

resolve. Although policy-makers see the city-region's international activities as extremely important, they fear the (local) voter's non-acceptance. A similar balance must be maintained between economic and social goals. One of the five hypotheses that frames the comparative section of the book states that city-regions act on an international level according to their specific economic needs (p. 22), rather than focusing on questions of (local) social cohesion. In other words, in these seven case studies, do actors at the city-region level perceive international activities as part of a larger strategy that aligns with their local system of production? Van der Heiden's conclusion is tentative on this matter: on the one hand, international activities of city-regions are 'not per se devoted to questions of economic competitiveness' (p. 140), and the empirical analysis illustrates 'it is wrong to assume a general and coherent path towards neoliberal policy-making on the urban level' (p. 141). On the other hand, although 'the content of networking itself is hardly oriented towards competitiveness, the strategy behind networking is clearly linked to competitiveness goals' (p. 152). Similar dilemmas, between foreign and domestic concerns, and between a city-region's social well-being and economic prosperity, are also explored in other bodies of literature, one example being the vibrant debates around creative cities. Future comparative work in this area, including perhaps the identification of a set of 'best practices' that achieve a balance between articulated social and economic goals, would be timely and interesting in international perspective.

The book closes with a general summary, and in so doing it re-states the central conundrum inherent to the new forms of interurban networking: 'city-regions try to increase their relative competitiveness towards other city-regions by cooperating with them' (p. 180). Although the nature of city-region's international activities are

more complicated as demonstrated by the rich empirical detail in the book, this 'illogical' goal merits further investigation in political science and urban studies. The book highlights the complexity of scalar relations: city-regions, through their international activities, have not gained influence 'against' the national scale. International urban networks should therefore be seen as a new spatial layer, not one that replaces the nation state. City networks are increasing in size and number all over Europe, and city-regions' urban policy will continue to strike their own balance between foreign and domestic concerns, and between economic and social agendas. Van der Heiden's intensive study of Swiss regions therefore makes a valuable, insightful and timely contribution to the field.

Josephine V. Rekers

Lund University

Josephine.Rekers@circle.lu.se

Peter Hanns Reill and Balázs A. Szelényi (eds.): *Cores, Peripheries, and Globalization: Essays in Honor of Ivan T. Berend*

Budapest 2011: Central European University Press, 281 pp.

This edited volume brings together a number of prominent historians to investigate the nature of relations between developed areas or nations and those that are under-developed or emerging. The editors invited scholars with an impressive record of research on various aspects of development to reflect on the concepts of core and periphery in order to forge new analytical tools to investigate the history of globalisation. This collection makes a very attractive promise: to account for the essential dynamics between metropolitan areas and their peripheries by going beyond the two master narratives of neoliberalism and dependency theory.

In the first part, a number of insights on the theoretical origins and implications of the core-periphery debate is offered. Joseph L. Love describes the contributions made by Argentinian economist Raúl Prebisch to the dependency theory and analyses the mechanisms of its diffusion through the UN Economic Commission for Latin America, in which Prebisch was active in the 1960s. Jean Batou discusses the role of slavery in the formation of modern capitalism, taking a middle position in the dispute, arguing for 'a genetic connection between the American plantation and the European plant' (p. 56). Daniel Chirot offers a critique of theories that identify different forms of exploitation by the core as causes of backwardness. Immanuel Wallerstein outlines an extremely ambitious research agenda for the study of development by analysing crucial nodes of social activity or organisation that range from access to wealth to religious diasporas. Unfortunately, he stops short of showing whether and how such a project could work.

The second part includes analyses of the interactions between economy and society, particularly in the context of Central and Eastern Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries. Eugen Weber summarises his work on the role small provincial towns played in the 19th century in absorbing regions into the central culture of modern France. Jürgen Kocka provides an overview of historical comparative research on civil society in Western and Eastern Europe, noting mutual influences among the regions. Helga Schultz makes a case for considering Central and Eastern Europe as the 'other Europe', which is neither the core nor the periphery, but has strong ties to both. Thomas David and Elisabeth Spilman analyse the policies of liberal economic nationalism in 1860–1914. Iván Szelényi discusses the role of East European intelligentsia in 'making capitalism without capitalists, overthrowing communism in the process' (p. 166).

