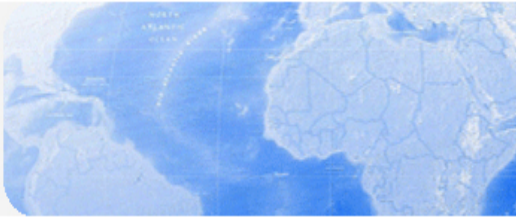




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NEW REGIONALISMS POST-EPAs:

What prospects for sustainable development in Africa &
the Caribbean?

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Introduction

Increasingly, there are multiple definitions of regions & their development in Africa & the Caribbean. Who so defines: the EU and/or the South? This paper advances a discussion about alternative definitions with reference to the BRICs along with fragile /failed states. It also considers how varieties of capitalisms & of civil societies impact regional governance, including CSR. And it recognises the impacts on regionalisms of conflicts & peace-making. Finally, the paper considers the range of implications for analyses of regionalisms, disciplines & discourses as well as public policy, non-state as well as state.

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

'The overlap of membership between regional integration arrangements in the wider southern & eastern African region is without parallel anywhere else in the world...seven regional economic communities are effectively operating in parallel within the region (SADC, COMESA, EAC, SACU, IGAD, ECCAS & CEPGL).' (Braude 2008: 7)

'Fragile states cannot or will not deliver what citizens need to live decent secure lives...

There are wider reasons why we need to work better in fragile states. They are more likely to become unstable, to destabilize their neighbours, to create refugee flows, to spread disease & to be bases for terrorists.' (DFID 2005: 5)

'The emergence of China & India as powerful actors in global governance arenas & in global politics poses a series of questions for development policy & the future of global governance.' (Humphrey & Messner 2006: 108)

At the end of the first decade of the new millennium, global relations are in flux, reflected in changing analyses of development, foreign policy (FP), international political economy (IPE), international relations (IR) etc as indicated at the end of this opening section. This is particularly apparent in Africa & the Caribbean where burgeoning subfields cannot be ignored, such as climate change, global coalitions, R2P & peace-making, resource wars, water scarcity etc. Such redefinitions are reinforced by the unevenness of globalization, most glaringly in the rise & impact of the BRICs – Brazil, Russia, India &

China – which are located outside such relatively marginal regions, where the fragile & failed state are concentrated.

In turn, old & new regionalisms are in transition because of formal, inter-governmental pressures (eg to agree EPAs with the EU) & informal, non-state shifts (eg diasporas in & remittances from the global South). Both, interrelated forces are felt particularly keenly in Africa & the Caribbean as they along with old/new regions like Central America, Central Asia, Central Europe & the South Pacific consist of multiple small, sometimes vulnerable & fragile states (Cooper & Shaw 2009). Issues like energy, environmental & food security will figure prominently on the two Summits which T&T is hosting in 2009 – 5th Summit of the Americas in April (www.fifthsummitoftheamericas.org) & Commonwealth in November (www.chogm2009.org) – along with our hosting of ACUNS in June on ‘Small, Middle & Emerging Powers in the UN System’ (www.acuns.org).

This paper juxtaposes IR from South & North with old & new regionalisms, informed in terms of the first nexus by a debate arising from a turn of the century collection on Africa (Dunn & Shaw 2001) & an end-decade retrospective research overview on new regionalisms (Shaw, Grant & Cornelissen 2009). Such analyses have to recognise & incorporate a range of contemporary issues, the ranking of which may vary over time & between regions, with implications for established analytic fields as indicated in the concluding section below:

climate change, including changing patterns of demand, price & supply of energy, food & minerals...and onto water, including declining as well as unstable levels of precipitation;

diasporas from the global South now well-established in major, cosmopolitan cities of the North, impacting policy direction as well as remittance flows;

global civil society of heterogeneous actors, from indigenous community-based organisations to international NGOs like Oxfam, SCF & World Vision, now including FBOs (Clarke & Jennings 2008) & diverse private foundations, both established & new (Albrow et al 2008), all increasingly concerned about their own accountability, transparency etc (www.ingoaccountabilitycharter.org; www.oneworldtrust.org);

