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To cite this article: Manfred Kühn (2015) Peripheralization: Theoretical Concepts Explaining Socio-Spatial Inequalities, *European Planning Studies*, 23:2, 367-378, DOI: [10.1080/09654313.2013.862518](https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2013.862518)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2013.862518>



Published online: 13 Mar 2014.



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Peripheralization: Theoretical Concepts Explaining Socio-Spatial Inequalities

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(Received August 2013; accepted November 2013)

ABSTRACT *The current increase in socio-spatial inequalities in Europe has led to a revival of the terms “peripheralization” and “marginalization” in spatial research. In contrast to the geographical notion of a “periphery”, which is synonymous with distance to a centre and being situated on the fringes of a city, region or nation, research on “peripheralization” describes the production of peripheries through social relations and their spatial implications. The main part of the article provides a critical review of theoretical concepts which attempt to explain socio-spatial disparities between centralization and peripheralization processes. This includes theories of economic polarization, social inequality and political power. Building on this, a multidimensional concept of socio-spatial polarization is outlined, one which comprises processes of centralization and peripheralization in economic, social and political dimensions. Finally, implications are drawn for spatial planning regarding the polarization between metropolitan and non-metropolitan regions and areas for further research are highlighted.*

Introduction

In recent decades, socio-economic inequalities have become increasingly apparent at all—international, national, regional and local—scales in Europe. A large number of European countries are characterized by a polarization between dynamic, growing metropolitan areas and rural or old industrial regions experiencing processes of shrinkage and decline. It is not only great metropolises such as London or Paris that are booming as a result of an influx of migrants, equity investments and the expansion of urban infrastructure (e.g. airports and rapid transit systems). Many Eastern European capitals such as Bratislava, Warsaw, Budapest and Prague are undergoing rapid expansion as well. The downside of these centralization dynamics, however, is that a growing number of towns and regions are increasingly “left behind”. This is true of sparsely populated rural areas, but also and in particular the old industrialized regions of Europe (e.g. Northern France,

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Northern England, Ruhr, etc.) and many smaller and secondary cities. The Territorial Agenda 2020 of the European Union (EU) states explicitly that “the core-periphery division is still present” and that it is important “to avoid polarization between capitals, metropolitan areas and medium-sized towns on the national scale”. However, increasing inequalities are also ever more apparent within the prosperous metropolises and have led to a growing gap between rich and poor neighbourhoods. In some cases, a spatial concentration of socially marginalized groups occurs. Within academic research, this increase in socio-spatial inequalities is reflected in the growing use of terms such as “peripheralization” and “marginalization”.

Against this background, the article provides a critical review of concepts of peripheralization, reflecting on how an analytical approach to understanding the “production” of peripheries can best be developed. By contrasting “peripheralization” with the more established approach of “periphery”, basic terminology is defined in the first section. The main approaches relevant to the description and explanation of peripheries are summarized in the second section. This includes structural theories of economic polarization, social inequality and political power. Drawing on the literature survey, a multidimensional concept is outlined, one which comprises processes of centralization and peripheralization in economic, social and political dimensions. The importance for spatial planning is emphasized, with regard to the centralization processes in metropolitan regions that can produce peripheralization in non-metropolitan regions, in the third section. The paper concludes with areas for further research in the fourth section.

“Periphery” and “Peripheralization”

The term “periphery” stems from the field of mathematics and has, since antiquity, been associated with the perimeter of a circle (Latin: *peripheria*; Greek: *periphēreia*). The attribute “peripheral” (Late Latin: *peripherēs*; Greek: *peripherēs*) has also been used in space physics in the sense of “perimetric, turning” (Vogt, 2009). From the beginning of the twentieth century, the term periphery was adopted in geography, and later also sociology and other disciplines, to denote “radius” or “fringe”. “Peripheral” became a synonym for “situated on the fringe”. Peripheries were defined as outskirts, determined by their distance to a centre—the greater the distance from the centre, the more peripheral the location. This understanding of a periphery emanates from “pre-given spaces”, which have social implications. In large part, the concept is applied in geography and spatial planning to sparsely populated rural regions, border regions or the suburban fringes of cities. Excluded are larger cities because within this notion cities are defined as centres. The concept of “periphery” as a remote location implies nearly static conditions for actors because distances to centres and population densities are hard to change in a short period.

