

Regionale Geographien | Regional Geographies

Florian Weber · Olaf Kühne ·
Julia Dittel *Editors*

Transformation Processes in Europe and Beyond

Perspectives for Horizontal
Geographies



Springer VS

Regionale Geographien | Regional Geographies

Series Editors

Olaf Kühne, Universität Tübingen | University of Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany

Florian Weber, Universität des Saarlandes | Saarland University, Saarbrücken, Saarland, Germany

Regionale Geographien/Regional Geographies

In den Raumwissenschaften hat in den letzten Jahrzehnten eine zunehmende Differenzierung und Spezialisierung stattgefunden. Viele der solchermaßen gewonnenen raumbezogenen Wissensbestände weisen große Potenziale hinsichtlich der Untersuchung von Wechselwirkungen auf unterschiedlichen räumlichen Maßstabsebenen auf. Denn eine solche Integration ist Aufgabe „Regionaler Geographien“, die lange Zeit wenig theoretisch gerahmt, deskriptiv bzw. eher im Sinne einer Darstellung von Ergebnissen der Spezialdisziplinen betrieben wurde. Die Reihe „Regionale Geographien/Regional Geographies“ hat sich zur Aufgabe gestellt, innovativen Beiträgen zu regionalgeographischer Forschung zu einer größeren Präsenz im Fachdiskurs und darüber hinaus zu verhelfen. Dabei werden sowohl Arbeiten zur theoretischen Begründung regionalgeographischer Forschungen und zu theoriegeleiteten Untersuchungen von Regionen als auch Arbeiten, die sich mit innovativen Darstellungsweisen regionalgeographischer Forschungsergebnisse befassen, präsentiert. Willkommen sind Monographien, Sammelbände, Habilitationsschriften sowie besonders gelungene Dissertationen. Publikationssprachen sind Deutsch und Englisch.

Herausgegeben im Auftrag der Akademie für geographische Regionalforschung von:

Prof. Dr. Dr. Olaf Kühne (Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen) & Jun.-Prof. Dr. Florian Weber (Universität des Saarlandes)

The spatial sciences have in recent decades undergone increasing specialization and differentiation. Many of the insights gained in this process possess considerable potential for the investigation of interactions on different spatial scales, generating the type of integrative perspective proper to regional geographies. However, this approach has long been pursued descriptively, in terms of the results of specialist subdisciplines, rather than within a theoretical framework of its own. The Regional Geographies / Regionale Geographien Series aims to raise the profile of innovative regional geographic research both within and beyond the specialist academic field. It will provide a platform not only for overarching discussions and specific applications of theory to regional geographic issues but also for methodologically innovative presentations of individual research results. The editors welcome monographs and collections, as well as postdoc and notable doctoral theses. Languages for publication are German and English.

Edited under the aegis of the Academy of Regional Studies by:

Prof. Dr. Dr. Olaf Kühne (University of Tübingen) & Junior Prof. Dr. Florian Weber (Saarland University)

Florian Weber · Olaf Kühne · Julia Dittel
Editors

Transformation Processes in Europe and Beyond

Perspectives for Horizontal
Geographies

 Springer VS

Editors

Florian Weber
Saarland University
Saarbrücken, Germany

Olaf Kühne
University of Tübingen
Tübingen, Germany

Julia Dittel
Saarland University
Saarbrücken, Germany

ISSN 2731-9792

ISSN 2731-9806 (electronic)

Regionale Geographien | Regional Geographies

ISBN 978-3-658-42893-8

ISBN 978-3-658-42894-5 (eBook)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-42894-5>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH, part of Springer Nature 2024

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors, and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Springer VS imprint is published by the registered company Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH, part of Springer Nature.

The registered company address is: Abraham-Lincoln-Str. 46, 65189 Wiesbaden, Germany

Paper in this product is recyclable.

Contents

Introduction

A Multi-Perspective Consideration of Transformation Processes in Europe and Beyond	3
Julia Dittel, Olaf Kühne and Florian Weber	

Theoretical Reflections on Transformation Processes of Different Spatial Units

Neopragmatische Annäherungen an horizontale Geographien – zum Stand der Dinge, zu Potenzialen und Herausforderungen	23
Olaf Kühne	

Landschaft als dreifaches ‚Pillepalle‘ – eine neopragmatische Redeskription	49
Olaf Kühne und Julia Fischer	

Räume und Grenzen	77
Karsten Berr	

Grenzen als horizontale Geographien? Perspektiven für synthetische Betrachtungen am Beispiel des <i>Complexity Shift</i> in der Grenzforschung	107
Christian Wille	

Transformation Processes in Perceptions of ‘Europe’ and Beyond, and Discourses in Times of Crises	
Vom Kanal bis zum Ural? Raumvorstellungen von Europa und territoriale Ordnungen	135
Hans Gebhardt	
“Zeitenwende”—also for the European Union? The Ukraine War, the Franco-German Tandem and the Future of the EU	155
Reiner Marcowitz	
Ungarn, die Visegrád-4 und der russische Krieg gegen die Ukraine	171
Heinrich Kreft	
Political Parties’ Emphasis on Sovereignty in Crisis Times for Europe . . .	187
Daniela Braun and Ann-Kathrin Reinl	
On the Transformative Power of European Criminal Law	213
Dominik Brodowski	
Von Saarabien zur EU: Europäische Diskurse der Extraterritorialität im Wandel der Zeit	225
Jens Temmen und Andrea Wurm	
Apocalypse Now: Küstenverlust und Klimawandel in Louisiana – neopragmatische Überlegungen	251
Olaf Kühne und Lara Koegst	
Wahrnehmungen der Cancer Alley in Louisiana aus neopragmatischer Sicht – ein Vergleich phänomenologischer Eindrücke mit Lokalzeitungen	275
Leon Flemming und Amanda Alber	
Grand Isle nach Hurrikan Ida – eine phänomenologische Betrachtung	297
Helen Frommer, Emma Knödler und Niklas Sauter	
Kulturelle Aspekte und Wahrnehmung der Top 10-Attraktionen der Stadt New Orleans – eine quantitative Analyse der deutschsprachigen Kommentare auf TripAdvisor	317
Maria Siordili und Tabea Schmid	

