

CHAPTER SIX

Regionalism in North America

“The diversity of regional arrangements makes broad generalisations and overarching theories or explanations of regionalism impossible. One cannot confidently assess these regional efforts or predict their effects upon the world economy.” R. Gilpin, 2001, p. 344.

PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER

There are different regional groups forming in the global economy that are not configured in the EU model. It is necessary to understand why these different regional units formed and how they behave in the global IPE and whether they support or detract from globalization. North America presents a different, looser and more nation centric approach to regionalism than the EU. There are many who argue that NAFTA is not a truly open regional trading group, but a form of regional protectionism, defending certain sectoral interests in auto manufacturing, natural resources, farming and other domains. It is certain that the pressures of EU integration and global capital formation were driving concerns for the formation of NAFTA. This chapter will explore the motivations of NAFTA and its identity as an actor within the IPE.