Competitive Multi-City Regionalism: Growth Politics Beyond the Growth Machine

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Abstract

Local growth politics are increasingly conducted at scales which confound the assumptions of growth machine theory. This paper analyzes "competitive multi-city regionalism" in the US—local growth coalitions collaborating on economic development across multiple city-regions. The paper introduces the concept of "scalar logics of regionalism" to characterize the multiple regionalism projects at work throughout the state-economy nexus, and develops a comparative case study of regionalism initiatives in Arizona, Florida and Ohio to demonstrate the importance of interactions and conflict between different scalar logics in determining the multi-scalar outcomes of local growth politics.

Keywords: *competitive multi-city regionalism, growth machine, local economic development*

Introduction

Local economic development in the United States has historically been conducted within individual cities or within a single city-region. But now municipal and metropolitan chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, city halls, universities, and other local governance actors are forming partnerships on a larger, multi-city scale. They collaborate on business attraction and place marketing, harmonize policies and regulations around economic development, and attempt to reduce zero-sum competition for capital investment within their jurisdictions. These partnerships were effectively non-existent forty years ago (twelve existed in 1973), while there are now 171, covering more than half of the country by population. I call this phenomenon competitive multi-city regionalism (CMCR), and its existence poses provocative questions for growth machine theory—arguably the most influential account of local growth politics in the last several decades. If the pursuit of land-use intensification and real estate development systematically promotes growth coalition formation at the local and city-regional scales, where the policy levers controlling land use are located, why are these growth coalitions now seeking alliances with their neighbours at unprecedented scales? What is making *regionalism* an increasingly common *local* strategy for growth? What, in short, is driving growth politics beyond the growth machine?

The aim of this article is two-fold. First, and more narrowly, it is to introduce competitive multi-city regionalism as a new emerging configuration of regional economic governance in North America. Second, and more broadly, it is to use CMCR as a window into growth politics beyond the growth machine. To that end, the article introduces the concept of *scalar logics of regionalism*: the different and often conflicting political objectives which governance actors attempt to realize through "regionalism" projects, in response to structural features of state space and geographically specific contingencies. I begin by revisiting BRENNER's (2009) nationally-scaled analysis of growth machine theory, and expand upon it to develop the concept of scalar logics of regionalism. On the basis of this theoretical discussion I present a historical and empirical overview of competitive multi-city regionalism, and then examine three case studies of CMCR institutionalization pathways, comparing the divergent outcomes of initially similar regional economic development initiatives in Arizona, Central Florida, and Northeast Ohio. I demonstrate the importance of conflicting scalar logics of regionalism in steering the course of locally-initiated regional growth politics. The article concludes by discussing the implications of scalar logics of regionalism and CMCR for how we understand local politics in a globalizing world.

The findings are informed by a large-scale comparative study of regional economic development in the post-1980s US. The research combines a policy review and spatial analysis of the 171 multi-city economic development partnerships operating in the US as of the end of 2013 with a narrower interview- and document-based investigation of five leading initiatives (in Arizona, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Ohio). In what follows I draw mostly on the latter, relying in particular on 41 semi-structured interviews conducted in 2013 with State[1] and local officials, business leaders, and civil society representatives in the case-study regions.

Rescaling the growth machine?

Arguably the most successful account of local politics in the postwar Global North has been the model of the city as a growth machine (LOGAN and MOLOTCH, 2007). Growth machine theory derives enormous explanatory power from the relatively simple observation that a broad swath of place-bound elites (the "growth coalition") shares a common interest in land-use intensification, and that this interest drives these elites to make common cause in urban governance. Anchored by the real estate and development industries but enlisting municipal governments, chambers of commerce, universities, utility companies, and the arts and entertainment sector, the growth coalition is an empirically ubiquitous feature of Northern cities (JONAS and WILSON, 1999).

[1] I use the upper-case "State" to refer to the formal US governmental entities (e.g. the State of Arizona) and the lower-case "state" to refer to the abstract apparatus of governance (e.g. state-economy relations).

Because growth machines are based on property development and land-use intensification, they have two structurally inscribed spaces of engagement (COX, 1998) within which such promotion is likely to be enacted. First of all, growth coalitions may be active within the territory of local jurisdictions (municipal or county governments), which correspond to both the property tax base and the government apparatus responsible for a range of consequential planning decisions. As PHELPS (2012) discusses, despite their 'urban' associations, municipally-situated growth machines have arguably been more characteristic of US suburbs, where, relative to inner cities, developers hold more sway over immature governments and the scope of revenue growth from new development is higher. In these cases, the growth-machine motivation of land-use intensification often takes the form of new construction on undeveloped land, rather than intensification of existing uses *per se*.[2] Second, growth machines may be active at the city-regional or metropolitan scale, which corresponds to the property markets within which developers and others in the real estate business have operating expertise, a common scale at which the local business community self-organizes via chambers of commerce, and the service area for other important growth machine actors such as institutions of higher learning.

