# Metropolitanization of the State: Towards Inequality in Democratic "Voice"?

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# METROPOLITANIZATION OF THE STATE: TOWARDS INEQUALITY IN DEMOCRATIC "VOICE"?

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## INTRODUCTION

The financial crash of 2008 triggered a growing critical discussion of global capitalism and its legitimacy vis-à-vis state control and popular interest. The definition and understanding of the latter has been subject to intense political discussion, as evident in the current media.[1] Advocates of neo-liberalism have begun to emphasize the benevolent effects of the markets in a Hayekian tradition,[2] where a trickle-down effect will lead to general distribution of income generation. This contrasts with the Marxist approach, which emphasizes the government's role in redistribution and curbing capitalism in furtherance of general societal advantage. The 2008 financial crisis highlighted the limited power individual state actors have in influencing internationalized capitalist developments, and, consequently, the limited sovereignty states possess vis-à-vis globalized finance. As a result, the market-based democratic state, through its government, finds itself caught between conflicting demands: acting on behalf of the electorate as its legitimator of power, while adhering to the principles of globalized capitalism with its demand for competitiveness and economic opportunity. Growing political backlash has exposed this tension over the last few years,

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1. *See, e.g.*, Branko Milanovic, *The Higher the Inequality, the More Likely We Are to Move Away from Democracy*, GUARDIAN (May 2, 2017), https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2017/may/02/higher-inequality-move-away-from-democracy-branko-milanovic-big-data [https://perma.cc/R6WD-864G]; George Robinson, *Piketty's Puzzle: Globalization, Inequality and Democracy*, GLOBAL POL'Y J. (Dec. 9, 2015), https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/09/12/2015/piketty E2 80 99s-puzzle-globalization-inequality-and-democracy [https://perma.cc/AE87-VUVB].

2. *See generally* FRIEDRICH A. HAYEK, INDIVIDUALISM AND ECONOMIC ORDER (1948).

against the backdrop of populist politicians decrying loss of political control vis-à-vis globalization and a wider popular stake in the proceeds of global capital gains.

Almost forty years of predominant neo-liberal discourse in the context of globalization resulted in a shift in the perceived relative values of, and relationship between, individual and collective interests.[3]  This has had the effect of pitting independently acting, opportunity-chasing metropolitan centers against the broader collectives represented by the democratic state.  Rather than feeling confined to the horizons staked out by their respective state territories, cities are now increasingly defining their ambitions, and likely their opportunities, through their functional and political interrelations within specific interest-based, self-organizing, collaborative networks.[4]  Simply being content with what is available in a particular territory no longer suffices for cities reaching outward.

Inequality, metropolitanism, and elitism have become closely associated in recent populist, nationalist rhetoric, which attacks globalization and multilateralism as not being in the interest of "the People."  Nationalist sentiment has risen as part of that rhetoric, as evidenced by the ascendance of starkly right-wing parties across Europe.[5] The election of Donald Trump as United States (U.S.) president, the Brexit vote in the United Kingdom (U.K.), and the new populist "anti-establishment" Italian government[6] are examples of an anti-globalist and anti-metropolitan backlash by those feeling resentful of being "left behind" – a term frequently used in the press and public debate[7]—as the rewards of economic globalization appear to reach some more than others.[8]

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3. PAUL HOPPER, REBUILDING COMMUNITIES IN AN AGE OF INDIVIDUALISM 13–27 (2017).

4. SASKIA SASSEN, GLOBAL NETWORKS, LINKED CITIES 19 (2016); *see also* PETER J. TAYLOR & BEN DERUDDER, WORLD CITY NETWORK: A GLOBAL URBAN ANALYSIS 179–93 (2015).

5. The meaning of "people" is rather diffuse, used in various politically charged ways by populist political parties who like to present themselves as the democratic voice of those very "people." *See, e.g.*, David Molloy, *What Is Populism, and What Does the Term Actually Mean?*, BBC NEWS (Mar. 6, 2018), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-43301423 [https://perma.cc/99YT-QR2K].

6. *Italy Government: Giuseppe Conte to Head Populist Coalition*, BBC NEWS (June 1, 2018), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44322429 [https://perma.cc/JEM2-K88N]; *see also* Jacopo Brigazzi, *New Italian PM Is Proud to Be Populist*, POLITICO (July 6, 2018), https://www.politico.eu/article/new-italian-prime-minister-giuseppe-conte-is-proud-to-be-populist/ [https://perma.cc/8PDU-KPSU].

7. For discussions of the "left behinds" by globalization, see, e.g., *Left in the Lurch: Globalisation Has Marginalized Many Regions in the Rich World*,

Although much of this resentment is economically driven, it also reflects a sense of loss of democratic voice in political decision-making. This appeal for voice becomes expressed in support for individual political parties, and, more broadly, for a representative democracy through participation in elections.[9] Questions abound over the functioning of representative democracy and its ideal of egalitarian representation of the populace.[10] As economic experiences are linked to the principles of liberal democracy, support for liberal democracy may be waning with shrinking economic rewards. The populists express what a growing number of people may have thought since the austerity politics after the 2008 financial crash[11]: Does democracy work for me? Will the promised trickle-down effect materialize for me?[12]

The issue concerns a central organizational principle: network-based, metropolitan interests, or territorially bounded state interests? States now can allow cities to shine globally, to make the most out of their visibility and appeal — on the understanding that the rest of the state will also benefit further down the line as a trickle-down effect. Alternatively, states may seek to maintain (or increase) the cohesiveness of their respective territories and insist on treating the cities as just one part of the municipal tier of administration at the sub-national level, firmly integrated into the administrative and political hierarchy.

This Article addresses the conundrum of an increasingly apparent mismatch between two geographic entities — those economically and

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ECONOMIST (Oct. 21, 2017), https://www.economist.com/briefing/2017/10/21/globalisation-has-marginalised-many-regions-in-the-rich-world [https://perma.cc/73Q9-5T4E].

8. *Globalization Benefits Everyone, but Gains Unevenly Distributed: Study*, DEUTSCHE WELLE (June 8, 2018), https://www.dw.com/en/globalization-benefits-everyone-but-gains-unevenly-distributed-study/a-44122842 [https://perma.cc/BM5U-8U8S].

9. *See* Frederick Solt, *Economic Inequality and Democratic Political Engagement*, 52 AM. J. POL. SCI. 48, 48–60 (2008).

10. *See, e.g.*, Sagar Sanyal, *A Defense of Democratic Egalitarianism*, 109 J. PHIL. 413, 413–34 (2012). For more concerned with democratic theory, see generally THOMAS CHRISTIANO, THE RULE OF THE MANY: FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES IN DEMOCRATIC THEORY (2018).

11. On "austerity politics," see, e.g., Wendy Broen, *Sacrificial Citizenship: Neoliberalism, Human Capital and Austerity Politics*, 23 CONSTELLATIONS 1, 3–14 (2016).

12. Alex Andreou, Opinion, *Trickle-Down Economics Is the Greatest Broken Promise of Our Lifetime*, GUARDIAN (Jan. 20, 2014), https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan/20/trickle-down-economics-broken-promise-richest-85 [https://perma.cc/9EUH-8DDB].

those politically driven. The former is a mere virtual backcloth to a network of hubs (here, the cities) and spokes (the economic and political relations), while the latter is a contiguous territory defined by circumfusing boundaries.  The economically driven geographic entity involves growing territorial variations in economic opportunities, whereas politically defined territoriality draws on the egalitarian principle of democratic representation in a liberal democracy. The Article examines the challenges arising from the growing mismatch between the two geographies for democratic governments, with cities suggested as crucial connectors between the two. Specifically, this Article will use the case study of the Danish-Swedish Øresund Region to highlight the interaction between the international sphere, and the state, region, and city levels, as they compete in a globalized economy.  The examination of this case study will accentuate this Article's main argument that the central role of metropolitan areas and larger cities is to function as connectors between the two geographies — the collaborative, network-based and the territorially defined. Metropolitan regions, in particular, function as the primary foci of national competitiveness in a globalized economy. Yet, they also act out of self-interest, not merely as agents of the state or region. This puts them at the forefront of political criticism — for placing self-interest above the collective interests of the nation or region. Metropolitan areas are thus experiencing growing popular political pressure to reconcile economic self-interest and political belonging to a larger entity – the nation or region.

This Article argues that linking formal territoriality with informal spatiality may generate synergy effects. In other words, it means to connect (1) the pre-defined formal territorial organization and distribution of state power, resources, and democratic legitimacy for action, and (2) more fragmented informal spaces loosely and temporarily circumscribed by self-organizing and selective networks of like-interested actors (e.g., the cities). This includes the dynamics and responsiveness of more ad hoc-forming, interest-based collaborative groupings and networks. Scope for, and interest in, such integration, however, varies.

This Article is divided into three main parts.  Part I discusses the growing gap between political and economic spaces as a result of the way in which competitiveness has pushed for the fragmentation of economic spaces within states and regions — and its implications for democratic legitimacy and sense of mattering among the electorate. Part II takes a closer look at metropolitan areas as primary actors, as well as indicators of the growing discrepancy between economic and political geographies within a state territory. The focus is on the role

of metropolitan areas and cities not only in driving competitiveness, and thus individualism, but also in functioning as connectors and agents of state-territorial cohesiveness to avoid political fragmentation and alienation. Part III is divided into two parts. Section III.A looks at the example of the international Øresund Region between Denmark and Sweden to illustrate the processes and tensions discussed in Parts I and II. Section III.B teases out possible avenues for resolving the conundrum between individualism-driving economic competitiveness and the collective, egalitarian ambitions of representative democracy.

## I. METROPOLITANISM AND THE "REST": DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGES FOR THE TERRITORIAL STATE

This Part discusses the growing fragmentation of the territorially based democratic common — frequently, the state — through competitive action by cities in response to neo-liberal globalized capitalism. These fragmentations challenge established notions and practices of representative democracy, with its underlying egalitarian principles in getting one's voice heard in political decisions. A growing division between cities and metropolitan regions, as most likely competitive "winners" and the less successful "rest," raises questions about the fragmenting and, ultimately potentially hollowing-out, effect of neo-liberal capitalism.

Section I.A discusses the ways in which a rising "metropolitanism" challenges the territorially defined and expressed "state as shared common." Section I.B focuses on economic competitiveness as a challenger to established public policies, especially in Western Europe, to counteract inequalities and thus promote territorial and societal cohesiveness of the democratic state. Finally, Section I.C looks more specifically at the fragmenting effect of growing competitive individualism, and the impact of such on interest representation in a representative democracy.

### A. Metropolitan Individualism, Competitiveness, and the Fragmentation of the Democratic Common

This section looks at the interaction between "metropolitan-ness" and competitiveness, and the resulting elitism, as it questions the principle of democratic egality within a given territory.

"Metropolitan" has become a contested and politically charged term,[13] insinuating not only elitism and superior opportunities, but also political and economic arrogance, vis-à-vis the respective wider region and nation-state.   The rise in populist anti-metropolitan sentiment is an expression of the underlying, simmering discontent and anger about a deepening economic divide between many metropolitan "winners" and a lot of non-metropolitan "losers" of neo-liberal globalization.   These gaps reflect different degrees of engagement with "global flows" of capitalism and the dynamics in creating or removing income opportunities with them.[14] This sense of a shift towards more elitism may create a feeling of losing control and relevance, which may lead to estrangement and alienation — something referred to by those feeling pushed into such a passive role as "being left behind."[15]   Differential development results from differences in capacity to utilize the effects of globalization to individual advantage, which is notable on several levels: first, at the global level, between developed and developing countries, with the latter blaming the former for unfair practices and structures that put them at an inherent disadvantage[16]; second, at the regional level, between clusters of countries, such as the European Union (EU), where the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis pitted the North against the South[17]; and third, at the national level, between the successful metropolitan regions and the mostly non-urban, peripheral "rest" of the state,[18] or between struggling old industrial towns or cities that seem to have lost their economic *raisons d'être*.[19]

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13. *See, e.g.*, Eliane Glaser, *In Defence of the Metropolitan Elite*, NEWSTATESMAN                     (Oct.               20,               2016), https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2016/10/defence-metropolitan-elite [https://perma.cc/S5S9-8RC6].

