and plural version, the 'new regionalisms' approach has also extracted fruitful discourses around 'civil society' and private companies, regional 'development triangles', the 'informal sector', and the illegal. First, the former pair of non-state actors can be found at all levels, from the local to the global, with our emphasis being on a variety of intermediate regional levels and dimensions. In other words, the dyadic relations are evident from regional non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and transnational corporations (TNCs) to regional brands, franchises, logistics, supply chains, support sectors, and the like.

Second, development triangles can vary in scale from micro-levels through meso-levels to macro-levels. For instance, there are over 3,000 EPZs located in 120 countries, some with cross-border features. Many of these EPZs are found in parts of Asia such as the Chinese triangle involving China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. Perhaps the most established and familiar is the Singapore–Johore–Riau (SIJORI). Other development triangles have been created in the past decade, such as the Brunei Darussalam–Indonesia–Malaysia–Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP–EAGA) and Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC). Hundreds of EPZs are in the planning stages, and are expected to be in operation by 2020.²

Third, the 'informal' may be traced to the work of Keith Hart (1973) on employment in Ghana in 1971, which informed the set of International Labour Organisation (ILO) employment commissions in the 1970s. However, this work focused exclusively on the national level rather than recognising the ubiquity and fluidity of the regional dimensions to informal labour as economies rise and fall. In the African context, recent 'new urban studies' have expanded much of the thinking on the growth of informal economies across national borders. Aside from a few exceptions (see for example Bach 1999; Iheduru 2003; Dunn and Hentz 2003; Shaw et al. 2003; Söderbaum and Taylor 2003 and 2008), the 'informal' perspective has not been extensively developed in the field of international relations (IR). Although at one end of a spectrum, the informal cannot be separated or isolated from either the formal or the illegal. In turn, as we suggest towards the end of this chapter, such heterogeneous regionalisms challenge traditional 'club' diplomacy and favour innovative, 'network' diplomacy (Heine 2006), or 'public' diplomacy (Cooper 2008).

2 See www.fez.go.kr

From Older Regionalisms

This overview chapter is also informed by a mix of existential and conceptual developments, some of which were recently presented, from a largely realist, institutionalist, and Asian perspective (characteristic of the last decade of the last century), by Amitav Acharya (2007). The former includes the proliferation of states since the end of bipolarity – now nearly 200, of which approximately 50 are 'small' and another roughly 45 are non-independent (Baldacchino 2006). The recognition of the BRICs following the rise then fall – if not demise – of the newly industrializing countries (NICs) and the reverberations of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and 7/7, and parallels in myriad other atrocities ranging from Bali to Madrid to Mumbai, represent a significant challenge to the argument that the state is the sole actor worth examining.

Hence the focus here is on lessons from/for the global South and other 'emerging regions' rather than the classic case of Europe alone. The contributors to this volume draw upon the analytical as well as the applied, the collective as well as the personal, in their work. Such a perspective is compatible with the dozen original comparative regional analyses of globalisation presented in Bowles and colleagues (2007). The earlier period and focus was influenced by a parallel perspective, which in turn reflected a nuanced version of *dependencia* – subordinate state systems – advanced in the case of pre-majority rule Southern Africa by Larry Bowman (1968).

This revisionist reflection unashamedly exploits previous collaborative work with a range of colleagues, none of whom should be blamed for our misinterpretations here. In turn, it seeks to go beyond such collaboration, informed by learning in the Caribbean and elsewhere in part through association with the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI)³ concentrated around the two ends of the inter-state spectrum: small states (Cooper and Shaw 2009) and emerging economies (Cooper, Antkiewicz, and Shaw 2006 and 2007). Likewise, UNU–CRIS (United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies) and the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECPDM)⁴ have begun to play an invaluable analytical and educational role, especially between the expanding European Union (EU) and reformist African Union (AU).

We also seek to go beyond the classical comparative perspective of Peter Katzenstein (2005) in his insightful descriptive history of Germany and Japan in post-war European and East Asian regional development within the US 'empire'. In particular, his notion of 'porous' regions is instructive:

A regionalism made porous by globalization and internationalization remains available for processes that create even larger regions, illustrated since the mid-1990s by the enlargements of NATO, the EU, and ASEAN. (Katzenstein 2005, 21)

3 www.cigionline.org

4 See www.ecdpm.org

Happily, Katzenstein's *magnum opus* puts a variety of regionalisms into the mainstream – such as culture, economy, identity, society, technology – yet he avoids more critical references to, say, varieties of capitalism or differences between established Northern TNCs and burgeoning companies in the South (Goldstein 2007). He also does not explore the role of conflict, gender, and informal or illegal forces in regionalism. In addition, he focuses on regional development in the North, with little reference to the global South.

Katzenstein's approach is reflective of a long-standing preoccupation in regional studies with the very formal processes of institutionalisation in the North (with the EU regarded as the leading example of regionalisation), to the relative neglect of the South. Indeed, as noted by several contributors to this *Companion*, in most conventional regional analyses the EU tends to be treated as the archetypal regional organisation, with other organisations analysed for their degree of divergence or convergence with European processes. Fortunately, this has not remained unchallenged in regionalism studies. In recent years, reflective of the increasingly problematic nature of the expanded EU and its eurozone (even ahead of the great recession of the turn of the decade), a collection of works has appeared on the contribution of 'new regionalism' (notably in its singular version) to EU studies. Alex Warleigh-Lack has been a principal contributor, but collaborators included other eminent students of EU and regionalism such as Nick Robinson, Ben Rosamond, and Luk van Langenhove (see for example Van Langenhove and Marchesi 2008; Warleigh-Lack 2004, 2006a, 2006b; Warleigh-Lack and Rosamond 2010; De Lombaerde et al. 2008; De Lombaerde and Schulz 2009). Most recently, a collection of essays sought to bridge the divide between EU studies and new regionalism (Warleigh-Lack, Robinson and Rosamond, 2011). The book's two parts – comparative analyses with and contrasts of the EU to Africa, Asia, Latin America, and North America; and analysis of inter-regional relations between the EU and other regional institutions – sought to collapse the conceptual 'frontier' between the two schools. In an earlier discussion, Warleigh-Lack and Van Langenhove (2010) lamented the tendency towards introversion in analyses of the EU, calling for attention to 'global governance' as well as new regionalism. They identified a set of reasons to engage in such comparative analysis, particularly in terms of varieties of region/regionness. In short, as the EU loses its distinctiveness in the current global and euro crises, and much of the rest of the world recovers from a mild form of contraction, there is a definite intellectual 'rebalancing' under way in cross-regional studies, mirroring empirical shifts in inter-regional hierarchies/relations.

Towards Newer Regionalisms

In response to the older variants of regionalism, including security complexes (Adler and Barnett 1998; Buzan and Wæver 2003), some scholars came to pluralise this notion as a way to identify and incorporate more informal relations – including 'grey' and illegal sectors – that affect the more recognised formal and

legal relations. This has drawn largely from the 'new security literature'. Thus 'regionalisms' is particularly useful in understanding the linkages that underpin diasporas, illegal narcotics, ecologies, gangs, small arms and light weapons (SALW), land, mafias, migrations, militias, remittances, water, minerals, and the like – in both the North and the global South. As argued in the introduction to a mid-decade collection on regionalisms, 'One of the important contributions of the new regionalisms approach has been its challenge to existing Western, in particular Eurocentric, bias in theorizing about regionalism and regionalisation' (Bøås, Marchand, and Shaw 2005, 4–5).

Thus this present volume notes, but does not accept, the critique of Acharya and Johnston (2007, 10):

We acknowledge the important contribution made by both neo-institutionalism and the new regionalism literature. We do not underestimate the importance of informal processes and non-state actors in regionalism. But we believe design issues are important and should not be neglected. Moreover, the study of new regionalism does not mean that the formal regionalism among states has become unimportant. Like the overall literature on globalization, the literature on new regionalism might have underestimated the resilience of the state, or have been too quick to predict its demise.

At the start of the new millennium, the appearance and recognition of 'emerging economies' or BRICs, succeeding the erstwhile NICs, along with the definition and identification of 'developmental' and 'fragile' states, has challenged not only notions of 'South' and 'North' but also of regionalism(s). This trend has become more pronounced given the extension of the BRIC perspective by Goldman Sachs into the 'Next-11' (or 'N-12' if South Africa is included in the list).⁵ This leads to questions relating to the degree to which emerging economies and developmental states may advance regional organisations to enhance their own leverage and status. Conversely, it remains unclear whether 'BRIC' will be extended into BRICSAM ((Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, and Mexico) without 'BRICs Plus' claiming regional roles or status (Cooper, Antkiewicz, and Shaw 2006 and 2007). Alternatively, it is not inconceivable that both BRICs and BRICSAM may come to compete or even come into conflict over their respective definitions of regions, claiming some state and non-state actors as their own associates or allies. Many of these concerns are a function of globalisation, however incomplete, uneven, or plural (Bowles et al. 2007).

At the same time, the financial and economic crises of 2008 and 2009 stimulated a number of multilateral developments that may yet have far-reaching institutional spin-offs. These include the crisis-mode summits of the G20 and the stronger voice for the BRICs in matters of the world economy. Moreover, this appears to have led to a change of relations, including the reframing within many regions of the South of collective developmental targets in the face of declining world commodity

5 See www2.goldmansachs.com

prices. For instance, in Africa there are significant new forms of collaboration among continental financial institutions (such as the African Development Bank [AfDB]) and international financial institutions (IFIs) to lessen the impacts of the economic crisis on the continent (see for example African Development Bank 2009). It is conceivable that these forms of macro-institutional coordination in the finance sector, which depend on external support, will create the conditions by which other types of future state-level regional efforts in Africa can either advance or degenerate (see for example Grant and Tiekou 2011).

Hence, as the status of and relationships between states and economies evolve, the nature of regions changes, especially if analyses bridge the gap between formally independent regimes and incorporates so-called 'non-independent' territories (Clegg and Pantojas-Garcia 2009). Furthermore, if states are characterised as emerging economies or developmental states, then the character of their regions may be likewise redefined. This leads to the following questions: are regions that include a developmental state likely to be taken more seriously than those that do not? Conversely, if the fate of such upwardly mobile states becomes problematic, will the position of their respective region become likewise more marginal? These are some of the compelling questions relating to regions and regional dynamics that emerge within the chapters in this volume.