Within spatial research, this traditional understanding of peripheries, based on distances to the centre, has increasingly been complemented by a new, process-centred perspective, expressed in the term “peripheralization” (Nitz, 1997; Keim, 2006; Herrschel, 2011; Lang, 2012; Fischer-Tahir & Naumann, 2013). Table 1 summarizes the main differences between the notions of “periphery” and “peripheralization”.

The peripheralization approach describes “social relations” which have spatial implications. Here, the dynamic processes through which peripheries actually emerge become the focus. This may include political, social, economic or communicative processes. Peripheralization can be applied to any spatial type. Hence, peripheries can be

Table 1. Periphery and peripheralization in comparison

Periphery	Peripheralization
<i>Pre-given spaces—with social implications</i> Fringes, edges, outskirts, borders	<i>Social relations—with spatial implications</i> “Production” of peripheries
<i>Status: static</i>	<i>Processes: dynamic</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance to centres • Remote location • Sparse population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political • Economic • Social • Communicative
<i>Fields of application: non-urban</i>	<i>Fields of application: open</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural regions • Border regions • Suburban fringes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing countries • Urban regions and cities • Rural (non-metropolitan) regions • Urban neighbourhoods
<i>Conditions for actors: fixed</i>	<i>Conditions for actors: changeable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined by structural deficits • Periphery as “destiny” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of periphery in a system changes • Actor networks matter

situated in the geographical centre of a city, region and country or on their fringes. Peripheralization can also be applied to any spatial scale: at the macro scale to developing countries, at the meso scale to non-metropolitan regions or urban regions and on the micro scale to urban neighbourhoods. All this shows that processes of peripheralization must be considered not only in relation to centralization, they exist on and between different spatial scales. Another important difference is: the conditions for actors seem changeable. The role of a periphery within a socio-spatial system may change, therefore actor networks matter. Apart from spatial inequalities, centres and peripheries are also determined by temporal inequalities. Peripheries do not have to remain peripheries forever. Historical research has addressed the different times and paces of development in centres and peripheries—the perception, from the centre, that peripheries are “backward” or “underdeveloped”.

This outlined understanding of “peripheralization” is very close to the geographical notions of “marginalization” and “marginality” (see Danson & De Souza, 2012). Within the International Geographical Union, a Commission on Issues of Geographical Marginality understands marginality as a multidimensional process, which covers aspects of inadequate integration, lower development and economic, social, political and cultural disadvantages (Jones, Leimgruber, & Nel, 2007).

Theoretical Approaches: Economic Polarization, Social Inequality and Political Power

How can different concepts contribute to an advanced understanding and explanation of “peripheralization”? In the following, three theoretical approaches will be discussed, which all start from a structural perspective includes: economic polarization, social inequality and political power. The social construction of peripheries via communicative discourses (see Meyer & Miggelbrink, 2013) will not be considered. The following literature survey is necessarily selective and focus on main explanatory modes and authors. The three approaches are assessed according to the following key questions: On which “spatial

scale” are peripheries defined? On the basis of which “processes” is the development of peripheries explained? What “relationship” between centres and peripheries is constructed in the process? Finally, what are the conceptual “weaknesses” of the approaches?

Economic Polarization Theory: Lack of Innovation

In Economic Geography in the 1950s, polarization theories emerged as a critical response to the neoclassical theories, according to which regions would converge towards a common equilibrium of productivity and wealth (Myrdal, 1957; Hirschman, 1958). In contrast to these ideas, polarization theories identified an increase in inequalities between regions (theories of sectoral polarization will not be considered here). Cumulative processes of growth and shrinkage between regions are explained with reference to the principle of circular causation. Growth processes in the centres are linked to shrinking processes in the peripheries via the interregional mobility of people, goods and capital.

John Friedmann’s “Theory of polarized development” (Friedmann, 1973) differentiates between “core regions” and “peripheral regions”. Core regions are the centres of technological, economic and social innovation. Peripheral regions are all other areas. Cores and peripheries constitute a spatial system centred on the poles of intense innovation and weak innovation. Friedmann argues that the polarized development of centres and peripheries is the outcome of self-reinforcing dynamics. He differentiates between domination effects (the extraction of resources from peripheries), information effects (the higher density of information in the centres), psychological effects (the higher density of interaction in the centres), modernization effects (more liberal values, attitudes and institutions in the centres), coupling effects (innovations create new markets in centres) and production effects (cost reduction through innovations in the centres). Through combining a consideration of economic and political factors, this theory represents a complex approach to apprehending the emergence of peripheries.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the concepts of “growth poles” and “growth centres” were added to polarization theories. These are related to the spatial scale of cities and their surroundings. A growth pole results from the advantages cities have as agglomerations, their density of services and activities. An agglomeration provides a context conducive to innovations, which in turn attracts more activities and reinforces the agglomeration (Lasuén, 1973). In this way, cities further extend their advantages over rural regions, which become peripheral.