14. *See generally* Manuel Castells, *Globalisation, Networking, Urbanisation: Reflections on the Spatial Dynamics of the Information Age*, 47 URB. STUD. 2737, 2737–45 (2010).

15. Michael Cox, *The Rise of Populism and the Crisis of Globalisation: Brexit, Trump and Beyond*, 28 IRISH STUD. INT'L AFF. 9, 9–17 (2017).

16. Axel Dreher & Noel Gaston, *Has Globalization Increased Inequality?*, 16 REV. INT'L ECON. 516, 516–36 (2008).  On North-South differences, see, e.g., Jean-Philippe Therien, *Beyond the North-South Divide: The Two Tales of World Poverty*, 20 THIRD WORLD Q. 723, 723–42 (1999).

17. Peter A. Hall, *The Economics and Politics of the Euro Crisis*, 21 GERMAN POL. 355, 355–71 (2012).

18. Larry S. Bourne & Jim Simmons, *New Fault Lines? Recent Trends in the Canadian Urban System and Their Implications for Planning and Public Policy*, CANADIAN J. URB. RES. 22, 22–47; *see also generally* Roberta Capella & Ugo Fratesi, *Scenarios for European Metropolitan Regions: Winners and Losers in a Globalized*

Competitiveness, a second factor discussed here, defines spaces of economic opportunity. Unlike state territories, these spaces are largely virtual, circumscribed by networks of cities that pursue their individual metropolitan interests as centers of economic activity and competitiveness. The Core Cities network of the ten largest English cities is one example.[20] They are highly selective in who is included in their networks, and who is not, to maximize the advantages of collective engagement for the existing network members. This contrasts with conventional state territory as a geographic jurisdictional "container,"[21] clearly defined by administrative borders within which all citizens are subject to the same provisions. That is where the tension arises: While all are equally part of jurisdictional territories, only a select number qualify for inclusion in the fragmented metropolitan-centric network spaces of enhanced competitive opportunity.

The inherent variability of relationally defined spaces offers the opportunity to find, and poses the requirement of finding, appropriate responses to quickly changing economic conditions and prospects. Equipped with the attribute "new,"[22] these spaces have increasingly become associated with less formalized alliances around actor networks,[23] built around shared policy objectives at a particular time,[24] and "interactive effects" on regional development.[25] Space in

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World, *in* METROPOLITAN REGIONS: KNOWLEDGE INFRASTRUCTURES OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY 195, 195–233 (Johan Klaesson et al. eds., 2013).

19. Catherine Thorleifsson, *From Coal to Ukip: The Struggle over Identity in Post-Industrial Doncaster*, 27 HIST. & ANTHROPOLOGY 555, 555–68 (2016).

20. For more detail on city networks, see, e.g., TASSILO HERRSCHEL & PETER NEWMAN, CITIES AS INTERNATIONAL ACTORS: URBAN AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE BEYOND THE NATION STATE 76–92 (2017).

21. On the notion of "spatial containers," see, e.g., John Agnew, *The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory*, 1 REV. INT'L POL. ECON. 53, 53–80 (1994); *see also* Martin Boisen et al., *The Selective Nature of Place Branding and the Layering of Spatial Identities*, 4 J. PLACE MGMT. & DEV. 135, 135–47 (2011).

22. *See generally* Fredrik Söderbaum & Timothy Shaw, *Conclusion: What Futures for New Regionalism?*, *in* THEORIES OF NEW REGIONALISM: A PALGRAVE READER (Fredrik Söderbaum & Timothy Shaw eds., 2003); *see also* Gordon MacLeod & Mark Goodwin, *Space, Scale and State Strategy: Rethinking Urban and Regional Governance*, 23 PROGRESS HUM. GEOGRAPHY 503, 503–27 (1999).

23. *See, e.g.,* Andrea Whittle & Andre Spicer, *Is Actor Network Theory Critique?*, 29 ORG. STUD. 612, 614 (2008); Jonathan Murdoch, *The Spaces of Actor-Network Theory*, 29 GEOFORUM 357, 357 (1998).

24. *See generally* TASSILO HERRSCHEL, CITIES, STATE AND GLOBALISATION: CITY-REGIONAL GOVERNANCE IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA 1–13 (2014).

25. Neil M. Coe et al., *'Globalizing' Regional Development: A Global Production Networks Perspective*, 29 TRANSACTIONS INST. BR. GEOGRAPHERS 468, 469 (2004).

itself needs to be understood as a "system of relations,"[26] rather than an *a priori* defined geographic entity[27] potentially offering a territorial trap for political analysis.[28]  It is increasingly important to understand inter-actor connections and relations in their reach across spatial scales and administrative boundaries.[29]

Yet, the reality is that there is a growing divide between some metropolitan "winners" with trendy, globalized lifestyles and international outlook, and other metropolitan areas, especially those having undergone major structural economic changes. Detroit, for instance, has become almost symbolic of the latter.  Such selectivity of opportunity may be viewed as the result and expression of favoritism and elitist arrogance from those outside the metropolitan microcosms. From the perspective of these outsiders, the advantages of globalization seem less obvious.  It is here that the democratic state common becomes fragmented into areas of favoritism and uneven "voice" across varying parts of society.

This discontent suggests that, so far, there has been little success in "matching up" the shifting, increasingly fluid, and highly selective geographies of variegated economic prospects and successes with existing, static, and formally institutionalized state territories.  As a result, despite being part of the same territory (e.g., state, region, city), there may exist quite considerable differences in de facto representation of interests at the political level.  This fundamentally contradicts the principle of a Western representative popular democracy,[30] where "one man—one vote" applies as a necessary condition and is the foundation of the legitimacy of the democratic state's territorial and institutional structures and powers.[31]

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26. DAVID HARVEY, EXPLANATION IN GEOGRAPHY 192 (1969).

27. *See generally* TASSILO HERRSCHEL & PETER NEWMAN, THE GOVERNANCE OF EUROPE'S CITY REGIONS: PLANNING, POLICY, AND POLITICS (2002).

28. *See generally* Agnew, *supra* note 21.

29. MICHAEL KEATING, THE NEW REGIONALISM IN WESTERN EUROPE: TERRITORIAL RESTRUCTURING AND POLITICAL CHANGE 82–110 (Edward Elgar ed., 1998).

30. *See generally* NADIA URBINATI, REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY: PRINCIPLES AND GENEALOGY (2006).

31. STEPHEN J. PURDEY, ECONOMIC GROWTH, THE ENVIRONMENT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: THE GROWTH PARADIGM 56 (2010).

## B. Competitive Territorial Individualism Versus the Cohesive Democratic State

The interaction between state-territorial structure and agenda-driven network spaces is shaped by the degree of congruence between the two.[32]  Less congruence suggests greater emphasis on individualist interests pursued through networks. Greater congruence suggests two scenarios: either a less intensely individualistic push for greater competitive advantage, or a stronger presence of state structures that could facilitate closer integration with metropolitan initiatives, such as international engagement and marketing.  In the latter instances, cities' individual ambitions remain embedded in their wider regional and national contexts to produce complementary synergy effects, as opposed to producing a growing fragmentation and individualization that deepens the divide between perceived winners and losers.

Structure allows a clear identification between inclusion and exclusion of actors and places, based on pre-defined goals, principles, and modi operandi, all within clearly defined boundaries.  Such clarity is more difficult to achieve for "relations," as these are inherently variable, less visible and predictable, and highly selective. Consequently, the forms and extent of inclusions and exclusions vary. The geographic ramifications of this complex and potentially conflictual interrelationship circumscribe the scope for individual actors — citizens, places, and administrations — to gain representation of their own interests at the policy-making level.  This concept applies across scale, to the position of cities within state territories and increasingly dominant nodes of economic and political decision-making, and affects the state as a whole.  These network relations are both outcomes and originators of a place-focused and place-shaped way of linking relevant political, social, and economic variables, as structure shapes agency and vice versa. In geographic terms, virtual "spaces" are no more than mere spatial backcloths underlying urban-centric networks. They are merely illustrative or discursively projected. Yet, through their characteristics and qualities, they may also act as descriptors of forces shaping such structures. The selective nature of actor networks means that being part of such a circle suggests increased relevance as actors. Relational relevance is thus becoming more important in shaping agendas than simply being included based on location on this side or the other of a territorial boundary, be that geographically, institutionally, or organizationally.

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32. *See generally* NEIL BRENNER, NEW STATE SPACES: URBAN GOVERNANCE AND THE RESCALING OF STATEHOOD (2004).

Thus, the territorial state essentially presumes the static-ness of boundaries and defined territories of responsibility, accountability, power, and legitimacy.

Meanwhile, self-organizing networks are variably connected and interactive. They reach both vertically and horizontally across that fixed, formalized arrangement of the state. The result is inevitably a number of gaps and cleavages within and across geographic scales.[33] And it is the ability to bridge these gaps and cleavages that determines the efficacy and legitimacy of resulting collaborative action and decision-making.

### C. Inequality Under Fragmented Spatial Opportunism?

Almost twenty years ago, regions, rather than nation-states,[34] were the main focus of attempts at raising national competitiveness; they were understood to be the most effective geographic "unit" for framing responses to the challenges of ever-expanding globalization.

The rise of economic competitiveness is widely understood as being attractive to capital investment[35] and has near doctrinal status in public policy, meaning that challenges to it result in accusations of pursuing socialism.[36] This debate, especially since the collapse of the communist world post-1989, means that the state *per se* has become associated with cumbersome, too-unresponsive, and bureaucratic policy-making that inhibits capital investment and growth. Rescaling the state was one answer, but policy-making as such had to change as well.[37] Opportunity-focused collaborations, informal and temporal, appeared better suited to the more differentiated post-"Fordist" economy, where small-batch production and market responsiveness,

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33. *See* Arjen Boin & Paul T. Hart, *Public Leadership in Times of Crisis: Mission Impossible?*, 63 PUB. ADMIN. REV. 544, 545 (2003); *see generally* Mario Telò, *Introduction: Globalization, New Regionalism and the Role of the European Union*, to EUROPEAN UNION AND NEW REGIONALISM (Mario Telo ed., 3d ed. 2016).

34. *See generally* Philip Cooke & Gerd Schienstock, *Structural Competitiveness and Learning Regions*, 1 ENTERPRISE & INNOVATION MGMT. STUD. 265 (2000).

35. Roberto Camagni, *On the Concept of Territorial Competitiveness: Sound or Misleading?*, 39 URB. STUD. 2395, 2395–2411 (2002).

36. *See, e.g.*, Michael McAuliff & Sara Kenigsberg, *Obamacare Is Socialism: Reps. Louie Gohmert, Steve King Attack*, HUFFINGTON POST (Mar. 27, 2012), https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/27/obamacare-socialism-louie-gohmert-steve-king_n_1383973.html [https://perma.cc/7CNP-FHPV].

37. *See generally* BRENNER, *supra* note 32.

and just-in-time principles, have become predominant in shaping increasingly individualized and differentiated economics.[38]

Scholars are concerned with closing the gap between rigid state administrative structures and economically required variability and flexibility. On the one hand, retaining structure avoids "a failure of traditional mechanisms" in effectively allocating resources.[39] Should the necessary flexibility, then, be introduced through collaborative or associative forms of governance,[40] collective action,[41] or collaborative institutionalism?[42] One conventional response has been repeated reorganization of the state.[43] This is ultimately futile, given organizational and popular resistance to moving administrative boundaries and places.[44] Instead, existing governmental structures may be given the necessary dynamics by linking established structures to relational arrangements[45] and thus effectively creating state structures that are relationally as well as territorially defined. This anchoring of the virtual, opportunity-driven, urban-centric network to the jurisdictional territory of the democratic state is the crux of reconciling the inherent elitism of the former[46] with the presumed

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38. Bob Jessop, *Post-Fordism and the State*, *in* COMPARATIVE WELFARE SYSTEMS 165–80 (Bent Greve ed., 1996).

