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Category of Spatial Formats: To What End?

Starting Point: Space as an Indispensable Dimension of Social Relations

Human actions – individual and collective – occur in space and time. Thus, space is a central dimension of social interaction and the resulting social relations.[1] Actors make use of geographic space when representing the spatial dimensions of their actions, when they apply widely accepted categories for framing and structuring these spaces, and when they create spaces through their social relations.

Conversely, one could say that every social interaction has, at least, one spatial dimension and often multiple dimensions. The French sociologist and philosopher Henri Lefebvre developed his memorable spatial triad to capture typologically the various spatial dimensions that can be found in one social interaction: *espace perçu* (the tangible, materialized, socially-produced space[2]), *espace conçu* (the totality of linguistic, visual, and other codifications that actors use to represent space), and *espace vécu* (lived space). While one may disagree with Lefebvre's classificatory system, its basic premise is undeniable: the diversity of spatial dimensions that accompany and characterize social relations cannot be reduced to any one dimension nor to the sum of its parts.

Spaces and Spatial Formats

This basic premise helps us comprehend why it is so difficult to develop a systematic understanding of the various spatial dimensions. This, certainly, does not mean that these spatial dimensions are a recent invention of the social sciences, which were overlooked in the past. Earlier theorists understood, for example, that battles took place at specific sites because these sites were of geostrategic significance; they understood that shipping lanes developed along

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1 B. Werlen, *Gesellschaft und Raum*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1988.
2 "This is the materialized, socially-produced space that exists empirically. It is directly sensible or perceivable – open to measurement and description. It is both the medium and the outcome of human activity, behaviour and experience" (H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991).

specific routes and to certain destinations because experience had taught that there wind and sea conditions were favourable and a profit could be made. But social action is not determined by only a few geographical characteristics, and the resulting complexity can be perceived as being contingent, rather than accidental, on the location of an event or a geographical frame. The production of space most often is the result of many interfering processes of spatialization, therefore making it difficult to decipher. At times where the world appears as increasingly interconnected, this complexity causes tension since old hierarchies of such spatial frames are dissolving and without necessarily being replaced by new clear-cut hierarchies of important and less important spatial frames of social interaction. It is no wonder that the debate about "globalization" has also brought about a new spatial turn, stretching over many different academic disciplines and problematizing in very different ways the relationship between revised societal theories – or narratives – that take their point of departure from the category of modern globalization and observations of processes of spatialization.

That said, our understanding of experiences of spatiality has evolved over time. Thus, it is valid to enquire into caesuras of our understanding and to investigate the origins of our current categories for describing processes of space-making. This leads to the broad sphere of enquiry addressed by the various lines of geographic history.[3] Within these lines, abstract concepts have been developed to capture the spatial dimension of social relations; these concepts have been quickly translated into worldviews, from which multiple distinct cartographic languages and spatial semantics have emerged. But the suitability and usefulness of these representations have been repeatedly called into question and thus have been subject to near constant renewal.[4] This dissatisfaction has accompanied the development of different cartographic languages and persists today.

The preference for representing spatial relations in visual images went hand in hand with the use of a rich metaphoric language and analogies drawn from the available knowledge, experiences, and ideologies. For example, in describing imperial space, early modern European theorists drew on the experience of the

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3 W.E. Murray, *Geographies of Globalization*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2006; I. Schröder, *Das Wissen von der ganzen Welt: Globale Geografien und räumliche Ordnungen Afrikas und Europas, 1790–1870*, Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2011; J.D. Sidaway et al., "Area Studies and Geography: Trajectories and Manifesto", *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 34 (2016) 5, pp. 777–790.
4 C. Grataloup, *L'invention des continents: Comment l'Europe a découpé le Monde*, Paris: Larousse, 2009; C. Grataloup, *Géohistoire de la mondialisation*, Paris: Armand Colin, 2010.

Roman Empire.[5] This development cannot be explored in depth here, suffice it to say that the cartographic languages and spatial semantics, still available to us today, are the product of various earlier stages of reimagining the world or parts of it.[6] Yet, spatialization has eluded any conclusive systemization, instead repeatedly being subject to scrutiny. Historically, we have seen periods in which spatial semantics acquired a degree of stability. But these periods were always replaced by less stable ones, in which reflection on new issues precipitated a rapid expansion in spatial semantics and technological advancements as well as produced new forms of map-making and standards of cartographic representation.[7]

The last three decades certainly fall into the latter category; with the intensification of cross-border, transnational, transregional, and even global processes, the spatial dimensions of social relations have become more and more complex. This complexity has led to a devaluation of established spatial relations, along with a growing interest among some actors in reimagining space. As a result, traditional strategies for reducing the (ever-present) complexity of processes of space-making have come under attack, prompting a proliferation of spatial metaphors, in which the word "space" has frequently been combined with other social dimensions to indicate the applicable perspective. A steady stream of books and essays, since the 1990s, have described or posited the emergence or increased relevance of a plethora of "new spaces", inter alia, social and political spaces, literary spaces, spaces of violence and of peace, border regions and deterritorialized spaces, imperial and transnational spaces, spaces of knowledge, global spaces, geographic spaces, spaces of entanglement, and interstitial spaces.

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5 A. Pagden, *The Burdens of Empire: 1539 to the Present*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

6 A. Ramachandran, *The Worldmakers: Global Imagining in Early Modern Europe*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015.

7 K. Wigen, "Cartographies of Connection: Ocean Maps as Metaphors for Interarea History", in: J.H. Bentley, R. Bridenthal and A.A. Yang (eds.), *Interactions: Transregional Perspectives on World History*, Honolulu: University of Hawai´i Press, 2005, pp. 150–166; G. Pápay, "Kartographie", in: S. Günzel (ed.), *Raumwissenschaften*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2009, pp. 175–191; B. Schellhase and U. Wardenga, "'Inzwischen spricht die Karte für sich selbst': Transformation von Wissen im Prozess der Kartenproduktion", in: S. Siegel (ed.), *Kartographieren: Materialien und Praktiken visueller Welterzeugung*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011; M. Picker, V. Maleval and F. Gabaude (eds.), *Die Zukunft der Kartographie: Neue und nicht so neue epistemologische Krisen*, Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2013; W. Rankin, *After the Map: Cartography, Navigation, and the Transformation of Territory in the Twentieth Century*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016; A. Kent and P. Vujakovic (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Mapping and Cartography*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2018.

This is not to say that these metaphors are not expressing a theoretically coherent framework, at which they may imply. Instead, they are occasionally used as categories for theoretical generalizations. They express an often empirically based understanding, in that all social interactions (including those addressed in such studies) involve processes of space-making. That said, studies of such "hyphenated spaces" too often focus on space as a container for a specific type of social relation, thereby failing to consider how spatial relations and representations of those relations continually stabilize, destabilize, and change these spaces.

At the same time, this proliferation signals an increasing understanding among observers that customary patterns of spatiality are being challenged. They are losing their legitimacy and/or relevance and others are gaining currency. The increased presence of metaphors in the spatial semantics points to a change in the way processes of space-making are conceived, ordered, institutionalized, and normalized.

A proliferation of new and metaphorical spatial semantics should not be equated with increased clarity. On the contrary, the amplification of discourse about "space", we argue, signifies a growing mindfulness to two fundamental issues of our age (the significance of spatial relations and the transformation of traditional forms of spatial relations) – without any corresponding greater insight into fundamental questions about what characterizes these spaces, how they relate to one another, or whether resulting spatial orders are becoming increasingly complex within the context of processes of globalization. In short, simply postulating new "spaces", we contend, no longer represents a promising strategy for answering the above questions.

The following essay seeks to explore paths to a heuristic approach that is inspired by the various strands of the current debate, but which moves beyond postulating new hyphenated spaces. To this end, we propose two concepts – spatial format and spatial order – which, we think, can help elucidate the co-constitution of processes of space-making and the global condition.

If in every situation involving social interaction, multiple spatial dimensions are brought into play; we must first ask by whom. Spatial dimensions do not exist in the abstract; instead they result from the spatializing actions of individual and collective actors. These actions are multifaceted and fleeting. Field research inspired by ethnographic methods, that is to say a precise and detailed description of the observed, is the closest that we can come to capturing them. Nevertheless, this methodology has its limits, as we are soon confronted with a huge variety of more or less consequential observations. Consequently, attention to scale and societal relevance is critical; only in their standardized form do processes of space-making take on significance for

society as a whole and thus are useful in analysing collective processes of space-making.

