HOW SCALE MATTERS IN TRANSLOCALITY: *USES* AND *POTENTIALS* OF SCALE IN TRANSLOCAL RESEARCH

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Summary: In a globalized world, the complexity of mobility prompts varied approaches to conceptualize connections across social and spatial boundaries. Over the past decade an increasing number of scholars have elaborated translocality as an approach to comprehend embeddedness while being mobile. Scale is one core dimension in conceptualizations of translocality. However, a systematic analysis of how scale is used in translocal research is lacking. Our core objective is to close this gap by reviewing and assessing how scale is conceptualized in research on translocality. Furthermore we discuss – against the backdrop of the rich literature on scale – how translocality research can benefit from considering notions of scale in a more systematic way. We find that by emphasizing the transgression and reshaping of spatial and scalar boundaries, translocality – beyond viewing scale as a category of spatial structuration – stresses the malleability of hierarchically ordered socio-spatial spheres. We accordingly conclude that scale is one conceptual approach whose explicit usage can help us to examine and operationalize practices of and power relations within social interactions by which translocal space is produced and reworked at multiple (abstract and concrete) levels.

Zusammenfassung: In einer in hohem Maße globalisierten Welt wie der heutigen, bedarf es vielschichtiger theoretischer Konzepte, um Mobilität in ihrer gesamten Komplexität zu erfassen. Dies beinhaltet insbesondere die Konzeptualisierung von Verbindungen, die soziale und räumliche Grenzen überschreiten bzw. einschließen. In diesem Zusammenhang gewann Translokalität als ein konzeptioneller Zugang an Bedeutung. Dieser stellt die Gleichzeitigkeit von Mobilität und Einbettung von Akteuren und sozialer Interaktion in den Fokus. Geographische Skalen sind ein Schlüsselelement der Translokalitäts-forschung. Was darin bisher allerdings kaum Beachtung findet, ist eine systematische Betrachtung der unterschiedlichen Skalenverständnisse. Das Hauptanliegen dieses Artikels besteht daher in der Systematisierung und Einordnung der Verwendungsarten von Skalen in Translokalitätskonzepten. Bezugnehmend auf die reichhaltige Literatur zu Skalen, gehen wir überdies der Frage nach, welchen Mehrwert eine explizite Verwendung von Skalen für die Translokalitätsforschung hat. Unsere Analyse zeigt – über die Verwendung von Skalen als bloße räumliche Kategorie hinaus – die schwerpunktmäßige Auseinandersetzung translokaler Konzepte mit der Überwindung und Umformung räumlicher und skalarer Grenzen, wodurch der permanenten sozialen Neu-Aushandlung sozial-räumlicher Grenzen und Hierarchien Rechnung getragen wird. Dementsprechend kann geschlussfolgert werden, dass die explizite Verwendung von Skalenkonzepten zur Weiterentwicklung translokaler Forschungsansätze beiträgt, da sich so Praktiken und Machtbeziehungen von sozialer Interaktion in der Produktion und Veränderung von Räumen auf unterschiedlichen (abstrakten und konkreten) Ebenen darstellen lassen.

Keywords: translocality, scale, mobility, place, boundaries, social-spatial interactions

1 Introduction

In the age of globalization, migration has become a constitutive element of more and more people's lives. People move across and beyond places, and settle in and link these places through their everyday activities. Connectedness to and embeddedness in multiple places constitute ways of living that are increasingly widespread. Various scientific disciplines seek to enhance the understanding of what can be described as *translocal modes of living* and have contributed to the development of the concept of *translocality*. Contributions come from migration studies (Brickell and Datta 2011; Lahiri 2011; Gielis 2009; Steinbrink 2009; Hedberg and do Carmo 2012; Sterly 2015; Andersson 2014; Winters 2014; Etzold 2016; Fauser and Nijenhuis 2015), area studies (Oakes and Schein 2006; Schetter 2012; Verne 2012; Bromber 2013; Benz 2014; Gilles 2015; Schröder and Stephan-Emmrich 2016), urban studies (Söderström and Geertman 2013; Liu et al. 2014; Main and Sandoval 2015; Kinder 2016; Brzezicka and Wisniewski 2016) and history (Freitag and Oppen 2010), as well as economic geography (Lange and Büttner 2010; Dubois et al. 2012; Kuah-Pearce

2016), development studies (Grillo and Riccio 2004; Zoomers and Westen 2011; Banerjee 2011; van Ewijk 2016), cultural anthropology (Appadurai 1996; Ma 2002; Long 2008; Rogers 2011; Greiner 2012; Amelina 2012; Weissköppel 2013; Adams 2015; Pocapanishwong 2016) and human ecology (Rios and Watkins 2015).

The concept of translocality seeks to provide a frame to understand mobility, peoples' embeddedness while being mobile, and how mobile and immobile actors (re-)produce connectedness and thereby reshape places (Freitag and Oppen 2010; Oakes and Schein 2006; Brickell and Datta 2011). Translocal practices are not only considered multi-sited but also multi-scalar (Brickell and Datta 2011; Rau 2012). *Scale* – as the literature clearly indicates – can be considered an important element in conceptualizing translocality (Oakes and Schein 2006; Page 2011; Chacko 2011; Smith 2011; Amelina 2012). Both translocality and scale are concerned with overlapping matters related to the structuring of socio-spatial entities, mobility, and connections across space, and linkages between places. Therefore, both concepts have already been connected throughout large parts of translocality research. However, the conceptual linkage between scale and translocality has not been systematically analyzed so far. Scale has heretofore been used differently, and in varying degrees of specificity. Hence, in order to contribute to the conceptual development of translocality, the objective of this paper is to systematize the ways of using scale in conceptualizations of translocality and in research on translocal modes of living. Moreover, we will assess how the scale literature can refine translocality as a research approach. The paper is based on the literature on translocality included in a comprehensive review paper on translocality by Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013, which was complemented by more recent works (Adams 2015; Benz 2014; Sterly 2015; Gilles 2015; Rios and Watkins 2015; Fauser and Nijenhuis 2015; Main and Sandoval 2015; Schröder and Stephan-Emmrich 2016; van Ewijk 2016; Kinder 2016; Etzold 2016).