The fact of growth-machine collective action occurring primarily at the local and metropolitan scales is not an ontological necessity. Instead, as BRENNER (2009) explains, it is a consequence of specific broader structural features of *national* state space:

> The "localness" of coalition formation and growth politics in US cities, as elsewhere, is not a pre-given empirical attribute of the coalitions in question, but a mediated *result* of national institutional structures… that, quite literally, create a space in which local growth coalitions may be established. (BRENNER, 2009: 126)

The factors that Brenner identifies—such as decentralized municipal finance and suburban home rule—are all bedrock aspects of local political economy in the US, which in most cases were established a century ago or more. Much of the empirical success of the growth machine model can be traced to the fact that these features have remained so constant over the *longue durée*.

[2] My thanks to an anonymous reviewer for raising this point.

There have, however, been a number of more fine-grain evolutions of the state system in the US which have provoked substantial if not quite epochal shifts in the selectivities of local growth politics. While Brenner's analysis of the national determinants of local politics is an insightful critique of methodological localism, read narrowly it arguably overstates the importance of *national* political structure within what is after all a multi-scalar state system. Additionally, Brenner's analysis could be read to imply a mono-directionality to local-national political relations, with national state space producing a distinctive local politics, but not the reverse. I therefore want to offer a sympathetic revision of this analysis that aims to address both of these limitations. I will do so, first, by taking Brenner's insight about the non-local state structures enabling local growth politics and broadening it from the national to the *multi-scalar* state. And, second, by interrogating the *multi-directional* policy relays which constitute local politics within the multi-scalar state apparatus—in particular by analyzing attempts by local political actors to expand the limits of those politics in territorial or networked terms. Here I narrow in on a form of local growth politics which has been lurching towards prominence and perhaps even ascendancy for of thirty years in the United States: regionalism. Regionalism can be a deliberate creation of state action—as with the establishment of metropolitan planning agencies and regional planning councils in the US, and the various national and supranational spatial planning frameworks which have proliferated across Western Europe—but it can also emerge as a local strategy of growth politics in response to state spatial selectivities at multiple scales.

There is not one contemporary local strategy for regionalism, but numerous colliding, coexisting, and competing strategies. The following ground-up regionalisms are all now seen in the US:

- *Metropolitan city-regionalisms* encompassing a central city and its suburbs;
- *Multi-city regionalisms* encompassing multiple metropolitan areas in a corridor or constellation, often described as "super regions" by policy actors;

- *Megaregionalisms* encompassing massive but diffuse urban networks, such as the Great Lakes Metro Chambers Coalition, which draws together nearly 40 chambers of commerce (many of which are themselves already regional in scope) for coordinated policy development and lobbying to the federal government;
- Even larger *subnational regionalisms* driven by State governments—notably the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, the Council of Great Lakes Governors, the Southern Growth Policy Board, and the Gulf of Mexico Alliance. (Unlike the previous examples, these subnational regionalisms are not undertaken by local political actors, but share similar dynamics inasmuch as they represent attempts to expand the territorial limits of State politics through cooperation with neighbours.)

The fact of growth-oriented *local* political action being undertaken at these various *regional* scales suggests the need for an account of growth politics beyond the growth machine. Shared commitment to land-use intensification and the promotion of property values still undoubtedly unites local growth coalitions, but the political action those growth coalitions undertake is not (only) local anymore. And new growth coalitions are forming at larger regional scales where land-use intensification is not an objective which can be pursued in a coherent fashion. I therefore turn now to a different account of local growth politics which can better account, I argue, for the variety of regionalisms currently at play in the US.

Scalar logics of regionalism

An adequate analysis of regionalism as a form of local politics requires an identification of *scalar logics of regionalism*—the different and often conflicting political objectives which governance actors attempt to realize through "regionalism" projects in response to structural features of state space and place-specific contingencies. Different state actors, by virtue both of their relatively durable locations within the broader intergovernmental system and of historically- and geographically-specific contextual factors, tend to pursue regionalism in different ways. Through the interaction of these scalar logics the "region" is produced—not as a fixed scale, but as a structure for social action.