Accordingly, we can say that processes of space-making, *firstly*, result in routines that stabilize over time. But, *secondly*, only some of these stabilized routines become institutionalized; they are defined and validated as well as assume relevance in the public sphere. For this to happen, not only must these processes of space-making occur repeatedly over a lengthy period of time, they must also converge in relation to a format and the apprehension of this format must be collectively shared. This includes also, *thirdly*, that such formats are named and that a collective acceptance as such emerges. Spatializing activities have, *fourthly*, to be performed and have to be performative in order to become accepted and therefore successful and powerful as spatial formats in a given social context.[8]

Our proposed concept for describing the results of such processes of space-making, which are characterized by long-term repetition, standardization, performativity, and institutionalization, as well as by the collective imaginings of their stability, is spatial format. Spatial formats by no means only result from political space-making. They can also be the product of cultural and economic activities. But most importantly, because of their institutional component and the imaginations associated with their formation, they are often connected to politico-administrative processes and respectively ideological interpretations.

One example that comes to mind is the German notion of *Volkswirtschaft*, which may translated as national economy and which addresses the fact that economic actors found it an increasingly attractive way (in the second half of the nineteenth as well as in large parts of the twentieth centuries) to conceive of their market-driven interaction within the spatial framework of a nation-state and to rely on statistics and other information focusing on this framework. The term *Volkswirtschaft* hints at the fact that this format became important even before the official establishment of the German Empire as nation-state in 1871 and during a period when culture and assumed ethnic roots helped in defining the space of ever-intensified economic interaction.

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8 As a good introduction, both historical and systematic, to the performative turn, see J. Martschukat and S. Patzold (eds.), *Geschichtswissenschaft und "Performative Turn": Ritual, Inszenierung und Performanz vom Mittelalter bis zur Neuzeit*, Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2003. The authors argue that this performative turn took inspiration from speech act theory, theatre studies understood as cultural studies, the investigation of ritual beyond its framework of religious studies, and finally gender studies ("doing gender"). A parallel strand of interest in performativity developed within cultural geography with the concept of doing space.

Politico-administrative and economic forms of space-making converge and stabilize each other mutually.

The convergence of multiple processes of space-making into a spatial format, without a doubt, does not take place in a vacuum. There is always a pre-existing world, which spatial formats interpret and in which the social interactions are integrated. In many cases, when certain processes of space-making lose importance or even come to an end, it does not challenge existing spatial formats, but rather confirms them. This is either because the now acting subjects adjust their renewed processes of space-making to the spatial formats they encounter or because they do not want their ideas about the relevant spatial formats to appear to blatantly contradict socially accepted ideas. This dialectic in which existing and imagined spatial formats are juxtaposed, synthesized, and reconciled leads to the stabilization of the generated spatial formats over the course of long historical phases. Cities or regions may serve as examples here since the perceived continuity of their existence hides – only artificially – that central actors, primary directions, and important functionalities of space-making processes have changed dramatically while slipping into an already accepted and seemingly continued shell.

In contrast to the above situation, there are situations in which spatial formats are explicitly challenged and are no longer considered adequate. This type of challenge initiates a period of uncertainty and a search for new spatial formats capable of remedying the identified deficiencies of older spatial formats. Once such new formats are found, the previously described process of stabilization and legitimation begins.

Spatial formats originate from processes of space-making and have the following characteristics:

– A positive or negative association with an existing set of spatial formats (action-driven imaginations of the appropriate spatial formats for the realization of processes of space-making);
– Multiple institutionalizations (including the establishment of an infrastructure that facilitates stabilization and makes it visible);
– A conspicuous charge in importance through description, designation, and functional assignment;
– A certain historical stability over longer periods of time;
– They are performed in multiple ways and by multiple actors to the end that they are deeply rooted in the perception of daily-life routines of the many.

Spatial formats are thus both structures that shape social actions and imaginations that guide social actions. They do not become powerful drivers of both action and imagination if they are not being performed through speech acts,

rituals, and other performative acts or having a strong connection to influential narratives circulating in the concerned community.

From a systematic point of view, spatial formats originate from the multiplicity of processes of space-making and from a historical point of view; they replace, complement, or compete with already existing spatial formats.

Abstraction and Ideal Types

Spatial formats, thus, are directly related to tangible actions, but at the same time are the products of a process of abstraction. To borrow Max Weber's terminology, spatial formats simultaneously bear the traits of the actual and the ideal type. As a result, there was much confusion in earlier histories of science addressing spatiality – the most impressive example being the notion that the nation-state represented the culmination of historical development and the optimal spatial format for meeting the challenges of modern globalization. This idea, which gained currency in the last third of the nineteenth century, is now labelled methodological nationalism and is rejected by most social scientists as a particular feature of Eurocentrism.[9] And yet, methodological nationalism and Eurocentrism respectively have proven stubbornly resilient, continuing to influence thinking about processes of space-making. Overcoming this bias, as discussions have shown, requires that we consider empirical evidence that extends beyond the West. This does not mean that we should replace one centrism with another, but rather we must advance a heuristic firmly grounded in multiperspectivity.

The territory, place, scale, and networks (TPSN) framework, as outlined by Jessop, Brenner, and Jones,[10] tackles these inherited, unreflective geographic assumptions through the elaboration of abstract concepts describing ideal typical components of four key dimensions of sociospatial relations. In devising these concepts, Jessop, Brenner, and Jones painstakingly attempt to distance themselves from actual historical-social processes of space-making. The abstracted concepts are then used as heuristic devices for assessing the current or historical

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9 A. Wimmer and N. Glick-Schiller, "Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences", *Global Networks* 2 (2002) 4, pp. 301–334; A. Amelina (ed.), *Beyond Methodological Nationalism: Research Methodologies for Cross-border Studies*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2012.

10 B. Jessop, N. Brenner and M. Jones, "Theorizing Sociospatial Relations", *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 26 (2008) 3, pp. 389–401; B. Jessop, "Territory, Politics, Governance and Multispatial Metagovernance", *Territory, Politics, Governance* 4 (2016) 1, pp. 8–32.

sociospatial landscape. But what the authors fail to consider is that the construction of ideal types is always done from a certain perspective, hence clashing with post-structuralist doubts about science's claim of objectivity.

The strength of the ideal type approach is not multiperspectivity. This becomes apparent in the descriptions used by the TPSN approach, which rely on a particular system of linguistic conventions and so could not be easily applied, for example, in languages used by non-Europeans, who insist on the particularity of their own intellectual traditions and historical roots. Additionally, ideal types effectively bring time to a standstill, in that they are always formulated from the perspective of a particular present. Thus, the path dependency and alternativity of historical developments are obfuscated. Again, this expresses itself as a problem of language, this time of its historical charge by certain experiences tied to a historical situation (such as the Europe of the late nineteenth century).

Intentionality

Processes of space-making arise from the actions, thoughts, and feelings of individuals as well as from every type of social organization as an expression of collective action. However, to reduce all of these to intentional spatializations would fall short of the mark. Processes of space-making that lack intentionality, in many cases, leave no long-term traces on collective perception (albeit they may have a lasting impact on certain individuals), and so are subject to little or no analysis.

Consequently, we need to make an important distinction. Certain forms of action address the spatial dimension directly and so are investigated in many academic disciplines as processes of space-making (including geopolitics). However, in other social interactions, the spatial dimension remains in the background. Processes of space-making are not explicitly addressed by actor but disappear in the face of other concerns, be they of an economic, a cultural, or a political nature.[11] But when these spatial structures, created or changed by these social interactions, are mobilized by existing power structures,[12] it prompts a closer examination (beyond academic interest in the geography) of

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11 This is discussed in greater detail and with reference to an abundant political science literature by H. Zinecker, "Maras as Producers of Translocal Spaces of Violence: Theoretical Model and Structure of Argument", SFB Working Paper 1 (2018).

12 N. Thrift, "On the Determination of Social Action in Space and Time", *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 1 (1983) 1, pp. 23–56; N. Thrift, *Spatial Formations*, London: Sage, 1996.

the involved processes of space-making. While they are no longer taken for granted, a certain reductionism takes place. The space that ostensibly structures action is reduced to a mere container, which – although not limiting the observed action – requires no further investigation. This negligence in determining more precisely the relationship between action and space-making has been broached by various parties.[13]

Already in 1967, Michel Foucault had intuited:

> The great obsession of the nineteenth century was, as we know, history: with its themes of development and of suspension, of crisis and cycle, themes of the ever-accumulating past, with its great preponderance of dead men and the menacing glaciation of the world. [...] The present epoch perhaps will be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein.[14]

It seems to us not by chance that the French theorist rejected a temporalization of spatiallydefinable differences. As was typical of modernization theory, his theory was formulated at the intersection of two trends, symbolized by the looming defeat of technologically superior US troops in Vietnam and the emergence of the Internet. The idea that one could translate synchronous difference into diachronic difference became less and less convincing, especially after the war in Vietnam had been lost.[15] Moreover, the revolutionary acceleration of communication initiated by the Internet (comparable to the introduction of the telegraph in the mid-nineteenth century) quickly upended the technological advantages that had underpinned the rigid order of the First, Second, and Third Worlds.