global coalitions in response to proliferating global issues (Rittberger & Nettesheim 2008) such as landmines & blood diamonds leading to Fisheries & Forestry Certification schemes (Gale & Haward 2009) but also to disinterest as over, say, child soldiers & small arms (O’Dwyer 2006);

small/island states, from a minority of ‘developmental’ to a majority of ‘fragile’ status (Cooper & Shaw 2009);

southern MNCs (Goldstein 2007) particularly from the BRICs, now over 10% (62) of the Fortune 500; & *transnational/informal relations* as in several regions of Africa such as the Great Lakes & the Horn, in which non-state actors in informal economic & social networks are dominant (Soderbaum & Taylor 2008).

In responding to the critique of Acharya & Johnston (2007: 9-10), I would advocate the reinforcement rather than dilution or abandonment of new regionalism(s):

...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 & comprehensive phenomenon, taking into account the role of both state & non-state actors, as well as the whole range of political, economic, strategic, social, demographic & ecological interactions within regions. It shifted the focus away from formal institutions toward studying informal sectors, parallel economies & non-state coalitions. In fact, its focus on informal sectors & non-state actors might have lessened the importance of institutional features of regionalism. Instead a much broader view of regional interactions emerged, especially a range of transnational processes that seems to operate outside the limits of state sovereignty. The major concern of new regionalism was to show the declining importance of the state & formal intergovernmental cooperation.

I turn first to such insights from that continent of many landlocked countries before turning to a very different region dominated by islands: the Caribbean.

a) African insights

‘...a major distinction between African international relations & those elsewhere is that so many of Africa’s states are states in name only – legal entities that have failed to consolidate political power within the territories over which that are the legally recognised authorities. Instead political power is exercised by a variety of states & non-state actors in Africa. Because standard international relations research theorizes about & collects data only for official states, much of Africa’s international relations are left out.’ (Lemke 2003: 117) (emphases added)

Despite the stereotype of a helpless or hopeless continent, in part because of demand for energy & raw materials from China & India, Africa has been in transition since mid-decade. Whilst it contains a higher proportion of fragile or failed states than other regions, it has also constituted at least half of the world's fastest growing economies since mid-decade: from oil & gas from Angola & Sudan to Equatorial Guinea & Sao Tome & in 2009 on to Madagascar (nickel), Malawi (uranium) & Mozambique (steel) (Economist 2008: 113). And if the oil boom in Uganda's northwest really gets underway, it may be next. The continent has featured at least two 'developmental states' (Mkandawire 2001) since the turn of the century – Botswana & Mauritius – with one or two others able to make a credible claim to the status, like Ghana & Uganda (Mbabazi & Taylor 2005). Furthermore, fragile states often tend to coexist with relatively strong economies or societies, however formal or legal.

The ubiquity of informal, non-state cross-border relations around fragile or failed states has generated an interest in the distinctiveness of African IR (Brown 2006, Lemke 2003): extra-governmental flows of drugs, foods, guns, manufactures, money, people, petroleum, religions, vehicles etc. Such informal regional exchange is considerably larger than the recorded formal flows in Central, Southern & West Africa, the Horn etc. In turn, novel forms of mixed actor governance have been required, such as the Ottawa Process against land-mines (www.icbl.org) & the Kimberley Process around conflict diamonds (www.kimberleyprocess.com).

Two informed review articles on the two sides of the Atlantic in the first half of the present decade (Lemke 2003, Brown 2006) advanced the debate around whether African IR was/is exceptional (Cornelissen, Cheru & Shaw 2009)? Thus 'Africa' has come to generate comparative insights into 'transnational' relations, especially regionalisms, around fragile states plus 'private transnational governance' (Dingwerth 2008) in response to emerging 'global' issues like corruption (www.publishwhatyoupay.org), fisheries & forestry certification (Gale & Haward 2009), forced migration & small arms (www.smallarmssurvey.org) & onto more sustainable 'regimes' like DDI (www.ddiglobal.org), EITI (www.eitransparency.org) & ICC (www.icc-cpi.int) etc. I turn next to a very different region, one characterised by small island & littoral states.