City-regional growth machine strategies are one scalar logic of regionalism. The shared commitment of the growth coalition to land-use intensification directly motivates elite collective action at the metropolitan scale, and indirectly motivates other metropolitan regionalisms by establishing transposable institutional frameworks at the metropolitan scale. This scalar logic remains ubiquitous in regional politics (JONAS et al., 2014; HALL and JONAS, 2014), but the arena is getting crowded. We can identify, at a minimum, the following diversity of state actors in contemporary US regionalism, each with its own relatively distinct scalar logic(s) of regionalism: the federal government, State governments, municipal governments, county governments, regional planning councils, metropolitan planning organizations, and a profusion of special purpose agencies and public-private partnerships. To clarify the multi-scalar determinants of "local" regionalism efforts, I will briefly elaborate the two scalar logics of regionalism attributable to contemporary US State governments.

First, regionalism is now seen as an effective means of increasing State competitiveness, and so State governments undertake regional subdivisions of their territory to administer economic development initiatives. Fourteen States have undertaken significant economic development reforms in recent years, mostly following the election of new Republican governors (FESER, 2013), and many of these involve the creation or restructuring of a sub-State regional framework for economic development. These initiatives are less likely than efforts from the federal government or from local growth coalitions to involve cross-border cooperation. Ground-up regionalism often emerges out of local recognition of functional interconnections within a metropolitan or multi-city agglomeration. State-led regionalism, by contrast, is frequently a vehicle for advancing a State's interests against its nearby competitors, and these two scalar logics are often in tension where agglomerations cross State boundaries.

The second scalar logic of regionalism attributable to State governments applies to the cases where supra-metropolitan urban regions are effectively a State scale of urbanization. Large-scale conurbations often cross State borders and thus are not easily accommodated within State planning frameworks. But where these conurbations do not cross State borders but rather approximate the State's territory—Arizona, California, Florida and Texas are all examples—they can become a useful strategic framework for State economic development policy. Here the scalar logic of regionalism at work is not one of subdivision but of integration.

Presenting these two State government scalar logics of regionalism is not meant to imply that States are necessarily able to accomplish their regionalism goals (see, e.g., JONAS and PINCETL, 2006, on the fraught history of State regionalism in California). Instead, analyzing State governments as regionalism actors is meant to foreground the fact that apparently ground-up regionalisms have always been constitutively structured by the intergovernmental architecture of the state. This observation was true for the two major waves of 20th-century US regionalism: the Progressive-Era "first wave" of municipal expansion and New Deal national regionalism, and the 1960s and 1970s "second wave" of regional planning councils (WALLIS, 1994). And it remains true for the present, "third wave" of regionalism, which since the early 1990s has seen the emergence of a heterogenous array of "regional partnerships". They are diverse with respect to their composition, their goals, and their scalar configuration, although they tend to be public-private partnerships and tend to operate in some articulation to economic competitiveness. Third-wave regionalism confounds any notion of the region as a fixed spatial scale. Within the rescaled, relativized terrain of neoliberal state-economy relations, there is no single answer to the "regional question" (PARKER and HARLOE, 2015). Instead, we see a startling variety of institutional experiments mobilizing around specific governance problems at different supra-local, sub-national scales. The third wave of regionalism can thus be characterized as the coexistence of multiple distinct scalar logics of regionalism. Table 1 summarizes the three waves of US regionalism from this perspective.

Period of regionalism	**Approx. dates**	**Dominant regionalism projects**	**Leading policy domain**	**Structure of regionalism**
Progressive Era and New Deal	1900-1940	Municipal expansion; New Deal national regional planning	Municipal governance	Autonomous, non-overlapping local and federal policymaking
Fordism-Keynesianism	1960-1980	Regional planning councils in a federal policy framework	Land-use planning	Local regionalism facilitated by federal leadership
Neoliberalism	1990-present	Proliferating regionalisms at multiple scales	Economic development	Ad-hoc, multi-level public-private partnerships

Table 1: Structures of regionalism in the US

My conclusion is that the task of deciphering the increasingly variegated forms of regional growth coalition action in the contemporary US (as elsewhere) is greatly aided by identifying the scalar governance logics which individually shape regionalism selectivities, and which articulate together in relatively durable structures.

Competitive multi-city regionalism

On the basis of this brief sketch of scalar logics of regionalism, I now turn to a case study of regional growth coalition formation and collective action in the US. I have coined the term "competitive multi-city regionalism" (CMCR) to describe place-bound elites collaborating to pursue familiar local growth objectives but on unfamiliar—and indeed unprecedented—scales, spanning multiple metropolitan regions and laboursheds (WACHSMUTH, 2015, 2016). The term

