

Leviathan Undone?

Leviathan Undone? Towards a Political Economy of Scale

..... Edited by Roger Keil and Rianne Mahon



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..... Preface

This book originated in separate but connected discussions at Carleton University, the University of Ottawa, and York University on matters of political economy and scale. Political economists from the varied and rich traditions of Canadian political economy had begun to engage with extant debates on geographic aspects of power, the state, capitalism, etc. Earlier publications (Jenson, Mahon, and Bienefeld 1993) had already noted these connections in the context of the Canadian discourse, but the newer discussions on scale and topologies, which mushroomed over the past decade, necessitated a fresh look. Out of the local conversations in Ottawa and Toronto grew the idea of holding the annual Studies in Political Economy conference on the subject of scale in 2005. Headed by the editors of this volume in conjunction with Caroline Andrew of the University of Ottawa, an organizing committee prepared a large and vibrant conference at York University in February of that year. This conference laid the groundwork for the book before us. European and American experts on scale joined a large contingent of Canadian scholars for an exciting and groundbreaking debate on the notion of scale in the practice of political economy.

In an innovative format, the conference combined two forms of paper contributions. In order to demonstrate our commitment to the support of junior academics and graduate students, we held a workshop of graduate student papers, which were discussed by senior scholars. The main section of the conference was structured around keynote presentations by leading thinkers on scale and topical sessions on various theoretical and empirical *problématiques* related thereto. We subsequently invited some of the contributors to the conference to submit papers for an edited collection, the results of which you are holding in your hands.

A project like this cannot succeed without help from a number of people and institutions. Our project was generously supported by a conference grant

from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and by individual contributions from various departments and faculties at Carleton University, the University of Ottawa, and York University. We are grateful to our colleagues on the editorial board of *Studies in Political Economy* for their encouragement and assistance. We thank Joseph Roman for his work on the abstracts and the program and Clara Morgan for creating the website at Carleton University. The conference was meticulously organized by Stefanie Primeau at York University. She deserves our special recognition. Patrick Laceby and Carol Altilia were instrumental for logistics at York University before and during the event.

Ahmed Allahwala carefully edited and formatted the manuscript to fit the style of the publisher. We could not have carried the project through to completion without the expert and patient assistance of Emre Uckardesler and Lindsey McKay. Melissa Pitts at UBC Press provided her unrelenting support to the project. We are extremely grateful to them for their patience, professionalism, and flexibility.

Leviathan Undone?

Introduction

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Rianne Mahon and Roger Keil

This book is an intervention into several ongoing debates in political economy and the critical social sciences. It contributes to the development of a new language and sensibility to questions of space, scale, and topology in critical political economy. Caught in “the territorial trap” (Agnew 1994) of the nation-state, and frozen in the bloc logic of the Fordist post-World War II period, critical political economy has often failed to problematize space. Rather than taking the spatial as given, this book brings into focus the highly contested reconfiguration of relations among and across scales of action and the invention of new ones, so characteristic of the contemporary period. We are treating scale in this context as *one* form of spatialization of political economies that has its own contradictions and dynamics but is also articulated with other related spatialities such as topologies, places, territories, and levels (of government).

The fundamental shifts in the economic space of post-Fordism, globalization, and the post-Cold War rejigging of the Westphalian nation-state system have brought supra- and subnational spatial entities to the fore of sociospatial regulation, setting in motion strong real historical-geographical transformations. These changes have, however, often been understood as simply *institutional* realignments, while their *spatial* or *territorial* implications are ignored. Thus, the end of the Cold War was primarily recognized as a systemic event: the liberal democratic capitalist system won over the state socialist system of the Soviet Bloc. Such thinking was (and still is) replete with spatializing metaphors – the wall, the iron curtain – but rarely were the spatial implications of the “system competition” problematized. They were simply taken for granted. Similarly, while the post-1990 developments were acknowledged for their tremendous impacts on the lives of people and the conditions for the expansion of globalized capital were freed from previous

boundaries, political economy rarely understood these developments in spatial, scalar, or topological terms. When the spatial implications were considered, they were viewed in either/or terms: either the national state remained central to the construction of the current phase of imperialism (Hirst and Thompson 1995; Panitch and Gindin 2003), or it disappeared, to be replaced by a “global space of flows” (Castells 2000) or a Foucaultian vision of empire (Hardt and Negri 2000).

Nevertheless, a strong and pervasive spatial – and now one can add scalar and topological – turn has entered the realm of political economy, both metaphorically and analytically. Our book draws on and develops this important work. The volume includes contributions from some of the leading theorists of scale as well as from newer scholars who are pushing the research agenda forward. A crucial shared insight is that contemporary developments should not be understood as a zero sum process that, in a parody of Marx’s prophecy, entails the withering away of the nation-state. Rather, we need to recognize the existence of multiple and overlapping scales and of changes in the relations among them. Rescaling involves a complex, highly contested reconfiguration of interscalar arrangements, including the invention of new scales of action and emancipation. Here we offer an introduction to the concepts of space, place, and scale and outline some of the key debates that run through this rich literature.

Space, Place ...

It is no accident that geography, which has often been looked at as a useful but intrinsically unimportant “auxiliary science” (*Hilfswissenschaft*) by political economists, has recently become a leading source of ideas for political scientists, sociologists, and environmental studies and cultural studies scholars. This is not the place to reiterate the full extent of the spatial revolution in the social sciences, but let us draw in broad strokes a few of the determining real developments and intellectual tendencies in political economy regarding the notion of space in the twentieth century.

In the painting *The Red Cavalry* by Casimir Malevich, painted between 1928 and 1932, red riders gallop purposefully across the Russian tundra.¹ Beneath them, abstractly striped geological layers of history lie solid and unmoved. Above them, there is only open blue sky. This depiction of revolutionary action, which has dynamic history as its ontological centre, was typical of the twentieth century. In this case, the riders provide the agency to propel revolutionary Soviet Russia on its mission to abolish all class rule.

Geography remains the immobile and passive quarry from which historical action takes its ammunition and energy. Space appears as an empty canvas to be filled by historical events. The twentieth century believed in progress: space is overcome by time, made irrelevant by it. Political economists have, for the most part, subscribed to this worldview.

That the spatial was underdeveloped can be credited to two diametrically opposed yet linked movements, revolution and counterrevolution at a world scale. For the most part, the metaphors and geography of revolution, which determined long periods of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Hobsbawm 1962, 1994), were able to do without reference to, or problematization of, space, scale, or topology.

Carried over from Marx's critique of Hegel's spatial fetishism in the nineteenth century, space remained suspicious to the critics and revolutionaries of the twentieth century. Space was about the state. Time was about revolution. Moreover, the science of space – geography – can hardly deny its origins in the military logic of territorial rule and expansion (Lacoste 1990). History transports its contents over more or less defined geographies, whose landscapes and people are literally wiped away by waves of modernization (Berman 1982). In the concretization of the Russian Revolution, the central question about the chances for "socialism in one country" to succeed is not one of space but one of the *historical* readiness of the "weakest link" in the chain of imperialism.

On the other side of the history of the twentieth century, capitalism spread itself as a world system imperialistically across entire continents. Here, too, this expansion occurred under the pretenses of modernization, civilization, and colonization: that is, *historical* processes. Only German National Socialism was a deliberately spatialized intervention into the history of colonization. The search for "life space" (*Lebensraum*) itself became the motivation for historical movement. History, in fact, was suspended with the declaration of the Thousand Year Empire of the Nazis – for twelve years, it changed the geography of the world. The stillborn Nazi Empire rested on the expansion of Germany towards the East, which became the main aspect of military action in World War II. It went with the extermination of people, countries, and landscapes at an unprecedented scale. In geographer Walter Christaller's geopolitical theory of central places, the colonization of the East obtains a scientifically rationalized principle of order (Rössler 1989). Small wonder, then, that much of critical theory of the postwar period kept its distance from space.

In Canada, the prewar work of the first generation of critical political economists, led by Harold Innis, had laid the foundation for a political economy that brought together time and space to produce a critical analysis of capitalist development. As Janine Brodie (1989, 144) reminds us, "Innis asked us to think about geographic space abstractly and relationally. It was as if Canadian history could be represented as a series of transparencies, each representing a different matrix of economic growth and political organization, laid on geographic space ... as the international political economy changed. Each staple led to different geographic configurations that were unstable across time. Boundaries – whether national or regional – were not 'in the land' but rather tied to the pattern of staples exploitation." In the early postwar years, political economists carried this tradition forward, albeit with a greater emphasis on the role of the state (Fowke 1957) and politics (Macpherson 1953). Yet, critical political economy in Canada, as elsewhere in the West, was marginalized by the growth of a positivist, discipline-bound social science that flourished in the Cold War era. While prepared to challenge this, for the most part, critical social scientists contributed to the "silenced spatiality of historicism" in which "an already made geography sets the stage, while the wilful making of history dictates the action and defines the story line" (Soja 1989, 14).

After World War II, of course, spatial metaphors were built directly into the new world order. This historical systems competition between East and West created relatively inert, immobile territorial entities, symbolically and materially cordoned off from each other through walls and armed frontiers. The relative immobility of the double hegemony of the USSR and the United States stood in contrast to the virulent anticolonial wave of revolutions of the global South. They aimed for new kinds of spatialization in independent nation-states but potentially entailed a permanent revolutionizing of the colonial and imperialist state system. When the youth of the Western world in the 1960s picked up the slogan "create one, two, many Vietnams," they signified the moment – Paris, 1968 – when the revolution of geohistorical relationships was put back on the agenda of the metropolitan countries of the West. "Space" as a sociotheoretical problematic of critical theory in the second half of the twentieth century was rarely recognized. If it was, it remained a metaphor of world historical calcification.

In the context of the rapidly changing structure of Fordist societies, space moved to the centre of theoretical interest in the social sciences in the 1970s, the crisis of neoimperialism, which became manifest in various liberation struggles; the crisis of Fordism, a self-consciously spatialized

regime of accumulation (“the suburban solution”); the crisis of the cities; the ecological *problematique*; the identity debates of postmodernism; and the rescaling of spatial arrangements, economies, and society-nature in the process of globalization. Intellectual developments such as the success of human ecology in large parts of urban and regional sciences, sociology, and geography, as well as realism in international relations scholarship, created the specific conditions for the rediscovery of critical theories of space and society first as critique of spatial determinism (e.g., Manuel Castells) and later as critical spatial theory (David Harvey, Henri Lefebvre, Neil Smith, Edward Soja). In Canada, too, the “rediscovery” of political economy by the New Left spawned a revival of interest in theories of uneven spatial development. Classes were understood to be constituted at multiple scales – regional, national, and continental. Brodie’s work (1989, 1990) in particular sought to bring together insights from the older Canadian tradition and newer work being done by critical geographers such as Doreen Massey.

Since the tectonic shifts in Western capitalist societies since the 1960s (Boltanski and Chiapello 2006), it has become increasingly impossible to explain social developments in non-spatial terms and to devise appropriate strategies for social change if space itself is treated as an unproblematic category. The rapid acceleration of the restructuring of the post-World War II global order into a new industrial division of labour gradually chipped away at the traditional hesitancy in the critical social sciences to space (and its derivatives, scale and topology) as an important category of explanation. Although a healthy distancing from spatial determinism remains, critical political economy has opened up to the relevance of the spatial to the construction and sustainability of modern capitalist societies. “The production of space” (Lefebvre 1991) itself became a dominant metaphor of societal change in the post-Cold War period.

