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EDITOR'S NOTE

RIPE is delighted to publish the annual lecture which marks the 10th anniversary of the journal. The annual RIPE lecture series seeks to highlight the work of a scholar who has made a significant contribution to the field of international political economy. Saskia Sassen, distinguished Ralph Lewis Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago, and Centennial Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics, presented the lecture in the Department of Geography at Durham University on 14 March 2002 (jointly sponsored by the Durham University Geographical Society). The paper introduces a novel discussion on the spatiality of globalization, leading to a challenging re-interpretation of meanings of the local and local struggles in a globalized political economy.

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Globalization or denationalization?

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It is an honour and a pleasure to give the 10th RIPE Anniversary Annual Lecture, an opportunity to engage you in a discussion about the theoretical and methodological difficulties of studying and interpreting a variety of dynamics usually grouped under the term globalization.

What is it we are trying to name with the term globalization? In my reading of the evidence it is actually two distinct sets of dynamics. One of these involves the formation of explicitly global institutions and processes, such as the World Trade Organization, global financial markets, the new cosmopolitanism, the War Crimes Tribunals. The practices and organizational forms through which these dynamics operate are constitutive of what are typically thought of as global scales.

But there is a second set of processes that does not necessarily scale at the global level as such, yet, I argue, is part of globalization. These processes take place deep inside territories and institutional domains that

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have largely been constructed in national terms in much, though by no means all, of the world. What makes these processes part of globalization even though localized in national, indeed subnational settings, is that they involve transboundary networks and formations connecting multiple local or 'national' processes and actors, or involve the recurrence of particular issues or dynamics in a growing number of countries. Among these processes I include cross-border networks of activists engaged in specific localized struggles with an explicit or implicit global agenda, as is the case with many human rights and environmental organizations. And I include particular aspects of the work of states, e.g. certain monetary and fiscal policies critical to the constitution of global markets need to be being implemented in a growing number of countries, often with enormous pressure from the IMF and the US government. I also include the use of international instruments, whether human rights or WTO linked instruments, in *national* courts. Finally, I include non-cosmopolitan forms of global politics and imaginaries that remain deeply attached or focused on localized issues and struggles, yet are – knowingly or not – part of global lateral networks containing multiple other such localized efforts. This list is not meant to be exhaustive but rather representative.

Here I want to focus particularly on these second types of practices and dynamics and conceptualize them as constitutive of particular scalings of the global, albeit ones we do not usually recognize as such. A particular challenge in the work of identifying these types of processes and actors as part of globalization is that they often continue to be experienced and codified as national. This calls for the need to decode at least some of what we call the national.

When the social sciences focus on globalization it is typically not on these types of practices and dynamics but rather on the self-evident global scale. The social sciences have made important contributions to the study of this self-evident global scale by establishing the fact of multiple globalizations (e.g. Appadurai, 1996; Bonilla *et al.*, 1998; Eichen-green and Fishlow, 1996; Aman, 1998), and making it increasingly clear that neoliberal corporate economic globalization is but one form. But there is much work left to do. At least some of this work entails distinguishing: a) the various scales that global processes constitute (Taylor, 2000; Swyngedouw, 1997; Agnew, 1993; Amin and Thrift, 1994); and b) the specific contents and institutional locations of this multi-scalar globalization (e.g. Massey, 1993; Howitt, 1993; Jonas, 1994; Brenner, 1998). Geography more than any other of the social sciences today has contributed to a critical stance toward scale, recognizing the historicity of scales and resisting the reification of the national scale so present in most of social science, but also alerting us to the risks of exclusively scalar analytics that disregard the thick and particularistic forces that are part of these dynamics (e.g. Amin, 2002; Howitt, 1993; Cox, 1998).

1. THE SUBNATIONAL: A SITE FOR GLOBALIZATION

Studying the global, then, entails not only a focus on that which is explicitly global in scale, but also a focus on locally scaled practices and conditions articulated with global dynamics, and a focus on the multiplication of cross-border connections among various localities fed by the recurrence of certain conditions across localities. Further, it entails recognizing that many of the globally scaled dynamics, such as the global capital market, actually are partly embedded in sub-national sites and move between these differently scaled practices and organizational forms. For instance, the global capital market is constituted both through electronic markets with global span, and through locally embedded conditions, i.e. financial centres and all they entail, from infrastructure to systems of trust.

A focus on such sub-nationally based processes and dynamics of globalization requires methodologies and theorizations that engage not only global scalings but also sub-national scalings *as* components of *global* processes, thereby destabilizing older hierarchies of scale and conceptions of nested scalings. Studying global processes and conditions that get constituted sub-nationally has some advantages over studies of globally scaled dynamics; but it also poses specific challenges. It does make possible the use of long-standing research techniques, from quantitative to qualitative, in the study of globalization. It also gives us a bridge for using the wealth of national and subnational data sets as well as specialized scholarships such as area studies. These types of studies, however, need to be situated in conceptual architectures that are not quite those held by the researchers who generated these research techniques and data sets, as their efforts mostly had little to do with globalization.