b) Caribbean foci

Just as Braude's opening citation identifies myriad overlapping definitions of regionalism in Africa, so the Caribbean or West Indies can be conceptualised in different ways depending on emphasis - ecology, economy, history, language, logistics, politics, society etc – including whether non-independent anglophone, Dutch & francophone territories are included. The narrower, anglophone definition

privileges the islands & is institutionalised in CARICOM (www.caricom.org). By contrast, the hispanic formulation incorporates the littoral of the Caribbean Sea – *el gran caribe* - & is institutionalised in the ACS (www.acs-aec.org) (Girvan 2006). Both narrower & broader conceptualisations are now impacted by non-state relations such as civil society networks, including culture, media & religion, & corporate investments & logistics, let alone more informal, sometimes illegal, relationships. And even more so than Africa, the Caribbean in reality extends to diasporas in Miami, New York & Toronto as well as Amsterdam, London & Paris (Cooper & Shaw 2009).

Thus Caribbean regional development – greater or narrower – includes regional NGOs or think-tanks like CANARI, CaPRI & Cropper Foundation & regional MNCs like ANSA McAl, Bermudez, Caribbean Airlines, CLICO, Goddards, Grace Kennedy, Guardian Life, Jaleel, LIAT, Neal & Massy, Republic Bank, Sagikor, Sandals, TCL etc, in addition to regional branches of global MNCs; eg Flow, Nestle, RBC, Scotiabank etc. But ‘Caribbean’ cultures include film, videos, literature, music, religions, sports etc & stretch to carnivals & fetes in the major North American metropolises & London. Whilst major debates flow around orthodox regional inter-governmental governance, few analysts treat broader issues of geographic scale, non-state dimensions, cultural components although Trevor Farrell (2005) recently discussed social contacts & media as well as regional stock exchanges & Trinidad’s dominance of regional manufacturing as factors.

c) New regionalisms as responses to uneven globalizations?

‘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 & regionalization’ (Boas, Marchand & Shaw 2005: 4-5)

Contemporary regionalisms are highly heterogeneous in scale – from micro- & meso- to macro – focus or issue – ecological, economic, political, social, strategic etc – & membership – companies, governments and/or civil societies etc? They have proliferated & diversified as the number of states has multiplied since the end of bipolarity. This has led to increasing specialisation such as education, technology, water (eg Nile Basin Initiative (www.nilebasin.org) with its parallel civil society network: Nile Basin Discourse (www.nilebasindiscourse.net)) & trans-boundary peace parks for wildlife (www.peaceparks.org). Some include non-independent territories, especially in the Caribbean. And they increasingly connect with each other in forms of inter-regionalism (Gaens 2008, Wunderlich 2007).

Moreover, regional institutions evolve in terms of membership & priorities. SADCC of nine at first was rather distinctive in largely non- or extra-governmental & extra-regional (ie Western Donors') concern for assistance & liberation in Southern Africa whereas its successor – SADC (with maximum membership of 15) – is more familiar inter-state & orthodox in its focus on economic integration & liberalization (www.sadc.int, www.tralac.org). At first, encouraged by donors' preoccupation with desertification, IGADD concentrated on the fragile ecology of Africa's Horn but as IGAD it subsequently expanded membership & purview to advance conflict resolution & prevention (www.igad.org). Already the revived & redefined EAC has gone beyond its anglophone inheritance to include two francophone members as well as expanding its purview to parliament, security etc (www.eac.int). As groupings over-expand & become diluted, more meso- or micro-level arrangements may become more salient (eg SACU within SADC). The role of civil society in any region, including post-apartheid southern Africa, is central (Soderbaum 2007)

Regions can include development corridors or spatial development initiatives (SDIs), development or growth triangles, export processing zones (EPZs), inter-city connections (eg Oresund link between Copenhagen & Malmo), pipelines (Aalto 2007), ocean rims (eg Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (www.iornet.com) to South Pacific Forum (www.forumsec.org.fj), and rivers & valleys (eg Amazon, Danube, Ganges, Mekong (www.mrcmekong.org), Nile & Zambezi etc. Some regions rise & fall in status (eg APEC) (www.apec.org) while others never get born (eg FTAA) (www.ftaa-alca.org). A few have had to absorb significant levels of conflict (eg ECOWAS, MRU & IGAD) (Grant & Soderbaum 2003, Soderbaum & Taylor 2008)

