

Annual Conference I

Regionalism in the Global South and the EU in Comparative Perspective: The ambivalent Influence of Intra- and Extra-Regional Actors on Regional Integration Processes

10.-11. November 2016, Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz, Germany

Call for Papers

TOPIC

Since the early 1990s and in parallel to Globalisation, the world has witnessed a new wave of regionalism and a mushrooming of regional integration organisations in virtually every part of the globe. Quite surprisingly, most of these new regionalisms have emerged in the Global South and produced considerable institutional dynamics. Despite this observation, the scientific debate on how to explain regionalism or specific regional integration processes is yet significantly influenced by research on the EU. So far, only few theoretical approaches have been developed which aim explicitly at analysing and explaining regional integration beyond Europe. This is because regionalisms and regional integration processes in the Global South have been widely neglected in the scientific debate for a long time and comparative studies are yet rare to find. Most of the current research and existing literature on regionalism in the Global South belongs either to the field of area studies or has often focussed only on selected policy areas (e.g. the economy) so far.

There is evidence that regional integration processes and institutional dynamics in the Global South are not always entirely under control of the regional actors only. While intra-regional actors, particularly regional hegemony or other key countries, are widely recognised to play a pivotal role for the development and success of specific integration projects and entire regional organisations, there has been few systematic research on the influence and effects of extra-regional actors on regionalism so far. Whereas diffusion theory argues that the EU acts as a vital promoter of regionalism in other parts of the world, it remains still fairly unclear to what extent regional organisations in the Global South are actually affected by external impact and whether and how external actors stimulate or impede regional integration efforts.

This relates in particular to the issue of institutional performance and effectiveness. Extra-regional actors may act as facilitators for regional integration projects and contribute to the functional capability and performance of regional organisations and their member states. Likewise, however, external support to regional organisations may trigger dysfunctional façade institutions and fuel neopatrimonial structures/actors that do not necessarily improve organisational effectiveness or members' state capacity.

OBJECTIVES

This international conference brings together scholars and researchers who work on the topic of regional integration and aims to encourage and advance scientific research on regionalism in the Global South and the EU in comparative perspective. Analysing the EU or any other regional integration organisation in isolation leads always to an $n = 1$ problem which can only be overcome through comparative case study research. Nevertheless, the EU remains a pioneer and "trendsetter" for global regionalism and qualifies not only as case study for comparative analyses but functions as well as important role-model and benchmark for regional

integration schemes in the Global South. Understanding the role and interplay of different intra- and extra-regional state and non-state actors as well as their impact on the regional level can generate valuable insights – particularly with regard to generalisations and causal mechanisms – when compared across a larger number of different regionalisms and policy areas worldwide.

Against this background and with reference to the existing gaps in research and scientific debates, this conference aims at analysing and explaining the emergence, institutional development and performance of regionalisms in comparative perspective – with a focus on the Global South, but also on the EU (both in comparison to other regionalisms and as a shaper/promoter of regional integration). This shall lead to achieving systematic and profound knowledge on the similarities and differences among regional integration organisations as well as understanding how intra- and/or extra-regional actors unfold influence on polity, policy and politics on regional level.

Successful papers address topics and questions such as:

- How do regionalisms in the Global South develop in terms of polity, policy and/or politics?
- What actors influence regional integration processes and how?
- In what ways do intra- and/or extra-regional actors shape polities, politics and policies?
- What are the similarities and/or differences of regional integration processes, institutional dynamics and performance within the Global South – but also in comparison to the EU?
- How do intra- and/or extra-regional actors affect institutional performance and effectiveness of regional organisations and/or specific integration projects?
- Governance transfer by regional organisations on third regional organisations, for example: what role does the EU play in promoting and diffusing regional integration?
- Impact of external support on regional organisations with focus on aspects such as institutional (dys-)functionality, symbolism, regime-boosting and member countries' degree of state capacity
- The combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods with the goal of better analysing, explaining and understanding regionalism in comparative perspective.

Theoretical contributions and methodological approaches are welcome, but also empirical analyses. Those works focussing on theory, methodology and theory-building would introduce frameworks that aim to systematically compare different regional integration processes and/or regional organisations. Analyses and case studies on regionalisms in Africa, Asia, Eurasia and South America are most welcome. The conference is planned to lead to a joint publication (edited volume) in which high-quality papers may become part of.

- Please send an abstract of your paper proposal (max. 300 words; please include title, name and affiliation) by **29th July 2016 (deadline)** to: regionalism@uni-mainz.de

Limited funding will be available to finance (part) of the travel and accommodation costs. Please, state whether your participation will depend on funding made available by the organisers.

ORGANISERS

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