One central task we face is to decode particular aspects of what is still represented or experienced as 'national', which may in fact have shifted away from what had historically been considered or constituted as national. This is in many ways a research and theorization logic that is the same as that developed in global city studies. But there is a difference: today we have come around to recognize and code a variety of components in global cities as part of the global. What I am trying to focus on here engages a range of conditions and dynamics that are to be distinguished from those global city components in that they are still coded and represented as local and national.

Three instances serve to illustrate some of the conceptual, methodological and empirical issues in this type of study. One of these instances concerns the role of place in many of the circuits constitutive of economic and political globalization. A focus on places allows us to unbundle globalization in terms of the multiple specialized cross-border circuits on which different types of places are located. In a later section of this lecture I will discuss the emergence of forms of globality centred on localized

struggles and actors that are part of cross-border networks; this is a form of global politics that runs not through global institutions but through local ones.

A more familiar instance is that of global cities as sub-national places where multiple global circuits intersect and thereby position these cities on several structured cross-border geographies, each typically with distinct scopes and constituted in terms of distinct practices and actors. For instance, at least some of the circuits connecting Sao Paulo to global dynamics are different from those of Frankfurt, Johannesburg or Bombay. Further, distinct sets of overlapping circuits contribute to the constitution of distinctly structured cross-border geographies: we are, for instance, seeing the intensifying of older hegemonic geographies, e.g. the increase in transactions among New York, Miami, Mexico City and Sao Paulo (e.g. Schiffer Ramos, 2002; Parnreiter, 2002), as well as newly constituted geographies, e.g. the articulation of Shanghai with a rapidly growing number of cross-border circuits (Gu and Tang, 2002). This type of analysis produces a different picture about globalization from one centred on global markets, international trade, or the pertinent supranational institutions. It is not that one type of focus is better than the other, but rather that the latter, the most common focus by far, is not enough.

A second of these instances, partly connected to the first, is the role of the new interactive technologies in repositioning the local, thereby inviting us to a critical examination of how we conceptualize the local. Through these new technologies a financial services firm becomes a microenvironment with continuous global span. But so do resource-poor organizations or households: they can also become microenvironments with global span, as might be the case with activist organizations. These microenvironments can be oriented to other such microenvironments located far away, thereby destabilizing the notion of context which is often imbricated in that of the local and the notion that physical proximity is one of the attributes or markers of the local. A critical reconceptualization of the local along these lines entails an at least partial rejection of the notion that local scales are inevitably part of nested hierarchies of scale running from the local to the regional, the national, the international.

A third instance concerns a specific set of interactions between global dynamics and particular components of national states. The crucial conditionality here is the partial embeddedness of the global in the national, of which the global city is perhaps emblematic. My main argument here is that insofar as specific structurations of the global inhabit what has historically been constructed and institutionalized as national territory, this engenders a variety of negotiations. One set of outcomes evident today is what I describe as an incipient, highly specialized and partial denationalization of specific components of national states.

In all three instances the question of scaling takes on very specific

contents in that these are practices and dynamics that, I argue, pertain to the constituting of the global yet are taking place at what has been historically constructed as the scale of the national. With few exceptions, most prominently among which is a growing scholarship in geography, the social sciences have not had critical distance, i.e. historicized, the scale of the national. The consequence has been a tendency to take it as a fixed scale, reifying it, and, more generally, to neutralize the question of scaling, or at best to reduce scaling to a hierarchy of size. Associated with this tendency is also the often uncritical assumption that these scales are mutually exclusive, most pertinently for my argument here, that the scale of the national is mutually exclusive with that of the global. A qualifying variant which allows for mutual imbrications, though of a very limited sort, can be seen when scaling is conceived of as a nested hierarchy.¹

Finally, the three instances described above go against those assumptions and propositions that are now often described as methodological nationalism. But they do so in a very distinct way. Crucial to the critique of methodological nationalism is the need for trans-nationalism because the nation as container category is inadequate given the proliferation of transboundary dynamics and formation (e.g. Taylor, 2000; Beck, 1999). What I am focusing on here is, rather, yet another set of reasons for supporting the critique of methodological nationalism: the fact of multiple and specific structururations of the global inside what has historically been constructed as national. Further, I posit, that because the national is highly institutionalized and thick, structururations of the global inside the national entail a partial, typically highly specialized and specific denationalization of particular components of the national.²

2. THE DESTABILIZING OF OLDER HIERARCHIES OF SCALE

Various components of globalization bring with them a destabilizing of older hierarchies of scale – scales and hierarchies constituted through the practices and power projects of past eras, with the national scale eventually emerging as the preeminent one. Most notable today is what is sometimes seen as a return to older imperial spatialities for the economic operations of the most powerful actors: the formation of a global market for capital; a global trade regime; and the internationalization of manufacturing production. It is, of course, not simply a return to older forms: it is crucial to recognize the specificity of today's practices and the capabilities enabling these practices. This specificity partly consists of the fact that today's transboundary spatialities had to be produced in a context where most territory is encased in a thick and highly formalized national framework marked by the exclusive authority of the national state. This is, in my reading, one of the key features of the current phase of globalization

and it entails the necessary participation of national states in the formation of global systems (Sassen, 1996: chapters 1 and 2; Panitch, 1996).³