39. Simon Zadek, *Global Collaborative Governance: There Is No Alternative*, 8 CORP. GOVERNANCE 374, 385 (2008).

40. Nicholas A. Phelps & Mark Tewdwr-Jones, *Scratching the Surface of Collaborative and Associative Governance: Identifying the Diversity of Social Action in Institutional Capacity Building*, 32 ENV'T & PLAN. A 111, 111–30 (2000).

41. *See generally* RUSSELL HARDIN, COLLECTIVE ACTION (2015); *see also* Elinor Ostrom, *Polycentric Systems for Coping with Collective Action and Global Environmental Change*, 20 GLOBAL ENVTL. CHANGE 550, 551 (2010).

42. Patsy Healey, *Building Institutional Capacity Through Collaborative Approaches to Urban Planning*, 30 ENV'T & PLAN. A 1531, 1531–46 (1998).

43. Neil Brenner, *Open Questions on State Rescaling*, 2 CAMBRIDGE J. REGIONS ECON. & SOC'Y 123, 123–39.

44. *See generally* Kaj Zimmerbauer & Anssi Paasi, *When Old and New Regionalism Collide: Deinstitutionalization of Regions and Resistance Identity in Municipality Amalgamations*, 30 J. RURAL STUD. 31 (2013).

45. *See discussion infra* Sections II.C, II.E; *see generally* Colin Flint et al., *Conceptualizing Conflict Space: Toward a Geography of Relational Power and Embeddedness in the Analysis of Interstate Conflict*, 99 ANNALS ASS'N AM. GEOGRAPHERS 827 (2009).

46. *See, e.g.*, ROBERT AGRANOFF & MICHAEL MCGUIRE, COLLABORATIVE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT: NEW STRATEGIES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (2004); *see generally* Terry L. Cooper et al., *Citizen-Centered Collaborative Public Management*, 66 PUB. ADMIN. REV. 76 (2006); Michael McGuire, *Collaborative Public Management: Assessing What We Know and How We Know It*, 66 PUB. ADMIN. REV. 33 (2006); Rosemary O'Leary & Nidhi Vij, *Collaborative Public Management: Where We Have Been and Where We Are Going?*, 42 AM. REV. PUB. ADMIN. 507 (2012).

egalitarian political representativeness of the latter. There is some unease in this respect, given the generally less transparent decision-making structures in collaborative networks, compared to the clear role given to citizens in hierarchical state administration structures.[47]

For instance, elitism becomes evident in the correlation between degree of political recognition and socioeconomic status and success when it comes to policy goals and agendas.[48] It is this unevenness in "voice," whether actual or perceived, that questions a defining feature of democracy: egality among all groups and persons in society. This promise of isonomia to the whole electorate — the *demos*[49] — is the primary rationale for the acceptance and functioning of representative democracy[50] (i.e. the acceptance of the same standing in front of the law for all members of society). Claims of one law for the rich and another for the poor suggest that the perception at least does not quite reflect that democratic ideal.

And this perception affects the legitimacy and appropriateness of policies and political decisions that derive from any such perceived selective consideration of interest, especially as such decisions seem to be influenced by outside factors. The populist, "anti-establishment" and "anti-metropolitan elite" backlash we are currently seeing in many Western democracies attests to that.[51] This quite clearly exposes the conundrum between pushing for greater economic competitiveness, which mostly means a focus on urban areas, and the notion of egalitarian democratic representation of all, irrespective of their position in the state territory. It is this very egalitarianism in having a voice that provides legitimacy for derived political action. The absence of such egalitarianism, by contrast, may imply the absence of legitimacy, as suggested by the new populist Right.[52]

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47. *See* JAMES BOHMAN, *Representation in the Deliberative System*, *in* DELIBERATIVE SYSTEMS: DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY AT THE LARGE SCALE 77, 77–92 (John Parkinson & Jane Mansbridge eds., 2012); Nadia Urbinati, *Representation as Advocacy: A Study of Democratic Deliberation*, 28 POL. THEORY 758, 758–86 (2000).

48. *See generally* Patrick Flavin, *Income Inequality and Policy Representation in the American States*, 40 AM. POL. RES. 29 (2011).

49. On the changing position of *demos,* see generally WENDY BROWN, UNDOING THE DEMOS: NEOLIBERALISM'S STEALTH REVOLUTION (2015).

50. *See generally* URBINATI, *supra* note 30.

51. *See generally* WILLIAM GALSTON, ANTI-PLURALISM: THE POPULIST THREAT TO LIBERAL DEMOCRACY (2018).

52. *See, e.g.*, SIMON BORNSCHIER, CLEAVAGE POLITICS AND THE POPULIST RIGHT: THE NEW CULTURAL CONFLICT IN WESTERN EUROPE 1–7 (2010); *see also* Elisabeth Ivarsflaten, *What Unites Right-Wing Populists in Western Europe? Re-Examining*

Part I laid out the central premise of this Article: There exists a growing push for urban individualism under the pressures of competitive globalized capitalism. The weakening of the state as a key actor in structural economic policy has resulted in a growing "cities first" mentality. Part II will examine established views of the territorial state as a cohesive economic entity, underpinned by relevant collective policies.

## II: COMPETITIVE URBAN INDIVIDUALISM VIS-À-VIS COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEMOCRATIC STATE

This Part explores both the evidence and consequences of a growing gap between the conventional state-territorial perspective behind democratic representation, and the role of cities as arenas of democratic processes and actors in their own right.

The discussion is divided into five sections. Section II.A examines the growing neo-liberalization of established structural economic policies, and thus the acceptance of inequality instead of something to be counteracted by the state. Section II.B links this growing individualization to the role and position of cities as competitive actors vis-à-vis the territorial democratic state with its underlying notion of egality. Section II.C looks at the growing role of informal collaborative action between cities to pursue their specific interests *en face* of the nation-state and its institutionalized politics for all its territory. Section II.D further discusses cities as a growing elite within state territories, and the resulting divisions between those localities participating and those not. Finally, Section II.E addresses questions of "citi-ness" in democracy: the need to consider the particular role of urban elements in democratic processes, and the role of cities in connecting local competitive individualism and collectivism of the state.

## A. The Urban and the Neo-Liberal State and the Acceptance of Regional Inequality

This section discusses the effect of the rise of neo-liberalism as political agenda in the 1990s at the expense of established social democratic social market economies, such as in post-war Western Europe. State involvement, through government regulation, in making the market economy deliver more equitable outcomes within national economies in Western Europe, has been an important part of

*Grievance Mobilization Models in Seven Successful Cases*, 41 COMP. POL. STUD. 3, 3 (2008).

the "[p]ost[-]war social contract" between state, capital, and society.[53] Instead, as captured by Fukuyama's "End of History"[54] claim, in the face of the collapse of communism, state involvement in capitalism was considered counterproductive because it was seen as too socialist. This, together with Britain's push for greater liberalization of the European Common Market under the then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher,[55] moved EU economic policy closer to a competitive free market agenda.

The nation-state, with its complex administration and interests, seemed ill-suited to effectively address the rapidly changing challenges and opportunities produced by globalization. And so, in Europe, the concept of a "Europe of the Regions," rather than nations,[56] was advocated by the European Commission as a new future framework for international relations.

The result has been a substantial shift in the EU's Regional Policy[57] towards a much more urban-centric and competitiveness-oriented approach, illustrating the changing focus of politics. Implicitly, inequalities were now accepted as a given. Rather than the state trying to incentivize private capital investment to consider less-than-ideally-competitive locations outside metropolitan areas, the greater appeal of urban areas is accepted. Their prospects in a globalized market are to be strengthened as the strongest national players, to then benefit the rest of the state territory following the neo-liberal trickle-down rationale.[58]

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53. *See, e.g.*, Leonard Schoppa, *Globalization and the Squeeze on the Middle Class: Does Any Version of the Postwar Social Contract Meet the Challenge?*, *in* SOCIAL CONTRACTS UNDER STRESS: THE MIDDLE CLASSES OF AMERICA, EUROPE, AND JAPAN AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY 319–20 (Olivier Zunz et al. eds., 2002).

54. *See generally* FRANCIS FUKUYAMA, THE END OF HISTORY AND THE LAST MAN (1992).

55. *See* James Ball, *The Thatcher Effect: What Changed and What Stayed the Same*, GUARDIAN (Apr. 12, 2013), https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2013/apr/12/thatcher-britain [https://perma.cc/JE8M-EWYJ]; Christoph Hermann, *Neoliberalism in the European Union*, 79 STUD. POL. ECON. 61, 75–76 (2007).

56. *See generally* John Loughlin, *"Europe of the Regions" and the Federalization of Europe*, 26 PUBLIUS 141 (1996).

57. *See* Roberto Camagni & Roberta Capello, *Macroeconomic and Territorial Policies for Regional Competitiveness: An EU Perspective*, 2 REGIONAL SCI. POL'Y & PRAC. 1, 10 (2010) ("'[I]ntegrated spatial/urban development policies' were recently indicated by . . . the EU . . . as the consistent new policy approach . . . .").

58. *See* Philippe Aghion & Patrick Bolton, *A Theory of Trickle-Down Growth and Development*, 64 REV. ECON. STUD. 151, 152 (1997) (discussing theory that wealth trickles down "from the rich to the poor" and "leads to a unique steady-state distribution of wealth" if capital accumulation is high).

The EU's *URBAN* program of the late 1990s, and now URBACT,[59] is a good example of the shift from traditional territorially-based redistributive state policies towards selective support of cities as best horses in the competitive race for capital investment.[60] Now, in the face of a growing anti-globalist right-wing nationalism in Europe, there is a tentative rediscovery of the virtues of the traditional *leitbild* of EU-wide cohesion in quality of life and opportunity as the embodiment of national and European collective interest and community.[61] Thus, while regions as a territorial whole have remained the primary unit of geographic reference for publicly declared policies, the growing debates on globalization have narrowed the focus on metropolitan centers of de facto policies.[62]

Since this shift in perspective, the EU has been trying to square the circle between promoting cohesion across its territory as an integral part of its founding principles,[63] while also following the essentially Anglo-Saxon model of neo-liberal, globalized competitiveness with its focus on individual achievement. And here, the cities and metropolitan areas have emerged as best positioned.[64] As a result, state territory outside these centers has lost its predominant position in the EU's structural spatial policy agenda.[65] In effect, there has been a negative trickle down.[66]

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59. The EU set up URBACT about fifteen years ago to "enable cities to work together and develop integrated solutions to common urban challenges . . . ." *URBACT at a Glance*, URBACT, www.urbact.eu/urbact-glance [https://perma.cc/956N-BWGZ].

60. Rob Atkinson, *The Emerging 'Urban Agenda' and the European Spatial Development Perspective: Towards an EU Urban Policy?*, 9 EUR. PLAN. STUD. 385, 386–88 (2001).

61. *See, e.g.*, Susan S. Fainstein, *Competitiveness, Cohesion, and Governance: Their Implications for Social Justice*, 25 INT'L J. URB. & REGIONAL RES. 884, 885 (2001) (citing Amsterdam as an example of where there is "practicable possibility" that "economic growth and social cohesion can go hand in hand").

62. *See* Castells, *supra* note 14, at 2743–44 (discussing contradiction between "strong regional or local identity" and concentration of "wealth, power and innovation" in metropolitan "mega nodes" that lack "institutional existence").

63. *See* Fainstein, *supra* note 61, at 887 ("The continued existence of the European national welfare states in the face of ideological assaults on their viability demonstrates the possibility of retaining social benefits even within the context of heightened global competition.").

64. *See* Ioannis Chorianopoulos & Theodoros Iosifides, *The Neoliberal Framework of EU Urban Policy in Action: Supporting Competitiveness and Reaping Disparities*, 21 LOC. ECON. 409, 419 (2006) ("The neoliberal conceptualisation of EU urban policy is based on the belief that 'harmonious development' is the result of enhanced 'competitiveness.'").