New Regionalisms as Responses to Uneven Globalisations

The proliferation of the 'new regionalisms' approach is, in part, a function of the appearance of new states, but also of the intensification of inequalities as a result of the exponential, uneven impacts of globalisation (or globalisations), including its cultural, social, technological, economic and financial facets (Bowles et al. 2007). As myriad 'new', small states sought to insulate themselves from the shock-waves of liberalisations, successive, innovative forms of regionalisms appeared as collective responses in different parts of the South. They enabled the latter to emulate the North, and, by extension, have appeared to enhance the latter's bargaining power.

Nevertheless (and notwithstanding particular catalysts), almost all contemporary regions tend to embody elements from all three sides of the political economy/political culture 'triangle' – that is, civil societies, private sectors, and states. This is increasingly evident, for example, during the proceedings of each hemispheric, macro-regional Summit of the Americas (such as in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009),⁶ which involves protracted, multi-level diplomacy among such a trio of actor types.

The proliferation of 'global' issues in the new century – from diasporas, drugs, ecology, gangs, gender, guns, conflict commodities, and remittances to viruses and pandemics – cannot be separated from the rise of think-tanks as sources of analyses and concepts (Stone and Maxwell 2005; Zadek 2007) along with advocacy and certification (Grant, MacLean, and Shaw 2003; Rittberger and Nettesheim

⁶ See www.fifthsummitoftheamericas.org

2008) as integral parts of 'public diplomacy'. At times these roles merge somewhat, as in INGOs such as Global Witness⁷ and Partnership Africa Canada,⁸ which play a leading role in animating the mixed-actor global coalition around 'blood diamonds' (also known as conflict diamonds; see Grant and Taylor 2004). The Kimberley Process⁹ is a forum that has made much progress and has brought together civil society, corporate, and state interests on the conflict diamond issue (Grant 2009, 2010, and 2011). Small and non-independent states can overcome some of the disadvantages of their status through innovative, inclusive public diplomacy in which non-state as well as official resources are mobilised (Clegg and Pantojas-Garcia 2009; Cooper and Shaw 2009). Kimberley Process members may veto any changes to the governance framework. Thus countries such as Sierra Leone and the USA enjoy the same procedural power within the confines of the Kimberley Process.

Despite such unique power configurations within the Kimberley Process, frustration regarding the lack of progress on development issues led civil society and some segments of the diamond industry and state participants to fund the establishment of the Diamond Development Initiative International (DDII).¹⁰ The DDII, which is more akin to a think-tank than an INGO, has observer status within the Kimberley Process, through which it attempts to bring attention to human security and development issues relating to artisanal diamond mining. While the Kimberley Process has been able to attract media attention and remain salient in international policy circles, the Montreal Process on ozone depletion and the Ottawa Process on landmines led by an ICBL¹¹ comprising 1,400 members have suffered from inability to gain consensus on central issues. Moreover, it has been difficult for other human security initiatives to build momentum or gain widespread visibility. O'Dwyer (2006) has identified transnational advocacy efforts on small arms as facing such challenges despite the informed analyses and scholarly efforts produced by the annual Small Arms Survey from the Graduate School in Geneva.¹² In turn, the accountability and transparency of such think-tanks and spin-offs like global coalitions and public diplomacy are also becoming issues drawing popular¹³ and scholarly attention (Walker and Thompson 2008).

Contemporary regions may be categorised in terms of emphases and scale as well as focus. Regions also vary in range of economies (e.g. ECOWAS and SADC) to inclusion of several non-independent countries (e.g. the Caribbean and South Pacific). Whilst almost all have some 'economic' dimensions – agriculture, currency, energy, environment, finance, industry, logistics, technology trade, transportation etc. – some may privilege security (e.g. NATO and Organisation for Security and

⁷ www.globalwitness.org

⁸ www.pacweb.org

⁹ See www.kimberleyprocess.com

¹⁰ See www.ddiglobal.org; see also Grant (2009, 12–13).

¹¹ www.icbl.org

¹² See also www.smallarmssurvey.org

¹³ See for example www.accountability21.net and www.ingoaccountabilitycharter.org

Co-operation in Europe [OSCE]) or water (e.g. the Nile Basin Initiative).¹⁴ Notably, the Nile Basin Initiative has a parallel civil society network, aptly named the Nile Basin Discourse.¹⁵

The priorities and sizes of regional arrangements may change over time. Thus the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) of nine members was initially rather distinctive in its largely non-governmental (or extra-governmental) and extra-regional (i.e. Western donors') concern for assistance and liberation in Southern Africa. In contrast, the SADCC's successor – the Southern African Development Community (SADC)¹⁶ – with a maximum membership of 15 – is more inter-state and orthodox owing to its focus on economic integration and liberalisation. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was initially a creature of transatlantic nuclear bipolarity in Europe but is now a 'global' strategic alliance preoccupied by the Middle East and Central Asia. At first, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) concentrated on the fragile ecology of Africa's Horn. However, as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD),¹⁷ it subsequently expanded membership and purview to advance conflict resolution and prevention. The original post-colonial East African Community (EAC)¹⁸ of three anglophone states in the late 1960s was revived at the century's turn with civil society and corporate features, a parliament and security sector among five members including a pair of ex- or semi-francophone societies. Meanwhile, the role of civil society in any region is increasingly central, however problematic, including post-apartheid Southern Africa (Söderbaum 2007).

Some contemporary institutions symbolise shifts in economic and political fortunes. So the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was a function of the break-up of the Soviet 'empire'. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)¹⁹ captures the rise of China in the twenty-first century. And regional partners of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), now at four decades (Sumsky 2008), and the G8 indicate recognition of growing influence. This is evident in the creation of the 'ASEAN Plus 3'²⁰ and the G8 outreach five from BRICSAM, respectively (Cooper, Antkiewicz, and Shaw 2006 and 2007). The latter was recently somewhat formalised in the Heiligendamm Process (Cooper and Antkiewicz 2008).

Contemporary regions can be 'macro', 'meso', and 'micro' in scale, as indicated in Box 1.1. Consider the trio of small states in West Africa's Mano River Union (MRU) or the eight very small Central American states in Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA)²¹ to continent-wide AU and Organisation of American States (OAS) and the inter-continental, trans-Pacific configuration of Asia-Pacific

14 www.nilebasin.org
 15 www.nilebasindiscourse.net
 16 www.sadc.int
 17 www.igad.org
 18 www.eac.int
 19 www.sectsc.org
 20 www.aseansec.org
 21 www.sica.int

Economic Cooperation (APEC). The new regionalisms approach embraces all three levels, each of which differentiates relations between state, civil society, and private capital (the last ranging from TNCs to small firms, individual entrepreneurs, and/or investors). The perspective also allows for the study of regions that are externally rather than internally generated (e.g. the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's advocacy of ecological regional development around Lake Victoria versus the region's own Nile Basin Initiative and Dialogue) as well as those that are more generic or somewhat artificial.

Box 1.1 Levels of Regional Interaction/Institutionalisation

macro-level: APEC, AU, EU, NAFTA, OAS, SOA, etc; meso-level: ASEAN, CARICOM, ECOWAS, MERCOSUR, SADC, etc; and micro-level: particularly from Africa, such as corridors, peace parks and valleys (including networks around conflict such as the Parrot's Beak in West Africa), and triangles, especially from Asia (e.g. original Singapore–Jahore–Riau (SIJORI) development triangle) and EPZs

The EU has expanded dramatically since the end of the Cold War to 27 from its original six member states. Concomitantly, the EU's range of concerns has multiplied from industrial development to common currency to unified foreign and security policies. By contrast to the EPZ 'triangles' of East Asia, Africa has generated novel forms of regionalisms that are reflective of its economy and ecology, such as development 'corridors' (or spatial development initiatives [SDIs]) and trans-boundary peace parks (see Box 1.2).

Box 1.2 Distinctive Forms of Contemporary Regionalisms

corridors (e.g. Maputo Corridor)²²
 peace parks²³
 pipelines (e.g. Central Europe and Central Asia)
 triangles/EPZs (e.g. Singapore–Johore–Riau)
 valleys/rivers (e.g. Amazon, Danube, Ganges, Mekong,²⁴ Nile, Zambezi)

Oceanic 'rims', which often cut across or bring together different established land-based regionalisms, are a function of the size of the seas; from Caribbean and Mediterranean through Indian (e.g. the Indian Ocean Rim–Association for Regional Cooperation)²⁵ (Kaplan 2009) to Pacific (e.g. the South Pacific Forum),²⁶ as well as APEC. In general, non-independent states associate more readily with smaller

22 www.mcli.co.za
 23 www.peaceparks.org
 24 www.mrcmekong.org
 25 www.iornet.com
 26 www.forumsec.org.fj

rather than larger groupings. This is evident in the Associate Member Countries (AMCs) affiliated with the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) in Port-of-Spain rather than, say, UNECLAC as a whole (UNECLAC 2007).

Regions can be transformed as the political economies of members undergo transitions or regressions in concert with the balance between and sequence of political and economic liberalisations. Thus SADCC progressed into SADC as South Africa achieved majority rule but regressed (as far as the organisation's own stated goals of democratisation and transparency are concerned) as Zimbabwe slipped back into a 'black' rather than 'white' authoritarian state (Bösl et al. 2008). Transitions in East Germany and Eastern Europe have transformed the EU while ECOWAS (Akinyeye 2010) has had to absorb unexpected changes in the 'fragile' micro-region of Côte d'Ivoire/Guinea/Liberia/Sierra Leone, centre of the erstwhile blood diamonds/child soldiers nexus (Bøås and Dunn 2007; Grant 2010). The Caribbean awaits the inevitable transition in Cuba after 50 years of the Castros – from socialist to developmental state – with mixed emotions. The question is whether Cuba will become, post-Fidel Castro and post-Raoul Castro, a 'China' or a 'Vietnam' (economic without political liberalisation) or rather a 'Central Asia' (political and economic regressions around big men and mafias). The balance between economic, political, social, and strategic changes, especially the place of party and military (Klepak 2005) and the role, if any, for the exiles in Florida, will be telling, particularly with respect to competition in agriculture, health, rum, and tourism (worth some two billion dollars per annum already). In turn, Cuba's transition may reinforce one regional association – the Association of Caribbean States²⁷ – over the more established Caribbean Community (CARICOM) or the stillborn Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).²⁸

Furthermore, as regions mutate, so inter-regional relationships evolve, sometimes quite dramatically (Wunderlich 2007). For example, NATO balanced the Warsaw Pact until the end of the Cold War. The initial EEC facilitated decolonisation and post-colonial economic ties through successive Cotonou and Lomé Conventions with the African, Caribbean, and Pacific group (ACP) states, only to abandon them to comply with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. It has come to insist on a set of so-called Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with a series of Southern 'regions' as defined by the European Commission (EC) in Brussels, with the non-independent ex-colonial states excluded despite their similar interests to their neighbours in, say, the Caribbean. And, because of growing concerns about migration and ecology as well as energy, the EU looks to its immediate South as well as East (Biscop 2003; Aalto 2007; Engel and Asche 2008). Finally, as economic 'power' shifts, the salience of inter-regional relations evolves, from, say EU-ASEAN (Robles 2004) to EU-ASEM (Gaens, Jokela, and Linnell 2009; Gaens 2008). Hence the relative decline of APEC and its 21 members after two decades (Feinberg 2008), and the demise of the FTAA, despite the fact that both had increasingly included

27 www.acs-aec.org

28 www.ftaa-alca.org; in contrast, the fifth Summit of the Americas (SOA) was held in Port-of-Spain in April 2009. See www.fifthsummitoftheamericas.org

non-state actors and networks. Further, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is not the innovation it was claimed to be a decade ago as competition from China and endless bilateral FTAs undermine any trilateral privileges in North America (Morales 2008; Mace, Therien, and Haslam 2007).

