

Disentangling the Regionalization of Law Enforcement in Southern Africa

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ABSTRACTS

This article contributes to the growing literature on new regionalism(s) in two ways: It first exposes regional police cooperation as a neglected subject area in the study of regionalism/regionalization. The case of the emergence of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO) is used to contextualize the regionalization of policing in relation to a perceived globalization of crime since the 1990s. The article then introduces the framework portals of globalization as a methodological tool to study processes of regionalization. The framework is used to deepen the analysis of SARPCCO by helping to more concretely identify the actors, places, and spaces in and through which regionalization, as a multi-actor and multilevel process, takes place.

Dieser Artikel trägt zu der sich stets erweiternden Literatur im Bereich der neuen Regionalismen in zweifacher Hinsicht bei: Zunächst wird die überregionale Polizeikooperation als bisher vernachlässigte Fachrichtung in der Regionalisierungsforschung herausgestellt. Am Beispiel der Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO) wird die Regionalisierung der Polizeiarbeit im südlichen Afrika erklärt, die im Zuge einer verstärkt wahrgenommenen Globalisierung von Kriminalität in den 1990er Jahren entstanden ist. Anschließend werden die Portale der Globalisierung als methodisches Hilfsmittel zur Untersuchung von Regionalisierungsprozessen miteinbezogen. Damit lassen sich konkrete Akteure, Orte und Räume identifizieren und Rückschlüsse auf die Gestaltung von Regionalisierung auf mehreren Ebenen ziehen, was der vertieften Analyse der SARPCCO zuträglich ist.

1. Introduction

Since the 1990s, authors working under the New Regionalism Approach (NRA) have made a growing contribution to the study of regionalism(s) in the post-Cold War changing global order. The NRA has exposed the multiplicity of regionalisms that coexist and which are constructed by various actors through processes of regionalization. This article contributes to this literature in two ways: The first is to introduce regional police cooperation to regionalism studies through applying the NRA to a case of regional law-enforcement cooperation in Southern Africa. Since the end of the Cold War, different regional bodies have emerged in order to tackle transnational crime by creating partnerships across sovereign jurisdictions. Although the map of international law-enforcement cooperation has at present come to include a variety of such regional cooperative ventures, they are not, as yet, present in the growing body of NRA literature. The second builds on the premise that there is room in the NRA to further conceptualize methodologies that direct attention to specific socio-spatial arenas, where processes of regionalization may be observed. Building on the recent emergence of “spatial turn” language in the NRA that attempts to investigate the globalization/regionalization nexus, this paper proposes the use of the “portals of globalization” framework, emanating from global history as a viable tool to support structural arguments through its focus on actor-based strategies that deal with processes of de- and reterritorialization.

After contextualizing the NRA and introducing the portals of globalization approach, the rest of the paper sets out in two directions: First, regionalism in international police cooperation is introduced by elaborating on the important role that the regional scale has come to play in ordering police cooperation since the end of the Cold War. Both transnational crime and the globalization of law enforcement are highlighted as key environmental factors. The paper then moves to the case study that focuses on the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO) as a particular regional cooperative venture. The emergence of SARPCCO is contextualized, and specific characteristics and relationships are drawn that have played a role in solidifying the regional body as both an organization and an evolving police space. The portals of globalization framework is then used to investigate processes of regionalization in SARPCCO. The framework exposes a few socio-spatial arenas wherein different actors at different levels meet to further construct the SARPCCO project. In closing, the paper reflects on the findings by considering what regionalization has taken shape in SARPCCO and considers how the portals of globalization framework could add value to the study of regionalism and regionalization in general.

2. The NRA's Turn to Space and the Potential of Portals of Globalization

Since the 1990s, a marked interest in the practice of regionalism and processes of regionalization has re-emerged in the post-Cold War global political arena.¹ The regional level “has increasingly become an important referent for students of international relations, international political economy and development.”² Simultaneously, processes of globalization have come to represent the inexorable integration of markets, nation states, and technologies involving networks of interdependence³ that facilitate the increased movement of objects across bounded spaces.⁴ A central interest during the 1990s, in this re-emerging field of enquiry, was what has been called the globalization/regionalization nexus.⁵ Work during this period was increasingly concerned with, on the one hand, deciphering the newness of “new regionalism” compared to trends in the 1960s and 1970s, while on the other hand, determining in what manner regionalization was a reaction to processes of globalization.⁶ Björn Hettne adequately captures this in his foreword to Fredrik Söderbaum’s *The Political Economy of Regionalism: The Case of Southern Africa*, stating: “In order to improve the theory of regionalism, relevant studies must analyse the interplay of regionalism on different levels of society, as well as between regionalization and globalization.”⁷