65. *See* Michael Kitson et al., *Regional Competitiveness: An Elusive yet Key Concept?*, 38 REGIONAL STUD. 991, 996–97 (2004) (discussing "issue of whether and

It is a typical neo-liberal narrative, where the betterment of the strong is justified by the expected eventual trickle-down effect to the rest.[67] But such filtering down requires the willingness of the "winners" to let go at least some of their proceeds to the benefit of the wider common. This would mean that cities needed to be put back in their places as integral parts of the state territorial geographic and political fabric. But that deprives them of the opportunity of becoming more visibly global and playing their best sides to the audience. This expected — and advocated — trickle down has not materialized everywhere as promised. Much of it has remained confined to metropolitan areas, rather than fanning out into the more peripheral areas. There, this selective effect leads to the recalibration of the respective communal space as a reflection of the delicate balancing act between competitive standing and being an integral part of a state territory. As it has turned out, the gap between "winners take all" and the "losers" of this head-on competitiveness has never been wider across the world.[68] And it is the resulting disaffection, frustration, and anger that have supported a new nationalist, protectionist and anti-globalist, populist agenda across the Western world.

Discussions about global cities[69] and their pivotal role in the new "network society,"[70] where network relations are the basis of a society and not so much shared territory and physical proximity, reflect the dominant narratives at this time. Large, internationally

how far policy should focus on particular localities within the region rather than on others" and European Commission's recognition of the need for "reduc[ing] of spatial socio-economic inequalities").

66. *See* Richard P.F. Holt & Daphne T. Greenwood, *Negative Trickle-Down and the Financial Crisis of 2008*, 46 J. ECON. ISSUES 363, 363–64 (2012) (defining "negative trickle-down" as the flow of economic growth "increasingly to the very top," accompanied by "negative externalities that diminish financial well-being").

67. *See* Aghion & Bolton, *supra* note 58, at 151 (describing trickle-down as a "widely believed" theory).

68. Robert Hunter Wade, *Is Globalization Reducing Poverty and Inequality?*, 34 INT'L J. HEALTH SERVS. 381, 403–04 (2004) (presenting studies suggesting "world income inequality has been rising during the past two to three decades" and challenging World Bank's poverty numbers); *see also* Micaela di Leonardo, *New Global and American Landscapes of Inequality*, *in* NEW LANDSCAPES OF INEQUALITY: NEOLIBERALISM AND THE EROSION OF DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA 3–4 (Jane L. Collins et al. eds., 2008) (highlighting "proliferating array of markers of human misery" amid "the rise of neoliberal globalization").

69. *See generally* Saskia Sassen, *Whose City Is It? Globalization and the Formation of New Claims*, 8 PUB. CULTURE 205 (1996).

70. Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, *in* THE INFORMATION AGE: ECONOMY, SOCIETY, AND CULTURE (2d ed. 2009).

operating cities[71] have thus increasingly moved to the center ground politically and economically. These cities have been encouraged by national governments to do so,[72] in the quest for greater economic success for the whole of the wider region and state as the expected outcome.

The Europe-wide Eurocities network[73] is one such "elite" international project by leading European cities to raise their profile and emancipate themselves from their respective nation-states as "masters." This involved less institutionalized, and thus less binding, forms of collaborative regionalism, driven by opportunistic considerations by each collaborator.[74] However, such self-selection processes mean that not all urban players or other spatial entities, are equal in their scope and capacity to engage, or being invited to engage, by others. The reason is that they may not have to offer the qualities sought, and thus advantages available, that promise win-win outcomes for all those actors engaged in a network. But that matters as the primary appeal of building and joining a self-selecting policy network, where collaboration is to bring more advantages to each participant than "going it alone." So, the strong will seek the strong, thus reinforcing underlying inequalities in opportunities by gaining political weight in national and regional politics.

71. MICHELLE ACUTO, GLOBAL CITIES, GOVERNANCE AND DIPLOMACY: THE URBAN LINK 96–97 (2012) (noting "global cities" are "at the heart of today's world affairs" and "play a key role in changing some of [international politics'] essential parameters"); *see also* HERRSCHEL & NEWMAN, *supra* note 20, at 1–2 (describing how cities are becoming "actors in their own right . . . in international policy-making and governance").

72. *See, e.g.*, Allan D. Wallis, *Regions in Action: Crafting Regional Governance Under the Challenge of Global Competitiveness*, 85 NAT'L CIVIC REV. 15, 17 (1996) (citing a survey of a dozen regions whose "governments are actively working" toward "modernization" and "convert[ing] their cities into beacons, leading their nations").

73. GEOGRAPHIES OF POWER: PLACING SCALE, 1–14 (Andrew Herod & Melissa W. Wright eds., 2002). *See also About Eurocities*, EUROCITIES, http://www.eurocities.eu/eurocities/about [https://perma.cc/336R-YST7]. In 1986, six cities set up the Eurocities network, but now over 130 members (plus forty partner cities) are part of the network. HERRSCHEL & NEWMAN, *supra* note 20, at 84. These cities cite "an explicit mission to achieve formal roles in the EU's 'multi-level' policy processes." *Id.*

74. *See* Michael Keating, *Regions and International Affairs: Motives, Opportunities and Strategies*, 9 REGIONAL & FED. STUD. 1, 13 (1999) (citing examples of "practical problems . . . in efforts to secure inter-regional collaboration" in Canada, France, Spain, and Belgium); *see also* KEATING, *supra* note 29, at 16. *Cf.* MacLeod & Goodwin, *supra* note 22, at 511 ("[In] integrated policy communities . . . individual departments pursue their own autonomy, albeit within overall governmental constraints.").

Thus, unevenness becomes de facto an accepted reality, where shadow effects of such urban-centric individualism may mean a marginalization of non-urban and non-participating actors — places, territories, institutions, organizations, or individuals. Their voices may become obscured, even drowned out, by the urban nodes of connectivity and growing political and economic pre-eminence coupled to their global economic success.[75] The cities and their economic engagement have thus been leading to the recalibration of the respective communal space, a reflection of the delicate balancing act between competitive standing and being an integral part of the state territory.

Neo-liberalism has grown as a dominant doctrine in economic policy since the late 1980s. The end of the bi-polar world gave added impetus to acceptance of individualist competitiveness as the "only show in town." Even stalwarts of state intervention in economic development to counteract structural inequalities, such as the EU, have succumbed to the neo-liberal rationale. The result has been a general acceptance of inequality as a matter of fact, and the belief that success can only be achieved by sending out the strongest players to globalized capitalism: the already successful cities and city regions.

## B. Cities and Governing the Complexity of Space with Territory

This section explores the possible roles cities and metropolitan areas may adopt in using their key positions as linchpins of both virtual collaborative network spaces and the state territories of which they are an integral part.

Metropolitan areas are, thus, in a crucial position to develop governance mechanisms that address the gap between competitiveness-defined spaces and cohesive state territories. Governing virtual or "soft" spaces,[76] such as network-defined spaces, is likely to resemble a complex patchwork of negotiated and renegotiated compromise arrangements among a group of actors self-selecting around a shared agenda. The outcome is a complex, continuously revised and rearranged self-organizing web of opportunistic inter-relations and connections, as reflected in the

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75. *See* Castells, *supra* note 14, at 2743–44.

76. Cormac Walsh, *Rethinking the Spatiality of Spatial Planning: Methodological Territorialism and Metageographies*, 22 EUR. PLAN. STUD. 306, 308, 309, 322 (2014) (drawing distinction between "hard spaces" that refer to "existing institutional geographies" and "soft spaces" that refer to "relational understanding of place and space").

concept of governance — in contrast to conventional, state actor-centric government.

The concept of governance provides the opportunity to look at networks from both a political-administrative perspective [77] and the angle of traditional state hierarchical organization.[78] Their respective geographic expressions follow the dichotomy between spatially variable and institutionally "light" networks on the one hand, and the vertically organized, nested territorial state on the other.[79] The reach of such interest-defined, and thus actor-selective, networks vaguely defines the boundaries of such variable, virtual space.[80]

This contrast becomes evident in public planning as a main instrument of the state's intervention for the collective interest: Communicative planning[81] adds a new, dynamic, time-dependent, and geographically "soft"[82] component to traditional planning with its longer-term, territorially fixed, and prescriptive nature. Rather than being bureaucratically prescriptive, the focus is on consensus-based strategy making.[83] And this, at least in principle, offers access to, and participation in, a broader coalition of interests and voices than

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77. R.A.W. Rhodes, *Understanding Governance: Ten Years On*, 28 ORG. STUD. 1243, 1246 (2007); *see generally* JONATHAN S. DAVIES, CHALLENGING GOVERNANCE THEORY: FROM NETWORKS TO HEGEMONY (2011).

78. *Compare* Ian Bache & Matthew Flinders, *Multi-Level Governance and the Study of the British State*, 19 PUB. POL'Y & ADMIN. 31, 33–34 (2004) (juxtaposing the traditional Westminster model of government with multi-level government) *with* Liesbet Hooghe & Gary Marks, *A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus*, 39 BRIT. J POL. SCI. 1, 2–3 (2009) (advocating post-functionalist, multi-level view of governance, given trend toward regional integration).

79. Neil Brenner, *Between Fixity and Motion: Accumulation, Territorial Organization and the Historical Geography of Spatial Scales*, 16 ENV'T & PLAN. D 459, 466 (1998).

80. Tassilo Herrschel, *Network Regionalism, Development Agencies and Peripheralisation Through 'Loss of Voice,'* in MOVING TOWARDS POST-REGIONALISM? 172–86 (Nicola Bellini et al. eds., 2012); Tassilo Herrschel, *Regionalisation and Marginalisation: Bridging Old and New Regional Divides*, in REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NORTHERN EUROPE: PERIPHERALITY, MARGINALITY AND BORDER ISSUES 38 (Mike Danson & Peter de Souza eds., 2012).

81. Patsy Healey, *Relational Complexity and Imaginative Power of Strategic Spatial Planning*, 14 EUR. PLAN. STUD. 525, 542–43 (2006); *see, e.g.*, Phil Allmendinger & Graham Haughton, *Soft Spaces, Fuzzy Boundaries, and Metagovernance: The New Spatial Planning in the Thames Gateway*, 41 ENV'T & PLANNING A 617, 618–19 (2009) (describing "relational geography of planning" employed for the Thames Gateway).

82. *See* Walsh, *supra* note 76, at 306–08.

83. *See* Jesse Heley, *Soft Spaces, Fuzzy Boundaries and Spatial Governance in Post-Devolution Wales*, 37 INT'L J. URB. & REGIONAL RES. 1325, 1327–28 (2012).

conventional institutional procedures through hierarchical arrangements.

Such opening up raises questions about the form of inter-relationships[84] between these two principles of geographic organization — structure and fluidity. In an ideal scenario, both geographies may be congruent, producing a near-perfect match between like-minded and like-interested self-organizing "togetherness," and an *a priori* prescribed territorial organization of power, responsibility, and representative democratic legitimacy. In most cases, however, this congruence between the two layers is less than perfect, showing an only partial, or fragmented, match. Being part of a state territorial unit does not automatically mean participating in decision-making and policy-influencing networks.

This inherent selectivity matters, given the growing economic relevance and political reality of the network spaces formed for enhanced competitive prospects under globalization. The result is growing tensions between the territorially-based possibility to express political choices (e.g., through elections) that are then translated into public policy decisions, and the economic reality of highly selective, increasingly metropolitan-centric, investment decisions in a neo-liberal, competitive setting.

Because of these tensions, any public policy outcomes that are ultimately achieved may not be recognizable in formally and publicly visible ways. Here, the current "anti-elite" populism finds its *raison d'être*: a growing sense of disempowerment or remoteness from actual decision-making processes that begets a sense of lost voice.[85] The main clusters of influential decision-making networks inevitably remain concentrated in the metropolitan areas; therefore, democratic principles and choices may seem, to those on the fringes, less relevant for the shaping of actual decision-making processes and the distribution of economic opportunities.