The global project of powerful firms, the new technical capabilities associated with information and communications technologies, and some components of the work of states, have together constituted scales other than the national as strategic today. Most especially among these are subnational scales such as the global city, and supranational scales such as global markets. These processes and practices also contained a destabilizing of the scale hierarchies that expressed the power relations and political economy of an earlier period. These were, and to a good extent continue to be, organized in terms of institutional size and territorial scope: from the international, down to the national, the regional, the urban, to the local, with the national functioning as the articulator of this particular configuration. That is to say, the crucial practices and institutional arrangements that constituted the system occurred at the national level. Notwithstanding multiple different temporal frames, the history of the modern state can be read as the work of rendering national just about all crucial features of society: authority; identity; territory; security; law; and capital accumulation. Periods preceding those of the ascendance of the national state saw rather different types of scalings, with territories typically subject to multiple systems of rule rather than the exclusive authority of the state.

Today's re-scaling dynamics cut across institutional size and across the institutional encasements of territory produced by the formation of national states (Sassen, 2000b). This does not mean that the old hierarchies disappear, but rather that rescalings emerge alongside the old ones, and that the former can often trump the latter. Older hierarchies of scale constituted as part of the development of the nation-state, continue to operate, but they do so in a far less exclusive field than they did in the recent past. This holds even when we factor in the hegemonic power of a few states which meant and continues to mean that most national states were in practice not fully sovereign.

Existing theory is not enough to map today's multiplication of practices and actors constitutive of these rescalings. Included are a variety of non-state actors and forms of cross-border cooperation and conflict, such as global business networks, the new cosmopolitanism, NGOs, diasporic networks, and spaces such as global cities and transboundary public spheres. International Relations theory is the field which to date has had the most to say about cross-border relations. But current developments associated with various mixes of globalization and the new information and communications technologies point to the limits of IR theory and data. Several critical scholars (Taylor, 2000; Cerny, 2000; Ferguson and Jones, 2002; Hall and Biersteker, 2002; Walker, 1993) have shown us how its models and theories remain focused on the logic of relations between

states and the scale of the state at a time when we see a proliferation of non-state actors, cross-border processes, and associated changes in the scope, exclusivity and competence of state authority over its territory. Theoretical developments in other disciplines may prove important; especially relevant is, as I already mentioned above, geography and its contributions to critical analyses of scale, while other social sciences tend to take scale as a given and the national scale as a naturalized condition.

A second feature is the multiscalar character of various globalization processes which do not fit into either older conceptions of hierarchies of scale nor conceptions of nested hierarchies. Perhaps most familiar here is, again, the bundle of conditions and dynamics that marks the model of the global city. In its most abstract formulation this is captured in what I see as one of the key organizing hypotheses of the global city model, to wit, that the more globalized and digitized the operations of firms and markets become, the more their central management and specialized servicing functions (and the requisite material structures) become strategic and complex thereby benefiting from agglomeration economies.⁴ To variable extents these agglomeration economies are still delivered through territorial concentrations of multiple resources. This points to multiple scales which cannot be organized as a hierarchy or a nested hierarchy: for example, far-flung networks of affiliates of multinational firms along with the concentration of strategic functions in a single or in a very limited number of locations (e.g. Taylor *et al.*, 2002). This is a multiscalar system, operating across scales and not merely scaling upward because of new communication capabilities.⁵

Some of these issues assume particular contents and locations when it comes to the political domain. This is the focus of the next two sections.

3. DENATIONALIZED STATE WORK

One of the roles of the state *vis-à-vis* economic globalization has been to negotiate the intersection of national law and the activities of foreign economic actors – whether firms, markets or supranational organizations – in its territory as well as the activities of national economic actors overseas. This is not a new role, but it is a transformed and expanded one. A key element in my thesis about denationalization is that there are particular conditions that make execution of this role in the current phase distinctive and unlike what it may have been in earlier phases of the world economy. Further, I argue that at least some of the expressions of this configuration are multiscalar but do not follow the model of a nested hierarchy (e.g. Howitt, 1993); and, secondly, that the facts of scaling cannot fully explain the outcomes as these are shaped and driven by often thick and complex agendas (e.g. Amin, 2002).