Admittedly, Foucault's premonition has not materialized as quickly as catchphrases of the current epoch would suggest. In 2000, the American historian Charles Maier repeated Foucault's conjecture, but by now the tone was one of confirmed diagnosis:

> The concept of hierarchically organized Fordist production based on a national territory was supplanted by the imagery, if not always the reality, of globally coordinated

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13 Various authors have written essays attempting to introduce this turn in the social sciences. See, e.g., R. Kosselleck, *Zeitschichten: Studien zur Historik*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2000, pp. 78–96.

14 See J.W. Crampton and S. Elden (eds.), *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2007.

15 D. Milne, *America's Rasputin: Walt Rostow and the Vietnam War*, New York: Hill & Wang, 2008.

networks of information, mobile capital and migratory labour. [...] Decisive resources will not be those of space but of networks and interaction, regardless of the area over which they take place.[16]

Spatial Turn and Spatial Literacy

The late 1960s witnessed an expanding scholarly interest in space and processes of space-making. This interest, which continues today, has been labelled the "spatial turn", creating the mistaken impression that this was the first time that scholars had taken note of space and spatial processes.[17] This, certainly, is not true for geography, an academic discipline that owed its existence to a series of developments in knowledge systems, most notably the transition from the Newtonian concept of absolute space to a relational understanding of space at the turn of the twentieth century.[18] Thus, instead of speaking of a singular spatial turn, it would be more productive to assume multiple epistemological breaks. The long history of geographic imaginations and ideologies clearly indicate that the epistemological and experiential foundations of our current interest in space are not limited to the last quarter of the twentieth century.[19] As Benno Werlen notes:

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16 C.S. Maier, "Consigning the 20th Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era", *American Historical Review* 105 (2000) 3, pp. 807–831.

17 See, e.g., J. Döring and T. Thielmann, *Spatial Turn: Das Raumparadigma in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften*, Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2008; B. Warf and S. Arias (eds.), *Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2009; F. Williamson, "The Spatial Turn of Social and Cultural History: A Review of the Current Field", *European History Quarterly* 44 (2014) 4, pp. 703–717.

18 We do not wish to give the erroneous impression that the history of spatial turns started in or was limited to Europe. Presumably, the formation of larger social units on the basis of tribe or ethnicity had already attracted attention to the issue of claimed space and its limitations, as had confrontations between nomadic and settler communities. However, documentation, at best is rudimentary and thus research is difficult. Documentation is better with the emergence of large empires, as various reference works have now addressed comparatively: P.F. Bang and C.A. Bayly (eds.), *Tributary Empires in Global History*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011; P.F. Bang and D. Kołodziejczyk (eds.), *Universal Empire: A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in Eurasian History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012; P.F. Bang and W. Scheidel (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the State in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

19 M.W. Lewis and K. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

> Socio-spatial relations have always been and remain above all changeable. They are socio-cultural and artificial in nature. Thus, the current shift does not indicate the "end" or the collapse of "true geography" that should be prevented. Rather, the challenge for scientific geography is to make this new geographic reality comprehensible. It is surely one of the most important and noble duties of this discipline to prepare present and future generations for a life under new geographic conditions and thus to focus on processes of globalization – with their positive as well as problematic implications.[20]

Clearly, political, economic, or social spatial formats cannot be easily separated from spatial imaginations, even if for analytical purposes this is necessary.

Spatial imaginations – along with associated speech acts and symbolic forms – are important, but by themselves they do not suffice to explain changing spatial formats and spatial orders under the global condition, past or present. Changes in spatial semantics and shifts in the significance of spatial imaginations indicate that new processes of space-making have been proposed or gained currency. New spatial imaginations or the re-evaluation of current or past spatial imaginations are attempts at creating a new spatial literacy that is capable of describing changed spatial structures. In other words, it is an effort to interpret changing spatial conditions and make them the basis of action. As scholars, we participate in these processes of creating and transforming current spatial literacy. Thus, rather than describing an abstract orientation or an ability to read maps – uncritically put forward as timeless – spatial literacy is an intellectual awareness of changes in the processes of space-making that is historically conditioned and mutable. Spatial literacy, therefore, can be seen as a kind of crisis management initiative that allows societies to adapt to a new stage of global connectivity.

Critical Junctures of Globalization

Recent debates on sociospatial theory suggest that the "spatial turn", beginning in the 1970s, was not the first such turn:

1. Research on the origins of the category "territory" suggests a comparable shock in understandings of space in the late sixteenth century[21] and has allowed for a new conceptualization of the relationship between empire and practices of territorialization.

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20 B. Werlen, *Gesellschaft, Handlung, Raum*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2017.
21 S. Elden, *The Birth of Territory*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

2. The nationalization of language, which calls to mind the crisis of empire in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, can also be seen as a comparable crisis, in which the semantics of space changed dramatically.

3. The late nineteenth century produced a new language of space addressing world markets, global politics, as well as transnational nations. This development reflected that a "trivial" nationalization was no longer viewed as providing an adequate description of spatial relations.[22]

4. The change in spatial semantics in the last three decades, now with explicit references to the concept of globalization, goes hand in hand with an intensified scientific debate as well as with exploratory movements by political, cultural, and economic actors seeking to find an appropriate response to new challenges of the spatial order after the end of the seeming stability of the Cold War.

These phases in which changing spatial dynamics are perceived as extremely unsettling are replaced by those in which the understanding of sociospatial relations stabilize. In this latter phase, something akin to the idea of a "correct" geography, that is to say a representation of spatial relations justified by the experiences of large groups of people in different regions, emerges. But it is during the periods of intense uncertainty, transformation, and even upheaval that our understanding of spatial relations adapts to new global connections. We can call them critical junctures of globalization since they are all to a certain degree moments and arenas of a rearrangement (often accompanied by violence) between border-crossing flows and the attempt to regain control over such flows while making use of their profitability.[23]

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22 J. Osterhammel, "Raumbeziehungen: Internationale Geschichte, Geopolitik und historische Geographie", in: W. Loth and J. Osterhammel (eds.), *Internationale Geschichte: Themen-Ergebnisse-Aussichten*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000, pp. 287–308; J. Osterhammel, "Raumerfassung und Universalgeschichte", in: J. Osterhammel (ed.), *Geschichtswissenschaft jenseits des Nationalstaats. Studien zu Beziehungsgeschichte und Zivilisationsvergleich*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001, pp. 151–169; on Randolph Bourne's "Trans-National America" (1916), see the analysis of K. K. Patel, "Nach der Nationalfixiertheit: Perspektiven einer transnationalen Geschichte", Inaugural lecture, Faculty of Philosophy of Humboldt University of Berlin, 12 January 2004, https://edoc.hu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/18452/2330/Patel.pdf?sequence=1.

23 See U. Engel and M. Middell, "Bruchzonen der Globalisierung, globale Krisen und Territorialitätsregimes – Kategorien einer Globalgeschichtsschreibung", *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 15 (2005), 5–6, pp. 5–38; M. Middell and K. Naumann, "Global History and the Spatial Turn: From the Impact of Area Studies to the Study of Critical Junctures of Globalisation", *Journal of Global History* 5 (2010) 1, pp. 149–170.

Spatial Formats and Spatial Order(s)

These spatial conditions, subject to constant negotiation, are based on the development of new spatial formats, on the revaluation of old formats, and on the joining of these spatial formats in a spatial order, whose scale is still to be determined. These thoughts are based on four observations:

1. All social actions and interactions have one or more spatial dimensions. Only a small percentage of the routines resulting from such processes of space-making become (relatively) stable spatial formats. This stability is achieved through repetition, institutionalization, performance, and reflexivity (definition and authentication).