State territories are thus no longer able to provide a consistent and continuous reference point of certainty. The borders and territories they define give way to diffuse, virtual spaces of competitive opportunity which are inherently open, held together by temporary coordination of shared interest rather than formalized alliances and

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84. *See infra* Sections II.C, II.E; *see* Flint et al., *supra* note 45, at 829–30 (discussing "multiple geographies" of "relative physical location" and "positions with networks of relationships").

85. Eva Sørensen, *Democratic Theory and Network Governance*, 24 ADMIN. THEORY & PRAXIS 693, 698 (2002).

programs.[86]   The underlying driver is, in essence, individual (local, regional national and personal) self-interest, rather than an appreciation of the bigger picture.   In other words, relations among actors are primarily driven by the perceived individual benefits for each of the network members that will result from engagement in such collaborative arrangements.

Actors may join, leave, or regroup in pursuit of their changing interests and circumstances, thus producing shifting "geograph[ies] of centrality and marginality"[87] through reflexive networks.[88]   Such networks consciously adapt to external challenges.   The consequence is a diverse range of new strategic directions for cities and regions, which emerge from within as they seek to further their priorities and agendas individually or through collaborative alliances.   These clearly distinguish between those actors that are beneficial for furthering the network and those that are not.   There is no participation by mere association, such as sharing a fixed, institutionalized territorial entity of a region or state.   No longer is there a general, inclusive safety net of contiguous territory, when it comes to the pursuit of development opportunity.   Instead, competitiveness and connectedness rely on the success of individual places.   Here, cities and city regions are — generally — in a better position than the non-metropolitan rest.

And so, less attractive actors, deemed too much of a risk and ballast for a network, are left to fend for themselves.   They may either remain excluded or need to find other willing partners of similar limited attraction to boost their equally limited capacity and opportunities as an alliance of the weak(er).   Not being part of such a "relational web"[89] threatens to reinforce existing relational peripheralization and marginalization.   Such may be read as failure to make the grade for being considered good enough for inclusion in a network of enhanced competitiveness and thus opportunity, setting in train a reinforcing negative momentum.

One solution to this growing selective fragmentation could be to ensure that all state territories are captured by the forming of relevant opportunity spaces, or spaces circumscribed by a group of opportunity-chasing collaborative actors.   Traditionally, this has been

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86. Paul Kantor, *Varieties of City Regionalism and the Quest for Political Cooperation: A Comparative Perspective*, 1 URB. RES. & PRAC. 111, 114 (2008).

87.  Sassen, *supra* note 69, at 212.

88. *See* Ash Amin & Nigel Thrift, *What's Left? Just the Future*, 37 ANTIPODE 220, 228–31 (2005).

89. Patsy Healey, *Institutionalist Analysis, Communicative Planning, and Shaping Places*, 19 J. PLAN. EDUC. & RES. 111, 113–15 (1999).

attempted through active state intervention, such as infrastructure investment to raise the competitiveness of the more peripheral areas.[90]   This occurs within metropolitan areas, with marginalized neighborhoods and suburbs, or outside cities, with semi-urban and rural areas away from the main city regions.

By contrast, another way may be a less expensive, discursive, or "imagineered"[91]   production of cohesiveness, which may serve primarily more superficial and immediate political agendas.   Yet, the state needs to be willing to take on a more active role in shaping its territorial development based on politically and democratically agreed agendas.   This deviates from the neo-liberal mantra of the minimal state being the most economically effective.   Some form of dirigisme may well enhance competitiveness by broadening the range of potentially successful actors or places.   The result may be greater variety, innovativeness, and dynamic than a mere pursuit of the survival of the fittest.   The subsequent costs may well exceed the seeming initial benefits.

### C.   Collaborative Governance as Undermining of Practical Democracy

Governance as a concept evolved out of the growing diffusion of power structures and decision-making since the rise of competitive globalism with its neo-liberal underpinning.[92]   R.A.W. Rhodes, Professor of Government at the University of Southampton, describes governance as characterized by variable institutional and territorial boundaries, goal-defined actor networks, and a degree of autonomy from the state, all of which point to the inherent "fuzziness"[93] of the concept.[94]   Important here is the specified autonomy of the state. This push for governing independence points to the growing gap

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90. Tassilo Herrschel, *Local Policy Restructuring: A Comparative Assessment of Policy Responses in England and Germany*, 27 AREA 228, 231 (1995).

91. *See, e.g.*, Brenda S. A. Yeoh, *The Global Cultural City? Spatial Imagineering and Politics in the (Multi)cultural Marketplaces of South-east Asia*, 42 URB. STUD. 945, 946–48 (2005) (discussing how Southeast Asian cities like Singapore "imagineered" its city into an "economic powerhouse and international business hub").

92. R.A.W. Rhodes, *The New Governance: Governing Without Government*, 44 POL. STUD. 652, 653–54 (1996).

93. Ann Markusen, *Fuzzy Concepts, Scanty Evidence, Policy Distance: The Case for Rigour and Policy Relevance in Critical Regional Studies*, 37 REGIONAL STUD. 701, 702 (1999) (defining a "fuzzy concept" as "one which posits an entity, phenomenon or process which possesses two or more alternative meanings and thus cannot be reliably identified or applied").

94. Rhodes, *supra* note 92, at 660.

between the institutionalized state and actual decision-making structures and processes.  For a democratic state, it is the gap between representational popular legitimacy derived from the citizenry of all its territory, and the degree to which these interests are translated into political processes and developments, that at least questions comparable opportunities across its owned territory.

It is this growing gap that reflects a "redefined basis of accountability."[95]    This, in turn, causes frustration and raises questions about the quality of democratic representation and the balance between individual, elite, and general civic interests.  Indeed, some theorists of democracy critique neo-liberally characterized democracies as "defective,"[96] "post-representative,"[97] post-democratic,[98] or mere façades.[99]  It is a claim used by the anti-democratic populists who accuse democratic systems of being no more than establishment or elite projects.[100]

The focus of critique rests in the role of civil society in shaping political choices: Who calls the shots? It is here that transition theory, with its focus on democratization, makes the main distinction between a formal democracy—institutionally democratic on paper only — and a practiced, actually existing democracy, which involves popular interest representation in political power.[101]

The ways in which collaborative government comes about determine its degree of openness for interest representation (i.e. autonomy from the state).  Collaborative arrangements organized top-down via governmental fiat are more state-centric and formally incorporated into state administrative hierarchies — effectively part of the state machinery and its institutionalized procedures.  By contrast, collaborations shaped bottom up, through self-organizing

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95. Zadek, *supra* note 39, at 387.

96. *See generally* Wolfgang Merkel, *Embedded and Defective Democracies*, 11 DEMOCRATIZATION 33 (2004).

97. *See generally* Laura Boldvai-Pethes, 7 CORVINUS J. SOC. & SOC. POL'Y 131 (2016) (reviewing SIMON TORMEY, THE END OF REPRESENTATIVE POLITICS (2015)).

98. COLIN CROUCH, POST-DEMOCRACY 19–30 (2004).

99. *See generally* WOLFGANG STREECK, BUYING TIME (2014).

100. *See generally* Howard Davis & Mike Geddes, *Deepening Democracy or Élite Governance? New Political Management Arrangements in Local Government*, 20 PUB. MONEY & MGMT. 15 (2000); William Brett, *What's an Elite to Do? The Threat of Populism from Left, Right and Center*, 84 POL. Q. 410 (2013).

101. *See, e.g.*, JAMES S. FISHKIN, THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE: PUBLIC OPINION AND DEMOCRACY (1997).

mechanisms either among neighboring municipalities,[102] or between like-interested metropolises of similar standing and appeal —such as the mentioned world cities — are deliberate attempts to break out of the confines of their state contexts.[103] It is a step to boost the own positions vis-à-vis the state and thus an attempt to gain more autonomy from it. Globalization and derived pressures for increased economic competitiveness are the main drivers behind such collaboration.[104]

This greater autonomy from state governing structures affects, for instance, the range of actors considered eligible for participation in political processes and the ultimate purpose of collaborative efforts. Such efforts may aim to merely gain efficiencies in service delivery and administration, as under new public management.[105] Or, they may seek to broaden civic involvement by widening the range of involved governmental and non-governmental, public and private, actors with their diverse agendas. Though balancing interests becomes more complex and challenging, this strengthens the legitimacy and acceptance of political decisions and policy implementation. Consequently, it becomes more difficult to devalue such policies as mere elite projects serving elite interests.

However, willingness and capacity to do so vary, reflecting particular regional and national circumstances and political cultures with varying balances between individual and collective interests. It is here that any striving efforts for more autonomy from the state, to make political choices to maximize development opportunities, find their limitations.[106]

## D.   Cities as Elites in Democratic States

Inter-actor relationships, such as between cities, sit within varying place-specific contexts as external milieu. They are composites of particular societal values, political agendas, state structures, and scalar allocations of power, as well as historic experiences and

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102. *See* Alan Harding, *Taking City Regions Seriously? Response to Debate on 'City-Regions: New Geographies of Governance, Democracy and Social Reproduction'*, 31 INT'L J. URB. & REGIONAL RES. 443, 451 (2007).

103. HERRSCHEL & NEWMAN, *supra* note 20.

104. *See* Harding, *supra* note 102, at 451–52; Chris Ansell & Alison Gash, *Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice*, 18 J. PUB. ADMIN. RES. & THEORY 543, 552 (2007).

105. *See, e.g.*, Elinor Ostrom, *A Behavioral Approach to the Rational Choice Theory of Collective Action: Presidential Address, American Political Science Association*, 92 AM. POL. SCI. REV. 1, 1–2 (1998).

106. *See, e.g.*, Healey, *supra* note 42.

political-economic structures.[107]    They circumscribe scope and capacity for, but also interest in, "actorness" which means assuming a proactive stance in decision-making.[108]  For localities, this includes a willingness to participate in governance at the city-regional level, though it may also mean building and joining networks.  Democratic action may thus be viewed as doubly embedded: (1) internally, in the functional arrangements and systemic interdependencies of the different composite elements of a democratic regime, or (2) externally, as embedded in the broader preconditions for democracy. These conditions may be supportive or obstructive.[109]    Internal embeddedness involves the statutory position of municipalities within the state hierarchy.   This, in turn, circumscribes the scope for independent action, and more generally, perceptions of the expected role of the state in public policy by the individual citizen.  External embeddedness, meanwhile, involves the processes of globalization, and the working of global capitalism vis-à-vis the state and its regulatory capacity.

Negotiating and finding a win-win outcome for all concerned is the *raison d'être* of all self-organizing collaborative engagement and action *per se*, as likely negative outcomes are a disincentive. Engagement can be justified as part of a local apolitical program only if the gain is greater through collaboration than through independent action.   Even if orchestrated by the state, the willingness and enthusiasm to effect policy outcomes depends on the expected individual advantage.  Pressures to demonstrate added value are likely to be greater in self-organizing collaborative networks because there the proposed benefits of engagement are the primary justification of departing from well-established, familiar structural procedures.  It is this pressure to achieve positive outcomes that is both a strength and a weakness of informal collaborative action.  For instance, lines of responsibility and legitimation of action under an informal system are not as clear as they are under a hierarchical, formalized, and institutionalized system.  There is also a danger that the results justifying the means may lead to decisions later challenged by those to whom the outcomes seem less clearly beneficial.

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107. *See generally* JÖRG DÜRRSCHMIDT, EVERYDAY LIVES IN THE GLOBAL CITY: THE DELINKING OF LOCALE AND MILIEU (2013).

108. *See, e.g.*, Lisanne Groen & Arne Niemann, *The European Union at the Copenhagen Climate Negotiations: A Case of Contested EU Actorness and Effectiveness*, 27 INT'L REL. 308, 308–24 (2013).

109. *See* Merkel, *supra* note 96, at 43–48.