Transformation Processes in European Border Regions

Upper Silesia as a Divided Region in the Process of Learning Transborder Cooperation	349
Anna Muś and Małgorzata Myśliwiec	
Netzwerk-Governance in der Großregion: Akteure, Strukturen und Entwicklungslinien	377
Stefanie Thurm	
Cross-Border Vocational Training in the Polish-German Border Region: A Stakeholder Perspective	399
Sara Bonin and Dagna Zinkhahn Rhobodes	
Die grenzüberschreitende Region als Karte	435
Ulla Connor	
Finanz- und Coronakrise in Grenzregionen und innerstaatlichen Regionen: Vergleich der Resilienz	459
Stefan Hippe	
Post-Covid Symptoms in EU Cross-Border Cooperation	481
Gyula Ocskay, Martín Guillermo-Ramírez, Eduardo Medeiros and Jean Peyrony	
The Covid-19 Pandemic as a Driver for Transformation Processes in European Border Regions? A Comparative Analysis of Franco- German and German-Polish Borderlands	503
Julia Dittel, Elżbieta Opiłowska, Florian Weber and Sylwia Zawadzka	
Covid-19 and Effects on EU Labour Mobility: Evidence from the Czech-German Borderland	535
Lukáš Novotný	
Local and Cross-Border Dynamics of Energy Management and Transition: A Franco-German Comparison	561
Carole Wernert	
Tales of a Failed Energy Region Project? Politics of Scaling and Postnuclear Transition in the Upper Rhine Valley	581
Teva Meyer and Audrey Sérandour	

Contested Energy Transitions: A Media Discourse Analysis on Transformation Processes in the SaarLorLux Border Region	603
Florian Weber	
 Housing, Life in Cities, Alimentation, and Infrastructures in Transformation	
Horizontale Geographien europäischer Wohnungspolitiken	639
Carola Fricke	
French People’s Housing Aspirations as Revealed by the Covid-19 Pandemic	659
Jean-Marc Stébé and Hervé Marchal	
Transformation Processes in the Parisian Urban Borderlands— Reinventing the <i>Canal de l’Ourcq</i>	673
Corinna Jürgens	
Two Countries, Two Cities, One Trend? Urban Redevelopment, Neighborhood Change and Reinterpretations in the San Diego-Tijuana Borderland	699
Albert Rossmeyer	
Ankommen in Malstatt – Zur Transformation eines Ankunftsstadtteils im Kontext der Fluchtmigration 2015.	717
Ahmad Izzo	
Transformationsprozesse im saarländischen Altenpflegearbeitsmarkt – eine zunehmende Öffnung für ausländische Pflegekräfte als Lösungsansatz für den Fachkräftemangel?	745
Julia Lenz	
Die Komplexität von <i>Urban Health</i>: konstruktivistische Diskussion einer indikator-basierten Analyse am Beispiel von Baton Rouge, Louisiana	785
Daniela Heigenhauser, Zehra Horoz und Emily Wapler	
Die Wahrnehmung der Nahrungslandschaft in Baton Rouge auf Grundlage des Lebensmitteleinzelhandels	813
Lena Hinz	

Introduction



A Multi-Perspective Consideration of Transformation Processes in Europe and Beyond

Julia Dittel, Olaf Kühne and Florian Weber

Abstract

Recent (geo)political, environmental, social, and economic developments demonstrate a world in constant flux, in response to which continuous structural transformations are necessary. Throughout this anthology, the aim is to illuminate theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches, and empirical insights relating to such transformation processes in Europe and beyond, with a special focus on the USA. In combination with considerations of the processes themselves, the approach to horizontal geographies runs like a common thread through the contributions of the interdisciplinary group of authors, offering significant potential for comparative analysis. The introductory remarks discuss the central characteristics of the transformations concerned, outline conceptual ideas of horizontal geographies, and present the structure of the anthology.

J. Dittel (✉) · F. Weber
Saarland University, Saarbrücken, Germany
e-mail: julia.dittel@uni-saarland.de

F. Weber
e-mail: florian.weber@uni-saarland.de

O. Kühne
University of Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany
e-mail: olaf.kuehne@uni-tuebingen.de

Keywords

Transformation processes · Horizontal geographies · Interdisciplinarity · Crises · Upheavals · Flux

1 Transformation Processes in a World in Constant Flux

In spring 2020, a virus—SARS-CoV-2—brought the world to a standstill. Given its rapid spread, Covid-19 was classified in March 2020 as a pandemic. In the two years that followed, news surrounding the pandemic was omnipresent. Human fates and burdens on health systems worldwide were the consequences. With Russia’s war against Ukraine breaking in on the scene in February 2022, questions of how we understand Europe and how Europe defines itself through solidarity, shared values, and future visions have been and continue to be raised. Over and above this, climate change continues to manifest itself with environmental disasters that are increasing in number and intensity.

In the face of the twenty-first century polycrisis—a concept that has recently attracted widespread attention—these recent developments and events testify to a world in constant flux. Changing framework conditions pose ever new challenges and call for adaptations. This is where the interest of our anthology lies. We are particularly concerned with questions of conceptual approach and with empirical investigations supporting an understanding of social, political, economic, etc. processes of change and transformation from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Transformation has been described as “a decisive change in one or more of [a] system’s defining characteristics” (Merritt, 1980, p. 14), where ‘decisive’ refers to a type of change that is both significant for (parts of) a system and irreversible (or nearly so), and relates to the form, nature, style, or character of a phenomenon (Kollmorgen et al., 2015, p. 11). Implicit in its Latin root, *transformare*, is an additional dimension: ‘to change in shape’. Etymologically, this clearly refers to an active component of intervention, a ‘reshaping’. However, while this reshaping may be intended to a certain degree, one mustn’t underestimate the subconscious and unintended side effects and developments that occur in transformation processes. In order to concretise the concept, Kollmorgen et al., (2015, p. 11–12)

suggest five dichotomous, and at times interdependent axes, along which transformation processes can be described, illustrating the wide range of their possible shapes and characteristics:

1. Change as reform vs. change as upheaval: Transformation processes have different intensities.
2. What is construed as a system vs. what is construed as an aspect of that system: A system itself can be construed as the subject of transition affecting many of its different aspects—e.g. Energy transitions can be understood both as a result of transformation processes in the context of sustainability debates and as transformation processes of the energy sector itself.
3. Controlled vs. uncontrolled: Transformation processes may vary in the degree to which they are controlled—this dimension may well change in the course of the process.
4. Revolutionary, short-term, radical vs. gradual long-term evolutionary change: Transformation processes also differ in time-scale.
5. Innovation vs. imitation: Transformation processes can strive towards new developments or follow examples of others.

