

7 New working spaces in rural areas

Designing a research agenda for regional sovereignty in post-pandemic times

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Introduction

In Switzerland and Germany, as in many other European countries, rural development has been significantly challenged by various crises in the last decade. At the same time, digitization policies and smart country initiatives are aiming to reduce regional disparities. However, people and institutions are occupied with ongoing regional changes and adaptation processes, even more so during the COVID-19 pandemic (Rose-Redwood et al., 2020; Willi et al., 2020). In particular, small businesses, social enterprises, and new civic initiatives have had ongoing difficulties coping with legitimized top-down forms of regional development and top-down crisis regulations. Furthermore, the recent effects of political regulations during the pandemic have paradoxically challenged the social networks of new working environments. On the one hand, the effects of social distancing have largely limited or even restricted face-to-face encounters and social interaction. On the other hand, less dense rural areas could cope more easily and more effectively design new spaces and working environments due to small businesses, personal networks, and existing social trust among regional users and established collaborators.

Consequently, ongoing transformations challenge the ability of regions to shape their development and the way in which they do so. Especially in rural areas, regions are no longer able – or perhaps were never able – to govern and manage their development independent of external forces and international trends. In short, regional sovereignty is at stake when discussing rural development during the pandemic. This article therefore uses the debate on regional sovereignty to discuss the future of new working spaces in rural areas in the post-pandemic period.

We relate new working arrangements to questions of regional sovereignty in the context of rural policies. We investigate sovereignty between the debate on collaborative governance on the one hand and the transformative capacity of local working space initiatives, the global dominance of the digital realm, and social infrastructure on the other. Based on this asymmetric relationship, we first propose conceptual elements of how to analyze regional sovereignty

during the pandemic by considering the recent role of new working spaces and expectations/assumptions about them.

In the following sections, our interest lies in discussing how regional sovereignty can be conceptualized to better understand the relationship between new working spaces and regional development. In doing so, we perceive new working spaces as a recent phenomenon that plays a growing role as social infrastructure aside from its role as tech-based digital infrastructure aimed at supporting regional development.

New working practices in rural areas and their regional effects

Defining new working spaces

New working and coworking spaces have long been considered an urban phenomenon (Lange & Wellmann, 2009), although the movement has spread to the countryside in recent years (Bähr et al., 2020). Thanks to the digital transformation, people increasingly have the option of deciding where they want to work, flexibly and on an ad-hoc basis. New places of work in rural areas are benefitting from this development (Koster et al., 2020). At the same time, urban business models cannot be easily transferred to rural communities. One of the reasons is lower demand due to the lack of agglomeration and urbanization economies. Nevertheless, coworking has found market opportunities and niches to develop in rural areas as well (Bähr et al., 2020). Different founders, target groups, and business models make it possible for each region to have the right characteristics to ensure economic operation in the long term. The functions and uses of new working spaces also cover a much wider range than in the city. They not only provide infrastructure that is shared by several people, they also act as basic services by integrating offerings such as cultural events, post offices, day-care centres, or village shops. This enriches the quality of life locally and contributes to sustainable regional development (Fuzy, 2015).

The users of rural coworking spaces are also far more heterogeneous than those in cities (Bähr et al., 2020). In the countryside, it is not only representatives of the original milieu of the cultural and creative industries who come together; instead, coworking spaces here reflect the breadth of society. Their target groups, according to Bähr et al. (2020), range from academics to craftsmen to local people and teachers.

Five types of new working spaces

By screening recent debates on new coworking spaces, we identified five generic types of new (co-)working spaces, considering publicly funded coworking networks and their policy documents in Germany (e.g. Bähr et al., 2020; BMEL, 2021) and Switzerland. The two countries are very comparable

due to the distinct geographical patterns in both countries, their decentralized spatial structures, very heterogeneous socioeconomic rural development, strong federal- or canton/state-level policies, and similar trends during the pandemic to use new work options in decentralized spaces away from city agglomerations. Summarizing the findings of Bähr et al. (2020) and BMEL (2021), we present the following typology of new coworking spaces in peripheral regions.

Classic Coworking: According to BMEL (2021), a social environment is the scarcest resource in the countryside. Rural coworking spaces therefore hold clear advantages over private home offices. Communities are the real glue and elementary building blocks for long-term successful coworking spaces. With their clear focus on basic infrastructure, classic spaces can usually support themselves without subsidies after a start-up phase and can also cover their costs with a small floor area. Due to weaker demand in some places, rural coworking spaces require less space on average than their urban counterparts; they are usually less than 500 square metres in size.