This conflict is referred to as the relationship between the individual and the commons, and it requires modes of governance that can reconcile the differing respective perspectives and appraisals of advantage.[110] Applied here, the conflict juxtaposes local individuality in the form of municipal self-governance, with a city-regional common made up of neighboring municipalities. This common city region is linked to the local individual through expected advantages for the participating individual municipalities from collective action. Such individuality refers not just to locality as a whole, but also institutional, organizational, or personal interests and considerations, as they consider the costs and benefits of collaborative action.[111] For example, municipalities may pursue a regional agenda as part of a strategic move to promote their individual local interests through collective action, rather than simply scale up such activities to the regional level as a separate tier of framing and legitimizing policies. This would be seen as a transfer of power and responsibility, and thus a local loss of policy-making capacity.

Giving the region an economic value in its own right involves considering the commonality of interests among the collaborators so that there is a sense of natural shared purpose and, in return, individually beneficial outcomes of their collective action.[112]

Urbanization and its relevance to state-territorial referencing of democratic concepts[113] reveal a gap between urban theory, on the one hand, and theory of democracy and democratization, on the other.[114] Critical and radical urban theory focuses on the link between the city, as an expression of collective functionality, and the individual.[115] In so doing, it focuses on the consideration of collective interests[116] and accessibility of urban spaces, as a matter of spatial justice.[117] The city

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110. *See* Ostrom, *supra* note 105, at 17.

111. *See generally* Zadek, *supra* note 39.

112. *See* Ostrom, *supra* note 105, at 10.

113. *See, e.g.*, SCOTT L. GREER, TERRITORY, DEMOCRACY AND JUSTICE: FEDERALISM AND REGIONALISM IN WESTERN DEMOCRACIES (2005).

114. *See* Clive Barnett, *What Do Cities Have to Do with Democracy?*, 38.5 INT'L J. URB. & REGIONAL RES. 1625, 1625 (2014).

115. *See generally* HENRI LEFEBVRE, THE URBAN REVOLUTION (Robert Bononno trans., 2003); HERBERT MARCUSE, ONE-DIMENSIONAL MAN: STUDIES IN THE IDEOLOGY OF ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY 11–24 (1964); *see also* Neil Brenner, *What Is Critical Urban Theory?* 13 CITY 198, 198 (2009).

116. *See* Susan S. Fainstein, *The Just City*, 18 INT'L J. URB. SCI. 1, 1–18 (2014); *see also* MARCUSE ET AL., SEARCHING FOR THE JUST CITY: DEBATES IN URBAN THEORY AND PRACTICE (2011).

117. *See* Edward W. Soja, *The City and Spatial Justice*, JUST. SPATIALE/SPATIAL JUST., Sept. 2009, at 2, 3.

is thus construed as an arena in which social structures are manifested and acted out for influence on, and participation in, city life.[118] It is thus a distinct social and societal focus, which has repeatedly followed Marxist analyses and borrowed from structural theory.[119] This theory focuses in particular on a critique of neo-liberalism as dominant discourse and the uneven outcomes it produces for citizens within and outside of cities. And this, in turn raises fundamental questions around accountability and justice of relevant policy decisions.[120]

Democratic theory focuses on questions of representation, the role of the *demos* in shaping and controlling power,[121] and neo-liberal economics as part of the Western model of liberal market democracy, with its expected natural production of social justice across spatial scales through trickle down.[122] This theoretical map can be applied to the relationship between individual localities —be they urban or not — and state territories as an expression of the collective sum of all places in a state.

Critical democratic theory addresses the distinction between city and state political geographies by pointing to the differences in representative and communicative democracy, respectively.[123] In the latter, connectivity, and thus access to institutions, power, and influence, matters.[124] In other words, the normative notions of legitimacy are of primary interest, based on universal representation versus selective engagement as a means for gaining greater political efficacy. The question is how theoretical and actually experienced expressions of democracy are negotiated and become anchored to particular structures and histories.

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118. *See generally* David Harvey, *The Right to the City*, 53 NEW LEFT REV. 23 (2008); *see also* CITIES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT: CRITICAL URBAN THEORY AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY (Neil Brenner et al. eds., 2011).

119. *See, e.g.*, Harvey, *supra* note 118.

120. *See, e.g.*, Clive Barnett, *Situating the Geographies of Injustice in Democratic Theory*, 43 GEOFORUM 677 (2012).

121. *See* Simone Chambers, *Deliberative Democratic Theory*, 6 ANN. REV. POL. SCI. 307, 314 (2003).

122. *See* Marlies Glasius & Geoffrey Pleyers, *The Global Moment of 2011: Democracy, Social Justice and Dignity*, 44 DEV. & CHANGE 547, 549 (2013); *see also* Brian J. L. Berry, *David Harvey: Social Justice and the City*, 6 ANTIPODE 142, 145–49 (1974).

123. *See* Nadia Urbinati & Mark E. Warren, *The Concept of Representation in Contemporary Democratic Theory*, 11 ANN. REV. POL. SCI. 387, 387–412 (2008); *see also* DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY: ESSAYS ON REASON AND POLITICS (James Bohman & William Rehg eds., 1997).

124. *See, e.g.*, WILLIAM E. SCHEUERMAN, THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF POLITICAL THEORY 1, 13 (John S. Dryzek et al. eds., 2006).

For democratic engagement, identity and sense of belonging are important factors in pinpointing the relevant territorial reference, be it the nation-state or a region or city with distinct identities. For instance, collaborative regionalism draws on municipal entities which, as building blocks of the democratic state, are also important democratic spaces of *demos* and legitimacy of political processes, such as local elections and councils. Municipal entities, in pursuit of their specific local agendas, provide the basis for more varied, detailed and individually responsive policies. This greater variety in policy responses and strategies takes into account an increasingly detailed variety in circumstances, potentials, and interests of places than is possible at the more aggregate conventional territorial approach with a more uniform policy implementation down the political hierarchy. Likewise, further up the spatial scale, inherently elitist cosmopolitanism faces pressures for recognizing, and responding to, transnational justice in income and opportunity, and needs to adjust in imaginative, individualized ways to meet criticism.[125]

Importantly, cities and metropolitan areas have gained twofold: first, as competitive economic and political actors, and second, as platforms for, and expressions of, democratic representation. This has added complexity to the democratic state, as it highlights, and offers the opportunity to articulate, differing interests, perspectives, and priorities within the territory-based democracy of states and regions. This, in turn, challenges notions of a territorial uniformity and the capacity to formulate democratic response.

### E.   Democracy and "Citi-ness"

This section focuses on the need for a more city-shaped form of democratic policy making. The notion of "citi-ness" seeks to capture the particular characteristics of city-based societal interests and political processes. This, re-calibrates the understanding of democratic principles away from the one-size-fits-all territorial model.

Factors like political historic legacies, experiences, and cultures do not feature much in the territorial model of the state. Rather, the state is understood as a territorial black box, with no further distinctions beyond the overall visibly territorial and institutional characteristics.[126] There is much less interest in internal territorial

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125. *See generally* Flint et al., *supra* note 45.
126. *See, e.g.*, John Agnew, *Still Trapped in Territory?*, 15 GEOPOLITICS 779, 779–84 (2010).

variations, such as differences between urban and non-urban spaces in experiencing and shaping democracy. Does the difference between "urban" and "non-urban" matter? In urban critical theory, the city is the primary lens as a given spatial platform, on which different interests and power structures in society manifest themselves physically.

In urban theory, the city is a given as the primary focus of interest. Consequently, there is much less discussion about the possible functioning of such theory in a non-urban setting. This suggests an automatic implicit assumption that it is the urban places that matter.[127] Cities are the particular and relevant political arenas. Meanwhile, in democratic theory, "citi-ness"[128] plays little role as a particular factor. "The state" as a concept does not know such distinction. It is therefore difficult for either analysis to address the intricacies between metropolitanization, where cities are favored objects by post-structuralist theories of globalization, and debates on democratic principles, where the state is primarily an institutional entity with a uniform territorial expression.

Yet the spatial dimension matters too, as it creates different layered identities and begets the perception that there are differing degrees of "affectedness" by certain political issues.[129] "Affectedness" thus means being affected by the processes and policy decisions of others, and thus is inherently about passivism. What is the scope to turn this passivism into agency, formulate a response, and thus shape the ways in which affectedness works? The greater the gap between passive and active, the greater the sense of political impotence and being a mere leaf in the wind of wider processes.

This sense of being reduced to a mere passive role has resulted in the current boost to populist nationalism and inward-looking politics which we can observe in Europe and the U.S.[130] This fundamentally contradicts the role and nature of democratic principles and thus corrodes democratic values. The retreat of this political faction into itself has been borne of the distinction between "metropolitanism" and "the rest," with the associated values of left-leaning, internationalist, and diverse in the former, and conservative, often

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127. *See, e.g.*, Kuniko Fujita, *Introduction* to CITIES AND CRISIS: NEW CRITICAL URBAN THEORY 26 (Kuniko Fujita ed., 2013).

128. Jeff Coulter, *Human Practices and the Observability of the 'Macrosocial'*, 25 ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR SOZIOLOGIE 377, 340 (1996).

129. *See* Barnett, *supra* note 114, at 1631.

130. *See, e.g.*, *Left in the Lurch*, *supra* note 7.

inward-looking in the latter with a penchant for authoritarian leadership as benevolent 'father' of the whole nation.

Networks are about power games,[131] generally focused around specific, single objectives ("issue networks").[132] They include a growing localization – or, rather, metropolitanization – of the regional scale of governance.[133] And this results in an effective, albeit administratively invisible, dissection of the territorially fixed entity 'region' into temporary, policy-driven, local groupings, where regionalization is a merely incidental outcome of inter-local collaboration. The result has been a dynamization of territory towards a continuously changing patchwork of relationally-defined and opportunity-driven policy spaces.[134] The nature of these spaces thus effectively has added a perception of a geography that sits next to a conventional understanding of hierarchical state territoriality and its organizational principles.

Underneath these virtual, relationally-defined, geographic entities lie established governmental territories with clearly defined and institutionally-backed powers, fiscal and statutory responsibilities, and democratic legitimacies. It is through these established governmental territories that inherently self-selective network spaces can become effective on the ground: by being "anchored" to existing structures.[135] And these most salient anchor points are more likely to take hold in cities than the functionally less connected and influential "rest" of a territory. How this "anchoring" can work in practice varies depending on each city's particular circumstances[136], thus circumscribing their capacity to negotiate, their tensions, and their contestations. The example presented here illustrates this complex relationship between, fixed and democratically legitimating state-administrative territoriality and, selective, often invisible, network-defined and virtual spatiality. The conventional, administrative Region Skåne in southern Sweden exemplifies the former, the

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131. *See* Annika Agger & Karl Lofgren, *Democratic Assessment of Collaborative Planning Processes*, 7 PLAN. THEORY 145, 145–64 (2008).

132. *See* GRAHAME F. THOMPSON, BETWEEN HIERARCHIES AND MARKETS: THE LOGIC AND LIMITS OF NETWORK FORMS OF ORGANIZATION 126–38 (2003).

133. *See generally* TASSILO HERRSCHEL & YONN DIERWECHTER, DISCUSSIONS ABOUT CITY-REGIONALISM (2018); *see also* JOHN HARRISON & MICHAEL HOYLER, MEGAREGIONS: GLOBALIZATION'S NEW URBAN FORM? 5–11 (John Harrison & Michael Hoyle eds., 2015).

134. *See generally* HERRSCHEL, *supra* note 24.

135. *See generally* Flint et al., *supra* note 45.

136. *See generally* PIERRE BOURDIEU, STRUCTURES, HABITUS, PRACTICES (1990).

Øresund Region (now rebranded as Greater Copenhagen and Skåne) illustrates the latter.

### III. THE INTERNATIONAL ØRESUND REGION: METROPOLITAN-DEFINED SPACE INTERSECTS WITH STATE-DEFINED TERRITORY

*Region Skåne* in southern Sweden (Figure 1) remains a fascinating example of multiple regionalisms overlapping and intersecting – those that are territorially fixed, equitable in terms of democratic representation, and institutionalized as part of the hierarchical state, and those that are projected as more or less virtual, discursive spaces underpinning self-organizing urban networks in the pursuit of specific shared interests. The beginning of constructing discursively the Øresund Region was the opening of the fixed link Øresund Bridge in 2000, which fundamentallychanged the relational dynamics in the Danish-Swedish regional space.[137]

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137. *The Oresund Bridge*, ORESUNDBRON (Aug. 31, 2018), https://www.oresundsbron.com/en/node/6738 [https://perma.cc/LH9K-C53G].