Over the years, authors prescribing to the NRA have managed to push the study of regionalism to a new intellectual horizon through varying reflective-constructivist⁸ readings of international relations/international political economy. Such readings attempt to step away from Eurocentric⁹ and state-centric conventions.¹⁰ A rich literature has, therefore, emerged that illustrates the existence of a plurality of regionalism(s),¹¹ which

1 R. Kelly, *Security Theory in the “New Regionalism,”* in: *International Studies Review*, 9 (2007) 2, p. 197.

2 M. Bøås, M.H. Marchand and T.M. Shaw, *The Political Economy of Regions and Regionalism*, Basingstoke 2005, p. 3.

3 For example, T.L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization*, New York 1999, pp. 7–8, and R.O. Keohane and J.S. Nye, *Globalization, What’s new? What’s not? (and so what)*, in: *Foreign Policy*, 118 (2000), p. 105.

4 See, for example, A. Appadurai, *The Wertheim Lecture 2000 – Globalization and Area Studies: The Future of a False Opposition*, Amsterdam 2000, p. 5.

5 See Bøås et al. (fn. 2), p. 4.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

7 B. Hettne, *Foreword*. In: F. Söderbaum, *The Political Economy of Regionalism: The Case of Southern Africa*, Basingstoke 2004, p. xiii.

8 For a mapping of the theoretical landscape of the NRA in this regard, see chapter 2 in Söderbaum (fn. 7), pp. 15–35.

9 Bøås et al. (fn. 2) p. 4.

10 Söderbaum (fn. 7), p. 49.

11 Compare for example M. Bøås et al. (fn. 2), and T. Shaw, A. J. Grant and S. Cornellsen (eds.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Regionalism*, Farnham 2011.

encompasses a variety of state and non-state actors,¹² formal and informal processes,¹³ as well as spatial variations.¹⁴ Söderbaum sums up the NRA approach as follows:

*Contrary to dominant theories in the field, the NRA pays tribute to multidimensionality of regionalism and the fact that regions are constructed and reconstructed – intentionally or unintentionally – by state, market, civil society and external actors which come together in complex and often informal multi-actor coalitions for a variety of both positive and negative purposes.*¹⁵

The NRA has thus served to enrich regionalism studies, yet the connection between processes of globalization and regionalization is not always clear. This is illustrated by Söderbaum's following statement:

*Since globalization and regionalization form part of a larger structural change, the two may exist simultaneously and in parallel, but more often they tend to reinforce and shape one another. If and when the latter is the case, then mutually exclusive indicators may hide more than they reveal.*¹⁶

To solve this problem, Söderbaum proposes that we cease to think about space as a container¹⁷ and avoid what the geographer John Agnew has famously termed the “territorial trap.”¹⁸ This “spatial turn”¹⁹ inspired approach has been taken up in various cases and applied to different contexts, enriching the NRA's effort to expose the social construction of geographic scale²⁰ and the overlapping of regional space(s). Thinking about regionalism and regionalization as “territorial constructs” allows us to place regionalism and regionalization in the context of globalization as simultaneously encompassing, constant processes of deterritorialization²¹ and reterritorialization,²² which take place at various scales.

12 For example, F. Söderbaum and I. Taylor. *Afro-Regions: The Dynamics of Cross-Border Microregionalism in Africa*, Uppsala 2008; R. Muggah's Chapter on Transnational Gangs in Shaw et al. (fn. 11), pp. 339–359.

13 See, for example, F. Söderbaum (pp. 51–68); M. Ramutsindela (pp. 361–373) in Shaw et al. (fn. 11), 2011.

14 Compare, for example, F. Söderbaum and I. Taylor (fn. 12) 2008, where they introduce the study of micro-regionalisms, or U. Lorenz and S. Cornelissen's treatment of SADC in the “regional arena” in T. Shaw et al. (fn. 11) 2011, pp. 241–256.

