
Global, Fragmented, Hierarchical: Henri Lefebvre's Geographies of Globalization

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The question of scale and of level implies a multiplicity of scales and levels, and thus a hierarchical stratified morphology. . . . The choice of scale has a particular importance in this context, for the local, the regional, the national and the global imply one another. . . . Today the question of scale inserts itself at the outset—at the foundation, as it were—of the analysis of texts and the interpretation of events. The results depend on the scale chosen as primary or essential.

Henri Lefebvre, *De l'État: De Hegel à Marx par Stalin*

What is at stake in the interpretation of contemporary transformations is not the eternal presence or imminent absence of states. It is the degree to which the modernist resolution of space-time relations expressed by the principle of state sovereignty offers a plausible account of contemporary political practices, including the practices of states.

R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory*

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Globalization/Territorial State: A False Dichotomy

It is today widely recognized that world capitalism is in the throes of a massive wave of restructuring, triggered in large part by the global economic crises of the early 1970s.¹ One of the major dimensions of these transformations has been a re-scaling and reterritorialization of global social space. Local and regional social relations have become increasingly intertwined with global processes, and meanwhile world-scale dynamics appear to be impacting subglobal practices with increasing regularity and intensity. The phenomenon of globalization has become at once a matter of urgent intellectual-political concern and an increasingly common aspect of everyday experience.

The current wave of restructuring has also significantly transformed the role of the territorial state in organizing and reproducing world capitalism. Throughout much of the twentieth century, the territorial state became increasingly hegemonic as the basic “container” of social life, the major scale on which economic, cultural, and political processes were organized (Taylor 1994). During this period, states and civil societies were viewed as the interlocked, spatially isomorphic units of a self-enclosed national-territorial whole within which a linear pattern of endless “modernization” was to occur (Agnew 1994; Wallerstein 1991). Territorial states became the politicogeographic blocks in terms of which the temporal dynamic of modernity was widely understood.

This state-centric developmental model achieved greatest predominance during the postwar period, under the Fordist-Keynesian configuration of global capitalism, which lasted roughly from the 1950s until the early 1970s. Throughout Europe and North America, Keynesian social welfare policies institutionalized demand management, collective bargaining, monopoly pricing, and the generalization of mass consumption norms, all of which presupposed the geographical-political space of the sovereign nation-state (Peck and Tickell 1994; Radice 1984). Meanwhile, the Bretton Woods monetary regime ensured the close regulation of national financial markets, and the GATT served to regulate trade relations in a manner consistent with continued U.S. global economic hegemony (Altwater 1992). Finally, the import substitution industrialization strategies that were deployed in much of the Third World were likewise premised upon the assumption that “national economies” were the basic spatial units of development. The goal of state intervention in these regions was to install the technological-institutional model of Fordism, with its emphasis on mass production and mass

1. See, e.g., A. Amin 1994; S. Amin 1992; Arrighi 1994; Cox 1987; Hirsch 1995; Lash and Urry 1994; Lipietz 1987; Harvey 1989; Offe 1984.

consumption, within a relatively closed national space-economy (S. Amin 1994: 105–148; Storper 1990). Samir Amin refers to this period as the “Bandung era,” noting that the dramatic spurt of growth in the OECD zone was premised upon the emergence of the Third World (1994: 14). It was also during this era that national-developmental practices and ideologies triumphed in states throughout the world economy, from the core OECD countries to those of the Soviet bloc and the postcolonial states of the periphery (S. Amin 1994; Wallerstein 1995). The current wave of globalization and state restructuring is a direct outgrowth of the worldwide crisis of the Fordist-Keynesian-Bandung developmental configuration during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

These ongoing transformations have severely undermined the state-centric spatial presuppositions of the last century of social scientific theory and research, rendering issues of spatiality and spatial scale increasingly salient for the analysis of contemporary societal dynamics. Today globalization researchers frequently deploy notions such as “the space of flows,” “hyperspace,” “FlexSpace,” “deterritorialization,” “ethnoscapes,” the “local-global interplay,” the “local-global nexus,” and “glocalization” to describe the spatial reorganization of world capitalism on both sub- and suprastate spatial scales.² In a world of intensifying global interdependence and interconnectedness—and the recognition of this dominant historical-geographical tendency is surely the common denominator of all analyses of globalization—space appears no longer as a neutral container within which temporal development unfolds but, rather, as a constitutive, historically produced dimension of social practices. The recognition that social relations have become increasingly interlinked and intertwined on a global scale necessarily problematizes the spatial boundaries of those relations and therefore the geographical context in which they occur. It is for this reason that spatial concepts and metaphors have become so prevalent in contemporary analyses of globalization. More generally, the recent “reassertion of space in critical social theory” (Soja 1996, 1989) can be viewed as a sign that many social scientists have begun to break out of the state-centric epistemic frameworks that have defined the universe of institutionalized social inquiry for most of the past century.³

Paradoxically, the concern to deconstruct the state-centric legacies of nineteenth-century social science has led many globalization researchers to neglect the

2. See, e.g., Agnew and Corbridge 1995; Amin and Thrift 1994; Appadurai 1996; Castells 1996, 1989; Deleuze and Guattari 1983; Dicken 1994; Dunford and Kafkalas 1992; Featherstone et al. 1995; Hall 1991; Jameson 1991; Lehrer 1994; Lipietz 1993; Peck and Tickell 1994; Robertson 1995; Swyngedouw 1992a; Tickell and Peck 1995.

3. See Agnew 1994; Taylor 1996; Wallerstein 1991; Wallerstein et al. 1996.

major role of state-level processes—including the reconfiguration of state territorial power itself—in currently unfolding global transformations. Even the most explicitly spatialized analyses of globalization frequently assume that the power and significance of the territorial state are declining.⁴ The popularity of the “state-decline” argument in globalization studies may be understood in part as a methodological backlash against what John Agnew (1994) has aptly termed the “territorial trap”—an ahistorical state-centrism in which the only possibility for mapping global processes is in terms of the fixed territorial boundaries of states. In order to undermine this static, ahistorical cartography, globalization researchers have often claimed, or implicitly assumed, that the regulatory capacities of the territorial state necessarily decline in conjunction with intensified global interdependence. The national and the global scales are viewed as being mutually exclusive rather than relational and co-constitutive. Particularly in approaches to globalization that focus on the changing articulations between sub-state (“local”) and suprastate (“global”) processes, the national-state scale vanishes almost entirely. In their haste to escape from the territorial trap, therefore, many globalization researchers veer toward an equally problematic inversion of state-centric approaches, culminating in a kind of “global babble” (Abu-Lughod 1991) in which any discussion of globalization is deemed intrinsically incompatible with an account of the continued role of state-level processes.⁵ The binary opposition between the “territorial trap” and “global babble” has become a doxic presupposition of sorts in many recent debates about the future of the nation-state, apparently requiring participants to decide “whether states are here forever or are about to disappear into some global cosmopolis” (Walker 1993: 14; see also Agnew 1994: 53–54). Meanwhile, among those analysts who favor the latter alternative, the global/local dualism appears to have acquired an equally doxic status that has deflected attention away from the state-level sociospatial mediations that link processes operating on both sub- and suprastate scales. How can these problematic binarisms—global/national, global/local—be transcended in studies of globalization?