The Caribbean contains the largest set of non-independent/overseas/dependent territories, most of which are established democracies (Green 2007, 372–92). Thus the experience of such actors in levels and eras of regionalisms as well as hemispheric and global summits is instructive. A 2007 UNECLAC working group report captures the contemporary scene: seven Associate Member Countries – Anguilla, Aruba, British Virgin Islands (BVI), Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands – of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) as part of the UN's Regional Commission, ECLAC. In addition to this, a trio of these, all anglophone and formally British, are Associate Members of the OECs (Anguilla, BVI, and Montserrat), with which Puerto Rico is also associated in a formal agreement on functional cooperation.

At the global level, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) includes, as member parliaments, those from Anguilla, Bermuda, BVI, Caymans, and Turks and Caicos along with those islands around the UK such as Alderney, Guernsey, Isle of Man, and Jersey (Shaw 2004, 2008, and 2009).²⁹ And the Commonwealth Games³⁰ include national teams from Anguilla and the Caymans as well as Guernsey, Isle of Man, and Jersey in addition to, say, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. The UK Overseas Territories have an annual bilateral consultation in London with the British³¹ rather than a multilateral one via the EU.

In addition to such inter-governmental associations, some of the AMCs play a significant role in the private global economy, especially finance. Thus the Bahamas hosted almost 28,000 offshore entities at the turn of the century, with assets on deposit of US\$100–150 billion; the 'upstart' Caymans hosted some 65,000 (Vlcek 2007 and 2008), some of which reflect the externalisation of the burgeoning Chinese economy. Specifically, the non-independent Caribbean serves as a corridor from Taiwan and other centres of 'overseas Chinese' capital to mainland cities.

State and non-state actors alike prevail at different levels of regionalism(s) – micro, meso, or macro – depending on era, issue, status, and so forth. Our next two sections examine the two primary, generic types of non-state actors in regional projects and discourses: private capital and civil society. Historically, these have been antagonistic forces (Klein 2001). However, in recent years, these two non-state actor categories may have at least some mutual interests as reflected in the proliferation of sites for such NGO-MNC interaction such as the Copenhagen Consensus³² and the UN Global Compact and its spin-offs³³ (Rittberger and Nettesheim 2008; Zadek 2007).

29 www.cpahq.org

30 www.thecgf.com

31 www.fco.gov.uk/ots

32 See www.copenhagenconsensus.com

33 See www.unglobalcompact.org and www.gln-openaccess.org

Varieties of New Regionalisms and Varieties of New Capitalisms

Regional development in the twenty-first century is as much a function of corporate strategies and informal sectors as endless inter-governmental negotiations and declarations. Private sectors and state priorities may or may not be compatible, but neither can be ignored. The former can be national, regional, and/or global companies along with informal and sometimes illegal agencies. First, then, the NICs and then the BRICs have led to a dramatic expansion of the global corporate sector based in the South, particularly China and India, but also Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa (BCG 2006; Alden 2007; Goldstein 2007; van Agtmael 2007). Hence, in the new century, regional development may be more advanced by corporate strategies rather than by state directives. These now include branding, franchising, and logistics as well as old-fashioned foreign direct investment (FDI). Thus, in Southern and Eastern Africa, rather than SACU, SADC or COMESA, regional drivers include South African TNCs such as Engen, Game, Protea, SAA, Shoprite, Southern Sun, Stanbic, and Woolworths, and franchises such as DSTV, MTN, Nandos, and Steers. And in the Caribbean, Trinidadian companies such as Caribbean Airlines, Guardian, Neal and Massy, Republic Bank, and TCL advance regional cooperation between the islands (Farrell 2005) along with extra-regional investments such as B Mobile, Flow, RBC, and Scotiabank from Canada. The difficulties of regional financial giant Clico affected many Caribbean economies in 2009 as it had become ubiquitous throughout the region (even if weak regional regulations hardly touched it).

Conversely, regional supply chains are increasingly a function of corporate networks. Thus, given service sector franchises and energy and mineral demand, logistics in parts of Africa are now defined by the BRICs, especially China and India. Likewise, post-apartheid South Africa has restructured continental supply chains for reasons of both air freight/couriers, containers, franchises, and mobile phones, on the one hand, and satellite TV on the other.

New Regionalisms and New Civil Societies

The regionalist strategies of states, businesses, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and social movements are key to understanding the complex relationship between contemporary globalization and social policy processes ... to advance a wider appreciation of the significance of regionalist and regionalization processes in the making of global social governance and policy. (Yeates 2007, 251)

Parallel to both decolonisation and globalisation, the emergence and recognition of 'civil society', both formal and informal, is significant as a factor, sometimes even catalyst, for regionalism around the turn of the century, even if the literature on

social movements usually overlooks this aspect (Albrow 2007; Yeates 2007). Such agencies in the South *matter* in terms of both formal and informal definitions of 'regions', as indicated in Söderbaum's (2007) case study of Southern Africa. Thus regions are a function of alienation, ethnicities, diasporas, genders, migrations, and religions, as well as economic ambitions and opportunities. Social development/human development index/Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) vary significantly between as well as within regions.

Furthermore, some authentic regional NGOs and think-tanks have emerged at several levels.³⁴ And reflective of the growing challenge of 'security', including peace-building (see next section), several INGOs (e.g. Human Rights Watch) have started sponsoring with states such as Australia, Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, and Norway, a novel Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect³⁵ supported by MacArthur, Soros, and other foundations.

In addition to INGOs, particularly global 'federations' (e.g. Consumers/Refugee/Transparency International, Oxfam, World Vision, WWF etc.) defining regions, communities do likewise – both short- and long-distance, indigenous, and/or diasporic. Such communities do not always reinforce inter-state organisations, but neither can they be overlooked. For example, many of the North's more conservative migration policies have been driven by or have responded to the sometimes explosive politics evoked in many societies by the global rise in undocumented cross-border and trans-continental migration. In Southern Africa, moreover, a rising tide of xenophobia within host communities has accompanied the increase in illegal migration in the region, which in turn helped shape a more protectionist regional migration governance regime (Cornelissen 2009). Whilst civil societies may therefore at times be disregarded in scholarship, over time they have become recognised and respected. In turn, reflective of a revisionist critique about their democratic and transparency deficits, INGOs have begun to advance an accountability charter³⁶ along with comparative transparency rankings in which TNCs and international organisations also feature.

As noted by Bøås, Marchand, and Shaw (2005), and encouraged by the work of Manuel Castells (1996), 'network society' can also inform and define regions in the new millennium. Thus diasporas as features of globalisations come to define 'regions' through 'transnationalism from below'. Consider:

diasporas ... continue to have a presence in their communities of origin. In many cases, such transnational migrant networks operate on a regional scale and thus reinforce and complement regionalizing tendencies. These

34 Examples from the African continent include Mwengo, the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), the Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA) and CIVICUS (see, respectively, www.mwengo.org; www.aercafrica.org; www.codesria.org; www.ossrea.net; and www.civicus.org).

35 www.globalcenter2p.org

36 See for example www.ingoaccountabilitycharter.org and www.oneworldtrust.org

migrant networks can and have become important regional actors, especially on regional issues, ranging from security, human rights, the pursuit of democracy to regional trade and investment agreements. (Bøås, Marchand, and Shaw 2005, 11)

Hence the Caribbean region may now extend to communities in Miami, New York, and Toronto. And today, given norms among international agencies, regional institutions at least permit if not encourage their own civil society responses. Increasingly, civil society can both campaign for but also animate regionalisms around the global South.

However, there continues to be a 'radical' critique suggesting that civil society is neither accountable nor democratic, that it is bourgeois and liberal and that it is 'Northern' in origin and orientation. Thus a recent special issue of *Development Dialogue* from the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation³⁷ laments the un-democratic (perhaps even anti-democratic) features of the World Social Forum (WSF) (Lofgren and Thorn 2007). However, this critique ignores the many varied expressions that civil society can have in the South, privileging only an institutionalised or organisational form of civil society. Some of the most fruitful theoretical advances in new regionalisms scholarship have come out of the contention that regions consist of and are co-constituted by numerous and overlapping social and discursive spaces. How else should one deal analytically with the phenomenon of rising xenophobia in parts of Africa, and in particular Southern Africa, if not as a simultaneously spontaneous and contrived manifestation of civil society values? Shedding much of the normative labelling that is generally applied to civil society, even if mostly tacitly, will advance a greater understanding of the informal processes that drive regionalism. In this sense, comprehending the dynamics of xenophobia (a negative) is as important as analysing migration (which is mostly regarded in an innocuous and vacuum-like manner in scholarship). Consider the following call:

[There is a need] to address the substantial gap in the scholarly and policy literatures on regionalisms that privilege issues of trade, diplomacy and 'security' to the neglect of welfare ... there is a tangible social policy dimension to several regional groupings ... questions of trade and 'security' are in practice entangled in wider social policy issues. (Yeates 2007, 251)

Yeates is correct in challenging scholars to provide social-policy-relevant insights as part of their overall analyses of regionalism dynamics.

37 www.dhf.uu.se

Regional Conflicts and Peacemaking: The Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

competing and clashing meta-narratives ... cumulatively comprise the cross-border micro-regions that, in turn, constitute Uganda's complex and turbulent interlinkages with the Great Lakes regional war zone. (Bøås and Jennings 2008, 154)

Just as the original European Economic Community (EEC) was a response to the nightmare of the Second World War and the rise of American corporations, so too are regionalisms in the South affected by evolving regional conflicts, either directly or indirectly (Tavares 2008). Post-Cold War, these increasingly have economic causes and consequences so that companies have had to learn how to operate profitably and ethically in conflict zones (Boge et al. 2006), particularly in several regions of Africa. Such coexistence may come to be a major characteristic of the 'third wave' of regional relations and studies.

