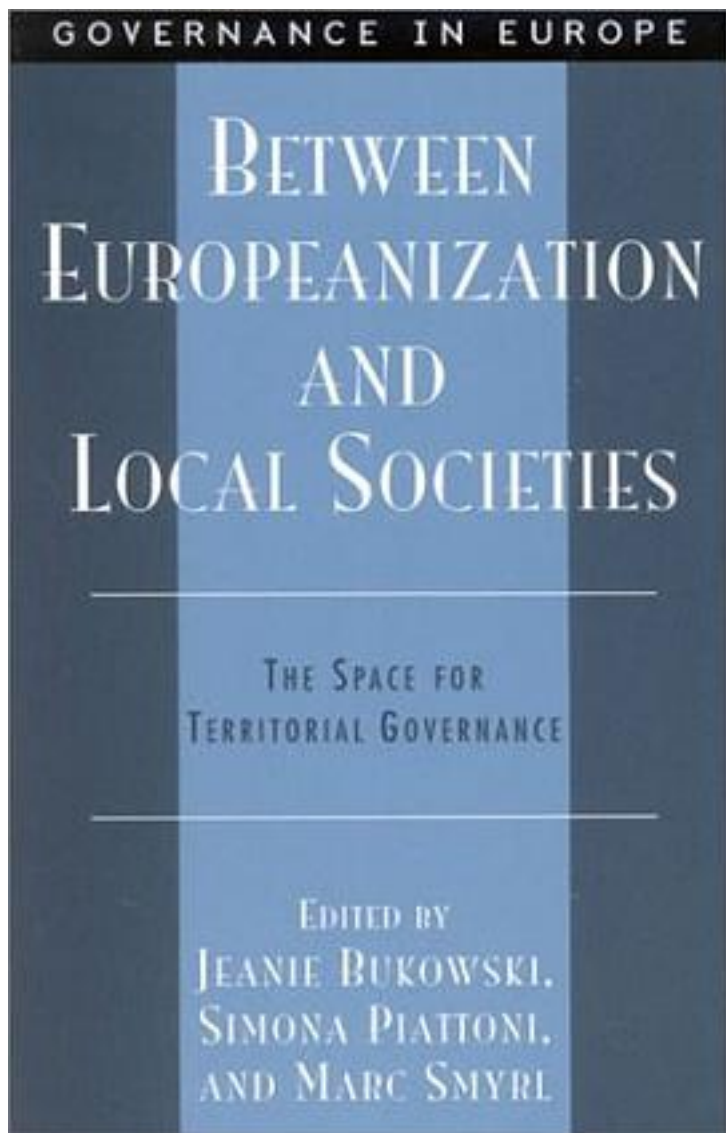


Between Europeanization and Local Societies



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Does politics matter? is the fundamental question posed by this thoughtful book. The contributors explore the role and influence of political leadership through a rigorous comparative analysis of regional-level dynamics in Europe. Through case studies that center around three dimensions-economy, institutions, and identity-the book makes a compelling argument against excessive reliance on macro-determinism, either 'from above' or 'from below.' The cases provide fascinating evidence regarding the role of political agency for territorial governance between the double pressure of globalization and Europeanization on one side, and local culture on the other. Taken together, they show that agency can apply at two levels: first, that of institutions, which therefore do not automatically converge under the pressure of globalization and Europeanization; and second that of identity, which therefore does not necessarily mirror the existing political culture. Regional government does 'work,' both in the sense that territorial entities engage in real political choices, and that these choices often result in effective outcomes.

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