The central goal of this essay is to outline the ways in which Henri Lefebvre’s spatialized approach to state theory and globalization (as outlined primarily in his two major works of the 1970s, *The Production of Space* [1974] and *De l’État* [1976–1978]) fruitfully circumvents the analytical impasse just outlined. The

4. See, e.g., Appadurai 1996; Castells 1996; Gupta and Ferguson 1992; Robertson 1992; Scott 1996; Shapiro 1994.

5. For critiques of the global-national dichotomy see Anderson 1996; Brenner 1997b; Sassen 1996, 1995.

English translation of the former text in 1991 has already provoked extensive critical engagement with his work among many geographically oriented scholars,⁶ but the implications of Lefebvre's writings on state spatiality for globalization studies remain largely unexplored.⁷ In what follows I will demonstrate that Lefebvre's theory of the state is an integral component of his approach to globalization. Lefebvre conceives globalization as a process of worldwide spatial restructuring that unfolds in part through reconfigurations of state sociospatial organization. In Lefebvre's framework, therefore, the globalization of capital and the re-scaling of state territorial power are viewed as two intrinsically related processes within the same dynamic of global sociospatial restructuring. Urbanization—the source of capital's place-based requirements and the site of concrete everyday experience—constitutes a third fundamental dimension of globalization, which is likewise superimposed upon and closely intertwined with the geographies of both transnational capital and the world interstate system. Against apocalyptic visions of globalization as a monodirectional implosion of global forces into the subglobal scales of social life (see, e.g., Castells 1989: 348–353; Ohmae 1995), Lefebvre views the shifting social geographies of global capital accumulation, the interstate system, and urbanization as being tightly intermeshed on all spatial scales. The concept of *geographies of globalization* is intended to portray the currently unfolding transformation of the world system as a dynamic rearticulation, reconfiguration, and reterritorialization of these superimposed spatial scales. From this perspective, globalization is a multiscalar transformation of global social space, and one of its major organizational-institutional dimensions is constituted through the territorial state itself.

It is impossible within the parameters of a single essay to provide a comprehensive analysis of Lefebvre's writings on the state and globalization. My goal here is to explore some of the major elements of this neglected aspect of Lefeb-

6. See, e.g., Gottdiener 1993; Gregory 1994: 348–416; Merrifield 1995, 1993; Soja 1996; Stewart 1995; Swyngedouw 1992b. For biographically oriented discussions see Bernié-Boissard 1994; Hess 1988.

7. A preliminary attempt to address this topic can be found in Brenner 1997a. The only detailed discussion of Lefebvre's state theory is Hajo Schmidt's (1990) comparison of Lefebvre and Georges Bataille. Gottdiener (1985) provides an excellent discussion of Lefebvre's state theory but neglects Lefebvre's major work on the topic, *De l'État*. Gregory (1994: 382–406) and Martins (1982) are among the few English-language scholars to examine the latter work, but neither author explores the implications of Lefebvre's approach to state theory for globalization studies. Prigge's (1995) discussion of "the epistemology of urbanity" captures much of the spirit of Lefebvre's approach to globalization and spatial scale without providing an explicit analysis of his work. Poulantzas's final book, *State, Power, Socialism* (1978), is one of the only attempts to deploy aspects of Lefebvre's state theory to analyze contemporary global transformations.

vre's work on capitalist spatiality and thus to excavate his conceptual framework for insights that might contribute to contemporary debates on globalization and state theory. Though most of Lefebvre's major discussions of globalization were written during the 1970s, I shall argue that his theoretical framework can nevertheless contribute substantially to analyses of currently unfolding transformations. After examining the constellation of categories through which Lefebvre theorizes the intersection of globalization, state power, urbanization, and the production of space, I discuss Lefebvre's "politics of scale," in particular with reference to the contradictions of globalization, the re-scaling of the state, and the problem of transformative political praxis in an increasingly polymorphic configuration of world capitalism.

Forms of Social Space and the Geographies of Globalization

Throughout his writings of the 1970s—above all in *The Production of Space* (1974) and *De l'État* (1976–78)—Lefebvre castigates social and political theory for conceiving space as a static "container" or "platform" of social relations.⁸ According to Lefebvre, space is a crucial dimension of social relations under capitalism, itself historically produced, reconfigured, and transformed. One of Lefebvre's overarching concerns in these works is to examine the historically specific and intensely contradictory configurations of "abstract space" upon which the long-term survival of capitalism has been grounded. Lefebvre's approach to "spatio-analysis" (PS: 404–405; E, iv: 283) confronts this task by weaving together three distinct aspects of social space under capitalism—its role as a matrix of social action, its role as a socially produced second nature, and its role as a scaffolding of spatial scales. Before analyzing Lefebvre's state theory, I shall briefly consider these intertwined "moments" of Lefebvre's analysis of the production of space, each of which, I shall argue, entails a distinct mapping of the geography of globalization.

First, Lefebvre views social space as a *matrix of social action*, at once as a pre-supposition, medium, and product of the social relations of capitalism. According to Lefebvre, social space is an ensemble of social relationships, not an object, a void, or a container: "The space engendered [under capitalism] is 'social' in the sense that it is not one thing among other things, but an ensemble of links, connections, communications, networks and circuits" (E, iv: 305; PS: 26–33, 73).

8. *The Production of Space* (Lefebvre 1991/1974) will be cited hereafter as PS. All citations in French from the latter work are drawn from Lefebvre 1974. The four volumes of *De l'État* will be cited hereafter as E, i (1976a), E, ii (1976b), E, iii (1977), and E, iv (1978), respectively.

Lefebvre's notion of the "production of space" refers to this geographical patterning of social relations within determinate configurations of interdependence.⁹ Lefebvre distinguishes his own conception of production sharply from the "indeterminacy" of Hegelian idealism, in which production is viewed as a logical, atemporal abstraction, as well as from economic approaches that reduce production simply to the industrial capitalist labor process (PS: 15–16, 68–73). For Lefebvre production refers to a far more general structuration and rationalization of social relations according to the abstract spatiotemporal logic of capital accumulation. Lefebvre views social space as the structural matrix within which this historically specific dynamic unfolds:

[Social] space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products. . . . It is the outcome of a sequence and set of operations, and thus cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object. . . . Itself the outcome of past actions, social space is what permits fresh actions to occur, while suggesting others and prohibiting yet others. (PS: 73, 65, 85–88, 412ff.; E, iv: 281)

Social space is "produced" under capitalism in the specific sense that it "imposes a temporal and spatial order upon related operations whose results are coextensive" (PS: 71). However, as Lefebvre emphasizes, the "produced space" of capitalism is never static or fixed but continually reconstituted, reconfigured, and transformed through the "incessant to-and-fro between temporality (succession, concatenation) and spatiality (simultaneity, synchronicity)" (PS: 71; E, iv: 168–169, 264–265, 279–280). This conception of social space as a matrix of social action also entails a preliminary characterization of globalization as a process in which interdependencies among geographically dispersed social actors are radically intensified. From this perspective, globalization appears as an increase in the spatial density of "links, connections, communications, networks and circuits" (E, iv: 305) through which social relations in geographically distant places and territories are intertwined.¹⁰

Second, Lefebvre views social space as a *second nature* of urbanized built environments and organizational-institutional infrastructures produced by both capital and the territorial state. According to Lefebvre, the social space of modern capitalism is an "abstract space," for it is endowed with exchange value and

9. On the "production of space" see Gottdiener 1985; Gregory 1994; Harvey 1989, 1985; Merrifield 1993; Smith 1990; Soja 1996, 1989; Swyngedouw 1992b.