The rediscovery of space has called for the development of a more refined vocabulary. One such concept is that of “place” – “a more or less bounded site of face-to-face relationships among individuals and/or other forms of direct interaction among social forces ... Place is generally closely tied to everyday life, has temporal depth, and is linked to collective memory and social identity” (Jessop, this volume). Political economists and others have often associated place-based politics and identifications with a xenophobic politics of nostalgia, in contrast to the universalism of working-class revolutionaries – or the cosmopolitanism of the intelligentsia (Harvey 1996). For Massey, however, a progressive sense of place is dynamic and connected; it

is a “meeting place” of a whole series of complex networks and social relations. Its boundedness is understood not as forming a simple enclosure but as being permeated by the multiple relations that stretch across the globe. The specificity of place is not linked to a unique, place-based identity, for places are traversed by unequal relations of power and struggles to contest these relations. Rather, specificity “derives from the fact that each place is the focus of a distinct *mixture* of wider and more local social relations” (Massey 1994, 155). We will return to the concept of place later, when we reflect on contemporary debates on the core concept in this book – scale.

... and Scale

An important variant or offshoot of the spatial turn has been the recognition of the centrality of scale to the perpetuation of capitalist societies. Scale is thus understood not cartographically, as the relation between distance on a map and distance on the ground, but as socially constructed. For John Agnew (1997, 100), scale refers to “the focal setting at which spatial boundaries are defined for a specific social claim, activity or behaviour.” This definition is useful in highlighting the way in which space is differentiated, carved out as spaces for particular actions and relations. Yet, it fails to bring out the critical relational – or multiscalar – dimension (Brenner 2001a). In other words, each scale needs to be understood in terms of its relation to other scales. Scale thus defined provides a better way of grasping the ever-changing and contested world of globalization. Rather than assuming set dimensions of social reality and the structuring of the human condition, scales are socially produced and reproduced through myriad, sometimes purposeful, sometimes erratic, social, economic, political, and cultural actions (Brenner 2004; Herod and Wright 2002; McMaster and Sheppard 2004; Swyngedouw 2004a).

The scalar turn in geography specifically, and in the social sciences generally, has been initiated by political economists. Neil Smith, Erik Swyngedouw, Bob Jessop, and Neil Brenner have been leading voices in the scale debate, with strong roots in the historical-geographical materialism spearheaded by David Harvey in the 1970s. As McMaster and Sheppard (2004, 16) note, “the strongest tradition, emerging out of Marxist-inspired political economic theories of the space economy, stresses the *production* of scale; i.e. how economic and political processes shape the emergence of scale. Processes include the geographic strategies of capitalist firms, of political institutions such as the nation-state, and of labor organizing to improve livelihood conditions in the face of challenges posed by capital mobility and/or state strategies.”

Along with Peter Taylor, Neil Smith is credited with initiating the political economy of scale in the 1980s. Concerned to understand unequal geographical development, Smith (1984) located the production of scales in relation to the dialectics of equalization within a scale and differentiation across scales. Particular “scalar fixes” – for example, the national state – were identified as sites for the temporary resolution of the competing requirements of cooperation and competition among capitals (Smith and Dennis 1987). In subsequent work, Smith (1992b) engaged with the postmodernist critique of marxism to reflect on the construction of identities and the ways in which not only capital but also other social forces, including the homeless, could “jump scale” to further their power positions.

While the early scale theorists focused on capital accumulation, scale, and the national state as the Fordist scalar fix, feminists have rightly insisted that the “messy world” of social reproduction and consumption should also be included (Marston 2000; McDowell 2001). Thus, it is important not only to analyze the way in which scale intersects with, and helps to channel, the flow of goods, capital, and people but also to examine the scalar arrangements governing the development of social infrastructure and the way that this intersects with the “small world” of the neighbourhood and the household. While Linda McDowell illuminates the ways in which scale, class, and gender intersect in the contemporary service economy, Sallie Marston (2004, 182) has analyzed the ways in which white, middle-class American women learned to use lessons drawn at the scale of the household to redesign the nineteenth-century US state system, “enlarging its functions and responsibilities and creating a new scale of state territoriality in the process.” The feminist critique also brought into view other scales, such as the body, which earlier scale theorizing, with its macro political economy roots, tended to ignore.

Social reproduction is articulated not only with class and gender relations but also with race-ethnicity. Fiona Williams’ (1995, 143) classic essay on welfare state formation establishes how the construction of social citizenship at the national scale occurred “within a context in which the policies and discursive practices attached to the provision of social rights were exclusionary and/or differentiated along lines of class, race, gender, ability and sexuality.” Similarly, today, the construction of “social Europe” is drawing lines between insider-bearers of rights and those who, at best, are second-class citizens. The politics of inclusion/exclusion play into the dynamic of welfare state restructuring. As care responsibilities are reassigned to markets and

families, the latter turn to immigrants whose vulnerable position makes them cheap sources of labour (Lister et al. 2007).

Feminists are not alone in pointing out the need to extend scale theorizing beyond the boundaries of classic Marxist political economy. Political economy needs to get beyond the conception of nature as a passive object for "man" to master, as Harvey (1996) and others have argued. For Swyngedouw (2004b, 129), "the transformation of nature is embedded in a series of social, political, cultural, and economic constellations and procedures (i.e. social relations) that operate within a nested articulation of significant, but intrinsically unstable, geographical scales." The newer literature on political ecology has, in fact, been at the forefront of rethinking scale as a critical concept (Gibbs, Jonas, and While 2002; Keil 2005; Swyngedouw and Heynen 2003). The rescaling of societal relationships with nature has become a central topic in the restructuring of economic and social spaces, such as metropolitan regions, as the metabolism of cities is reorganized deliberately to fit into a world defined by the tensions of global economic interterritorial competition and bioregional ecological limits (Debbané and Keil 2004; Heynen, Kaika, and Swyngedouw 2005; Keil and Boudreau 2005; Keil and Debbané 2005).

Beyond the National to a Multi-Scalar Perspective

Westphalian blinders hindered a creative opening towards the kinds of questions beyond the territorial cage. This is not surprising, as the rise to prominence of the national state coincided with the foundation of modern social sciences. The modern centrality of the nation state has powerfully influenced their horizons, including those of political economy. As Peter Taylor (2000, 8) notes, "the 'society' which sociologists study, the 'economy' which economists study, and the 'polity' which political scientists study all share a common boundary, that of the [national] state ... From a geographic perspective, the trinity provides 'one scale' social knowledge." This national centrism – or "methodological nationalism" (Brenner 2004, 38) – has bedevilled not only mainstream social science but also critical political economy, from Poulantzasian state theory and other left critiques of the world systems theory of Immanuel Wallerstein and Gunder Frank to contemporary regime theorists. Nor did world systems theory offer a viable alternative, for it simply shifted the focus from one scale – the national – to another – the world system. Instead, what is needed is a multiscale approach.

A recent contribution to the empirical literature – Darel E. Paul's *Rescaling International Political Economy* – attempts to do just that. This book discusses

the scales of international political economy that are usually left out of the picture by focusing on world city formation processes in Quebec, Georgia, and Minnesota. Paul is rightly critical of the scalar fixation of international political economy (IPE) on the global scale, from which is derived all relevant change. Noting that “social scientists interested in the political-economic implications of globalization have for the most part ignored” the “actions and authority of subnational states,” Paul (2005, 3) sets out to emphasize the multiscale politics that constitute both the global and the local, in which the local is not simply acted upon by global forces. Rather, “by thinking of rescaling rather than simply globalization, one makes visible the invisible, finally seeking the subnational and its contributions both to the recapitulation of the global in conventional ways as well as to efforts to alter it through practices which contradict established patterns. One also sees subnational institutions, including subnational states, in a new light, as sites in and through which actors defined at any scale interact with global structures to produce and reproduce the global political economy” (8).

Paul’s book represents an important attempt to integrate subnational scales into a multiscale analysis. Yet, it fails comprehensively to challenge the containerized view of territorial space in IPE. This failure may have much to do with his preoccupation with the local as the prism of multiscale analysis. Atlanta, Montreal, and Minneapolis become far more than case studies of glocalization processes; they become critical pivots of the global order. As sites of glocalization, they absorb the entire multiscale process topologically. While Paul subjects the traditional nation-state centrism of the political economy literature to useful and biting critique, he is too quick to downscale the national to subnational, losing sight of the continued Westphalian skeleton on which the skin of rescaled metropolitan regions is draped. He thus underrates some of the critical work that has been done on the capitalist state and the politics of scale.

Jessop’s (2002a) work has been important in this respect, locating the shift in scalar fix from the Keynesian welfare national state to the Schumpeterian-workfare post-national regime as a response to the crisis of Atlantic Fordism. In other words, the postwar period can be seen as the heyday of the national state – a political form that had slowly, and often violently, become the dominant form in Western Europe in the nineteenth century, then spread to the rest of the globe through colonization and decolonization. Yet, even at its peak, the national state never actually operated as the single policy-relevant scale. Advanced capitalist countries could be called upon to heed the “advice”

of the International Monetary Fund. For developing countries, the World Bank and major donor countries often played a substantial role in shaping national policy "choices." In both unitary and federal systems, moreover, subnational scales retained a certain, if variable, importance. Nevertheless, the national scale occupied a pivotal position in the Keynesian welfare states of the advanced capitalist countries, the "developmental" states of Asia, Latin America, and Africa, and the Soviet and Chinese Communist regimes.

The crisis of the Keynesian welfare national state involves more than a shift from Keynesian demand management to the Schumpeterian competition state and from "passive" welfare to the "activation" strategies of the workfare state.² It also entails the "relativisation of scale": "The national scale has lost the taken-for-granted primacy it held in the economic and political organization of Atlantic Fordism; but this does not mean that some other scale of economic and political organization (whether the global or the local, the urban or the triadic) has acquired a similar primacy" (Jessop 2002b, 112). In other words, while the national state is no longer the pivotal scale, no other scale has succeeded in taking its place. The notion of a "postnational regime" thus refers not to the withering of the national state but to a redefinition of its place within a tangled set of hierarchies. This insight was already embedded, if rarely explicitly developed, in the early literature on the crisis of the Fordist-Keynesian regime of accumulation, which saw the end of the nation-state's primacy linked to its internal rescaling into a multilevel regionalized competition state and to the recalibration of its external relations to supranational modes of regulation (see, e.g., Hirsch 1997; Hirsch and Roth 1986; Lipietz 1987, 1992).

The destabilization of the national state's place within the hierarchy of scales is often seen as a result of neoliberal "glocalization." For Swyngedouw (1997b, 160), glocalization refers to an uneven (and contested) process involving the "upscaling" of the circuits of capital and the simultaneous downscaling of the regulation of work and social reproduction. Peck and Tickell (2002, 315), however, would draw attention to the role of neoliberal "extralocal rule regimes" and the way that they "undermine the potential of non-neoliberal programs at the local scale, while engendering a lemming-like rush towards urban entrepreneurialism." Liberalization of financial flows certainly helps to shape these new regimes, but market mechanisms are reinforced by the global flow of policy ideas or "fast policy transfer" wherein "policy advocates, consultants and evaluation foster and circulate essentialized readings of effective local programs in which a small number of supposedly

decisive (and potentially replicable) design features are ... promoted" (Peck 2002b, 349).