We have, on the one hand, the existence of an enormously elaborate

body of law developed in good measure over the last 100 years which secures the exclusive territorial authority of national states to an extent not seen in earlier centuries, and, on the other, the considerable institutionalizing, especially in the 1990s, of the 'rights' of non-national firms, the deregulation of cross-border transactions, and the growing influence/power of some of the supranational organizations. If securing these rights, options and powers, entailed an even partial relinquishing of components of state authority as constructed over the last century, then we can posit that this sets up the conditions for a transformation in the position of the state. It also signals a necessary engagement by national states in the process of globalization. Finally, it signals the formation of new geographies of power confronting national states.

Crucial to my analysis here is the fact that the emergent, often imposed, consensus in the community of states to further globalization is not merely a political decision: it entails specific types of *work* by a large number of state institutions in each of these countries (e.g. Picciotto and Mayne, 1999). Governments of countries articulated with the global economic system have had to pass multiple legislative measures, regulations, executive orders, and court decisions, enabling foreign firms to operate in their territories, their own firms to operate abroad, and markets generally to become global. Again, this is not new *per se*, but the orders of magnitude involved, the diversity of firms and markets, the depth of these legal and regulatory transformations all suggest that this is not merely a quantitative change but also a qualitative one. It is in this sense that I argue that the so-called consensus was not just a decision, but rather entailed new state practices which changed the actual work of states. Furthermore, this work of states has an ironic outcome insofar as it has the effect of destabilizing some aspects of state power. Thus the US government as the hegemonic power of this period has led/forced other states to adopt these obligations towards global capital, and, in so doing, has contributed to strengthen the forces that can challenge or destabilize what have historically been constructed as state powers.⁶

The accommodation of the interests of foreign firms and investors under conditions where most of a country's institutional domains have been constructed as 'national' entails a negotiation.⁷ The mode of this negotiation in the current phase has tended in a direction that I describe as a denationalizing of several highly specialized national institutional components.⁸ My hypothesis here is that some components of national institutions, even though formally national, are not national in the sense in which state practice has constructed the meaning of that term since the emergence of the so-called regulatory state in the twentieth century, particularly evident in the North Atlantic and parts of Asia. Though imperfectly implemented and often excluding national minorities, a good instance of this meaning of the 'national' is the set of Keynesian policies

aimed at strengthening the 'national' economy, 'national' consumption capacity, and the educational level of 'national' workforces. There are, clearly, enormous variations among countries, both in terms of the extent to which such a national policy project existed and the actual period of time of its implementation.

Today, particular institutional components of the national state begin to function as the institutional home for the operation of powerful dynamics constitutive of what we could describe as 'global capital' and 'global capital markets.' In so doing, these state institutions contribute to reorient their particular policy work or, more broadly, state agendas towards the requirements of the global economy. This then raises a question about what is 'national' in these institutional components of states linked to the implementation and regulation of economic globalization.⁹

This work of states is not just a technical matter, I argue, but one that has profound, albeit very specialized and partial, effects on the substantive rationality of states. In very specific, rather than universal ways, it changes the answer to the question: Why do we have states, what are states for?

There is a set of strategic dynamics and institutional transformations at work here. They may incorporate a small number of state agencies and units within departments, a small number of legislative initiatives and of executive orders, and yet have the power to institute a new normativity at the heart of the state; this is especially so because these strategic sectors are operating in complex interactions with private, transnational, powerful actors (Sassen, 1996: chapters 1 and 2).¹⁰ That is to say, this highly specialized transformation in particular components of the work of states is one element, albeit a crucial one, along with other developments which carries consequences for certain features of the state. Key among these other developments is the growth of various forms of private authority which together are constructing an increasingly institutionalized order that functions in good part outside the inter-state system (e.g. Ferguson and Jones, 2002; Cerny, 2000; Corbridge *et al.*, 1994).

This is happening to variable degrees in a growing range of state components, even as much of the overall institutional apparatus of states remains basically unchanged (e.g. Smith *et al.*, 1999; Olds *et al.*, 1999). The inertia of bureaucratic organizations, which creates its own version of path dependence, makes an enormous contribution to continuity. The task is one of decoding what has actually changed in what we continue to represent and experience as the national. This allows us to capture the simultaneity inside the national of power relations pertaining to the national and the global. It signals what we might describe as a scale politics of spatiality (see Jonas, 1994), but with a twist.

In terms of research and theorization this means, among other tasks, establishing what are the new territorial and institutional conditionalities

of national states in the context of globalization. In a more abstract sense, it means establishing novel or additional political dimensions of the spatiality of the national and the global. Specific structurations of what we have represented as the global are actually located deep inside state institutions and territories. In turn, what we have represented (and to some extent reified) as the scale of the national contains a simultaneity of power relations, some pertaining to the national and others to the global. This final aspect is further developed in the next section where I argue that what we have represented as the local is being repositioned today through articulations with global networks.