10. Versions of this perspective on globalization have been adopted by writers such as Giddens (1990) and Robertson (1992).

integral to the circulation of capital. Like the commodified form of labor-power through which capitalist social relations are mediated, abstract space is formal, quantitative, geometric, and blind to qualitative differences. Abstract space is “secreted,” Lefebvre suggests, through the central spatial practices of capitalist modernity, the production and circulation of land (rent), labor (wages), and capital (profits) in cities, in territorial states, and on the world market. Meanwhile, the modern territorial state is likewise grounded upon a form of “violence directed towards a space” in which social relations are rationalized, partitioned, and territorialized within an abstract, objectified grid (PS: 280–281). Lefebvre argues that the spatial practices of capital and the territorial state drive ruthlessly toward the “homogenization,” “liquidization,” and “pulverization” of everyday life, the qualitative realm in which use values are ultimately consumed.¹¹ On this basis, Lefebvre elaborates one of his most central arguments: the globalization of capitalism has entailed an epochal transformation from the production of individual commodities in space (early, competitive capitalism) to the production of space itself, a “second nature” of territorial infrastructures, spatial configurations and institutions through which capital is valorized (“neo-capitalism”) (PS: 26, 36–37, 89, 410; E, iv: 421).

From this perspective, globalization appears as a process through which the distinctive forms of sociospatial organization associated with capitalism—capital, territorial states, and urban-regional agglomerations—have become increasingly intertwined on a world scale. Particularly since the late nineteenth century, this “second nature” of spatial configurations has become more crucial than ever as a fundamental geographical precondition for the world-scale circulation of capital.¹² Globalization has entailed an accelerated circulation of labor-power, commodities, and capital through space, but each round of “time-space compression” (Harvey 1989) necessarily presupposes a complex infrastructure of relatively fixed and immobile territorial configurations, ranging from urban built environments, forms of industrial organization, and large-scale patterns of urban-regional agglomeration to political-regulatory institutions and the organizational structures of the world economy. In Harvey’s (1985: 149) formulation, “the ability to overcome space is predicated on the production of space.” Lefebvre’s conception of social space as a “second nature” points toward an interpretation of globalization as the most recent expression of a recurrent, highly contradictory dialectic in

11. PS: 38ff., 122ff., 412–413; E, iv: 290–293, 302–314; Lefebvre 1980: 186–195. On Lefebvre’s concept of the “everyday” see Soja 1996 and Trebitsch 1991.

12. This aspect of Lefebvre’s approach to globalization has been elaborated in detail by Harvey (1985, 1982) and Swyngedouw (1992b).

which spatial configurations—the “second nature” produced by capitalism—are continually constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed on all spatial scales as a means to accelerate the turnover time of capital.

Third, and most crucially, Lefebvre conceives social space as a *scaffolding of spatial scales* (global, national, urban) upon which capitalism has been continually territorialized, deterritorialized, and reterritorialized throughout its long-run history. On the one hand, because spatial practices oriented toward endless capital accumulation have today enframed the entire globe, Lefebvre insists that contemporary capitalism can only be understood adequately on a global scale, in terms of the encompassing space of the world system, the final spatial frontier for capital.¹³ The earth, Lefebvre argues, “appears today as the centre around which various (differentiated) spaces are arranged” (PS: 418); “worldwide space [*l’espace mondial*]” is the “ocean” into which, “much like rivers,” all “historical formations flow” (PS: 417). Lefebvre reinterprets Heidegger’s paradoxical statement “The world worlds” by arguing that capitalist globalization has signaled the actualization of capital’s inherent dynamism *in space*. The concept of the world is always already inherent to capital; and thus it is *capital* that globalizes, or “worlds [*se mondifie*]” (E, iv: 416–420).¹⁴ According to Lefebvre (1980: 151), this global space is based upon a “system of equivalencies” oriented toward the universal suppression of difference. Lefebvre plays on the double meaning of the French term *global* to grasp this totalizing form of spatiality: like the commodity form, global space appears to constitute an abstract, homogenizing totality composed of equivalent, interchangeable units; at the same time, global space has become an all-encompassing “second nature” that is now geographically coextensive with the entire world system. Lefebvre thereby conceives globality at once as a totalizing developmental dynamic and as a planet-encompassing geographical scale and relates both of these dimensions to the nature of capital as a historically specific form of sociospatial organization (E, iii: 133; E, iv: 340–341).

On the other hand, Lefebvre explicitly rejects conceptions of globalization as a unilinear process of increasing “deterritorialization.” Despite intensified global-

13. Lefebvre describes the global scale using two different terms: *le mondial* and *le global*. Whereas the former term refers to the world scale in the literal, geographical sense, the latter term encompasses this meaning as well as the notion of totality (as in a *somme globale*). Less frequently Lefebvre also uses the term *Planetary* (*le Planétaire*) to describe global processes.

14. This aspect of Lefebvre’s argument can be interpreted as a spatialization of Marx’s famous formulation in the *Grundrisse*: “The tendency to create the world market is directly given in the concept of capital itself. Every limit appears as a barrier to be overcome” (Marx 1857/1973: 408).

ization, social relations have remained territorialized in significant ways: "Even the 'multinationals'—the most abstract form of capital—cannot deterritorialize themselves" (E, iii: 134). Similarly, "the world market entails a territorial repartition—fluctuating but always real—of productive forces, flows and stocks. The world market does not detach itself from space; it is in no way a 'deterritorialized' abstraction" (E, iv: 29, 232).¹⁵ Lefebvre insists that subglobal scales are intrinsic components of the globalization process: "We are confronted not by one social space but by many—indeed, by an unlimited multiplicity or uncountable set of social spaces. . . . No space disappears in the course of growth and development: *the worldwide [le mondial] does not abolish the local*" (PS: 86; emphasis in original).¹⁶ In this sense, the global scale must be conceived as a "hypercomplex," "polyscopic," and "contradictory" amalgamation of multiple forms of sociospatial organization, not as a reified, territorialized essence (PS: 88, 308). According to the "principle of interpenetration and superimposition of social spaces" (PS: 85–88; E, iv: 208, 295), world capitalism is composed of overlapping sociospatial networks articulated on divergent geographical scales, a "hierarchical stratified morphology."¹⁷ More generally, Lefebvre argues that the social spaces of contemporary capitalism overlap and interpenetrate one another, often in highly conflictual, contradictory ways (PS: 351, 86ff.; 266ff.; E, iv: 270). Spatial scales must therefore be conceived as the sites of closely intertwined yet deeply contradictory social forces:

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—they may even sometimes collide. Consequently the local (or "punctual," in the sense of "determined by a particular 'point'") does not disappear, for it is never absorbed by the regional, national or even worldwide level. The national and regional levels take in

15. The term *deterritorialization* is often deployed as a synonym for *globalization* in contemporary debates. However, as Lefebvre's analysis indicates, these notions entail very different analyses of contemporary patterns of sociospatial restructuring. Whereas the concept of deterritorialization implies that social relations have become increasingly *detached* from their place-based geographical preconditions (as in, for instance, Castells's [1996, 1989] notion of the space of flows), the concept of globalization suggests, among other things, that interdependencies *among* places have intensified. Clearly, insofar as globalization may be a crucial precondition for deterritorialization, these meanings are not empirically incompatible. Nevertheless, it is crucial to distinguish these terms analytically since their conflation generates considerable ambiguity regarding the nature of contemporary sociospatial transformations. For a critical discussion of deterritorialization approaches to globalization see Brenner 1997d.