Brenner has done much to illuminate the place of the urban scale in the rapidly shifting multiscalar world of today, without losing sight of the continued importance of national states. In his book-length treatment of the rescaling of after-Fordist European spaces, Brenner (2004, 180) insists on the special role played by metropolitanization as it has created "(a) high value added socioeconomic capacities, advanced infrastructures, industrial growth, inward investment, and labor flows [that] are increasingly concentrated within major metropolitan regions, and (b) territorial disparities between core urban regions and peripheral towns and regions [that] are significantly intensifying across Europe." In particular, his conception of "state spaces" is designed to come to grips with a post-Weberian "relativized" statehood in which urban spaces are given a new prominence. This is not because urban sites have "slipped anchor" and now float free of national states in a space of global capital flows. Rather, the new prominence of the urban reflects a strategic turn in state policy from a strategy aimed at spatial equity through standardization/homogenization to spatial differentiation and the interurban networks of competition and cooperation thrown up in response.

The absence of a privileged scale does not mean that anarchy prevails, however. Countertendencies are at work, including the elaboration of new mechanisms of multiscalar metagovernance, involving the rearticulation of primary, nodal, and marginal scales. One of them is the formation of new supranational structures at the regional/continental scale. The most advanced example is the European Union. Jessop (2004b) has looked at the implications of the attempts to consolidate the European Union for contemporary statehood, criticizing state-centric views of liberal intergovernmentalism and supranationalism as well as governance-centric views of multilevel governance and network states.

It is no longer appropriate to try to understand the world with single-scale theoretical lenses. Comparative and international political economy need to adopt a multiscalar approach. Adoption of such a perspective does not mean that the national state has literally been hollowed out. As we have suggested, rescaling, or the "relativization of scale," is not a zero sum process in which new policy roles at the supranational scale and the rediscovery of the urban mean the eclipse of the national state. Rather, what is at stake is a reconfiguration of a complex set of hierarchical arrangements. This is, moreover, a contested process but one that is not without a certain order as new, multiscalar

arrangements are superimposed upon and displace those forged during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the process, the national scale, far from withering away, often retains an important role as “scale manager” in the emergent structures for metagovernance.

Scale, Hierarchy, Network

Metaphorically, political economists rarely moved beyond the Russian doll conception wherein each doll/scale is understood as largely capable of being considered on its own, even while located in its (fixed) position within a preordained hierarchy (Herod and Wright 2002; Keil 1998). Such a conception was inadequate even in the heyday of the nation-state-centred hierarchy, and it is even more so today as interscalar arrangements are being reconfigured in complex ways. Scale theory seems to offer a more nuanced approach, one focused on the construction, destruction, and reconstitution of scales and interscalar arrangements. Some argue, however, that scale theorists have also remained trapped in the nesting metaphor and thus fail to grasp the complex horizontal connections, or networks, that traverse scalar arrangements (Amin 2002; Marston, Jones, and Woodward 2005).

Certainly, scale is not the only way to think about space. As we have suggested, the concept of place captures different dimensions of the spatial. To this we might add recent thinking about topologies. Critics such as Ash Amin have noted that the understanding of socially constructed scales is still too fixed a notion of human relationships to explain the globalized world in which we live: “Overlapping near-far relations and organizational connections that are not reducible to scalar spaces” have to be taken into account (2002, 386). For some, a “topological” ontology offers a better way to grasp these connections (Amin and Thrift 2002; Latham 2002; Marston, Jones, and Woodward 2005). The obvious advantage of this way of thinking is that it offers an alternative to a narrowly territorial understanding of globalized spatial relationships. Many contemporary social realities seem to be subject to such a topological or relational logic. Thinking in spatialized but non-territorial terms can thus provide insight into the realities of many social collectives in a globalized world.

One of the most explicit statements in this context is Richard Smith’s recent work on global cities. Smith (2006, 401) engages with Deleuze, Guattari, Latour, and other poststructuralist thinkers to invoke a language of “folds” rather than scales: “What interests Deleuze are (un)folds, the infinite labyrinth of fold to fold, that produces the world’s topology as one of processes that

overwhelms the fictions of boundaries, limits, fixity, permanence, embedment. What is important to realize ... is that all folds are equally important, there are no masters and no servants." In eschewing scale as too static a concept, Smith sees space as "rather messy, complex, juxtaposed, or perhaps that there are many kinds of space" (401).

The global is not just "out there"; networks of varying reach are very much co-present in, and play a role in structuring, the everyday practices that constitute the urban (Flusty 2004). The literature on such networks has developed parallel to the work on scale. Leitner, Pavlik, and Sheppard (2002), in a thorough review of the relevant literature, identify three discourses of importance: (1) *networks in economic geography and regional development*, where the notion of network has been used to describe the relationships of firms in industrial sectors, learning regions, etc., in post-Fordist economies, where firms are described as "constellations of network relations" and "circulatory networks" (Amin and Thrift 2002, 64-65); (2) *policy networks*, which have gained prominence as alternatives to hierarchical or market modes of organization and governance (Leitner, Pavlik, and Sheppard 2002); and (3) building on the work of Bruno Latour and John Law, Leitner, Pavlik, and Sheppard (2002, 284) present *actor-network theory*, which considers individuals as constituted by and constitutive of "complex, ever-changing, heterogeneous" networks of "actants" of various origin and "with potentially equal power to influence collective outcomes." "Individual action should be evaluated as connected to, and contingent upon, relative position, rather than as endogenously determined by characteristics of individuals or by macro-level conditions applying to all agents" (Leitner, Pavlik, and Sheppard 2002, 285).

In his most recent work, Latour could not be clearer on this point. Building on Boltanski and Thévenot, Latour (2005, 184-85) notes that "if there is one thing you cannot do in the actor's stead it is to decide where they stand on a scale going from small to big, because at every turn of their many attempts at justifying their behavior they may suddenly mobilize the whole of humanity, France, capitalism, and reason while, a minute later, they might settle for a local compromise." He adds this terse assessment: "Scale is the actor's own achievement. Although this is the oldest, and in my view, the most decisive proposition made by A[ctor] N[etwork] T[heory], I have never encountered anyone who could accept to even glance at the landscape thus revealed – no more, if I dare the parallel, than Galileo could tempt his 'dear and respected colleagues' to have a look through his makeshift telescope. The reason is that we tend to think of scale – macro, meso, micro – as a well-ordered

zoom" (185). Of course, Latour's notion of scale as employed here is of the metric kind, less complex than the notions that many authors extol in this book. But the point is made – scales and agency through networks of actors are entwined and not ontologically separable.

The literatures on network and scale have hitherto rarely been explicitly connected, but there is much to be gained from weaving together insights drawn from both. Leitner, Pavlik, and Sheppard (2002, 287) identify several distinctive social and geographical attributes of networks: they "span space but do not cover it"; they "transcend the boundaries dividing the spaces of hierarchical modes of governance"; the "flexibility of network membership means that the geographical boundary of any network, separating the places which are part of the network from those which are not, may frequently change"; and "network spaces can overlap and interpenetrate one another," unlike the non-overlapping conventional political spaces. Networks, however, exist in a dialectical relation to hierarchies and markets, which they come from but which they also influence. And networks are scaled: "The scale of a network is not fixed but is a consequence both of how that network evolves and of other processes shaping its territorial and social extent" (Leitner, Pavlik, and Sheppard 2002, 286).

Marston, Jones, and Woodward (2005, 422) reject these attempts at synthesis. For them, scale theory is fundamentally flawed: "In spite of efforts ... to build complex relational understandings that crisscross these levels ..., research projects often assume the hierarchy in advance, and are set up a priori to obey its conventions." Scale, they argue, should be abandoned in favour of a "flat ontology" of social sites. Yet, they (420) and other critics admit that vertical hierarchies do exist. For example, Amin (2002, 396) recognizes that

those concerned with the politics of regulation and governance associated with globalization are right to note the very real and felt contest of jurisdiction and control between local, national and global state and non-state organizations. They are right to stress that globalization ... has unleashed a rigorous restructuring of the rationale and spaces of formal politics ..., including the rise of new forms of economic and political regionalism, experiments to regulate a new global regime of capital accumulation, [and] the reorganization of the state towards the imperatives of global competition ... All of these aspects do represent a politics

mobilized around redrawn institutional boundaries and fixities, including scalar ones.

For Amin, the concept of governmentality – networks of spatial connectivity governing “action at a distance,” drawn from Foucault and Latour – offers a better alternative to scale. Yet, such networks are structured by scalar hierarchies. They are not free-floating alternatives to scalar arrangements but are embedded in them.

Contra the misrepresentation of scalar hierarchies in Marston, Jones, and Woodward (2005),³ moreover, scale theorists also clearly recognize that there is more than one single hierarchy, moving from the global down to the local, and that the relations among them are complex. As Brenner (2001a, 605) argues, “the meaning, function, history and dynamic of any one geographical scale can only be grasped relationally, in terms of its upwards, downwards, and sideways links to other geographical scales situated within tangled scalar hierarchies and dispersed interscalar networks.” More broadly, Sheppard and McMaster (2004b) have clearly shown the ways in which the notion of hierarchy employed by political economists differs from that of the physical geographers and cartographers. They show how, in the political economy of scale, hierarchy is understood in quite a different way than it is in biophysical geography.

- 1 In the political economy of scale, *the units are not fixed but mutable*. Scales and the units of which they are comprised are not determined once and for all but are shaped and reshaped by socioeconomic processes and political struggles. This is, in fact, a core premise of the political economy of scale.
- 2 *Causality does not begin at the smallest scale but runs in all directions*. “Social collectivities and individuals are mutually constituted so causality can run in all kinds of directions within and across scales” (Sheppard and McMaster 2004, 261).
- 3 *There is not a single hierarchy; rather, there is a multiplicity of hierarchies*. As Brenner (2001a, 606) suggests, “processes of scalar structuration do not produce a single nested scalar hierarchy, an absolute pyramid of neatly interlocking scales, but are better understood as a mosaic of unevenly superimposed and densely interlayered scalar geometries.” In other words, a multiplicity of differently structured, tangled scalar hierarchies operates in and across diverse spheres of life.

- 4 While there may be a plurality of hierarchies, pluralism does not prevail. There are what Peck (2002b, 341) has called *interscalar rule regimes* that “envelop, constrain or animate” action at any particular scale. While both the supra- and the subnational scales have assumed a greater prominence today, the national state retains an important role as “scale manager,” especially as organizer of the complex of hierarchies governing different aspects of everyday life. As a consequence, there are important cross-national differences in these regimes. Nationally centred interscalar regimes contribute to the path dependencies noted by Brenner (2001a) and Jessop (1993).
- 5 In the political economy of scale, *it is possible and desirable to ask how scaled processes can be shaped in ways that promote equality and democratic control*. In other words, dealing with the world “as it is” does not rule out thinking about the way the world ought to (and can) be. In fact, as Gramsci (1971) recognized, critical theorists need to develop a dynamic perspective on “effective reality” in order to transform it.