As suggested by Bøås and Jennings (2008) above in terms of the Great Lakes Region (GLR) of Africa, regional conflicts flow across borders, which serve to redefine regions, sometimes dividing states. Thus, as we now learn at the International Criminal Court (ICC), to secure control as well as riches, Charles Taylor redefined the Mano River Union from its inter-governmental developmental roots to an extra-state (or non-state) regional network of resource extraction to finance small arms imports for his warlords: diamonds, gold, iron ore, rubber, and timber from/through Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone (along with Côte d'Ivoire) in exchange for weapons (Bøås and Dunn 2007). In addition, at present, the *de facto* East African economy includes the southern Sudan and eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): not only do global and local companies, INGOs, the UN, and AU peacebuilding structures operate there, but also Ugandan shillings are the currency and Ugandan mobile telephones and country codes serve as the wireless communication hubs.

Similarly, the nationalist 'liberation movements' in Southern Africa in the 1960s and 1970s and the 'unholy trinity' of white regimes they opposed each controlled parts of territories in distinctive, shifting patterns of regionalisms, somewhat reminiscent of today's Central Europe and Central Asia. In turn, there have been growing pressures to 'regionalise' peacekeeping responsibilities, as in Darfur or Somalia – with the North responsible only for training, 'heavy lifting', and logistics – along with a continuing quest to 'sub-contract' peacebuilding with civil society. Hence the innovation by a set of INGOs as well as 'like-minded' states that remain sympathetic to the 'human security' conceptualisation, to establish a Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect in New York City.³⁸ Conversely, there continue to be powerful, less benign or idealistic pressures to privatise security, both formally and informally (Wulf 2005), with profound implications for both regional and global

38 www.globalcentrer2p.org

peace. In addition, the OECD has moved to allow some 'developmental' forms of peacekeeping operations (PKOs) to count against Official Development Assistance (ODA) in its Development Assistance Committee (DAC), which makes the INGO community very anxious. However, in response to new forms of conflict, they have all appointed security advisers, often from Western military establishments. This represents a significant shift in their corporate cultures and ethics.

New Regionalisms and the South: Implications for Established Disciplines and Policies

orthodox ... approaches to regions and regionalization ... still privilege(s) the state, the formal, the institutional and the economic incentives to market integration. (Boás, Marchand, and Shaw 2005, 11)

New regionalisms, especially in the global South, challenge a variety of analytical assumptions and approaches, not just established and recognised social sciences (e.g. sociology anthropology, economics, and political science), but also more interdisciplinary fields such as development (Haynes 2008; Payne 2004), gender, and security studies, commerce, and 'global studies'. Moreover, their attention to more informal dimensions can enhance the critiques of Brown (2006) and Lemke (2003) about the contribution of 'African' IR to comparative analyses. Political economies and political cultures in the major regions of the global South are not isolated; rather, they are typically connected to one or more form of regionalisms. Hence the lingering appeal, albeit in a very different era and despite deficiencies, of the subordinate state sub-system perspective (Bowman 1968). *Dependencia* was a response to disappointments over independence concentrated in Latin America while 'Asian values' were an expression of regional difference, at least until the regional crisis of the late 1990s, even if increasingly confined to the 'Singapore School' (Mabhubani 1992 and 2008).

In turn, established disciplinary approaches need to recognise (and acknowledge) that they are not infallible and indeed may be rather endangered by current analyses and relations. New regionalisms may bring, then, some of these isolationist fields back towards the realities of the present decade.

This Companion reflects the emergent epistemological agenda in new regionalisms studies, providing analysis of both formal, inter-state regionalisation, as well as informal processes of region-building, covering case studies from the North and global South. It consists of three parts. In the first, theoretical, conceptual, and methodological approaches to the study of regionalism are considered. Following this introductory chapter, Phillipe De Lombaerde reflects more closely on the methodological issues related to comparative regionalism, considering such matters as the nature of comparative design, the selection of appropriate indicators, and the suitability of quantitative or qualitative approaches. Taken together, these chapters

offer templates for the deep analysis of the broad spectrum of regionalisation (macro to micro and formal and informal) evident today. Next, Fredrik Söderbaum provides an overview of the debates, concepts, and theories of formal and informal regionalism. Drawing on empirical illustrations from Africa and Asia, he demonstrates the analytical intersections between the 'formal' and 'informal'. Such a framework not only enables stronger comparisons between regions but also helps to bridge the formal/informal divide in the new regionalism field. Bart Gaens then considers the nature and dynamics of inter-regionalism through review of relations between the EU and East Asia, concretised through the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process. Inter-regionalism, according to Gaens, is part of the tapestry of global governance to which regions, singly and collectively, contribute.

The second and third parts of the volume present case studies of regionalism that is, respectively, predominantly formal or state-led, and is shaped by a mixture of informal, state and non-state actors and forces. Part II comprises a number of analyses of regional entities that in origin, composition, and functioning reflect 'orthodox' forms of regionalism. An attempt is also made, however to explore the nexuses between such formal regions and the consequences such interactions – economic, trade, political, security etc. – bear. While addressing some of the external region-building roles of the EU, Alberta Sbragia focuses in greater depth on the organisation itself, reviewing the institutional and political processes that have underpinned integration and other key processes within the EU in recent years. She considers both the attributes and factors that are unique to the EU, as well as those the organisation shares with other regional bodies across the world. Laura Macdonald reviews the historical and contemporary conditions that shaped region-building in the North American context. Through an analysis that largely centres on NAFTA, she focuses on the material and discursive processes that underlay first the bolstering and, in recent years, according to Macdonald, the slackening of regionalism in North America.

In their respective contributions, Charan Rainford and Kevin G. Cai explore regionalism in South and East Asia. Rainford reviews the ASEAN and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), focusing on the way in which the idea of a security community underpinned regionalisation processes in the case of the two organisations. Cai analyses China's role in East Asian regionalism, tracing an ever-growing presence and influence by the Asian power in integration processes in the East Asian sphere – a factor that, according to Cai, could reinforce economic regionalism in the global domain.

Gordon Mace and Dominic Migneault's analysis centres on regionalisation in South America, which they term 'hemispheric regionalism'. Their focus falls on the OAS and the organisation's more recent complement, the Summit of the Americas, a process of summitry that has given new impetus to trans-continental regionalisation processes. In his contribution, Marc Schelhase focuses on MERCOSUR as a reference point for wider processes of integration in South America. He explores the linkages between MERCOSUR and other established and emergent forms of regionalism on the continent. Notably, these same processes align with Mace and Migneault's concept of hemispheric regionalism.

The second part of the *Companion* concludes with three chapters that provide analyses of Africa's more established regional organisations. Thomas Kwasi Tiekü's chapter on the AU focuses on the administrative and political structures – the AU Commission – and the officials and diplomats, the 'Africrats', that drive continental integration processes. Tiekü's contention is that the agency of Africrats reflects and affects the capacities of African states to shape regionalisation. Okechukwu C. Iheduru explores regionalism in the context of West Africa, focusing largely on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), tracing the 'club diplomacy' origins of the organisation and its evolution to its contemporary, multi-actor, multi-level forms affected by other regional processes such as cross-border business and advocacy networks. Ulrike Lorenz and Scarlett Cornelissen discuss regionalisation in Southern Africa through an analysis of SADC. They consider the institutional changes and political ambitions towards deepened integration that have reshaped the organisation in recent years, reflecting on the implications for the region of the negotiations to establish EPAs with the EU.

Part III of the *Companion* comprises a number of chapters that focus on regions or regional spaces that do not fit within the orthodoxy of conventional regional studies, but whose processes of regionalisation are highly instructive. Kate Stone addresses the discursive and identitarian practices that underlie the Oceania (or Pacific Rim) region – a geographically large and diverse area, but one shaped by its inhabitants' common experiences of history and common contemporary world outlook. Bahgat Korany explores the nature and overlaps of the various regional projects in the Middle East, focusing extensively on the League of Arab States, but also considering the underpinnings of other forms of institutionalisation in the region.

Agata Antkiewicz and Andrew F. Cooper explore the role that the BRICSAM plays in its respective regions, as well as the influence it has on international processes, the latter justifying the question whether BRICSAM should be considered a global, if highly diverse, actor. According to Antkiewicz and Cooper, 'the projection of new forms of regionalism and inter-regionalism more specifically is coming most dramatically not from the regions as a whole but regional hubs', such as BRICSAM. Timothy M. Shaw adopts a similar stance with his analysis of the Commonwealth. Shaw suggests that activities by state and non-state actors in the Commonwealth not only reinforce regionalism in the home regions of member states, but should also be seen to constitute a Commonwealth region in and of itself.

The book concludes with four chapters that explore various processes of informal regionalisation encapsulated in new regionalisms' 'third wave'. Robert Muggah discusses the dimensions and dynamics of transnational gangs. Such gangs, according to Muggah, arise in the interstices of the formal spaces of policing and (state) regulation and the informal (economic and other) spaces created by state incapacities. As such, gangs traverse state-produced regions, but also affect regional dynamics in myriad ways. Ian C. Taylor examines micro-regional processes in Southern Africa through analysis of spatial development initiatives (SDIs), which comprise a mix of state and non-state actors. Their activities can both lead to new regional spaces and reinforce long-established formal processes. Next, Maano

Ramutsindela focuses on another form of micro-regions, transfrontier conservation areas. He explores the formal and informal constituents of these areas, driven as they are by the primary motivation of ecological protection. Ramutsindela's inclusion of ecological issues is a welcome extension to the new regionalisms field. J. Andrew Grant, Matthew I. Mitchell, and Frank K. Nyame apply the concept of 'micro-regionalisms' to scholarly debates on migration and violent conflict in the context of natural resource governance. The authors emphasise the importance of understanding how 'informal' internal and cross-border linkages and conduits operate in Sierra Leone's diamond sector, Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa sector, and Ghana's gold sector. The new regionalisms analytical perspective informs the authors' empirical findings on the interconnections of natural resource sectors, migration, and violent conflict.

Conclusions

Globalisation at the end of the first decade of the new century continues to evolve because of emerging economies and varieties of capitalisms (BCG 2006; Goldstein 2007; van Agtmael 2007), combined with the outbreak of major and minor wars. It is in this context that we have argued for the need to engage continually in regular, open-minded reflections and evaluations of globalisation and regionalisation (Haddad and Knowles 2007). This concern is reflected in the following queries. Which is the biggest automobile company in the world? What is the largest INGO? Which region is the 'driver' of globalisation?³⁹ Which set of communications technologies are 'cutting-edge'? Which countries are the 'fragile states' and why? Which state and non-state actors were present at the Summit of the Americas in Trinidad in April 2009 and the G8 in Canada in June 2010?