The paper is structured in the following manner. First, we briefly outline both notions of translocality and of scale. Secondly, conceptualizations of scale in translocality research will be analyzed to then discuss its contribution to translocality. This will lead us to address the question whether the connection of translocality and scale prompts notions of a *translocal scale*, before concluding this paper with a reflection on the implications of our findings.

2 What is translocality?

The concept of translocality has been critically influenced by research on transnationalism. This approach originated in the need to re-conceptualize nationality and ethnicity in research on international migration, given the complexity and fluidity of migrants' lives and the unbounded nature of social spaces (Glick Schiller et al. 1992). Yet transnationalism accounts for both global interconnectedness and the persistence of nation-states by linking these phenomena to migrants' practices. Extending this view, translocality addresses processes and practices producing local-to-local relations and thereby enunciates the simultaneity of mobility and situatedness in specific places (e.g. Chacko 2011; Smith 2011; Sun 2006; Datta 2011; Rau 2012; Bromber 2013). In earlier reflections on translocalities, Appadurai (1996) described them as localities (e.g. neighborhoods) emerging from personal ties that weave together circulating populations with locals across and beyond boundaries of nation-states. Viewing the local as being "situated within a network of spaces, places and scales" (2011, 5), Brickell and Datta define translocality as a "'field' of everyday practices across scales" (2011, 7). Likewise, *concrete* processes and networks are regarded as part and parcel of translocality as conceptualized by Freitag and Oppen (2010). They refer to translocality as "all phenomena which are created by circulations and transfers" (ibid. 5) of people, goods, ideas, and symbols, spanning spatial and ideological distances across boundaries at different scales. Places where mobility is actually grounded, where mobile actors meet, where connections converge, and towards which flows of resources are directed or from which they depart come into the focus of research. Connections between these sites thus emerge beyond and between the types of links that connect nation-states.

Deriving from transnationalism, one strand of translocality research focuses on migration-induced translocality. While migrants are situated in specific places, they are at the same time connected to others, e.g. the place of origin, and therefore link these places. Translocality thus encompasses the re-/shaping of "physical, political, social and cultural spaces and localities by [mobility]" (Bromber 2013, 63). Within this field of research, emphasis is, for instance, placed on the role of family relations and the changes they undergo in the course of both rural-urban and transnational migration processes (e.g. Greiner 2012; Adams 2015). Related studies also focus on social practices of embedding in localities and con-

nectedness through place-based linkages (Hall and Datta 2010; Schetter 2012; Verne 2012; Etzold 2016), and on family- and locality-based references of identity formation (complementing the nationality-focused construction of identity) (Brickell 2011; Christou 2011; Datta 2011; Peleikis 2010). Moreover, concepts of migration-induced translocality have been elaborated in research on the migration-development nexus, exploring the influence of different forms of migration on development processes in (rural) sending areas of migrants (e.g. Sakdapolrak et al. 2016; Benz 2014; Grillo and Riccio 2004; McKay 2003).

Beyond the evolution of translocality in a migration context, the concept contributes to investigations into the spatial dimensions of socio-political movements (McFarlane 2009; Banerjee 2011) and other formations of cognitive exchange, such as business networks, innovation-oriented knowledge networks, "development corridors" constituted by the accumulation and usage of social capital, or community partnerships for mutual learning on an administrative level (Leung 2011; Lange and Büttner 2010; Dubois et al. 2012; van Ewijk 2016). In these studies, translocality enables the conceptualization of the spatial nature of social, political, and academic configurations whose emergence and performance suggest global references, while their embeddedness in specific local contexts is likewise pertinent. For instance, Banerjee conceptualizes the exchange of resources and ideas, political identities and strategies that actuate resistance against imposed extractive interventions as forms of *translocal* resistance (2011, 335). This framing is based on actors' connectedness across boundaries between levels of governance. While this notion of translocality does not draw on human migration, related research still addresses mobility and connectedness, namely through the exchange of context-specific ideas and knowledge, and in the form of distance-spanning socio-political (protest) movements.

To sum up, translocality scholars conceptualize mobility and emplacement as simultaneous processes (Smith 2005; Brickell and Datta 2011; Freitag and Oppen 2010). Opposing unmoored hyper-mobility (Smith 2011, 183), translocal approaches rather view the practice of producing places as situated in relational space, i.e. including remote interaction, social practices at a distance, and the connectedness of mobile and immobile actors. At the same time, the relational and processual character of producing space is taken into account (Oakes and Schein 2006; Schein 2006; Verne 2012). In order to capture such

multi-dimensional socio-spatial interweaving, which features places as reference points in mobility-intense contexts, and yet as re-shapeable, unbounded localities, translocal scholars employ concepts of scale (e.g. Christou 2011; Smith 2011; Hedberg and do Carmo 2012; Herzig and Thieme 2007).

