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Elize S. van Eeden

To cite this article: Elize S. van Eeden (03 Dec 2024): Considering the Many Variations of Regional History, Histories of People and Place, DOI: [10.1080/28334299.2024.2433919](https://doi.org/10.1080/28334299.2024.2433919)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/28334299.2024.2433919>



Published online: 03 Dec 2024.



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REVIEW ARTICLE



Considering the Many Variations of Regional History

Elize S. van Eeden

Department of History, School of Social Science, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa

ABSTRACT

Scholars from all over the world have deliberated the histories of peoples and places for decades. They have different fields of departure, different goals, methodologies, vocabularies, and understandings of regions. Economic and political transformations in the twentieth century have created trends of thought in which studies featured the increasing prominence of humanity's status, role, and impact, but, not necessarily as a noticeable development in regional studies after the Second World War (1939–1945). Meanwhile, some regional histories were produced on many continents but never as part of the scholarly initiatives in regional studies inspired by multidisciplinary scholarship in Europe and the United States. Reaching out to regional studies associations by history scholars is a twenty-first-century development – while these historians aim at also developing their understanding of what regional history fundamentally is or may imply. Conceptual thought about regions and regional history has aged but remains far from clarity or scholarly maturity. This discussion intends to further stimulate possibilities of the improved understanding of regional history study by debating its many variations as a way forward to recognise and provide structure to the field.

KEYWORDS

Regional history; regional studies; microhistory; micro-spatial history; local history; trans-regional; trans-local; multidisciplinary history

Introductory Reflections

This paper departs from the understanding that defining “regions” and “regional” remains a contested debate as a “battle”¹ between disciplines’ regarding various epistemological vocabularies and research experiences.² Even among historians (the discipline I represent) there might be a lack of understanding of the concept of “region”, amongst other methodological uncertainties. Scholarly research as voices from micro spatial and local, trans-regional and trans-local³ to global views made me realise that, though academics might generally (for direction) resort to similar regional vocabularies, their different origins, and study of different phenomena or themes in regional histories, may differ widely. There are, however, topic and phenomenon commonalities that Fischer-Tiné, for example, would like to see transformed into a global microhistory⁴ understanding, and which perhaps may be viewed in a similar methodological spirit as the early Annales.⁵ So, each research experience with its research context and challenges, may require a unique/adapted research process within a broad regional history directive. Historians engaging in regional

histories (whether micro-local, trans-regional, trans-local or global) should aim to consider broader socio-cultural connections and meaning.

Although possible, it is not feasible to do regional history research on a mega level on one's own. Mega-level regional history research is a multidisciplinary, multiregional, community collaborative with which all of humankind can associate. "Findings" may historically display dynamic understanding and meaning, depending on the point of departure. Another debate is the reality of states as institutions and their official impact on all demarcated regions (micro or macro) under a political or imaginary authority.⁶ Hence the approach in this discussion is to treat regional histories and histories of regions as a field of history operating in/with many conceptual variations with several time and space differences or categories. These variations can also occasionally infuse, collaborate, partner, and inform each other. (The British-American Geographer John Agnew, as a prolific writer of regional historiography,⁷ generally supports this regional research view).⁸

It's to be noted that all sections of this discussion encompass a rich historical tradition in what is known as regional history. The author intended to study the topic in-depth to gain a global understanding of the concept of 'region' from a regional history perspective. Where scholars of other disciplines are also required to touch on the craft generally associated with historians I have noted their arguments. Sadly, I could only utilise English sources from the various historiographical traditions that I have pointed out. Though I do not claim to have acknowledged all major scholars that might have contributed to this historiographical tradition I have consciously strived to be globally inclusive of developments in the field of regional history. In this article, the emphasis is firstly on introducing, and scholarly debating global regional history scholarship. Secondly, the five listed variations of regional history and some leading scholarly thoughts in each variation will be emphasised. Prominent observations from this historiography over time and regional history's way forward will conclude the discussion.

Regional Historiography Trends – Some Global Perspectives

Regions and their "inevitable" associations with humanity, temporality and spatiality can, with some reasonable scholarly effort, be traced far back in time. Familiar names that come to mind are those of the fourteenth-century Tunisian scholar Ibn Khaldûn;⁹ Confucius (of China);¹⁰ Herodotus (from Greece);¹¹ nineteenth to twentieth-centuries scholars such as the *Annales (histoire regionale)* historians (from the 1920s);¹² the historians engaging with the Victorian History of the counties of England (since the late-nineteenth century),¹³ and ideologically inspired nationalisms noted in regions¹⁴ such as German *Landesgeschichte*¹⁵ (known as area studies with a rich provincial history before the nineteenth century)¹⁶ and even convincingly related to the French *Annales* that quoted *Landesgeschichte* scholars like Karl Lamprecht.¹⁷ Then there is regional history written by Russian scholars (apparently dating from the eighteenth century),¹⁸ and early twentieth-century developments towards a "local [regional history] method", viewed as a total history, which Sergei Ivanovich pioneered. This method was viewed as a total approach to history embracing many disciplines, of which the history of the region, geography, economy and demography of the "working class" featured prominently.¹⁹ Features of this method are also associated with later developments in British regional histories at

the University of Leicester.²⁰ Various countries have constructively displayed historiographical trends in regional historical research (with a political, economic or cultural association seemingly dominant) since the twentieth-century upsurge of regional studies²¹ (such as Walter Mignolo's subaltern studies on geo-cultural locations and regionalism in Latin America,²² the diverse decolonial and interdisciplinary debates in India²³ and Arabia²⁴ as well as the Finnish Ruralia Institute's multidisciplinary regional studies on "home").²⁵ In 1948 William Hessestine reminds the reader that political institutions in the nineteenth-century United States of America "spring from local communities ... all of American life ... American life has been organized on a regional base ...".²⁶ Yet the vision for writing regional history had been captured to mainly serve the national state imaginary, as would become evident from the dozens of scholarly articles published worldwide in the following years. Globally, several of these trends also influenced regional history scholars in Africa, especially in the last decades of the twentieth century, in which the economies of regions (with emphasis on regional integration and cooperation) dominated for many years.²⁷ My country, South Africa, also has an established regional history understanding related to social histories, which emanated amidst radical and Marxist thought challenging apartheid South Africa.²⁸

Recently (in 2022) Russian scholars resorted to a "transdisciplinary regionology" research framework in which they intend "studying the peculiarities of development of economy, politics, society, culture, history [and] the languages of different regions of the world".²⁹ This particular objective is hardly different from any other pioneers studying regional histories all over the world and already hints at the multidisciplinary features which the *Annales* historians have over-explored for decades. Should "sub-discipline formation" within regional history materialise and be established on a tertiary level to instil acceptable multidisciplinary regional research in which history features prominently, it would be refreshing. This would imply moving away from "haphazard and fuzzy conceptualizations", according to Arnoud Lagendijk. He prefers to rather appreciate the existing "conceptual inheritance", and further elaborates:

Recent ideas on relationality, in particular, are considered helpful in reassessing as well as refining the value of 'older' structuralist-institutionalist macro approaches, and in situating the contribution from more recent debates on the (micro) role of cognition and knowledge.³⁰

Lagendijk's discussion relates to regions that dominate through their economic perspectives and processes. One can assume that this necessity in the method also applies to how other disciplines view the regions, and how they have embraced multidisciplinary thought on regional studies that speak from local to global views. (Such an effort will be evident in the next section of this discussion).

Lastly, two mid-twentieth-century associations embraced scholarly regional studies in a multidisciplinary fashion. These associations were founded in the United States of America and Europe respectively. They are the Regional Science Association International (RSAI),³¹ founded in 1954 and the Regional Studies Association (RSA),³² established ten years later. By the twenty-first century, both had reached maturity and continued to thrive within multidisciplinary contexts³³ (although history as a discipline was not yet as prominent as the business and economic sciences and geography).