In conclusion, we encourage scholars to consider the directions in which new regionalist analyses and practices might evolve, exacerbated by the recent tremors in the global financial system. In turn, the usefulness of comparing and contrasting micro-, meso-, and macro-regions becomes clearer. It is important to assess inter-state and non-state regions, to study the 'informal' and illegal, and analyse the 'formal' and legal. The salience and promise of the 'new regionalisms' perspective lies in its ability to advance such analyses and debates as symbolised by this *Companion*.

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39 See for example Kaplinsky (2005), and Kaplinsky and Messner (2008).

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Comparing Regionalisms: Methodological Aspects and Considerations

Philippe De Lombaerde

Introduction

Although early neo-functionalists had already engaged in comparative studies of regionalisms in different world regions back in the 1960s, it is only more recently that comparative regionalism studies saw their interest grow and their number of practitioners multiply significantly. More and more scholars with a track record in area – often European – studies are moving in the direction of *comparative regionalism* studies. In addition, the growing availability of quantitative data and econometric work has also stimulated comparative analyses. However, the quality of such analyses is unequal. This chapter therefore addresses a number of methodological issues that researchers engaging in comparative research projects are faced with and aims at providing some guidelines for comparative empirical analysis in this field. The issues addressed in this chapter include comparability, case selection, qualitative versus quantitative approaches, the design of indicators, and the role of comparison in monitoring systems. To illustrate these issues, and the broader *problématique* of comparative regionalism, references to a selection of examples of comparative analysis of regionalisms are added. Because of space constraints, these examples are not discussed in detail here, but should be considered as suggestions for further reading. When looking at this (non-random) selection of examples, it will be clear that comparative research on regionalism is characterised by different definitions for the key concepts, different theoretical frameworks, different research questions, different comparators, different empirical methods, and different results. The *problématique* of comparative regionalism refers therefore to conceptual issues and theoretical issues as well as to empirical methods. The chapter is organised as follows: following this Introduction and section one, section two deals with conceptual issues, section three elucidates the choice of theoretical frameworks,

section four examines various aspects of empirical research methodology, and section five concludes the essay.

The Definitional Issue ... Again

The definitional problem in comparative regionalism can be broken down into different parts. The first part of the problem is that the phenomenon under study (independently of how it is exactly referred to) is a moving target. Even if we limit ourselves to the post-World War II era, it is clear that the world of regionalism(s) has undergone important changes and is constantly in motion. Regional cooperative mechanisms have become more diverse over time. Whereas they were initially dominated by uni-dimensional (uni-sectoral) organisations, they have come to include multi-dimensional organisations, on the one hand, and less formally institutionalised regional networks, on the other (Hettne and Söderbaum 2004, 5–6, Table 2.1). This has led to an important variety of regionalisms, further enhanced by the global spread of regional initiatives in different geographical, cultural, and historical contexts. The population of ‘regions’ in comparative regionalism is therefore much more heterogeneous than the population of ‘states’ in comparative politics (Genna and De Lombaerde 2010). This variety points to the need for flexibility when defining ‘regions’ or ‘regional organisations’ in a comparative context. Authors like Laursen (2003), Hettne (2003) and Dabène (2009, 8) have indeed argued therefore that relatively loose definitions are unavoidable.

Many definitions of regions, regional integration, and related concepts exist. A rather static definition provided by Nye (1971, vii) is representative of the ‘early’ attempts to define the regional phenomenon: ‘a limited number of states linked together by a geographical relationship and by a degree of mutual interdependence’. By contrast, an ‘updated’ definition of the region-building process could be the following:

a multi-dimensional process of social transformation whereby actors, associated with (sub-)national governance levels and belonging to a limited number of different states, intensify their interactions through the reduction of obstacles, the implementation of coordinated or common actions and policies, and/or the creation of regional institutions, thereby creating a new relevant (regional) space for many aspects of human behaviour and activities’.

The above definition¹ is to some extent representative, or at least illustrative, of the newer approaches, although many alternative definitions can obviously be put forward. The point I want to make is that, compared to Nye’s definition, more recent definitions tend to show: (i) more emphasis on process characteristics;

1 Based on definitions in De Lombaerde and Van Langenhove (2007, 1), and De Lombaerde and colleagues (2008, 149).

Table 2.1 Typology of Regional Cooperative Mechanisms²

	Organization	Network
Unidimensional	Sectoral organisations Security organisations Economic integration arrangements Regional development banks	Research networks Public-private partnerships Civil society networks
Multidimensional	Comprehensive organisations River basin organisations UN Economic Commissions	Growth triangles Cross-border micro-regional organisations Development corridors

(ii) a multiplicity of actors; (iii) more emphasis on the multi-dimensional nature of regionalism; and (iv) a clearer distinction between regional interdependence and regional institution building.

The evolution of concepts shows, however, that it is not only a matter of changing characteristics of the ‘regional phenomenon’ (linked to globalisation, driven by a multiplicity of state and non-state actors), but also a reflection of the changing understandings behind it. Broadening the scope of the analysis by including more actors (i.e., different from the State), for example, does not only indicate that these actors have become more active over time, but also that the social sciences (and their theoretical frameworks) are nowadays better equipped to deal with them. In other words, some long-existing expressions of non-classical regionalism might have come on the radar of regionalism scholars only recently.

This somewhat ambiguous combination of taking into account new characteristics and proposing new ways to look at the phenomenon also characterises the so-called ‘new regionalism’ (Hettne, Inotai, and Sunkel 2000 and 2001; Söderbaum and Shaw 2003; Breslin et al. 2002; De Lombaerde 2003). It is not my intention, and it would even be counterproductive, to try to present a single (‘best’) definition of the ‘region’ here. Instead, and as we have argued elsewhere³, we defend conceptual pluralism, not only because of the diversity of the phenomenon but basically because the definition of a ‘region’ (and derived concepts) depends on the research questions that are being asked. And, by implication, what is comparable depends on the research questions that are asked (Laursen 2010, 3). This does not mean that definitions should be left vague or implicit (often suggesting a simple geographical connotation). On the contrary; when defining regions (and derived concepts), it is important to focus on what are considered as the essential characteristics of regions. These essential characteristics are usually ‘internal’ (i.e., intra-regional), but they can also be ‘external’ (extra-regional) or a combination of both.

2 Based on Hettne and Söderbaum (2004, 5–6).

3 See De Lombaerde and colleagues (2010).

The internal characteristics can refer to its features as a non-sovereign governance system, the existence of a regional identity, or a minimum level of intra-regional interdependence. The external characteristics can refer to the capacity to interact with other regions or the global governance level or its capacity to influence – economically or politically – other regions or the global economy/polity (De Lombaerde et al. 2010).

Regions can therefore be defined by one of these essential characteristics or a combination of the same. In addition, the context in which they are used is also relevant. It is the choice of the definition that will allow us to identify the relevant comparators in comparative research. The definitional issue is also related to the scope of the research programme of which it is a part, not only with respect to the type of actors included in the analysis but also, for example, with respect to the level of analysis. More concretely, one of the strategic choices that must be made is whether to include or discard the sub-national region (micro-regions) in the analysis.

Definitions of regions such as ‘non-sovereign governance systems with certain statehood properties’, for example, are perfectly able to cover this broader conception of a region. Such broader conceptions also have the advantage that they can help to bridge the divide between European Union (EU) studies (and its comparative politics approach), considering the EU as a *sui generis* case, and new regionalism, mainly interested in regionalisms in the rest of the world. Obviously, broader definitions necessarily imply more heterogeneous populations for analysis.

My position is therefore that, from a conceptual point of view, one could indeed start from a broad notion of a region, defining it as ‘a space, different from the global, the national or the local, created by (public, private and/or mixed) actors to govern their behaviour and transactions’.⁴ This requires some further explanation: Firstly, a region is characterised by some type of boundaries, which can be geographical or not, jurisdictional or not, but which point in any case to a limitation in terms of reach in the real world. Secondly, these boundaries can be open, ‘porous’,⁵ or rather closed. Thirdly, a region is characterised by a relative density of within-region transactions, as opposed to extra-regional transactions, which merits being studied. Fourthly, at the same time, regional actors can use the regional construction to govern their extra-regional transactions.⁶ Fifthly, the roles and relative importance of the different types of actors can vary. Sixthly, the region can be ‘light’ or ‘heavy’, shallow or deep, important or unimportant, formal or informal, relevant or irrelevant, institutionalised or not, legal or illegal, micro-level or macro-level, endogenous or exogenous, market driven or not, old or new. Finally, regions as continuous rather than discrete phenomena can be characterized by ‘more or less regionness’.⁷ This definition would, in other words, capture the

4 Or, in other words, to create ‘regimes’ (Krasner, 1983).

5 Katzenstein (2005, 21–5).

6 For example, a country like Paraguay can use Mercosur to engage in inter-regional negotiations with the EU.

7 Hettne and Söderbaum (2008).

varieties of regionalisms as sketched by Bøås, Marchand, and Shaw (2005), Hettne and Söderbaum (2000), and in the introductory chapter to this book (e.g., ‘third-wave regionalism’).

Some caution, however, is required. The opposition between ‘conventional’ and ‘non-conventional’ approaches (see chapter one of this volume) should not be over-emphasised. Comparative research projects and programmes should be built around sub-sets of regions, be they ‘old’ (regional organisations, free trade areas [FTAs]) or ‘new’ (civil society networks, cross-border micro-regions), be they based on specific types of actors involved or on simple ‘levels’ of materialisation (micro-, macro-). This is simply applying common practice in scientific research to adjust the research design to the needs implied by the research questions at stake, while at the same time preserving the manageability of the project. In my view, in the discussion between Acharya and Johnston (2007, 10) and Shaw and colleagues (see chapter one of this volume), a distinction should be made between two different issues: the role and importance of the (national) State in (driving regionalism in) the twenty-first century on the one hand, and the relevance of researching the role of regional organisations in shaping regional public governance, providing regional public goods and taking over roles of (sovereign) states on the other hand. One can make a good case for playing down the role of the State in driving regionalism, while at the same time acknowledging the relevance of public policy-making, and *vice versa*.