CMCR builds self-consciously off of WARD and JONAS's (2004) "competitive city-regionalism"—their contestation-focused synthesis of the new regionalism and global city-regionalism—while insisting that the dynamics of growth coalition formation and contestation at the multi-city scale are qualitatively different from those at the scale of the city-region. Place-bound elites have a straightforward interest in coordinating economic development policy across central city and suburbs: the city-region is a common labour and property market, and competition for investment within such a region is necessarily zero-sum. This fact does not make intra-metropolitan competition disappear, since there are still coordination problems to be overcome, and numerous actors who face the imperative to 'compete or die' (EISENSCHITZ and GOUGH, 1996) within a metropolitan region—above all municipal officials trying to protect their tax base. But the common labour and property markets of the city-region do offer a real basis for collaboration: a new office park in one jurisdiction can supply employment for residents in a second, and consumer demand for businesses in a third. The familiar growth-machine logic of land-use intensification can therefore motivate metropolitan-scaled growth coalitions, even if, as JONAS (2013) has argued, economic development will rarely be a sufficient inducement to crystallize city-regional political alliances in the absence of collaboration on other issues of collective social concern, such as infrastructure, housing, and environmental management. At the larger, multi-city scale, by contrast, the incentives for cooperation even on economic development are murky: because metropolitan labour markets are relatively discrete, one city-region's win might really be another's loss. The result is that inward investment will rarely mobilize policy collaboration at the larger-than-metropolitan scale, and city-suburb relations—the defining problem of metropolitan regionalism (MITCHELL-WEAVER et al., 2000; BRENNER, 2002; LINDSTROM, 2010)—are not the defining problem of US multi-city regionalism.

The case of competitive multi-city regionalism is thus a case of growth politics beyond the growth machine. Rather than looking to growth-machine motivations to explain CMCR, we must turn instead to emerging scalar governance logics which have established new selectivities for local growth politics. Specifically, CMCR can be contextualized as a new development within so-called "third-wave" local economic development policy (ROSS and FRIEDMAN, 1990), which is characterized by a broad regional or sectoral focus on innovation, and public-private partnerships as the privileged institutional vehicle. One particularly salient regulatory outcome of the third wave of economic development has been the unbounding of local economic development institutions from specific political jurisdictions. As OLBERDING (2002) has explored, the 1990s saw a marked acceleration in the formation of *metropolitan* economic development agencies and partnerships which span a common labour market (see also WOOD 1993). These competitiveness-focused partnerships have for the most part failed to address the city-suburb inequalities and free-rider problems which have motivated numerous calls for US regional governance over the last several decades (e.g. DREIER et al., 2004; ORFIELD, 1997; RUSK, 1993), but they nevertheless represent an important new form of local economic governance.

At the same time, although initially in much smaller numbers, another kind of economic development entity began to emerge: multi-city partnerships, spanning multiple metropolitan and micropolitan areas and thus crossing both jurisdictional and functional boundaries. Prior to the 1990s, some such partnerships existed, but generally either in sparsely populated areas where simple economies of scale in staffing and operations made collaborative economic development efforts tempting, or as legacies of 1970s State-government-led attempts at regional planning. Over the course of the 1990s, though, "bottom-up" CMCR partnerships started to appear with increasing frequency, and in increasingly well-populated urban areas, and since the early 2000s they began to proliferate in earnest.

CMCR is now ubiquitous in the United States. This point deserves underscoring, because the academic literature on US urban governance has so far taken no notice of this phenomenon. And yet, across 43 States, almost 160 million people—more than half the country's population—

live in regions whose growth coalitions have formed CMCR partnerships. The very largest cities in the country generally do not participate in CMCR—it is a phenomenon of mid-sized and small urban areas—but the largest CMCR initiatives span territories with populations approximating a large city: there are currently eight initiatives with more than five million inhabitants. It is quite common for multi-city partnerships to span a large number of counties; the median number of counties in a CMCR partnership is eight, and eight partnerships span more than twenty counties. Given that each of these partnerships has emerged as the result of bottom-up collaboration between local elites, the territorial scope of these groups is notable.

The capacities and aims of these regional collaborations vary widely. The most common institutional form is a board of directors representing local economic development corporations and the private sector, along with a small permanent staff, but some partnerships have large staffs, deep connections to civil society, and substantial independent institutional capacity, while others are barely more than a website and a commitment to periodic conversations between collaborators. Meanwhile, the aims range from simple place branding exercises to more substantial public-private coordination of the regional political economy. Unlike local growth machines, for which land-use intensification supplies a structuring principle, there is no consistent functional basis underlying CMCR; in addition to narrow economic-development focused partnerships, multi-city "infrastructure alliances" mobilizing around supply-chain expansion are common (WACHSMUTH, 2016), as are partnerships which attempt to simultaneously address economic and environmental sustainability objectives. Finally, multi-city regionalism initiatives are by no means mutually exclusive with other forms of regionalism. The same organizations or growth coalitions may well participate in several distinct but spatially overlapping regional projects. There are no strong structural determinants leading CMCR collaborations to form around specific geographies—as, for example property and labour markets provide scalar selectivities for city-scale growth machines. Instead, explaining the different geographies of CMCR partnerships requires identifying the multiple interacting and often conflicting scalar logics of regionalism at work in a given location. And it is to this task that I now turn.