Marston, Jones, and Woodward (2005) fail to take these crucial qualifications into account. They reject any conception of hierarchy even while they acknowledge (in passing) the argument that “nesting seems to be imposed by legal, juridical and organizational structures without our having to accept the legitimacy of the hierarchy that did the ordering” (420). Rejecting scalar hierarchies in favour of a “flat ontology” of “localized and non-localized event-relations productive of event-spaces,” they claim to liberate agency from the shadows of scalar structures (424). Hierarchies exist, and, *pace* Marx (or famously Harvey extending Marx’s historical view to geography and space), they do structure the world in which individual and collective agents make their choices. The concept of scale and the mutable, contested, but nonetheless real hierarchies that it brings into focus are critical to understanding the political world in which social movements have to operate. Smith (2005, 897) has put it more pungently: “If hierarchies vanish today in our academic theories, then so too vanish most of the targets of our political critique. One can’t fight what one can’t see or identify.”

Contestations and Resistances

A key point in the literature on scale is that struggles for emancipation necessarily involve contesting, and sometimes using, scalar arrangements. Scale theorists are thus interested in how interscalar arrangements not only operate

to reinforce but also to contest class, gender, and racial-ethnic inequality as well as environmental degradation. Precisely because such interscalar arrangements have an impact on social relations of power, they can become the target of struggles designed to profoundly alter those relations. In reflecting on the politics of scale, theorists have debated the relative weight given to structure versus agency. Brenner (2001a), Collinge (1999), and Jessop (2002a) have tended to focus on the structural forces driving rescaling, whereas others, such as Herod (1997), Kurtz (2003), and Miller (1997), have concentrated on social movements, as they incorporate interscalar arrangements into their strategic calculations.

Smith's (1992b) concept of "jumping scale" has been important here, pointing to the ways in which those who sought to challenge existing power relations often incorporate scale into their strategic repertoires, shifting scales (upward and downward) to gain advantage. Kurtz (2003) and Miller (2000) have shown how scale figures in the strategies of social movements.

Engels (1958 [1884]) earlier highlighted the way in which the labour movement's power was dependent on its capacity to operate across scales. More recent work by scale theorists highlights the way that it has sought to strike a balance between centralization to reap the benefits of organization at the national scale and maintenance of a vital presence in the local workplace (Herod 1997; Swyngedouw 2004a). While some would suggest that, in the current round of globalization, workers must shift their horizons to transnational scales, Noel Castree (2000a) argues that the national and local scales remain vital to the success of workers' struggles even today. This is not to suggest a unidirectional "leap" from the local to the national (and supranational). For example, while the Swedish unions were successful in developing their power resources at the national scale in the postwar period, today they find it essential, on the one hand, to regenerate local power resources to counter the move by big capital in the engineering branch to decentralize wage formation and, on the other, to develop the capacity to act at the European or even global scale (Mahon 1999).

Richard Howitt's work on Aboriginal land claims in Australia shows how they have created new scales and altered scalar arrangements in that country. In Canada, Jean Rousseau (2000) has documented the ways in which the Quebec Cree as well as environmental movements in that province successfully utilized scale in their struggles over construction of the James Bay hydroelectric projects. Rousseau's analysis brings out the important transnational dimension to scalar strategies. Janet Conway's research (2004) on

antiglobalization movements shows how a local social justice movement such as the Metro (Toronto) Network for Social Justice was able to develop an innovative social praxis that contributed to the constitution of the antiglobalization movements of the 1990s. As Debbané and Keil (2004) and Keil and Debbané (2005) have pointed out, notions of (environmental) justice are similarly scaled, complex, and both path and place specific in real politics and political discourse alike.

Outline of the Book

The contributions to this volume provide a wide-ranging yet profound argument for the value of spatial perspectives in political economy. Political economy is understood here as a colourful collection of complementary and competing intellectual projects, unified in their joint interest in critically commenting on, and ultimately changing, contemporary capitalism. The book is also self-consciously Canadian in that it evokes the Innisian and Marxist political economies of this country. Half of the contributors to this collection use Canadian examples to illustrate the ways in which scale illuminates contemporary challenges/struggles. Such a single country focus has its limits, however, as the world of “permeable Fordism” (Jenson 1989) has turned into the “porous post-Fordism” of the Canadian experience today. From the multinational, multicultural, pervasively globalized reality of contemporary Canada, new views have opened up not least because of the rescaled and retopologized dimensions of all aspects of life in this highly urbanized country. From the perspective of an almost exemplary world society of diversity and difference, deprivation and opportunity, rabid neoliberalism and civic reform, new views have opened up. With authors and topics from many regions around the world, this book combines rich empirical analyses with cutting-edge theoretical *tour du monde*, taking us through the rescaled new topologies of global capitalism. Defiantly local at times, and provocatively global in other sections, the authors have created a kaleidoscope of the political economy of neoliberal capitalism and its discontents.

Exploring the scalar turn in theoretical terms opens the volume with a broadside of theoretical accounts and innovations, which succinctly summarize the state of the art in debates on the political economy of scale. In different ways, the chapters in this section address the “limits to scale” as a singular concept for grasping the spatial while at the same time mounting strong arguments for scale as part of a broader conceptual toolkit. Miller takes on the thesis that scale is a “chaotic concept” – one that has been stretched

to encompass often unrelated objects and processes, concluding that it is better understood as an “umbrella term for a set of commonly intertwined relations.” In his opening contribution to this volume, Brenner uses the image of a thousand leaves to remind us of the complex and multilayered spatial realities with which we are dealing. He subsequently reflects on a generation of spatial theory and the consecutive and equally layered concepts that political economists have invited into their theoretical home. Kipfer explores the way in which scale is complemented by level in the pathbreaking work of Henri Lefebvre.

The section on political scales gives the state its due. Jessop, too, takes up the “limits of scale,” identifying four fallacies marring current scalar debates. He goes on to offer a working hypothesis for future research, that the relative weight of different moments of spatiality in state strategies has shifted from the postwar primacy of place-territory to the current primacy of scale-network. In this way, he seeks to put scale “in its place” within a broader spatiotemporal framework and to move beyond the political economy of scale to a more complex-concrete analysis of restructuring. For Magnusson, the nation-state still exercises a serious hold on contemporary political imaginaries because of its promise of a universal justice tailored to the particularities of place. Yet, there are other political projects that have the potential for scaling government to a more fulfilling politics. Of particular interest in this regard are cities – the classic scale of democratic politics in ancient Athens, whose time may have come again. And cities are reemerging from under the shadow of the national state, as several other contributions to this volume suggest.

Using the example of the scalar politics of water in Franco’s Spain, Swyngedouw develops his thesis that scalar reconfigurations produce new sociophysical ecological scales that determine who gets access to what kind of nature and shape the trajectories of environmental change. He demonstrates how the scalar politics of this fascist “modernization” project was predicated upon a profound reworking of the socionatural organization of Spain and a redefinition of its internal and external scalar arrangements. In his chapter, Howitt examines recent developments in relations between Aboriginals and non-indigenous Australians, relations in which he was involved. He shows how the concept of scale can be put to use by those aiming to construct new spaces of sociality, governance, and accountability.

The third section takes a closer look at contemporary processes of competition and social reproduction. Peck offers an incisive critique of Richard Florida’s flat world of “creative cities” and the growing intraurban inequalities

into which it plays. He shows how the interlocal competition generated by the contemporary extralocal rule regime creates favourable conditions for its rapid diffusion. Larner, Lewis, and Le Heron pick up on the theme of “creativity” in an era of “after-neoliberalism,” focusing on the way in which the designer fashion industry has become the focus of diverse political projects, each with its own spatial imaginary. Their approach shows that the glocalizing dimensions of the designer fashion industry have been co-constituted through sites in diverse places. After-neoliberalism thus needs to be understood not as a coherent strategy but as *ex post facto* connections between discrete, even contradictory, projects.

Swyngedouw and others have suggested that social reproduction is of decreasing salience in state practices today. Yet, neoliberalism is not the only force restructuring and rescaling welfare regimes. Changing gender relations are putting new needs, such as non-parental child care, on the agenda (Mahon 2002). These needs are often experienced earlier and more intensely in major urban areas, where they have given rise to new attempts to remodel welfare regimes from below. Mahon’s analysis of child care in four of Canada’s largest cities shows that the expansion of local alternatives remains constrained by the interscalar arrangements that constitute the very scaffolding of existing welfare regimes. Health care is another important component of the social reproduction puzzle. The chapter by Ali and Keil uses the SARS “epidemic” to locate bodies within the scaled hierarchy of global health governance, from the World Health Organization (WHO) to local hospitals. They argue that this scalar structure intersects with the topological nature of global city formation to produce the accelerated and erratic movement of ideas, practices, policies, things, people, and non-human natures across the planet. A post-Westphalian political pathology of emerging disease now forces us to rethink the global political economy of health in fundamental ways.

The final section on social movements confronts our political economies of today with “a spatiality of contentious politics,” in the words of Leitner and Sheppard. This group of chapters paints a rich picture of a world of social movements, simultaneously restrained and enabled by the current refractions of a political economy of scale, going beyond the biophysical, historical, and geographical limits of the definitions associated with a politics of place. Leitner and Sheppard argue that successful contentious politics frequently involves both a “politics of place” and the construction of networks of spatial connectivity that stretch across and challenge the nested territorial nature of political scale. Their analysis of the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride in the

United States provides a nice illustration of how place, scale, and network were simultaneously deployed. Heynen's analysis of the Black Panther Party's "biopolitics from below" reveals how the leadership clearly saw the strategic connections between hungry bodies, ghetto communities, and resistance to empire.

Wekerle, Sandberg, and Gilbert focus on the intersection of capitalist development and nature, highlighting environmental opposition to urban sprawl waged on the ex-urban fringe of the Greater Toronto Area. In the Oak Ridges Moraine, the politics of scale and the politics of place intersected to create a bioregional identity and an alternative vision for the region. Environmental movements strategically utilized discourses of ecosystem management to mobilize resistance to development and to pressure the provincial government to enact legislation to control sprawl by preserving nature and the countryside. Conway's chapter assesses the World Social Forum as a site of transnational emancipatory practice. Conway argues that the forum needs to be seen not as a unitary entity but as a "worldwide movement-based multi-scale cultural process involving a wide variety of civil society entities, themselves operating at a variety of geographical scales."

NOTES

- 1 To view this painting, go to http://www.auburn.edu/academic/liberal_arts/foreign/russian/art/malevich-cavalry.html. Some of the ideas in the next paragraphs have been previously expressed in Keil and Brenner (2003).
- 2 On the workfare state, see also Peck (2001b, 2003).
- 3 Although their article begins well, they slide into caricature when they construct the supposed "binaries" of scalar reasoning. See their Tables I and II on pages 420 and 421.