Commuter Port: New work locations along popular commuting routes address the needs of businesses and employees. Since many metropolitan areas are struggling with challenges such as traffic congestion, driving bans, and skyrocketing residential and commercial rents, working in the periphery is of interest. As a result, more and more families, young professionals, and people just starting their careers are moving to the outskirts of major cities where they can live more cheaply and possibly closer to nature. However, this often means that they must commute daily to reach their place of work. To counteract this, commuter havens are being built in the suburbs of major cities, for example, Ammersee Denkerhaus in Dießen near Munich (Germany). The equipment and premises of commuter ports are basically comparable to classic coworking spaces, but the business model of commuter ports differs in that it focuses more on corporate customers with larger space requirements for several users.

Bottom Hub: Idea-driven, private initiatives for collaborative work are springing up all over rural areas. Deriving from the bottom-up principle, these are known as 'bottom hubs'. A manageable group of no more than eight people who regularly use the coworking space, low turnover, independently operated community management, and comparatively small premises of around 150 square metres are characteristic features of bottom hubs. One of these bottom hubs is Tokunft Hus in Bücken in Lower Saxony (Germany). The equipment is based on what is offered at classic coworking spaces, which the founders are often familiar with from their own use. They are regularly on site and form the communicational centre: community management in an honorary capacity. Bottom hubs share the values of coworking: openness, collaboration, sustainability, community, and accessibility. They develop a space for regular open events as well as other offers for the environment.

Retreat Spaces: When coworking alone does not promise a viable business model, an additional hotel function is considered an option for staying longer. In this way, retreat operators often generate two thirds of their turnover and

create the personnel basis for further offers. These retreats – such as *cobaas* in Preetz, Schleswig-Holstein – attract mainly urban-based target groups and companies from larger city agglomerations. Due to increasingly decentralized work organization, there is a new need for meeting places close to nature for project work outside classic offices. Many teams and their knowledge workers prefer spaces they can rent temporarily to concentrate on new concepts, strategies, and team building. Retreats also target freelancers, students, and company founders. The duration of the stay can range from a few days to several weeks.

Workation: The combination of work and leisure is referred to as a ‘workation’. People from the digital industry are taking advantage of the offer and spending a limited amount of time in workation spaces; from long weekends to extended parental leave, the duration varies greatly. Attractive vacation regions can thus develop new target groups beyond package and individual tourism. The target groups are familiar with the coworking landscape and are discerning; balky Internet and poor equipment are quickly acknowledged with a critical assessment. In contrast to the remote retreat spaces, workation offers are found in tourist hotspots all over the world, and increasingly also in Germany, such as ‘Project Bay’ on the island of Rügen or the sailing area ‘Coworking Schlei’. At these vacation spots with well-developed infrastructure, overnight accommodations are available in abundance, which is why, in contrast to retreat spaces, they are not always part of the business model.

The potential role of new working spaces for regional development

New working spaces have gained momentum during the pandemic, supporting economic and infrastructure development in rural regions. Much is known about the complexity of regional economic transitions (Turok et al., 2018), the role of technology transfer (Leydesdorff et al., 2002), and the role of entrepreneurship (Baumgartner et al., 2013) in regional development. However, the recent euphoria surrounding the potential positive effects of new working spaces for rural areas may be too simplistic and not valid for every region.

We observe that new working spaces are increasingly spreading in rural areas. Moreover, interest is growing among policymakers to promote new working spaces in rural areas as a means to increase the attractiveness of their location and living conditions (SECO, 2018). The promotion of economic development in rural areas, e.g. the digital village initiative in Bavaria, focuses on the spread of information and communication technologies, especially the provision of ultra-high broadband. New working spaces in rural areas are often promoted with the high quality of nature and landscape amenities. These policy campaigns implicitly suggest that new working spaces improve living and working conditions and reduce car traffic and commutes to bigger cities. However, it is still not clear what the socioeconomic implications of new working spaces are for rural areas, since related research has focused mainly on urban areas.