4. A POLITICS OF PLACES ON GLOBAL CIRCUITS: THE LOCAL AS MULTISCALAR

The issue I want to highlight here concerns the ways in which particular instantiations of the local can actually be constituted at multiple scales. I examine this through a focus on various political practices among mostly resource-poor organizations and individuals that are constitutive of a specific type of global politics, one that runs through localities and is not predicated on the existence of global institutions. Because a network is global does not mean that it all has to happen at the global level. A key contribution to this type of conceptualization of the local as multiscalar is Jones' (1998) analysis of how jumping scales involves a politics of representation. She shows us how local groups can actively reshape the discourses within which their struggles are constituted and thereby can discursively re-present their political struggles as taking place across scales (see also Gzesh and Espinoza, 2002; Smith, 1993).

Historically this is not new. Yet there are two specific matters which signal the need for empirical and theoretical work on this dimension. One is that much of the conceptualization of the local in the social sciences has emphasized physical/geographic proximity and thereby a sharply defined territorial boundedness and, usually, closure. The other, partly a consequence of the first, is a strong tendency to conceive of the local as part of a hierarchy of nested scales. To a very large extent these conceptualizations probably express the actual practices and formations likely to constitute most of the local in most of the world. But there are also conditions today that contribute to destabilize these practices and formations and hence invite a reconceptualization of the local, even if it pertains to only a limited range of its features and of its instantiations.

Key among these current conditions are globalization and globality as constitutive not only of cross-border institutional spaces but also of powerful imaginaries enabling aspirations to transboundary political practice. Also important are new computer-centred interactive technologies that facilitate multiscalar transactions. All facilitate a new type of

cross-border politics, one centred in multiple localities yet intensely connected digitally. Adams (1996), among others, shows us how telecommunications create new linkages across space that underline the importance of networks of relations and partly bypass older hierarchies of scale. Activists can develop networks for circulating place-based information (about environmental, housing, political issues etc.) that can become part of political work and strategies addressing a global condition – the environment, growing poverty and unemployment worldwide, lack of accountability among multinationals, etc.¹¹ The issue is rather one of orders of magnitude, scope and simultaneity: the technologies, the institutions and the imaginaries that mark the current global digital context inscribe local political practice with new meanings and new potentialities.¹²

Further, an important feature of this type of multi-scalar politics of the local is that it is not confined to moving through a set of nested scales from the local to the national to the international, but can directly access other such local actors whether in the same country or across borders. This possibility does not preclude the fact that powerful actors can use the existence of different jurisdictional scales to their advantage (Morrill, 1999) and the fact that local resistance is constrained by how the state deploys scaling through jurisdictional, administrative and regulatory orders (Judd, 1998). On the contrary, it might well be that the conditions analysed, among others, by Morrill and Judd force the issue, so to speak. Why work through the power relations shaped into state centred hierarchies of scale? Why not jump ship if this is an option. This combination of conditions and options is well illustrated by research showing how the power of the national government can subvert the legal claims of first nation-people (Howitt, 1998; Silvern, 1999) which has in turn led the latter increasingly to seek direct representation in international fora, bypassing the national state (Sassen, 1996: chapter 3).¹³ In this sense, then, my effort here is to recover a particular type of multiscalar context, one characterized by direct local-global transactions or by a multiplication of local transactions as part of global networks. Neither type is marked by nested scalings.

There are many examples of such types of cross-border political work. We can distinguish two forms of it, each capturing a specific type of scalar interaction. In one the scale of struggle remains the locality and the object is to engage local actors, e.g. a local housing or environmental agency, but with the knowledge and explicit or tacit invocation of multiple other localities around the world engaged in similar localized struggles with similar local actors. It is this combination of multiplication and self-reflexivity that contributes to constitute a global condition out of these localized practices and rhetorics. It means, in a sense, taking Cox's notion of scaled 'spaces of engagement' constitutive of local politics and situating

it in a specific type of context, not necessarily the one Cox himself might have had in mind. Beyond the fact of relations between scales as crucial to local politics, it is perhaps the social and political construction itself of scale as social action (Howitt, 1993; Swyngedouw, 1997; Brenner, 1998) that needs emphasizing.¹⁴ Finally, and crucial to my analysis, is the actual thick and particularized content of the struggle or dynamic that gets instantiated.

These features can be illustrated with the case of SPARC (Society for the Promotion of Area Resources). This is an organization that began as an effort to organize slumdwellers in Bombay to get housing. Its purpose is to organize urban and rural poor, especially women, to develop their capabilities to organize around issues of concern. The focus is local, and so are the participants and those whom they seek to reach, usually local governments. But they have established multiple networks with other similar organizations and efforts in other Asian countries and now also some cities in Latin America and Africa. The various organizations making up the broader network do not necessarily gain power or material resources from this global networking, but they gain strength for themselves and *vis-à-vis* the agencies to which they make their demands.