3   Scale – a brief introduction

"Connecting the dots" between translocality and scale implies answering questions about the framing of spatiality that translocality necessitates; i.e. whether translocality is compatible with scalar thinking, and if so, with what approaches to scale, or whether translocal space can or even should do without scale. Before exploring answers to these questions in further detail in section five, scale will be depicted as one dimension of spatiality, and different notions of scale juxtaposed with one another.

The various meanings of *scale* encompass notions of size and scope, levels and spheres of influence, and the boundaries of socio-spatial entities, i.e. nested sets of spatial units appearing at different spatial resolutions (Gibson et al. 2000).

3.1 Scale as size

Scale is often referred to in terms of the *relative sizes of spatial entities*. By using scale as a measure, the extent and resolution or degree of generalization of such spatial units can be distinguished, resulting in the idea of small and large scales, such as village, province, and continent. This stance is rarely taken by human geographers, but is rather widespread among ecologists and biophysical geographers (Sayre 2009, 22).

3.2 Scale as level

Scale is also commonly understood as *spatial level,* which implies the utility of scale both as an analytical tool and as a structure in reality that is analyzed. While the aforementioned notion of scale as size refers to the relative spatial extent of specific entities, spatial levels usually range from the local to the global, encompassing the regional and national scales. As compared to scale-as-size, scale-as-level is more relevant to social scientists, including human geographers (e.g. Swyngedouw 2000; Brenner 2001; Sheppard 2002; Mansfield 2005;

LEITNER and MILLER 2007; COX 2009; NEUMANN 2009). Beyond administrative, political and economic spheres of influence, the body has also been added, referring to the individual as a level of its own which influences and is shaped by socio-spatial relations (CASEY 1997; OAKES and SCHEIN 2006). Yet another differentiation is designated by rural and urban scales (GIBSON et al. 2000). While they might also denote administrative spheres, these scales predominantly indicate areas differing in terms of socio-economic structures.

3.3 Boundaries and scale

Structuring physical and social space according to levels and their related scope implies a system of nested spaces or territories separated from each other by boundaries. This framing of scale as a spatial concept also entails a notion of a hierarchical order of scales within which norms, rules and regulations are embedded. Spaces are thereby structured according to scale. At the same time, spaces are equated with scales in terms of spatial size, and with scales referring to relative levels of administrative units that differ in reach and influence. Referring to scale as level, and to boundaries, implies a view of scale as a construct that is constituted by social practices and power struggles producing different spatial levels (SWYNGEDOUW 1997; LEITNER and MILLER 2007, 119; BRENNER 2009, 126; TAYLOR 2011; MARSTON and SMITH 2001, 615; PAASI 2004, 542).

3.4 Scale as object of analysis, and as an analytical tool

A distinction can be made between scale as an object of analysis and scale as an analytical tool (SAYRE 2009). Scale as an object of analysis relates to the production of specific scales by social relations as well as to the effects of such socially produced scales (SMITH 1992; BRENNER 1997; SWYNGEDOUW 1997; MARSTON 2000; OAKES and SCHEIN 2006; SCHEIN 2006; see Chapter 4.3 and 4.4). Corresponding conceptions of geographic scale comprise, on the one hand, "space envelopes" (BRENNER 2001) suggesting "scaffolding of spatial scales" (BRENNER 1997) which encircle spaces. On the other hand, such scalar structures can also be circumvented by "jumping scales" (SMITH 1993), and scalar boundaries become permeable by means of networks (HEROD 2011, 250; COX 1998; LATHAM 2002; CONWAY 2008; HOEFLE

2006; JESSOP et al. 2008; SAYRE 2009). Framing scales as material outcomes of social interaction hence implies that, instead of scale per se, processes and practices by which scales are socially produced need to be understood (BRENNER 1997; SAYRE 2009; HEROD 2011).

With that said, the intersection of scale as a material social product and scale as a social construction serving an analytical purpose becomes apparent. While scale is a component of socio-spatial processes whose production is analyzed (BRENNER 1997; SWYNGEDOUW 1997), it can also be employed as an analytical tool in order to examine and structure socio-spatial processes and practices, and to determine the scope of these practices, for instance (BRENNER 1997; MCFARLANE 2009; SAYRE 2009; see Chapter 4.2). These processes consist of a horizontal and a vertical dimension, i.e. scale as *size* and scale as *level* (HEROD 2011). As a third dimension of scale as an analytical tool, *relation* has been suggested (HOWITT 2003; SAYRE 2009). Consequently the idea of scale enables the description of social spaces both in terms of their differing extents (size), and in terms of the production of a series of spaces according to these extents (levels), and also helps to depict how different spaces interact with each other (scale as relation). The latter facet of scale results from an understanding of the constitution and reconfiguration of geographical scales as based on each scale's relation to other scales (in its meaning as levels) (SAYRE 2009, 103).

Both scale as an object of analysis in the sense of a material social product and scale as an analytical tool reflect a constructivist perspective on scale. Expanding this view to a relativist perspective, scale has also been rendered a mere social construction, not materializing in reality (see MANSON 2008 for an overview of notions of geographical scale). This directly relates to the debate on the ontological or epistemological status of scale.

3.5 Illusion or reality?

As an analytical tool, scale defines the extent to which processes are observed and allows the contextualization of what is being observed and analyzed at one site and in one specific instance (HOEFLE 2006; SAYRE 2009, 104). A single phenomenon can be disassembled into – even in-directly – interrelated elements depending on the analytical depth determined by the scale of analysis. Scale, used analytically, may be considered to exist in an

epistemological rather than in an ontological sense – which has inspired researchers, including human geographers, to deconstruct the imaginary of space as a nested hierarchy (Amin 2002; Law 2004).