New working spaces contribute to the transformation of rural economies and societies. These transformations imply risks and opportunities, as well

as positive and negative effects. The degree to which rural economies might benefit from new working spaces remains an open and controversial debate (Gandini, 2015). According to the scholarly literature and debates in practice, we identified five socioeconomic implications of new working spaces in rural areas.

- 1 Digital skills and access to digital infrastructure: New working spaces provide access to digital technologies (e.g. high-speed Internet, computer equipment, 3D printers), which is essential for developing and mastering digital skills and building resilient rural communities that are attractive for people and businesses (Roberts et al., 2017; SECO, 2018). Further potential is hidden and depends on the characteristics of new working spaces, such as user policies, access for the local population, services and training, and events and networking opportunities. The lack of digital skills and training may exclude the rural population from fully exploiting the opportunities of digital progress (Philip et al., 2017). In addition, the lack of qualified experts in rural areas prevents knowledge-intensive businesses from settling in these areas. Other scholars explicitly highlight the potential of new working spaces to facilitate the acquisition of digital skills by offering adequate training and education (Spinuzzi, 2012).
- 2 Economic potential: On the one hand, new working spaces can create new opportunities for businesses, improve accessibility to products and services, increase the attractiveness of places to live and work, and enhance the quality of life. On the other hand, new working spaces require new technological infrastructure and skilled personnel; they challenge established business models in agriculture, forestry, tourism, and hydropower, and question traditional rural society in general. New working spaces can increase production in rural areas.
- 3 Community building: Studies have indicated that new working spaces have the potential to contribute to community building in rural areas beyond their immediate tenants and thereby increase the attractiveness of the location (Fuzi, 2015). After all, some new working spaces hold regular events for local entrepreneurs, advising start-ups and facilitating collaboration among local businesses.
- 4 Public services: New working spaces offer the potential to provide additional services beyond the business and working place. These public services include social services (childcare, school, and education), community services (seminars, facilities for local associations and initiatives, sports classes), and classic public services (e.g. postal and medical services). For instance, in the US, some retail companies offer medical self-screening tests, which can be performed independent of one's family doctor, thus contributing to alleviating the lack of medical care in rural areas (e.g. Pursuant Health, one-stop health self-screening kiosks located in US Walmart pharmacies). In Switzerland, schools in mountain areas are successfully addressing declining pupil numbers with

innovative approaches based on digital infrastructure and knowhow, as shown by gd-Schule in the canton of Valais.

- 5 Place attachment and place identity: New workspaces shape the identity of places and are, of course, shaped by the identity of the place. Exactly how these processes work is the object of ongoing research (Moscovitz, 2020; Zimmerbauer, 2011). Optimistically speaking, new working spaces have the potential to positively affect the perception of rural areas and improve people's place attachment or place identity.

Other implications of new working spaces include mobility (e.g. potential reduction of commuting and out-migration to urban places) and spatial planning (e.g. potential to re-use or to intensify the use of abandoned buildings and infrastructure). These implications show the potential and services, which can increase quality of life and make rural areas more attractive, diverse places for working and living.

New working spaces, regional sovereignty, and governance

Within the discourse on regional development, the scholarly debate regarding the sovereignty of places and spaces is usually associated with terms such as 'territorial sovereignty' or 'regional sovereignty' (Agnew, 2020). Sovereignty is inherently characterized by a spatial or geographical element. In policy studies and political geography, sovereignty is traditionally tied to state authority. We conceive nation states as sovereign states within specific borders, or we think of autonomous regions as sovereign political entities with specific judicial regions and sociocultural traditions (e.g. the Basque Country in Spain, Aosta Valley in Italy, Hong Kong in PRC).

Using first-hand observations of trends in pandemic-induced changing working practices, we discuss how a refined notion of regional sovereignty can be applied to the COVID-19 pandemic. With a newly framed concept of regional sovereignty, we can precisely classify the relationships between governance capacities in rural areas and new working arrangements and practices. This will contribute to a better understanding of the role of new and spatially relevant working patterns and their future performance. In doing so, we do not limit ourselves by focusing on sovereignty performed as infrastructural sovereignty and driven by technology (ICT, digitization). By extending (regional) sovereignty beyond its traditional political (Grimm, 2015) and technological (Couture & Toupin, 2019) discourse, we are interested in looking at the ways in which cities and regions practice sovereignty.

