

# Understandings of the Changing Nature of Space and the Future of Global Governance

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*Recent geographical writing challenges the idea that space is inert historically and claims that 'lived space' or place is evolving from being organized primarily with respect to the territories of states into a more complex kaleidoscope of spatial forms. From one perspective this is due to the revolutionary 'time-space compression' of recent times associated with the rise of new communications and transportation technologies and the opportunities for capital accumulation they have provided. From another perspective, however, there is considerable continuity between past and present as a result of either new flows of capital, goods, and people coming into contact with existing territorial arrangements in complex ways or because of the geopolitical sponsorship of the increasingly globalized world economy by the United States and its allies around the world. Whereas the first perspective pays little or no attention to questions of global governance, the latter does, suggesting either some version of multi-tier governance or a critical analysis of proposals to project the U.S. model onto the world at large, claiming that such proposals reflect American intellectual hegemony rather than the most suitable type of political arrangement for an increasingly globalized world.*

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From one point of view, terrestrial space is inert. It is simply the geographical surface upon which physical, social, and economic practices and ideas exert their influence. But because the impact of practices and ideas is historically cumulative and geographically differentiating, space can be thought of as having long-term effects on the conduct of human life because of the very unevenness in the spatial distribution of physical resources and human capabilities. In this way, space is turned into place or 'lived space': the humanly constructed settings for social and political action. Contemporary Geography has abandoned the view once characteristic of many of its Anglo-American and German practitioners that physical geography is determining of other features of geographical difference across geographical scales from the local to the global. Rather, social and economic practices are now seen as primary in creating geographical differences of all kinds.

In the modern political realm lived space has been almost invariably associated with the idea of state-territoriality; politics is about modes of government within and patterns of conflict and cooperation between the territories or tightly-bounded

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spaces of modern states. Plausibly, however, this rendition of the association between politics and place is both historically and geographically problematic. Not only is the state-territory relationship a relatively recent one, it is one that has never completely vanquished other types of political geography (such as network-based kinship and city-state or core-periphery imperial political systems) around the world. Writing about 'failed' or 'quasi' states in locations as diverse as East Africa or Southern Europe, for example, often misses the fact that the absence of a working state bureaucracy throughout a given state's territory does not signify the absence of either politics or of alternative governance arrangements working non-territorially.

'Political space', therefore, cannot be reduced to state-territoriality for two reasons. One is that states are always and everywhere challenged by forms of politics that do not conform to the boundaries of the state in question. For example, some localities have kinship or patronage politics, others have ethnic or irredentist politics oriented to either autonomy or secession, and others support political movements opposed to current constitutional arrangements including the distribution of governmental powers between different tiers of government within the state. The second is that state boundaries are permeable, and increasingly so, to a wide range of flows of ideas, investments, goods, and people that open up territories to influences that are beyond the geographical reach of current governmental powers.

Consequently, in geographical perspective there is an imbalance between the overwhelming emphasis in the contemporary social sciences on territorial states as the main vehicles of governance and the geographically-variegated world that current territorial government is ill-suited in and of itself to manage and represent. A literature has begun to develop in Geography that addresses the sources of this political impasse and, to a degree, suggests possible solutions to it.

In this paper I offer a critical survey of the various strands of the emerging literature. Firstly, two strands are distinguished that focus on the singularity of the present, suggesting that contemporary 'time-space compression' augurs a post-modern world in which the fixed territorial spaces of modernity no longer match a new world of kaleidoscopic and jumbled spaces in which speed conquers established geopolitical representations. One of these strands, however, maintains a focus on the role of the agents of capital in creating this new world, the other tends to highlight the impact of new communication and representational technologies such as round-the-clock news reporting, the Internet, and new weapons systems. Two other strands see greater continuity between present and past in the configuration of space. One sees new local spaces interlinked with existing territorial ones producing a mosaic pattern to global development with local as much as global forces leading the process. A second sees powerful states, above all the United States, sponsoring a new global 'market access' regime that is producing a new geopolitics of power in which control over flows of goods, capital, and innovations increasingly substitutes for the fixed or static control over the resources of territories. Thus, states (and regions and localities within them) vie for access to the world's resources not through empire-building or territorial expansion but through command over world markets. These two last

strands have produced the main alternative governance proposals, respectively, in terms of multi-tiered governance and discussion of the limitations of territorial models for a world of flows.