In recent debates, scale's added value as a structuring element of social space has been put under scrutiny, with criticism, for instance, directed at the supposed structural inflexibility and hierarchical ordering of spaces implicated by scale (Marston et al. 2005; Woodward et al. 2010). So, in addition to using scale as an analytical tool or regarding it as real, arguments have been made for neither using nor accounting for scale at all, advocating a "flat ontology" of socio-spatial structures instead (Marston et al. 2005)[1].

Nonetheless, with respect to the variety of notions of scale, there seems to be great potential for its application in concepts of translocality. Given the conceptual ambiguity of scale though, in what sense can the notion of scale enrich translocality?

4   Conceptualizations of scale in translocality

Translocality implicates a specific perspective on socio-spatial relations; while scale, in a general geographical sense, is used to structure space. Linkages between these two conceptions are thus obvious, and yet not always made explicit. The different ways of applying scale in translocal approaches are now explored in more detail, in terms of functions and implications for conceptualizing translocality. Table 1 provides an overview on the different types of using scale in translocal concepts.

4.1 Usage without precise delineation

One way of using scale in translocality literature is its application without explicit conceptualization. Scales are then recognized as existing structures insofar as they are simply equated with administrative levels. Without specifying the implications of applying scale to their studies, scale in this type of usage is taken for granted as an ontological reality (Lange and Büttner 2010; Grillo and Riccio 2004; Benz 2014; Zoomers and Westen 2011; Da Silva 2012;

Dubois et al. 2012). Grillo and Riccio (2004) for instance, conceptualize translocal development as an approach for refining the understanding of migration and development. While their conceptualization focuses on transmigrants and their modes of living across borders, and assumes a shift of development activities from the national to the local level, no further attention is drawn to concepts of scale. It rather is implicitly considered to be an ordering principle of social space that is reassessed by translocal development.

Often authors simply mention the plurality of spaces and scales created by translocal connections (Scheele 2010), or, vice versa, with mobility as occurring on various scale levels (regional, national, international, and virtual space) (Da Silva 2012). Combining place, space, and scale as the triadic basis of translocality (Brickell and Datta 2011) makes them appear as an inextricably related set of categories. Despite being treated as essential components of translocal space, scales' specific function in translocal space in particular is not comprehensively addressed (ibid.).

4.2 Analytical aid for structuring socio-spatial configurations

Scale is also used in translocality literature as an analytical tool that dimensionalizes social interaction spatially and temporally. Despite being treated as fluid, scale provides structure by enabling the description of existing socio-spatial contexts, including a differentiation between levels of spatial abstraction, from the corporeal body and everyday life as the most concrete, to transnational space as the most abstract level (e.g. Hedberg and do Carmo 2012; McFarlane 2009; Banerjee 2011; Goodman 2006; Page 2011; Hatfield 2011; Brickell and Datta 2011; Freitag and Oppen 2010; Peleikis 2010; Smart and Lin 2007; Herzig and Thieme 2007). This usage of scale to distinguish levels of authority, governance, social interaction etc. plays an important role in delineations of translocality both as an empirical phenomenon (McKay 2005; Steinbrink 2009; Greiner 2012) and as a conceptual approach (Gielis 2009; Brickell and Datta 2011; Banerjee 2011; Page 2011; Smith 2011).

First, translocality as an empirical phenomenon relates to spatial entities on different levels of scale. Research on migration-induced translocality mirrors this interplay in a certain way. Migrants' connectedness to their places of origin, particularly

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[1] An in-depth review of the literature reflecting the scale debate among human geographers exceeds this paper's scope. But for more comprehensive analyses, see e.g. Sheppard 2002; Marston et al. 2005; Hoefle 2006; Leitner and Miller 2007; Moore 2008; McFarlane 2009; Woodward et al. 2010; Herod 2011

Tab. 1: Types of using scale in translocal concepts

Type of using scale	Understanding of scale	Purpose of using scale	Author(s) (selection) by field of research
No explicit conceptualization	Scale as empirical phenomenon	- Implementing an order to processes and practices of mobility: implicit equation of scales with socio-spatial levels	Economic Geography: LANGE and BÜTTNER 2010; DUBOIS et al. 2012 Area studies: BENZ 2014; DA SILVA 2012 Development studies: ZOOMERS and WESTEN 2011; GRILLO and RICCIO 2004
Analytical aid (and "narrative aid")	Scale as socially constructed system of spatial levels and boundaries	- Structuring socio-spatial configurations, such as body, home, neighborhood, local, national, global; rural, urban - Distinguishing levels of authority, governance, and social interaction, such as local, regional, national - Conceptualizing the transgression of boundaries - (Implicitly) challenging a rigid (hierarchical) order of spatial levels	Migration studies: GIELIS 2009; HATFIELD 2011; PAGE 2011; BRICKELL 2011; DATTA 2011 Human Geography: MCKAY 2005; STEINBRINK 2009; HEDBERG and DO CARMO 2012 Area studies: SMART and LIN 2007; GOODMAN 2006 Economics: BANERJEE 2011 History: FREITAG and OPPEN 2010; PELEIKIS 2010 Anthropology: GREINER 2012
		- Specifically addressing power relations: relating both embeddedness and mobility to a supposedly hierarchical order of levels - Operationalizing simultaneity of connectivity and emplacement of translocality	Human Geography: MCFARLANE 2009; SMITH 2011; BRICKELL and DATTA 2011; CHACKO 2011; PAGE 2011; LIU et al. 2014 Economics: BANERJEE 2011 Sociology: KUAH-PEARCE 2016 Human Geography: MCFARLANE 2009; VERNE 2012 Anthropology: NAUMANN and GREINER 2016
Object of analysis	Scale as social product; but not as a materiality *per se*	- Referring to underlying (social and spatial) structures - Addressing power relations: challenging a *scale-induced* hierarchical order of levels by addressing processes of scale-making	Human Geography: OAKES and SCHEIN 2006 Anthropology: SCHEIN 2006