Ann Markusen engaged in a broad critical reflection on these scholarly associations occupied with regional studies, and how and why they had excelled "globally". Markusen

believes that “this body of work challenged orthodox approaches in geography, regional science and political economy”. Soon these challenges awakened a sensitivity to studies on “imperialism, class, race and gender on both sides of the Atlantic and to active movements opposing specific national and local policies”. According to Markussen, it was a time that Marxist and institutionalist approaches to social phenomena revived and infused “into new interpretations of economic geographical forces”. It also became a scholarly space for sharing multidisciplinary ideas and methods which “greatly enriched the results”.³⁴ In 1993, Andrew Isserman mentioned that the RSAI and RSA taught that a region “necessarily changes over time”.³⁵ Some historians, like Donald Worster, engaging with different regions,³⁶ had to “discover” this through their own long regional history careers – in time, a region is spatially and historically not static. Another “discovery” not to ignore in regional history is that top-down and bottom-up (history from below) histories should be included in regional history studies.³⁷ Veit-Brause reminds readers of the lasting separation between “history from below” and the history of “high politics” in for example the post-Second World War era, which displayed an “aversion” in Marxist theories.³⁸ This “lasting separation”, as Van Eeden³⁹ points out, should not be because in regions both the “bottom-up” and “top-down” histories are necessary to progress towards a representative history of regions.

From research done in this field, it appears as if hardly any continent regions and local spaces were scholarly excluded: Though not all of them might represent all peoples and places. It is, therefore, best for scholars of the history discipline, to be aware of the rich intellectual variety on the scholarly table, and to rather consider referring to the variations of regional history. In doing so (some already do)⁴⁰ a digestible conceptual understanding of each variation, with its features can be considered while accepting occasional overlapping features with other “variations”. These regional history variations will be introduced in the next sections, although each variation probably deserves its own, separate discussion, which is not possible within the ambit of this article.

Considering the Many Variations of Regional History

It is a challenge to identify, list and/or describe the variety of research historiographies and methodologies that can be regarded as part of regional history studies in a broad sense. It is a field that is sometimes shared by academic scholars and non-academic (amateur) historians⁴¹ across the globe, and one which remains debatable when making an effort to define or outline it in a digestible way.⁴² Economists, geographers and other related professionals also seem to embrace regional studies far easier when dealing with human development and sustainability, than historians. There are many reasons for historians’ aversion. Perhaps some view it as too unstructured a study field, without clearly defined boundaries to use as an academic, scholarly point of departure. Others might disapprove of the multidisciplinary approach it requires. Whatever the case might be, it is a vibrant, diverse field of study, unlikely to disappear and worthy of scholars’ attention.

At this stage, several scholars have engaged in research using methodologies that added structural meaning to the widest possible spectrum covered by regional history studies.⁴³ Such scholars (not all of them historians, but scholars with a historical sensitivity towards regional studies) include John Agnew,⁴⁴ Celia Applegate, Robert Fawn,⁴⁵ Bhairabi Prasad Sahu, Donald Worster, Christian de Vito, and Sulevi Riukulehto.⁴⁶ I have also

scholarly invested in the field. Similar efforts by regional history establishments and scholars in several countries before the twenty-first century should be included in the debate towards a varied structured outline and meaning that can be considered as regional history. These yesteryear scholars are occasionally referred to in the following discussions.

To initiate the discussion on the many variations in regional history *per se*, it is sufficient to agree with Agnew that “regions are ‘real’ in the sense of marking off distinctive bits of the earth’s surface or the product of political and social conventions that appear and disappear as human history takes its course ...”.⁴⁷ Historians focusing on regional developments, engage with a particular theme or phenomenon within a specific timeframe to understand its development in the context of a defined space. A region’s space and time-connectedness can be associated with several scholarly themes as variations with different goals that could and should occasionally overlap. This connection in all regional history research is possible if it is accepted that there are other contexts (whether micro or macro of nature) that impact the local to global regions, and vice versa. Figure 1 displays five variations of regional history scholarship: (i) Family – home – micro-spatial localities; (ii) Translocal (to national) and transregional histories; (iii) Region-specific communities/countries/states; (iv) Spatial (space) and time and place specific trends (from micro-spatial to national and to global) and (v) Large/International regions as “imagined”. As every variation is discussed in the following sections, a conceptual understanding of each will be elaborated on.

In introducing these possible regional history variations⁴⁸ three criteria are used in each to explain its historiography and meaning. The mentioned criteria include the variation’s (i) conceptual/epistemological feature(s); (ii) some scholarly views on a category and, (iii) observations on its prominence as a regional history variation.

Family – Home – Micro-Spatial Localities

Conceptual/Epistemological Feature(s)

The “family⁴⁹ – home⁵⁰ – micro-spatial localities”⁵¹ can be defined as a part of those micro spaces in any region that depicts everyday life histories “from below”, while other close-by and “from-above” or distanced histories frequently impact /inform or direct the “family – home – micro-spatial locality”. Yet this regional history variation can also, with the local histories that emanate within itself, direct (influence and complement) trans-local,⁵² trans-regional and national⁵³ histories.

An active proponent of micro-spatial history, De Vito, argues that the micro-spatial is grounded on “historical processes spatially” and usually “centring on single localities” while stretching across time by addressing connections.⁵⁴ He continues:

The micro-spatial perspective has the potential to combine ... multi-century studies with the micro-analytical epistemology that highlights complexity, discontinuity and unevenness
....⁵⁵

In De Vito’s studies, he and Gerritsen did exactly that by looking at the connections of “labour” as a topic from a micro-spatial to a global impression.⁵⁶ The topics, phenomena and fields specifically covered from a historical angle, remain broad imaginaries. Lawson, Bavaj and Struck, for example, argue that “spatial” history *per se* is a “common forum which serves to link pertinent fields”, which can include “environmental history, landscape



Figure 1. A broad structural application for approaching the many variations in regional history.¹³⁵

history, local and regional history, transnational and global history, urban history, architectural history, the history of cartography and the history of science”, and which can be textual, visual, or performative representations.⁵⁷

Scholarly Views

The “family – home – micro-spatial locality” variation in regional history was pioneered, promoted, and explored by prominent scholars in their micro-spatial localities⁵⁸ all over the world. Some twentieth-century (and much earlier) scholars that come to mind are Ibn Khaldun, several French Annales historians⁵⁹ and the German Alf Lüdtke.⁶⁰ Khaldun resorted to such an approach by departing from the micro spatial locality. Michael Brett states that:

Ibn Khaldun provides a mass of information on the cities and oases of southern Ifríqiya which allows us to observe the pattern of local government from the breakdown of the Almohad empire to the imposition of direct rule from Tunis in the 15th Century ...⁶¹ [sic]

Centuries later, the Annales scholars emphasise the village community. Gailanpiu Gonmeih’s observation accurately captures the Annales in this regard:

In the village all the “structures” that fascinate the Annalistes-spatial, psychological, economic-can be studied. Individual villages provide the sources in parish registers that make possible “family reconstitution” over centuries from baptism, marriage, and death records. Tax rolls throw light on income, land distribution, and regional product. [sic] Folklore, passed on through written records or oral testimony, illustrates popular culture and throws light on hidden assumptions, on the mental structure, that governed village society. Linguistics, social anthropology, and a host of other social sciences could be utilized ...⁶²

The conceptual variety in the “history from below” research methodology related to family, home and micro-spatial localities as a regional history variation is part of the Alltagsgeschichte historian, Lüdtke’s framework, that might be viewed as part of a “social justice”⁶³ approach:

At the centre ... are the lives and the sufferings of those who are frequently labelled, suggestively but imprecisely, as the ‘small people’ ...⁶⁴

The contextual and multidisciplinary value of research on the micro-spatial locality, says Christian De Vito (2019), is important to note and a mammoth but pivotal undertaking:

... context-sensitive research requires awareness of the implications of historical research for each local community and the construction of its memory and self-representation. In this way, it pushes the discipline towards ever more co-operation [sic] with institutions and informal groups outside of academia.⁶⁵

Thinking in integrative ways (multidisciplinary) to work towards the future of a locality’s economic sustainability in, for example, similar colonial distressed spaces also requires regional historians to advance their methodological thinking of this category as a variation of regional history.⁶⁶ This is not an extraordinarily new idea as it was also endorsed by the British regional historian Harvey Finberg and the Annales historians of the twentieth century. In this regard, the well-known British scholar Asa Briggs is mentioned by Van Eeden after an interview with a South African regional history pioneer who had been scholarly engaged with Briggs in the 1970s:

Concerning regional history, he [Prof Asa Briggs] is of the opinion that the French are doing interesting work because they integrate regional history more than the [Victoria County History Scholars] VCH does, for example. What he means by this is that the French approach regional history in a more interdisciplinary way and are less inclined to place it in closed compartments ...⁶⁷

Any regional historian having dealt excessively with micro-spatial research can share similar experiences necessary to integrate historical research with interdisciplinary efforts.