The second form of multi-scalar interaction is one where localized struggles are aiming at engaging global actors, e.g. WTO, IMF, or multinational firms, either at the global scale or in multiple localities. Local initiatives can become part of a global network of activism without losing the focus on specific local struggles (e.g. Cleaver, 1998; Espinoza, 1999; Ronfeldt *et al.*, 1998; Mele, 1999).¹⁵ This is one of the key forms of critical politics that the Internet can make possible: A politics of the local with a big difference – these are localities that are connected with each other across a region, a country or the world. From struggles around human rights and the environment to workers' strikes and Aids campaigns against the large pharmaceutical firms, the Internet has emerged as a powerful medium for non-elites to communicate, support each other's struggles and create the equivalent of insider groups at scales going from the local to the global.¹⁶ The possibility of doing so transnationally at a time when a growing set of issues are seen as escaping the bounds of nation states makes this even more significant.

Yet another key scalar element here is that digital networks can be used by political activists for global transactions but they can also be used for strengthening local communications and transactions inside a city. The architecture of digital networks, primed to span the world, can actually serve to intensify transactions among residents of a city or region, it can serve to make them aware of neighbouring communities, gain an understanding of local issues that resonate positively or negatively with communities that are right there in the same city rather than with those that are at the other end of the world (Lovink and Riemens, 2002).

Recovering how the new digital technology can serve to support local initiatives and alliances inside a locality is conceptually important given the almost exclusive emphasis in the representation of these technologies of their global scope and deployment.

Coming back to Howitt's (1993) point about the constructing of the geographical scales at which social action can occur, let me suggest that cyberspace is, perhaps ironically, a far more concrete space for social struggles than that of the national political system. It becomes a place where non-formal political actors can be part of the political scene in a way that is much more difficult in national institutional channels. Nationally politics needs to run through existing formal systems: whether the electoral political system or the judiciary (taking state agencies to court). Non-formal political actors are rendered invisible in the space of national politics. Cyberspace can accommodate a broad range of social struggles and facilitate the emergence of new types of political subjects that do not have to go through the formal political system.¹⁷ Much of this becomes visible on the street. Much of urban politics is concrete, enacted by people rather than dependent on massive media technologies. Street level politics makes possible the formation of new types of political subjects that do not have to go through the formal political system in order to practice their politics. Individuals and groups that have historically been excluded from formal political systems and whose struggles can be partly enacted outside those systems, can find in cyberspace an enabling environment both for their emergence as non-formal political actors and for their struggles.

The types of political practice discussed here are not the cosmopolitan route to the global.¹⁸ They are global through the knowing multiplication of local practices. These are types of sociability and struggle deeply embedded in people's actions and activities. They are also forms of institution-building work with global scope that can come from localities and networks of localities with limited resources and from informal social actors. We see here the potential transformation of actors 'confined' to domestic roles, into actors in global networks without having to leave their work and roles in their communities. From being experienced as purely domestic and local, these 'domestic' settings are transformed into microenvironments located on global circuits. They do not have to become cosmopolitan in this process, they may well remain domestic and particularistic in their orientation and remain engaged with their households and local community struggles. And yet they are participating in emergent global politics. A community of practice can emerge that creates multiple lateral, horizontal communications, collaborations, solidarities, supports. I interpret these as micro-instances of partial and incipient denationalization.

5. CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude this lecture by returning to the points of method and interpretation I began with. In this lecture I have focused on a set of instantiations of the global that are actually sited in what are usually represented or thought of as national institutional orders and dynamics. These range from forms of globality centred on localized struggles and actors that are part of cross-border networks, through formations such as global cities, to specific types of state work geared towards accommodating global actors and their interests. Cutting across these diverse processes and domains is a research and theorization agenda. In this lecture I have tried to construct this agenda by bringing together different strands of a rapidly growing scholarship to which geographers have made enormously important contributions, more so than other social scientists. This agenda is driven by at least some of the following major concerns.

At the most general level a first key concern is establishing novel or additional dimensions of the spatiality of the national and the global. Specific structurations of what we have represented as the global are actually located deep inside state institutions and national territories. In turn, what has been represented (and to some extent reified) as the scale of the national contains a simultaneity of power relations, some pertaining to the national and others to the global.

A second major concern is with critical examinations of how we conceptualize the local and the sub-national in ways that allow us to detect those instances – even when these might be a minority of all instances – that are in fact multi-scalar even when represented and experienced as ‘simply local’. The multi-scalar versions of the local I focused on have the effect of destabilizing the notion of context, often imbricated in that of the local, and the notion that physical proximity is one of the attributes or markers of the local. Further, a critical reconceptualization of the local along these lines entails an at least partial rejection of the notion that local scales are inevitably part of nested hierarchies of scale running from the local to the regional, the national, the international. Localities or local practices can constitute multiscale systems – operating across scales and not merely scaling upward because of new communication capabilities.

A third major concern is how to conceptualize the national, particularly the specific interactions between global dynamics and specific components of the national. The crucial conditionality is the partial embeddedness of the global in the national, of which the global city is perhaps the most developed instance. My main argument here is that insofar as specific structurations of the global inhabit/constitute what has historically been constructed and institutionalized as national territory multiple instances of the national will be engaged. One set of outcomes evident today is what I describe as an incipient, highly specialized and partial denationalization

of specific components of national states. This type of focus allows us to capture the enormous variability across countries in terms of the incorporation/negotiation/resistance of globalization, since these are partly shaped by the specifics, both *de facto* and *de jure*, of each country. The understanding of globalization in this case would demand detailed studies of the particular ways in which different countries have handled and institutionalized this negotiation.