New Economic Geography has added further depth to polarization theories through incorporating transport costs and historical development paths in discussions of centre–periphery relationships (Krugman, 1991). But in the following period, the dichotomy between centre and periphery was questioned and considered dubious. The assumption of centre–periphery concepts was criticized on the grounds that peripheries are disadvantaged in terms of higher transport and distance costs and weak agglomeration advantages. These factors, it is argued, have become less important as a result of economic structural change and technological innovations such as information and communication technologies and the emergence of polycentric developments (Copus, 2001). Following the notion of an “aspatial peripherality”, agglomeration effects lost importance, while spatial proximity and networks gained more interest (Copus, 2001). Over the last decade, economists have used “knowledge economy” as a descriptive term for post-industrial, service-based societies. The growth of this economy is driven by highly qualified

business services (e.g. banking, consulting, marketing and legal services). Because the assumption is prevalent that these knowledge services are highly concentrated in metropolitan regions (Crone, 2012), the centralization through attracting people, economic productivity and infrastructures determines processes of peripheralization (Keim, 2006, p. 3). Therefore, we can see a “revival” of polarization trends with the emergence of the knowledge economy. If that is true, the current metropolitanization of the knowledge economy creates new peripheries, which have been labelled negatively as “non-metropolitan regions” (Herrschel, 2012; Lang, 2012).

A key insight of economic polarization theories is that peripheries are seen as weakly innovative because their workforce is less qualified compared to the centres of the economy. This is a well-known deficit of de-industrialized cities and regions. Therefore, the “lack of innovation” is a core factor, one which explains the economic processes of peripheralization. A general weakness of polarization theories is that the principle of circular causation is often too rigid and clear-cut. The underlying assumption, that in peripheries everything is in decline due to a loss of migration and investments, neglects the possibility of a “de-peripheralization” or “re-centralization”. In consequence, historical turning points, such as the descent of centres and rise of peripheries to new centres (Nitz, 1997), cannot be explained.

Social Inequality Theories: Marginality and Poverty

Other explanations of peripheralization can be found in sociological research on inequality. In general, however, sociological research in this area is dealing less with “peripherality” and more with “marginality”. This is because sociologists are much less concerned with physical-spatial dimensions and have mostly directed their core focus to social differences. Following a sociological understanding, “marginality” describes social groups on the fringes of a society—not necessarily on the fringes of a city, a region or a country. Billson suggests that in sociology marginality is applied in three different ways: as cultural marginality, as social role marginality and as structural marginality (Billson, 2005). Especially the latter strand of research explains social marginality with reference to exclusion and a lack of power and participation (Bernt & Colini, 2013).

Generally, sociological approaches place more emphasis on the processes that lead to the production of socio-spatial disadvantages. In his political sociology of social inequality, Kreckel develops the centre–periphery notion to outline social inequalities. He describes peripheral positions as those structurally embedded conditions which lead to disadvantages for the persons and groups concerned in terms of the accessibility of desirable material and/or symbolic goods and the scope for autonomous action (Kreckel, 2004, p. 43). Peripheral positions can emerge in local, regional, national and global structural relations, all of which are interlinked (Kreckel, 2004, p. 43).

However, most sociological concepts of marginality are linked to the micro scale of urban neighbourhoods. Social marginalization within cities is mainly defined by one factor: poverty. Urban margins are poor groups, disadvantaged by a low level of education, low income or a high level of unemployment. A famous writer on urban marginality is the French Sociologist Wacquant (1999, 2008). His approach of “advanced marginality” explains the emergence of disadvantaged neighbourhoods in a multidimensional way and consists of four dynamics: (1) macro-social: the resurgence of social inequality, (2) economic: the mutation of wage labour, (3) political: the reconstruction of welfare

states and (4) spatial: concentration and stigmatization (Wacquant, 1999). This approach argues that a polarity between affluent and impoverished neighbourhoods is a permanent characteristic of contemporary cities. Critiques of Wacquant's work were apparent mainly regarding the lack of preciseness and generalizability of his arguments and his ideological tendency, which underplay the role of politics (see Bernt & Colini, 2013).