Special attention is to be placed here on the relation between regulation/control and self-dynamics. Transformation processes tend to be triggered externally and can thus be considered inevitable—for example if prompted by certain crises—but they can also be promoted or halted dynamically. Despite the positive connotation of the term in everyday life—the Cambridge Dictionary defines transformation as “a complete change in the appearance or character of something or someone, especially so that that thing or person is improved”¹—we argue against this normative emphasis. Even though ‘transformation’ is often mentioned in the same breath with approaches to challenges, they should rather be considered potentially ambivalent processes open to further development (Bruns & Kühne, 2015, p. 21). Transformation processes thus describe far-reaching, fundamental, long-term, interdependent shifts or upheavals of political, economic, and social frameworks towards altered structures, and lie embedded in a dynamic relationship between control and self-dynamics. In the following, we will further specify this understanding of transformation by looking at previous approaches to transformation research in various disciplines.

¹<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/transform>

2 Transformation—An Interdisciplinary Concept

The concept of transformation received early academic attention, for example, from the economic sociologist Karl Polanyi. His publication *The Great Transformation* (1978 [engl. orig. 1944]) deals with the profound secular and social changes in England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the face of industrialisation. However, the concept of transformation as a theoretical approach plays only a subordinate role here, since it is only briefly elaborated and classified conceptually.

Due to the far-reaching political, economic, and social upheavals that occurred after the fall of the Iron Curtain, transformation research flourished in the 1990s. As a result, the term is also closely associated with Eastern European studies, where it refers to these epochal upheavals. In this context it can be understood as an “unprecedented process of simultaneous change in the political, economic, and socio-cultural system”² (Kühne, 2001, p. 148) in the former socialist countries.

In both these examples, the concept of (systemic) transformation denotes holistic processes of change in political, economic and socio-cultural structures. However, transformations can also be limited to specific subsystems, where they can result in frictions or changes in (perceptions of) physical spaces and their consequent geographical reflection (Kühne et al., 2015, pp. 9–10). In this context, German-language geography in the 1990s was particularly concerned with “visible manifestations of transformation”, meaning anything that “changes and causes social frictions, which accelerates or hinders the transformation process and which is physiognomically conspicuous and immediately tangible”³ (Fassmann, 2000, p. 16). A constructivist viewpoint suggests that changes occur not just in the physical spaces themselves, but also manifest themselves in divergent demands, ideas, and evaluations of such spaces. Thus transformation processes affect spatial entities in two different ways: materially—i.e. in their impact on the “material foundations of appropriated physical landscapes”⁴ (Bruns & Kühne, 2015, p. 22), and conceptually in social landscape constructions. Transformation processes therefore occur in a field of tension between physical spaces and ideas

²“beispiellose Prozeß des zeitgleichen Wandels des politischen, ökonomische sowie soziokulturellen Systems”.

³“sichtbaren Manifestationen der Transformation”, all dem, “was sich verändert und gesellschaftliche Friktionen hervorruft, was den Transformationsprozess beschleunigt oder behindert und was physiognomisch auffällt und physisch (be-)greifbar ist”.

⁴“materiellen Grundlagen angeeigneter physischer Landschaften”.

of landscape, which are constantly in flux, but persist in certain ways (Bruns & Kühne, 2015, p. 17).

Political structures such as nation states are also subject to transformation processes. State transformation can be defined as “a fundamental and permanent change of the system of government which we call the state” (Benz, 2019, p. 25). A striking example of this is the shift of decision-making power from the nation state to regional or international organisations, and thus processes of change towards multilevel governance structures (Bache, 2014; Benz, 2007; Crossey & Weber, 2022; Hooghe & Marks, 1997). According to Benz (2019, p. 23–24), state transformation and the evolution of multilevel governance go hand in hand, since 1) multilevel governance structures transform the state, and 2) national governments serve as important actors in the multilevel network, creating a certain framework in which multilevel governance can be conducted. Accordingly, “transformation appears as a multi-layered process affecting different parts of the institutional order at different times and to different extent” (Benz, 2019, p. 27). The process of transformation itself becomes a stabilising moment: “The modern state is changing, but it always has been, and change is a condition of its stability” (Benz, 2019, p. 37).

The field of energy supply, for example, is influenced by both spatial and political transformation processes. Various energy-related transformation processes—such as the accelerated expansion of renewable energies and the abolition of nuclear power provision in Germany, but also the phaseout of coal-fired power and the shift towards CO₂-neutral power generation across Europe (Bürger, 2018, p. 35)—can on the one hand be understood as the result of socio-political transformations, but on the other hand represent transformation processes in their own right (Hamman, 2022). Likewise, the discourse on sustainable development and planetary limits is both an example of and the result of transformation processes. That this discourse originated in an active demand for transformation in the context of sustainability is not surprising. In 2015, the UN published the global vision *Transforming the world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, better known as the 2030 Agenda, which states: “We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path” (United Nations, 2015, p. 1). It is evident, then, that transformation processes take on a variety of forms and points of contact. Our anthology reflects this diversity, with contributions from interdisciplinary and international authors. In the following section we will explain our theoretical and methodological positioning.