In all three instances the question of scaling takes on very specific contents in that these are practices and dynamics that, I argue, pertain to the constituting of the global yet are taking place at what has been historically constructed as the scale of the national or the sub-national. One central task this brings up is the need to decode particular aspects of what is still represented or experienced as 'national' which may in fact have shifted away from what had historically been considered or constituted as national. This type of analysis also suggests a different – though by no means incompatible – research strategy from that which calls for trans-national analyses as a response to methodological nationalism. Transnational analysis in that case is a response to the fact that the nation as container category is inadequate given the proliferation of transboundary dynamics and formations. I think of this as a crucial part of our large collective research agenda. But I want to distinguish it from the particular focus of this lecture: the fact of multiple and specific structurations of the global *inside* what has historically been constructed as national. This is yet another type of emphasis in the (shared) critique of methodological nationalism.

There are conceptual and methodological consequences to this particular emphasis. Most importantly it incorporates the need for detailed study of national and sub-national formations and processes and their re-coding as instantiations of the global. This means that we can use many of the existing data and technologies for research but need to situate the results in different conceptual architectures from those they were originally designed for. We have some of these – translocal communities, global cities, post-colonial dynamics. But are they enough? I am not so sure. Further, because the national is highly institutionalized and is marked by socio-cultural thickness, structurations of the global inside the national entail a partial, typically highly specialized and specific denationalization of particular components of the national: is the analytic vocabulary of transnationalism, post-coloniality and hybridity enough or adequate to map these types of formations and dynamics? Again, I am not so sure. There is much work to be done.

NOTES

- 1 In my early research on the global city I began to understand some of these questions of reified scales. Much of the literature on global and world cities

has a critical appraisal of questions of scaling, but with important exceptions (Taylor, 1994; Brenner, 1998) this appraisal tends to be in embryo, under-theorized and not quite explicated. On the other hand, the scholarship on 'glocalization' recognizes and theorizes questions of scale but often remains attached to a notion of nested scalings (e.g. Swyngedouw, 1997). I find that among the literatures in geography that come closest in their conceptualization, albeit focused on very different issues, to what I develop in this lecture are those on first-nation peoples rights-claiming (e.g. Howitt, 1993; Silvern, 1999; Notzke, 1995). Clearly, there is a particularly illuminating positioning of the issues in this case because from the outset there is a) the co-existence of two exclusive claims over a single territory and b) the endogeneity of both types of claims – that of the modern sovereign and that of the indigenous nation. In my case here in this lecture, it is the coexistence of the claim of the historical sovereign and the claim of the global as endogenized in the re-constituted sovereign. (For a full development of this somewhat abstract statement, please see Sassen, 2003). This is a very particular usage of scale, one where the analytics of scale are drenched, so to speak, in specific and thick conditions and struggles (see Amin, 2002 for a critique of scale along these lines).

- 2 I have developed this at greater length in Sassen, 1996; 2000a). I should clarify that when I first developed the construct 'de-nationalization' in the 1995 Memorial Schoff Lectures (1996) I intended it to denote a specific dynamic. I did *not* intend it as some general notion that can be used interchangeably with post-national, global, or other such terms. In this regard see the debate in *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* (2000), and the Special Millennium Issue of *Public Culture* (2000, now issued by Duke University Press 2002).
- 3 Diverging somewhat from what has emerged as the main proposition in globalization research – growing interdependence – I argue that the marking condition for globalization today is the way in which the national has been constructed over the last century (with different temporal frames in different countries). From here then comes my emphasis on denationalization: the necessity to denationalize specific structurations inside this thickly constructed and highly formalized national context. This type of focus brings to the fore the variability across countries in how the encounter with globalization is negotiated, since it is partly shaped by the specifics of each country. At the same time such a focus avoids the trap of comparative studies in that it introduces the thesis that the conditionalities of a global system are multi-sited, i.e. need to be partly met through specific structurations in multiple countries. (See Sassen, 2003.)
- 4 For what I define as the nine organizing hypotheses of the global city model please see the Preface to the new edition of *The Global City*. In preparing this new edition I was far more able to formulate these 9 hypotheses than I was in writing the first edition, partly thanks to the enormously rich and varied literature produced during the 1990s and the equally rich and varied (though not always as enjoyable) critiques the first edition provoked.
- 5 Thus I would distinguish this from the case of illegal traffickers of people who have now been able to go global, where before they were regional, because of the infrastructure for communications and money transfers brought about by globalization.
- 6 See, i.e. the argument by Arrighi, 1994; see also the debate in Davis, 1999.
- 7 In terms of research and theorization this is a vast uncharted terrain: it would mean examining how that production takes place and gets legitimated. This

type of focus, or conceptualization, allows for the possibility of significant cross-national variations (which then would need to be established, measured, interpreted), in contrast to types of analysis that either emphasize the enormous power of global actors to override national specificities or, at the opposite end, insist that not much has changed (e.g. Krasner, 1999).