Later in time scholars like De Vito also added his voice towards the necessity for integrative micro-histories:

I argue that microhistory is not bound to synchronic narratives and that a micro-spatial perspective questions the very partition between short [*micro/local*] and long-term [*macro/trans regional*] analyses, and reveals more articulated patterns of multiple and combined temporalities ... just like the singularity of a place is made by its simultaneous connections across space, it is also constructed out of the multiplicity of its past connections ... Acknowledging the interactions among plural temporalities allows for an understanding of historical change as uneven and combined across and within regions.⁶⁸

Thinking family to micro spatial locality not only requires a nearby spatial and temporal understanding for the sake of its history but also for the sake of its commonalities and threads rooted and linked to broader regional and cross-border imaginary. It is, after all, where the actual history originates, develops, excels, and relates. As an example, Nina Caputo's regional history on Jewish memory falls within this ambit as do many micro-histories that eventually might contribute to display connecting features with transnational historical developments.⁶⁹ Also, Riukulehto notes that it is impossible to separate regional history from local history and a nation's history.⁷⁰

Observations on "Family – Home – Micro-spatial Locality" as a Variation of Regional History

In every defined country and region, families, and localities, as a variation of regional history, have been widely studied, but more needs to be done. In some instances, the broader contexts are successfully used in locality histories to understand the micro-spatial.⁷¹ However, they are not necessarily further explored for their possible extended transnational connections – including other varieties of scholarly transnational reflections (for example locality comparisons; differences; features; continuity and change). Currently, there appears to be an enormous, global research void on this variation. To some scholars, this variation of regional history is a space where local histories (occasionally labelled as part of "half done"⁷² regional histories) continue their struggle to discover a clear definition within (in) national and transnational histories.⁷³ There is also a preference for political angles associated with nationalism,⁷⁴ while this variation can offer so much more.

Micro-spatial locality histories of any kind are spatially and historically situated in time, and form part of perhaps a region in which strong features of culture and identity exist.⁷⁵ To my mind this variation of regional history, associating with a family – home – micro-spatial localities in a place and its time, are necessary "layers" of history that complement or advance into larger viewed histories such as the trans-local, the transregional and the national histories (see the conceptual understanding and examples by De Vito and Gerritsen mentioned earlier). Hence my view is that one variation does not matter more than another but relies on each other to provide perspectives of imaginary translocal, transnational, transregional and global value.

Trans-Local (to National) and Transregional Histories

Conceptual/Epistemological Feature(s)

It is said that “trans-local” is a word that emerged with the coining of the spatial turn, and more often includes “non-European regions in the debate such as Africa or south-eastern Asia”.⁷⁶ The argument with trans-local and transregional as a variation of regional history, is that it relates to the previous family-home to micro spatial local histories in that the micro spatial contextually “feeds” the histories of regions as formal borders inside and outside a nation-state or as imaginary regions that can be defined politically, economically, and socially, and/or religiously. The trans-local (to national) and transregional histories variation display a tendency to be impacted from top-down through national demarcated border interventions and other decisions or trends that influence national and trans-local discourses and formations for example ideology, race, and identity.⁷⁷ According to Rick Fawn, also suggested by Celia Applegate:⁷⁸

... A region exists when actors, including governmental, [sic] define and promulgate to others a specific identity.⁷⁹

World historian Arif Dirlik validly argues for replacing the concept “transnational” with “trans-local”. He views trans-local as a much older historical pattern in communities than that of national establishments.⁸⁰ At this point, it is sensible to further engage with these mentioned and some other scholars.

Some Scholarly Views

A trans-local (to national) and transregional variation of regional history has been debated by, amongst others, prominent scholars such as Sahu, Applegate, Worster, Fawn and Jones.⁸¹ In elaborate critically viewed discussions on the national German Heimat histories, Applegate also relates them with the pursuit, development and maintenance of an imaginary nation-state and ideologies,⁸² that most likely impact the micro-spatial local histories. Hence, perhaps, the view of Susan Armitage that thinking about the regions can become a “sloppily”⁸³ process in research endeavours.

Applegate is not alone in her critique of the approach to the imaginary nation-state histories. Bhairabi Prasad Sahu of India informs that from the local to the national regions (or vice versa) in India have always been contested. He refers to the late nineteenth-early twentieth century study of regional histories that emerged in India, amidst India’s “damning indictment” of its past in “colonial writings”. Feudalism (a land system of landlord nobility-vassals/tenants and peasants) remained the dominant framework for understanding India’s past and Sahu continued suggesting such an approach by 2015.⁸⁴ Few scholars view the national state as an identity in itself (as mentioned earlier), and therefore contest institutional boundaries, which Sahu views as a doomed “epicentric perspective” with political motives.⁸⁵

In a study on America’s regional history, Worster argues for understanding local as a total or inclusive history of a region (thus trans-local), though the temporal meaning of a region may be dynamic (thus changing through time and different spaces), the researcher of the region (in this case, the Western United States of America) should live with that. As a practical example, he refers to his experience with an earlier pioneer of

the West's history, Frederick Jackson Turner, which explains Worster's coming to terms with the dynamism of a region.⁸⁶

Human-inhabited trans-local and transregional spaces in and outside the national, are thus not fixed but a dynamic reality in historical time that's to be scholarly overcome.

Observations on Trans-Local (to National) and Transregional Histories as a Variation of Regional History

For historians (and many other professionals) the "how to" of working micro-spatially with human temporalities, requires a conscious scholarly demarcation of the trans-local concerning features of the "imagery" national, with motivations or arguments that can be considered for scholarly cognition.⁸⁷ Themes, fields, and phenomena histories from the historically perceived trans-local to the national and transregional (despite the challenges of nationally demarcated or scholarly determined boundaries) can assist the historian in defining trends and developments within a specific time-frame and dynamic boundaries.

With the regional historian leading the discussion while being conscious of the challenges as limitations, it does not always have to turn into an impossibility, but be digestibly embraced despite the array of scholarly viewed limitations. One such limitation is the political accent of the local as opposed to the national. Using Sahu's argument regarding India,⁸⁸ the histories of other countries also display their scholarly preferences of doing research in which the national state ideologies impact the local. In South Africa in 1990 for example, Chris Saunders criticised all regional history research efforts as not framed to "address issues of regionalism", with the distinction of the historians dealing with the KwaZulu Natal Province history.⁸⁹ His concern might have been about the dominant emphasis on mainly the marginalised and justice history, while the remaining cultural and social history of a region was underscored.