3 Theoretical and Methodological Positioning and Link to Horizontal Geographies

Europe in all its diversity and complexity has always been—and continues to be—in a state of change. The origin of the term “Europe” itself lies in Greek mythology, according to which the Phoenician princess Europa was abducted to Crete by Zeus, who appeared to her in the form of a bull. There she gave her name to the surrounding regions. On the basis of Greek culture and Roman law, Europe was understood in ancient times as a diffuse space north of the Mediterranean Sea—alongside the other two continents known at the time, Asia and Africa. From a geographical perspective, it is striking that the borders of Europe as the “Occident” have gradually shifted towards the East. Since the epochal turning point of the two World Wars, the construction or (re)production of “Europe” has been inextricably intertwined with the construction of the European Union (EU) and of its respective member states as a process “emanating from the West of Europe”, and has further been accompanied by far-reaching (internal) reorganisation processes of the nation states, by spatial conflicts, and shifting regionalisation processes. This historical background—as well as recent events and developments—raises a myriad of issues and questions touching upon notions of “European worlds” within multi-level networks, from “Europe in the world” to the local level—with a view “from inside” as well as “from the outside” on Europe-related upheavals.

As of spring 2020, Europe’s internal borders have also—quite unexpectedly—been brought into the limelight again. With the Covid-19 pandemic and the reintroduction of border controls and closures in the “heart of Europe”, the assumed certainty and guarantee of open borders within the Schengen Area crumbled, raising questions regarding perspectives for cross-border cooperation and the resilience of European border regions to crises—questions of particular weight, given that more than a third of the EU population lives in border regions. With Russia’s war against Ukraine, the question of how we understand Europe and how Europe defines itself through solidarity, shared values and visions for the future has once again been brought to the fore.

In the course of the conference “Europa(-Welten) im Umbruch—Grenz(ziehungen) im Wandel | Europe(ean Worlds) in Transition—Border(ing) processe(s) in Flux”, which took place on October 5 and 6, 2022 in Saarbrücken, the Academy for Regional Studies (AGR), the Cluster for European Studies (CEUS) and the European Studies Working Group of Saarland University set themselves the goal of shedding light on recent ruptures and changing boundaries

in (the perception of) Europe and beyond. The exciting and enriching exchanges of that conference are the starting point of our present anthology. We see “transformation processes in Europe and beyond”—illuminated with theoretical-conceptual and empirical analyses—as embracing perceptions of Europe and the European Union in transition, as well as macro-, meso-, and micro-perspectives on border regions and cross-border cooperation across the Schengen Area. Perceptions of the EU from outside and contributions “beyond Europe” function as a comparative background bearing high contrast potentials and offering a variety of reference points.

Given their comprehensive characteristics, transformation processes cannot be viewed solely from one angle. Likewise, a uniform theory or methodology would not do justice to their complexity and contingency (Kollmorgen et al., 2015, pp. 18–19). As a result, the concept of “horizontal geographies”—as opposed to “vertical geographies” which adopt a thematically specific focus—serves as our theoretical framework. The concept refers to comprehensive, synthesising regional analyses which collect, structure and reflect on knowledge with different spatial, social, and cultural contexts. Rather than conceiving these spatialities in terms of distinct and “isolated” units, we examine reciprocal influences between different scales, emphasising in particular the effects of “world-societal” references within regional contexts and bearing in mind mechanisms of construction and the contingency of spatial and social configurations. The concept of “horizontal geographies” is thus on the one hand a collective term for a variety of approaches to the formation of spatial syntheses, such as regional geography, landscape geography or new regional geography. But it also indicates that this approach claims equal validity with that of “vertical geographies” (a recognition often denied since the 1960s; Wardenga, 2001; Weichhart, 2018). In order to fulfil this claim, however, as well as the new designation “horizontal geographies” (Kühne, 2018a), a theoretical foundation was necessary. Accordingly, intensive work has been done in recent years to ground these “horizontal geographies” neopragmatically—i.e., to develop a format in which different theories, methods, data, research perspectives, etc. can be integrated against a background of usefulness (Kühne, 2018b; Kühne & Jenal, 2020). Some of the essays in this anthology follow this approach. The interdisciplinary and international group of authors, whose contributions are outlined in the following section, take in a wide range of transformation processes in Europe and beyond, doing justice to the idea of horizontal, multi-perspective geographies.

4 Overview of the Sections and Contributions of this Volume

Our anthology opens with four contributions that present *theoretical reflections on transformation processes within different spatial units* such as landscapes or borders. *Olaf Kühne (2024)* elaborates on the concept of “horizontal geographies” and, based on a neopragmatist approach, opts for a redescription of space/region/landscape in terms that are suitable for the particular time period and that take into account the contingency of these constructs. Building on this theoretical approach, *Olaf Kühne and Julia Fischer (2024)* develop a concept of three landscapes following Karl Popper’s three-world theory—based on (1) a material landscape, (2) a landscape of individual consciousness, and (3) a landscape of socially shared interpretation, categorisation and evaluation. In order to do justice to the complex and contingent construct of landscape as a research object and at the same time to counteract a ‘pillepallisation’ of landscape, the authors plead for a neopragmatic redescription involving multi-perspective theoretical, methodological, and empirical approaches. In doing so, they recur in particular to the ironic component of neopragmatism. *Karsten Berr (2024)* explores Georg Simmel’s ideas of space and borders and comments on the specific sociology-related weakness of their focus on the sociocultural—to the neglect of the individual—sphere. To counter such challenges, he emphasises the need for a neopragmatic approach in border studies, integrating multiperspective theories on space, borders, and border regions. *Christian Wille (2024)* detects the sometimes imprecise use of the concept of complexity in border studies, and the corresponding failure to take a consistent synthetic view. In response to this, he provides impulses for the further development and practical implementation of synthetic considerations of borders in the sense of horizontal geographies.

Based on these theoretical reflections, which provide the framework for our anthology, our second group of essays outlines *transformation processes in perceptions of Europe and beyond, and discourses in times of crises*. In his multiperspective essay, *Hans Gebhardt (2024)* examines divergent spatial conceptions of Europe, and the transformations in territorial order that have accompanied them. Along with reflecting on Europe’s internal and external borders, he outlines its future in an increasingly globalised world. As a response to Russia’s aggression in Ukraine, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced during a speech to the German Bundestag in February 2022 that the Federal Republic of Germany would increase its military engagement. Taking this as a starting point, *Reiner Marcowitz (2024)* examines the impact of this turning point (‘*Zeitenwende*’) in

the Federal Republic of Germany's strategic military positioning and its significance for Franco-German and European relations. *Heinrich Kreft (2024)*, in turn, reveals that reactions of the Visegrád-4 (V-4) to the Russian aggression against Ukraine since 2022 could hardly be more divergent: they range from full support for Ukraine by Poland, to a rather hesitant Hungary, leading to group-internal conflicts and raising questions on the future of the Visegrád Group itself.