## TIME-SPACE COMPRESSION AND THE END OF HISTORY

Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Hegel seemed to have had it right. History seemed to have culminated with the advent of the European nation-state and the nation-state seemed to be the highest form of governance, accepted as representing the fundamental essence of Western civilization. Now a new end of history has appeared. This time, however, it is one in which the globe substitutes for the state. The ease with which space is now overcome, militarily, economically, and culturally, is seen as creating a world in which “all that is solid melts into air”, to borrow a phrase from Karl Marx. Capital now moves around the world at the press of a button, goods can be shipped over great distances at relatively low cost because of containerization and other innovations, cultural icons represented by such products as blue jeans and Coke bottles are recognizable the world over, and Stealth technology undermines the ability of territorial military power to police its air space. A new post-modern world is emerging in which old rules of spatial organization based on linear distance-decay of transportation costs and territorial containing of external effects have broken down.

Under the new ‘flexible accumulation’ associated with globalization the unique attributes of particular places in fact take on greater value for what they can offer to increasingly mobile capital, from specific types of labor market to fiscal incentives. The need for rapid access to information has privileged those ‘world cities’ that have good connectivity to other places. The local availability of entrepreneurship, venture capital, technical know-how, and design capabilities differentiate ‘attractive’ from ‘unattractive’ sites for investment. At the same time, tastes are increasingly volatile, subject to manipulation through advertising and the decline of status-markers other than those of consumption. Niche markets associated with different social groups increasingly cross national boundaries, giving rise to cross-national markets that can be served by factories located in any one of them or, for labor-intensive goods, produced wherever labor costs are lower.

To David Harvey (1989), for example, one of the main advocates of this point of view, the ‘condition of postmodernity’ does not therefore signify the decreasing importance of space. Rather, it represents the latest round in capitalism’s long-term annihilation of space by time in which capitalists must now pay “much closer attention to relative locational advantages, precisely because diminishing spatial barriers give [them] the power to exploit minute spatial differentiations to good effect. Small differences in what space contains in the way of labor supplies, resources, infrastructures, and the like become of increased significance” (Harvey, 1989:294). Politically, this gives local populations and elites the incentive to organize to represent

themselves as best as possible in the struggle for mobile assets. They can be expected to turn 'homewards' and away from relying on national states to represent their interests. Political fragmentation, therefore, is a likely outcome of the increased place differentiation of the current era.

Yet, ultimately the expected world is one in which where you are will no longer matter, materially or culturally. Implicit in the perspective is an imminent decline in the significance of place as first technological conditions and then social relations produce an increasingly homogenized global space, within which local difference will be purely the result of human volition. Only in the here-and-now is there increased differentiation as new technologies conjoined to the unchanging imperative of capital accumulation work unevenly across the face of the post-modern world. The historical record offers little comfort to this teleology. Wealth and power always seem to pool up in some places and not in others. Only this time around the pattern is a much more localized one than that associated with the era of national-industrial capitalism and its welfare states.

Drawing particularly on the philosopher Henri Lefebvre (1991), Edward Soja (1989; 1996; 1999) argues that thinking about space has changed alongside the material impacts suggested by Harvey. In particular, Soja claims evidence for a 'spatial turn' in contemporary social science in which the previously dominant historicist approaches are increasingly challenged and displaced by ones in which 'lived space' is conjoined with 'perceived' and 'conceived' space to build a "shared spatial consciousness...to take control over the production of our lived spaces" (Soja, 1999: 277). In other words, a critical spatial imagination has been stimulated by recent transformations in the production of space giving rise to a new 'spatial politics' that fundamentally challenges hitherto dominant historical-social conceptions of political change. From this point of view, the end of history is thus as much intellectual and political as it is material (Dodgson, 1999). As yet, however, the 'normal' social sciences show little or no evidence of the 'spatial turn', notwithstanding the strong logical case that Soja makes for its arrival (see Taylor et al., 1996). To them, to quote a famous phrase of the writer William Faulkner about the American South, "the past isn't dead, it isn't even past".