PART 1

..... The Scalar Turn

1

A Thousand Leaves: Notes on the Geographies of Uneven Spatial Development

.....
Neil Brenner

The experience of geographical difference – that is, the recognition that spaces across the world differ from one another – lies at the heart of capitalist modernity. While geographical difference is hardly unique to the modern age, it can be argued that the ability of populations to travel long distances, and thus to encounter otherness, has intensified qualitatively during the capitalist epoch. It continues to be enhanced in the early twenty-first century, as worldwide flows of capital, trade, and migration acquire ever greater densities and speeds.

Some commentators have claimed that, in our current moment of “globalization,” geographical differences are being annihilated as new information technologies, transnational corporate strategies, free-market politics, and cultural imperialism homogenize the landscapes of everyday life around the world. Most critical geographers reject such claims, arguing that late modern capitalism has been premised upon an intensification of differences among places and territories, even as the mobility of capital, commodities, and populations is enhanced (Cox 1997; Lee and Wills 1997; Smith 1997). Struggles for a sense of place, for territorial rootedness, and for a unique geographical niche remain as intense as ever in a world of sometimes disturbing volatility (Massey 1994). Precisely as interconnections among dispersed spaces around the globe are thickened, geographical differences are becoming more rather than less profound, at once in everyday life and in the operation of social, political, and economic power. In short, spatial unevenness remains endemic to the contemporary global capitalist (dis)order (Smith 1997).

During the past three decades, critical geographical scholarship has confronted the problem of geographical difference in a systematic, theoretically reflexive way. The concept of *uneven spatial development* lies at the heart of such analyses. This concept is derived from Marx’s (1976) foundational

account of capital circulation in *Capital*, where the notion of uneven development was used to describe the existence of differential growth rates among various sectors (or “departments”) of the capitalist economy. The concept was reinvented in the early twentieth century by socialist intellectuals such as Lenin, Luxemburg, Bukharin, Trotsky, and (decades later) Mandel, who were concerned to understand the global expansion of the capitalist mode of production through imperialism and colonialism (Smith 1984). The concept of uneven *spatial* development was introduced by radical geographers in the late 1970s and early 1980s, thanks to the pathbreaking contributions of writers such as Harvey (1982), Lefebvre (1991 [1974]), Massey (1985), Smith (1984), and Soja (1985). Through their work on uneven spatial development (USD), these scholars and others in their intellectual milieu developed new ways of conceptualizing the production of geographical difference under modern capitalism. The theoretical foundations forged during this period have also proven useful for scholars concerned to analyze various aspects of geographical differentiation that cannot be fully derived from the logic of capital accumulation (Brenner 2004; Harvey 2003, 2006b; Taylor 1993).

Building upon this expansive, increasingly sophisticated literature, this chapter considers a specific question: how are the *geographies* of USD to be conceptualized? In his classic book on the topic, Neil Smith (1984) suggested that USD is deeply imbricated in the production of geographical scale. Indeed, it was his attempt to decipher the “see-saw movement” of USD that appears to have led him, in a brilliant intellectual manoeuvre, to theorize about geographical scale on its own terms rather than subsuming it under other geographical concepts such as territory and place. The very differentiation of global, national, regional, and urban scales, Smith argued, must be understood at once as a medium and a product of the process of USD under capitalism.

Smith’s justifiably influential conceptualization inspired a generation of critical geographical scholarship not only on USD but also, more generally, on the production of scale and its associated politics. Against the background of recent debates on the new political economy of scale (see Mahon and Keil, this volume), this chapter revisits the intellectual terrain of Smith’s initial theorization of USD. While I build closely upon the foundations constructed by Smith, I also argue for a broader, polymorphic conceptualization. Drawing upon a metaphor introduced by Lefebvre (1991, 87), I suggest that the geographies of USD resemble “a thousand leaves”: that is, a multilayered fusion of several distinct *dimensions* of sociospatiality (for a closely related conceptualization, see also Jessop, this volume). While Smith’s insight that

USD is scale-differentiated remains foundational, any adequate, historically nuanced conceptualization of this phenomenon must also consider its place-based, territorial, and networked dimensions. Paradoxically, it is precisely the progress of debates on the new political economy of scale during the past two decades, which have provided a differentiated conceptual vocabulary for the analysis of scalar structuration, that now enables us to reconsider processes of USD in their full geographical complexity.

Following a general overview of the theory of USD, I develop this theorization through a stylized analysis of its four most essential geographical dimensions during the geohistory of modern capitalism – namely, place, territory, scale, and networks. My argument underscores what I have elsewhere termed “the limits to scale” (Brenner 2001a). While I would agree with the contention of other contributors to this volume that processes of rescaling are central to the political economy of late modern capitalism (Brenner 2004), this chapter is intended to caution against the tendency to overextend scalar concepts.

Foundations

Reflexive theorizing on USD began in the 1970s and has subsequently flourished in the writings of critical geographical political economists. While this literature is now quite multifaceted, it contains at least four core theoretical propositions regarding the nature of USD under modern capitalist conditions, which can be briefly summarized as follows.

First, under capitalism, the existence of geographical difference is not simply an expression of the discrete qualities of particular places, of inherited differences among territories, or of the fact that sociospatiality is intrinsically heterogeneous. As the capitalist division of labour is deepened and extended, spaces throughout the world are simultaneously connected and distinguished in a see-saw movement of equalization and differentiation (Smith 1984). Rather than extinguishing the distinctiveness of places and territories, this dialectic of simultaneous interconnection/differentiation reworks inherited geographical differences, which can now only be understood in relational terms. From this point onward, geographical difference no longer represents the spatialization of particularity. It instead demarcates the distinctive positionality of any given space within an evolving, worldwide grid of interdependencies. In the most general terms, then, USD represents the aggregate, macrogeographical expression of such positionalities within each configuration of global capitalist development (Sheppard 2002).

Second, each historical framework of USD entails the differentiation of cores and peripheries, spaces of centrality and marginality, zones of inclusion and exclusion (Lefebvre 1991; Smith 1984; Soja 1985). Accordingly, in this conceptualization, spatial positionality refers not only to absolute geographical location but also to the relational situatedness of particular spaces within broader, asymmetrically organized frameworks of power (Sheppard 2002). The notion of USD is therefore intended to capture the deeply polarized distribution of socioeconomic assets, forms of geopolitical influence, ideological hegemony, and conditions of everyday life not only among different populations but also among spaces positioned differentially within the global capitalist system.

Third, patterns of USD are mediated through large-scale institutional forms (e.g., the modern state) and diverse social forces (e.g., capitalist firms, business organizations, trade unions, property owners, and place- or territory-based social movements). This means that the analysis of geographical difference necessarily entails an inquiry into the “politics of space” (Lefebvre 1976) through which historically specific structures of sociospatial polarization are produced. Capitalist accumulation strategies play a central role in the structuration of USD, but so do political institutions, territorially based alliances, social movements, and households (Cox 2002).

Fourth, during the historical evolution of capitalism, certain deep structures of USD have been entrenched. They include the core/periphery division on which the international division of labour has long been grounded (Amin 1979; Wallerstein 1974) and the city/countryside opposition (Williams 1973). Despite this, however, USD is always articulated in historically and contextually specific forms. Global inequality and the urban/rural divide remain persistent, durable features of capitalism, but their precise geographical contours have been reshaped during the past three centuries. Moreover, even as certain dimensions of USD under capitalism have proven relatively durable, others have been qualitatively modified during the process of historical development. Examples of the latter include the configuration of urban and regional settlement patterns, the geographies of industrial development, networks of infrastructural investment, and the concentration of political-economic hegemony (Harvey 1985; Soja 1985). Patterns of USD can thus be said to crystallize at the interface between inherited sociospatial configurations and emergent spatial strategies intended to transform the latter (Brenner 2004; Massey 1985).

A Thousand Leaves

Up to this point, my discussion has deployed the term “space” as a generic category for describing all aspects of geographical difference. I have thus referred to “spaces,” “spatial differentiation,” and, most generally, “uneven spatial development” without delineating the specific forms in which they are articulated. At this stage, it is essential to examine more closely the fabric of social space and, specifically, the contours of USD. To this end, Lefebvre’s (1991) emphasis on the *polymorphic* character of social space within capitalist modernity provides a useful methodological starting point. From this point of view, the geographies of any social process – such as urbanization, state power, capital accumulation, or uneven development – cannot be understood with reference to a singular principle or all-encompassing pattern. Instead, several intertwined yet analytically distinct dimensions of sociospatiality may be distinguished (Brenner et al. 2006a, 2006b; Sheppard 2002).

For example, the principle of *place*, which entails geographical proximity, the embedding of social relations within particular locations and patterns of areal (horizontal) differentiation (Massey 1994; Paasi 2004), represents an important dimension of each of the aforementioned social processes, but it cannot capture all aspects of their geographies or serve as a generic metaphor for sociospatiality as such. To proceed otherwise entails the methodological error of *place-centrism*: that is, the treatment of social space as if it were composed completely and uniformly of places.

Similarly, the principle of *territoriality*, which entails the enclosure, bordering, and parcelization of social relations (Sack 1986; Taylor 1993), is powerfully implicated in diverse aspects of macrogeographical development. However, it would be a serious mistake to reduce all aspects of social space to this form. Indeed, even the geographies of the modern state, which has been routinely defined as a territorial power-container (see, e.g., Giddens 1984; Mann 1988), cannot be understood in exclusively territorial terms (Agnew 1994; Brenner et al. 2003). This fallacy, which has been quite pervasive within mainstream political studies, may be characterized as *methodological territorialism* (Agnew 1994; Brenner 2004).

The principle of *scaling*, which entails the vertical differentiation of social relations among, for instance, global, supranational, national, regional, urban, and/or local levels (Smith 1995; Swyngedouw 1997b), likewise represents an essential, but not comprehensive, element of modern sociospatial

organization. To reduce sociospatiality as a whole to its scalar dimension leads to the methodological dead-end of *scale-centrism*.

Finally, the principle of *networking*, which entails the establishment of transversal interconnections across geographically dispersed locations or organizational units, is an increasingly significant dimension of contemporary sociospatiality (Castells 1996; Sum 1997; Whatmore and Thorne 1997). However, the fallacy of *network-centrism* must likewise be avoided insofar as the proliferation of long-distance, transversal linkages (e.g., through the deployment of new information technologies) does not necessarily erode the importance of place, territoriality, and scale as co-constitutive dimensions of social space (Bulkeley 2005; Leitner 2004).

Thus, in contrast to reductionist, isomorphic, and monodimensional approaches, it is methodologically imperative to view every sociospatial process as a complex crystallization of multiple, intertwined geographical dimensions and consequently to subject each of the latter to sustained analysis. In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991) develops this point through his thesis of the “superimposition and interpenetration of social spaces” (88). In one particularly vivid formulation, he likens the superimposed dimensions of social space to the intricate, asymmetrical layerings within a *mille-feuille* pastry – a powdery French dessert that means, literally, “a thousand leaves” (88). While Lefebvre’s somewhat fanciful culinary metaphor may distract us momentarily from the intricacies of sociospatial theory, it has direct implications for the discussion at hand. Like the *mille-feuille*, formations of USD are composed of complex articulations among multiple patterns, contours, lines,

FIGURE 1.1
Mille-feuille cake
SOURCE: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Mille-feuille_01.jpg.