Figure 1: Øresund Region: Selective Metropolitanization and Exclusion of the "Rest Region" of Skåne



Source: Based on a prior version of an outline map by Lund University. All contents added by the author.

Until the bridge opening, economically, the border had been somewhat "like an Iron Curtain."[138]  The opening has become the main driver of changing spatial relationships – whether experienced, advocated, or perceived.  Two relationships interact: (1) regions as cohesive territorial parts of the hierarchically-ordered state, defined by clear boundaries, including the physical separation by the Øresund Strait along the international border between Sweden and Denmark; and (2) regions as a fragmented, non-contiguous outcome of selective, self-organizing, inter-municipal collaboration, with a distinct metropolitan or urban focus.  The latter type region aims to boost international visibility to attract presumed footloose global capital by emphasizing the advantages that stem from complementarity of location factors in the two countries.

Section III.A looks at the Øresund Region as a constructed space based around expected increased competitive opportunities. Section III.B discusses the growing division between the central role of the

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138. Interview with Official, Øresund Committee, in Øresund  (Nov. 19, 2003) (unnamed interviewee to preserve anonymity) (notes on file with author).

main grouping of cities and the marginalising effect of this for the rest of the wider geographic region of Skåne. Section III.C discusses the crucial role of cities as potential connectors between variable and essentially elitist collaborative spaces of competition within the territorial collectivity of the democratic state. It is this second role that is only beginning to be identified as part of the growing questions about the relationship between globalized capitalism and principles of egalitarian representation in a democratic state. And it is around this that the current discussions about the Øresund Region between Region Skåne and Greater Copenhagen have essentially revolved. The inherent conundrum has not quite been solved yet, as the rather cumbersome, bolted-together name 'Greater Copenhagen and Region Skåne' suggests.

### A. The Øresund Region as Technologically Enabled and Economically Driven International Opportunity Space

The Øresund Region as a discursive marketing project has been substantially shaped by its main cities in both Denmark and Sweden, facing each other across the sea. Conventional regionalism, such as sub-national state territories, is represented through the formalized Capital City Region (Hovedstaden) in Denmark and Region Skåne in Sweden. In Sweden, like all Swedish regions, Region Skåne's main task is the distribution of public services, especially health care.[139] Since 2010, Skåne, as a pilot project of limited regional devolution, gained some greater degree of autonomy, including economic development, as test cases for devolving responsibilities to the regional level.[140]

The region remains a creature of the central state. Most of its cities are concentrated along the western coastline,[141] with the rest being characterized by expansive rural areas with a scattering of villages and a few small market towns. Skåne thus shows a clear functional geographic division between an urban western coast and a largely rural rest. This contrast has been brought to the fore by the public

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139. *See The Swedish Model of Government Administration*, GOVERNMENT OFFICES OF SWEDEN, https://www.government.se/how-sweden-is-governed/the-swedish-model-of-government-administration/ [https://perma.cc/VL26-QR6L]; *see also Health Care in Sweden*, SWEDISH INSTIT., https://sweden.se/society/health-care-in-sweden/ [https://perma.cc/6WKG-YKJY].

140. *See Regional Development*, SVERIGES KOMMUNEROCH LANDSTING, https://skl.se/tjanster/englishpages/municipalitiescountycouncilsandregions/regionaldevelopment.1304.html [https://perma.cc/C2NQDQS4].

141. *See* Figure 1.

and political discussion around the Øresund Region as a political and economic spatial construct.[142]  The result was a perceived, even if formally invisible, separation into those municipalities that considered themselves part of this new discursive space of internationality and competitiveness, and those that quite clearly feel not part of this new space.[143]  This has resulted in the latter's further sense of marginalization and peripheralization and loss of voice.  A sense of political unease and even frustration followed with the seemingly de facto division between first and second-class municipalities within Skåne, when it comes to having a voice in shaping regional matters.

The concept of the discursive Øresund region as a spatial image follows the rationale of network-based, relationally defined "new" regions— essentially opportunistic, based on a shared agenda, and collaborative for a select group of actors whose participation defines the spatial extent of the region.  Globalization, and the growing focus on competitiveness by the EU in the 2000s, have been key drivers of this development.[144]  The geographically neutral, non-descript name of the concept region is *per se* an expression of the underlying rivalry between the main cities, especially the largest three, Copenhagen, Malmö and Lund. And then there are national sensitivities on the Swedish side, mainly in Stockholm and outside the Skåne Region, towards being 'subsumed' under the name of Greater Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark.[145]  Against this, there has been a recent remarkable complete *volte-face*, that reflects shifting political interests vis-à-vis rapidly changing economic realities.  In 2016, following pressure from Copenhagen to have a stronger visibility of

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142. *See* Interview, Official, Region Skåne Administration, in Region Skåne (Jan. 10, 2013) (unnamed interviewee to preserve anonymity) (notes on file with author); Interview with Councillor, Lund City Council, in Lund Town Hall, City of Lund (Dec. 12, 2013) (unnamed interviewee to preserve anonymity) (notes on file with author).

143. *See* Interview with Official, Ystad, Southeast Skåne Region Organization, in Southeast Skåne Region (May 20, 2014) (unnamed interviewee to preserve anonymity) (notes on file with author).  For a more general discussion of international political spaces, see, e.g., TRANSNATIONAL DEMOCRACY: POLITICAL SPACES AND BORDER CROSSINGS 15–16 (James Anderson ed., 2002).

144. *See* Interview with Official, Øresund Committee, *supra* note 138.

145. These sensitivities go back to the times when Skåne was Danish until about 300 years ago, as was repeatedly pointed out in interviews. *See id.*; *see, e.g.*, Interview with Official, Øresund Committee, *supra* note 138.

its name to boost international recognition, the name of the Øresund Region was changed to "Greater Copenhagen and Skåne."[146]

This reflects the outcome of a general disillusionment on the Danish side – mainly in Copenhagen – with the lukewarm support for further collaboration in Sweden, and a greater emphasis on traditional state-sponsored regionalism. One of the reasons has been a distrust of Stockholm, some 500 kilometers away, in favor of a close relationship with Denmark and a growing economic integration of a Swedish peripheral part (as seen from the capital) with an economic corridor reaching from Oslo, via Gothenburg, to Hamburg.[147] Within the Øresund region, dealing with Copenhagen at a local level is no problem at all, whereas a bit further away Copenhagen is viewed primarily as a foreign capital.[148]

But also at a more regional level, political temperature has varied between Copenhagen's and Malmö's city leadership in the early 2010s,[149] when a change in Copenhagen's mayoralty meant a more sceptical view of the likely benefits of engaging with the eastern neighbor.[150] Copenhagen's interest focused on the urban centres, especially Malmö as the largest and most accessible city on the Swedish side, and there is a strong duopoly of interests, including plans for an undersea metro line.[151] Through this closer cooperation, the two cities have practically left the rest even of the Øresund region behind, manifesting a threefold core-periphery order: (1) the Malmö-Copenhagen duopoly, (2) followed by the virtual Øresund Region, and (3) the rest of Region Skåne.

The re-projecting and re-branding of the Øresund Region as Greater Copenhagen and Skåne is an attempt to respond to Copenhagen's pressure to have its leading – and internationally more visible – position recognized more clearly. But there is also Skåne's

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146. *See* Interview with City Official, Mayor's Office, in City of Helsingborg (Apr. 19, 2018) (unnamed interviewee to preserve anonymity) (notes on file with author).

147. *See id.*; *see also* Interview, City Official, Invest in Skåne, Region Skåne Administration, in City of Malmö (May 21, 2014) (unnamed interviewee to preserve anonymity) (notes on file with author).

148. *See* Interview with City Official, Invest in Skåne, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 147.

149. *See* Interview with Councillor, Lund City Council, *supra* note 142; *see* Interview with Official, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 142.

150. *See* Interview with City Official, Invest in Skåne, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 147.

151. *See* Interview with Councillor, Lund City Council, *supra* note 142; Interview with City Official, in City of Landskrona (May 19, 2014) (unnamed interviewee to preserve anonymity) (notes on file with author).

political push evident in the addition to the name "and Skåne," as the region wants to be acknowledged as the "true" (i.e. formalized) regional representation for all municipalities within its territory.[152] Yet, it does not change the dominance of the further strengthened duopoly Copenhagen-Malmö, which further exacerbates the underlying unease about uneven regional voice between Malmö and the smaller municipalities and thus actual and perceived asymmetries in power and influence. The smaller places are concerned about their scope for self-determination as the main cities gain agency.[153]

The main attraction has been an extension of its hinterland for wider (and lower-cost) housing choices for Copenhagen residents, an increased consumer demand, and an enhanced employment pool in an international climate.[154] The Øresund region conceptually has been convincing on its rationale. But differences in taxation and currency, both national responsibilities, demonstrate the continued presence of the territorial state and imperfect anchoring between it and the Øresund space.[155] Global economic changes, such as in 2008, which reduced the economic advantages of this collaboration quite significantly, simultaneously highlighted the importance of a win-win outcome for continued support for this form of a political-economic project.[156]

The particular metropolitan interests in the Øresund Region are the drivers and oxygen of this regionalization project, and these are, in essence, selectively elitist, rather than representatively egalitarian for all municipalities.[157] Even if located within the virtual boundary of the Øresund Region (or, since 2016), Greater Copenhagen and Skåne, involvement with the relevant policy network is not a given. And the different experiences of the winners and losers of this project are likely to create political differences in priorities and more support for conventional regionalism as a sign of collective state support, as

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152. For instance, the somewhat provocatively titled "Denmark Wants to Re-Brand Parts of Sweden as Greater Copenhagen." *See* David Crouch, *Denmark Wants to Re-Brand Parts of Sweden as Greater Copenhagen*, GUARDIAN (Mar. 5, 2015), https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/05/denmark-wants-to-rebrand-part-of-sweden-as-greater-copenhagen [https://perma.cc/2ANG-9J5W].

153. *See* Interview with Councillor, Lund City Council, *supra* note 142.

154. *See* Interview with Official, Øresund Committee, *supra* note 138.

155. *See, e.g.*, *id.*; *see also* Interview with City Official, Invest in Skåne, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 147.

156. *See id.*; *see* Interview with Official, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 142; *see also* Claire Nauwelaers et al., *The Case of Oresund (Denmark-Sweden)— Regions and Innovation: Collaborating Across Borders*, 21 OECD Regional Development Working Papers (2013).

157. *See* Interview with Councillor, Lund City Council, *supra* note 142.

advantages from the Øresund region are felt much more indirectly in the Skåne periphery.[158] It is for that reason that the city of Helsingborg, a larger player in the Øresund Region, and part of the 'urban elite,' tries to act as interlocutor for its surrounding municipalities by having prompted the "Helsingborg Family" as a group of neighboring municipalities.[159] This is to initiate the trickle-down effect that neo-liberal enthusiasts claim makes more individualized competitiveness promising and justified.[160]

Elsewhere, towns like Ystad on the southern coast, which consider themselves outside the imagined and functional Øresund region,[161] seek other possibilities to step out of the regional shadow and be more visible on their own through emphasis of individuality and thus a de facto rise above the more peripheral rural surroundings.[162] Participating in EU projects, even if they are about region-specific food as the main focus, serve as platform for internationalization as way out of peripherality in the shadow of the Øresund Region. Another form of local self-empowerment in a peripheral setting involves collaborative action among like-positioned municipalities. Such sub-regional networks subdivide Skåne into four smaller network-based regions – one in each corner. It is a form of mutual assurance and support through occasional meetings just to keep in touch.[163]

The Øresund's competitive success was expected to ultimately benefit the whole of southern Sweden through improved links to the economic hub of Northwestern Europe, especially the global port of Hamburg.[164] More than a decade later, this neo-liberal rationale turned out differently. The already less well-connected and developing eastern, largely rural, part of Region Skåne feels even more distant and peripheralized, as all attention has turned to Malmö and the city-region along the western coast.[165]

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158. *See* Nauwelaers, *supra* note 156.