In this respect, local and regional sovereignty is about agency; empowerment and practices that foster self-determination and possibilities to act, due to the ever-changing importance of interaction between individuals, the political public, and governance (Ritzi & Zierold, 2019). More precisely, we do not conceptualize sovereignty with regard to aspects of control and (state) power

within a specific territory. We frame sovereignty as a concept that emphasizes the capacity to act, self-governance, and the enabling of actors and communities to make decisions for the collective interest. Accordingly, our interest lies in researching local and regional practices (forms, expressions) of self-organization, civic engagement, or local initiatives to deal with contemporary challenges. Understanding the ‘operation’ of sovereignty helps to propose ways to design sovereignty and shift sovereignty regimes. In this perspective, sovereignty as a concept is never territorially bound or fixed; rather, it is dynamic and fluid and needs to be built repeatedly.

Regional sovereignty is consequently a result of various governance arrangements that emerge over time and determine participation and self-determination. When we look at governance concepts, a basic component is the engagement of intermediaries between civil society, market, and politics. Intermediaries represent a very heterogeneous group composed of specific structures and logic with exceedingly diverse representatives (Kooiman, 2003). Therefore, general binding control and organizational solutions for all intermediaries do not appear to make much sense. The occupational biographies of freelancers and coworking/remote workers often reveal highly risky living conditions, even more so during the pandemic. This can also be assumed for intermediaries in view of the very broad demands made regarding their commitment. The small-scale, heterogeneous nature of these actors is based on a high degree of self-direction and self-responsibility. Because activities in flexible, informal networks seem to grow more relevant, questions about the management of control, goal achievement, and leadership in structurally unstable situations are emerging. Behind this lies the question of self-organization, collaborative governance, and self-determination as well as infrastructure and digital technologies that influence societal change.

New working practices and digital sovereignty

To address the potential of collaborative governance and intermediaries as catalysts for societal change in peripheral regions, we also consider the impact of the digital transformation on practices of self-organization, working, and networking. Possibilities for self-organization and participation have changed dramatically in recent decades, and socio-technical changes are transforming intermediaries and their everyday practices (Nitschke & Schweiger, 2021). On the one hand, the expansion of globalized ICT is a basic component that allows for new working practices and spaces, expanding the range and effectiveness of communication, collaboration, and engagement. Being digitally connected, however, does not necessarily convert into savvy use of digital technologies (Ragnedda, 2018).

Although information, access, and networking – the main promises of the networked society – still determine the ways we frame digital opportunities for collaboration and new work, questions of privacy, security, and data ownership have been reinforced in critical consideration (Couture & Toupin, 2019).

Urban coworking and new working spaces have long been considered the forerunners of a new working culture (Lange & Wellmann, 2009). They have been perceived as important constituents in the startup ecosystem and of digital collaboration and participation. Along with this assumption, the entanglements of new working and the digital transformation have long been dominated by technological optimism. However, research shows that individuals, communities, and regions that are socially and economically marginalized benefit less from the digital transformation and hardly participate digitally. This potentially leads to greater disadvantages and inequalities (Ragnedda, 2018; Eubanks, 2018). Against this backdrop, a new understanding of regional sovereignty with regard to digital sovereignty, since it has become a central issue in policy discourses on digital issues (Pohle & Thiel, 2021), might help address regional capacities to govern new working space development in the (post-)pandemic period.

In the last two decades, the term ‘digital sovereignty’ has been used as a normative concept to relate numerous forms of autonomy, self-determination, and independence to digital infrastructure and data (Couture & Toupin, 2019). Three main conceptual frames of digital sovereignty can be found in the literature. The first and main one deals with the state’s function to protect the privacy rights of its citizens and defend democratic procedures from manipulation and disinformation from outside (Couture & Toupin, 2019). Second, digital sovereignty is framed in terms of power relationships between the public and private sectors, with an increasing focus on dealing with the de facto market dominance of digital mega-platforms, since corporate sovereignty undermines democratic decision-making processes (Pohle & Thiel, 2020). The third frame of digital sovereignty considers digital self-determination and autonomy through collective and collaborative governance (Couture & Toupin, 2019), as is seen in new working spaces. The focus here lies on critical digital literacy to assert control over technologies and digital infrastructure. Understanding digital sovereignty from this democratic self-determination point of view means looking at the concept as a constantly developing process.

