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The book *Governing Cities through Regions: Canadian and European Perspectives* edited by Roger Keil, Pierre Hamel, Julie-Anne Boudreau, and Stefan Kipfer provides a comprehensive and realistic assessment of the strengths and weaknesses that characterize regional governance. This edited volume is a nuanced study, which demonstrates that the region is back in town. The book states that governance in metropolitan areas is now influenced and governed by city region. The book is divided into three sections: (1) Conceptual, comparative and general considerations, (2) Canadian regions, and (3) European regions.  

The first section is interesting and deals with development of the concept. The book broadens and deepens our understanding of metropolitan governance through an innovative comparative project. The analysis is based on Canadian, French, and German literature on regional governance. It expands the comparative perspective from issues of economic competitiveness and social cohesion to relevant fields such as housing and transportation. It also broadens and enlarges comparative work on municipal governance to the regional scale. The contributions are made from established and emerging scholars of urban and regional governance. The book includes both conceptual and case studies from Canada and Europe. The cases of regional governance in Canada and Europe deal with three sets of questions on the regional political space, modalities of governance, and on regional identity. The volume is concerned with differences in regional governance responses to the structural forces of globalization. The central questions that the book addresses include a) does the globalized urban region establish as a political space or does the region act collectively? b) how does the emergence of a city-region into political space affect the state restructuring process? c) what are the impacts of this emergent political space on the political process itself? and d) what are the dominant “modalities of governance” in the respective city-region? Finally, do
we see convergence or divergence in terms of development of metropolitan governance?

The second section deals with seven chapters devoted to Canada. These chapters highlight regional transportation, housing, and other issues that continue to divide and define communities and electorates. The case studies from Canada include the Toronto, southern Ontario, Montreal, Winnipeg, Calgary, and Vancouver regions. These empirical cases have yielded a remarkable breadth of experience. They display new urban and regional institutions and politics. However, they have also shown internal diversity in approach and execution. All the studies agree that regional governance has emerged as a meaningful political space. The degree to which it varies is produced by different modalities of governance leading to different identities. At the Pacific edge of the Canadian national urban system is Vancouver, where another mode of globalization prevails with trade and globalized real estate. However, in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver suburban expansion takes place along concentric circles from the core, which is now determined by immigration and ethno-cultural diversity. This process has tremendous implications for governance from such a demographic and economic shift.

The focus in the third section is on European city-regions where the volume deals with Paris, Frankfurt, Barcelona, and southern Italy. In Europe, metropolitanization has created high value-added socioeconomic capacities, advanced infrastructures, industrial growth, inward investment, and labor flows. These are concentrated within major metropolitan regions, which has implications for governance. However, this has also led to territorial disparities between core and peripheral regions. Although Canada and Europe rank amongst the most urbanized areas in the world, the high degree of urbanization also leads to different urban systems, with Europe having territorially balanced city-systems and Canada being somewhat densely settled only along the border with the United States. Both Canada and Europe have a long history of regional governance, especially structural, around suburban expansion in the second half of the twentieth century. In addition, the traditional focus is on the classical city center in Europe, in contrast to a comparatively stronger political weight of suburban politics in Canadian urban regions.

In my opinion, this edited book is an important contribution to the literature on regional governance. The volume offers distinct perspectives and is a significant contribution in terms of insight and approach. Perhaps its most important achievement is to make the subject matter interesting and exciting with a number of case studies. While the first chapter provides an overview of the themes and states its objectives, the last chapter concludes with directions
for further work. The bibliography is current, relevant, and exhaustive while the index is more than adequate. The volume is an easy and enjoyable read with an accessible style. Lastly, the organization of the book is straightforward. The book will be valuable to those interested in contemporary issues of city regions and governance. Faculty, students, and researchers in disciplines such as geography, political science, urban and regional planning, and policy analysis will find this volume a worthwhile read.