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Rezension

Transatlantic Governance in the Global Economy

Edited by MARK A. POLLACK and GREGORY C. SHAFFER. Lanham, MD: Rowman
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This book is worth reading and useful for teaching and research. It represents a successful exception to the standard expectation that edited collections of conference papers offer colourful collections of papers with some good questions but little common research. The editors come close to delivering a cohesive project.

The focus on well-established transatlantic relations makes much sense. In global perspective, the US and Western Europe remain the most heavily interdependent and deeply intertwined regions. High levels of economic exchange, common values and political bickering go hand in hand. Thus experts cyclically provide us with forecasts of a drifting apart into separation or of a Melting into one *Atlantica*.

With its state of the art IR perspective, the book presents the concept of transatlantic governance as a tool for explaining the patterns of co-operation and conflict. The analysis covers three main relationship levels: intergovernmental, transgovernmental and transnational. The New Transatlantic Agenda process reveals that at the intergovernmental level the US administration and the European Commission are the primary actors. American and European chiefs of government dominate, although they no longer monopolise the transatlantic stage. They are supported by transgovernmental networks of lower-level technocratic experts. Traditional methods of intergovernmental diplomacy and dispute resolution continue to dominate the realm of transatlantic governance. Expert governance is limited to specific issue areas such as competition policy. The transnational networks of private actors, business, labour, consumers and the environment have so far created far less civil society than visionary normative wishful thinking would love to find. Various transnational dialogues occur more in partnership with governments than as an alternative to government initiatives. Segmented sectoral dialogues take place without extensive exchange among the various interests. However, the so-called Transatlantic Business Dialogue has enjoyed a special status and unique access to governmental policy-makers.

The empirical evidence on transatlantic governance does not support the ideal-type division across the three levels of relationships. Mixed networks of COGs, lower-level government officials, and various non-governmental actors perform governance activities, depending on their access to resources. Such access is the key to explaining why governance has not yet been radically decentred. Thus, while their dominance might be decreasing, governments remain privileged actors with significant legal, regulatory, informational and financial resources. Anti-globalisation NGOs may be able to utilise the Internet to extend their organisational scope in order to make much noise, but the substance of resource-based governance continues to favour governmental interaction and transnational business.