Previous arguments on a wider notion of sovereignty stress the importance of designing for digital participation and inclusion, since digital sovereignty is framed as a process, a practice that requires constant deliberation, re-negotiation of rights, and assessment of risks, opportunities, and capabilities (Pierri & Herlo, 2021). A balanced view of the effects of digitization in collaborative governance and regional sovereignty may be a key factor in advancing participation, democratic self-determination, and empowerment within peripheral areas.

As a conclusion to this section, we can state that digital sovereignty as a concept and design practice helps to address the challenges regarding the incremental power of digital technologies, not only as challenges, but also as potential drivers in peripheral areas. With all areas involved in digital technologies and the digital transformation, individuals, communities, and regions face manifold chances for their self-determination. Collaborative ecosystems experience an upswing; new creative, sharing, and digital economies evolve and boost digital

collaboration not only in urban agglomerations but also, as we have outlined, in peripheral areas. These new evolving working practices and their cooperation with the private sector and civil society need a closer look with respect to questions of ownership, trust, and privacy regarding digital technologies in the post-pandemic period.

The potential effects of new working spaces in rural areas

Advancing digital sovereignty as a design practice will lend support to the practitioner's role in countering a deterministic technology-driven perspective of societal challenges, especially in times of crisis. This is more important for digital-driven working spaces, where remote work based on sound working conditions and trustworthy digital infrastructures should be practiced. Questions about digital rights and the skill sets and literacy that people need to understand and control their data arise through the lens of digital sovereignty.

For new working practices to adequately address those questions, we agree with Ragnedda (2018) that critical digital literacy is needed, also with regard to the growing digital divide, which has become evident, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (van Deursen, 2020). The literature on the digital divide highlights that while the first and second levels of the digital divide address inequalities in access and use of the Internet, the third level refers to the tangible outcomes generated online that also carry social or economic value (van Deursen & Helsper, 2015).

New working spaces as potential drivers for rural development foster non-standard forms of work and collaborative governance in a networked society, but also an emerging global precariat. This has uncertain impacts on workers' social status and their basic rights, for example, social security. Against the backdrop of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the very question arises: How can individuals, communities, and regions respond to quickly changing digital landscapes and situations amid a crisis and benefit from the digital economy without falling into unintended inequalities and social consequences?

Reducing regional inequalities is a strategy to increase regional sovereignty. Therefore, to contextualize the role of new working spaces in the debate on growing digital inequality (Helsper & Eynon, 2013) and regional sovereignty (Agnew, 2020), regionalized social inequalities should be analyzed. The COVID-19 pandemic has enforced existing inequalities (Van Deursen, 2020). Those who were already relatively advantaged – members of flexible workspaces – have been more likely to take advantage of the information and communication opportunities provided by ICT. The crisis has also increased the varied landscape of (digital) inequalities, not only on a global level, but also regionally, where new nodes as working spaces have increased the socio-economic and digital divides. Ragnedda's analysis of the digital divide shows that skills and knowledge, as well as sociocultural and sociopolitical backgrounds, determine the way individuals can transform the digital experiences of their peer group into (regionally) relevant social outcomes (Ragnedda, 2018).

Debating questions of regional development and sovereignty is thus increasingly intertwined with questions of technical infrastructure, competencies, and opportunities to create benefits for the regional population at large (Barkan, 2015). It is even more important to identify drivers of digital access, participation, and skills in rural areas, and to design ways in which communities can take the initiative in tackling societal inequalities (Moscovitz, 2020). Otherwise, the fame of recent new working spaces is only as drivers for increased ‘rural gentrification’ (Smith, 2011).

The potential of collaborative informal practices

Following the idea of a more inclusive and integrated view of new coworkers and recent ‘avant-garde’ work possibilities in rural areas, their physical existence alone does not allow their impact for peripheral areas to be fully grasped. A closer look at their practices of collaborative commons, such as the sharing of makerspace infrastructure, shows that sharing and exchanging local knowledge creates new working ecologies in the broader rural areas around new working spaces. As a consequence, these practices and social exchange with the local population, local companies, and the local state, lead to an increased fostering of digital participation in local and regional communities. Accordingly, this might require rethinking and reconceptualizing the role of emerging bottom-up collaboration that illustrates a different take on how digital sovereignty can be grasped in rural areas.