Perhaps, most importantly, the EU has expanded to 27 heterogeneous members from an original, homogeneous six, with profound implications for other states & regions. The EU's relations are most controversial both within & outside the EU with its ex-colonies in the 79 member ACP grouping, in part because for the majority of recent members, connections with the South are unimportant: just 40 billion euros in trade each way pa, though investment from the EU to Africa is growing. This is especially so in its unilateral attempt to make the 2000 Cotonou agreement compatible with WTO rules. Its attempts to agree FTAs including a range of services with other parties like ASEAN, India & Korea have not attracted as much attention or opposition. But the proliferation of bilateral FTAs may erode the gains of regionalism (Solis, Stallings & Katada 2009)? Meanwhile, the EU has attempted to take advantage of China's burgeoning role in Africa, especially in the extraction of energy & minerals, by creating three-way talks: EU, China & Africa.

EU FTAs are very comprehensive, including services, government procurement, competition law etc. The controversial negotiation (imposition?) of EPAs on its definition of six regions in the South - CARIFORUM, South Pacific & Central, East, Southern & West Africa (see Braude 2008) - has revived lagging 'nationalist' sentiment leading to a range of negative reactions (www.normangirvan.info, www.southcentre.org), even if the South has little choice but conform. The larger states in the South like Nigeria & South Africa, are particularly aggrieved & some of Africa's regional communities are talking about a combined approach (ie 26 members of COMESA, EAC & SADC) to enhance their bargaining position. Notwithstanding a variety of overlaps in memberships, in late-2008 in Kampala they held an initial summit for a FTA amongst themselves so they could in turn negotiate an EPA as one regional economic community with the EU (www.rtfp.org) as well as constitute the core of any continental FTA, reminiscent of the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action. Surprisingly, the new EAC of five had beaten the other more-established regional communities to the finishing line by agreeing an interim EPA just weeks before the expiry of the Cotonou waiver at the end of 2007. The EAC includes overlapping memberships with COMESA (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda & Uganda) & SADC (Tanzania) which may require them to forgo such competing connections (Braude 2008 5-6):

'The challenge for COMESA & SADC in the short term (as the first EPA tranches come into effect) will therefore be to minimise & contain the negative effects of multiple EPAs within their regional trade blocs. These are the effects that the EAC member states narrowly avoided.' (Braude 2008: 7)

To date only CARIFORM has signed a comprehensive final agreement; others have agreed a range of interim agreements. And even in CARIFORM there is ambiguity over who will implement for the Caribbean, which is central as monitoring & dispute settlement are key to securing mutual benefits. The ECDPM (www.ecdpm.org) is attempting to enhance Africa's capacity in such talks over trade.

As Yeates (2007: 251) laments, we need

'...to address the substantial gap in the scholarly & policy literatures on regionalisms that privilege issues of trade, diplomacy & 'security' to the neglect of welfare...there is a tangible social policy dimension to several regional groupings...questions of trade & 'security' are in practice tangled in wider social policy issues...'

d) Varieties of New Regionalisms & Varieties of New Capitalisms

(NB some of the initial drafts of the next three sections (ie d) to f)) are taken from my initial draft of the overview paper for Shaw, Grant & Cornelissen, 2009)

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

Regional development in the 21st century is a much a function of corporate strategies & informal sectors as endless, often inconclusive or ineffective, inter-governmental negotiations & declarations. If the BRICs plus Mexico & South Africa (?) (Cooper, Antkiewicz & Shaw 2007, Cooper, Shaw & Antkiewicz 2006) following the NICs have created a set of new global companies (Agtmael 2007, BCG 2006, Goldstein 2007), so they have helped to redefine regionalism especially in the South; eg China's ICBC investment in Standard Bank which encourages the latter's regional expansion, likewise China's in UBA which is expanding continentally, both facilitating China's hunger for resources. In turn, a series of rankings of the most accountable & transparent MNCs, INGOs & intergovernmental institutions has arisen such as www.oneworldtrust.org.