16. See also PS: 87–88, 351, 412, 416–417; E, ii: 67–70.

17. E, ii: 67–68; E, iv: 256, 283, 294–295.

innumerable “places”; national space embraces the regions; and world space does not merely subsume national spaces, but even . . . precipitates the formation of new national spaces through a remarkable process of fission. All these spaces, meanwhile, are traversed by myriad currents. The hypercomplexity of social space should now be apparent, embracing as it does individual entities and peculiarities, relatively fixed points, movements, and flows and waves—some interpenetrating, others in conflict, and so on. The principle of the interpenetration and superimposition of social spaces . . . 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. (PS: 88; emphasis in original)

From this perspective, the historical geography of capitalism can be understood as a multilayered scaffolding of intertwined, coevolving spatial scales upon which historically specific interlinkages between processes of capital accumulation, forms of state territorial organization, and patterns of urbanization have been crystallized. Lefebvre rejects the attempt to attribute causal primacy to any single spatial scale: local, regional, national, and global social relations overlap within the same worldwide territorial grid of capitalist modernity (E, ii: 67–70). Spatial scales (global, national, urban) and their associated forms of sociospatial organization (capital, territorial states, cities) are conceived as levels of the hierarchical geographical scaffolding through which globalization has unfolded historically: “Today our concern must be with space on a world scale [*l'échelle mondiale*] . . . as well as with all the spaces subsidiary to it, at every possible level. No single space has disappeared completely; and all places without exception have undergone metamorphoses” (PS: 412). Lefebvre criticizes the accounts of the internationalization of capital developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s by writers such as Amin, Emmanuel, and Palloix for their economism, their failure to consider the ways in which globalization has itself been mediated through the state scale (E, iii: 127–133; see also Murray 1971). Likewise, in an argument that anticipates the analyses of contemporary world cities researchers,¹⁸ Lefebvre suggests that cities remain keys sites of coordination among flows of energy and labor, commodities and capital, even as surplus value is increasingly being realized within apparently deterritorialized circuits of money and finance (PS: 347). The key to Lefebvre's approach to globalization is his concern to analyze the dynamic transformations of all subglobal scales within the encompassing framework of space on a world scale, while simultaneously avoiding the spatial fetish-

18. See, e.g., Friedmann and Wolff 1982; Hitz et al. 1995; Sassen 1991; Knox and Taylor 1995.

ism that reduces the social relations embedded within forms of sociospatial organization to static, reified objects (PS: 90).

Geographies of State Power: State Space and the Spatial Fix

The conception of social space as a multilayered, multiscalar, and contradictory scaffolding of social relations is the analytical lens through which Lefebvre interprets the changing role of the state in an era of intensified globalization. Throughout both *The Production of Space* and *De l'État* Lefebvre argues that the interventions of the state in the capitalist economy must be conceived spatially, as attempts to organize, instrumentalize, and regulate social space.¹⁹ Space is one of the privileged instruments of the state in its efforts to control social relations among individuals, groups, class fractions, and classes. But the state, according to Lefebvre, does not simply manipulate preexisting spatial grids from some neutral, dimensionless position external to social space. The state is itself a sociospatial configuration, a form of social architecture that is constantly engaged in the production of matrices of social space that extend its power and control over social relations in the midst of the anarchic, global space of the world economy:

Each new form of state, each new form of political power, introduces its own particular way of partitioning space, its own particular administrative classification of discourses about space and about things and people in space. Each such form commands space, as it were, to serve its purposes. (PS: 281)²⁰

Lefebvre's notion of state space (*l'espace étatique*) is the basis on which he theorizes the spatial form of the modern state (E, iv: 259–324). Lefebvre conceives state space in terms of three fundamental elements—national territorial space; an internal grid of state sociospatial organization composed of politico-institutional and administrative configurations, built environments, and symbolic monuments; and the mental space produced by the state (E, iv: 259–262). First, much like Max Weber, Lefebvre conceives the modern nation-state as a spatial framework characterized by the domination of a centralized administrative apparatus over a dispersed national territory within which commodity production and circulation take place (E, iv: 75, 259–260). The territorial form associated with the modern state is, according to Lefebvre, linked inherently to violence: the state's monopolization of the means of violence empowers it to impose a political

19. This section draws in part on Brenner 1997a.

20. See also E, iv: 260–262; PS: 349, 280–282, 378.

principle of unification upon social relations within civil society (PS: 281). It was this principle of homogenizing, unifying territorial violence that Hegel misrecognized and elevated to the status of supreme rationality in his *Philosophy of Right*.²¹ The territoriality of state power, however, is analytically distinct from the second dimension of state space, composed of historically specific patterns of state sociospatial organization. This second aspect of state space includes sociospatial configurations such as administrative-organizational hierarchies, legal networks, built environments, and political monuments, all of which interlace national territorial space as well as that of civil society (E, iv: 260). Third, Lefebvre suggests that state space occupies everyday consciousness to generate a mental space through which both social consensus and political identities are established (E, iv: 261).

Equally central to Lefebvre's analysis of state space is the notion that the abstract space of modern capitalism is permeated by contradictions that the state attempts to manage—above all, that between exchange value and use value, but also those between work and leisure, liberation and repression, need and desire, production spaces and consumption spaces, homogenous spaces and fractured spaces, the center and the periphery, global spaces and fragmented spaces, and finally, that between the territorialization of surplus value in fixed capital investments and its deterritorialization in global financial flows.²² The state attempts at once to repair the abstraction and destruction of everyday social space that is induced through the accumulation process while simultaneously producing grids of social space that might permit the crisis-free, uninterrupted continuation of the latter.

Confronted with these highly contradictory tasks, according to Lefebvre, the state adopts various strategies that entail the production, control, and surveillance of diverse matrices of social space. In an argument that closely resembles the conception of the “spatial fix” developed more recently by David Harvey (1982: 414–444), Lefebvre argues that the state plays a crucial role in constructing the relatively fixed and immobile territorial configurations upon which each round of capital circulation is grounded.²³ Whereas Harvey's analysis of the spatial fix focuses primarily on the role of fixed capital infrastructures in urban built environments, Lefebvre argues that the relatively stabilized organizational-territorial form of the modern state has likewise operated as a crucial spatial precondition for the accelerated world-scale circulation of capital. The territorial fixity of state

21. PS: 23, 279–281; E, ii: 118–211.

22. PS: 47, 292–356, 363–365; E, iv: 274ff.

23. E, i: 56–57; E, iv: 278–280, 307, 388.

organizational configurations, Lefebvre suggests, provides a geographical scaffolding for the increasing spatial mobility of labor-power, commodities, and capital on suprastate scales. The territorialization of political power is an essential precondition for the state's ability to regulate "flows":

Political power as such harbours an immanent contradiction: It controls flows and it controls agglomerations. The mobility of the component parts and formants of social space is constantly on the increase, especially in the "economic" realm proper: flows of energy, of raw materials, of labour, and so on. *But such control, to be effective, calls for permanent establishments, for permanent centres of decision and action. . . .* A novel and quite specific contradiction thus arises between what is *transient* and what is *durable*. (PS: 388; emphasis added)

Under these circumstances, according to Lefebvre, a new state form emerges, the "state mode of production [*le mode de production étatique*]" (E, iv: 312–313; see also Dieuaide and Motamed-Nejad 1994), which entails the increasing territorialization of such "permanent centers" within the state's own institutional-organizational infrastructures as a means to regulate capitalist growth:

The state tends to control flows and stocks, assuring their coordination. In the course of this triple-faceted process (growth . . . urbanization . . . spatialization), a qualitative break takes place: the emergence of the SMP (state mode of production). . . . Something new appears in civil society and in political society, in production and in state institutions, which must be named and conceptualized. The rationalization and the socialization of society took on this form: politicization, statism (E, iv: 263).