In light of a recent phase of multiple crises involving calls for greater national sovereignty—refugee crisis, Euroskepticism and the like—*Daniela Braun and Ann-Kathrin Reintl (2024)* investigate to what extent different political parties emphasise the importance of national sovereignty. *Dominik Brodowski (2024)* considers the interplay between supranational and national levels by assessing the transformative power of European criminal law provisions on national criminal law. *Jens Temmen and Andrea Wurm (2024)* focus on transformation processes at the regional level: taking the example of the Territory of the Saar Basin, they outline European discourses of extraterritoriality over time.

This is followed by four contributions providing a comparative focus on the United States of America. *Olaf Kühne and Lara Koegst (2024)* analyse the complex causes, effects, and interdependencies of landloss and anthropogenic climate change in southern Louisiana. In the hybrid coastal space between land and ocean, specific transformation challenges arise. Closely linked to these observations, and to the effects of the petrochemical industries in Louisiana, are the ecological conflicts in the so-called “Cancer Alley”—a region characterised by an above average cancer rate—studied in an essay by *Leon Flemming and Amanda Alber (2024)*. *Helen Frommer, Emma Knödler, and Niklas Sauter (2024)* study the effects of environmental disasters like Hurricane Ida—which hit Grand Isle, Louisiana—and the protection and prevention measures taken to counteract them, on landscape experiences and subjective attributions of meaning. The evolution of Louisiana has been marked by a variety of historical influences that are reflected in the state's enormous cultural diversity. *Maria Sordili and Tabea Schmid (2024)* examine the role these factors play in tourist perceptions.

More than a third of EU citizens live in Border Regions, which cover roughly 40% of the territory of the supranational union. Two million people cross Schengen borders every day for very different reasons, demonstrating the significance of border regions for our research. The next section focuses, then, on *transformation processes in European border regions*. *Anna Muś and Małgorzata Myśliwiec (2024)* discuss structural and functional transborder ties in Upper Silesia, a border region between Poland and the Czech Republic evincing far-reaching historical interconnections. Their findings suggest transformation processes evolving towards stronger and deeper forms of cross-border cooperation. A network

analysis of cross-border institutions within the Greater Region between Germany, France, and Luxembourg conducted by *Stefanie Thurm (2024)* brings similar findings. Her comparison of two Interreg funding periods shows increasing institutionalised cooperation, indicative of growing closeness within the network. *Sara Bonin and Dagna Zinkhahn Rhobodes (2024)* discuss opportunities for vocational education and training and the related language policies in the Polish-German border region. In her study, *Ulla Connor (2024)* explores the way cartographic images contribute to constructions of border regions. She then discusses how these spatial and knowledge practices can be positioned within the context of European integration.

Crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic can be understood as drivers of transformation processes, especially since the various bordering processes initiated in response to the pandemic impacted border regions and their inhabitants in a severe manner. Four contributions focus on the political, economic, and social transformations in cross-border cooperation connected with the Covid-19 pandemic. *Stefan Hippe (2024)* compares the extent to which different German regions—border regions and inner state regions, among others—showed resilient reactions to two major crises of the twenty-first century—the financial crisis of 2008/2009 and the Covid-19 pandemic. *Gyula Ocskay, Martín Guillermo-Ramírez, Eduardo Medeiros, and Jean Peyrony (2024)* survey cross-border cooperation within the EU during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. While “Covid-fencing” led to severe disturbances especially in border regions, the authors see potential for learning from the experiences. These macro-perspective observations are exemplified in regional case studies. *Julia Dittel, Elżbieta Opilowska, Florian Weber, and Sylwia Zawadzka (2024)* raise the question whether the Covid-19 pandemic can be understood as a driver of transformation processes in European border regions. In a comparative analysis of Franco-German and German-Polish borderlands they show how political actors in the border regions drew lessons from the Covid experiences, hinting at transformation processes in progress. *Lukáš Novotný (2024)* then discusses the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on EU labour mobility, using the example of the Czech-German borderland.

Energy supply is subject to and underlies constant transformations. Climate change, efforts to achieve CO₂ neutrality and, most recently, the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine have brought energy-related topics to the forefront of socio-political debate. In border regions, where divergent energy policies of different nation states meet in constant flux, both in themselves and in their relationship to each other, this results in possible synergies, but also in conflicts. In a Franco-German comparison, *Carole Wernert (2024)* uncovers local and cross-border dynamics in the management of energy supplies and their capacities to

transform in light of various recent crises and changing framework conditions. Based on the post-nuclear transition in the Upper Rhine Valley, *Teva Meyer and Audrey Sérandour (2024)* investigate how politics of scaling influence the construction of cross-border energy regions, but also create obstacles and reasons for failure in such regions. By means of a media discourse analysis, *Florian Weber (2024)* shows transformation processes in energy transitions in the SaarLorLux border region. Negotiation processes on nuclear energy and renewable energies in the three neighbouring countries are embedded in diverging and changing interests and perceptions, leading to regional conflicts, but nonetheless leaving representatives hopeful for future cooperation.