CMCR institutionalization in Arizona, Florida and Ohio

To substantiate the analysis of scalar logics of regionalism, I offer a brief comparison of CMCR institutionalization pathways in three regions: the Arizona Sun Corridor, Central Florida, and Northeast Ohio. Each of these regions has seen the emergence of a CMCR partnership since 2000. Despite relatively similar growth coalition objectives—each has been led by metropolitan chambers of commerce and focused on more tightly coordinating local economic development activities across their territories—these three CMCR initiatives have developed in divergent fashion. In Arizona, CMCR has spilled out from economic development to other areas of governance, catalyzing a series of regulatory experiments which have had the overall effect of institutionalizing the Sun Corridor as a real space of urban governance. In Central Florida, despite an initial economic development partnership that looked quite similar to Arizona's, governance overflow from economic development into other realms has failed to occur. Finally, in Northeast Ohio, a major CMCR initiative has neither inspired a diverse range of governance initiatives as in the Arizona case, nor remained isolated as in the Florida case. Instead, there has been a consolidation of economic development initiatives at the multi-city scale, with multiple complementary institutions converging on a similar geography and policy agenda.

Each case is complex, but the parsimonious explanation for the difference between them is the broader state context into which these three local regionalism projects, animated by the same economic policy common sense, developed. The institutionalization of locally-initiated CMCR depends on the specific balance achieved between conflicting scalar logics of regionalism.

Bottom-up governance proliferation in the Arizona Sun Corridor

The Arizona Sun Corridor is one of the eleven megaregions speculatively defined by the REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION (2006), and the only of the eleven that reasonably corresponds to a real space of political-economic governance (WACHSMUTH, 2015). Phoenix and Tucson are the two poles of the corridor, connected by the I-10 interstate highway, which was the spine for an enormous amount of suburban growth during the housing boom of the 2000s. The collapse of that boom—and the State's economy along with it—in the Great Recession of 2008 prompted a set of economic governance experiments in search of an "institutional fix" (PECK and TICKELL, 1994) for the crisis. The most significant of these was the Arizona Sun Corridor Partnership, a collaboration between the five major urban economic development agencies in the region. In the early days of the recession, leaders at the Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) and Tuscon Regional Economic Opportunities (TREO) began discussing pooling resources, engaging in joint marketing, and reducing intraregional competition for new investment projects. As a senior TREO official explained:

> It takes a lot of people who have the mindset to collaborate in big megapolitan regions, and so you really have to have the right leaders that believe in that. But in Arizona specifically, because our economy Statewide has mostly relied on…housing construction…we realized during the recession as a State that we had to…come together and leverage all our resources, to get a message out there that Arizona is not just about growth and housing construction—that we have more.

They were soon joined by three other economic development agencies representing counties and cities outside of metropolitan Phoenix and Tucson, and the five organizations formalized the collaboration as the Arizona Sun Corridor Partnership in 2009.

In the months and years following the formation of the Arizona Sun Corridor Partnership, a set of other governmental and non-governmental organizations sprung up or realigned themselves along the Phoenix-Tucson axis. The most significant has been the Arizona Sun Corridor Joint Planning Advisory Council, an effort by the federally-designated metropolitan planning organizations in the corridor to coordinate freight and transportation planning on a multi-city scale. In total, business attraction, transportation and infrastructure planning, workforce training, and sustainability and resource conservation are now all active governance concerns on the multi-city scale in Arizona. The result is that an initially narrow economic development collaboration has spilled out into other realms of governance, and helped significantly institutionalize the Sun Corridor as a real space of governance in Arizona.

What explains this bottom-up governance proliferation in the Sun Corridor? At the same time as local elites were collaborating on post-recession economic development at the multi-city regional scale, the State of Arizona was widely understood as being incompetent at the kind of future-oriented planning that local capitalists and civic leaders believe is necessary to reproduce their prosperity—not the least of which was the lack of any significant efforts at State-led regionalism. In fact, the post-2008 relationship between the Arizona business community and the State was openly antagonistic, despite the fact that conservative Republicans dominated the latter. The legislature's vicious stance towards immigrants, enacted into law in 2010 via the infamous SB 1070, and the more recent anti-gay SB 1062 which was vetoed by the governor, prompted coordinated action from local capital to rein in what it saw as unproductive extremism (LEE and BURNS, 2014). The governor's office enjoyed a somewhat better reputation among business, but even here the State economic development office—the Arizona Commerce Commission—was almost universally described to me as incompetent at best. One of my informants involved in Sun Corridor governance put it bluntly:

> There wasn't that much of a partnership with the Arizona Commerce Commission…. They have no idea what they're doing with the leadership and how to make economic development work. So that's where you see someone filling the leadership void, and that's where TREO and GPEC were trying to do it [with the Arizona Sun Corridor Partnership].