A second strand in the literature on time-space compression emphasizes more the role of speed in postmodernity than the enhanced importance of local places or lived space. Indeed, in this understanding, "the power of pace is outstripping the power of place" (Luke and Ó Tuathail, 1998:72). Accepting the rhetoric of the gurus of the Internet world and the 'Third Wave', this perspective sees the world as on a technological trajectory in which global space is being 're-mastered' by a totally new geopolitical imagination in which accelerating flows of information and identities undermine modernist territorial formations. Drawing on such writers as Paul Virilio (1986), "Places are conceptualized in terms of their ability to accelerate or hinder the exchanges of global flowmations" (Luke and Ó Tuathail, 1998:76). Space is reimagined not as "fixed masses of territory, but rather as velocidromes, with high traffic speedways, big band-width connectivities, or dynamic web configurations in

a worldwide network of massively parallel kineformations” (Luke and Ó Tuathail, 1998:76). The main danger here, as McKenzie Wark (1994) notes, is that of mistaking a trend towards massively accelerated information flow with a deterritorialized world in which where you are no longer matters. It still matters immensely. Some places are well-connected, others are not; media and advertising companies work out of some locations and cultures and not out of others. The simulations of the media are still distinguishable (for some people) from the perils and dilemmas of everyday life. Pace is itself problematic when the images and information conveyed lead to information overload and fatigue more than accurate and real-time decision-making. The much hyped televisual world must still engage with an actual world in which most people still have very limited daily itineraries that root them to very particular places. To think that geopolitics is being replaced by chronopolitics is to project the desire for a boundaryless world characteristic of an older utopianism onto an actual world in which the old geopolitical imagination is still very much alive and well. History has not yet ended in instant electronic simulation. History is not the same as the History Channel.

## GLOBALIZATION AND THE NEW GEOPOLITICS OF POWER

The other strands of thinking are less apocalyptic about recent change in the nature of space. They see recent shifts from more to less territorialized modes of social and political organization as growing out of previous features of global political-economic organization. In particular, they emphasize that the spatial organization or spatiality of development is increasingly “constructed through interactions between flow economies and territorial economies” (Storper, 1997:31). It is not a question of either/or but of how one relates to the other. Where the strands differ is in the relative roles they ascribe to economic-technological and geopolitical forces (Leyshon, 1997).

In the first strand, a number of different territorial-organizational dynamics are distinguished so as to better monitor the trend towards globalization and its challenge to established modes of regulation and governance. In this understanding, local sources of advantage maintain a role that cannot produce complete locational substitutability for businesses moving investments from place to place. Michael Storper (1997), for example, distinguishes four dynamics that work differentially across economic sectors and world regions:

In some cases, the opening up of interterritorial relations places previously existing locationally specific assets into a new position of global dominance. In a second set of cases, those assets are devalued via substitution by other products that now penetrate local markets; this is not a straightforward economic process, however; it is culturally intermediated. In a third set of cases, territorial integration permits

the fabled attainment of massive economies of scale and organization, devalues locationally specific assets and leads to deterritorialization and widespread market penetration. In a fourth set of cases, territorial integration is met by differentiation and destandardization of at least some crucial elements of the commodity chain, necessitating the reinvention of territory-specific relational assets (Storper, 1997:35).

Globalization of trade, foreign direct investment, and production, therefore, is not just about an emerging geography of flows but how flows fit into and adapt to existing territorial or place-based patterns of economic development.

The point is that “globalization does not entrain some single, unidirectional, sociospatial logic” (Cox, 1997:16). Rather, place-specific conditions still mediate many production and trade relationships. For example, most multinational businesses still betray strong national biases in investment activity and the intersection of various external economies and ‘relational assets’ (to use Storper’s term) give different places different competitive advantages in expanding their economic base. Various modes of local regulation and governance evolve to handle the development process.

It is often not quite clear, however, what is that new about all of this. The world’s economic geography has long been a product of a mix of localizing and globalizing pressures, as world-systems theorists have long maintained (see, e.g., Arrighi and Silver, 1999). A genuine skepticism about the empirical basis to globalization as a pervasive process is also conjoined with a fairly economic rendering of what is happening (e.g., Cox, 1997). This is where the second strand comes in, not denying the complexity of the spatial impact of globalization so much as offering a different account of its origins and novelty.

From this point of view, contemporary globalization has its origins in the ideological geopolitics of the Cold War with U.S. government attempts at both reviving Western Europe and challenging Soviet-style economic planning by stimulating a ‘free-world economy’ committed to lowering barriers to world trade and international capital flows (Agnew and Corbridge, 1995). Globalization, therefore, did not just happen. It required considerable political stimulation without which technological and economic stimuli to increased international economic interdependence could not have taken place. From the American viewpoint, all states ideally would be internationalized; open to the free flow of investment and trade. This not only contrasted with the closed, autarkic character of the Soviet economy, it also had as a major stimulus the idea that the depression of the 1930s had been exacerbated by the closing down of international trade.