Various aspects of everyday life likewise need to adapt to changing framework conditions, resulting e.g. from changing space perceptions, climate change, or various crises of the twenty-first century from *housing, life in cities, and alimentation, to infrastructures in transformation*. In light of the decrease in affordable and appropriate housing options, demands for a common European housing policy have arisen. *Carola Fricke (2024)* reflects on the horizontal geographies of EU housing policies. She raises the question, whether the EU—even though it doesn't hold any formal competencies in this field, can activate implicit dimensions of housing policies. *Jean-Marc Stébé and Hervé Marchal (2024)* reflect on an anthropological shift in the housing aspirations of French citizens, highlighting their increased desire to live in single-family houses in periurban spaces, enforced by the experiences with the Covid-19 pandemic. *Corinna Jürgens (2024)* analyses transformation processes along the Canal de l'Ourcq in the metropolitan region of Paris, where upgrading processes in housing and infrastructure initiated in a rather top-down fashion trigger debates on various urban bordering processes. As a direct comparison and also applying a theoretical focus on urban borderlands in downtown peripheries, *Albert Rossmeyer (2024)* examines urban redevelopment processes, neighbourhood change, and reinterpretation in the San Diego (USA)-Tijuana (MEX) borderland.

Taking into consideration the concept of “arrival cities”, *Ahmad Izzo (2024)* analyses the transformation processes within an “arrival quarter” in the context of flight migration in 2015. His findings support theses on the potential to promote integration and development of such arrival spaces. The so-called refugee crisis of 2015 prompted *Julia Lenz (2024)* to investigate the extent to which transformation processes can be observed in the elderly care labour market in the Saarland (Germany), to the effect that efforts are being made to open it up to foreign care workers—particularly in order to counter the increasing problem of a shortage of skilled workers in the sector. *Daniela Heigenhauser, Zehra Horoz, and Emily Wapler (2024)* conducted an indicator-based analysis to review urban health in

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, taking into consideration the vulnerability of citizens, access to health facilities, urban green spaces, and susceptibility to heat. *Lena Hinz* (2024), in turn, analyses local availabilities of grocery stores and possibilities for alimentation, drawing a foodscape of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The contributions thus provide insights into the various theoretical considerations, methodological approaches, and empirical case studies of transformation processes in Europe and beyond. With horizontal geographies in mind, the interdisciplinary and international contributions enable a broad examination of transformation processes across levels and borders. Several points of contact between the contributions attest to the added value of this approach. We hope our readers will enjoy a journey of discovery in this anthology.

References

- Bache, I. (2014). Multi-level governance in the European Union. In D. Levi-Faur (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of governance* (pp. 628–641). Oxford University Press.
- Benz, A. (2007). Multilevel governance. In A. Benz, S. Lütz, U. Schimank, & G. Simonis (Eds.), *Handbuch Governance. Theoretische Grundlagen und empirische Anwendungsfelder* (pp. 297–310). VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Benz, A. (2019). Transformation of the state and multilevel governance. In N. Behnke, J. Broschek, & J. Sonnicksen (Eds.), *Configurations, dynamics and mechanisms of multi-level governance* (pp. 23–39). Springer International Publishing.
- Berr, K. (2024). Räume und Grenzen. Ein Plädoyer für ein neopragmatisch gerahmtes Forschungsprogramm zur Grenzraumforschung. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Bonin, S., & Zinkhahn Rhobodes, D. (2024). Cross-Border Vocational Training in the Polish-German Border Region: A Stakeholder Perspective. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Braun, D., & Reinl, A.-K. (2024). Political parties' emphasis on sovereignty in crisis times for Europe. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Brodowski, D. (2024). On the transformative power of european criminal Law. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Bruns, D., & Kühne, O. (2015). Gesellschaftliche Transformation und die Entwicklung von Landschaft. Eine Betrachtung aus der Perspektive der sozialkonstruktivistischen Landschaftstheorie. In O. Kühne, K. Gawroński, & J. Hernik (Eds.), *Transformation und Landschaft. Die Folgen sozialer Wandlungsprozesse auf Landschaft* (pp. 17–34). Springer VS.

- Bürger, J. J. (2018). *Transformationsprozesse und Stromnetzausbau. Herausforderungen für die deutsche Energie-Infrastruktur*. Springer Vieweg.
- Connor, U. (2024). Die grenzüberschreitende Region als Karte. Raum- und Wissenspraktiken im Kontext der Kooperation. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Crossey, N., & Weber, F. (2022). Die Frankreichstrategie des Saarlandes als multisektoraler Impuls für die grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit. In K. Mangels, & D. Briegel (Eds.), *Strategien und Konzepte grenzüberschreitender Raumentwicklung und Raumplanung* (UniGR-CBS Thematic Issue, vol. 7, pp. 23–41). UniGR-Center for Border Studies.
- Dittel, J., Opiłowska, E., Weber, F., & Zawadzka, S. (2024). The Covid-19 pandemic as a driver for transformation processes in European border regions? A comparative analysis of Franco-German and German-Polish borderlands. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Fassmann, H. (2000). Zum Stand der Transformationsforschung in der Geographie. *Europa Regional*, 8(3/4), 13–19. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-48271-2>. Accessed: 28 June 2023.
- Flemming, L., & Alber, A. (2024). Wahrnehmungen der Cancer Alley in Louisiana aus neopragmatischer Sicht—Ein Vergleich phänomenologischer Eindrücke mit Lokalzeitungen. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Fricke, C. (2024). Horizontale Geographien europäischer Wohnungspolitik. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Frommer, H., Knödler, E., & Sauter, N. (2024). Grand Isle nach Hurrikan Ida – eine phänomenologische Betrachtung. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation Processes in Europe and Beyond. Perspectives for Horizontal Geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Gebhardt, H. (2024). Vom Kanal bis zum Ural? Raumvorstellungen von Europa und territoriale Ordnungen. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Hamman, P. (2022). Renewable energy transition beyond borders in Europe. From a literature review to a case study in the Upper Rhine Region. In P. Hamman (Ed.), *Cross-border renewable energy transitions. Lessons from Europe's Upper Rhine Region* (Routledge studies in energy transitions, pp. 3–34). Routledge.
- Heigenhauser, D., Horoz, Z., & Wapler, E. (2024). Die Komplexität von *Urban Health*: konstruktivistische Diskussion einer indikatorbasierten Analyse am Beispiel von Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Hinz, L. (2024). Die Wahrnehmung der Nahrungslandschaft in Baton Rouge auf Grundlage des Lebensmitteleinzelhandels. Eine *Mixed-Methods*-Analyse von Google-Daten. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.