The absence of any kind of State leadership in economic development left the local economic development organizations—and particularly the large GPEC and TREO metropolitan development organizations—with a wide degree of latitude to determine the institutional parameters of economic development in the State. A scalar logic of regionalism emerging from the chambers of commerce encountered neither opposition nor encouragement from the State government. So, following the emergence of the Arizona Sun Corridor Partnership, a whole range of other governance actors rallied around this particular governance vision, and enacted variants upon it in similarly bottom-up fashions. The State has a new economic development initiative, called the Arizona Commerce Authority, but it is entering a governance space already structured by the Sun Corridor. One participant in the Sun Corridor Partnership told me:

> If the ACA doesn't get its act together pretty soon I think it's going to fold. Our Sun Corridor group runs circles around them right now. They've got all the money and they can't get their act together.

The result of State inaction in Arizona, in sum, has been multi-city governance proliferation from below.

Governance gridlock in Central Florida

Florida's Super Region is a collaboration between the Tampa Bay Partnership and the Central Florida Partnership (two large civic-business partnerships and chambers of commerce operating in metro Tampa and metro Orlando respectively) and the Florida High Tech Corridor Council, a multi-city economic development collaboration serving the I-4 interstate corridor. It formed in 2009 after years of discussions around multi-city regionalism in Central Florida, but was proximately motivated by the Great Recession's impact on the State's housing-driven economy. Over the course of the 1990s and early 2000s, both Tampa and Orlando had witnessed a consolidation of economic development activities at the metropolitan scale, leading to the formation of the Tampa Bay Partnership and the Central Florida Partnership. The success of those efforts, and some early encouraging experience with cross-regional collaboration over a joint Orlando-Tampa Olympics bid, led to recurrent discussions between business leaders about ways to strengthen collaboration throughout the 2000s. When the Great Recession threw the State's economy into disarray, the Super Region was launched—in its first guise as the 2009 Super Regional Leadership Conference, bringing together hundreds of business and civil society leaders from across Central Florida to discuss regional economic integration. (Follow up conferences were held in 2010 and 2011.) The goal was leveraging the combined size and economic power of the corridor for better economic development, as one of the Super Region's leading proponents described:

> Separate, Tampa Bay and the Central Florida Orlando area are the eighteenth and nineteenth largest regions in the United States…. When you put those two economies together, we become the tenth largest region in the United States. The power of that is incredible. But we do not have the organization systems in place to take advantage of that. So that's what we continue to work on: getting our leaders to understand the power economically of working together.

The major initiative of the early years of the Super Region was coordination to develop a high-speed rail line between Tampa and Orlando. Poor transportation infrastructure in the corridor had been an ongoing issue of concern for business leaders, and when the Obama administration announced a national high-speed rail initiative as part of federal stimulus spending in the Great Recession, elites throughout the super region mobilized strongly along with their political counterparts to secure federal rail funding for a Tampa-Orlando line. The project had widespread backing from nearly all relevant political and economic actors, and appeared headed for success, but in February 2011 Republican Governor Rick Scott unexpectedly killed the project in what was widely interpreted as an effort to stymie a major Obama initiative. Despite the defeat, there was widespread agreement among Super Region elites that the project demonstrated the ability of leaders across the region to work together, but new concrete initiatives have been slow to develop.

And indeed, there are a number of other regionalist projects on the go in Central Florida, but none that have followed from the Super Region, or that attempt to match that specific space of governance. The most important reason for this is that the Florida State government had its own vision of economic regionalism in the State, and it was one that was at odds with the bottom-up regionalism emerging through collaboration between local growth coalitions in the Tampa-Orlando corridor. Enterprise Florida, the State's economic development agency, developed an elaborate regional vision, but one in which the Super Region does not appear. One planner, in the course of a skeptical assessment of the Super Region's efficacy to date, explicitly confirmed what others indicated more obliquely—that the governor does not want a Super Region:

> Orlando and Tampa do not work together…. They're talking about thinking about talking together to think about doing. And the governor there has made it almost impossible for them to do that, by getting rid of the vehicles for working together.