159. *See* Interview with City Official, Mayor's Office, *supra* note 146; *see also The Family Helsingborg*, HELSINGBORG, https://helsingborg.se/kommun-och-politik/samarbete/regionalt/familjen-helsingborg/ [https://perma.cc/TWX9-423D].

160. *See* Andreou, *supra* note 12.

161. Interview with Official, Ystad, Southeast Skåne Region Organization, *supra* note 143.

162. *See id.*

163. *See id.*

164. Interview with Official, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 142; *see* Interview, Councillor, Lund City Council, *supra* note 142.

165. Interview with Official, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 142; *see* Interview, Councillor, Lund City Council, *supra* note 142.

Since its inauguration eighteen years ago, the galvanizing effect of the Øresund Bridge has given way to a degree of normality, where activity across the sea no longer is viewed as such an extraordinary thing.[166] Instead, territorial borders have regained their delimiting impact on spatial imaginations and narratives. This has been especially true since the 2015 migration crisis in Europe, which brought the state back very visibly in the form of border controls at the bridge.[167] The end of the virtual Øresund University as network of existing Danish and Swedish universities in the region in 2013[168] also points to a cooling of the trans-national idea of the Øresund. It has lost some of its novelty effect, challenged by more visible and realized underlying troubles of uneven development and a growing divide between the successful urban centres and the more struggling peripheralized rest.[169]

Here, it matters that the Øresund region has no "hard" political dimension of its own, as its governance operated until recently through the Øresund Committee[170] and, since 2016, the Greater Copenhagen and Skåne Committee.[171] A regional agenda does not yield electoral or political bonus points. As such, there is no political lobbying on its behalf as a spatial entity. Instead, the economically driven and narrated Øresund region needs to work through the respective underlying administrative structures and regulations. Borders, boundaries, and institutional and regulative differences continue to matter as needed "anchor points,"[172] as do political considerations of likely electoral rewards. It is for that reason, that the conventional (Scandinavian) egalitarian, collective perspective and rationale have come back to be considered as expression of the democratically underpinned state territory.

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166. *See* Interview with Councillor, Lund City Council, *supra* note 142; *see also* Interview with City Official, Mayor's Office, *supra* note 146.

167. While at Copenhagen's Kastrup airport, Author observed make-shift detailed border control at the airport station for trains heading to Sweden, with Swedish border control positioned at the first station after crossing the Øresund bridge.

168. *See* Interview with Official, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 142; *see also* Nauwelaers et al., *supra* note 156.

169. *See* Interview with Official, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 142.

170. *See* Nauwelaers et al., *supra* note 156.

171. *The Story of Malmö*, MALMÖ STAD, http://Malmö.se/Nice-to-know-about-Malmö/EU-and-International-Cooperation-/Regional-work/Greater-Copenhagen-and-the-Skane-Committee.html [https://perma.cc/ADS7-PTCL].

172. *See generally* Flint et al., *supra* note 45, at 827–35.

## B. Urban-Centric Øresund Region, Peripheralization, and Marginalization

As evident from the Øresund example, peripheralization and marginalization are not merely the result of geographic distance from a core, but rather of a communicative, participative distance to functional networks between policy-making actors and their strategic alliances. And this distance circumscribes the scope to participate in, and influence, decision-making and outcomes for oneself. While infrastructure is important in communication and accessibility, individual agency in the form of building networks and alliances to further their own interests are equally as important. Connectivity matters, be that conventionally communicative or relational alliances through networks. Some of the "cores" (or nodes) may participate as actors in different networks for different agendas at the same time, boosting their presence and voice, and thus agenda.

Networks may be overlapping and overlaying, following variable geometries of engagement and prioritising. They are also, in turn, excluding and fragmenting, and thus produce differences in scope for engagement and participation through articulating a political voice. There is an invisible, but potentially very effective, line separating included and excluded localities and territorial parts of formal state territory, such as defined regions. In the example used here, it is a distinction between the dynamic, internationally connected urban-defined part "trading" under the banner of the Øresund Region strategic space, and the rural, less dynamic, more inward-looking and state-oriented, dependent hinterland to the east as dominant part of the formal Region Skåne.

The urban-based inequality has been quite a delicate political issue for some time,[173] but now the issue seems to gain recognition[174] as the new Skåne Development Plan *Open Skåne 2030* tentatively indicates. But cities have different responses to that, with some, as Malmö, quite openly following their own interests ("Malmö first").[175] Others, such as Helsingborg, are trying to downplay their stronger position vis-à-vis the surrounding municipalities to minimize tension and allow co-operation.[176] Malmö and Lund will be the main drivers for the

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173. *See* Interview with Official, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 142.

174. *See generally Development Skåne*, REGION SKÅNE, https://utveckling.skane.se [https://perma.cc/42A6-NH9W].

175. *See* Interview with Official, Region Skåne Administration, *supra* note 142.

176. *See* Interview with Helsingborg International Office, in City of Helsingborg (Dec. 11, 2014) (unnamed interviewee to preserve anonymity) (notes on file with author).

whole area, but the question remains to what extent the two cities want to be burdened with having to carry the whole region economically, thus making their own drive for competitiveness and international success more difficult and less immediately rewarding.

The important political task is to find alternative ways to employ this conventional approach of merely redistributing economic growth potential. The economically more successful option may be to manage, rather than seek to curtail, the different pathways and spatial orientations of the two parts of the Region. This means going further with the integration in the Øresund Region to strengthen its competitive advantages. This may lead to a further move towards a city region with growing urbanization, while seeking an alternative connector and development platform for the rest.

## C. Democratic Responsiveness and "Affectedness" in a State Is Not "One Size Fits All"

There is a growing differentiation of a territorial state as presumed uniform platform for democratic participation and expressing a democratic voice. Cities, and especially larger metropolitan areas, have developed a more explicit and audible political voice in promoting their interests at state and regional level.

The political theorist Habermas speaks of communicative action[177] in relation to the all-affected principle,[178] where everyone within a demographic (however defined) group, or territory, is subject to the same pressures, and most importantly, resulting decisions and responding political processes. This involves the sense of being represented. How should we respond to the affectedness? Should it be through democracy from above, being taken care of by those in power including the nation state, or from below, where smaller units collaborate and self-organize? This may mean to re-spatialize democratic imagination,[179] which would include a sense of belonging and having influence. But does this lead to emancipatory politics developing around the plurality of identities within cities and also across metropolitan areas, within broader city regions? Only when

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177. J. Habermas, *'A Reply,'* in COMMUNICATIVE ACTION: ESSAYS ON JÜRGEN HABERMAS'S THE THEORY OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTION 214–64 (A. Honneth & H. Joas eds., 1984).

178. *See, e.g.*, David Owen, *Constituting the Polity, Constituting the Demos: On the Place of the All Affected Interests Principle in Democratic Theory and in Resolving the Democratic Boundary Problem*, 5 ETHICS & GLOBAL POL. 129, 130–31 (2012).

179. *See generally* Amin & Thrift, *supra* note 88, at 220, 226.

*demos* and democratic politics approach congruence can the notion of "all affectedness" and thus "all involved and relevant" be maintained or achieved.

There is a need to consider place-based democracy and representation. Different localities or regions, as well as states, produce particular milieux for evaluating the need for, engagement with, and expectations from democratic processes and outcomes. This includes the role of civil society as politicized expression of the *demos*. It is here that the sense of satisfaction or disappointment with democratic structures and outcomes are shaped. This becomes evident in the different sense of ownership of democratic processes and resulting politics between Western and post-communist Eastern Europe, for instance, as the growing support for authoritarian leaders and restricted political debate and choices suggests.

This global shift, and the populist Right in Western Europe, presents democracies as playgrounds of the elites, not really interested in the genuine needs of the people at large. And the fact that these narratives, as well as the political responses evident in election results suggest clear metropolitan – non-metropolitan differences,[180] points to variations that have developed of the purpose and desirability of representative democracies.[181] Instead, the interest is in general principles of power relations between people and the state.

Other important differences in traditions, which shape attitudes towards democratic procedures and willingness and scope to get involved, include the position of local governments. How much genuine decision-making and political autonomy do they possess? For example, there is a clear difference between federal systems with forms of multi-level democratic autonomy, such as in federal systems (e.g., Germany or the U.S.) and centralized systems, where local government is a creature of higher level parliament (e.g., the UK or Canada).

Places matter. Urbanization creates new dynamics and new spatial patterns and relations with associated varying conditions for democratic contention, negotiation, and inclusion. It is here that classical Marxist analysis has brought in structuration theory and the role of uneven affectedness of places (and people) by the effects of

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180. *See, e.g.*, Richard Florida, *How America's Metro Areas Voted*, CITYLAB (Nov. 29, 2016), https://www.citylab.com/equity/2016/11/how-americas-metro-areas-voted/508355/ [https://perma.cc/3DAW-28S5].

181. *See, e.g.*, URBINATI, *supra* note 30, at 17–59.

global capitalism.[182] Some places are more likely to benefit than others and this challenges the notions behind representative democracy. Furthermore, this inequality becomes more evident as the promise underlying the neo-liberal market economy model no longer seems to hold and some places, especially cities, seem to fare much better than others.

## CONCLUSION

This Article examined the link between relationally shaped, agenda-driven network-defined spaces and conventional, state-defined territoriality. It is the degree of congruence between the two that circumscribes the scope for marrying the inherent dynamic and problem-solving nature of collaborative network policy and the more permanent geography of institutionalized universal legitimation and implementation of state power.

This Article distinguished between (1) territory as a priori defined geographic entities within a state hierarchy and a clearly defined *demos*,[183] and (2) ad hoc defined spaces of collaboration between like-interested actors. The former serves as a vehicle for uniform democratic representation and linking state and the population as a whole, while the latter is inherently selective, mirroring group-specific interests and opportunities as they connect and collaborate to seek to maximise their own opportunity. Collaboration is viewed as a means to individual ends. The difference is thus the mechanism of inclusion: by territorial association and opportunistic 'added value' respectively. The two co-exist, as the case study of the Øresund Region illustrates. Their inter-relationships can be more or less complex, harmonious or conflictual, as they mirror varying degrees of congruence – or discrepancy.

The crux of the matter rests in the ability to reconcile seemingly competing or conflicting or contradicting interests: finding a reconciling solution, which depends on political leadership and/or innovativeness in adopted political modi operandi. This may, for instance, involve the acceptance of the trans-scalar nature of local engagement, right up to an international representation, rather than viewing cities merely as integral part of a state. Or, collaborative action among actors, here cities, is used to enhance individual

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182. *See, e.g.*, David Harvey, *The Geopolitics of Capitalism, in* SOCIAL RELATIONS AND SPATIAL STRUCTURES 128, 128–63 (1985).

183. *See, e.g.*, Sarah Song, *The Boundary Problem in Democratic Theory: Why the Demos Should Bounded by the State*, 4 INT'L THEORY 39, 39–40 (2012).

capacity and prospects of gaining advantage. The challenge is to reconcile two different, yet concurrent rationales and subsequent dynamics: confinement to the uniformity of state structure and self-organizing collaborative local individualism to pursue specific agendas to individual advantage. The crucial question, then, arises about how such innovative politics can achieve public support on the basis of established territorial patterns and public views of what constitutes appropriate representation of their interests. As we could observe over recent times, merely claiming that some vague general benefit will result from individual collaborations between leading actors may not suffice. Rather, notions of collusion among an elite to further their own advantage may only raise doubts about whose interests are being served. The choice seems to be between an unspecified elite running a democratic system to their own advantage, as populists like to claim, or broad popular engagement with democratic processes to take collective ownership of the workings and challenges of a representative democracy.