

Recenzje/Book Reviews

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***Baltic-Black Sea Regionalisms. Patchworks and Networks at Europe's Eastern Margins*, eds. Olga Bogdanova, Andrey Makarychev, Springer, Cham 2020, ISBN 978-3-030-24877-2, pp. 249.**

Recent years have been marked by numerous academic publications studying regionalism and dealing with Eastern Europe, as framed by both the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea. Very few, however, merge both approaches, offering a more insightful look into processes in this region. A new volume issued by the Springer publishing house seems to have succeeded with this task, offering an analytically coherent, factographically informative and conceptually inspiring set of descriptions and interpretations of the current developments in the region.

Created by an international team of scholars, the new book, resulting from the project “Rethinking Regional Studies: The Baltic-Black Sea Connection (BBSR)” (KA2 Higher Education – International Capacity Building, funded by the European Union’s Erasmus+ Programme, Project No. 2017 – 2883/001-001), presents a new approach to regionalism studied on the example of the Baltic Sea – Black Sea Space. As indicated by the title, *Baltic-Black Sea Regionalisms. Patchworks and Networks at Europe's Eastern Margins*, this edited volume employs the perspective of the EU’s peripheries and the creation of connections across the EU’s eastern borders. This results in a conceptually fresh and empirically up-to-date analysis, conducted from several disciplinary perspectives and national angles.

The first set of contributions pave the way for further investigation by presenting and developing the key theories, vocabularies and concepts of high explanatory value to understand the regional dynamics. Tomasz Brańka, Jarosław Jańczak and Łukasz Donaj work with re-bordering and de-bordering models in their text “Border Processes in the Contemporary Baltic–Black Sea Region: Between (Re)Bordering and Debordering.” Vassilis Petsinis focuses on ethnopolitics in his contribution, titled “Ethnopolitics Across Central and Eastern Europe in a State of Flux: Time for Updating and Upgrading?” Andrey Makarychev and Alexandra Yatsyk concentrate on biopolitics studying “The Biopolitics of National Belonging in the Baltic–Black Sea Region.” Eleonora Narvselius employs the

perspective of cultural diversity researching “Cultural Diversity in the Area between the Black and Baltic Seas: A Tentative Approach.” Finally, Polina Sinovets and Iryna Maksymenko study hard power investigating “The Baltic–Black Sea Region in Great Powers’ Relations: The Hard Power Aspect.”

The second section approaches the region as a (set of) transnational space(s). Mindaugas Jurkynas investigates the Baltic space in his contribution “The Baltic World and Beyond: The View of the Baltic Presidents.” Anna Kuznetsova investigates Finland Estonia and Hungary in her text “Finno-Ugric World(s) and ‘Language Brotherhood,’” and Yana Volkova examines Central and Eastern Europe, where she analyzes “State-Led Transnationalism in Eastern and Central Europe: Understanding the Phenomenon of the ‘Domestic Abroad’.”

The third part of the book focuses on policy practices, where Andrea Schmidt tests mutual influences in the region in her text entitled “From Intermarium to the Three Seas Initiative – The Implications of the Polish Orientation over the Central and Eastern European Region on Hungarian Foreign Policy.” Oleksii Polegkyi employs the security perspective, studying “Regional Cooperation in Ukrainian and Polish Security Discourse.” Przemysław Furgacz checks the role of the past, writing about “Polish-Russian Disputes over History as an Important Factor in Their Mutual Relations.”

In the final part of the book the stress is put on Ukraine. Markiyan Malskyi, Nataliya Antonyuk, Marianna Gładysz and Oksana Krayevska focus on the development of regionalism in their paper “Regionalism and Spillover Effects: Case of Ukraine.” Olga Brusylovska and Sergii Glebov explore the role of Russia and its influence in their contribution titled “‘Russian World’ in the Black Sea Region: The Case of Ukraine.” The last text by Mykola Trofymenko and Anastasiia Trofymenko focuses on diplomatic relations, as they discuss the “Public Diplomacy in the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe: Experiences for Ukraine.”

The collection of texts offers a consistent analysis of the current political and socio-political processes in the Baltic-Black Sea space. It fills a gap in the research by proposing a new perspective: the most important manifestations of regionalization dynamics are explored as seen from the inside. In an interdisciplinary mode, new light is shed on many aspects of the regional dynamics there. This international group of authors, demonstrating the diversity of their academic orientations, guarantees a wide spectrum of approaches, opinions and conclusions. This is especially significant, due to the fact that the region is currently the scene of ongoing, still accelerating, political, economic and social processes of transformation, with an unknown (or at least uncertain) final point. Therefore, the book should be recommended to all those interested in the integration processes in (Eastern) Europe, and especially to scholars, students and practitioners focusing on the eastern outskirts of the European Union and its eastern neighbors.

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