Let me point to a number of additional issues related to the definitional question. The first issue could be referred to as ‘the paradox of regional integration’. Consider a set of x states. If these states, or a sub-set of these states (which by themselves could be studied with the tools of comparative politics or economics) enter a process of regionalisation (initially: ‘old style’ international cooperation or ‘new style’ networking, and hybrid diplomacy; later: ‘old style’ integration), we initially need different tools to analyse the regional phenomenon that is developing. As the regional construction is very different from a State, we need tools from new regionalism to understand what is happening. However, if the deepening of the process consists of acquiring statehood properties, at the end of the regionalisation journey, the region comes closer and closer to the state-model and could again be studied as (and compared with) states (Figure 2.1).⁸ This is, to some extent, what happened with the EU.⁹

A second issue concerns ‘additivity’. In comparative regionalism, we tend to focus on the regional layer and separate it from the layers below. For certain purposes, this might make sense (for example, when comparing regional forms of organisation of state or non-state actors), but for other purposes it makes less

8 From the perspective of the states, one could argue that, if regional integration implies that they give up part of their sovereignty, they acquire certain regionhood properties, which then leads to a more ‘fluid’ understanding of states and regions.

9 See, for example, Eichengreen (1991), who compares the EU and the United States with respect to their characteristics as optimum currency areas. See also Bowen and colleagues (2010).

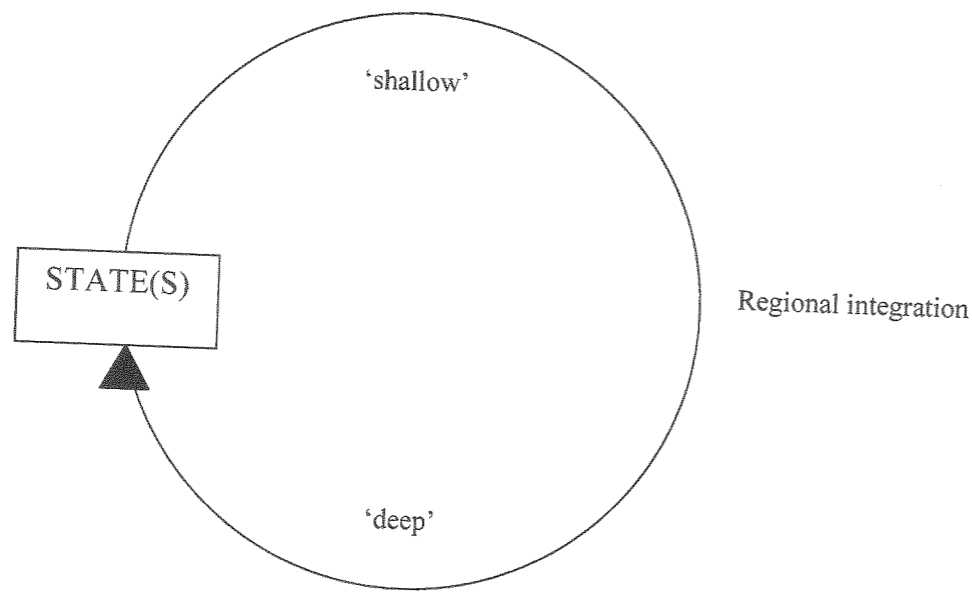


Figure 2.1 The Regional Integration Paradox

sense. For example, if interregional trade negotiations (e.g., between the *Mercado Común del Sur* [Mercosur] and the EU) are being analysed it does not make sense to focus on the Mercosur (and the EU, for that matter) as an organisation but rather as the sum of the regional organisation and its constituent parts.¹⁰ This is common practice when comparing states and studying their relations, but not so commonplace when studying regions.

A third issue refers to overlapping regions. Independently of the way we choose to define what a region is, regions (both formal and informal) usually overlap with other regions. In other words, membership or belonging is usually not exclusive. For example, according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) data, 46 out of 53 African countries are member of at least two regional economic communities (RECs), and the Democratic Republic of Congo is even member of four RECs (see also Table 2.2). When using broader definitions of a region, this number rises further. According to the Regional Integration Knowledge System (RIKS) database, which includes a set of 66 regional arrangements, countries seem to be part of many more regional arrangements; eight or nine overlapping memberships is rather the rule than the exception (see Table 2.3). According to these data, Chad for example is a member of not less than ten regional arrangements. This

¹⁰ The interest of the EU to negotiate with Mercosur has everything to do with the importance of the Brazilian economy and market, independently of the strength of Mercosur as an organisation. Inter-regionalism can therefore not be understood in terms of regional organisations, but rather in terms of 'additive' regions.

Table 2.2 Overlapping Memberships of Regional Economic Communities in Africa¹¹

Number of memberships of regional economic communities (RECs), per country	Number of countries per category
0	0
1	7
2	27
3	18
4	1*
Total:	53

Table 2.3 Overlapping Memberships in Selected Regional Arrangements in Africa¹²

	Number of RAs to which individual member states belong										# Member states per RA
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
EAC							1	4			5
ECCAS				1		1	2	4	3	1	12
ECOWAS					2	2	2	4	4		14
SADC					2	1	4	5	2		14

poses particular challenges for empirical research and questions the applicability of comparative politics approaches where overlapping membership is not an issue.

A fourth issue concerns derived dynamic regional concepts. Once a region has been defined, dynamic equivalents can be derived. The latter refer to transformations of non-regions into regions (and vice versa) or to processes of increasing (decreasing) regionness.¹³ The interest in these dynamic (regional) concepts reflects the fact that in modern social science, in general, the process

¹¹ Source: UNECA (2002); * denotes the Democratic Republic of Congo.

¹² Based on RIKS data, www.cris.unu.edu/riks/web, last visited on 16 March 2010. The cells in bold show the location of the median. The full name for each regional arrangement is as follows: East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Southern African Development Community (SADC).

¹³ On the concept of regionness, see Hettne and Söderbaum (2000).

characteristics of social phenomena have rightly come to occupy a central place. However, I would not go as far as some social constructivists might suggest, that focusing on regionalisation processes is a way to avoid the definitional problem. As in any other area of social science, definitional problems have to be addressed for discursive and practical purposes.

Dynamic concepts include regional cooperation, regional integration, regionalisation, and regionalism. The former two are associated with 'old' approaches, the latter two with 'new' approaches. There seems to be growing convergence on the meaning of the latter two. As Söderbaum (2009)¹⁴ puts it:

'Regionalism' represents the policy and project, whereby state and non-state actors cooperate and coordinate strategy within a particular region or as a type of world order. It is usually associated with a formal programme, and often leads to institution building. 'Regionalisation' refers to the process of cooperation, integration, cohesion and identity creating a regional space (issue-specific or general)'.

A process of regional integration traditionally refers to European-style institutionalised 'economic + political' regionalisation. However, the term regional integration is also used as synonymous for regionalism and/or regionalisation.¹⁵ From the perspective of the broad regional notion, as proposed above, one could argue that regional integration refers to a specific type of regionalisation (region-building) whereby an emerging regional governance space 'absorbs' (and therefore 'replaces'), pre-existing sub-regional governance spaces – which can be national, regional (of a lesser scale), or local – instead of constituting an additional layer of governance.

The Choice of the Theoretical Framework

Having simply defined the regional concept(s) is not sufficient in order to engage in comparative research. Thus, a theoretical framework and set of empirical tools and techniques are needed (see Figure 2.2). The theoretical framework explains the purpose of the comparison and suggests how variables intervene and how they are interconnected. The empirical tools and techniques allow us to test the theoretical hypotheses using empirical data.

Theories allow one to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant observations and variables, and suggest relations between these variables. The latter can be

¹⁴ Examples of comparative research that distinguish between the regional project and policy, on the one hand, and 'real' regionalisation, on the other, include Hufbauer and Schott (1994), Feng and Genna (2003, 2004, and 2005) who build further on the former, Dorrucci and colleagues (2002 and 2004), and Mongelli and colleagues (2007).

¹⁵ As in the cases of UNU-CRIS, www.cris.unu.edu, and Laursen (2010).

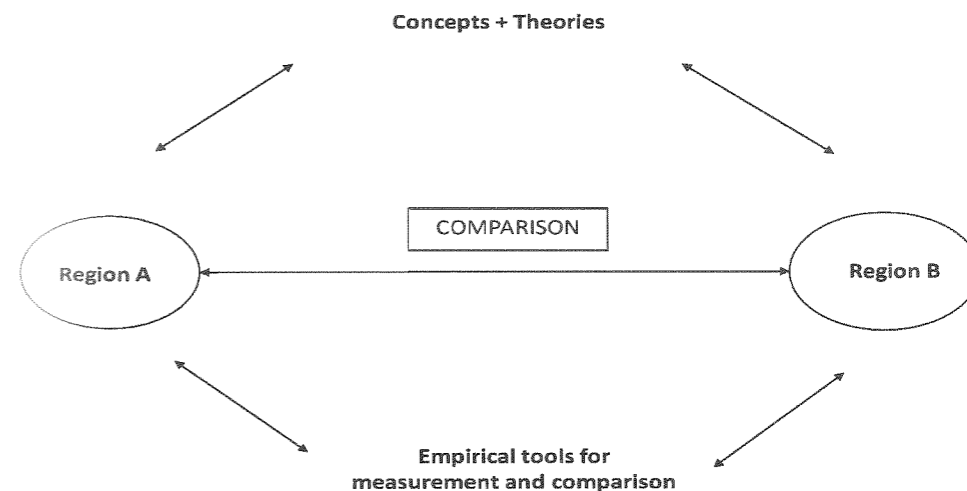


Figure 2.2 Comparing Regions and the Roles of Theory and Empirical Tools

causal relations, correlates, or more complex, systemic relations. The objective of academic research is typically to 'explain' the behaviour of selected variables (the 'dependent' variable) in terms of other variables. The combination of all selected relevant variables and their hypothetical interrelations is called the theoretical model. Theoretical models can be simple, if only few variables intervene, or more complex. The advantage of parsimonious models should be weighed against the risk of becoming too abstract and unrealistic. This weighing exercise is part of the 'art' of doing good research. Having said this, the choice of the intervening variables in a research set-up does not stop after the initial selection; the purpose of empirical research is precisely to test the relevance of these variables and their contribution to answering the research questions that are tabled. A critical attitude should be adopted and the selection of variables considered as endogenous to the research process. Variables that are not 'explained' by the model are called 'independent' variables. In between the categories of dependent and independent variables are the intermediate variables that explain the dependent variable while being explained by other variables at the same time. Of particular interest among intermediate and independent variables are the 'policy' variables. These variables 'explain', or at least influence, the dependent variable, and can be manipulated or influenced through policies. Working with such logical models does not necessarily imply that one adopts a rational or mechanistic view of reality. It should be seen as useful working hypotheses and pragmatic simplifications of a complex systemic world.