their relations with non-migrating family members at their places of origin, engenders their embeddedness in multiple places at the same time (HEDBERG and DO CARMO 2012; GREINER 2012; BRICKELL and DATTA 2011; STEINBRINK 2009). In this context,

BRICKELL, for example, argues that migrants' sense of belonging is not only related to nation-states, but also includes familial affiliation and local politics (2011, 27). Placing more emphasis on the interconnectedness of migrants and non-migrants, MCKAY

(2003; 2005) shows how remittance practices re-shape the land use in migrants' places of origin. Here, scale helps to dissect the spatial and temporal dimension of this modification process that is initially driven by individual actors and mediated through translocal connectedness, and lastly materializes at the level of spatial range and impact of an entire landscape. The translocal nature of this phenomenon unfolds in the boundary-transgressing influence of remittance-related activities on multiple places simultaneously. Remittance generation and sending are situated in one specific locality, and their investment in another one.

Second, translocality as a conceptual approach is also related to scales as an analytical aid. By highlighting the transgression of boundaries, translocal research challenges the rigidity often implied in scale, and thereby implicitly charts the concept's utility as an analytical aid for integrating mobility, connectivity, and emplacement. In conceptualizing "translocal geographies" as a performative term, BRICKELL and DATTA (2011) for instance refer to translocal geography as place-making. This socio-spatial practice of place-making is structured by and at the same time blurs scales. Specifically scale-inherent dichotomies (global-local, local-national, rural-urban) lose ground. Similarly, Smith asserts that "the politics of place-making" are multi-scalar and are therefore "necessarily crossing many boundaries" (2011, 196). To analyze "translocal geographies" both *smaller* (specific sites, neighborhoods, or home) and *wider* (sub-national regions, transnational mobility, global policies and governance, and nation-states) scales are referred to (ibid; accentuation in original). Such multi-scalar place-making links for instance cities and urban politics across national boundaries, or hometown associations in places of destination with rural communities of origin including the surrounding region. While not focusing on human migration, MCFARLANE (2009) uses scale to examine translocal social movements, specifically their simultaneity of being both place-based and constituted by exchange across sites (including knowledge, ideas, and conceptualizations of power). According to his view of scale as a narrative aid, scale helps to describe existing structures and relations, and the production of hierarchies privileging the local over the global (ibid.). In order to bypass the local-global distinction, MCFARLANE applies a translocal approach, that of translocal assemblages, seeking to circumvent power and space hierarchies (e.g. scale), and highlighting performance and events in addition to spatial categories.

As these examples highlight, with respect to translocality as an empirical phenomenon the use of scale allows the description of the boundaries that translocal practices transcend and reshape. At the same time, drawing on scale as a spatiality composed of levels and boundaries, translocality as a research concept enables a reframing of the hierarchical order of supposedly clearly distinguishable spatial levels.

4.3 Object of analysis

In another mode of using scale in the context of translocal concepts, scale, or the process of scale-making, are themselves objects of translocal research (OAKES and SCHEIN 2006). Here, scale is used in the sense of underlying structures that manifest in translocal arenas of negotiation, such as regions or localities. Translocal actors' practices and experiences are hence viewed as producing places and scales in such arenas (SCHEIN 2006, 216). While scale is thus analyzed as a spatial configuration that is manifest in its implications, it is not considered a material reality *per se*. Such production of places and scales through translocal practices and experiences is conceptualized in two ways.

First, scales are viewed as being constituted by a broader set of processes which encompasses movements of people, goods and capital, the establishment of social institutions, and negotiations of power over territories and resources. Such sets of processes constitute and (re-)shape scales – such as political scales or scales of socio-economic development, for instance (OAKES and SCHEIN 2006, 10). Mobility is one driver for the formation of socio-spatial relations, contributing to the reconfiguration of scales that order society. SCHEIN illustrates this with the example of Chinese minority migrant women engaging in ethnic handicraft tourist businesses in "global cities of China" – that is, outside of their "remote villages" (2006, 223). Expanding their living and working environment in this way contributes to the interweaving of spatial scales (rural and urban in this case). The binary relations of scale ordering society, for instance between communities at the supposedly diminutive local level vs. the 'urban class' in a global city, are thereby devitalized.

Secondly, apart from these "broader sets of processes", micro-dimensions of social life, such as the body, also contribute to the generating and reshaping of scales. It is the body itself that is regarded as mobile and assumes different styles according to the social setting in which it is situated (SCHEIN 2006, 216).

Implications of a mode of living that encompasses multiple places are considered to be experienced and processed by bodily individuals, and social practices, which partly reflect processed experience, are viewed as embodied. Since embodied practices are then carried on to other localities, they themselves influence localities, as well as the reordering of localities. Taking up the above example of minority migrant women in China, "embodied place-making" is described as taking certain features of, for instance, urban style (e.g. fashion, hairstyle, or behavioral patterns) back to the countryside as forms of cultural capital (Schein 2006, 223). Such *mobile* embodied place-making by migrants illustrates translocal ways of experiencing and embracing different scales.