In the five decades after 1945, American dominion was at the center of a remarkable explosion in ‘interactional’ capitalism (Agnew, 1993). Based initially on the expansion of mass consumption within the most industrialized countries, it later involved the systematic reorganization of the world economy around massive increases in the volume of trade in manufactured goods and foreign direct investment. This was definitely not a recapitulation of the previous world economy that Lenin had labeled ‘imperialist’. Abandoning territorial imperialism, “Western capital-

ism...resolved the old problem of overproduction, thus removing what Lenin believed was the major incentive for imperialism and war" (Calleo, 1987:147). The driving force now was not export of capital to colonies but the growth of mass consumption in North America, Western Europe, and Japan. If before the Second World War the prosperity of the industrialized countries had depended on favorable terms of trade with the underdeveloped world, now demand was stimulated mainly at home. The products of such industries as real estate, household and electrical goods, automobiles, food processing, and mass entertainment were all consumed within, and progressively between, the producing countries. The welfare state helped to sustain demand through the redistribution of incomes and increased purchasing power for basic goods.

Beginning in the late 1960s this international system started to change in profound ways that augured the onset of globalization. First came increased levels of international trade following the revolutionary effects of the Kennedy Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in the mid-1960s. This was followed in 1971 by the U.S. abrogation of the Bretton Woods Agreement of 1944, liberating currencies from a fixed exchange rate to the U.S. dollar so as to improve the deteriorating trade position of the U.S. economy. This set currencies free to float against one another and created the globalized financial system now in place around the world. Third came the globalization of production associated with dramatic increases in the level of foreign direct investment. Initially led by large American firms, by the 1970s and 1980s European, Japanese, and other firms had also discovered the benefits of production in local markets to take advantage of macroeconomic conditions (exchange rates, interest rates, etc.), avoid tariff and other barriers to direct trade, and gain knowledge of local tastes and preferences.

With the collapse of the alternative Soviet system since 1989, largely because of its failure to deliver the promise of increased material affluence, the 'American' model has emerged into prominence at a world scale. An approach set in train in the 1940s to counter the perceived threat to the American model at home by exporting it overseas has given rise to a globalized world economy that is quite beyond what its architects could have foreseen at the outset of the Cold War. Yet, that is where its roots lie, not in recent technological changes or purely in the machinations of American big business. Globalization has geopolitical more than technological or economic origins.

Globalization has also had dramatic effects on global political geography, affecting the political autonomy of even the most powerful states (Agnew, 1999). One is the internationalization of a range of hitherto domestic policies to conform to global norms of performance. Thus, not only trade policy but also industrial, product liability, environmental, and social welfare policies are subject to definition and oversight in terms of their impacts on market access between countries. A second is the increased global trade in services, once produced and consumed largely within state boundaries. In part this reflects the fact that many manufactured goods now contain a large share of service inputs—from R&D to marketing and advertising. But it is also because the revolution in telecommunications since the 1980s means

that many services, from banking to design and packaging, can now be provided to global markets. Finally, the spreading geographical reach of multinational firms and the growth of international corporate alliances have had profound influences on the nature of trade and investment, undermining the identity between national territories and economic processes. Symptomatic of the integration of trade and investment are concerns such as rules on unitary taxation, rules governing local content to assess where value was added in production, and rules governing unfair competition and monopoly trading practices (Cowhey and Aronson, 1993).

None of these policy areas is any longer within the singular control of individual sovereign states. They all must live in an increasingly common institutional environment; including the United States. Unfortunately, as demonstrations at the November 1999, World Trade Organization (formerly GATT) meeting in Seattle made clear, the global institutional environment is not one currently open to democratic demands. Indeed, the globalizing world is marked by a crisis of governance as existing national-state scale institutions cannot offer the spatial reach needed to regulate increasingly worldwide and world-regional transactions but existing global-scale institutions are still creatures of the most powerful states and dominant interest-groups from them.