Summarizing, it can be stated that in sociological inequality studies “marginalization” or “peripheralization” are clearly a social relation with spatial implications. This social relation is described as a polarity between affluent and impoverished neighbourhoods. Urban marginality is spatialized by a concentration of poor people within cities, which in some cases may be stigmatized as “ghettos”, “slums” or “banlieus”. A major insight of sociological concepts is that *peripheries are poor*, in relation to the average socio-spatial unit. Impoverishment is produced in a multidimensional way which includes macro-social, economic, political and spatial processes. Poverty as a social characteristic of urban marginality may also be transferable to the regional scale, where peripheralized communities and households are experiencing impoverishment, as a result of deindustrialization, demographic shrinkage, lack of investment and out-migration of higher qualified people. An important weakness of most sociological approaches is that the terms centre and periphery are defined only vaguely and the causal relationship between affluent and impoverished neighbourhoods remains unclear.

Political Power Theories: Dependency and Exclusion

In political science theories, the relation between centres and peripheries is classically one of power and domination (Gottmann, 1980; Wellhofer, 1989). Power is probably one of the most fundamental concepts in political science, but has multiple faces and is difficult to catch. The understanding of power in politics has evolved to become more and more complex. Starting with the principal dimension of decision-making (Dahl, 1957), understandings of power have been widened through the consideration of the control over agenda-setting, which includes non-decision-making (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970). Further, a third dimension of power was added by Lukes (2005), which describes the influence on people, when the dominated acquiesce in their domination (see Haugaard, 2002). Regarding concepts that try to explain peripheries in terms of political power, there is the long tradition of “Dependency theory”. This is a school of thought that attempts to explain the “underdevelopment” of regions and countries within the capitalist world economy. Emerging in Latin America during the 1960s, these theories have argued that there is a power asymmetry between developed and underdeveloped states. “Underdevelopment” is explained with reference to the neo-colonial “domination” of the periphery by capitalistic metropolis. Following them, peripheral states are seen as dependent on the politics of centres and disadvantaged by an unequal exchange in trade between low-value resources and high-value goods. Wallerstein picked up this notion in his World-System-Theory (Wallerstein, 1974). According to him, the capitalist world economy is divided into three layers: cores/centres, semi-peripheries and peripheries. Centres are politically strong states with high productivity of higher value goods. Peripheries are politically weak states with a basic level of production. Semi-peripheries are states between these poles stabilizing the system by balancing the opposites.

Later, those global theories of dependency were transferred to the regional scale within national states. The Historian Nolte (1991) coined the term “internal peripheries”. In

Friedmann's above-mentioned "Theory of polarized development", he even speaks of centres using their power to ensure the "organized dependency" (Friedmann, 1973, p. 51) of the peripheries. The political relation between centres and peripheries is marked by conflicts between central and peripheral elites. This conflict can have four possible outcomes: suppression of counter elites, neutralization, co-optation of counter elites in the periphery or successful replacement of established authorities (Friedmann, 1973, p. 51). Friedmann's definition of power referred to the first dimension of decision-making: "To have power is to exercise a measure of autonomy in decisions and to have the ability to carry out these decisions" (Friedmann, 1973, p. 48).

A second key term in the political science literature addressing peripheralization is "exclusion". The political sociologist Kreckel defines a peripheral position as "exclusion from dominating resources of power and (...) insufficient possibilities, abilities or willingness to create counter power" (Kreckel, 2004, p. 44). A direct link between processes of peripheralization and exclusion is outlined in governance research (Herrschel, 2011). Herrschel refers to regional scales within the EU. The approach differentiates between two types of peripherality: spatial and network. Both types can overlap. Herrschel defines the "exclusion from networks" (Herrschel, 2011, p. 86) as a central characteristic of peripheralization. This exclusion approach focuses on political power through decision-making processes.