2. Spatial formats that emerge from specific processes of space-making never exist in isolation. Instead they exist in specific relationships with other spatial formats (in competition with, complementary to, or parallel with). Together with other formats, they form a structure consisting of all the spatial dimensions of social interaction. This structure we call spatial order. For analytical purposes, these spatial orders can be treated as distinct sectors (e.g. Argentina, Eurasia, or the free trade zone in colonized Africa established by the Berlin conference in the late nineteenth century). To investigate the one or the other of these configurations, it makes sense to treat it as a spatial order in its own right. Nevertheless, we realize that such spatial orders are increasingly interconnected and cannot be completely understood without taking into consideration the different linkages it has with other parts of the world – be it mutual influence, strong opposition, or an asymmetric power relation. Therefore, in principle it must be assumed that under the global condition all spatial orders – regional (including supra- and intraregional) and national – are increasingly interdependent.[24] If they merge into one global spatial order or continue, at least partly, to follow their own logics is a question for further conceptual debate as well as empirical investigation. The fact that some dream of a world order guaranteed by a few, or even only one remaining, superpowers and others insist on the necessity of a one-world approach to save the world from self-destructive forces of mankind is not reason enough to echo these dreams in scholarly contributions that support constructing such a worldwide spatial order. It might be that imagination differs from the real integration of spatial formats and different

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24 M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

spatial orders into one.[25] What becomes clear from recent scholarship is that this does not mean that this process results in a homogenous spatial order, in which networking is increasingly linear. On the contrary, interdependencies tend to increase imbalances in resources, power, and perceived proximity. The concept of spatial order should not be confused with the assumption of a single world society devoid of inequalities and asymmetries of power.[26]

3. The resulting constellation of spatial formats – the spatial order – periodically enters a critical phase of contestation, precipitating a search for new spatial forms, which can reconcile the spatial dimension of social action with the changing interests and ideas of the actors involved. During such phases of uncertainty, we often see a proliferation of spatial semantics. But this proliferation of spatial semantics does not necessarily indicate a proliferation of spatial formats; instead, it can also indicate that existing spatial format(s) require a new intellectual foundation or a new position within the spatial order.

4. This dynamic is further fuelled by the increase in global flows and efforts to regain control of them, so that with the entry into the global era the intervals between phases in which we see a proliferation of spatial semantics and increased uncertainty over the continued existence of established spatial formats shorten.

Case Studies

Studying such processes via a selection of case studies as in the Collaborative Research Centre (SFB) 1199: "Processes of Spatialization under the Global Condition",[27] cannot be limited to a specific region of the world (e.g. the Global

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25 N. Luhmann, "Die Weltgesellschaft", in: N. Luhmann, *Soziologische Aufklärung*, vol. II, Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 1975, pp. 63–88.

26 R. Stichweh, *Die Weltgesellschaft: Soziologische Analysen*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2000; S. Vietta, *Die Weltgesellschaft: Wie die abendländische Rationalität die Welt erobert und verändert hat*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2016.

27 Such case studies are currently conducted in the framework of individual subprojects of the Leipzig-based Collaborative Research Centre (SFB) 1199: "Processes of Spatialization under the Global Condition" (for details, see SFB 1199, "Welcome", <http://research.uni-leipzig.de/~sfb1199/index.php?id=7> (accessed 14 December 2018) and as dissertations that are part of the doctoral programme of the Graduate School Global and Area Studies (see Graduate School Global and Area Studies, "Home", <https://home.uni-leipzig.de/~gsgas> (accessed 14 December 2018)).

North) nor can it be reduced to the very recent past[28]; it requires investigating processes over lengthy periods of time. But this is much more than the illustration of diversity over space and time. In contrast to a purely inductive approach to theorizing, it is important for this project to acknowledge that the totality of spatial formats cannot be determined. Our case studies, for this reason, do not endeavour to classify understudied historic situations according to a fixed theoretical framework having a limited number of categories; instead, we seek to discover spatial formats previously not recognized as such. In so doing, the research initially participated in the above-mentioned proliferation of spatial semantics, but now, through its inductive approach, has turned to examining to what extent the identified spatial formats are novel or represent a variation on spatial formats found elsewhere.

A deductive approach that starts with defining the totality of spatial formats does not, however, seem appropriate for a multitude of reasons. First, our current understanding of the object of research is rudimentary both regarding past historical eras and the present. This is due in no small measure to the fact that only recently have categories for spatial formats and spatial orders been proposed. Thus, existing research must first be scrutinized to determine to what extent past findings are transferable to this concept. One of the central challenges is identifying transitions from processes of space-making to the establishment of spatial formats, based on the previously outlined criteria of stabilization, scale, performativity, and reflexivity. In addition, we need to undertake a comparable empirical effort aimed at identifying which spatial semantics circulate beyond the borders of a particular world region and the extent to which this suggests that similar spatial formats are establishing themselves in different parts of the world.[29]

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28 For a still valid collection of critical viewpoints and responses to them, see J.M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History*, New York: Guilford, 1993; A. Dirlik, "Is there History after Eurocentrism? Globalism, Postcolonialism, and the Disavowal of History", *Cultural Critique* 42 (1999) 2, pp. 1–34; D. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000; S. Conrad and S. Randeria (eds.), *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus: Postkoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften*, Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2002.

29 For some spatial formats, such as empire and nation-state, there is a widespread assumption that they are universal. However, the objection has been raised that one must closely examine the actors advancing this idea of universality: Is their assumption based on an unreflective Eurocentrism, or is it an appropriation by elites in other parts of the world who use these spatial semantics to legitimize their sometimes completely different interests? The debate about "weak or failed nation-states" contains numerous indications both that it is

These first two issues could, as one may argue, more or less easily be resolved through an appropriate research effort. But the third reason why we cannot ascertain the totality of spatial formats is contained within the definition itself. The formation of new spatial formats comprises an innovative response on the part of individual and collective actors to the challenges of transregional and global interactions. As such, there is high likelihood that ongoing searches for solutions to these challenges will continue to produce new spatial formats. The very open-endedness of the process precludes the formulation of a finite list of spatial formats.

Where to Begin?

Conceivably our analysis of social interactions and associated processes of space-making could start with the migration of our distant ancestors out of Africa. Such a long-term perspective would allow us to demonstrate unequivocally that space-making is not synonymous with modern mobility and that spatial formats predate the formation of empires and nation-states. Such an endeavour would require the specialized knowledge of historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, and palaeographers versed in sources even before any written documentation. Although information and materials generally are available for these distant periods, the challenge of imposing a rigorous comparative methodology are immense. Yet, early spatial formats – whether villages, city states, transcontinental trade routes, or the spaces of nomadic movement – have shown themselves to be surprisingly resilient, despite having undergone countless redefinitions in relation to other spatial formats.[30] Interest in this long history of global connectivity and space-making received a boost in the wake of renewed interest in world history in the 1980s.[31]

Global or transregional connectivity does not look the same across all historical epochs. Thus, scholars have developed various classificatory systems to

a transplanted normative concept and that a participatory nation-state was seldom the primary goal of state independence. See J.C. Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.

30 For an impressive description of such continuities, see J.R. McNeill and W.H. McNeill, *The Human Web: A Bird's-eye View of World History*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2003.

31 Noteworthy summaries of this history include J.H. Bentley and H.F. Ziegler, *Traditions & Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000 and M.E. Wiesner-Hanks (ed.), *The Cambridge World History*, 9 vols., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, vol. I.

describe the defining features of global interpenetration for various historical periods. For example, the British historian Christopher Bayly employs the terms archaic globalization and modern globalization.[32] However, in making this distinction, Bayly does not posit an abrupt shift from less sophisticated features of global connectivity to more sophisticated patterns of globalization. Instead, he identifies a lengthy transitional period from 1750 to 1850, in which old forms of globality were slowly replaced by new forms: "The argument is that the period saw the subordination of older forms of globalization to new and yet inchoate ones emerging from Euro-American capitalism and the nation-state. An essential feature of this proto-globalization was its continued utilization, or 'cannibalization' of forms of archaic globalization."[33] For Bayly, it was the underlying ideology that distinguishes the two eras of global connectivity. In the archaic era, the dominant ideologies were "cosmic kinship, universal religion and humoral understandings of the body and land," and in the modern era, they are nationalism, capitalism, democracy, and consumerism. Bayly argues that the idea of "cosmic kinship" is diametrically opposed to the sweeping territoriality of the modern era. Unlike ideological differences, cultural differences, including patterns of consumption, were not consistently based on normative structures and thus evolved more slowly. Under archaic globalization, a ruler dominated a vast array of living conditions and the exchange of exotic foodstuffs was intensified across the entire area of dominion. Despite the integration of large empires, archaic globalization was based on extensive regionalization. The available means of transport and communication lacked the leverage to overcome the regional quality of global connectivity.