Some regional scholars are perceived to become so involved in their surrounding conceptualities that they are more concerned with their position than their objectives and actions. Think of "regionalism" and "regionality", and what a region might encompass,⁹⁰ and who is privy to (thinking about the views of all disciplines) dominate the scene of conceptual clarity on regions? The next category sufficiently alerts the reader to this debate that features deliberate scholarly efforts to embrace many micro-spatial contexts as a broader trans-local and transregional history, known as the imaginary national and regional.

Region-Specific Communities/Countries/States

Conceptual/Epistemological Feature(s)

This "region-specific communities/countries/states" variation of regional history emphasises geographic; socio-cultural and other imaginary "features-of-scale" similarities. In essence, this implies that more disciplines appear to show an interest and that the scholarly debate develops towards potentially moving towards observing global connections and other associations of regions with postmodernism as part of the linguistic turn debate, post-colonial studies and the rise of subaltern views. All these complexities also challenge the traditional thinking of the regional historian.⁹¹

Some Scholarly Views

Globally viewed, one may assert that some historians engage in research and writing on a combination of regions in imaginary demarcated national borders. Many scholars agree on the obvious global and regional connectedness, and by the early twenty-first-century regionalism appeared as a dominating trend, with international regions described by Fawn as “conspicuous” [visible or noticeable] with economic attention leading academic debates.⁹²

Celia Applegate’s discussion on Europe as a continent of regions with regional identities⁹³ correlates well with this variation. Yet Applegate quotes Christopher Harvie metaphorically comparing the regional understanding of Europe as a “badly organised dinner party”. Again, there are issues of differences in the comprehension of regions, which Applegate believes had been further obscured with the advent of modernisation after 1945. Harvie is of the view that by 1994 Europe was a continent of regions, badly organised so to speak because “jostling disciplines” in regional research rather speak alongside one another but not with each other.⁹⁴ Since Harvie’s 1994 experience⁹⁵ and Applegate’s discussion in 1999, more collaborations between disciplines in and on regions have been scholarly recorded. Yet the hybrid epistemology of “region” will remain challenging⁹⁶ if kept neatly within a box as a very digestible take-away dinner, so to speak. Guided by Arjun Appadurai’s views, Applegate, suggests that Harvie’s “guests”, namely the spatial understandings of localities, social immediacies, technologies of interactivity and the relativity of contexts should be invited to talk to each other ...⁹⁷

Apart from Harvie’s regional study on Europe many other contributions may well fit this category such as that of Victor Skipp on “The Centre of England” and economically focusing on an industrialised part of England.⁹⁸ Another example is the study of Toyin Falola and Steven Salm on “Nigerian Cities”(2003).⁹⁹ Marja Jalava of Finland also reports on the growing early twenty-first-century interest in transnational and trans-local regions and regionalism in the Nordic region, with emphasis on Scandinavia.¹⁰⁰ Jalava, in particular, refers to the trans-local¹⁰¹ connectedness of the Sámi people at the furthest point of northern Europe, which is today divided between four different countries (Finland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden).¹⁰² In her debate Jalava refers to scholar Sanjay Subrahmanyam who has used historiographical examples from Mexico to, amongst others, “question the boundaries defined retrospectively by post-WWII Area Studies, arguing that they have blinded us to the possibilities of connection”.¹⁰³ In many ways, in his earlier work, James Hayes also tried to associate the Hsin-an in Chinese historiography by considering the outer islands as settlements and, ... to show “their former connection with parts of present-day Hong Kong”.¹⁰⁴ Further east, the Caroline Islands in the Pacific Ocean connected by the sea, have initiated the study of Paul D’Arcy, moving away somewhat from the general tendency to seek an “exaggerated” external impact on the islands and rather be attentive to the inter-island relations in indigenous history.¹⁰⁵

There can never be a single method to a variation of regional history, especially in a world where historians tend to “experiment” with the theories and methods of other disciplines. For example, Eric Van Young’s methodology in his regional study, embraced the geographer’s central place theory to develop a historical typology of Mexican regional spaces “along the lines of solar and dendritic regions, relating especially to the colonial period” with the nineteenth century’s economic and spatial features of some regions in

Mexico prominent.¹⁰⁶ Place and space studies in national regions and translocally or transnationally all follow some form of methodological structure to reason historical development and possibilities of connections to elsewhere in a given time.

The multidisciplinary dimensions of a region's developments may also produce information that may not be directly regarded as historically relevant but certainly may necessitate taking notice of for a more comprehensive understanding. One such example is the research debate between the geographers Costis Hadjimichalis and Ray Hudson. The post-2007 European crisis is viewed as having impacted dominant traditional regional theories, and past and current trends allowing for the erosion of "model regions" (such as intellectual, political, connected with radical and social movements), are listed as reasons for it.¹⁰⁷

The thoughts and contributions of twentieth-century regional history scholars remain vibrant in the twenty-first-century variations of regional history.¹⁰⁸

Some Observations on Region-Specific Communities/Countries/States as a Variation of Regional History

From this variation, it is more obvious that geographers also engage in human demography, accentuating spatial value. Scholars have more generally considered embracing more region-specific histories in imaginary national countries or states, and even in reflective comparative regional studies¹⁰⁹ on, and in national states, than in earlier times¹¹⁰ and amidst a growing trend in regional nationalism.¹¹¹

Spatial (Space), Time & Place-Specific Trends (from Micro Spatial to National and Towards Global Interconnectivity)

Conceptual/Epistemological Feature(s)

Though it can be argued that this category shares some similarities with the previous three variations on regional history as viewed from a historical perspective, the conscious accentuation of time and place specific trend(s) in each space (spatiality) on a topic and/or phenomenon in research, applies. Some global histories indeed acknowledge space when engaging with time and place. Others allow specific topics and phenomena that, in time, are associated with definite trends featuring all over the globe, to guide their research. One such topic is the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the institution's influence in many British colonies' rural areas.¹¹² Other trends, apt in dealing with space, place and time can include migrations; land occupation; demarcations; governing systems; cross border histories; cross-cultural encounters¹¹³ and subaltern¹¹⁴ voices.

Riukulehto argues that "time, event, and narrative are basic concepts in history, whereby space, place, and landscape are basic concepts in geography ... Characterized by its physical nature, but regions as historical units are never completely determined by their environment ...".¹¹⁵ I would like to argue that "space and place" are equally valued in historical studies. Furthermore, space and place are known to be prominent considerations when people, for example, settle anywhere. Historian Donald Worster associates the identity of a region primarily with its ecological modes from which "people have tried to wrest their food, their energy, their income from the specific land in question and what influence that effort has on the shaping of ... [a] society and culture".¹¹⁶

Some Scholarly Views

The mingling thoughts on space and time or time and space stretch much further than twenty-first-century thought – from familiar examples such as the twentieth-century *Annales* historians,¹¹⁷ and the British historians, and even historical thoughts of yesteryear such as those of Ibn Khaldun. They all inform well that time was not viewed in isolation of space. Khaldun, for example, eventually also resorted to universal history as the popular way up to the nineteenth century.¹¹⁸

Moreover, Jalava reflects on pioneers of space (up to the spatial turn) in which she acknowledges French geographers and historians, and space and place hybridity:

Theoretically, the spatial turn is indebted to the critical human geographers such as David Harvey, Doreen Massey, and Edward Soja, who have drawn upon a variety of philosophers and sociologists from the pragmatic-hermeneutic tradition and phenomenology to the Frankfurt School, French poststructuralism, and postcolonial studies. The honor [*sic*] of being a path-breaker is often assigned to the Marxist theorist [*historian*] Henri Lefebvre.... Because of the significant influence of various “post-isms” on the spatial turn... this approach has challenged such historicist views that regard places, such as nations, regions, and territories, as pre-given entities that can be treated in purely empirical, and empiricist, terms. Because places in spaces are human productions the concepts to give meaning to them are viewed as hybrid and changeable over periods of time”.