Henri Lefebvre on the polymorphic character of sociospatiality

(excerpts from Lefebvre 1991, 85-88)

“HOW MANY MAPS ... might be needed to deal exhaustively with a given space, to code and decode all its meanings and contents? It is doubtful whether a finite number can ever be given in answer to this sort of question.”

“WE ARE CONFRONTED not by one social space but by many – indeed, by an unlimited multiplicity or uncountable set of social spaces which we refer to generically as “social space.” No space disappears in the course of growth and development: the *worldwide does not abolish the local* ... Thus social space, and especially urban space, emerged in all its diversity – and with a structure far more reminiscent of a flaky *mille-feuille* pastry than of the homogeneous and isotropic space of classical (Euclidian/Cartesian) mathematics.”

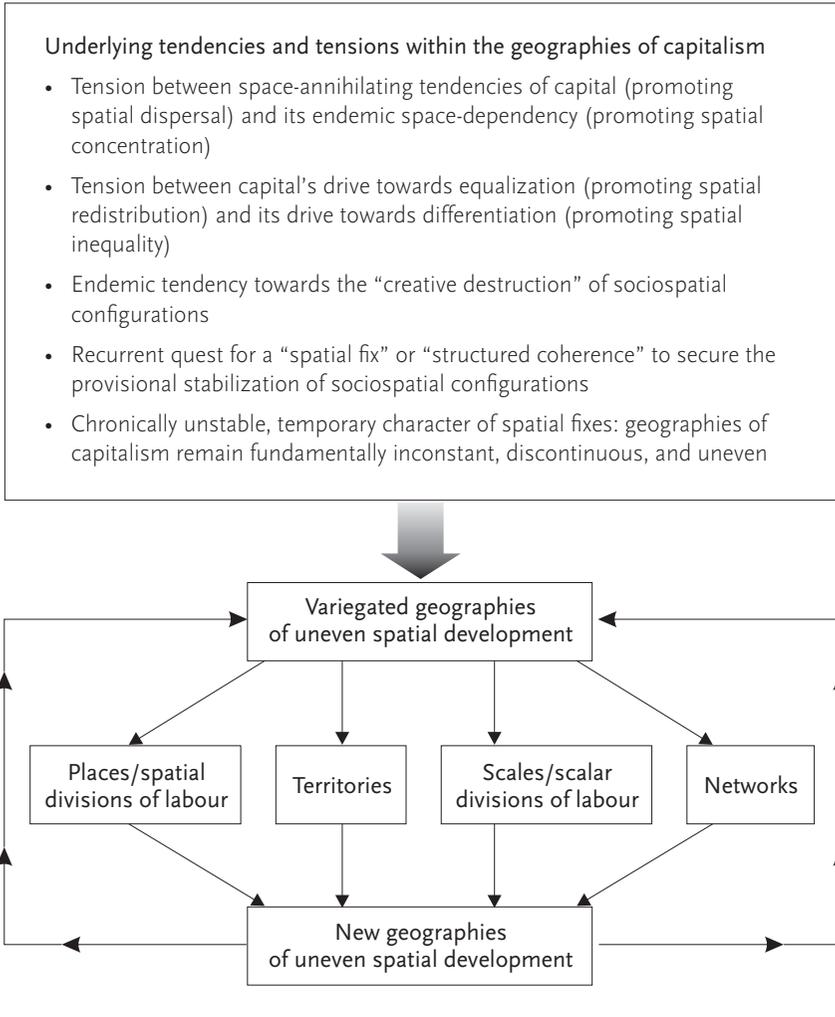
“THE PLACES OF social space are very different from those of natural space in that they are not simply juxtaposed: they may be intercalated, combined, superimposed ... Consequently the local ... does not disappear, for it is never absorbed by the regional, national, or even world-wide level. The national and regional levels take in innumerable “places”; national space embraces the regions; and world space does not merely subsume national spaces, but even (for the time being at least) precipitates the formation of new national spaces through a remarkable process of fission.”

“THE PRINCIPLE OF the interpenetration and superimposition of social spaces has one very helpful result, for it means that each fragment of space subjected to analysis masks not just one social relationship but a host of them that analysis can potentially disclose.”

folds, points, clusters, and edges. Drawing upon the distinction between place, territory, scale, and networks introduced above, the remainder of this chapter elaborates this contention through a series of macrogeographical generalizations regarding the evolutionary patterning of USD during the *longue durée* history of capitalism. A schematic summary of this discussion is provided in Figure 1.2, which links major accounts of the *sources* of USD under capitalism

FIGURE 1.2

Geographies of uneven spatial development under capitalism



(Harvey 1982; Smith 1984) to the analysis of its polymorphic *geographies* that is elaborated below.

Places and Uneven Spatial Development

Capitalism emerged within a differentiated geographical landscape inherited from previous modes of production. Nonetheless, even in its incipient stages,

capitalist expansion entailed profound transformations of places, above all through the establishment of new spatial divisions of labour in which dispersed geographical locations were assigned specific functional roles within the expanding capitalist world market. Initially, under merchant capitalism (1600-1750), these spatial divisions of labour were articulated with circuits of precapitalist trade and the geographies of inherited resource endowments – for example, the locations of waterways, raw materials, mineral supplies, and so forth. However, with the progressive industrialization of capital since the mid-eighteenth century, and the increasing integration of the production process into circuits of accumulation, specifically capitalist spatial divisions of labour emerged that have been based predominantly upon socially constructed economic assets (“agglomeration economies”). Under these circumstances, beginning in the core zones of Western Europe and eventually extending throughout the world economy, urbanization processes dramatically accelerated as capital and labour were concentrated within large-scale, specialized production complexes and long-distance trade networks were at once expanded and thickened. On a macrogeographical level, these trends also entailed the consolidation of a worldwide grid of places differentiated according to their particular functions, specializations, and positions within the spaces of global accumulation (Läpple 1978; Storper and Walker 1989). This differentiated landscape of place-making processes has articulated patterns of USD in at least five key ways.

First, new spatial divisions emerged within the expanding centres of capitalist production through residential segregation, the functional division of urban space, and the consolidation of new urban infrastructures for production and social reproduction. As capitalist urbanization has intensified and accelerated during the past two centuries, these intraplace divisions have continued to evolve, albeit always in contextually specific forms (Gordon 1978).

Second, the urban/rural divide was exacerbated as rapid industrialization fuelled large-scale urbanization and an increasing peripheralization or “underdevelopment” of rural spaces (Williams 1973). The division between two distinct *types* of places – capital-rich, industrializing urban centres and capital-poor, predominantly agrarian peripheries – thus became an essential axis of capitalist USD (Myrdal 1957). Even as settlement patterns have been differentiated among an ever broader range of types, this basic division has persisted, albeit in a continually evolving form, throughout the past two centuries (McMichael 2006).

Third, as capitalist industrialization accelerated in the global core zones, places across the global periphery were transformed into sites for the primary extraction, processing, and export of raw materials, generally through a process of “accumulation by dispossession” in which surpluses were violently or coercively appropriated (Harvey 2003). In this manner, spatial divisions of labour articulated a worldwide pattern of USD in which core, capital-rich zones of large-scale industrialization (the “global North”) were differentiated from peripheral, capital-poor areas of relative underdevelopment (the “global South”) (Amin 1979; Wallerstein 1974).

Fourth, as industrial restructuring and technological change have accelerated since the nineteenth century, new forms of interplace differentiation have rippled across the global system. The spatial divisions of labour produced through the first wave of capitalist industrialization have been subjected to rounds of “creative destruction” in conjunction with each period of crisis-induced restructuring – hence the increasingly chronic instability of places and interplace relations under capitalism since the nineteenth century. Such restructuring processes have, in fact, seriously unsettled the concrete patterns associated with each of the three previously mentioned forms of place-based USD (intraurban, urban/rural, and global core/periphery). The creative destruction of spatial divisions of labour has not, however, eroded the basic significance of place as an axis for the articulation of geographical difference.

Fifth, and finally, places may become basing points and arenas for social mobilizations that destabilize or otherwise modify broader patterns of USD (Harvey 1989c). This is because, even as capital strives to transform places, place-based attachments persist in the form of everyday routines, regimes of social reproduction, institutionalized political compromises, and socio-cultural identities. Such place-based commitments are often articulated quite sharply when broader processes of capitalist restructuring destabilize patterns of interplace relations. Consequently, capital’s impulsion to rework spatial divisions of labour in search of new opportunities for profit making may encounter intense resistance from those whose everyday lives, livelihoods, and identities are tightly enmeshed within particular places. The resultant forms of place-based “revulsion and revolt” may assume reactionary or progressive forms (Harvey 1989c), but whatever their political valence, the cumulative impact of such mobilizations is to insert an element of friction into capital’s process of creative destruction. Places, in other words, cannot be creatively destroyed according to the whim of capital; rather, their evolution is an object and stake of intensive sociopolitical contestation and negotiation

(Hudson 2001). The concrete shape of place-based USD is therefore powerfully mediated through social struggles regarding the form, pace, rhythm, and trajectory of capital's process of creative destruction.

Territories and Uneven Spatial Development

The capitalist space-economy emerged in medieval Europe within a fragmented, decentralized mosaic of political-economic spaces. This mosaic encompassed small city-state enclaves, interurban networks, bishoprics, duchies, principalities, and a patchwork of absolutist state structures lacking fixed territorial boundaries (Spruyt 1994). However, following the Peace of Westphalia of 1648, the principle of territoriality became an increasingly foundational basis for organizing political life. Despite continued institutional and geographical diversity among them, states were now understood to occupy mutually exclusive, non-overlapping, contiguous, and sovereign territorial spaces and were reflexively monitored as such (Giddens 1984; Ruggie 1993). Borders were now seen clearly to separate the "inside" from the "outside" of states, and the domestic/foreign divide came to serve as a basic reference point for political-economic activity (Agnew and Corbridge 1994; Walker 1993). With the consolidation of mercantile capitalism, this grid of state territories was entrenched as both statesmen and capitalists attempted to expand international trade, to consolidate national markets, and thereby to increase national wealth (Braudel 1984). The territorialization of worldwide social space continued during the first wave of capitalist industrialization through (a) the intensified regulation of interstate boundaries; (b) the increasing internal parcelization of state space among intergovernmental administrative hierarchies; (c) the development of enhanced infrastructural capacities through which states could attempt to extend their authority over all "points" within their jurisdictional borders; and (d) the imperialist conquest and territorial division of peripheralized zones of the world economy under the yoke of colonial rule (Lefebvre 1978; Maier 2000).

These territorializations were maintained during subsequent rounds of capitalist industrialization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, even through phases of profound geoeconomic and geopolitical instability. This is not to suggest that territoriality has remained static within the Westphalian system; its specific roles have evolved significantly. The power and wealth containers of early modern territorial states were superseded by new forms of state developmentalism, nationalism, and welfarism that were likewise grounded upon distinctively territorial structures and strategies (Taylor 1994).

Concomitantly, the concrete geographies of interstate borders and intrastate jurisdictional divisions have periodically been modified, whether through warfare, internal rebellions, legal decisions, or social protest. And, as interstate relations have evolved in relation to the broader dynamic of worldwide capitalist development, new, large-scale territorial institutions (e.g., the European Union, NAFTA, ASEAN, and Mercosur) have been introduced that encompass multiple (national) state structures. Nonetheless, even in the midst of these macrohistorical realignments, the underlying principle of territoriality has been reproduced (Sack 1986). Most crucially, for my purposes, the differentiated landscapes of state territorial organization have articulated, mediated, and modified forms of USD in at least five central ways.