Particularly since the late nineteenth century, Lefebvre argues, this state mode of production has played a major role in securing the territorial preconditions for the accelerated circulation of capital: "Only the state can take on the task of managing space 'on a grand scale'" (E, iv: 298). The state has produced this geography of provisionally fixed territorial configurations through an extraordinarily diverse range of spatial strategies, including the construction of transportation infrastructures such as highways, canals, railroads, airports, and the like; the production and management of energy resources such as gasoline, electricity, and nuclear power; the deployment of spatial planning policies to balance uneven geographical development on urban, regional, and state scales; the subsidization of public housing and educational institutions; and finally, the planning, construction, and reconfiguration of urban built environments to enable the repro-

duction of both labor-power and capital.²⁴ In Lefebvre's view, therefore, the central role of the state within the social space of contemporary capitalism is to "maintain a hierarchical ensemble of places, functions and institutions," a task that entails at once biological reproduction, the reproduction of the labor force, the reproduction of the means of production, and the reproduction of the social relations of production and domination (E, iv: 307–308; PS: 32).

It is in this sense that the territorial state has played a crucial role in constructing a worldwide "second nature" of sociospatial configurations organized on multiple, overlapping spatial scales. The state mode of production provides a relatively stabilized territorial framework within which both capital accumulation and urbanization can unfold. Throughout the twentieth century, the state has also come to depend ever more directly upon the continuation of both accumulation and urbanization for its own reproduction. This increasingly dense interpenetration of state sociospatial organization with that of both capital and urbanization is one of the essential features of the state mode of production.

Lefebvre's critique of Hegel's state theory provides another crucial reference point for theorizing the state's highly contradictory role in securing a spatial fix for capital.²⁵ Hegel, Lefebvre notes, viewed the modern state as the telos of a world-historical evolutionary process, and thus as the institutional vortex in which historicity dissolved into spatiality: "Time is thus solidified and fixed within the rationality immanent to space" (PS: 21, 279). Despite his criticisms of this model of capitalist modernity, Lefebvre argues that Hegel's theory grasps a very real political tendency, inherent to the modern state, toward the territorial unification, abstraction, and homogenization of social relations. Hegel's major political-theoretical error, according to Lefebvre, was to affirm this process of abstract state domination, the rationality of unification, by delinking it from the spatiotemporal dynamism of global capitalism.²⁶ Insofar as the state strives to secure a spatial fix for capital within its bounded territorial space, the tendencies toward homogenization, abstraction, and unification emphasized by Hegel remain fundamental features of modern state power. However, as Lefebvre goes on to argue, because capitalism is based on the continuous drive toward technological, social, and spatial restructuring, the state's tactics for achieving some measure of control over its internal territorial space can succeed only for a rela-

24. See E, i: 55–57; E, iv: 296–303. For more detailed analyses of these forms of state spatial intervention see Castells and Godard 1974; Dunford 1988; Gottdiener 1990; Lipietz 1977; Swyngedouw 1992b.

25. See, e.g., E, ii: 118–164; Lefebvre 1995/1968: 90–91.

26. E, ii: 149; E, iii: 76; E, iv: 434; PS: 282.

tively limited period of time, until a new wave of crisis-induced capitalist restructuring unfolds.

The apparent territorial fixity and stability of state institutions is therefore deeply unstable, no more than a "precarious equilibrium" (E, i: 56). The globalizing dynamism of capital ultimately explodes the Hegelian conception of state spatiality as the terminus of history. The state may well strive to secure a spatial fix for capital, but the Hegelian vision of this intensely contradictory process as an atemporal "rational unity" amounts to a "fetishization of space in the service of the state" (PS: 21; E, iv: 434). Different configurations of state sociospatial organization can manage the contradictions of capitalism more or less effectively, Lefebvre argues, but none can entirely overcome them through the one-sided logic of territorialization upon which state space is grounded.

"Trial by Space": Globalization, State Territorial Restructuring, and the Politics of Scale

One of Lefebvre's central arguments in *De l'État* is that the process of globalization cannot be grasped independently of the role of the state in producing, organizing, and stabilizing the spatial scales on which capital accumulation occurs. Not unlike capital, Lefebvre argues, the territorial state has long been consolidating on a world scale (PS: 23; E, iv: 23–25), and thus it is one of the elemental sociospatial forms through which the process of globalization has unfolded. Though all states are necessarily organized on the national-territorial scale, enframed by the mutually exclusive boundaries in terms of which political sovereignty is defined, Lefebvre argues that the territorial *form* of the modern nation-state has been replicated throughout the world system. In this sense, the nation-state form has been constituted not only on the state scale, but on a *global* scale through its "modular" replication throughout the world system (see Goswami 1997). Since the late nineteenth century the state mode of production has gradually enframed the entire globe, constituting an intricate and uneven mosaic of interpenetrating geographical configurations: "with the world market, [the state] enters into the definition of the Planetary" (E, i: 11).²⁷ Lefebvre's concept of the state mode of production ultimately refers to this global network of states, the interstate system through which the political space of the planet has been subdivided, parcelized, and territorialized (E, iii: 253–268). According to Lefebvre the globalization of the state mode of production territorializes the "capitalist trinity" of

27. See also E, i: 12–18; E, iii: 253–268; E, iv: 413–442.

land, labor, and capital within a global matrix of contiguous, mutually exclusive national-state scales. The state mode of production must therefore be viewed as one of the central organizational-territorial structures of late-twentieth-century capitalism.²⁸

Though Lefebvre's writings of the 1970s do not explicitly theorize the most recent wave of crisis-induced capitalist restructuring (which is usually subsumed in his work under the rubric of "neo-capitalism"), Lefebvre's account of the modern state and globalization is nevertheless remarkably well attuned to various consequences of what is today often called the crisis of global Fordism.²⁹ According to Lefebvre, intensified global interdependence generates an increasing fission, differentiation, and fragmentation of social space on all scales, including those of the state:

How and why is it that the advent of a world market, implying a degree of unity at the level of the planet, gives rise to a fractioning of space—to proliferating nation states, to regional differentiation and self-determination, as well as to multinational states and transnational corporations which, although they stem from this strange tendency towards fission, also exploit it in order to reinforce their own autonomy? Towards what space and time will such interwoven contradictions lead us? (PS: 351)

State territoriality is therefore not a static, unchanging feature of the world interstate system but a historically produced configuration of sociospatial organization linked closely to the spatiotemporal dynamics of both capital and urbanization. Faced with intensified globalization, the abstract, parcelized space of the interstate system has been intertwined ever more tightly with the contradictory logic of global capital accumulation and its concomitant planetary space—it has become at once "global," "hierarchical," and "fragmented."³⁰ In this context, the problem of "territorial non-correspondence" between the scales of capital, the state, urbanization, and civil society is radically intensified (Murray 1971). Lefebvre argues that this simultaneous globalization and fragmentation of social space on all scales is among the core contradictions of contemporary capitalism.