Scholarly writing on the value of space and place in regional histories (in which time is pivotal) has been quite prolific in the past three decades with the spatial turn as a historical trend embraced in many published works. Proponents of these histories also see no prominent place for national histories. They believe that most regional historical studies departed from much narrower or local research endeavours with institutional features¹¹⁹ before having associated its time context with other geographic spaces for an advanced meaning and other possibilities. Global or world historians display this well in their writing.¹²⁰ De Vito views space and time as bedfellows, and “micro-spatial” can be used as a way of combining microhistory and global history.¹²¹ In so many ways it is exactly what Fischer-Tine¹²² has in mind with the topical or trend connections across space, created in a specific time or era that should be studied from a “global-microhistory” point of view. Yet, it stands that the micro-spatial footprint of each “micro-global-visible” trend, first requires scholarly attention before it is possible to reflect on the trend in a united and consolidated, comparative global way.

De Vito also states that “time”, and not only the “spatial”, matters by pointing to the “role of time in the making of places, connections and social practices as an alternative to the short-term/long-term divide”.

Addressing practices and strategies of historical actors is crucial for identifying the ‘pertinent contexts’ of any large historical processes... the point is not to see each place as one ‘context’, but rather to acknowledge that the context of a social process lies in multiple localities, individuals, objects and knowledges... Acknowledging the bottom-up and entangled construction of historical processes offers procedures of generalization.¹²³

Though there are more and even similar views on this variation of regional history which has been belaboured by some regional historians on all continents, it is sadly impossible to tribute all in this paper.

Some Observations on Space, Time, and Place-Specific Trends Towards Global Interconnectivity as a Variation of Regional History

Regional historians have debated this variation alongside geographers, though it must be admitted that geographers like Robert Fawn, John Agnew and Anssi Paasi have been at the forefront in providing direction for theoretical context, method, and focus.¹²⁴ However, their focus may contain different aims than what the historians may have in mind when discussing trans-local to global interconnectedness. Agnew relates globalisation (in his words as “one of the premier buzzwords of the early twenty-first century”) as part of the geopolitics of the day while it is a myth to think of the world as being borderless.¹²⁵ Hopkins agrees and associates the 2010 plus era as the time in which globalisation, as part of the academic vocabulary, was quite loud, and connected as part of all the “turns” in historical studies created at the time (“global turn”, “material turn”, and the “totalizing return”). Hopkins notes that these specific turns can be viewed as a “reappearance of history in the public domain”:

Studying the past is now held, once more, to be important to understanding pressing ‘contemporary issues’ of which empires and globalization are viewed as prominent themes.¹²⁶

Lastly, Hopkins argues that doing global history as an interactive effort between the universal and the local serves two main purposes: As a past-to-present study to understand the current globalisation debate and to consider it as a study for teaching purposes.¹²⁷ The value of regional history programmes on an advanced Higher Education and training level is of course very important and should be considered in other debates. Generally viewed, historians can improve their positions on their views of space and time towards global interconnectivity in regional human settlement.

Histories of Large/Macro International Regions (“Imagined”)

Conceptual/Epistemological Feature(s)

Neumann and many others are of the view that all engagements labelled as macro or large regions in studies are, like the national and the transnational, mere “imagined communities”.¹²⁸ In thinking about “large” international regions scholarly usually seems to mostly relate to themes or topics covering economies, economic powers or preventative features and escalating conflicting histories. Large or macro-regions are also associated with concepts such as regionalism/the national in a trans-local way/and transregional.¹²⁹ Fredrik Söderbaum concisely defines his view of macro-regions:

Macro-regions (“world regions”) are here seen as large territorial units or subsystems, between the “state” and the “global” level (e.g. Europe or the EU) ...¹³⁰

Macro-regional studies by economic historians appeared to have been viewed more as “contexts for social intervention and political affiliation”, says John Agnew.¹³¹ Agnew’s definition of macro-regional studies as variation in regional history can be captured as:

... those theoretical and policy perspectives that directly relate the relevance of regions to the economic restructuring of national economies in the face of globalization and supranational regionalization (above all with the European Union).¹³²

The next section sheds more light on some prominent scholarship.

Some Scholarly Views

Agnew acknowledges twentieth-century historians having engaged with the macro-regional concept frameworks “in which dynamic economic core macro-regions had been discussed”. Most of Agnew’s valued examples are within the European context, namely the contributions of some Annales historians like Fernand Braudel (1949), Marc Bloch, Immanuel Wallerstein (1974), E.W. Fox (1971) and Emanuel Todd (1990) on “respectively northwest Europe and eastern as well as southern Europe” and “new regionalism” which can be associated with the large or macro international regions’ variation in regional history.¹³³

To date, this scholarly variation of regional history from an economic angle has young historiography from the pen of historians. It is mostly visible in multidisciplinary research contexts which should also be viewed as more advanced, with possibilities of diverse perspectives, than merely a solo disciplinary effort. Possibilities departing from a micro-spatial narrative to the trans-local, and the transnational with an eye on macro-regional needs and opportunities, require further scholarly debate between economic and social historians.

Not all regional history historians might have an appetite for macro-regional research. Christian De Vito expresses his reservations by stating that the “exclusive and predefined focus on large regions produces fundamental distortions at the methodological and interpretative levels, including hampering the study of historical agency, downplaying differentiations around space, class, gender and ethnicity, and shifting away from in-depth study of primary sources”.¹³⁴ In my view, there is room for a variety of historical research methods in which to engage, and historians of regional history should be willing to not only engage in the micro-spatial variety (which is a must-do or must-be available-to-use in arriving at macro-regional “conclusions”) but also to participate in international macro-regional needs to serve the public domain.

Some Observations on Histories of Large/Macro International Regions (“Imagined”) as a Variation of Regional History

It seems as if European studies on macro-regions have dominated the scholarly contributions in this variation of regional history globally. Perhaps it is not strange at all because western thought (enforced through imperialism in colonised areas) dominated for centuries. The twentieth century displayed a healthy micro-spatial local as opposed to regional research approach in literally all European countries (with views and methods spilling over elsewhere, such as in former colonies). It is only in the past 50 years that postcolonial time regions and countries have had access to microspatial and translocal research done by their scholars. It might take more time to overcome the impact of the past in this regard.

Conclusion

This paper engaged with the historiography of regional history studies and debated five variations of regional histories. From the concise introductions of all the variations of regional history, it is quite clear that all have overlapping features, though, from conceptual and historiographical points of view, they can be distinguished from one another. Personally, the most valuable outcome from this reflection was that no

perception that one variation of regional history is “better” than the other, could be identified. They all rely on one another to “serve” regional history studies in a particular variation. It is quite clear that history as a discipline cannot fulfil its mandate on, for example, a macro-regional level if micro-spatial research is lacking. Regional history and historians in their variety of endeavours have the potential to embrace multidisciplinary research opportunities; have the potential to define connections that are broader than the micro locality or micro spatiality and the national towards the trans-local and the global; may have to establish/alter a research methodology tailored for place-specific circumstances while complying to basic disciplinary and scholarly requirements.

Finding one single epistemology and understanding regional history in all its variations might be like searching for a needle in a haystack – counterproductive and unrealistic. Yet there are basic scholarly research frameworks, meanings, and directions as research methodological guidelines, which regional historians as historians pursuing the craft of the discipline, should explore and consider participating in.

With a broad but digestible concept of regional history, must come the establishment of institutional educational structures to better serve this field of study within multidisciplinary contexts and in which regional historians should also participate. Possible failures or shortcomings of existing histories on regions should be studied, as only historians can do, and improve/better its approach towards engaging with regional history in its many variations in the twenty-first century and beyond.