As these differently dimensioned processes of social life come together in places (ibid.), this translocal stance with regard to scale incorporates a notion of how place and scale interact: the production of scales is embedded in translocalities.

4.4 Using scale to address power relations and hierarchies in translocal space

Besides capturing levels and boundaries both on a conceptual level and in an empirical sense, scale also helps to explicitly address power relations in translocal social space. This usage of scale is particularly important given previous controversies on conceptions of power in network-based or relational approaches to space which translocality research builds on (Smith 2011; Verne 2012; Naumann and Greiner 2016). Comprehensive reflections on power seem so far rather exceptional in translocal concepts (see McFarlane 2009; Brickell and Datta 2011; Smith 2011 for exceptions). The power dimension of scale in translocality comprises three aspects: The first and second deal with two core features of translocality, namely mobility and embeddedness, and their relation to scale as levels in a hierarchical structure. The third one relates to the questioning of the scale-induced hierarchical order of socio-spatial levels. The way in which scale is used in translocal concepts hence places emphasis on agency of social actors, without losing sight of the significance of power relations beyond the sphere of direct influence of individual actors.

First, power relations are addressed in the tension between scale as a graduated system of spatial levels and translocal mobility. Scale serves as one means to apprehend power in socio-spatial relations and corresponding configurations as it allows dis-

tinguishing between levels in terms of their scope. Considering scale as a graduated system of spatial levels helps to capture power disparities incorporated in these levels. That is to say, translocal concepts draw on scale to address disparate magnitudes of power and unequal relationships between actors, neighborhoods, and nation-states, for instance, unfolding in translocal movements across scales (in a spatial, social, and temporal sense) (Oakes and Schein 2006; Schein 2006; Chacko 2011; Page 2011; Banerjee 2011; Kuah-Pearce 2016; Liu et al. 2014). Translocal movements tend to be both constrained and facilitated by structures of power, of knowledge, and of domination (Smith 2011).

Second, embeddedness as another core element of translocality, incorporates scale-induced power relations as it entails being part of and influenced by a wider context (which can be referred to as a "larger scale"). As, for instance, Appadurai notes, particular spaces and places (e.g. neighborhoods) are embedded in "different scales of organization and control" and thus affected by the powers of "larger-scale social formations (nation-states, kingdoms, […])" (1996, 186). Also, Christou, drawing on her study of translocal spaces of Greek migrants in New York, Berlin, and Athens, describes cities as contexts where "globalizing and glocalizing forces, power, and hegemonies" manifest and shape relations; therefore, migrants' everyday lives are influenced by "politico-economic hierarchies" in which city spaces are embedded (2011, 148). Her research thus indicates in which sense scalar hierarchies (reflecting and reproducing institutionalized power) can affect social practice and everyday interaction and experiences.

Third, acknowledging the social production of scale itself, translocality challenges the rigidity of scale-induced hierarchies. As discussed above, the differentiation of levels and spheres of influence in terms of administrative authority, and political or economic power implicates a hierarchical order. However, this order is neither to be considered a rigid scaffold nor a necessarily vertical gradation, i.e. privileging the global *over* the local (Oakes and Schein 2006; Freitag and Oppen 2010; McFarlane 2009; Smart and Lin 2007; Gielis 2009; Goodman 2006). Translocality draws attention to social practices spanning a field of interconnected localities across scales (Brickell and Datta 2011; Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013). Expanding this stance, translocality scholars also draw on rhizomatic approaches to conceptualize the production of scale, with the metaphor of the rhizome placing addition-

al emphasis on the relational and highly dynamic character of this process (OAKES and SCHEIN 2006; SCHEIN 2006; VERNE 2012). Scales are thus regarded as referencing order of both social and spatial relations and as discursively produced. Power relations and struggles over power are essential elements of social relations; that is, social practices and interaction reflect and re-/shape power relations. As social actors engage in interactions and thereby shape the space of their interaction, the power relations among them re-/construct scale (GUARNIZO 2012). This is taken into account in translocal research by accentuating actors' agency in linking and thereby reworking places and transgressing and reshaping boundaries of scales. For instance, the extent to which neighborhoods are affected by the powers of *larger*-scale socio-spatial formations (nation-states, global cities) is re-negotiated when connections between particular places (beyond and across the local-national-global order) gain importance (APPADURAI 1996; MANDAVILLE 1999; FAUSER and NIJENHUIS 2015). This is also exemplified in BANERJEE's (2011) aforementioned study on translocal resistance. He gives an account on how social interaction in more than one place, i.e. how (translocal) connections and flows of people and of material and immaterial resources re-shape scales, referred to as levels at which power is exercised, and the respective scope that the exercising of power has at a given level (ibid.).

As delineated in the preceding sections, translocality and scale are conceptually interlaced. Now, recapitulating the core elements of translocality – i.e. multi-scalarity of translocal interaction, situatedness (without boundedness), the blurring or bypassing of the scalar local-global distinction (MCFARLANE 2009) – do they as a whole call for the conceptualization of a distinct translocal scale? In the following, we will discuss this question. In this context, we will also address considerations to dismiss scale, which has been a point of contention in recent debates among social and political geographers.