Where then is the principal contradiction to be found? Between the capacity to conceive of and treat space on a global (or worldwide) scale [*à l'échelle globale (mondiale)*] on the one hand, and its fragmentation by a

28. See PS: 36–37, 229, 357–358, 377–379; E, iii: 189–252; E, iv: 262–263, 279–280.

29. See Altwater 1992; A. Amin 1994; Hirsch 1995; Jessop 1992; Lipietz 1993, 1987.

30. PS: 282, 422; E, iv: 290–291, 344.

multiplicity of procedures or processes, all fragmentary themselves, on the other. (PS: 355; E, iv: 344; see also Lefebvre 1980: 148–156)

This state of affairs, in Lefebvre's ominous formulation, subjects all social and political movements to a "trial by space"—"an ordeal which is the modern world's answer to the judgement of God or the classical conception of fate" (PS: 416). According to this notion, the viability of all transformative political strategies depends crucially upon their ability to produce, appropriate, and organize social space: "Space's investment—the production of space—has nothing incidental about it: it is a matter of life and death" (PS: 417). The reconfiguration of social space on all scales becomes a fundamental prerequisite for all forms of transformative politics, the geographical basis on which the possibilities latent within capitalism could be actualized in everyday praxis (PS: 382–383). This strategic-political dilemma is at the heart of what I shall call—borrowing a phrase from Neil Smith (1993, 1992)—Lefebvre's "politics of scale."

Lefebvre's emphasis on the politics of scale is an attempt to overcome state-centric modes of analysis by relating the problem of large-scale social transformation directly to the dynamics of world-scale capital accumulation and its social, political, and ecological consequences: "Might not the spatial chaos engendered by capitalism, despite the power and rationality of the state, turn out to be the system's Achilles heel?" (PS: 63). Today, according to Lefebvre, the classical Marxist imperative to choose between reform or revolution has become a false problem, for it hinges upon a limited, monocentric vision of political praxis in which the state scale is conceived as the exclusive terrain of sociopolitical struggle.³¹ Lefebvre argues that the social spaces of contemporary capitalism are being increasingly politicized; space is no longer merely the theater of political conflict but its principle stake (PS: 410, 416ff.). What ensues is an intensifying struggle for command and control over social space on all scales, from the global and the urban to that of the state itself.

The global scale The global scale is the highly contradictory site of what Lefebvre calls the "triad of historicity—globality [*mondialité*]*—*spatiality" (E, iv: 434–435). This notion figures centrally in his account of the politics of scale in

31. PS: 63, 383, 420, 422. Against the rigid ideological stance of his one-time comrades in the PCF, Lefebvre opposed *étatist* strategies of sociopolitical transformation. In Lefebvre's view, the Soviet model merely reconfigured state-capital relations without undermining capital's inherently productivist logic (E, iv: 399, 437–438; PS: 421). This claim is at the core of Lefebvre's critique of Althusser, whose state theory, he argues, "proceeded directly from Stalinism" (E, i: 153, 160; E, iv: 339).

the current era: “The ‘historicity-globality’ conflict resolves itself through the production of a global space [*l’espace mondial*], the product of historical time, in which the latter realizes itself” (E, iv: 435). In one of his more anticipatory-utopian and humanistic moments (on which see Gregory 1994: 361–368; Gottdiener 1985: 150–153), Lefebvre suggests that the possibilities opened and suppressed by capitalism could only be actualized on the global-planetary scale. Despite the massive structural constraints it imposes, capitalist globalization also opens the possibility for the production of “the space of the human species”: “The creation (or production) of a planet-wide space as the social foundation of a transformed everyday life open to myriad possibilities—such is the dawn now beginning to break on the far horizon” (PS: 422). Lefebvre’s claim is that the process of globalization generates not only recurrent crises of overaccumulation and state power but irresolvable contradictions that ultimately point beyond the logic of capital, toward alternative, antiproduktivist forms of spatial practice: “At all events, everything suggests at present that workers in the industrialized countries are opting neither for indefinite growth and accumulation nor for violent revolution leading to the disappearance of the state, but rather for the withering away of work itself” (PS: 24). Lefebvre maintains that the abstract space of neo-capitalism (grounded on abstract labor and state violence) simultaneously creates and suppresses the possibility of “differential space” (based upon use value, the appropriation of space, architectures of wisdom or pleasure, free time, and the right to the city).³² The temporal opposition under capitalism between the necessary and the possible (Postone 1993) is therefore linked intrinsically to the spatial contradiction between globalization and fragmentation (Lefebvre 1980: 215–259).

The urban scale The urban scale acquires an equally fundamental theoretical-political significance in Lefebvre’s analysis of globalization. According to Lefebvre, twentieth-century capitalism has been characterized by a worldwide shift from industrial to urban society, a process of “implosion-explosion” in which the geography of urbanization has gradually become coextensive with global spatial practice.³³ The process of capitalist industrialization has continuously reconfigured the urban scale, successively creating and destroying the nested layers of sociospatial organization through which both the production of capital and the reproduction of labor-power are secured. Urbanization is the resulting dynamic through which capital’s place-based requirements (in terms of both labor-power

32. See PS: 49–53, 348, 368; Lefebvre 1995/1968: 147–159.

33. Lefebvre 1995/1968: 71, 65–85, 122–132. See also Lefebvre 1970.

and fixed capital inputs) are secured. Meanwhile, because cities are simultaneously the sites of everyday life, the consumption of use values, and societal reproduction, they are the territorial locales in which the contradictions of globalization are most immediately perceived and lived. The urban revolution therefore underlies the possibility of the production of differential space, spaces of appropriation, and free time. It is above all in the urban context, Lefebvre argues, that counterprojects and counterspaces can be produced, defended, and ultimately expanded in scale.