Circa 1650, a new period of globalization (proto-globalization), defined by the emergence of the plantation economy and the use of slave labour, witnessed increased specialization in the production and trade of predominantly luxury goods, such as spices, sugar, coffee, and later cotton. The increase in the interregional exchange of labour and goods stimulated gold and silver trade between Latin America and East Asia. This development, in turn, accelerated the monetization of exchange and thus the ability of states to raise money by levying taxes. With additional funds, states were able to expand central functions, such as administrative control and military forces. The nexus between the expansion of state control over vast empires (and the use of armies to compete against other empires for influence) and the extraction of resources

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32 C.A. Bayly, "'Archaic' and 'Modern' Globalization in the Eurasian and African Arena, c. 1750–1850", in: A.G. Hopkins (ed.), *Globalization in World History*, New York: Penguin Books, 2002, pp. 47–73.
33 Ibid., p. 50.

from the subordinated territories widened the scope of state intervention. The modern military state became a fiscal state and expanded its access to economic resources. England, despite its loss of the American colonies during this period, achieved great success in the race for global influence.[34] Meanwhile, its competitor France experienced bankruptcy and underwent a revolutionary restructuring before re-entering the fray (at least briefly) under Napoleon.[35]

Yet changes in political, cultural, and economic structures, as Bayly notes, did not trigger an epochal break. Continuities with the archaic model of global connectivity could still be seen. For example, rulers continued to use nomadic warrior peoples for modern military conflicts and diasporic communities that specialized in banking and trade (over land and by sea) survived in the steppes and deserts of Eurasia and Africa. But it is not enough to see these developments as proof of the early onset of global connectivity or to use them to highlight continuities with the past – a frequent occurrence in much research on the medieval and early modern era. Instead, what makes these developments so interesting is the ways in which they are integrated, improved upon, or subordinated by nineteenth-century globalization[36] and consequently the spatial formats that they represent.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the (relatively) small-scale trade in luxury goods was replaced by the mass production and consumption of comparatively inexpensive goods. This shift was facilitated by a transregional division of labour between raw materials–extracting peripheries and emerging centres of industry. Textile production (albeit without the complete loss of highly specialized production centres, for example, in India[37] or production for local needs) was the first affected by this shift.[38] This division soon spread to other areas of production, including the food sector.[39]

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34 P.K. O'Brien, "Fiscal and Financial Preconditions for the Rise of British Naval Hegemony, 1485–1815", LSE Working Paper 91 (2005), http://www.lse.ac.uk/Economic-History/Assets/Documents/WorkingPapers/Economic-History/2005/WP9105.pdf

35 A. Forrest and M. Middell (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to the French Revolution in World History*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2015.

36 Bayly, "'Archaic' and 'Modern'", p. 62 sq.

37 For detailed account of the role of state in subordinating traditional quality production to the rational of mass production of cheap textiles, see P. Parthasarathi, *Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia Did Not: Global Economic Divergence, 1600–1850*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

38 A. Nützenadel and F. Trentmann (eds.), *Food and Globalization: Consumption, Markets and Politics in the Modern World*, London: Bloomsbury, 2008.

39 For a critical assessment of the concept of world markets, see G.M. Winder, "Conceptualizing the World Economy", in: M. Middell (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Transregional Studies*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2018, pp. 221–234.

The emergence of "world markets" was closely tied to quicker and more reliable access to market information, such as on pricing, and supply and demand, which allowed investors to reduce financial risks and improve outcomes. At the same time, improvements in the speed and modes of transport allowed investors to benefit more from the transregional division of labour. Hence, the development of the telegraph, steam shipping, and later railway networks were essential for the growth of world markets. But these new infrastructures required guarantees that neither the old spatial formats nor private investors could provide. Consequently, by the late eighteenth century, intense debates had erupted on the reimagining of spatial relations in the world – from the constitutional discussions in the United States and France, which revised the concept of nation and nation-state,[40] to geopolitical considerations, which resulted in the development of land and submarine cable systems in the nineteenth century.[41] The dynamics of a new spatial format – the national state – gradually overtook other spatial formats, as initially it appeared the ideal structure for mobilizing resources (e.g. the taxing of French estates, previously exempt, in the name of national interest) and for safeguarding sovereignty. Nations were actors engaged in global competition, not the baubles of dynastic interests. The loss of diversity within the nation and its clear demarcation from outside territories seemed a reasonable price to pay for these advantages. But the costs soon became apparent, as it was difficult to reconcile the idea of the nation with imperial control over remote regions or the subjugation of colonial peoples. This dissonance soon took a concrete form when French planters refused to grant free men of colour citizenship in Saint-Dominique, and a rebellion broke out on France's most valuable island possession.

The transition to modern globalization has not led to the dissolution of all borders nor has it led (as it was sometimes presumed) to a world of national states in which bilateral and multilateral negotiations of connectivity are free of power imbalances. The reality is much more complex and underlines the emergence of diverse and conflicting spatial formats – a topic to which we will return later.

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40 D. Armitage, *The Declaration of Independence: A Global History*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.

41 P.J. Hugill, "The Geopolitical Implications of Communication Under the Seas", in: B.S. Finn and D. Yang (eds.), *Communications Under the Seas: The Evolving Cable Network and Its Implications*, Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2009, pp. 257–278.

Territory-Place-Scale-Networks

What distinguishes our approach from other systematic efforts to theorize socio-spatial relations is that our approach is firmly anchored in historical research. The TPSN framework, developed by Jessop, Brenner, and Jones in the late 1990s and revised in 2008, has gained particular prominence.[42] The starting point for TPSN – like the "new political geography" in general[43] – was the observation that methodological territorialism, that is to say the subsuming of all aspects of spatial relations under the rubric of territoriality, did not suffice for theorizing the polymorphy of sociospatial relations. In this respect, the TPSN framework should be commended because it moved beyond a one-dimensional approach that threatened to overlook other important processes of space-making.[44] The TPSN framework calls for a multidimensional, polymorphous account based on four dimensions of sociospatial relations: territory, place, scale, and networks/reticulation, and it was linked to a series of very powerful globalization narratives that emerged in the 1990s and gained dominance in the early 2000s. The added focus on place has its origin in the categories of glocalization,[45] developed by Roland Robertson in 1992, and supports the local investigation of global processes. The concept of scale reflects the experience of multilevel governance as well as the notion that increasingly borders of every kind would be traversed.[46] Networks demonstrate new forms of connectivity between remote locales, rather than to the hinterlands, and help to explain reduced enthusiasm for a world dominated by outsourcing and global players.[47]

The "new political geography", and particularly TPSN, has been so effective because it classifies crucial new experiences with processes of space-making according to categories. Rather than simply comparing these processes, it maps them as part of one system. In short, it provides a toolkit for

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42 B. Jessop, N. Brenner and M. Jones, "Theorizing Sociospatial Relations", *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 26 (2008) 3, pp. 389–401. See also the contribution by Bob Jessop in this volume, which is based on the lecture at the annual conference of the SFB 1199 and partly delves into the theoretical considerations outlined here.

43 J.A. Agnew et al. (eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Political Geography*, Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.

44 J. Agnew, "The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory", *Review of International Political Economy* 1 (1994) 1, pp. 53–80.

45 R. Robertson, "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity", in: M. Featherstone, S. Lash and R. Robertson (eds.), *Global Modernities*, London: Sage, 1995, pp. 25–44.

46 M. Zürn, "Global Governance as Multi-Level Governance", in: D. Levi-Faur (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Governance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 730–744.

47 R.J. Holton, *Global Networks*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

undertaking a comprehensive analysis of a new and complex social reality. To do this, its definitions of territory, place, scale, and networks are broad enough that they can be applied to many spatial configurations in the world. The underlying assumption is that these four elements can be used to explain every situation, although the mix of the four features in each situation will vary. Although the TPSN framework says very little about the temporal dimension, the implication is that these categories could be used to explain contemporary situations and their historical antecedents. Whether this framework is useful for describing historical processes has not been critically tested, because analysts of the contemporary situation have shown much more interest in the TPSN framework than historians.

The historical applicability of the TPSN framework is the starting point of our critique. TPSN assumes a pronounced contrast between present and past, meaning the defining feature of the present situation is that the terminology of an earlier situation is no longer adequate for describing it. This delineation is made without clarifying the starting point of the "present", defining what constitutes the "past" – a world presumably circumscribed by the unfolding of territoriality – explaining how or when the transformation from "past" to "present" took place, or even if the "past" experienced any transformations relevant for the analysis of the "present".