Notes

1. When using the word “battle” I cannot help but think of the late Arthur Marwick’s work, *The New Nature of History: Knowledge, Evidence, Language* (UK: Lyceum Books Incorporated, 2001), 334 (Chapter One).
2. More than sufficient studies exist in which historians and exponents of other disciplines engage with possibilities for defining a region from any preferred angle. See for example R. Fawn, “‘Regions’ and Their Study: Wherefrom, What for and Whereto?’, *Review of International Studies* 35 (2009): 5–34, with p. 10 in particular. See also Louise Fawcett’s efforts in defining regions and regionalism in L. Fawcett, ‘Exploring Regional Domains: A Comparative History of Regionalism’, *International Affairs* 80, no. 3 (2004): 429–46.
3. All concepts are explained in the following sections.
4. H. Fischer-Tiné, ‘Marrying Global History with South Asian History: Potential and Limits of Global Microhistory in a Regional Inflection’, *Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 29, no. 52 (2019): 52–77.
5. See for example Georg G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century. From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge* (London, Wesleyan University Press, 1997), Chapter 5 on the Annales (pp. 51–64); Kate Narev, ‘How Have the Annales Tenets Evolved Since the School’s Inception in 1929?’, *Teaching History* 46, no. 3 (2012): 10–15.
6. Further on in this discussion several scholars argue this “shortcoming”. See for example Antonia I. Castañeda, ‘Que Se Pudieran Defender (So You Could Defend Yourself): Chicanas, Regional History, and National Discourses’, *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 22, no. 3 (2001): 116–42.
7. See for example J.A. Agnew, ‘Arguing with Regions’, *Regional Studies* 47, no. 1 (2013): 11–17; J.A. Agnew, ‘Regions on the Mind Does Not Equal Regions of the Mind’, *Progress in Human Geography* 23, no. 91 (1999): 91–6; Agnew, ‘Arguing with Regions’, 6–17.
8. J.A. Agnew, ‘Arguing with Regions’, *Regional Studies* 47, no. 1 (2013): 11–17.

9. M. Brett, 'Ibn Khaldun and the Dynastic Approach to Local History: The Case of Biskra', *Al-Qantara* (Madrid) 12, no. 1 (1991): 157; M. Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldûn's Philosophy of History: A Study in the Philosophic Foundation of the Science of Culture* (UK, London: Routledge, 2015), 22.
10. G. Hofstede and M.H. Bond, 'The Confucius Connection: From Cultural Roots to Economic Growth', *Organizational Dynamics* 16, no. 4 (1988): 5–21.
11. K. Clarke, *Shaping the Geography of Empire: Man and Nature in Herodotus' Histories* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2018), 21–46.
12. J.A. Agnew, 'Arguing with Regions', 8–9; 13.
13. H.A. Doubleday and W. Page, *A Guide to the Victoria History of the Counties of England* (Westminster: Archibald Constable and Company, 1909 and republished in 2010), 146.
14. In this regard there are too many to recall and perhaps no region can distinguish itself from it. See for example M. Moll, 'Regional History without a Region: The Peculiar Case of Post-1945 West German Historical Research', in *Being a Historian Opportunities and Responsibilities Past and Present*, compl. S. Mörsdorf (European Commission, Cliehres, 2010), 19–44 and several chapters on other countries such as Poland.
15. G. Schwerhoff, 'Spaces, Places, and the Historians: A Comment from a German Perspective', *History and Theory* 52, no. 3 (2013): 420–32; Applegate, C. Applegate, 'A Europe of Regions: Reflections on the Historiography of Sub-National Places in Modern Times', *The American Historical Review* 104, no. 4 (1999): 1171, 1165–9; I. Veit-Brause, 'The Place of Local and Regional History in German and French Historiography: Some General Reflections', *Australian Journal of French Studies* 16 (1979): 447; 472.
16. E. Frie, 'Area Studies in German Historiography', as in [https://ias.pku.edu.cn, doc / 8903513 ... d4ac1a28](https://ias.pku.edu.cn/doc/8903513...d4ac1a28), ca 1989, 1–3.
17. Veit-Brause, 'The Place of Local and Regional ...', 458–70.
18. S. Smith-Peter, 'How to Write a Region Local and Regional Historiography', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 5, no. 3 (2004): 527–42 (Review).
19. Smith-Peter, 'How to Write a Region ...', 527–42.
20. See for example H.P.R. Finberg and V.H.T. Skipp, *Local history. Objective and Pursuit* (Newton Abbot Devon: David & Charles, 1967), 1–24; V.H.T. Skipp, 'Local History: A New Definition and Its Implications', *Local Historian* 14 (1981): 325–91.
21. See for example J-F. Berdah, R. Eßer, M. Moll, and A.M.P. Quaglia, *Regional History in Austria, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain* (Pisa, Edizioni Plus: Cliehres.net, 2009), 37–53; the study on Mexico by J.W. Rubin, 'COCEI in Juchitan: Grassroots Radicalism and Regional History', *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26, no. 1 (1994): 109–36; J. Hayes, 'The Hong Kong Region: It's Place in Traditional Chinese Historiography and Principal Events Since the Establishment of Hsin-An County in 1573', *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1974): 108–35.
22. W. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (UK: Princeton University Press, 2012), 371; L.E. Delgado, R.J. Romero, and W. Mignolo, 'Local Histories and Global Designs: An Interview with Walter Mignolo', *Discourse* 22, no. 3 (2000): 7–33.
23. See for example B.D. Chattopadhyaya, 'Presidential Address: Political Processes and Structure of Polity in Early Medieval India: Problems of Perspective', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 44 (1983): 25–63; B.P. Sahu, 'Regional Histories to Histories of the Regions and Beyond', *Social Scientist* 43, no. 3/4 (2015): 33–47.
24. See for example J. Büsow, K. Franz, and S. Leder, 'The Arab East and the Bedouin Component in Modern History: Emerging Perspectives on the Arid Lands as a Social Space', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 58, no. 1/2 (2015): 1–19.
25. See S. Riukulehto and K. Rinne-Koski, *A House Made to Be a Home* (Finland: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), 136; S. Riukulehto, 'Regional History Between Time and Space', in *Between Time and Space*, ed. S. Riukuehto (Finland: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), Chapter 1; K. Zimmerbauer, S. Riukulehto, and T. Suutari, 'Killing the Regional Leviathan? Deinstitutionalization and Stickiness of Regions', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 41, no. 4 (2017): 676–93.