In the new century, then, regional development may be advanced more by corporate strategies than state directives. These now include branding, franchising & logistics as well as old-fashioned DFI. Thus in, say, Southern & eastern Africa, rather than SACU, SADC or COMESA. Regional drivers include 'South African' MNCs like Engen, Game, Protea, SAA, SABMiller, Shoprite, Southern Sun, Stanbic & Woolworths & franchises like DStv, MTN, Nandos, Steer etc. And in the Caribbean, as already mentioned in b) above, Trinidadian companies like Caribbean Airlines, Clico, Guardian, Neal & Massy, Republic Bank & TCL advance regional cooperation among the islands (Farrell 2005) along with extra-regional investments like B-Mobile, Flow, RBC & Scotiabank.

Finally, in terms of inter-urban regionalisms, including some mega-triangles, especially amongst the BRICs, emerging mega-cities are central, whether recognised or not. The rise of a handful of world cities – Delhi/Kolkata/Mumbai, Sao Paulo, Shanghai/Beijing/HK etc is inseparable from uneven globalization, crucibles for diversity/fusion but also for tension/crime?

e) New Regionalisms & New Civil Societies

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

Parallel to both decolonization & globalization, the emergence & recognition of 'civil society', both formal & informal, is significant as a factor, even catalyst, for regionalism around the turn of the century, even if the literature on social movements usually so overlooks (Albrow 2007, Yeates 2007). As Soderbaum's recent (2007) study of Southern Africa indicates, NGOs can define regions. Thus contemporary regions are a function of alienation, ethnicities, diasporas, genders, migrations, religions etc as well as formal economic interest. Social development/HDI/MDGs vary significantly between as well as within regions as indicated in i) below. Yeates (2007: 251) insists on

'...the centrality of social policy & politics in mediating the development & impacts of regionalist strategies – as well as the significance of regional formations in the (re)making of social policy under conditions of globalization.'

And some authentic regional NGOs, networks & think-tanks have emerged at the several levels in, for example, Africa: from Mwengo (www.mwengo.org) & CODESRIA (www.codesria.org) to CIVICUS (www.civicus.org) & UISS (www.iss.co.za). And reflective of the growing challenge of 'security' including peace-making (see next section f) below), several INGOs (eg ICG, HRW) have started sponsoring with state like Australia, Belgium Canada, the Netherland & Norway, a novel Global Centre for R2P (www.globalcenter2p.org) supported by MacArthur, Soros & other foundations.

In addition to INGOs, particularly global 'federations' like AKF, CIVICUS, Consumers/Refugee/Transparency International, Oxfam, SCF. World Vision, WWF etc, defining regions, communities do likewise, both short- & long-distance, indigenous and/or diasporic? Such communities to not always reinforce inter-state organization, but neither can they be overlooked; see, for example, the evolution in the Indian diaspora from alienated NRIs to recognised GOPIO (www.gopio.net). In turn, responding to critiques about their democratic & transparency deficits, INGOs have begun to advance an accountability charter (www.ingoaccountabilitycharter.org) & recognise rankings of accountability amongst themselves along with MNCs & IOs (www.oneworldtrust.org).

As noted in mid-decade (Boas, Marchand & Shaw 2005: 11), encouraged by the work of Manuel Castells, 'network society' can also inform & define regions in the new millennium. Thus, diasporas as features of globalizations come to define 'regions' through 'transnationalism from below' more so in the Caribbean than Africa?

'...diasporas...continue to have a presence in their communities of origin. In many cases, such transnational migrant networks operate on a regional scale & thus reinforce & complement regionalising tendencies. These migrant networks can & have become important regional actors, especially on regional issues, ranging from security, human rights, the pursuit of democracy to regional trade & investment agreements.'

f) From Regional Conflicts to Regional Peace-making?

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

Just as the original EEC/EU was a response to the nightmare of WWII & rise of American MNCs, so regionalisms in today's South are impacted by evolving regional conflicts, either directly or indirectly (Travares 2008). Post-bipolarity, these increasingly have economic causes or consequences so that companies have had to learn how to operate profitably & ethically in conflict zones (Boge 2006), especially in regions of Africa.