As a result, marginalised actors, in their varied forms, may find it difficult to join, so as not to upset the existing relationships and balances of power negotiated between those who are part of the system and thus "included" in the process of shaping and implementing decisions and control, and those who are not. (Herrschel, 2011, p. 98f)

In this way, Herrschel explains peripheralization primarily with reference to political exclusion, based on an understanding of power within a decision-making process and control over the political agenda-setting. Using this understanding of power, Herrschel does not, however, directly address which political actors and networks exclude others within which decision-making processes. There is also no discussion of peripheral elites' powers to resist and the relationship between centres and peripheries in political systems.

From a political science perspective, processes of peripheralization and marginalization are mainly associated with power in decision-making process and control over agenda-setting. At the same time, more recent contributions in political science and planning studies emphasize exclusion from networks and resources of power as an indication of processes of peripheralization. The main message from political science theories is: "peripheries are powerless". They are excluded from decision-making centres and from actor networks that also have decision-making power (Kuehn & Bernt, 2013). However, one drawback of power theories is the restriction on conflicting relations between centres and peripheries. In developed states, conflict between the centre and the periphery tends to diminish when government succeeds in gaining legal grounding for its policies (Claval, 1980). A simple dualism of centre (power) and periphery (powerlessness) neglects the variety of forms of political negotiation apparent in welfare and federal states and democracies. Further, the argument on political "exclusion" needs to be questioned at least in systems of representative democracy. Indeed, it should be seen as an empirical question, which resistance to power and the voices peripheral elites have in the political centres of decision-making.

Towards a Multidimensional Concept of Peripheralization

To summarize the reviewed literature briefly, the approach on peripheralization is

- *relational*: it is linked to the complementary notion of centralization within a socio-spatial system
- *process-centred*: it is focused on the dynamics of the rise and fall of spaces instead of static locations of remoteness,
- *multidimensional*: it is comprised of economic, social and political dimensions (as well as communicative dimensions, which was not discussed),
- *multi-scalar*: it is discerned at and between different spatial scales, from global to sub-local and
- *temporal*: the role of a periphery may change in long-term perspective and a “de-peripheralization” (or “re-centralization”) is possible.

This list of characteristics may lead to the conclusion that peripheralization is a “fuzzy concept”, which is lacking clarity, has multiple meanings and is difficult to test (Crone, 2012, p. 50). Besides all the conceptual differences in economic, social and political explanations, there are enough similarities between them to provide some starting points for a more comprehensive approach. These are the notion that peripheralization should be viewed as a “multidimensional process” of demotion or downgrading of a socio-spatial unit in relation to other socio-spatial units, one that can only be explained with reference to the interaction of economic, social and political dimensions. A further starting point to operationalize the theoretical approaches for empirical research is the insight that peripheralization is a “social relation with spatial implications” (see Table 1). If we accept these points, it is necessary (a) to distinguish main economic, social and political dimensions, (b) to describe concrete processes which lead to the production of peripheries and (c) to define relationships of socio-spatial inequalities between centres and peripheries.

Processes of Centralization and Peripheralization

Table 2 gives the main results of the literature survey, offering ideal types of polarization processes. These poles must not necessarily be understood as binary dichotomies; they may also constitute continuums with different degrees of centrality/peripherality.

In many cases, there may be interplay between economic, social and political processes that can lead to self-reinforcing effects, but there are also examples which show that these dimensions can remain apart. For example, the German capital of Berlin is a centre of political power, but not yet of economic power, because few headquarters of larger companies and banks are located here.

Regarding the spatialization of social inequalities, the approaches discussed showed that processes of peripheralization should not simply be thought of in terms of spatial distance to the centre. On the continental scale, shrinking, deindustrialized and poor regions appear in the core of the European “Pentagon” (e.g. the Ruhr area) and on the regional scale, processes of peripheralization can occur in the geographical centre of a country (e.g. the Midlands of England) as well as on the remote fringes (e.g. the North of Scandinavia). On a

Table 2. Socio-spatial processes of centralization and peripheralization

Processes dimensions	Centralization	Peripheralization
Economic	<i>Innovation dynamics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high-qualified work • growth of employment (business services) 	<i>Lack of innovation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low-qualified work • decline of employment (deindustrialization)
Social	<i>Wealth</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-migration • Hegemony 	<i>Poverty</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-migration • Stigmatization
Political	<i>Power</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making and control (autonomy) • Inclusion in networks 	<i>Powerlessness</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependency (in decision-making and control) • Exclusion from networks

local scale, “inner peripheries” can emerge in the historical centre of a city (e.g. Downtown in Detroit) or on its outskirts (e.g. the Banlieus in Paris).

