

Cars, carriers of regionalism, (eds), Jorge Carillo, Yanick Lung and Rob van Tulder, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2004, ISBN1-4039-2144-X,1-XV11,pp.1-309.

This book represents another solid offering from the GERPISA stable and investigates the relationships between the automotive industry, regionalism and globalism. On the surface the car industry represents the most archetypical of global industries whereas in reality it resembles more a world of regions with several key players such as Korea and Japan preferring to remain aloof from any regional grouping. Essentially a number of key questions related to the geo-political and geo-economic dilemmas and opportunities facing the automotive industry in both developed and emerging economies at the beginning of the present century are raised and analysed in this book.

Divided roughly into four equal parts, the aims and objectives of the book are laid out by Lung and Van Tulder in the Introduction. Here the concepts of regionalism and globalism and the relationships between the two are discussed under the banner of 'In Search of a Viable Automotive Space.' The debates and dialectics between multilateralism, regionalism, bilateralism and unilateralism are pursued as is the role of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as a vehicle for settling disputes. The second chapter by Van Tulder and Audet, while focussing on open and closed markets through the media of the EU, NAFTA, the Mercosur, ASEAN, SADC, ANZCERTA, CEFTA and the Maghreb, emphasises the role played by the car industry in regional integration, arguing that the latter has in its own way forced the pace in accelerating globalism. Moving from a macro to a more micro world, the third chapter by Freyssenet and Lung examines the role played by the automotive multinationals in developing regional strategies, demonstrating how regional integration was often viewed as a means for creating production systems able to meet the supply and demand for cars in a specific region so creating what could be described as 'regional space.'

Parts two and three of this demanding work look at regional integration within older industrialised and emerging regions. The first chapter investigates the dynamics of regional integration in the European car industry with the subsequent chapters concentrating on Central and Eastern Europe, North America, the Mercosur and the ASEAN regions. Each chapter is carefully structured and succeeds in contextualising the auto industry within the broader areas of regional institutions, politics and economic circumstances. These factors are particularly helpful in creating an understanding of the fluctuations, and problems in the industry in Eastern Europe, the CIS states, Turkey, the Maghreb and the Mercosur areas, which have received less attention in the general literature than North America and Western Europe. In each case the authors have taken care to stick to their last and deal with the key themes outlined in the introduction to the book. Of particular interest is the discussion on emerging regions such as Southern Africa where South Africa exerts a particular hegemony over the rest of the region, reflective of the latter's economic strength and also of the weakness of neighbouring markets and of the consequences of political turmoil in countries such as Zimbabwe and Angola.

The final section is a close examination of the 'go it alone' nations, Japan, Korea, China and India. The chapter on Japan is essentially a concise interpretation of the rise of Japan in the international industry, its unique approach to production, its export drives, transplant policies and resistance to import penetration. A further strength of this chapter is the analysis of how the internal weaknesses of the Japanese industry were exacerbated by Japan's economic difficulties in the 1990s, which led to several Japanese firms falling under the sway of their American and European rivals. Similarly, the rise and decline of the Korean industry is

carefully delineated by Marc Lautier and illustrates how the Koreans tried to elevate their industry to global status through penetration of other emerging markets in Eastern Europe and to a lesser extent Asia only to find themselves, like several of their Japanese counterparts, under the tutelage of the Americans and the Europeans. Perhaps the most interesting essays in the book are those by Eric Thun on China and Yeong-Hyun Kim on India. These two countries followed differing political trajectories in their attempts to foster the development on their respective auto industries. Thun pays close attention to the almost continuous struggle between Beijing and the provincial governments for ultimate control of the industry, which is in sharp contrast to India's attempt to achieve growth through deregulation. Both essays would make excellent reading for any student of developmental economics.

Overall this is a work in which the quality of essays is uniformly high, but it would have benefited greatly from a concluding chapter to bring the various strands of analysis together.

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