## GOVERNING A GLOBALIZING WORLD

In response to the perceived 'governance deficit' implicit in the gap between the spatial reach of existing national-state scale institutions and the changing geography of the world economy a number of studies have begun to examine the possible geographical options. One tendency, drawing largely on the sort of analysis provided by Michael Storper, involves the possibilities for multi-tier governance. In this understanding, because global-local relations are always mediated across a range of geographical scales different regulatory institutions should be located at different scales in a hierarchy from the local to the global.

A second tendency offers less a spatial logic for governance under globalization than a historical analysis of the geopolitical conditions that now prevail and that thus direct current debate over the 'best' form that new strategies of governance might take. One approach is to examine the claim that existing territorial arrangements within the world's most powerful state, the United States, can serve as a model for future transnational governance. This argument takes as its starting point the idea that the United States government is the major sponsor of globalization and sees the U.S. domestic model as a suitable one for the future regulation and management of the world economy as a whole; combining an openness to expansion through accretion of new territory and a division of public powers that gives private capital a central role in governance. Whatever its strengths, however, this claim fails to take into account the non-territorial character of globalization, reducing the viability of territorial designs such as the U.S. federal model and suggesting the superiority of what Susan Roberts (1998) has called 'globalization-from-below' based

on increasing the voice and political impact of diverse groups with distinctive stakes in the emerging global economy but without necessary connections to existing national-state institutions.

### *New Political Spaces*

A number of authors have distinguished a hierarchy of levels of governance at which different mixes of regulatory activities and political disputation can be lodged. Some might emphasize one level over others, such as the world-regional or regional trading bloc (e.g., Mittelman, 1996) or the global city-region (e.g., Scott, 1998). But all are concerned to argue for a spatial logic of levels or tiers as an alternative to the current concentration of governance at the national-state level.

Allen Scott (1998), for example, provides a fairly thorough discussion of the emergence of a set of new political spaces of which the world-regional, city-region, and global are the most novel. The national-state and local tiers already have relatively long standing institutional histories and high levels of political legitimation. Although there are “common and recurrent political questions (e.g., about trade, workers’ rights, gender issues, the environment, political representation)” (Scott, 1998:141) at all levels, many issues need addressing now both at levels ‘below’ and ‘above’ that of existing states. The global city-region is particularly important in Scott’s formulation. Not only is it the level at which competitive economic advantage is increasingly decided, due to the external economies of industrial clustering under globalization, but it is also the level at which popular involvement in political regulation is most effectively concentrated, not least because this is a geographical scale most associated with the ‘lived space’ of everyday life.

The tier arrangement is not a mere fantasy to Scott and others. Rather, trends towards a mosaic of global city-regions and world-regional organization (as with the European Union and NAFTA) are well under way. What remains more problematic is the possibility, and desirability, of increased governance at a truly global level. Here, though, the emerging market access regime of transnational liberalism may call forth from businesses themselves a demand for regulation, such as that recently coming from the financier George Soros (1998/99), to enforce the rules of global business equally across all actors. Global markets as presently constituted will never be able to do this. The danger is that governance at this level will be well beyond the range of popular democratic control. At the same time, however, local units may well begin to adopt policies that conflict with or even undermine the operations of higher-level ones, as with individual U.S. states pursuing their own policies in relation to foreign states or the WTO (e.g., Denning and McCall, 2000; O’Connell, 2000).

### *American Federalism and Global Governance*

Regional trading blocs and global city-regions are undoubtedly part of the emerging alternative to national-states as the primary units of global governance. Increasingly, however, calls for more effective governance beyond the national state are dominated

by fairly formal schemes based on 'up-scaling' of established national models. The most important of these, given the contemporary global geopolitical situation, is that of the United States, which now informs debates over, for example, the 'deepening' of the European Union through a federal model or proposals for revamping international institutions such as the UN system.

The American federal model has a number of attractive qualities, not the least of which is its pure territoriality', or rigid hierarchy of territories with functions allocated to levels on the basis of the spatial scope of their externalities, and its separation of powers between different 'branches' of government to reduce the concentration of public power. American 'constitutionalism', the continuing reference to a founding document, the Constitution, and the unending debate over its meaning and applicability, appeals as an institutional logic because, like any future model of global governance must do, the U.S. 'experiment' started from scratch. The emphasis on 'balance' between levels of government provides a means of sorting out multiple functions by tier in a way that other proposals for multilevel governance typically do not.