- Hippe, S. (2024). Finanz- und Coronakrise in Grenzregionen und innerstaatlichen Regionen: Vergleich der Resilienz. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (1997). The Making of a Polity: The struggle over European integration. *European integration online papers (EIoP)*, 1(4). Accessed: 1 July 2020.
- Izzo, A. (2024). Ankommen in Malstatt—Zur Transformation eines Ankunftsstadtteils im Kontext der Fluchtmigration 2015. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Jürgens, C. (2024). Transformation processes in the Parisian urban borderlands—re-inventing the *Canal de l'Ourcq*. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Kollmorgen, R., Merkel, W., & Wagener, H.-J. (2015). Transformation und Transformationsforschung: Zur Einführung. In R. Kollmorgen, W. Merkel, & H.-J. Wagener (Eds.), *Handbuch Transformationsforschung* (pp. 11–27). Springer VS.
- Kreft, H. (2024). Ungarn, die Visegrád-4 und der russische Krieg gegen die Ukraine. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Kühne, O. (2001). Transformation und kybernetische Systemtheorie. Kybernetisch-systemtheoretische Erklärungsansätze für den Transformationsprozeß in Ostmittel- und Osteuropa. *Osteuropa*, 51(2), 148–170.
- Kühne, O. (2018a). Die Landschaften 1, 2 und 3 und ihr Wandel. Perspektiven für die Landschaftsforschung in der Geographie—50 Jahre nach Kiel. *Berichte. Geographie und Landeskunde*, 3–4, 217–231.
- Kühne, O. (2018b). Reboot “Regionale Geographie”—Ansätze einer neopragmatischen Rekonfiguration “horizontaler Geographien”. *Berichte. Geographie und Landeskunde*, 92(2) 101–121.
- Kühne, O. (2024). Neopragmatische Annäherungen an horizontale Geographien—zum Stand der Dinge, zu Potenzialen und Herausforderungen. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Kühne, O., & Fischer, J.-D. (2024). Landschaft als dreifaches ‚Pillepalle‘—eine neopragmatische Redeskription. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Kühne, O., & Jenal, C. (2020). *Baton Rouge—the Multivillage metropolis. A neopragmatic landscape biographical approach on spatial pastiches, hybridization, and differentiation*. Springer VS.
- Kühne, O., & Koegst, L. (2024). Apocalypse Now: Küstenverlust und Klimawandel in Louisiana—Neopragmatische Überlegungen. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.

- Kühne, O., Hernik, J., & Gawroński, K. (2015). Einleitung. In O. Kühne, K. Gawroński, & J. Hernik (Eds.), *Transformation und Landschaft. Die Folgen sozialer Wandlungsprozesse auf Landschaft* (pp. 9–13). Springer VS.
- Lenz, J. (2024). Transformationsprozesse im saarländischen Altenpflegearbeitsmarkt—eine zunehmende Öffnung für ausländische Pflegekräfte als Lösungsansatz für den Fachkräftemangel? In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Marcowitz, R. (2024). “Zeitenwende”—also for the European Union? The Ukraine War, the Franco-German Tandem and the Future of the EU. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Merritt, R. L. (1980). On the transformation of systems. *International Political Science Review*, 1,(1) 13–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019251218000100104>.
- Meyer, T., & Sérandour, A. (2024). Tales of a failed energy region project? Politics of scaling and postnuclear transition in the Upper Rhine Valley. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Muś, A., & Myśliwiec, M. (2024). Upper Silesia as a Divided Region in the Process of Learning Transborder Cooperation. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Novotný, L. (2024). Covid-19 and Effects on EU Labour Mobility: Evidence from the Czech-German Borderland. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Ocskay, G., Guillermo-Ramírez, M., Medeiros, E., & Peyrony, J. (2024). Post-Covid symptoms in EU cross-border cooperation. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Polanyi, K. (1978 [engl. Orig. 1944]). *The Great Transformation. Politische und ökonomische Ursprünge von Gesellschaften und Wirtschaftssystemen*. suhrkamp taschenbuch wissenschaft.
- Rossmeyer, A. (2024). Two countries, two cities, one trend? Urban redevelopment, neighborhood change and reinterpretations in the San Diego-Tijuana Borderland. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Siordili, M., & Schmid, T. (2024). Kulturelle Aspekte und Wahrnehmung der Top 10-Attraktionen der Stadt New Orleans—Eine quantitative Analyse der deutschsprachigen Kommentare auf TripAdvisor. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Stébé, J.-M., & Marchal, H. (2024). ‘French people’s housing aspirations as revealed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Neither in the city nor in the country. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.

- Temmen, J., & Wurm, A. (2024). Von Saarabien zur EU: Europäische Diskurse der Extraterritorialität im Wandel der Zeit. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Thurm, S. (2024). Netzwerk-Governance in der Großregion: Akteure, Strukturen und Entwicklungslinien. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- United Nations. (2015). Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/291/89/PDF/N1529189.pdf?OpenElement>. Accessed: 4 Sept. 2023.
- Wardenga, U. (2001). Theorie und Praxis der länderkundlichen Forschung und Darstellung in Deutschland. In F.-D. Grimm, & U. Wardenga (Eds.), *Zur Entwicklung des länderkundlichen Ansatzes* (Beiträge zur Regionalen Geographie, vol. 53, pp. 9–35). Selbstverlag.
- Weber, F. (2024). Contested energy transitions: A media discourse analysis on transformation processes in the SaarLorLux border region. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Weichhart, P. (2018). *Entwicklungslinien der Sozialgeographie. Von Hans Bobek bis Benno Werlen* (Sozialgeographie kompakt, Band 1, 2., vollständig überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage). Franz Steiner Verlag.
- Wernert, C. (2024). Local and cross-border dynamics of energy management and transition: A Franco-German comparison. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.
- Wille, C. (2024). Grenzen als horizontale Geographien? Perspektiven für synthetische Betrachtungen am Beispiel des *Complexity Shift* in der Grenzforschung. In F. Weber, O. Kühne, & J. Dittel (Eds.), *Transformation processes in Europe and beyond. Perspectives for horizontal geographies (in this anthology)*. Springer VS.