In regional integration studies, the selection of the dependent variable has been subject of debate. This debate is quite old (see e.g., Haas 1971, 18–26; Nye 1971, 58–9; and for a recent overview, Rosamond 2000, 11–14, 87–8). Three recent examples of theoretical models, with a proposal for 'the' dependent variable, include Mattli (1999), Warleigh-Lack (2006, 2008, 2009, 2010), and Laursen (2010) (see Figure 2.3).

The following observations can be made: (i) the dependent variables are (slightly) different; (ii) the models are parsimonious and simple (as compared with Nye's political model of regional integration; see Nye [1971, 55-107]); (iii) there are no feed-back mechanisms; (iv) the models can all easily be expanded and the status of the variables can easily be changed; and (v) they all reflect a 'conventional' view on what constitute relevant 'regions'.

The three models have their merits and can be used for the purpose of comparative research. However, alternative set-ups can be equally valid, depending on the purpose of the research project. The purpose of comparative research can be broader or distinct from the one implied in the three examples. Valid research problems can refer to the contribution of regional governance to solving specific societal problems, the identification of optimal policy levels, or to the interactions and tensions between governance levels.

It should be noted in this respect that the above proposals implicitly suppose that the relevant cases are characterised by not too distant levels of regionness. We agree with Hettne and Söderbaum (2000) that allowing more heterogeneity in terms of regionness, and thus adopting broader definitions of 'regions' makes general theory-building even more problematic. In addition, to the extent that regional phenomena become more complex, as in the case of the EU, the question can be asked whether single theoretical frameworks provide sufficient support for the research that is unfolding (Rosamond 2000, 7).

As suggested by these three proposed models, many theoretical frameworks and models are thus available to the research community in comparative regionalism. This is what also emerges when looking at concrete examples of applied comparative research (such as the ones referred to earlier in the chapter). The theoretical frameworks that are used include the neo-functional model (Haas and Schmitter 1964 Haas 1967; and more recently Malamud and Schmitter 2007), Balassa's conceptual framework (Hufbauer and Schott 1994; Feng and Genna 2003, 2004, and 2005; Dorrucchi et al. 2002 and 2004; Mongelli et al. 2007),¹⁶ optimum currency area theory (Eichengreen 1991; Dorrucchi et al. 2002 and 2004; Mongelli et al. 2007), and social constructivist and institutional theoretical frameworks (Duina 2006). This variety of available theoretical frameworks has led other authors to opt for eclectic approaches (e.g., Mattli 1999, who is inspired by liberal intra-governmentalism, neo-functionalism, and game-theory).

Good (recent) overviews of theoretical frameworks can be found in Mattli (1999), Rosamond (2000), Wiener and Diez (2004), Söderbaum and Shaw (2003), Laursen (2003, 2010), Cooper and colleagues (2008),¹⁷ among others.¹⁸ An interesting and didactical way to present the main regional integration theories science can also

¹⁶ See Balassa (1961).

¹⁷ Especially the chapters by Warleigh-Lack, Hettne and Söderbaum, and Rosamond.

¹⁸ Whether all these proposals deserve the label of full-fledged theories, which is probably not the case, is beyond the scope of the present contribution. See, for example, Rosamond (2000) for a reflection on the role of theory in regional integration studies.

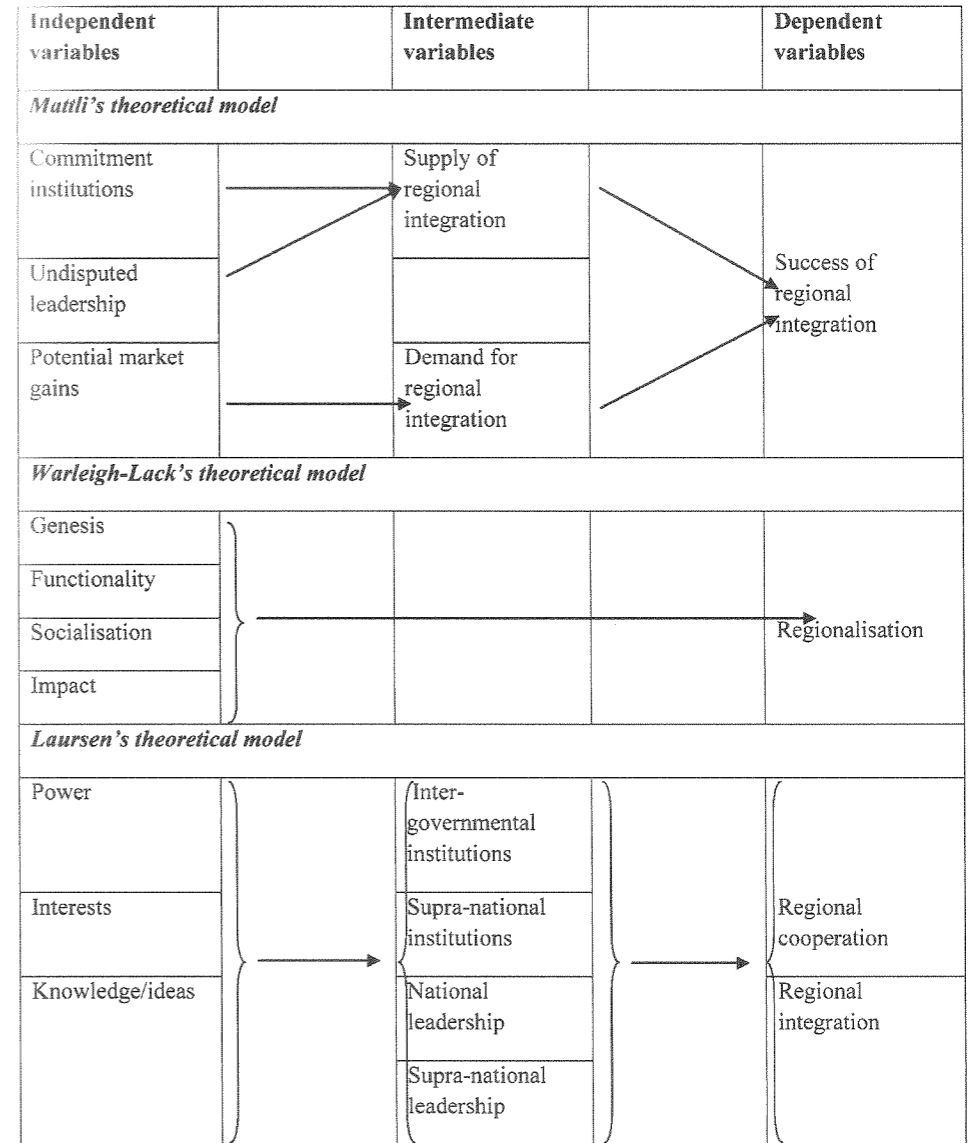


Figure 2.3 Recent Theoretical Models¹⁹

be found in Malamud and Schmitter (2007) (see Figure 2.4). With the exception of Mattli (1999), little attention is thereby given to economic theories.²⁰ Not all these theoretical frameworks will be presented here. The reader is referred to the

¹⁹ Based on Mattli (1999), Warleigh-Lack (2006, 2008, 2009, and 2010), and Laursen (2010).

²⁰ See for example Pelkmans (2001), and Gavin and De Lombaerde (2005).

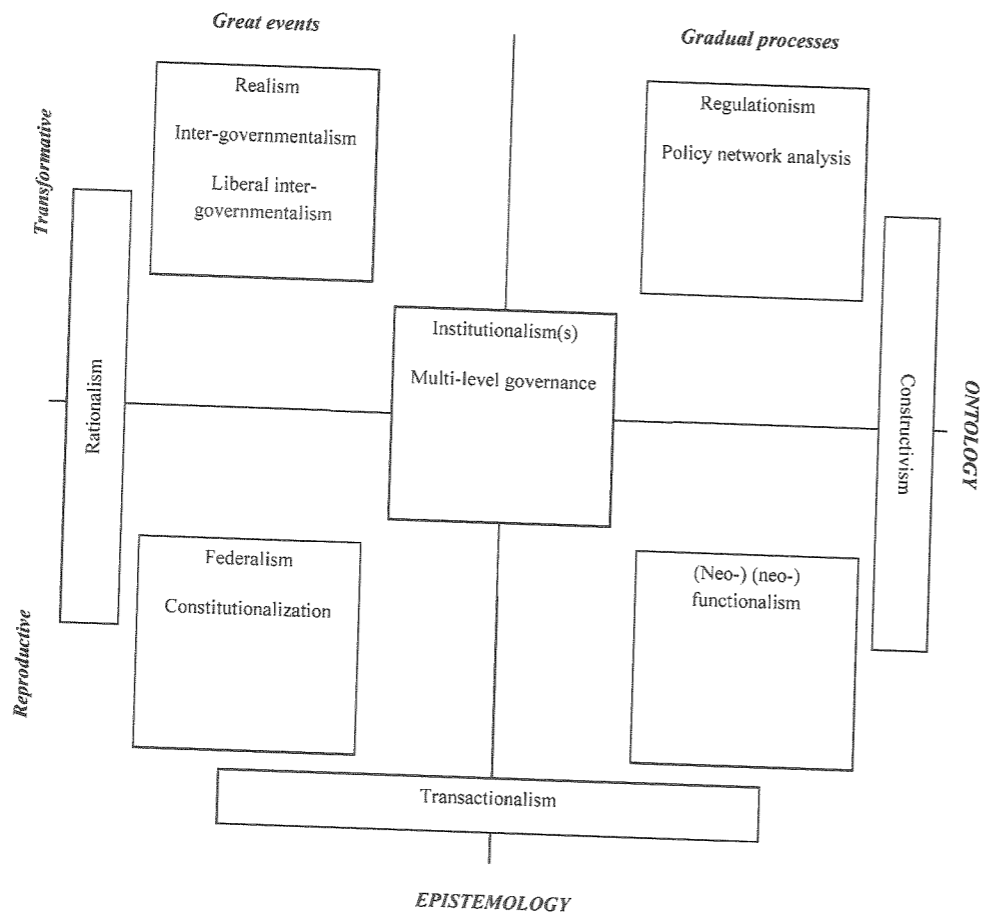


Figure 2.4 Political / International Relations Theories of Regional Integration²¹

suggested and original references, and to chapter two (Söderbaum) in this volume. He/she thus has access to a wealth of ideas, concepts, and theoretical frameworks. The challenge is to use these in an intelligent and adequate way, and this should be a function of the research question at stake. For many research problems, a creative but critical eclecticism will be the recommended option.