5   Translocal scale, or none at all?

Translocality scholars highlight the production of interfaces between different spatial levels and social layers by (everyday) practices (OAKES and Schein 2006; SCHEIN 2006; STENBACKA 2012). The multi-dimensional tiered system that is composed of these socio-spatial levels is captured by notions of scale. These interfaces between (local, national, global) scales and (translocal) spaces beyond these

scales, or the "network of spaces, places and scales", as BRICKELL and DATTA put it (2011, 5), indicate the production of another element complementing existing conceptions of social space. This prompts the question as to whether "the translocal" can be considered a scale in its own right – a "translocal scale". On the one hand, this conceptual assumption could help to overcome the local-global dichotomy. On the other hand, it corroborates scalar thinking. This, in turn, seems to be in opposition to the strong emphasis – in translocal concepts – on cross-scale interaction and transgressing scales (as materiality), which deemphasizes the power of scale as a system of distinct and disparate levels and boundaries. Its consequence would rather be an overall rejection of scale, at least of that specific understanding of scale. Two questions thus arise: Does "the translocal" become a scale itself? Or does translocality imply the replacement of scale, promoting the idea of no scale at all – which corresponds to discussions on "flat ontology"?

Regarding the first question, translocality scholars have analyzed the production and functions of "translocalities" and delineated the difficulties involved in accommodating translocal processes and practices, as well as translocal concepts, within existing spatial scales. However, in order not to reproduce scalar hierarchies and reassert scale boundaries, the use of translocality as an intermediate concept deemphasizing scalar dichotomies (CHACKO 2011; BRICKELL and DATTA 2011; MCFARLANE 2009) has not resulted in the claiming of a "translocal scale". Meanwhile, references to a "transnational scale" are common, also among translocality scholars (SMART and SMART 2003, 278; OAKES and SCHEIN 2006, 27; SMITH 2011, 194; AMELINA 2012), accepting a partial conflation of translocality and transnationalism despite claims in translocality research to go beyond notions of transnationalism. Similar to transnationalism, the notion of translocality portends the deconstruction of clear-cut spatial boundaries in the form of a system of fixed power relations based on and manifest in geographical scales and administrative levels. However, translocality goes beyond transnational conceptualizations of socio-spatial relations by shifting attention even more explicitly to concrete places and sites in which actors, their practices and connections are anchored. The hierarchical order of socially constructed scales is thus even more deemphasized in translocal approaches. As illustrated by the various examples of translocal research included in this article, both references to home and national and cultural belonging beyond

nation-state boundaries as well as the immediate lo-cal neighborhood are components of everyday lives and social practices constituting translocal space. Local, global, transnational, and so forth can thus be conceived of as interlaced structures which both mirror and generate social practices and relations that traverse multiple places and geographical scales. For instance, both nationality-induced sense of be-longing and social and cultural ties between specific localities across (and despite) national boundaries become manifest in translocal space (SMITH 2001). Therefore, instead of rendering "the translocal" yet another scale, accounting for the multiplicity of scales by drawing on scale as a separate concept has proven to be the more useful conceptual approach to translocal modes of living (FAUSER and NIJENHUIS 2015; HATFIELD 2011; SMITH 2011). Although na-tional boundaries are not at the center of attention in conceptualizing translocal socio-spatial relations, (a sense of) national belonging has still an influence on translocal multi-embeddedness and connections (that also transgress national boundaries) (PAGE 2011; HATFIELD 2011). The "trans*national* scale" thus fulfills a function in translocal concepts without both approaches being confounded.

The second question raised above, wheth-er scale is needed at all, prompts us to reflect on the relation of translocality and "flat ontology" (MARSTON et al. 2005; COLLINGE 2006; WOODWARD et al. 2010) – an approach that entirely dismisses scale. As mentioned earlier, human geography scholars arguing for a "flat ontology" particularly challenged the understanding of scales as a hierar-chy of spatial levels determining a world order that is dominated by a superior global level (WOODWARD et al. 2010; MARSTON et al. 2005, drawing on SCHATZKI's "site ontology" (2002) and DE LANDA's (2002) juxtaposition of hierarchical and flat on-tologies). Flat ontology questions the scaffolding of places and spaces, and instead of using scale, considers event-relations and event-spaces or sites, produced by such relations, as providing structure. Sites are self-organizing, and emerge where the so-cial unfolds (MARSTON et al. 2005; WOODWARD et al. 2010, 272). This self-organization refers to the constant recreation of sites by "material bodies" in-habiting these sites. The agency of human beings is one component of sites, besides materialities. As human beings do thus not stand outside of sites, sites are not steered by processes operating at scales above them. It is in view of this self-organization and the ensuing uniqueness of each site that pro-ponents of flat ontology assert the impracticality

of hypothesizing scale-as-size and scale-as-level (WOODWARD et al. 2010, 273; MARSTON et al. 2005). Conflating scale with both spatial size and institu-tional or boundary levels (national, regional etc.), constructs difference. As difference is, however, already an integral element of site, there is no need for the production of difference by means of "scale" (ibid.). Since translocality, by drawing on actors' connectedness across spatial boundaries, also calls the rigidity of such boundaries, and thus a fixed vertical order of spatial levels, into question, there seem to be intersections of translocality with a "flat ontology". Hence, it is not surprising that MARSTON et al.'s (2005) criticism of scale has been recognized by translocality scholars (e.g. MCFARLANE 2009; SCHEIN 2006; SMART and LIN 2007; BRICKELL 2011; CHRISTOU 2011; HATFIELD 2011).