- 8 The question for research becomes What is actually 'national' (as in national state, not as in national people) in some of the institutional components of states linked to the implementation and regulation of economic globalization. The social sciences are not well equipped for this task given a strong state-centric approach to theory and research.
- 9 In the larger project on which this lecture is based, I (2003) also examine parallel trends in the case of the international human rights regime, specifically the use of international instruments in national courts, and the emergent issue of universal jurisdictions. In brief, I conceptualize denationalization as multi-valent.
- 10 In the larger project (2003) I posit that one of the marking features of this new, mostly but not exclusively, private institutional order in formation are its capacity to privatize what was heretofore public and to denationalize what were once national authorities and policy agendas. This capacity to privatize and de-nationalize entails specific transformations of the national state, more precisely of some of its components. Further, I posit that this new institutional order also has normative authority— a new normativity that is not embedded in what has been and to some extent remains the master normativity of modern times, *raison d'etat*. That new normativity comes from the world of private power yet installs itself in the public realm and in so doing contributes to de-nationalize what had historically been constructed as national state agendas.
- 11 The Internet is a crucial medium in these political practices. But it is important to emphasize that beginning in the 1990s, particularly since the mid-1990s we have entered a new phase in the history of digital networks, one when powerful corporate actors and high performance networks are strengthening the role of private digital space and altering the structure of public-access digital space (Sassen, 2002). Digital space has emerged not simply as a means for communicating, but as a major new theatre for capital accumulation and the operations of global capital. Yet civil society – in all its various incarnations – is also an increasingly energetic presence in cyberspace. (For a variety of angles, see e.g. Rimmer and Morris-Suzuki, 1999; Poster, 1997; Graham and Aurigi, 1997; Henshall, 2000; Miller and Slater, 2000.) The greater the diversity of cultures and groups the better for this larger political and civic potential of the Internet, and the more effective the resistance to the risk that the corporate world might set the standards.
- 12 Elsewhere (2002) I have posited that we can conceptualize these 'alternative' networks as countergeographies of globalization because they are deeply imbricated with some of the major dynamics and capabilities constitutive of, especially economic globalization; yet are not part of the formal apparatus or of the objectives of this apparatus, such as the formation of *global* markets. The existence of a global economic system and its associated institutional supports for cross-border flows of money, information and people have enabled the intensifying of transnational and trans-local networks and the development of communication technologies which can escape conventional surveillance practices (For one of the best critical and knowledgeable accounts see e.g. WIO, 2002; Nettime, 1997). These counter-geographies are dynamic and changing in

- their locational features. And they include a very broad range of activities, including a proliferation of criminal activities.
- 13 Though with other objectives in mind, a similar mix of conditions can also partly explain the growth of transnational economic and political support networks among immigrants (e.g. Smith, 1994; Smith, 1997; Cordero *et al.*, 2000; Gzesh and Espinoza, 2002).
 - 14 Some of these issues are well developed in Adam's (1996) study of the Tiananmen Square uprisings of 1989, the popular movement for democracy in the Philippines in the mid-1980s, and the U.S. civil rights movement in the 1950s. Protest, resistance, autonomy and consent can be constructed at scales that can escape the confines of territorially-bounded jurisdictions.
 - 15 One might distinguish a third type of political practice along these lines, one which turns a single event into a global media event which then in turn serves to mobilize individuals and organizations around the world either or both in support of that initial action or around similar such occurrences elsewhere. Among the most powerful of these actions, and now emblematic of this type of politics, are the Zapatistas' initial and several subsequent actions. The possibility of a single human rights abuse case becoming a global media event has been a powerful tool for human rights activists.
 - 16 The Internet may continue to be a space for democratic practices, but it will be so partly as a form of resistance against overarching powers of the economy and of hierarchical power (e.g. Calabrese and Burgelman, 1999; see also Warf and Grimes, 1997), rather than the space of unlimited freedom which is part of its romantic representation. The images we need to bring into this representation increasingly need to deal with contestation and resistance to commercial and military interests, rather than simply freedom and interconnectivity (Sassen, 2002).
 - 17 I have made a parallel argument for the city, especially the global city, being a more concrete space for politics. In many ways, the claim-making politics evident today in cyberspace resonates with many of the activisms proliferating in large cities: struggles against police brutality and gentrification, struggles for the rights of the homeless and immigrants, struggles for the rights of gays, lesbians and queers.
 - 18 This has become an issue in my current work: the possibility of forms of globality that are not cosmopolitan. It stems partly from my critique of the largely unexamined assumption that forms of politics, thinking, consciousness that are global are ipso facto cosmopolitan (see Sassen, 2003).

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