The third part addresses the nature and history of globalisation.

Herman van der Wee examines the sources of commercial expansion and urbanisation in Europe from the Middle Ages to early modern times, involving shifting and displacement between cores and peripheries. Robert Brenner introduces his well-known argument that only the separation of producers (peasants) from the means of production (land) leads to self-sustained economic development. The failure of development to take off outside the capitalist core is thus explained by the persistence of pre-capitalist relations, rather than by the exogenous factors that dependency theory analyses. Ivan T. Berend analyses the nature and meaning of economic globalisation. He also provides a negative assessment of its impacts in developing regions, pointing to disappointing growth performances and, in particular, growing inequality between cores and peripheries. Finally, Eric J. Hobsbawm shows how globalisation has been accompanied by the persistent concentration of scientific activity, most of which is now found in the United States.

What can be learned from the collection? The essays include interesting details on the history of dependency theory, provide an overview of some of the disputes on the role of individual factors in spurring or hindering industrialisation and sustained development, and many of the contributions, if not all, also summarise past research achievements and make some very interesting observations or speculations on the implications of a particular argument along the way. Surprisingly, there is very little on the nature of core-periphery relations and on the mechanisms of dependency. A number of chapters, such as those by Kocka, Schultz, Berend, Hobsbawm, tend to use the core-periphery concepts in a descriptive way, to discuss similarities and differences between regions. The chapters by Batou, Chirot, and Brenner teach us that

even though core-periphery relations have often involved direct coercion, to consider the latter as a mechanism of dependence that explains the lack of development in the periphery would be misleading.

The promise thus remains unfulfilled. Most of the chapters represent summaries of past research projects and offer very few surprises even for readers who have not been following academic production on the history of development. The editors make no attempt to integrate or systematise their insights or draw lessons on the mechanisms of dependency and development. The chapters are contrasted against the two grand narratives, but the volume does not speak to the debates in the social sciences and developmental economics that are offering more plausible mechanisms for accounting for how the inter-connectedness of societies at different levels of development can create problems and/or opportunities for the development of emerging economies. This assembly of prominent scholars thus offers a nice *Festschrift* to the eminent historian, but, unfortunately, it does not go beyond that.

Jan Drahekoupil
University of Mannheim, MZES
jan.drahekoupil@gmail.com

Daniel Bochsler: *Territory and Electoral Rules in Post-communist Democracies*
Basingstoke 2010: Palgrave Macmillan,
215 pp.

Since Maurice Duverger's ground-breaking 1954 title (*Political Parties*, first published in French in 1951), the interaction between electoral systems and party systems has been a major field of study in political science and political sociology. Daniel Bochsler's book, partly based on his journal articles and PhD dissertation, is a valuable contribution to this research endeavour. It focuses on the impact of electoral systems

on party system formats in European post-communist countries, which seems to challenge the classic scheme in which the increasing disproportionality of electoral systems decreases the number of parties in parliament.

The main puzzle is exposed in Chapter 2 where party system formats (operationalised as the effective number of parliamentary parties) are regressed on electoral system variables (district magnitude or effective thresholds) and a number of control variables such as size of parliament, ethnic fragmentation, and democratic experience. Contrary to the implications of the electoral system theory and results obtained from research conducted on Western democracies, in the post-communist context electoral system variables exert only minor effects and are statistically insignificant. In other words, the relationship between electoral system type and the effective number of parties appears to be weak or non-existent. However, the author reminds us that the mechanical effects of electoral rules must be constant across the globe and that these inconclusive results must therefore be due to intervening variables that were omitted or taken for granted in other contexts. The missing piece of information is, according to Bochsler, the degree of party nationalisation, which refers to 'the territorial homogeneity of party support' (p. 37), that is, the degree to which party support varies from one electoral district to another. Before empirically testing his claims, the author tackles a number of important issues: how to measure party nationalisation (Chapter 3), how to account for its variation (Chapter 4) and how to deal with mixed electoral systems (Chapter 5).

The empirical measurement of party nationalisation for the purpose of cross-national comparison is fraught with difficulty; especially since the number of electoral districts and district size vary between countries and, to a large extent, even within countries. Bochsler summarises and rig-