As suggested by Boas & Jennings (2008) above in terms of the GLR, regional conflicts flow across borders so redefining regions, sometimes dividing states, as in the 1960s & 1970s anti-apartheid struggle (Bowman 1968). Thus, we now learn that, at the ICC, to secure control as well as riches, Charles Taylor redefined the Mano River Union (MRU) from its inter-governmental developmental roots to an extra- or non-state regional network of resource extraction to finance small arms imports for his allies: diamonds, gold, iron ore, rubber & timber from/through Guinea, Liberia & Sierra Leone (along with *Cote d'Ivoire*) in exchange for weapons (Boas & Dunn 2007). Furthermore, the *de facto* EAC includes the southern Sudan & eastern Congo: not only do global & local companies operate there, but Ugandan shillings are the currency & Ugandan cell-phones & codes are the wireless communications.

Similarly, the nationalist ‘liberation movements’ in Southern Africa in the 1960s/1970s & 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 or Central Asia. In turn, there have been growing pressures to ‘regionalise’ peace-keeping responsibilities as in Darfur or Somalia, with the North only responsible for heavy lift & logistics, along with a continuing quest to ‘sub-contract’ peace-building with NGOs. Hence, the innovation by a set of INGOs as well as ‘like-minded’ states who retain a certain sympathy for ‘human security’ to establish a Global Center for R2P (www.globalcenter2p.org). However, conversely, there continue to be powerful, less benign, pressures to privatise security, both formally & informally (Wulf 2005). And the OECD has already moved to allow some forms of PKOs to count against ODA in the DAC, which makes the INGO community very anxious. However, in turn the latter have moved to appoint security advisers often from Western military establishments, a significant shift in their corporate culture or ethics?

g) Towards ‘new’ global governance: BRICs & new regionalisms?

To contemplate the range of possible directions in terms of global & regional governance – from Washington to Beijing Consensus? - some sense of history, personality, psychology etc is imperative. Development prospects are a function of the distinctive & changing combination of myriad factors, especially state, market & civil society, but also resources, security forces, ecology along with regional & global contexts (Shaw, Cooper & Chin 2009). Conversely, it's very difficult to imagine global supply chains without containerization & computerization. Each developmental state has a distinctive trajectory around particular conjunctures so replication is virtually impossible, though lessons can certainly be learned for better or worse. Conjunctures are not always (often?) anticipated, as in the current high price for energy, food, minerals etc. Some would say that the unanticipated (& fleeting?) Celtic tiger involved at least a little Irish luck (Kirby 2002)

Symptomatic of some of the BRICs’ ambitions, indeed competitiveness, in their African relations is the summits they have animated in the new century: who defines African regionalism in the new century: the new AU &/or the BRICs? China was first in emulating Japan’s innovation of a series of African consultations: Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) – Forum on Africa-China Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000. And India orchestrated a somewhat more modest or selective ‘African’ gathering in Delhi in early-2008. Tokyo had inaugurated such Asian-African summitry in the early 1990s at the height of Asia’s economic miracle: 1993. But its fourth in late-May 2008 in Yokohama (www.ticad.net) constituted a form of catch-up with China & India in anticipation of the G8 Summit in

Hokkaido in mid-2008 which, post-St Petersburg, would again feature African ‘outreach’ reminiscent of Gleneagles (www.mofa.go.jp). Symptomatically, the first-ever extra-continental AGM of the African Development Bank (ADB) was hosted by China in Shanghai in May 2007.

Further, we need to ponder whether, as the emerging middle, the BRICs (Cooper & Antkiweicz 2008) – polities, economies, civil societies, ecologies etc – seek to look horizontally towards other burgeoning actors in the political economies in the new middle – ie G20 - or vertically: upwards – like O-5 to the G8/OECD (Payne 2008) – or downwards – to the historic South; G77? The prevailing orientation of primary interests in the BRICs has profound implications for Africa & other regions in the South: is there a danger of the BRICs becoming either dominant or disinterested (Shaw, Cooper & Chin 2009)? Is there a possibility of the South-North axis being replaced by one between East & South (Kaplinsky & Messner 2008, Martin 2008) by mid-century?