Julia Dittel studied historical and applied cultural studies at Saarland University. Since 2021 she has worked as a research assistant in the research group “European Studies with a focus on Western Europe and Border Regions” in the Department of European Social Research at Saarland University. Her research interests lie in the field of cross-border cooperation, resilience, landscape research, and perspectives of local sustainable development.

Olaf Kühne studied geography, modern history, geology and economics at Saarland University. He received his doctorate in geography here and in sociology in Hagen. In his *Habilitation* (postdoc thesis) at the Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz he dealt with the topic of transformation and environment in Poland. Since 2016, he is Professor of Urban and Regional Development at the University of Tuebingen. His research focuses spatially

on Europe and North America, thematically on the theory and practice of “horizontal geographies” and on spatial and social conflicts.

Florian Weber studied geography, business administration, sociology and journalism at the University of Mainz and gained his doctorate at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg with a thesis comparing German and French area-based policies in light of discourse theory. He completed his post-doctoral degree (*Habilitation*) at the University of Tübingen in 2018. In April 2019 he was appointed Junior Professor of European Studies at Saarland University, with special reference to Western Europe and border regions.

Theoretical Reflections on Transformation Processes of Different Spatial Units



Neopragmatische Annäherungen an horizontale Geographien – zum Stand der Dinge, zu Potenzialen und Herausforderungen

Olaf Kühne

Zusammenfassung

Der Ansatz der ‚neopragmatischen horizontalen Geographien‘ wurde vor dem Hintergrund entwickelt, dass bis dato synthetische Befassungen mit Raum/Region/Landschaft entweder ohne theoretische Integration vorgenommen wurden, eine stark komplexitätsreduzierende monotheoretische Bezugnahme oder aber keine metatheoretische Integration theoretischer Zugänge aufwiesen. Hier liefert der Neopragmatismus als Metatheorie die Möglichkeit, die Triangulation von Theorien, Methoden, Forschendenperspektiven, a- und b-modalen Sichtweisen, Daten und Darstellungen vorzunehmen und so eine Basis für eine ‚Redeskription‘ von Raum/Region/Landschaft zu schaffen, deren Qualität sich daran bemisst, ‚Welt‘ zum Zeitpunkt ihrer Erzeugung tauglicher und kontingenzsensibler zu beschreiben, als dies ‚altherwürdige‘ Vokabulare zu tun imstande waren. Ein anderes Qualitätskriterium liegt in der Tauglichkeit der Redeskription, in künftige Redeskriptionen eingewoben zu werden. Eine solche integrative Perspektive auf Raum/Region/Landschaft wird allerdings mit einem hohen Rechtfertigungs- und Relationierungsaufwand in Bezug auf Theorien, Methoden, Forschendenperspektiven, a- und b-modale Sichtweisen, Daten und Darstellungen, ‚erkaufte‘, der diesbezüglich einen hohen Grad an Kompetenz voraussetzt – oder zumindest die Bereitschaft, diese zu erwerben.

O. Kühne (✉)

Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Tübingen, Deutschland

e-mail: olaf.kuehne@uni-tuebingen.de

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH, part of Springer Nature 2024

F. Weber et al. (eds.), *Transformation Processes in Europe and Beyond*, Regionale Geographien | Regional Geographies,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-42894-5_2

Schlüsselwörter

Neopragmatismus · Horizontale Geographien · Regionale Geographie ·
Sozialkonstruktivismus · Richard Rorty · Karl Popper · Drei Welten
Theorie · Theorie der drei Landschaften

1 Einleitung

Soll ein Gegenstand einer wissenschaftlichen Untersuchung unterzogen werden, ist eine einzelne Perspektive in der Regel nicht ausreichend, um der Differenziertheit des Gegenstandes gerecht zu werden. Dies ist nicht zuletzt die Aussage von Karl Poppers Scheinwerfertheorie (Popper, 2011[1947]), der Hypothesen und Theorien mit Scheinwerfern verglich, die selektiv Forschungsgegenstände von unterschiedlichen Seiten aus beleuchten. Je komplexer ein Forschungsgegenstand, desto deutlicher wird der Bedarf einer multiperspektivischen Sichtweise (siehe auch Dittel et al., 2024 in diesem Band). Gerade die synthetische Befassung mit räumlichen Gebilden, die sich für Interferenzen natürlicher, ökonomischer, politischer, sozialer und kultureller Art interessiert, ist mit einem hochkomplexen Gegenstand konfrontiert. Nachdem die teilweise essentialisierende oder von einem naiven Realismus geprägte ‚kundliche‘ Befassung (also die in Deutschland verbreitete Trias von Landeskunde, Länderkunde und Landschaftskunde) in den 1960er Jahren weitgehend durch ein positivistisch-empiristisches Paradigma (in Deutschland verbunden mit dem ‚Kieler Geographentag‘ von 1969) ersetzt wurde, wurden synthetische Betrachtungen zunehmend an den Rand geographischen Interesses gedrängt. Es dominierte der analytische Blick auf einzelne Strukturen und Prozesse (unter vielen: Eisel, 1980; Gebhardt, 2019; Hard, 1973; Kühne & Berr, 2022; Schenk, 2011; Wardenga, 2001b, 2006). Die ‚*new regional geography*‘, die maßgeblich von Gilbert (1988; dazu ergänzend insbesondere Thrift, 1991) geprägt wurde, vereinte verschiedene Perspektiven, marxistische und humanistische Ansätze und die von Praxistheorien (Entrikin, 1996; vgl. Gebhardt et al., 2004; Paasi, 2002). Die konstruktivistische Grundperspektive brachte indes die Kritik ein, Materialitäten ‚aus dem Blick‘ zu verlieren (Holmén, 1995). Abseits dieser Überlegungen attestierten Aschauer (2001, 2002) und Wardenga (2001a) regionalgeographischen Befassungen eine weitgehende Methoden- und auch Theorieabstinenz, wodurch diese letztlich lediglich eine Form der Darstellung gewesen seien. An dieser Stelle setzt der neopragmatische Zugriff an: Ausgehend von der Anerkennung der Komplexität des Gegenstandes, des Bedarfs eigener methodischer Zugriffe auf diesen sowie theoretischer