The state scale Finally, according to Lefebvre (1980: 172), the state plays a pivotal role in the process of globalization by becoming at once the “subject and supreme object” of its contradictions as they unfold on each spatial scale. Once capital circulation has been extensively globalized, there is no longer any single scale on which stabilized long-run accumulation can occur. The frontiers for crisis-displacement are thereby exhausted, leading capital to revalorize and recolonize the spaces it has already conquered in its restless search for new sources of surplus value. Consequently, the state is forced more than ever to mediate the tensions between globalizing and localizing forces within its territorial boundaries (E, iii: 130–131). Lefebvre argues explicitly that the role of the state in producing relatively fixed and immobile spatial configurations has intensified in recent decades:

That relationship [between the state and space] . . . is becoming tighter: the spatial role of the state . . . is more patent. Administrative and political state apparatuses are no longer content (if they ever were) merely to intervene in an abstract manner in the investment of capital. . . . Today the state and its bureaucratic and political apparatuses intervene continually in space, and make use of space in its instrumental aspect in order to intervene at all levels and through every agency of the economic realm. Consequently, (global) social practice and political practice tend to join forces in spatial practice, so achieving a certain cohesiveness if not a logical coherence. (PS: 378; see also PS: 383)

Meanwhile, as the state struggles to regulate both the abstract spaces of global capital accumulation and the localized spaces of everyday life, its own configurations of sociospatial organization are substantially restructured: “The state self-expands globally while self-fragmenting [*L’État se mondialise en se fragmentant*]” (Lefebvre 1980: 172–173). On this basis Lefebvre advances his thesis that the most recent round of globalization has generated a *reconfigura-*

tion of the sociospatial form of the modern territorial state, not its dissolution or collapse:

Little by little, slowly but surely, the modern nation-state finds itself shaken and overwhelmed; growth is called into question; other forces such as multinational organizations take charge; differences among regions are accentuated. The principle function of the state is no longer simply to secure growth, but to reproduce the relations of domination. (E, iv: 409)

Through the “organization of space, the regularization of its flows and the control of its networks,” the territorial state becomes a crucial “pivot” mediating between global capital accumulation, urbanization, and everyday life (PS: 383; Lefebvre 1986: 93–94). As interterritorial conflicts between centralized and regional or local state institutions intensify, configurations of state sociospatial organization are often decentralized as a strategy to maximize the global competitiveness of cities and regions. Finally, as states acquire ever more direct roles in the de- and revalorization of fixed capital (Gottdiener 1990), “the economy and politics [are] fused into the state mode of production” (Lefebvre 1986: 35).³⁴

Lefebvre’s recognition that the most recent round of globalization has undermined certain traditional functions of the state (e.g., its ability to promote and redistribute growth on the national scale) while reconfiguring forms of state sociospatial organization resonates closely with recent post-Fordist analyses that emphasize the ongoing hollowing out of state territorial power.³⁵ Especially since the 1980s, faced at once with widespread domestic deindustrialization and an increasingly competitive and volatile world economy, the new authoritarian states of the Reagan/Thatcher counterrevolutions have engaged in a sustained effort to restructure themselves. This wave of state territorial restructuring has entailed, on the one hand, a retreat from national social welfare programs, national protective labor legislation, and national monetary policies, and on the other hand, a growing concern with product innovation, labor market flexibility, technological expertise, and global structural competitiveness, particularly with reference to the substate scales of industrial districts, regions, and cities. Robert Cox (1987: 290–291) refers to these increasingly “internationalized” configurations of state power as a new form of state capitalism in which “the world market is the state of nature” according to which all socioeconomic policies must be deduced.

34. See also PS: 378–379, 382, 416; Lefebvre 1986: 34–35, 172.

35. See, e.g., Jessop 1994; Hirsch 1995; Mayer 1994; Peck and Tickell 1994; Swyngedouw 1989.

Similarly, Joachim Hirsch (1995) has recently discussed the consolidation of a "national-competitive state" oriented toward "locational politics," the promotion of selected spaces within state territories (e.g., global cities and flexible production complexes) as sites for investment by transnational capitalist firms. In this context, as Lefebvre (1980: 172) suggested, the state has indeed become at once the subject and the object of the globalization process.

Despite substantial differences in the content and timing of their policy responses, by the mid-1980s all of the core industrialized states had substantially re-scaled their internal institutional hierarchies in order to play increasingly direct, entrepreneurial roles in providing the territorial preconditions for continued capital accumulation. Particularly in North America and Europe, state sociospatial organization has been threatened both "internally and externally by opposing forces" (Lefebvre 1986: 34). As Jessop (1995) and Sassen (1996) have more recently noted, the state is today being increasingly "denationalized" as supra-state, regional, and local-urban regulatory levels assume ever more significant roles in socioeconomic governance. On one scale, states have responded to economic globalization by forming supranational economic blocs such as the EU, NAFTA, ASEAN, and the like. On substate scales, meanwhile, states have devolved and decentralized substantial aspects of their governance capacities to the regional and local levels, which are better positioned, both strategically and geographically, to promote the global competitiveness of their cities and regions as industrial locations in the world economy (Mayer 1994).

These reconfigurations of state sociospatial organization may well signify a far more fundamental transformation in the nature of modern state power than the apparent weakening of central state regulatory capacities that has preoccupied many studies of the future of the nation-state.³⁶ Insofar as the isomorphic link between territory and state sovereignty is today being unbundled, emergent political geographies can no longer be represented adequately through the traditional Westphalian image of a single sovereign state apparatus that is identical in both size and form with society (i.e., as a "state-economy-society-culture

36. This claim is elaborated in greater detail in Brenner 1997a. The concept of the nation-state is too often deployed both as a generic term for *central state* institutions and as a reference to the distinct *spatial scales* on which state territorial power is deployed. One problematic consequence of this conceptual slippage has been a failure to distinguish shifts in the regulatory capacities of the central state from reconfigurations of state sociospatial organization on both supra- and subnational spatial scales. My research on urban and regional planning in contemporary Germany suggests that currently unfolding transformations of state form have been associated above all with reconfigurations along the latter axis, that of state sociospatial organization.

matrix").³⁷ State territoriality is now increasingly superimposed upon—and to some extent decentered by—various sociospatial forms that cannot be described as contiguous, mutually exclusive, and self-enclosed blocks of space, that is, as spatial analogues of the territorial state. The image of global sociospatial organization as a multiperspectival mosaic composed of superimposed levels, scales, and morphologies has therefore become more viable today than the traditional two-dimensional cartography of homogenous, mutually exclusive blocks of territory.

However, emergent patterns of state territorial restructuring also appear to validate Lefebvre's insistent claim that the state scale would necessarily remain a central dimension of capitalist globalization. As Lefebvre's analysis suggests, territoriality remains a fundamental structural feature of the world system and a crucial strategy for the promotion of competitive advantage on both supra- and substate scales, even though it is now situated within a far more polymorphic global geographical context than has previously existed. The re-scaling of the state signals not the demise of territoriality but, rather, its rearticulation and reorganization on multiple spatial scales that do not overlap evenly with one another or constitute an isomorphic, self-enclosed totality. Currently unfolding transformations in state form have entailed not the withering away of the state but, rather, the reterritorialization of state sociospatial organization as a means to promote profitability and competitive advantage in the intensified interspatial competition of the 1990s. As Erik Swyngedouw (1992b: 431) observes, "The role of the state is actually becoming more, rather than less, important in developing the productive powers of territory and in producing new spatial configurations."³⁸ The state continues to play a central role in the ongoing struggle to command, control, reconfigure, and transform social space, even as the scales on which this struggle is organized have been significantly denationalized.

37. Anderson 1996; Appadurai 1997; Ruggie 1993; Sassen 1996.

38. This newly emerging pattern of state sociospatial organization can be labeled provisionally as a "glocal" territorial state (Brenner 1997b; Swyngedouw 1996). The glocal state is a territorially bounded state form that is increasingly embedded within global flows of capital, commodities, and labor-power, and one of its primary goals is to "mediate between the supra- and the sub-national" (Jessop 1995: 11). The regional and local levels of the glocal state play major roles in socioeconomic governance that frequently circumvent central state institutions. The term *glocal*—derived from Swyngedouw (1996, 1992a) and Peck and Tickell (1994), among others—is intended to capture this increasingly dense interpenetration of global constraints and local-regional responses within the parameters of a transformed matrix of state sociospatial organization. However, the notion of the glocal state is intended merely to describe various ongoing structural shifts in the character and scale of state intervention, not to demarcate a newly consolidated or stabilized post-Fordist structure of state territorial power. The current hegemony of neoliberal ideologies and policies in these states must be viewed as a symptom of continued crisis and global disorder rather than as a coherent path toward a new spatial or institutional fix (Peck and Tickell 1994).