But it is the role of the U.S. as a global geopolitical force that pushes the U.S. model to the fore irrespective of its particular relevance. An important element in American emergence as a world power early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was projection of the American experience as an inherent aspect of U.S. government foreign policy. This not only reflected a well-established American distaste for a foreign policy uninformed by the specific values the United States was supposed to 'represent', going back to the founding of the country itself, it also served to present the United States as a relatively benign, even 'innocent' Great Power, committed to doing good in the world by intervening to vanquish evil and establishing institutions that would move the world beyond its territorial division into mutually antagonistic states. Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States from 1913 to 1921, was the leading figure in establishing an American commitment to global institutionalism, even though defeated in his own efforts by those either seeing the U.S. as a traditional Great Power or doubtful about the benefits of any kind of active presence in world affairs. Wilson's idea of a 'new world order' that would reorganize the world benignly in America's image has been a persisting if contested theme of American foreign policy (Perlmutter, 1997).

Projection of the American federal model onto a world scale is problematic, however, for a number of reasons (see Agnew, 2000). The first is the inflexibility of the division of powers and the difficulty of revising it within a rigid constitutionalism (Lazare, 1996). The system is only partially democratic because elite-based institutions such as the U.S. Senate and the federal judiciary rely, respectively, on the equality of territorial units and review of new law through the lens of an 18<sup>th</sup> century document. Amending the Constitution is also extremely difficult without widespread and substantial nationwide support. It requires a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress and three-quarters of the states by simple majority of their legislatures.

The separation of powers itself reduces accountability and limits the possibility of coordinated policy, making absent an external threat that encourages consensus but then demonizes domestic opposition as ‘unAmerican’.

This raises the second problem: the difficulty of political opposition within the American system. One critical test of democratic or open governance, exactly what is lacking in current world-regional and global-level institutions, is the extent to which opposition is not only allowed but also nurtured. Yet, the American model rests, as Tocqueville was the first to notice, on widespread consensus about institutions and the policies that they produce.

The presumption of consensus relies on an ideological feature of American history that is not replicable elsewhere or at a global scale. This is the sense of providential mission that has inspired both American institutions and the territorial expansion of the United States into North America. The idea of ‘American exceptionalism’ has been a vital part of the American national experience, providing an ideological adhesive to paper over the vast number of class, racial, ethnic, regional, and other cleavages that have always rent the American population. American federalism is not readily disentangled from such particular origins nor likely to work well without an appropriate heroic story to inform its everyday operations. It cannot be treated as a simple technical or instrumental ‘solution’ to the ‘problem’ of governance.

Finally, in a globalizing world the spatial pattern of externalities is no longer strictly territorial. Transnational forces create communities of interest and defense that are not well represented within a territorial conception of the public realm. In this setting the possibility of neatly allocating regulatory, distributory, and allocative functions to different territorial units is much reduced. As the span of control needed to govern various economic and cultural activities conforms increasingly to webs of interconnection between widely scattered regional nodes, the territorial structure of American federalism offers less purchase on the world to which it must adjust. The emergence of ‘global city-regions’ as centers of economic dynamism, for example, challenges more than the existing system of national states. It also calls into question the possibility of squeezing the new geography of economic activity into an 18<sup>th</sup> century spatial model of political organization.

The proliferation of ‘power sources’ without a territorial form mandates that we look towards a proliferation of control mechanisms rather than to a single model of governance reproducing a single national experience at a global scale. By way of example, Susan Roberts (1998) points to an alternative framework based on the proliferation of groups such as the International Forum on Globalization and other transnational alliances representing discourses of justice, democracy, and environment that run against the grain of both nationalism and the dream of a market-run world without any political regulation of economic activities. Democratic governance in a globalizing world, therefore, is a matter of process more than scale. Inquiry should thereby focus on “how to harness transnational forces—be they economic, social or political—in the name of democracy” (Goodman, 1997:182).

## CONCLUSION

In this paper I have briefly surveyed contemporary thinking in Geography (and allied fields) about the changing nature of space and the consequences of this for ideas about governance in a globalizing world. Notions of 'time-space compression' have been particularly influential in the field at large. But it is rather those writers focusing on past-present continuities in the emergence of a globalizing world who have more to offer concerning the possibilities of governance beyond the national state. The literature is still evolving, however, and current analyses are limited and tentative. What does seem clear is that Geography is grappling with the linkage of globalization and governance and, notwithstanding differences in terminology and approach, may have a contribution to make to the wider debate in the social sciences.

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