Relevance for Spatial Planning: Metropolization and Peripheralization

Following the above theories, the relation of centre and periphery is less a spatial fact than a social configuration resting on unequal power relations which lead to uneven spatial development. The political dimension is characterized by power in the centre and powerlessness at the periphery. This questions the political role of spatial planning in defining centres as growth poles and balancing territorial development between centralization and peripheralization.

In the field of spatial planning the importance of a possible polarization between centralization and peripheralization has been shown, particularly with regard to the construction of metropolises and metropolitan regions. As a means to avert any further centralization in the Western and Central European core area (the “Pentagon”), the EU’s Territorial Agenda 2020 strives for polycentric and balanced spatial development. A polarization between capitals, metropolitan areas and medium-sized towns on the national scale is to be avoided. At the same time, some member countries use their spatial planning policies to designate their metropolitan regions as a new category in order to promote them as growth centres in the global competition. Apart from their function to serve as hubs for innovation and competition or as infrastructural gateways (e.g. airports), these metropolitan regions are primarily characterized by their political decision-making and control functions. This especially privileges both capitals as the seats of national governments as well as international companies’ headquarters. In eastern Central European countries, we can observe a particularly pronounced divergence in the development of capital regions and other regions or cities today. According to ESPON & European Institute of Urban Affairs (2012, p. 58) report, the “over-concentration in capitals will weaken more peripheral areas because they will not have buoyant second tier cities and support services”. This raises the question as to what extent policies of metropolization tend to give rise to the peripheralization of “non-metropolitan” regions (Herrschel, 2011; Lang, 2012).

Conclusion and Open Questions

The paper concludes by outlining some research gaps and open questions that future research should address to further develop knowledge regarding processes of peripheralization.

Periphery as Location—Peripheralization as Process

In recent work, the conventional understanding of peripheries (based on distance from a centre) has been increasingly broadened to include a process-related perspective. As a result, the dynamics through which peripheries are formed has become more of a concern than rigid definitions of “remote location”. However, the relationship between a peripheral location and processes of peripheralization remains unclear in research (Herrschel, 2011, p. 90). To what extent do spatial and social factors determine processes of peripheralization? How can the spatial dimension be integrated in an account of unequal power relations, without a physical-spatial bias emerging?

Relationships of Centres and Peripheries

As explained above, peripheries and peripheralization are relational terms, linked to the complementary notions of centres and processes of centralization. The emergence of peripheries is thus not only the structural opposite of processes of centralization, but periphery and centre mutually influence each another. While this link is clear on a theoretical level, the exact way this relationship is conducted often remains unclear in empirical work. Which factors lead to a polarization between centralization and peripheralization under which conditions?

Actors of Peripheralization

The social production approach to peripheries implies that actions influence the structure. But which actors “produce” peripheralization? Which resources do they draw on and in what ways? By and large, it is not clear who the actual actors of peripheralization are—who is playing these roles in decision-making processes in the economy and politics?

Power and Powerlessness

“Power” is an incredibly nebulous term in peripheralization research, one that is used frequently, but with little uniformity. The lack of clarity about the actors of peripheralization is partly caused by the conceptual vagueness surrounding the term “power”. The relation of centre and periphery is less a spatial fact than a social configuration resting on unequal power relations and leading to uneven spatial development. It is characterized by power in the centre and powerlessness at the periphery. However, the question of what the power of the centre or the powerlessness of the periphery consists of is never clearly answered. Against this background, the advantages which centres enjoy over peripheries should be better clarified. How far do capitals, where the seat of authority is located, enjoy advantages the rest of the territory does not? Seen from the perspective of the periphery: What powers to resist do peripheral elites have in democratic systems?

Ways of Dealing with Peripheralization

Closely related to the power issue, there are research gaps with regard to the options available to actors affected by processes of peripheralization. Many researchers suggest the formation of endogenous governance networks in order to reduce the exogenous dependency on the centres (Copus, 2001; Herrschel, 2011). However, depending on the definition of periphery, the affected actors are considered as disadvantaged, powerless and lacking innovation capacity. Given this, it remains quite unclear what the actual potentials and limits of endogenous strategies to cope with peripheralization are? How far do peripheral actors remain dependent on the resources of the centres and how can they realistically become more independent? Have vertical networks linked to the centres more capacity? And what possibilities do those disadvantaged by these processes have to improve their position?

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