First, as the Westphalian interstate system has been globalized, territory has come to serve as a taken-for-granted category for the understanding of sociospatial organization more generally (Agnew 1994; Häkli 2001). As a result, patterns of USD have been widely conceptualized in territorial terms, whether in institutionalized forms of data collection (e.g., in national censuses, OECD statistical tables, or World Bank development reports), in political discourse (e.g., in debates on spatial inequalities within territorially demarcated areas such as Europe, Britain, the South East of England, or London), or in everyday life (e.g., in popular representations of “Africa” or “the ghetto”). In each case, a unit of analysis is defined with reference to the jurisdictional boundaries of states, territorially demarcated substate areas, or groups of territorial states. It is then treated as a relatively coherent, integrated whole and contrasted to other, formally equivalent units with reference to a particular socioeconomic indicator (e.g., population, unemployment, GDP, or crime rates) or a perceived characteristic (e.g., wealth or poverty, order or disorder). Thus, even though territory represents only one among several constitutive dimensions of USD, it has generally been treated as the most fundamental sociospatial form in terms of which geographical inequalities are to be understood and acted upon.

Second, within the modern interstate system, state territorial structures demonstrate considerable rigidity and, therefore, frequently act as a drag upon the capitalist impulsion to relocate investment activity (Harvey 1985, 2003). In other words, the territorial borders delineated and controlled by states have been much less malleable than the spatial imprints of capital circulation that interpenetrate them. Consequently, such borders impose determinate locational constraints upon the capitalist drive to creatively destroy established sociospatial configurations. Even when the concrete geographies of capital

have been rearranged, the modern interstate system has provided a relatively fixed, stable, and immobile grid of institutionalized sociospatial divisions – a world of parcelized, bordered spaces – for the process of capital circulation. To be sure, state territorial borders and internal jurisdictional arrangements have been modified during the course of capitalist development, in some cases quite significantly (e.g., after major military conflicts, civil wars, or revolutions). Once institutionalized, however, the concrete spatial parcels demarcated by state boundaries are relatively difficult to modify, even as their political-economic functions continue to evolve (Cox 1990; Taylor 1994). As discussed previously, patterns of USD are intimately intertwined with the endemic tension between capital's dependence upon fixed sociospatial arrangements and its equally chronic tendency to creatively destroy those very arrangements in pursuit of fresh possibilities for accumulation. The consolidation of state territoriality as a deep structure of sociospatial organization within modern capitalism directly impacts this contradictory dynamic: it imposes a certain element of fixity, embodied in the worldwide grid of state territories, upon an otherwise restlessly changing geographical landscape (Harvey 1985).

Third, actually existing state territorial borders and internal jurisdictional boundaries have direct, durable implications for the concrete forms in which place-based inequalities and spatial divisions of labour are articulated. This is because different types of state territorial structures and regulatory arrangements organize widely divergent conditions for capital circulation. For instance, the relative costs and availability of labour power, equipment, land, and raw materials, the nature of transportation and communication infrastructures, and the level of taxation and tariffs may diverge significantly among state territories as well as among intrastate (regional or local) political jurisdictions. Such inter- and intraterritorial differences are likely to have profound ramifications for the locational geographies of capital and, by implication, larger-scale spatial divisions of labour. Capitalists in search of cost-competitive locations are most likely to invest in territories (whether neighbourhoods, cities, regions, countries, or superregions) that provide the lowest costs of production and exchange. By contrast, capitalists whose accumulation strategies hinge upon more specialized forms of labour power, interfirm relations, infrastructural conditions, institutional relays, and technological resources are more likely to sink their investments into territories that provide such non-substitutable, territorially embedded socioeconomic assets (Storper and Walker 1989). In this sense, the geographies of (state) territories

do not only interpenetrate place-based patterns of USD but also directly shape them. Consequently, as Cox (2002, 253) notes, there is frequently “some congruence between patterns of geographically uneven development ... and the territorial structure of the state.”

Fourth, in significant measure due to their territorially centralized institutional structures, state institutions have the capacity to mobilize political strategies to influence patterns of USD both within and beyond their borders (Brenner 2004). States may pursue this goal through diverse policy instruments, including industrial policies, economic development initiatives, infrastructure investments, spatial planning programs, labour market policies, regional policies, urban policies, housing policies, international trade agreements, and imperialist interventions, all of which have direct or indirect ramifications for intra- and suprastate geographies of production, reproduction, and circulation. During the twentieth century, national-developmental state institutions came to promote the entire state territory as an integrated framework for economic growth. Relatively non-industrialized rural and peripheral regions were targeted in redistributive policies that aimed to spread urban industrial growth more evenly throughout the national territory. Most recently, across much of the world economy, major urban and regional economies have become strategically important targets for a range of spatially selective policies intended to enhance national competitive advantages in the context of accelerated geoeconomic integration. Throughout these periods, diverse forms of state-led imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism profoundly influenced patterns of USD beyond the state’s jurisdictional borders, whether through the expropriation of raw materials, the construction of markets, or, most recently, the imposition of regulatory conditions favourable to foreign direct investment (Harvey 2003). While the concrete effects of such interventions have varied considerably, and have often been considerably at odds with their declared purpose, these examples illustrate the multifarious ways in which state institutions have attempted to influence patterns of USD both within and beyond their territorial jurisdictions.

Fifth, the territorial structures of the state provide various overlapping institutional arenas in and through which social movements may attempt to modify inherited forms of USD. Insofar as places represent the most immediate geographical terrain on which the disruptive consequences of capitalist creative destruction are experienced, social movements frequently assume a place-based form. Crucially, however, the “nested hierarchical structures” of the state (Harvey 1982, 430) may likewise become important platforms for

social forces concerned to confront the dislocations of creative destruction. Insofar as place-based mobilizations attempt to harness the institutional capacities of the state in pursuit of their agendas, they necessarily assume at least a partially territorial form. Under these circumstances, state institutions (whether national, regional, or local) may be mobilized against capital's strategies of place transformation or at least as a means to reshape the latter to accommodate popular or sectional demands. But meanwhile, capitalists may adopt territorial strategies of their own, harnessing state institutions in order to preserve, modify, or transform the spatial divisions of labour upon which their current or projected accumulation strategies depend. In this manner, the territorial structures of the state become a terrain of political contestation in which diverse social forces struggle to influence the geographies of capital accumulation (Cox 1990). The processes of territorial alliance formation that ricochet throughout all levels of the state apparatus may thus have profound implications for the contextually specific forms in which USD is articulated.

Scales and Uneven Spatial Development

The preceding discussion of places, territories, and geographies of USD has presupposed a third, equally foundational dimension of sociospatial differentiation – geographical scale. In addition to the “horizontal” or areal differentiation of social practices across places and territories (or geographical scope), there is also an equally fundamental “vertical” differentiation in which social relations are hierarchically articulated among, for instance, global, supranational, national, regional, metropolitan, and/or local scales (Collinge 1999; Swyngedouw 1997b). Insofar as any social, political, or economic process or institutional form is internally differentiated into a vertical hierarchy of relatively discrete spatial units, the problem of its scalar organization arises. Thus understood, like other macrogeographical processes under capitalism, USD is profoundly scale-differentiated. Indeed, all of the aspects of USD discussed above under the rubric of place and territory are articulated in profoundly scale-differentiated forms.

The establishment of distinctively capitalist spatial divisions of labour and the territorialization of political power during the course of capitalist industrialization entailed not only the transformation of places, the consolidation of new intra- and interplace divisions, the territorial extension of capitalism beyond its European heartlands, and the territorial segmentation of sociospatial inequality throughout the capitalist space-economy. These

developments were also closely intertwined with qualitatively new forms of scalar differentiation, including, most centrally, three aspects.

First, the *urban* and *regional* scales were institutionalized as key spatial niches for agglomerations of capital and labour, as embodied in major metropolitan centres (Harvey 1982). This urban and regional scaling of USD was constitutively intertwined with the production of the intra- and interplace inequalities described above but cannot be reduced to the latter. It involved not only the polarization of urban spatial organization and the differentiation of cities and city-regions from other types of settlement spaces but also their strategic positioning within a broader hierarchy of sociospatial forms stretching from the local scale to the global scale.

Second, the *global* scale was consolidated as the ultimate geographical horizon for capitalist expansion, as embodied in the world market (Wallerstein 1974). This globalization of capital circulation necessarily entailed a territorial extension of the capitalist system into hitherto unincorporated zones and the crystallization of new forms of core/periphery polarization. It also helped to consolidate the global scale as an encompassing geographical niche within the emergent capitalist interscalar hierarchy.

Third, the *national* scale was consolidated as an institutionalized terrain of mediation within the process of intercapitalist competition, as embodied in the political-institutional hierarchies of the territorial state (Smith 1995). This nationalized scaling of political-economic space has already been examined above, through the analytical lens of (national) territoriality. It contributed to, and was in turn reinforced by, the various forms of interplace differentiation and territorial inequality that were surveyed previously.

In close conjunction with the latter trends, processes of USD have been articulated onto several additional geographical scales as well, including (a) the *neighbourhood* scale, embodied in intraurban zones of association and political jurisdiction, and (b) the *supranational* scale, embodied in institutionally demarcated spaces of capital circulation and political regulation that encompass multiple national states (e.g., the European Union, NAFTA, ASEAN). Each of the latter scalings of USD has been intertwined with place-based and territorial inequalities, yet their scalar dimension cannot be reduced to either of the latter. Insofar as each of the aforementioned scales provided an additional niche within the broader interscalar hierarchies of modern capitalism, it contributed to the further differentiation of processes of USD.

Because scales are defined relationally, the institutional and spatial coherence of those listed above can be grasped only with reference to their

distinctive roles and positions within interscalar hierarchies. Concomitantly, because the functions, institutional expressions, and interconnections among these scales have evolved historically, their differentiation should not be treated as an absolute functional requirement for the reproduction of capital. Nonetheless, because the differentiation among the neighbourhood, urban, regional, national, supranational, and global scales has been reproduced even as historically specific spatial divisions of labour and territorial arrangements have been creatively destroyed, they must be viewed as deep structures within capitalism's restlessly changing geographical landscape. In this sense, the process of USD under capitalism at once presupposes and reinforces a historically specific formation of scale differentiation (Smith 1984), which has been intimately intertwined with place-based and territorial articulations of sociospatial difference.

However, just as place-based and territorial patterns of USD have been reworked during the geohistory of capitalism, so too have its scalar geographies. Beyond the initial wave of scale differentiation discussed above, in which specifically capitalist instantiations of the urban-regional, national, and global scales were produced, the scalar configuration of USD has assumed historically specific forms *within* the capitalist system and, concomitantly, has been periodically junked and rewoven. These successive waves of "rescaling" (Brenner 1998a; Swyngedouw 1997b) represent an essential medium and expression of USD under capitalism.