While flat ontology and translocality might in-tersect in terms of the emphasis both concepts place on sites, or concrete places, respectively, as localities of social interaction, translocality, as shown above, does benefit from the inclusion of scale as an ana-lytical tool – because differences among translo-cal actors, places, and practices in terms of their scopes and effects still play out in translocal space. Imbalances do not disappear just because people are more mobile. Whereas flat ontology renders dif-ferences site-inherent, scale serves as one means by which to delineate and analyze differences within translocal approaches.

As the reshaping of places and boundaries is re-garded as practice-based, translocality emphasizes actors' agency as one driving force in the process of reshaping and interconnecting places. This con-trasts with self-organizing sites and event-relations as connecting elements between sites, as suggested by flat-ontology scholars. As the process of inter-linking places produces translocal space, translocal interaction qualifies as one component of this pro-cess that also structures translocal space. However, social interaction is not to be considered an entity. As actors differ in their social roles for instance, so do their practices of embedding in places and of reaching out to other places. As our analysis has shown, scale can be used as an analytical tool in order to dissect such differences that materialize in translocal social interaction (on a spatial level). To shed more light onto the social dimensions of translocal connections and (multi-local and multi-scalar) embeddedness, we might need to also draw on approaches addressing positionality in translo-cal space more specifically (VERNE 2012; ANTHIAS 2012; DIDERO 2014).

6　Concluding remarks: structuring translocal space – a matter of scale?

In this paper, we reflected upon the interplay of translocality and scale. Based on a categorization of the uses of scale in translocality research, we analyzed how scale is applied in translocal research, and discussed the implications of scale in translocal approaches. Translocality as a conceptual approach has been elaborated against the backdrop of increasingly complex patterns of people's movements, including multi-sited modes of living, and as explicitly acknowledging multi-faceted types of relations between people's social interactions and their influences on place-making. To grasp the diverse layers of social and spatial organization articulated in and reshaped by translocality, notions of scale are applied. While the understanding of scale in terms of spatial levels predominates, scales are also regarded as layers of social interaction, which are more varied than the former. That is, scale serves as both a spatial and a social category in translocal approaches. Scale is, moreover, considered a social construct which accounts for various dimensions and boundaries of translocal practices, but which at the same time is subject to negotiation processes among social actors, and is therefore an unfixed configuration. Translocal (everyday) practices articulate and rework layers of social and spatial organization which can be captured by notions of scale. Scale serves as a category of spatial structure allowing for the differentiation of levels and including a conceptualization of power relations articulated in the gradation of scales by extent and in the construction of scalar hierarchies. From a translocal viewpoint, power relations are both reflected and renegotiated in the production of links across scales and the reshaping of boundaries in translocal fields. Altogether, complementing translocality, as an actor-focused approach on mobility, situatedness in, and interlinkage of places across boundaries with scale as another dimension of socio-spatial structuration capturing different levels and boundaries, spurs a much more accurate comprehension of translocal space.

As implicated in the heterogeneity of scientific disciplines into which translocality has expanded, the contexts in which translocal concepts are applied also vary in terms of their respective understanding of scale. Against this backdrop, the conceptual combination of translocality and multi-scalarity calls for an *explicit* reference to the particular type of scale in order to take advantage of its use. Consequently, and as shown in our analysis, scale allows for a more comprehensive disentanglement of the spatial, social, and temporal relations spanning translocal space. Hence, an *explicit* usage of scale in translocal concepts proves helpful to point out the special relevance of translocal research in exploring different kinds of links between localities across spaces and boundaries, e.g. historical links, or societal fragmentation and reformation in connection with individual mobility and globalization, or migration across international borders. Furthermore, due to translocality's particular interest in intersections within and links between various kinds of spaces, disentangling convoluted interpretations of *scale* both as an analytical tool and as a socially constructed "reality" refines translocal research. Accordingly, reflections on the use of scale in translocality both benefit from and contribute to ongoing debates on scale in human geography revolving around scalar binaries and hierarchies versus relational thinking or flat ontology. As explained in this paper, rather than rejecting scale, translocal concepts draw on scale to depict the mediation of, for instance, the local-global dualism. Another approach that relates to the issue of (not) using scale is assemblage theory (Ong and Collier 2005; DeLanda 2006; McFarlane 2009; McFarlane and Anderson 2011; Dewsbury 2011). While acknowledging the function of scale as an "organizing narrative", emphasis is placed on emergence, performance and events, instead of resultant structures, stemming from a perspective on power as plural and constantly transforming (McFarlane 2009, 564). However, a comprehensive analysis of how translocality, scale and assemblage interact exceeds the scope of this article.

Nonetheless, as indicated in reflections on entirely rejecting scale, there is legitimate criticism of scale, including the question as to whether scale is an oversimplifying abstraction that obstructs the researcher's view. And yet, in terms of employing translocal concepts for empirical research on mobility and social transformation, this paper shows that scale used as social and spatial levels and boundaries facilitates the operationalization of translocality. Against the backdrop of those rather critical stances on scale, it is worth scrutinizing complementing approaches to analyze translocal social space in order to further elaborate the conceptualization of translocality. For instance, translocality's focus on (mobile) actors traversing, intersecting and reworking different spaces, scales and boundaries necessitates a more explicit engagement with conceptual approaches that enhance our understanding of the multi-dimensional social positionality of translocal actors

(Didero 2014). In this regard, integrating translocality, scale and intersectionality research (Anthias 2012, Carstensen-Egwuom 2014) could prove fruitful in exploring both the various facets of situatedness and practices of situating in translocal places and its interaction with producing links across scales.

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