26. W.B. Hesseltine, 'The Value of Regional History', *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 7, no. 1 (1948): 11–19.
27. See for example the comprehensive regionally divided work of E. Isichei, *A History of African Societies to 1870* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 578; and others like A.G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2020), 406; J.J. Hentz, *South Africa and the Logic of Regional Cooperation* (USA: Indiana University Press, 2005), 276.
28. E.S. van Eeden, 'Pioneering Regional History Studies in South Africa: Reflections Within the Former Section for Regional History at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)', in *Society, Research, and Power. A History of the Human Sciences Research Council from 1929 to 2019*, ed. S. Souradien, S. Swartz, and G. Houston (Pretoria: HSRC, 2021), 257–72.
29. E.V. Kremnyov, E.V. Lesnikovskaya, and O.V. Kuznetsova, 'Modern Transdisciplinary Regionalogy: The Goal and the Objectives', *Journal of Siberian Federal University. Humanities & Social Sciences* 15, no. 4 (2022): 443–52.
30. A. Lagendijk, 'Learning from Conceptual Flow in Regional Studies: Framing Present Debates, Unbracketing Past Debates', (in S. Roper (ed.), *Critical Surveys*), *Regional Studies* 40, no. 4 (2006): 385–99.
31. A.M. Isserman, 'Lost in Space? On the History, Status, and Future of Regional Science' (Presidential Address, 1992), *The Review of Regional Studies* (1993): 1–50.
32. RSA-Historical Timeline, <https://www.regionalstudies.org/about/history/> (accessed September 7, 2023).
33. Compare with P. McCann, 'Observational equivalence? Regional Studies and Regional Science', *Regional Studies* 41, no. 9 (2007): 1209–22.
34. A. Markusen, 'Fuzzy Concepts, Scanty Evidence, Policy Distance: The Case for Rigour and Policy Relevance in Critical Regional Studies', *Regional Studies* 37, no. 6–7 (2003): 701–17 [First published in *Regional Studies*, vol. 33(9), pp. 869–84].
35. Isserman, 'Lost in space? ...', 1–50 with emphasis on pp. 5–8.
36. See my reference to Worster later in the discussion.
37. E.S. van Eeden, 'Challenging Traditional Ways of Thinking and Doing Local/Regional History Research in South Africa: Some Global Learning and Sharing', *International Journal of Regional and Local History* 9, no. 1 (2014): 32; 34; 36. As of 2023, this Journal is known as *Journal of Peoples & Places*.
38. Veit-Brause, 'The Place of Local and Regional ...', 459.
39. Van Eeden, 'Challenging Traditional Ways ...', 37.
40. As author of this article I base this statement on the deepened study I have invested in the research on regions, globally.
41. Finberg and Skipp, *Local History*, 1–24; Skipp, 'Local History: ...', 325–91.
42. Compare S. Riukulehto, 'The Concept of Region in Regional History' (paper presented at the Regional Studies Association Annual International Conference, Pecs, Hungary, May 2010), 1–7.
43. Though a few specific scholars are mentioned in the next sentence, its evident from the previous section that some scholars in the twentieth century and earlier have also contributed to thinking about what regional history is and what possible tenets might be associated with it. Its not possible to acknowledge them here again. See for example E.S van Eeden, 'Challenging Traditional Ways ...', *International Journal of Regional and Local History* 9, no. 1 (2014).
44. See J.A. Agnew, 'Regions on the Mind Does Not Equal Regions of the Mind', *Progress in Human Geography* 23, no. 91 (1999): 91–6; Agnew, 'Arguing with Regions', 6–17.
45. Fawn, "'Regions" and Their Study: ...', 5–34.
46. All these authors appear in some of the references and discussions.
47. Agnew, 'Regions on the Mind ...', 91.
48. It is acknowledged that all the variations of regional history as introduced in this study have rich historiographies that all deserve individual discussions. This discussion is merely an introduction.

49. See the work of K. Friday, *Learning from e-Family History: Online Research Behaviour and Strategies of Family Historians and Implications for Local Studies Collections* (Aberdeen, UK: D.Phil., Robert Gordon University, 2012), Chapters 1 and 2 on Local and Family History Studies.
50. See an informed theoretical discussion on an even transnational level in A. Blunt and R. Dowling, *Home* (London & New York: Routledge, 2006), 1–268.
51. Christian De Vito seems to be a leading scholar in the use of “micro-spatial localities” as concept. See discussion later.
52. Translocal is discussed in the second variation of regional histories.
53. From a historical perspective it is known that the development of national states is viewed as a late invention in human history. See U. Freitag and A. van Oppen, ‘Introduction. “Translocality”: An Approach to Connection and Transfer in Area Studies’, in *Translocality. The Study of Globalising Processes from a Southern Perspective*, 4, ed. U. Freitag and A. van Oppen (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1–23.
54. C.G. De Vito, ‘History Without Scale: The Micro-spatial Perspective’, *Past & Present* 14 (2019): 356; 365.
55. De Vito, ‘History Without Scale: ...’, 366.
56. C.G. De Vito and A. Gerritsen, ‘Micro-Spatial Histories of Labour: Towards a New Global History’, in *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour*, ed. C.G. De Vito and A. Gerritsen (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 1–28.
57. K. Lawon, R. Bavaj, and B. Struck, eds., *A Guide to Spatial History. Areas, Aspects and Avenues of Research* (Denver: Olsokhagen Publishing, 2021), 4; 68–76 and which was followed by another publication by these authors and publisher in 2022 on “Doing Spatial History”.
58. Local or locality in this discussion is viewed as a very restricted micro-area and not the “national” as some countries or disciplines may relate to the word.
59. As an example, see G.G. Iggers, Q.E. Wang, and S. Mukherjee, *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (London: Pearson & Longman, 2016), 51–64.
60. A. Lüdtke, ‘The Historiography of Everyday Life: The Personal and the Political’, in *Culture, Ideology and Politics. Essays for Eric Hobsbawm*, ed. R.S. Samuel and G.S. Jones (New York: Routledge, 1982), 38–54.
61. Brett, ‘Ibn Khaldūn ...’, 1991, 157–80 with emphasis on p. 179.
62. G. Gonmeih, ‘Annales School of Thought and its Contribution’, *Agricultural History* 52, no. 4 (1978): 538–48.
63. See as example M. Jones, ‘Social Justice and the Region: Grassroots Regional Movements and the “English Question”’, *Space and Polity* 8, no. 2 (2004): 157–89.
64. A. Lüdtke, ed., *The History of Everyday Life. Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life* (transl. W. Temper) (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 278–95.
65. De Vito, ‘History Without Scale: ...’, 372.
66. Compare with E.S. van Eeden, ‘Towards a Community Engagement Turn? Historians Debate Forms of Engagement in 21st Century Higher Education’, *New Contree* 87 (2021): 142–53.
67. Van Eeden, ‘Pioneering Regional History ...’, 257–72.
68. De Vito, ‘History Without Scale: ...’, 365–7.
69. N. Caputo, ‘Regional History, Jewish Memory: The Purim of Narbonne’, *Jewish History* (The Elka Klein Memorial Volume) 22, no. 1/2 (2008): 97–114.
70. Riukulehto, ‘Regional History ...’, 21.
71. A typical example is the study by Karel van Nieuwenhuysse. See K. van Nieuwenhuysse, ‘Where Macro and Micro Histories Meet: Position, Trumps, and Pitfalls of Family History as a Form of Oral History in Flemish Education’, in *Oral History and Education*, ed. K.R. Llewellyn and N. Ng-A-Fook (USA: Palgrave Studies in Oral History, 2017), 167–84.
72. C. Saunders, ‘What of Regional History? Towards a History of the Western Cape’, *South African Historical Journal* 22, no. 1 (1990): 131–40; N. Nieftagodien, ‘The Place of The Local’, *African Studies* 69, no. 1 (2010): 41–58.
73. Compare an internal South African debate by the University of the Witwatersrand History Workshop historians in A. Lissoni, N. Nieftagodien, and S. Ally, ‘Introduction: Life after Thirty – A Critical Celebration’, *African Studies* 69, no. 1 (2010): 1–5.