Mercantile and early industrial capitalism involved a generalized condition of "scale relativization" (Collinge 1999) in which no single scale prevailed as the dominant level of political-economic organization. Patterns of USD were articulated at multiple spatial scales, from the urban and the national to the imperial and the global. Within the newly consolidating geographies of early modern capitalism, spatial scales provided a relatively malleable scaffolding in and through which USD could be differentiated among diverse types of places, territories, and zones of exchange.

This situation of scale relativization was rearticulated during the period of territorial state consolidation that began in the eighteenth century and continued through successive waves of capitalist industrialization well into the twentieth century. From this broad period until the termination of national-developmental capitalism (early 1970s), the national scale gradually became predominant at once as a crystallization point for USD and as an institutional locus for political strategies to manage the latter. As Taylor (1994) notes, the effort to impose a spatial congruence between economic

processes and political life within each state's territory also entailed a growing nationalization of key aspects of socio-institutional existence (see also Cerny 1995). To be sure, patterns of USD were articulated at other spatial scales, from the global to the local, but the increasing territorialization of political-economic life during this epoch was inextricably linked to a generalized nationalization of sociospatial inequality (Maier 2000). Consequently, inequality among cities and regions, or in the international arena, was increasingly understood and acted upon as if it could be neatly aggregated upward or collapsed downward into the national scale of political-economic organization. Despite significant geoeconomic crises, military conflagrations, and waves of industrial restructuring that periodically unsettled sociospatial arrangements, this nationalized scalar configuration lasted until the crisis of national-developmental capitalism in the late twentieth century.

The most recent round of worldwide capitalist restructuring of the post-1970s period has decentred the nationalized "scalar fix" (Smith 1995) and engendered a renewed situation of scale relativization. The expansion of the role of transnational corporations and global finance capital since the early 1970s, coupled with the consolidation of a new international division of labour, the emergence of post-Fordist forms of industrial agglomeration, the intensification of international diasporic flows, and the growing importance of new information technologies in mediating worldwide economic transactions, are among the most blatant indicators of this systemic sociospatial realignment (Agnew and Corbridge 1994). Some scholars have characterized these trends with reference to the purported ascendancy of a single spatial scale – as, for instance, in accounts of the "new globalism," "triadization," "Europeanization," the "new regionalism," the "new localism," or the "local-global nexus" (for an overview, see Lee and Wills 1997). By contrast, the argument proposed here is that the scalar architecture of capitalism as a whole – and, specifically, of USD – is being contested and reworked in unpredictable, often uncontrollable, ways (Brenner 2004; Jessop 2000; Swyngedouw 1997b). This line of interpretation builds upon the observation that previously nodal, subordinate, or marginal spatial scales are acquiring a renewed significance in contemporary political-economic processes. The key claim, however, is not that the national scale is being superseded or that any other scale has now acquired a dominance akin to that of the national during previous phases of capitalist geohistorical development. Rather, the significance of the national is now ever more tightly linked to other supra- and

subnational scales of political-economic organization than was previously the case. Concomitantly, patterns of USD are no longer configured around a single, predominant scale of political-economic organization.

In sum, this discussion suggests five key ways in which scaling processes may influence, and in turn be shaped by, processes of USD. First, the *differentiation of scales* under capitalism generates a hierarchical, but often tangled, scaffolding of sociospatial forms in and through which processes of USD may be organized and reproduced.

Second, scalar configurations are themselves internally differentiated insofar as they contain specific divisions of labour among their constitutive tiers (*scalar divisions of labour*). Whether they appear within political or economic organizational forms, such scalar divisions of labour are one of the key scalar expressions of sociospatial inequality (Collinge 1999).

Third, *scalar fixes* may emerge insofar as interscalar relations are provisionally stabilized around a relatively established scalar division of labour. They thus represent a mechanism through which scale-articulated and scale-dependent forms of USD may be further entrenched (Smith 1995).

Fourth, insofar as scalar fixes are destabilized and interscalar relations are unsettled, *rescaling processes* ensue in which new scales of political-economic organization and new interscalar hierarchies are produced (Swyngedouw 1997b). Rescaling processes may thus undermine established patterns of USD while also producing qualitatively new forms of sociospatial inequality and sociospatial differentiation.

Fifth, insofar as interscalar arrangements are contested, a *politics of scale* emerges in which diverse social forces actively struggle to reorganize the functions, organizational embodiments, and/or interconnections among spatial scales (Smith 1995). Indeed, like place and territory, scale can likewise serve as a basing point for social movements concerned with challenging established patterns of USD. Thus, the specific configuration of scale-based patterns of USD must be viewed as both object and stake of sociopolitical contestation.

Networks and Uneven Spatial Development

These considerations bring us to one final dimension of USD that has attracted considerable attention in recent years – namely, the role of networks and networking as the basis for an alternative, topological mode of socio-spatial organization based upon “points of connection and lines of flow, as

opposed to ... fixed surfaces and boundaries" (Whatmore and Thorne 1997, 289). According to Leitner (2004, 248), networks "span space" by establishing horizontal, capillary-like interlinkages among geographically dispersed nodal points. Consequently, "the spatial surface spanned by networks is ... fluid and unstable" insofar as (a) the degree of connectivity among network nodes may fluctuate; (b) patterns of network membership may fluctuate; and (c) multiple networks may overlap, interpenetrate, and crosscut one another (Leitner 2004, 248-49).

Network geographies have long figured centrally in the geohistory of capitalism, and they have been tightly enmeshed with the uneven geographies of places, territories, and scales in nearly all of their concrete forms. Indeed, interfirm networks, diasporic networks, intercity networks, infrastructural networks, interstate networks, and network-based social movements have thoroughly interpenetrated the place-based, territorial, and scalar geographies of mercantile, industrial, and globalizing capitalism that were surveyed above. Three brief examples illustrate the influence of networks upon patterns of USD.

First, the process of capital accumulation has long hinged upon networked relationships among firms. Although firms within the same sector aggressively compete for profit shares, others engage in cooperative relations through forms of subcontracting, information sharing, and diverse "untraded interdependencies" (Storper 1996). While the precise nature of such interconnections has evolved historically, they have powerfully intensified patterns of urban-regional agglomeration and, by implication, broader grids of place-based USD during the history of capitalist development (Scott 1988).

Second, the consolidation of the modern interstate system has likewise entailed various types of networked relationships within and among national state apparatuses. Through international organizations, international treaties, international agreements, and other types of informal regulatory and judicial agreements, networks have played an important mediating role in governing the global interstate system (Rosenau and Czempiel 1992). Networks have also long figured centrally in intergovernmental relations within each (national) state apparatus, where they have generally served to coordinate activities among diverse agencies, branches, and tiers of government. Insofar as these intergovernmental networks have influenced the geographies of capital investment, state activities, public service provision, and sociopolitical struggle, they have also necessarily impacted broader patterns of place- and territory-based USD.

Third, in addition to their place-based, territorially grounded, and scale-differentiated forms, social movements have deployed networked modes of organization in order to pursue their goals. From the international socialist movement to ACT UP and the global justice movement, the activities of social movements have depended upon networked ties as a basis for both communication and mobilization across places, scales, and territories. Social movement networks are generally embedded within, and intertwined with, places and territories, and they are always articulated in scale-differentiated forms. Yet, their geographies cannot be reduced to any of the latter dimensions of sociospatiality. Insofar as networking strategies impact the ability of social movements to influence ongoing processes of sociospatial change under capitalism, they also influence historically specific formations of USD.

In sum, networks may impact patterns of USD in at least two central ways. First, networks generally crosscut place-based, territorial, and scalar patterns of USD. In so doing, network formations may reinforce, interrupt, or destabilize intraplace divisions, spatial divisions of labour, territorial borders, interterritorial relations, or scalar hierarchies. Concomitantly, networks may also reinforce rather than alleviate extant geographies of sociospatial inequality, whether place-based, territorial, or scalar (Leitner and Sheppard 2002; Sheppard 2002).

Second, and contrary to popular representations of networks as non-hierarchical and democratic, many actually existing networks are internally stratified and externally exclusionary. They contain power hierarchies that marginalize some social forces at the expense of others, both within and beyond the network (Leitner and Sheppard 2002). They may be manifested through the differential abilities of participants to influence network operations; through the establishment of a division of labour within the network that differentially allocates resources, tasks, and burdens among participants; or through the establishment of distinctive rules of closure that limit participation within the network to particular individuals, groups, or organizational entities. While these network-based power relations may be expressed in variegated socio-organizational forms, they express USD insofar as they are articulated in distinctively geographical patterns.

The question of how network geographies are impacting contemporary patterns of USD is a matter of considerable scholarly contention. Many scholars of globalization have suggested that networks are today superseding the geographies of place, territory, and scale upon which the long-term geohistory of capitalism has been grounded. Alongside predictions that territoriality

is being dissolved due to processes of deterritorialization (see, e.g., O'Brien 1990), this position has recently been articulated through several influential interventions, including Castells' (1996) notion of the "space of flows," Amin's (2002) arguments for a "non-scalar and topological" interpretation of globalization, and Marston, Jones, and Woodward's (2005) proposal for a "flat ontology." Of course, these authors' diverse intellectual and political concerns cannot be reduced to the specific theme of USD, but they do commonly imply that inherited formations of sociospatial inequality are now being transcended through a radically new form of sociospatiality, based upon an ontology of networks.

It is not possible to settle here the question of how inherited patterns of USD are being remoulded through emergent networks. Nonetheless, the arguments developed in the preceding pages are intended to underscore the limitations of any approach that privileges a singular dimension of sociospatiality. The observation that networked forms of sociospatial organization are gaining a renewed significance is potentially productive insofar as – much like Smith's (1984) initial reflections on scale over two decades ago – it directs attention to a previously neglected dimension of sociospatiality. However, this useful observation does not logically translate into the claim that places, territories, and scales no longer exist or no longer serve to mediate processes of USD. To proceed otherwise is to engage in the methodological fallacy of network-centrism: it entails a reduction of the *mille-feuille* of modern sociospatiality into a singular, totalized form, that of the network. The preceding analysis suggests that the key issue is not the *replacement* of places, territories, and scales by networked geographies but the co-constitutive *rearticulation* of each dimension of sociospatiality in relation to one another, through ongoing strategies and struggles over the present and future shape of USD.

Coda

By way of conclusion, it may be useful to comment on the concept of a "new political economy of scale" around which this book is organized. On my reading, this concept usefully underscores the increasingly reflexive ways in which scholars are analyzing the production and transformation of scalar arrangements within contemporary capitalism. At the same time, the preceding discussion suggests two specific modifications to this concept.

First, as understood here, scale cannot be the "object" of political-economic analysis, for scales exist only insofar as key political-economic processes are scale-differentiated. From this point of view, it is more appropriate

to speak of *scaled political economies* – that is, of the scaling and rescaling of distinctive political-economic processes – rather than of a political economy of scale per se.

Second, because of the endemically polymorphic character of sociospatiality, a scaled political economy is most powerful when it is reflexively linked to place-, territory-, and network-sensitive approaches to sociospatial theory. In other words, a scaled political economy can in itself depict no more than a silhouette of sociospatiality; it becomes most intellectually powerful when it is reflexively combined with studies of the political economies of place, territory, and networks.