Since the pandemic in 2020 and following the counter reaction to relocate work to peripheral working spaces to overcome either working from home or working in dense agglomerations, positive discourse on a more balanced core-periphery dichotomy has been observed. Among socioeconomic opportunities for rural areas, these shifting geographies also dynamize the question of how sovereignty and the emergence of new sovereignty practices is crucial for a better understanding of new forms of (post-)pandemic driven regionalization. As for new users in these working spaces, analyzing regional (trans)formations or the emergence of new options for rural regions uncovers the role and strategies of individual and collective private and public actors, organizations, and institutions regarding gains in distinct forms of regional sovereignty (see the case study on the governance of regional economic development in northwest England).

In the debate about new regionalism and the resurgence of regions, the social construction of these spatial units is often emphasized. With its fragmented complexity, regions are always in a state of evolution, even more so when federal- and canton-specific forms of regional oriented policies to fight the pandemic have made local and regional self-organization more dynamic (e.g. volunteer work, temporary changes in public spaces and infrastructure for vaccination).

While we perceive regions as fluid and relational, they can also be perceived as ‘soft spaces’, i.e. non-statutory or informal spaces or processes (Allmendinger

et al., 2015). At the same time, they are embedded in territorial boundaries and institutions as well as in scalar relationships with both local communities and the nation state (Jonas, 2011). Arguing on the regional scale, for example, in the case of innovative systems for a green economy (Droste et al., 2016), helps to link the goals and politics of sustainability with regions between territory and network. Networks and territories, as well as places and scales, are connected in regions through political practice (Goodwin, 2013).

From a collaborative governance perspective, this line of thinking leads to new working spaces being considered as integrated and relational nodes in a wider context, and unpacks their role of connection or disconnection to existing actors (local state) and temporary users (co-workers); new working spaces, thus, as new institutions. Since many new working spaces seem to be frequented and used by external temporary users, questions arise as to what extent they stabilize a (weak) level of regional sovereignty in rural areas or if they can further dynamize their potential in other ongoing regional economic activities.

Categories for analyzing local sovereignty practices in rural areas

In light of a new evaluation of rural areas from the point of view interrelating new working spaces and COVID-19, we argue for closer attention and reflection on how regional sovereignty can be conceptualized and grasped to analyze processes, practices, and procedures for performing sovereignty.

Therefore, as a summary, we propose three categories for analyzing local sovereignty practices. These categories are in line with our reading of the literature concerning shifting geographies of sovereignty.

- 1 As well as a practice-based view of ‘doing’ sovereignty, it is interesting to shed light on a procedural view – with observable practices – to show and reconstruct the procedural steps that have led to various – at least temporary – formations and configurations of new governance arrangements apart from those formalized and institutionalized in rural areas. Especially within the context of the pandemic, it is insightful when flexible arrangements have been invented or adapted from pre-COVID times, e.g. when neighbouring practices, collaborative initiatives, support coalitions, and public-private arrangements filled a systemic lack, not just before COVID-19, but especially during the pandemic. This is even more relevant for rural areas.
- 2 Along these lines, a wider spatial or geographical frame will be key when referring to subjective views on ‘doing’ space (spacing). Following Bourdieu’s notion of practice and spacing processes (Löw, 2008) – in the sense of how symbols, goods, and spatial bodies are arranged in time and space – we take the recent pandemic as a starting point and ask how relevant goods and infrastructures have been reconfigured and re-arranged according to new hygiene requirements. Space is then understood as socially

constructed and mediated through signs and symbols and communicated within various medialized infrastructures. A multiplicity of spatial arenas of negotiation opens and weakens the idea of a container-like ‘dominant official’ notion of space and opens new situational spaces of engagement in various shifting spatial contexts.

- 3 A key dimension of the ‘national’ sovereignty discourse introduced is its stable notion of scale. It is not only the pandemic but also new digital bottom-up collaborations that have pointed – of course with different motivation – to shifting and flexible arrangements for growing urgencies. Social issues, new collaborative networks and their agendas not only occur on stable, static scales (global); they also point to shifting and rather mobile spatial arrangements on non-hierarchical scales. We therefore present a third heuristic component: that of flexible spatial arrangements and geographies. While the explanatory dimension for understanding and framing ‘sovereignty’ has been grounded on hierarchical scale-oriented stable notions of rather fixed ‘container’ space, we have introduced ‘sovereignty’ as based on flexible procedural spatial configurations.

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