So, despite the initially promising efforts at local economic development restructuring undertaken by the Tampa-Orlando growth coalition, the institutional landscape of governance in Florida was not otherwise significantly altered, as it was in Arizona. Instead there have been competing and indeed contradictory regionalism policy initiatives emerging from different actors in line with different scalar logics of regionalism. The Florida State government more recently made some moves in a more CMCR-friendly direction—notably the State Department of Transportation's Future Corridors initiative and the Department of Economic Opportunity's 2013 strategic plan for Statewide development. This latter initiative, in fact, represents a State scalar logic of regionalism on an even larger scale than CMCR, as a Florida-based economic development consultant described:

> In the [Department of Economic Opportunity] plan…one of the core parts of that is supporting regions but also connecting the regions together to build a megaregion…. In general, moving a megaregion argument to implementation is hard because it involves multiple States. In Florida they have the luxury of, generally the megaregion is contained within Florida. So actually in a way megaregion planning is also kind of Statewide and regional planning linked together. It's definitely got a lot of interest and it's helped facilitate some of those discussions.

As with the Arizona case, however, these recent developments from the State government came too late to disturb the basic pattern of regionalism governance which had already been established. In Arizona that pattern has been bottom-up governance proliferation, but in Florida it has been governance gridlock.

Coordinated governance in Northeast Ohio

A third scenario, besides the lack of State leadership from Arizona and the contradictory State leadership from Florida, can be found in Ohio, where the State government has embarked on regionalizing economic development reforms which build on the perceived effectiveness of local growth coalition efforts at CMCR. The signature CMCR initiative in Ohio is Team NEO: an economic development partnership between four chambers of commerce in Northeast Ohio (hence the "NEO" in "Team NEO"), spanning 18 counties and five metropolitan regions, along with a number of smaller regions. It is the longest-standing of the case study organizations, having been founded in 2004 as part of a wave of regional economic governance consolidation in the area. More so than the Arizona Sun Corridor Partnership or Florida's Super Region, Team NEO is attempting to provide traditional economic development services (focusing on new business attraction) but on a much larger scale than such activity had ever previously existed in the State.

Its major partners are five chambers of commerce centred on Cleveland, Akron, Canton, and Youngstown; an Ohio-based philanthropy named Fund for Our Economic Future (FOEF); and the State government's recently privatized economic development organization, Jobs Ohio. Team NEO was founded in the midst of a larger regional reorganization of economic development centred on the Cleveland area's various chambers and business organizations. Three Cleveland-area business groups merged to form the metropolitan-scaled Greater Cleveland Partnership. A similar consolidation occurred in nearby Canton, with the formation of the Stark Development Board. And, simultaneously, FOEF was launching its Advance Northeast Ohio initiative to articulate a growth strategy for the entire multi-city region. The result of these parallel developments was a political context which made the larger Team NEO partnership viable. This political opportunity was strengthened by the 2008 recession, as one Team NEO staffer explains:

> I think there was a recognition that if we did a study over the recent recessions—the last three or four—that Northeast Ohio did not come out of those recessions as favourably as the balance of the US. So we used that as a sort of a catalyst point to bring people to the table to develop this plan. It's a motivator to get people to the table, to continue to get people to the table.

In 2013, the incoming Republican governor enacted broad economic development reform, a major consequence of which was to create a series of official regional economic development partners to channel State ED funding. (This funding formerly had been distributed directly to municipal or county agencies and designated public-private partnerships.) And, unlike in Florida, the Ohio government opted to work with existing regionalist initiatives instead of creating a new series of regional institutions. So Team NEO was transformed from a creature of the local chambers and economic development corporations in Northeast Ohio, dependent upon them for funding and policy direction, into their master in a certain sense. Now the local chambers see Team NEO as a competitor, and many would prefer to dissolve it. According to one informant within Team NEO:

> The existing chambers of commerce, they see Team NEO now—an organization they developed—as somewhat of a threat to their existence, to their funding streams.

A few years ago, they would indeed have been able to dissolve it, since they controlled its funding and strategic direction. But Team NEO is now firmly entrenched with State support. And the State's action to strengthen the existing CMCR initiative in Northeast Ohio, instead of attempting to impose a different regional vision, has resulted in Team NEO—originally an outcome of local, ground-up economic development collaboration—coming to supplant to some extent the local and metropolitan economic development governance actors that created it. The result is consolidated economic development governance on a multi-city scale: an outcome quite different both from the governance gridlock in Florida and the bottom-up governance proliferation in Arizona.

Scalar logics of regionalism revisited

The comparison between CMCR institutionalization pathways in Arizona, Florida and Ohio yields a simple typology of interacting scalar logics of regionalism, based on 1) the presence or absence of State-led regionalism, and 2) whether or not this State-led regionalism is consonant or dissonant with locally-based CMCR initiatives. (Table 2 presents these distinctions diagrammatically; the bottom right cell is logically impossible.) The key insight captured by the typology and the case studies which preceded it is that the outcomes of three relatively similar ground-up business regionalism initiatives were fundamentally structured by distinct State government scalar logics of regionalism—not in the sense of CMCR outcomes being wholly dependent on higher-level governance processes, but in the sense of CMCR outcomes emerging from place-specific interactions between different regionalism logics throughout the multi-scalar state.