These shortcomings are not peculiar to TPSN; one sees in the social sciences many analyses of contemporary globalization that disregard the history of global connectivity. And yet, these analyses often implicitly adopt a historical narrative. For example, they may define the contemporary world in opposition to the world of sovereign national states presumably created by the Peace of Westphalia (1648), or they may postulate a contemporary world characterized by global flows and fluid networks, contrasting these to earlier structuring territories. In most of these narratives, a discourse of newness dominates.[48] A modified version of the above approach is offered by Ulrich Beck. While he still emphasizes the novelty of the present, he constructs a triptych in which there is a linear progression from the early modern world of networks to immobilization in the age of national states to today's global mobility and hybridity.[49]

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48 U. Engel and M. Middell (eds.), *Theoretiker der Globalisierung*, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2010.
49 U. Beck, *Was ist Globalisierung? Irrtümer des Globalismus – Antworten auf Globalisierung*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2002.

A Contextualized and Historicized Approach

Propelled by a similar interest in understanding the contemporary global condition, our approach, as noted earlier, is firmly and consistently anchored in historical research. This historicized approach entails examining the different historical contexts in which proliferations of spatial semantics have taken place as well as historicizing the changes in the spatial order(s) resulting from the contestation of various actors. The construction of new and alternative spaces does not involve a linear unfolding of a problem in time, but rather a succession of interconnected phases. Phases in which various actors become dissatisfied with the spatial relations of parts of a society, individual societies, or the world as a whole and respond by proposing new spatial formats or the reorganization of existing ones are followed by phases in which spatiality receives little or no attention. Following the time period from 1750 to 1850, described by Reinhart Koselleck as a "saddle era" (based mostly on European experiences),[50] the intervals between the two phases have become shorter, primarily due to increased interconnections between world regions in which neither the processes of space-making nor the imaginations of those processes were in sync.

The call for greater attention to the relationship between contemporary processes and past transformations did not result in historians immediately abandoning their long-held tendency to neglect the spatial dimension of social actions. As late as 2010, one of the founders of spatial history Richard White complained, "[h]istorians still routinely write about political change, social change, class relations, gender relations, cultural change as if the spatial dimensions of these issues matter little if at all."[51] But in recent years, this situation has improved considerably; today, numerous empirically grounded accounts and theoretical studies[52] are available that can facilitate a comparison between contemporary processes that appear new as well as historical processes.

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50 R. Koselleck, "Einleitung", in: O. Brunner, W. Conze and R. Koselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, vol. I, Stuttgart: Klett Cotta, 1979. On the subsequent debates of the term in German and French historiographies, see E. Décultot and D. Fulda (eds.), *Sattelzeit: Historiographiegeschichtliche Revisionen*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016.

51 R. White, "What is Spatial History?", Stanford Spatial History Lab Working Paper (2010), https://web.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/pub.php?id=29

52 Important not only for German historiography was the book by the Frankfurt scholar Karl Schlögel, which went in the direction of detailed description and theoretical conclusions: K. Schlögel, *Im Raume lesen wir die Zeit: Über Zivilisationsgeschichte und Geopolitik*, Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2003. It seems no coincidence that its appareance coincided with Jürgen Osterhammel's study of geopolitics as a dimension of universal-historical thinking: J. Osterhammel, "Raumerfassung und Universalgeschichte", in: J. Osterhammel

This literature has continued to expand as historians' interest in space, borders, and the traversing of borders has intensified. From this body of literature, the impression – still to be tested – emerges that throughout history, the number of spatial formats has remained relatively small. Instead of a plethora of new spatial formats, a small number of spatial formats have been given different characteristics, functionalities, and positions in a more or less hierarchically organized spatial order.

With a historicized approach, not only are we able to observe long-lasting processes of space-making and their effects on the configuration of spatial orders, we are also able to examine the processual nature of space-making. While many systematic studies offer exhaustive comparisons of new and old conditions, it goes unnoticed that the emergence of new spatial formats and spatial orders is one of their essential features. A truism for historians that new conditions have a more or less pronounced path dependency on past conditions becomes of critical significance when we undertake an interregional comparative study of space-making under global conditions. In this scenario, two operations must be combined: the quasi-vertical investigation of spatial formats relevant to a particular society or larger region and the horizontal analysis of the circulation of ideas regarding the form and function of such spatial formats.[53] Circulation, however, should not be understood as a unidirectional flow from the place of origin or centre to the periphery, as is often assumed in the literature on the dissemination of the nation-state model.[54] Instead, circulation is understood as multidirectional, in which through translation and intercultural transfers, a creative appropriation and adaptation of spatial semantics and spatial formats to historical requirements and contemporary needs takes place.[55]

(ed.), *Geschichtswissenschaft jenseits des Nationalstaats*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001, pp. 151–169.

53 Interestingly, despite the many cultural phenomena previously explored by specialists in connected, shared, and transnational history, histoire croisée or intercultural studies, the field of spatial semantics and spatial imaginations has received relatively little attention, although some insights are slowly being made. The interdependencies do not play out between fixed units, but rather constitute them, making the investigation of intercultural transfers an extremely important spatial dimension of its own.

54 For an excellent overview of the literature on nationalism, see J. Breuilly (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

55 On this methodological problem, see, e.g., B. Neumann and A. Nünning (eds.), *Travelling Concepts for the Study of Culture*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012; D. Bachmann-Medick (ed.), *The Trans/National Study of Culture: A Translational Perspective*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014; T. Adam (ed.), *Yearbook of Transnational History*, vol. I, Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2018.

A List of Potential Spatial Formats for a Historical Narrative

As already noted, our approach does not allow for a complete list of historically observable spatial formats. In this respect, it lacks the elegant brevity of the TPSN framework, in which only two classes of spatial formats are delineated – those associated with processes of territorialization and those based on connections and interdependencies between two or more points or places. The problem, however, with this framework is that it assumes the universality of territorialization rather instead of seeing it as a relational and historical process. In contrast, our approach does not reduce territoriality to a static and timeless container. Moreover, in defining networks, it allows us to avoid anachronistic analogies between today's often technologically advanced networks and the networks of earlier historical epochs.

The period from circa 1450 to 1800 was characterized by highly diverse processes of space-making and an incremental acceleration in communication.[56] During this period, we can identify four spatial formats which played a critical role in structuring human life[57]:

1. Empires (as well as some larger kingdoms), many of which had tax-paying provinces or tributary client kingdoms – the internal and external borders of which were poorly defined.[58] These empires lacked a strong centralized administration capable of unifying the heterogeneous populations over which they ruled. Claims to authority were based on personal ties and loyalty rather than defined boundaries. However, beginning in the seventeenth century, we see a gradual shift towards territoriality. This shift – an expression of rising dissatisfaction with border regions where neither geography nor political treaties provided clear lines of demarcation and so remained areas of

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56 R. Koselleck, "'Neuzeit': Zur Semantik moderner Bewegungsbegriffe", in: R. Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft: Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1979, pp. 300–348, at 302–303.

57 Here as elsewhere a double disclaimer is needed. The state of research for different parts of the world varies; so there is a danger that those areas that have been researched better will be overrepresented. Also, despite efforts to limit conceptual Eurocentrism, the historiography on which these observations are based has not completely shed their Eurocentric perspectives. These problems cannot be overcome in a single essay, but only by the targeted organization of multiperspectivity in a collective, even controversial, volume.

58 J. Burbank and F. Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

contention – entailed surveying lands and peoples in an effort to consolidate authority.

2. Maritime trade centres in particular, but also land-based ones (such as in the Sahara and along the Silk Road) merged into trade networks. In some instances, these networks were global, but typically they were rather regional in scale.[59] They functioned as portals of archaic globalization and as such developed a distinctive culture of transregional mobility.[60]

3. The town/village formed the basic unit of most societies, some of which had far-reaching privileges that created favourable conditions for networking beyond the boundaries of a particular empire. Frequently, land and natural resources were owned in common; this arrangement shielded affected persons from the devastation of crop failures and market fluctuations.

4. Translocal intellectual networks facilitated the communication of new knowledge between locales and the preservation of ancient knowledge from Greek and Roman times as well as from the early golden ages of India and China.

Undoubtedly, the list of spatial formats for this time period will expand as research continues, but based on its current form, at least two conclusions can be made:

a) Spatial formats were not solely the product of processes of space-making initiated by political actors.

b) Actors with ties to state-building were particularly successful in asserting the relevance of the spatial formats they created.

By the mid-eighteenth century, the seeming stability of the above spatial order was shaken by the transnational competition between some empires. In particular, the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), fought on three continents and considered by some as the "first world war", made clear that this competition had sparked irreversible internal transformations.[61] From this point forward, empires introduced various techniques of territorialization to minimize internal

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59 On this, see Braudel's classic and still relevant study: F. Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle, économie et capitalisme, XVe-XVIIIe siècle*, Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 1979. See also G. Garner and M. Middell (eds.), *Aufbruch in die Weltwirtschaft: Braudel wiedergelesen*, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2012.