It should hereby be observed that many (or perhaps most) of these theories should not be considered as 'competing', in the sense that they present alternative theoretical solutions to given research problems, from which the researcher has to choose in order to frame his/her research. A closer look reveals that they often present different answers to different questions. Malamud and Schmitter's presentation already points in that direction (showing that some theories 'explain'

²¹ Based on Malamud and Schmitter (2007).

great events while other theories rather 'explain' gradual processes), and it is even more the case if other theories (e.g., economic theories) are taken into account. It should finally be observed that more general theories from the social sciences could also usefully be applied to many issues that are of concern to researchers in the field.

Using Empirical Methods

Qualitative versus Quantitative Methods

As already indicated by the examples we have referred to in the previous sections, in comparative regionalism studies, both quantitative and qualitative empirical methods can be used. Their respective advantages and disadvantages and their characteristic use in certain social science sub-disciplines have been amply discussed in the methodological literature in the social sciences.

Suffice it here to present a few observations that are specific to comparative regionalism studies. To start with, the preference for qualitative approaches, more specifically single-case study methods, can be explained by (i) a (perceived) lack of comparable cases because of the (perceived) heterogeneity and complexity of the regionalisation phenomenon; (ii) the fact that the academic study of regionalisation and regionalism often emerged in area studies environments, and (iii) the disciplinary traditions and practices in political science and international relations (IR).

The advantages of these qualitative approaches are related to their nuance, sensitivity to complexity and specificity, sensitivity to historical and institutional contexts, and the capacity to engage in interdisciplinary approaches. The disadvantages include the lack of general conceptual frameworks, allowing for more general knowledge about the regional phenomenon and interregional comparisons, and often less rigour in empirically testing theoretical hypotheses using data and standardised techniques.²²

Having said this, there is a growing interest observable in comparative work, sometimes within broad geographical regions (e.g., Latin American regionalisms), but more and more inter-regionally. Sound research methodology, which is not always found in practice, requires: (i) a theoretical framework that is general enough to be applicable to the cases under investigation (which in practice often means that an uncritical adoption of European models should be avoided); and (ii) purposive and theoretically framed case selection, well connected to the research questions one wishes to address.²³

²² For a more general critique on research practice in IR, and applicable to comparative regionalism, see Eichengreen (1998).

²³ See for example: Silverman (2000, 104–6); Levy (2002); Maoz (2002, 166); and Eisenhardt (2002, 12–13). Genna and De Lombaerde (2010) deal specifically with the issue of case selection in comparative regionalism.

As also argued elsewhere, regionalism scholars could probably benefit from a more open attitude towards empirical methods and from striking a better balance between qualitative and quantitative techniques when studying regions (De Lombaerde et al. 2009). Quantification serves thereby not only the purpose of testing research hypotheses with the help of sophisticated statistical techniques, but also the purpose of more critically using 'stylised facts', referring to the relative success or depth of certain regional integration processes or organisations compared to others, when theorising about regionalisms.²⁴ Finally, an interesting avenue for future research in comparative regionalism is the use of 'mixed methods' like 'small *n* nested analysis' (Lieberman 2005; Teddlie and Tashakkori 2008).

Data Availability

Although there are, in my opinion, good arguments in favour of complementing qualitative approaches with measurements and quantitative hypothesis testing, one should be aware of the severe data availability constraints that (still) exist when undertaking research in this area. Indeed, although many relevant variables in comparative regionalism are in principle measurable, they are not necessarily measured. For some variables (e.g., the ones intervening in discourse analysis or social network analysis), the researcher might be able to collect the raw data (e.g., published political opinions in the press, regional structures of multinational companies, or memberships of regional trade unions as published in their respective annual reports, etc.) and produce the measurements and statistics. However, for many other variables the researcher depends on the work of statistical institutes or other (public or private) data-generating organisations.

Let us illustrate this with the example of *de facto* regionalisation or regional interdependence as expressed by the density of flows and interconnections of different kinds within a region. These flows include migration, short-term mobility of people, tourism, flows of goods, flows of services, foreign direct investment, financial investment, transfers of public funds, flows of knowledge, telecommunication, transportation, and energy interconnections. Although for many of these variables, aggregate data are available at the country level, for variables related to the movement of people or foreign investment, there are still no good data available that allow us to distinguish globally between intra-regional and extra-regional flows in a systematic way and over a time period of some length. Even for trade, which is probably the class of least problematic variables, data availability is a greater problem than one might expect. In the context of the work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on the *Handbook on Economic Globalisation Indicators*, for example, data availability was checked for trade related variables reflecting intra-regional interdependence. As

²⁴ For concrete examples of useful confrontations between 'generally accepted truths' and real-world data (concerning intra-regional trade shares, and regional budgets), see De Lombaerde and colleagues (2009).

Table 2.4 Data Availability for Intra-Regional Trade, OECD Zone

Indicators for free trade regions	Available for all countries	Available for a few countries	Desirable but not available
A. Structure of trade			
- Intra-regional trade in goods as a % of extra-regional trade in goods	X		
- Intra-regional services in goods as a % of extra-regional trade in goods		X	
- Trade in goods between free trade areas	X		
- Region's share of goods export markets	X		
- Share of intra-regional and extra-regional trade in global trade	X		
- Total trade by multinationals as a % of total trade		X	
B. Nature of trade			
- Trade in goods	X		
- Trade in services		X	
- Trade in intermediate goods		X	
- Trade in finished products			X
- Trade in inter-industry goods	X		
- Trade in high, medium and low-technology goods	X		

Table 2.4 shows, the availability of data for the OECD region, which is the region where the highest data standards can be expected, is altogether quite limited.

Using Integration Indicators²⁵

Direct measurements, together with scores based on qualitative assessments, can be used in indicator-systems. These indicator-systems can serve the purpose

²⁵ Based on Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004, 201).

of academic research, as in Hufbauer and Schott (1994),²⁶ but also of supporting the monitoring and evaluation of integration policies. Monitoring can thereby be understood as 'all relevant processes of information gathering, processing and dissemination concerning the ... integration process, performed by different kinds of actors in different moments and lapses of time, in order to control, evaluate, correct and/or influence the integration policies and the functioning of the regional institutions' (Costea et al. 2006, 214).²⁷

Using indicators allows (and forces) researchers and policy-makers to be more explicit when communicating about their findings and positions (for example when talking about 'successful' cases or instances of 'deep' integration), and helps to bridge the gap between qualitative and quantitative approaches. However, the strength of the indicators (i.e., their easy readability and manageability) is also their weakness. Once constructed, they are very easy to misinterpret and to misuse. It is therefore very important to use 'good practises' with respect to the selection of individual indicators, the systematic classification of individual indicators, and the construction of composite indices (De Lombaerde, Dorrucchi et al. 2008). Composite indices of regionalisation, for example, are attractive and powerful tools, but these attributes should be weighed against the difficulties related to their satisfactorily construction and their abstract character when it comes to their interpretation.²⁸

Conclusions

This chapter has addressed a number of methodological issues that researchers engaging in comparative research projects on regional integration or regionalism are faced with and aims at providing some guidelines for comparative empirical analysis in this field. The conclusions can be summarised as follows.

Firstly, 'regions' are a moving target for researchers, and the population of cases in comparative regionalism is more diverse than the population of cases (i.e., states) in comparative politics. Secondly, many definitions for 'regions' and related dynamic concepts circulate in the literature. These definitions are not necessarily mutually exclusive and some definitions are not necessarily better than other definitions. The choice of the definitions that are used depends on the research problem that is addressed. In addition, the fact that new regionalism has given us a better and broader understanding of regionalism (i.e., multi-actor, multi-dimensional) does not necessarily imply that more conventional approaches, based on narrower definitions have lost their relevance. Thirdly, conceptual choices determine the comparability of regions. It should thereby be observed that, again depending on

²⁶ See also the work by Feng and Genna (2003, 2004, and 2005) and Dorrucchi and colleagues (2002, 2004).

²⁷ For a worldwide overview of regional integration monitoring practices, see De Lombaerde, Estevadeordal, and Suominen (2008).

²⁸ On the problem of constructing composite indices in general, see Nardo and colleagues (2005). The authors propose a ten-step approach to build 'good' composite indicators.

the research problem, hybrid (i.e., region-to-state) comparisons might be more relevant than region-to-region comparisons. This is related to the paradox that with the deepening of the integration process, the integrated entity may acquire more and more statehood properties so that states might well become good (or even better) comparators. Fourthly, the overlap between different regions and regional arrangements deserves particular attention and is one of the methodological aspects that distinguish comparative regionalism from comparative politics. This problem is not necessarily easy to tackle in empirical research. Fifthly, different theoretical setups with different combinations of dependent, intermediate, and independent variables are possible. These can be based on a variety of theories or on eclectic combinations of the latter. It should thereby be observed that most theories are not competing but rather complementary. Finally, with respect to empirical research methods in comparative regionalism, more attention should go to sound case selection. In addition, the potential of quantification could be more fully exploited, provided that data availability does not constitute a prohibitive factor.

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Formal and Informal Regionalism

Fredrik Söderbaum

Introduction

Historically, the study of regionalism and regional integration has focused heavily on sovereignty transfer and political unification within inter-state regional organisations. This is seen in the innumerable studies on the European Union (EU) and other state-led regional projects, such as the African Union (AU), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR). The focus on formal (even formalistic) regionalism as a state-led and policy-driven project has frequently been combined with an analysis of official (in contrast with unofficial) economic flows of trade, capital, and people.

Closely related to this methodological bias is the strong tendency to explain variations from the 'standard' European case. Indeed, other forms of regionalism are frequently, where they appear, characterised as loose and informal (e.g. Asia) or simply as 'failed' (e.g. Africa). The problem is not European integration theory or practice *per se*, but rather the failure to acknowledge that it is a *particular* reading of formal and state-centric European integration – EU-style institutionalisation – that shapes perceptions about how regionalism looks, or should look.

The stance adopted in this chapter is that progress in the field of comparative regionalism will not be reached through simply celebrating differences between European integration and other regions. Rather, progress will be achieved by going beyond dominant (formal/formalistic and state-centric) interpretations of European integration and supranational institutions, and drawing more broadly upon alternative theories that highlight both formal and informal aspects of European integration that are more comparable to other regions.

In this context it is important to acknowledge that, since the late 1990s, research in the field of regional integration and regionalism has progressed, with both a broader and more nuanced interpretation of European integration (Diez and Wiener 2003), as well as with an increased emphasis on 'soft', *de facto* or 'informal' regionalism in Europe as well as other regions (Acharya 2001; Bach 1999; Söderbaum and Taylor 2008; Robinson et al. 2010). The relatively recent emphasis on such