	State-led regionalism	**No state-led regionalism**
Consonant State and CMCR regionalism logics	Coordinated governance (Ohio)	Bottom-up governance proliferation (Arizona)
Dissonant State and CMCR regionalism logics	Governance gridlock (Florida)	N/A

Table 2: State-local interactions in institutionalizing CMCR

The local growth machine is structured and enabled by durable features of national state space (BRENNER, 2009), and that durability has given the growth machine an empirical ubiquity and consistency which accounts in large part for the success of growth machine theory. Competitive multi-city regionalism is likewise structured by supra-local dynamics within the state system, but—unlike with the growth machine—it is the widely varying and potentially contradictory scalar logics of regionalism which are consequential for the form of multi-city regionalism which results from local elite collective action. It is this diversity which characterizes, above all, growth politics beyond the growth machine.

Since this analysis describes causality flowing from State governments to local growth coalitions via State scalar logics of regionalism, it is worthwhile to underscore that these scalar logics do not just emerge autonomously. They also respond to pressure and action from other actors. In particular, this research has found that the form of State government regionalism has in various cases been structured by local initiatives which make specific claims on State governments and change the facts on the ground which State policy must take into account. In Michigan, for instance, the ten-county West Michigan Strategic Initiative lobbied the State government for localities to be able to define their own economic regions for the purposes of State economic development policy. Not only did the State agree to this request, but it has since moved to harmonize other agency boundaries to the economic regions defined by localities. In Ohio, the State reform discussed above set its institutional boundaries based on the presence or absence of ground-up economic collaboration. So Northeast Ohio, already home to a robust regional economic development ecosystem, was defined as a single region for State planning. But Cincinnati and Dayton—by functional criteria at least as integrated as Northeast Ohio—were defined as separate regions, since there has not been any bottom-up cooperation to speak of.

Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to introduce competitive multi-city regionalism as a new emerging configuration of regional economic governance in North America, and to use CMCR as a window into the problem of how to theorize and analyze local growth politics beyond the growth machine. The article introduced the concept of scalar logics of regionalism: the different and often conflicting political objectives which governance actors attempt to realize through "regionalism" projects, and suggested that it is through the interactions and conflicts between multiple such scalar logics that actually-existing regionalism is animated.

I have argued that the contemporary US urban governance landscape can be productively interpreted as a new wave of regionalism, one in which the relative stability of local growth machines has been increasingly supplemented with a profusion of new regional governance experiments at a range of spatial scales. It is thus worthwhile to conclude by briefly framing this new US wave of regionalism against the largely Western-Europe-focused literature on state rescaling (BRENNER, 2004; MACLEOD and GOODWIN, 1999; JESSOP, 2002; KEIL and MAHON, 2009). In Western Europe, national governments and the EU have since the 1980s been increasingly concerned to promote specific city-regions as favoured locations for customized investment rather than fostering broadly redistributive, spatial-Keynesian growth trajectories (BRENNER, 2004). This process has destabilized the inherited scalar regime of accumulation, which had privileged the national scale, and has ushered in a new relativized state space (PAASI, 2004), which resembles the new US scalar architecture I have described. But, just as we should not overemphasize the extent to which state rescaling has actually transcended earlier state accumulation and development strategies in Western Europe, we should not overextend the applicability of largely Western-European processes of state restructuring to the US, where urban entrepreneurialism has a much longer history, spatial Keynesianism was never a strong force and the welfare state is radically fragmented and decentralized, and multiple levels of the state have been involved in local economic development since at least the early postwar era (COX, 2009). Unlike in Norway, for example, where HIDLE and LEKNES (2014) found that business city-regionalism emanates from "below" and cultural city-regionalism emanates from "above", in the US, city-regionalism from above and below alike is almost uniformly some variant of business regionalism.

The task of deciphering new developments in urban and regional governance—a task arguably central to current debates within the field around comparison, units of analysis and the meaning of "the urban" (BRENNER and SCHMID, 2015; PECK, 2015; WACHSMUTH, 2014)—will thus increasingly involve tracing connections between the sometimes consonant and sometimes dissonant spatial strategies of local growth coalitions and state actors operating across diverse scalar and territorial configurations. Identifying and exploring scalar logics of regionalism throughout the state-economy nexus is one promising strategy for accomplishing this analytic task: a strategy for following growth politics beyond the growth machine.

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