60 M. Middell, "Portals of Globalization as Lieux de Mémoire", *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 27 (2017) 3–4, pp. 58–77. See also the contribution by Geert Castryck to this volume.

61 F. McLynn, *1759: The Year Britain became Master of the World*, New York: Grove Press, 2004; S. Externbrink (eds.), *Der Siebenjährige Krieg (1756–1763): Ein europäischer Weltkrieg im Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008; M. Füssel, *Der Siebenjährige Krieg: Ein Weltkrieg im 18. Jahrhundert*, Munich: C.H. Beck, 2010.

conflicts and to mobilize resources for competing with other states: land reform, restrictions on aristocratic privileges, the consolidation of territory, increased tax rates as well as efforts at widening the tax base, and the professionalization of government administration.[62] This partial territorialization of empire in the mid-eighteenth century owed its origins in part to transregional discussions about the crisis of empire and a developing body of knowledge exhibiting the benefits of territorialization.

Although this partial territorialization reduced the relevance of the interior borders, it had less impact on external borders, which remained vague in places where they did not coincide with natural boundaries. It also did not make all imperial subjects equal. Even as these processes of space-making unfolded in the metropole, a host of very different projects were initiated in the colonized spaces (e.g. settler colonialism, the plantation system, and trading posts and territorial concessions[63]). These projects, loosely associated with the remaking of space in the metropole, were intended to maintain and consolidate imperial power in the colonized spaces.

The first phase of transformation from 1776 to 1826 remade the spatial order of the world in three ways:

1. The revolutions in North America and South America as well as in the Caribbean led to the formation of new states that established their independence from empire, thus introducing a new geopolitical situation.[64] The success of these states ensured that anti-imperialist rhetoric continued to gain momentum.[65]

2. The principles underpinning the spatial format of the nation-state became embedded in constitutional doctrine and institutionalized. Following this point, the imagined spatial format of the nation-state became a model for multiple processes of space-making in other parts of the world.

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62 For a more detailed account of this process, focusing on overlapping empires of East-Central Europe, see S. Marung, M. Middell and U. Müller, "Territorialisierung in Ostmitteleuropa bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg", in: F. Hadler and M. Middell (eds.), *Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas*, vol. I, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017, pp. 37–128.

63 On the typologies of colonialism, see e.g., J. Osterhammel & J.C. Jansen, *Kolonialismus: Geschichte, Formen, Folgen*, Munich: C.H. Beck, 2012.

64 J. Adelman, *Sovereignty and Revolution in the Iberian Atlantic*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009; P. Frymer, *Building an American Empire: The Era of Territorial and Political Expansion*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017.

65 I.R. Tyrrell, J. Sexton and P.S. Onuf (eds.), *Empire's Twin: U.S. Anti-imperialism From the Founding Era to the Age of Terrorism*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015.

3. The considerable autonomy of many old trade networks was shaken by these and other political and economic developments. The emerging manufacturing and industrial bourgeoisie became less maritime oriented than the old commercial bourgeoisie. This reorientation developed slowly as national markets promised increased profits due to the continued commodification of agriculture and advancing urbanization. This reorientation of the market was part of the integration of old spatial formats into new ones.

But the changes introduced during this first phase of transformations rarely resulted in the creation of national states; instead what we see are variations on the nation-state format:
– Nationalized and partially democratized imperial states (e.g. Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, USA, and Brazil)[66];
– Post-imperial statehood followed by a slow transition to a national state (e.g. Latin America)[67];
– Empires that territorialized and absorbed aspects of nationalization without recognizing civil rights (e.g. Russian, Habsburg, Chinese, Japanese, and Ethiopian).

A second phase of transformation from 1840 to 1880 was characterized by a revolution in transportation and communication, which again prompted a new space-making of the world.[68] During this phase, we see:
– The expansion of imperial spaces based on previously introduced spatial formats, such as settler colonies, plantation colonies, territorial concessions, trade bases, and free trade zones. This expansion went hand in hand with the consolidation of federations of states (e.g. the German Empire and Kingdom of Italy). This twofold process represented another step in the transformation of empires, which were unable to avoid expanding participatory rights in the metropole but did not extend these rights to their colonies and peripheries.[69]

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66 On the USA, see the broad overview given by Frank Schumacher in his contribution to this volume.

67 J. Adelman, "An Age of Imperial Revolutions", *American Historical Review* 113 (2008) 2, pp. 319–340.

68 R. Wenzlhuemer, *Connecting the Nineteenth-Century World: The Telegraph and Globalization*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

69 This contradiction cannot be interpreted as the teleology of empire to nation-state, but at best as a multistage process of adapting the spatial format of the empire to a changing spatial order as recent research has shown. See J. Esherick, H. Kayalı and E. van Young (eds.), *Empire*

- The emergence of world markets for goods and labour led to transregional regimes of migration[70] and transnational trade and value chains.[71] The ramifications of the latter extended beyond traditional economic sectors affecting many other sectors of society (e.g. the cultural realm) that became subject to commercialization. Cross-border trade in goods and value chains typically were associated with national economic units.[72]
- International organizations emerged as a new spatial format to regulate mobility and its associated problems. This mobility reached unprecedented speeds during this phase.[73]

Yet another phase of transformation took place between 1918 and 1961. This phase was defined by challenges to the legitimacy of the dominant political spatial formats – that is to say the empire, the nation-state, and imperial national states – owing to increased competition in the international system and growing interconnectivity. Because of these challenges, this phase is characterized by experimentation in spatial formats:

- The early years of the Soviet Union witnessed an effort to create a completely new spatial format by drawing on the anti-imperialist impulse. This project soon failed due to its conflicting ambitions. The Treaty on the Creation of the Soviet Union (1922) and the Soviet Constitution (1924) attempted a precarious balancing act; in one spatial format, they tried to incorporate the internationalist and anti-nationalist legacy of the socialist movement, reconciling

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to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006.

70 A. McKeown, "Global Migration 1846–1940", *Journal of World History* 15 (2004) 2, pp. 155–189.

71 For the time being, it must be left open whether these chains are primarily transnational as previous research suggested or whether they are better characterized as transregional as numerous examples suggest, but which have not yet been taken up by theory. On this topic, see, e.g., C. Dejung and N.P. Petersson (eds.), *The Foundations of Worldwide Economic Integration: Power, Institutions, and Global Markets, 1850–1930*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013; in the case of trade networks, their transregional character is clearer, see C. Dejung, *Commodity Trading, Globalization and the Colonial World: Spinning the Web of the Global Market*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2018.

72 For an impressive example and an excellent synopsis of the research literature on product chains and cluster analysis, see R. Declercq, *World Market Transformation: Inside the German Fur Capital Leipzig 1870 and 1939*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2017.

73 A. Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002; M. Herren, *Internationale Organisationen seit 1865: Eine Globalgeschichte der internationalen Ordnung*, Darmstadt: wbg Academic, 2009.

federalist elements with an imperial tradition, and at the same time deepen the state's monopoly on trade with foreign entities. Ultimately, the union of such diverse aims in one spatial format did not succeed; the rebellion of some Soviet states in 1989/90 exhibited quite clearly the flaws of this model.[74]

– Fascism can also be read as a failed attempt – ending in 1945 – at a radicalized return to the imperial spatial format.[75]

– The 1918 idea of national self-determination slowly transitioned into a process of decolonization.[76] Decolonization produced numerous nation-states, which in turn became integrated into the spatial format of (post-colonial) transregional organizations,[77] such as the Commonwealth[78] or International Organization of the Francophonie (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie).[79]

– The Cold War blocs and the Non-aligned Movement constituted similar integrations to the one described above.[80]

– The liberation of business and civil society from the omnipresence of the national state spatial format facilitated the emergence of numerous diverse transnational spaces.

– The Berlin Africa Conference (1884/85) had established, among other things, a free trade zone in Africa. "Berlin's Africa"[81] allowed various colonial powers

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74 H. Carrère d'Encausse: *L'empire éclaté: La révolte des nations en U.R.S.S.*, Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 1978; I.V. Gerasimov, *Novaja imperskaja istorija postsovetskogo prostranstva: Sbornik statej*, Kasan: Tatarskoe gazetno-Iurnal'noe izdatel'stvo, 2004; T.R. Weeks, "Nationality, Empire, and Politics in the Russian Empire and USSR: An Overview of Recent Publications", *H-Soz-Kult*, 29 October 2012, http://www.hsozkult.de/literaturereview/id/forschungsberichte-1134; and the rich literature that deals with Central Asia's position within the Soviet Union and has been published over the past decade.