Furthermore, distinctive subsets around the BRICs like IBSA (Le Pere & Shelton 2007) may have a unique place as a grouping, albeit, somewhat ironically, state-led, of more democratic political cultures/economies. The character of its interactions could be more comprehensive as well as democratic as all three partners treat issues of, say corporate social responsibility, environmental sustainability, poverty & inequality etc. By contrast, the other pair of BRICs is more authoritarian & statist, in part reflective of somewhat incomplete transitions from communist regimes, so their concern with, say, civil society or private capital would be limited.

Informed by the rise of non-state actors in global affairs – symbolised by the heterogeneity of participants in, say the Ottawa or Kimberley Processes – the definition & recognition of an emerging power is likely to be in part a function of whether it has capacity in terms of ‘public diplomacy’ to identify & advance ‘new’ issues? Formal democracies like Brazil or India may be able to reinforce their inter-governmental roles through judicious ‘network diplomacy’ rather than being confined to the limited, traditional ‘club diplomacy’ (Heine 2006).

Finally, indicators continuously need to be broadened to take into account, say, Human Development indicators or indicators of ‘globalization’ or ‘failure’ as in annual rankings from Foreign Policy or competitiveness from the World Economic Forum. Foreign Policy regularly ranks states according to both its ‘Failed States’ (Foreign Policy 2007) & ‘Globalization’ (2006) indices, the former being concentrated in Africa (eg Sudan, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Chad, Cote d’Ivoire & Congo) & the Middle East (eg Iraq & Afghanistan). In the hegemonic ‘Global Competitiveness Index’ from the WEF (2007: 14) out of 131 states, Brazil is #72, Russia 58, India 48 & China 34. Conversely, in terms of UNDP’s 2007 HDI,

out of 177 states, Russia is highest at # 67 & India the lowest at 128 with Brazil (70) & China (81) in between.

At the end of his overview on China & the continent, Chris Alden (2007: 128) identifies a set of possible scenarios or directions for 'the future of China-Africa relations' with implications for regionalisms everywhere:

Five 'images' of China are set to shape the relationship with Africa: first, its image as the new face of globalization; second its role in African development success; third as a mirror for the West; fourth as a pariah partner; & finally as a responsible stakeholder.

h) Implications for disciplines & debates?

In turn, I conclude by reflecting on some of the implications of such new regionalisms post-EPAs for the 'discipline' of political science in Africa, the Caribbean & elsewhere....both comparative & international PS, along with ethics:

global governance/multilateralisms – beyond inter-governmental law to global coalitions around blood diamonds (Kimberley Process), landmines (Ottawa Process), fisheries & forestry certification (Gale & Haward 2009), but minimal momentum around, say, child soldiers or small arms (O'Dwyer 2006);

international relations/multipolarity – greater equality & decentralization amongst 200 states or emergence of new hegemonies such as the BRICs?

comparative politics: developmental versus fragile states – how to progress from the latter to the former (Mkandawire 2001) in a sustainable way not just a sudden financial infusion from expensive resources leading to Dutch disease?

development studies – proliferation of issues & actors, especially around 'Asian drivers' (Kaplinsky & Messner 2008) & their African, Caribbean & other partners;

environmental studies – from climate change to resource wars around water & land as well as energy & minerals;

gender studies – from women & development to gender dimensions of ecology, violence etc, including masculinities & sexual orientations;

global studies – beyond inter- & non-governmental relations to emerging global structures, attention to which is increasingly reflected in academic programmes, publications, associations etc;

migration/diaspora/remittances nexus – a function of global inequalities? - whose salience was finally noticed by the World Bank earlier this decade, especially providing some relief & resources for at least some in otherwise failed or fragile states: &

security studies – treating both ‘old’ & ‘new’ security issues along with diverse forms of privatization & ‘civil-military relations’ now involving civil society as well as parliaments where democratic control is effective as well as privatization to escape such oversight.

I conclude by returning to the revisionist critique of Acharya & Johnston (2007: 10), but would suggest going beyond rather than abandoning new regionalisms given such global issues/responses:

We acknowledge the important contribution made by both neo-liberal institutionalism & the new regionalism literature. We do not underestimate the importance of informal processes & non-state actors in regionalism. But we believe design issues are important & 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.

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