74. See for example the German expression in the national through “Heimat” histories as in Applegate, ‘A Europe of Regions: ...’, 1160–61.
75. Compare with the view of Applegate, ‘A Europe of Regions: ...’, 1180.
76. See Ulrike Freitag’s view as displayed in V. Gottowik, ‘Transnational, Translocal, Transcultural: Some Remarks on the Relations Between Hindu-Balinese and Ethnic Chinese in Bali’, *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 25, no. 2 (2010): 180.
77. See for example C. Applegate, ‘Review: Heimat and the Varieties of Regional History’, *Central European History* 33, no. 1 (2000): 109–15.
78. Applegate, ‘A Europe of regions: ...’, 1165–6.
79. Fawn, “‘Regions’ and Their Study: ...”, 13.
80. See A. Dirlik, 2005, p. 397 in M. Jalava, ‘The Nordic Countries as a Historical and Historiographical Region: Towards a Critical Writing of Translocal History’, *Ouro Preto* 11 (2013): 246.
81. For the edited study by Roger Scully and Richard W. Jones see E. Wyn Jones, ed., *Europe, Regions and European Regionalism* (UK: Springer Link. Palgrave Studies in European Union Politics, 2010), 276.
82. See for example Celia Appelgate’s firm observations on “Heimat” in regional history as in Applegate, ‘Review: ...’, 109–15; M. Crang, ‘Nation, Region and Homeland: History and Tradition in Dalarna Sweden’, *Ecumene* 6, no. 4 (2000): 447–70.
83. S.H. Armitage, ‘From the Inside Out: Rewriting Regional History’, *Frontiers – A Journal of Women’s Studies* 22, no. 3 (2001): 32. See also G. Sheeran and Y. Sheeran, ‘Discourses in Local History’, *Rethinking History* 2, no. 1 (1998): 67.
84. Sahu, ‘Regional Histories ...’, 33–47. Sahu’s view is also shared by another Indian with whom Umesh Kadam agrees. See A.A. Kadam, ‘The Regional Conception of History: An Introductory Essay’, 2005 as in chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Umesh-Kadam-3/publication/236590056_The_Regional_Conception_of_History_An_Introductory_Essay/links/0046351cbdd96c97af000000/The-Regional-Conception-of-History-An-Introductory-Essay.pdf, accessed in February 2023.
85. See for example Sahu, ‘Regional Histories ...’, 40–2.
86. D. Worster, ‘New West, True West: Interpreting the Region’s History’, *Western Historical Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (1987): 141–56 with emphasis on pp. 146–7.
87. See E.S van Eeden, ‘Challenging Traditional Ways ...’, *International Journal of Regional and Local History* 9, no. 1 (2014): 27–43.
88. Sahu, ‘Regional Histories ...’, 33–47.
89. Saunders, ‘What of Regional History?’, 131–40.
90. Compare with Applegate, ‘A Europe of Regions: ...’, 1158.
91. Compare with M. Jalava, ‘The Nordic Countries as a Historical and Historiographical Region: Towards a Critical Writing of Translocal History’, *Ouro Preto* 11 (2013): 245–6; Applegate, ‘A Europe of Regions: ...’, 1158.
92. See Fawn, “‘Regions’ and Their Study: ...”, 5–6.
93. Applegate, ‘A Europe of Regions: ...’, 1157–82.
94. *Ibid.*, 1158.
95. C. Harvie, *The Rise of Regional Europe* (London & New York: Routledge, 2005), 112.
96. See the introductory discussion in which region as a challenging concept is mentioned by R. Wyn Jones, ed., *Europe, Regions and European Regionalism*, 1–15.
97. Applegate, ‘A Europe of Regions: ...’, 1180.
98. V. Skipp, *The Centre of England. Warwickshire; Worcestershire, Staffordshire, East Shropshire, North Gloucestershire* (London: Eyre Methuen, The Regions of Brittain Series, 1979), 255.
99. Toyin Falola and S.J. Salm, eds., *Nigerian Cities* (USA: Africa World Press, 2003), 396.
100. Jalava, ‘The Nordic Countries ...’, 244–64.
101. Jalava clearly has another understanding of translocal (to her meaning a state or country) and which is not defined as such in this regional history debate as addressed earlier in the first variation. For this discussion her contribution fits in the third variation of regional history.
102. Jalava, ‘The Nordic Countries ...’, 246.

103. See S. Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History. From the Tagus to the Ganges* (India: Oxford University Press, 2011), 264.
104. J. Hayes, 'The Hong Kong Region: Its Place in Traditional Chinese Historiography and Principal Events Since the Establishment of Hsin-an County in 1573', *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1974): 108–35.
105. P. D'Arcy, 'Connected by the Sea: Towards a Regional History of the Western Caroline Islands', *The Journal of Pacific History* 36, no. 2 (2001): 163–82.
106. E. Van Young, 'Doing Regional History: A Theoretical Discussion and some Mexican Cases', *Yearbook* (Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers) 20 (1994): 21–34.
107. C. Hadjimichalis and R. Hudson, 'Contemporary Crisis Across Europe and the Crisis of Regional Development Theories', *Regional Studies* 48, no. 1 (2013): 208–18.
108. Think of Skipp, Finberg, and the French Annales as examples.
109. L. Fawcett, 'Exploring Regional Domains: A Comparative History of Regionalism', *International Affairs* 80, no. 3 (2004): 429–46.
110. Compare with C. Dyer, ed., *Changing Approaches to Local History. Warwickshire History and Its Historians* (UK: Boydell Press, 2022), 73–94; 217–38; Smith-Peter, 'How to Write a Region ...', 527; 535–6.
111. See for example N. Miller, 'The Historiography of Nationalism and National Identity in Latin America', *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 2 (2006): 201–21; E. Storm, 'A New Dawn in Nationalism Studies? Some Fresh Incentives to Overcome Historiographical Nationalism', *European History Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (2018): 113–29.
112. See for example Fischer-Tiné, 'Marrying Global History ...', 55.
113. An array of global history covered sources may fall within the regional history variation such as Bentley and Ziegler's Traditions and encounters as well as that of Donald Worster and the work of William McNeill, such as his study *Keeping Together in time. Dance and Drill in Human History*, 1997.
114. Apart from Mignolo's work mentioned earlier, see also Dipesh Chakrabarty's view on subaltern historical thought in his work *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, 2nd ed. (USA: Princeton, 2007), 336.
115. Riukulehto, 'Regional History ...', 1–21.
116. D. Worster, 'New West, True West: Interpreting the Region's History', *Western Historical Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (1987): 149–50.
117. P. Burke, *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Febvre* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), 31.
118. Brett, 'Ibn Khaldun ...', 157.
119. Most historians who's work I have consulted, differ on this point. See for example S. Riukulehto, 'Regional History Between Time and Space', in *Between Time and Space*, ed. S. Riukuehto (Finland: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 1–2; Fischer-Tiné, 'Marrying Global History ...', 61.
120. See for example J.H. Bentley and H.F. Ziegler, *Traditions & Encounters. A Global Perspective on the Past* (Hawai: McGrawHill, 2000), 1067.
121. De Vito, 'History Without Scale: ...', 348–9; 361; 366.
122. Fischer-Tiné, 'Marrying Global History ...', 55.
123. De Vito, 'History Without Scale: ...', 348–9; 361; 366.
124. See for example Fawn, 'Regions' and Their Study: ...', 5–6; A. Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries, and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1996), 353.
125. J. Agnew, 'A World that Knows No Boundaries? The Geopolitics of Globalization and the Myth of a Borderless World', 1–29. Paper prepared for a chapter publication in D. Conway and N. Heyman, eds., *Globalization's Dimensions* (Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 2.
126. A.G. Hopkins, 'The Historiography of Globalization and the Globalization of Regionalism', *JESHO* 53 (2010): 19–36 with emphasis on pp. 19–20; 31.
127. Hopkins, 'The Historiography of Globalization ...', *JESHO* 53 (2010): 29.

128. See Neumann, 1994, 58 as quoted from Marja Jalava, 'The Nordic Countries ...', 248; Fawn, "'Regions" and Their Study: ...', 16.
129. See for example L.E. Grinin, A.V. Korotayev, and B.H., Rodrigue, *Evolution A Big History Perspective* (Russia: Uchitel, 2011), 304; T. Perrin, 'The Bigger the Better? The New 'Macro' Regions in France in the Lens of Territorial Changes in Europe', *European Planning Studies* 29, no. 11 (2021): 1975–80.
130. F. Söderbaum, 'Exploring the Links Between Micro-Regionalism and Macro-Regionalism', in *Global Politics of Regionalism. Theory and Practice*, ed. M. Farrell, B. Hettne and L. van Langenhove (Chicago: Pluto Press, 2005), 87–103.
131. Agnew, 'Arguing with Regions', 9.
132. *Ibid.*, 9; 11.
133. *Ibid.*, 11; 13. See also C. Applegate's criticism against the German regional histories.
134. De Vito, 'History Without Scale: ...', 351–5.
135. Inspiration for developing this structure came from an adapted version of the International Society of Regional History Statutes (2022) and Prof. Sulevi Riukulehto's guidance. See <https://isrh.org/> and my own thoughts as in Van Eeden, 'Challenging Traditional Ways ...', 27–43.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).