75 R.J.B. Bosworth (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Fascism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

76 S. Kunkel and C. Meyer, *Aufbruch ins Postkoloniale Zeitalter: Globalisierung und die Außereuropäische Welt in den 1920er und 1930er-Jahren*, Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2012.

77 U. Engel, Regionalismen, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018.

78 T.M. Shaw, *Commonwealth: Inter- and Non-State Contributions to Global Governance*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2008.

79 J. Erfurt, *Frankophonie: Sprache, Diskurs, Politik*, Stuttgart: UTB, 2005; G. Glasze, *Politische Räume: Die diskursive Konstitution eines "geokulturellen Raums" – die Frankophonie*, Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2009.

80 See the contribution in this volume on the Eastern bloc by Steffi Marung, Uwe Müller, and Stefan Troebst.

81 P. Nugent and A.I. Asiwaju (eds.), *African Boundaries: Barriers, Conduits, and Opportunities*, London: Bloomsbury, 1996; G. Castryck (ed.), "The Bounds of Berlin's Africa: Space-Making and Multiple Territorialities in East and Central Africa", *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 52, (2019) 1 (forthcoming).

to access resources and develop infrastructure projects.[82] This spatial format clearly illustrates how multiple actors – established powers, newly emerging powers, and local elites – participated in negotiating actual spatial practices. The motives for creating such zones of limited sovereignty and overlapping access were varied. But these zones served as the foundation for another spatial format, special economic zones (SEZ). An SEZ is a geographically delineated area inside a nation that, for the purposes of trade, business operations, duties, and tariffs, is deemed a foreign territory. The economic laws applicable in these zones, for example taxation and labour laws, are less stringent than those in the rest of the country in order to encourage foreign investment. The acronym SEZ covers a wide range of zones, including, but not limited to, export-processing zones, development zones, extractive industry enclaves, industrial parks, and science and innovation parks.[83]

In addition to these three phases, some scholars identify the post-1989 period as a fourth phase of transformation and for good reason. But because this fourth phase is ongoing, its features are more difficult to pinpoint. Digitalization, the standardization and containerization of transport, and the transregional expansion of value/supply chains (outsourcing of classic industries, asymmetry of profits by positions in the value/supply change) have all posed new challenges for existing spatial formats.

Countless studies have addressed the issue of deterritorialization. Similarly, multiple prognoses have been made concerning the emergence of new spatial formats. But too often, these analyses have been closely linked to various political projects aimed at valorizing or assisting the ascendancy of a particular spatial format.

– Observing that large cities will play an increasingly important role in resolving global problems is hardly surprising given the exponential growth in people living in urban centres. This claim, however, has been closely tied to demands by transnationally connected cities for their emancipation from a hierarchical spatial order that privileges the nation-state.[84] In the context

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82 D. van Laak, *Imperiale Infrastruktur, Deutsche Planungen für eine Erschließung Afrikas 1880 bis 1960*, Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2004.

83 M. Maruschke, *Portals of Globalization: Repositioning Mumbai's Ports and Zones 1833–2014* (Dialectics of the Global, vol. II), Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018.

84 P.J. Taylor, "World Cities and Territorial States: The Rise and Fall of Their Mutuality", in: P.J. Taylor and P.L. Knox (eds.), *World Cities in a World-System*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 48–62; S. Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

of the debate on global cities, the thesis has emerged that these cities are both the command centres of globalized capitalism and the social arena in which future decisions about distribution of power and resources will be made – the fact that this analysis was produced by municipal advisory councils and think tanks, such as the Brookings Institution,[85] highlights the often close relationship between analysis and political agendas. Beyond the role these cities may play, it is also important that we consider whether the significance of contemporary "global" cities is something new or a continuity with that of former centres of trade and power.[86] Such a continuity, we believe, cannot be reduced to these cities' control function under global capitalism. In this respect, the category – portal of globalization – seems more appropriate than command centres as it can encompass both a central position in global exchanges and a profound cultural influence owing to these cities' very positioning at the interface between cross-border networking and regional or national territorialization.[87] Whether such features would ever lead to a world ruled by mayors remains an open question.

– After the late eighteenth century, transnational spaces expanded into transregional ones as a result of new infrastructures and especially digitalization. Together, these two developments produced a qualitative change in outsourcing. Longer supply chains allowed global companies to take advantage of closer proximity to raw material sources, relevant knowledge stores, and the combination of a highly qualified and cheap labour force. However, both mounting social costs and the loss of control over

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85 S. Sassen, "A Global City", in: C. Madigan (ed.), *Global Chicago*, Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2004, pp. 15–34; G. Clark, *Global Cities: A Short History*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2016.

86 Sassen energetically denies this claim: "In this sense, global cities are different from the old capitals of erstwhile empires, in that they are a function of crossborder networks rather than simply the most powerful city of an empire. There is, in my conceptualization, no such entity as a single global city as there could be a single capital of an empire; the category global city only makes sense as a component of a global network of strategic sites. The corporate subsector which contains the global control and command functions is partly embedded in this network" (S. Sassen, "The Global City: Introducing a Concept", *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 11 (2005) 2, pp. 27–43, at 41). In contrast, Clark draws attention to multiple shifts in the relationship between central cities and global interconnections. This perspective is keeping with growing urban historical research that increasingly transcends the framework of individual nations and of the West.

87 On this, see M. Middell, "Portals of Globalization as Lieux de Mémoire", *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 27 (2017) 3–4, pp. 58–77.

intellectual property has long since dampened the initial euphoria over such benefits. It is no coincidence, for example, that in the United States the rise of populism under President Trump coincides with heated polemics on the outsourcing of manufacturing to China and the resulting trade deficit.

– Like other spatial formats put forward as solutions to the challenges of globalization, the initial enthusiasm surrounding regionalism[88] has waned. The idea that regional integration would facilitate global governance (for example, within the framework of United Nations system) found considerable acceptance in academic and political circles, including a body of literature on "new regionalism".[89] New regionalism highlighted the consolidation of regional organizations and the expansion of their range of policy objectives. It covered a whole range of phenomena previously ignored by theorists of regionalism, such as non-state actors and informal flows. But new regionalism was centred on the European Union (EU), raising the EU up as a model to be emulated by regional organizations in other parts of the world. This optimism, nevertheless, was dampened by the EU's inability to overcome member states' fears of relinquishing sovereignty and by its extreme doubts about the appropriate strategy for future integration: enlargement or consolidation, a confederation (union of sovereign states) or federation state, or multilevel democratic governance or a commitment to subsidiarity.

– When neither transregional connections nor regionalism provided a comprehensive solution for regaining political control over the current global flows, a quasi-neo-imperial behaviour emerged, that is to say the attempt to return parts of the world to the status of an imperial subsidiary space,[90] despite the seeming demise of this format with the conclusion of the Cold War.

This list is by no means exhaustive and because spatial relations are always subject to renegotiation, it cannot be. Nonetheless, it can serve as a point of departure for further empirical research, for comparisons across world regions, and for the formulation of a historically grounded theoretical model.

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88 Engel, *Regionalismus*.

89 T.A. Börzel and T. Risse (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

90 Most strikingly, the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 as well as the Syrian theatre of war invite corresponding investigations with regard to the openness of power relations.

Conclusion

Our goal was to develop a heuristic tool that may help with explaining in their historical context processes of space-making under the global condition that became characteristic of modern globalization. For this, we start from a multilevel compression: Spatialization must first be understood as an essential dimension of every social interaction. The term spatial format is used to describe the results of those processes of space-making that achieve stability for longer periods of time. Through a process of collective reflection, spatial formats are assigned a function in controlling new experiences of spatiality. Accordingly, spatial formats have more than one dimension: they are imagined, and they inspire a praxis of spatial structuring. By examining spatial imaginations and practices of spatialization in which spatial formats are consolidated, we also acknowledge and comprehend the individual and collective actors who attach their interests and imaginations to certain spatial formats.

Spatial formats, however, are not created ex nihilo but are always based on an already existing spatial order, which in turn is formed through the juxtaposition or superimposition of several spatial formats. At the latest, with the transition to modern globalization (circa 1750 to 1850), there is a linking of previous separate spatial orders. However, this linking did not result in a homogenizing integration into a single world society. The global spatial order, therefore, remains the vanishing point of interdependent action in a still fragmented world. Depending on the positionality of individual societies or actors in this fragmented world, different spatial formats seem more or less important. Determining spatial formats' scope of relevance and understanding their causation offers an important heuristic for analysing global integration and the multipolarity of the contemporary world.