Lefebvre's approach to the politics of scale is an attempt to demarcate a terrain of progressive political praxis, conceived as no more than an "orientation" (PS: 423), not as a rigid code, doctrine, or dogma. It is this appealing open-endedness that has led writers such as Soja (1996), Dear (1994), and others (see *Espaces et Sociétés*, 76, 1994) to interpret Lefebvre's work as an important precursor of contemporary theories of postmodernity. However, despite the imaginative eclecticism of Lefebvre's spatialized appropriation of Marx, the concept of capitalism remains a central organizing category throughout his analyses of the production of space, and his major political goals are articulated in explicit opposition to the productivist logic of capital (PS: 401–423). The possibilities and constraints operative in the late twentieth century, Lefebvre argues, are intrinsically related to the current configuration of global capitalism and its concomitant patterns of state sociospatial organization and urbanization. It is in terms of the intensely contradictory intersection of these superimposed geographies of globalization that the parameters for progressive political praxis within modernity are defined. While breaking decisively with various aspects of traditional Marxism—including class reductionism, economic determinism, and historicism—Lefebvre nonetheless insists that capital remains the dominant structuring principle of modern spatial practices. It is ultimately on this basis that Lefebvre grounds his politics of scale and his theory of sociospatial transformation. For Lefebvre, therefore, postmodernity could emerge only as an aspect of postcapitalism.³⁹

Lefebvre's analysis of globalization, state territorial power, and urbanization must be viewed as an effort to grasp the multiple, intertwined scales on which the contradictions of contemporary capitalism are expressed and thereby to decipher emergent openings for transformative political praxis on each of those scales. The politics of scale translates directly into the "trial by space" through which new, alternative forms of spatial practice can be produced.

Conclusion: Globalization and the Production of Spatial Scale

To what extent does Lefebvre's state theory successfully transcend the opposition between the "territorial trap" and "global babble" outlined at the outset of this

39. This suggestion is not intended to deny the massive influence of some of the major precursors of postmodern and poststructuralist theory, such as Nietzsche and Heidegger, on Lefebvre's thought. Merrifield (1995) has recently provided an enlightening discussion of Lefebvre's relation to Nietzsche. The influence of Heidegger on Lefebvre's work—particularly with regard to the crucial distinction between the work (*oeuvre*) and the product—has yet to be explored in depth. This distinction is apparently a direct appropriation of Heidegger's analysis of work and equipment in "The Origin of the Work of Art" (Heidegger 1977/1935).

essay? I have suggested that Lefebvre's spatialized approach to state power and globalization does indeed provide an extremely promising way out of this impasse. Once globalization is understood as a reconfiguration and reterritorialization of superimposed spatial scales, not as a monodirectional implosion of global forces into subglobal realms, the relation between global, state-level, and urban-regional processes can no longer be conceived as one that obtains among mutually exclusive levels of analysis or forces. The key question is not the state's eternal presence or imminent absence as an organizational-territorial matrix but, rather, how its relation to social space on all scales has been transformed in conjunction with processes of global capitalist restructuring (Walker 1993). From this point of view, the globalization of capital and the reconfiguration of state sociospatial organization are dialectically intertwined, mutually constitutive moments of the same multiscalar process of globalization.

I have suggested that the geographies of globalization are today characterized by a situation of territorial noncorrespondence in which the scales of capital, urbanization, and state territorial power increasingly diverge from one another.⁴⁰ Globalization entails not only the deterritorialization of social relations into a worldwide "space of flows" (Castells 1996) but their simultaneous reterritorialization into both sub- and suprastate configurations of sociospatial organization that are neither coextensive (identical in size) nor isomorphic (identical in form) with one another. This situation, and its massive consequences for transformative praxis, is at the core of Lefebvre's politics of scale. Though Lefebvre did not propose any single representation of this emergent, polymorphic cartography, his writings of the 1970s have the merit of outlining some of its basic elements with a clarity, rigor, and political urgency that remain as salient as ever under contemporary global conditions.

One final implication of this discussion of Lefebvre is the suggestion that spatial scale, like space itself, is socially produced.⁴¹ Spatial scale is not a static container within which social relations are situated but a constitutive dimension of the latter; it is one of the major expressions of the process of uneven geographical development through which the dynamics of capital accumulation and capitalist urbanization unfold (Smith 1992: 135–151). As Neil Smith (1990: 173) notes, "Geographical scale is political precisely because it is the technology according to which events and people are, quite literally, 'contained in space.' . . .

40. An analogous argument is implied by Appadurai's (1997, 1996) notion of disjuncture.

41. See also Brenner 1997c; Herod 1991; Jonas 1994; Smith 1993, 1990; Swyngedouw 1996, 1992a; Tickell/Peck 1995; and the recent special issue of *Political Geography* (16, no. 1 [1997]) on the political construction of scale.

In scale, therefore, are distilled the oppressive and emancipatory possibilities of space, its deadness but also its life." In this highly contradictory process, one of the central roles of the state has been to territorialize patterns of capital accumulation into distinct historical-geographical configurations, a "spatial fix" composed of temporarily stabilized ensembles of global, national, regional, and local relations. It was above all the predominance of the state scale in organizing both accumulation and urbanization during much of the past century that has made possible the pervasive reduction of scale to a static and ahistorical container throughout the social sciences. This misrecognition can be viewed as a real abstraction of the sociospatial organization of the world system throughout much of the twentieth century, in which the territorial state was viewed as being at once coextensive and isomorphic with civil society, politicocultural identities, and the national economy.⁴²

I have suggested, however, that the current wave of global capitalist restructuring has entailed an unraveling of this sociospatial configuration. Since the early 1970s, the state scale has been rearticulated in complex ways with urban, regional, and global scales. It remains to be seen how this process of re-scaling will affect the state scale in the long term, that is, whether the latter will eventually be dissolved in the face of deterritorialization and the local-global interplay, as many globalization researchers have implied (see, e.g., Appadurai 1996; Ohmae 1995; Scott 1996), or whether it will continue to play a major role as a pivot between supra- and substate processes. Lefebvre clearly embraced the latter view. Against the state demise argument, Lefebvre suggests that both urbanization and capital accumulation necessarily remain territorialized within geographical spaces organized by configurations of state power. The current transformation, therefore, signals a re-scaling of state sociospatial organization, not the dissolution of state territoriality as such.

Lefebvre's theory, finally, helps explain why the effort to construct a spatial fix for future rounds of capital accumulation necessarily entails a struggle to produce relatively fixed and immobile configurations of spatial scale. Even in an era of intensified globalization, the state continues to play a central role in this struggle for command and control over spatial practices. Under these circumstances, as Lefebvre indicated so exhaustively, the question of transformative praxis becomes inseparable from the politics of scale and its social production.

42. Agnew 1994; Radice 1984; Taylor 1996.

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