15 Söderbaum (fn. 7), p. 2.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 8.

17 *Ibid.*, pp. 45–46.

18 J. Agnew, *The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory*, in: *Review of International Political Economy*, 1 (1994) 1, pp. 53–80.

19 For a general introduction, see B. Warf and S. Arias (eds.). *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Abingdon 2009. In global history, see M. Middell and K. Naumann, *Global History and the Spatial Turn: From the Impact of Area Studies to Critical Junctures of Globalization*, in: *Journal of Global History*, 5 (2010) 1, 149–170, and in international studies, see for example U. Engel and G.R. Olsen, *Sovereignty and Africa's Regimes of Territorialization*, in: S. Cornelissen, F. Cheru and T.M. Shaw (eds.) *Africa and International Relations in the 21st Century: Still Challenging Theory?*, Ashgate 2012, pp. 51–65.

20 D. Delaney and H. Leitner. *The Political Construction of Scale*, in: *Political Geography*, 16 (1997) 2, pp. 93–97.

21 Literature under this category could include R. O'Brien, *Global Financial Integration and the End of Geography*, London 1992 and A. Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Minneapolis 1996.

22 *Stressing “reterritorialization”*, see for example D. Brenner, *Beyond State Centricism? Space Territoriality and Geo-*

The introduction of “spatial turn” language has enriched the field of regionalism studies. However, identifying actors and their roles in the production of multiple geographies of globalization/regionalization in specific actor-based contexts remains a challenge. In this sense, the recent emergence of the methodological framework portals of globalization is seen to offer some grounding in the interest of bringing the structural processes of globalization into context through actor-based investigations. Portals of globalization as a framework emerged within global history as an attempt to “focus on the actors who experience processes of de- and re-territorialization at moments and in sociopolitical arenas where conflict of new spatial patterns is fought out.”²³ More abstractly, portals of globalization focuses on those spaces and places in which global flows converge, serving to challenge “a seemingly stable territorial order by extending it to other spheres.”²⁴ This invites us to investigate socio-spatial arenas in and through which the means to regulate and control “global connectivity” are conceived and institutionalized. More practically, as an actor-based approach, it stresses engagement, transfer, and negotiation through actor-based strategies. In line with NRA thinking, regionalization encompasses multilevel processes,²⁵ both formal and informal,²⁶ that span across boundaries with the potential to construct and/or deconstruct geographic scale.²⁷ Yet, they are simultaneously actor-driven processes in which strategies emerge to negotiate new spatial configurations, as well as the articulation of identities²⁸ and the cognitive mapping of space.²⁹ This article argues that the portals of globalization concept can be used as a lens through which entangled socio-spatial arenas are analysed. The lens can enable a scholar to locate actors and uncover interests that converge in spaces where the parameters of territoriality are negotiated; in our case, where regionalization takes place. Before applying this lens to a particular case, the next section briefly introduces regional law-enforcement cooperation as a phenomenon in the post-Cold War environment. The section highlights how both “transnational crime” and the “globalization of policing” have come to play key environmental factors that help shape regional instances of policing.

graphical Scale in *Globalization Studies*, in: *Theory and Society*, 28 (1999) 1, pp. 39–78; S. Elden, *Missing the Point: Globalization, Deterritorialization and the Space of the World*, in: *Transactions in the Institute of British Geographers*, 30 (2005), pp. 8–19. In terms of regional studies, see for example Bøås et al. (fn. 2), p. 8, and S. Cornelissen, *Migration and Reterritorialization: Migrant Movement, Sovereignty and Authority in Contemporary Southern Africa*, in: L. De Haan and U. Engel and P. Chabal (eds.), *African Alternatives*, Leiden 2007, pp. 119–143.

23 M. Middell and K. Naumann (fn. 19), p. 162.

24 Ibid.

25 U. Lorenz and S. Cornelissen (fn. 14), p. 242.

26 M. Ramutsindela (fn. 13), p. 362.

27 D. Delaney and H. Leitner (fn. 20), p. 125.

28 M. Bøås et al. (fn. 2), p. 9.

29 D. Bach, *Regionalism in Africa: Concepts and Context*, in: J. Henz (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of African Security*, London 2013, pp. 181–189.

3. Regionalism and International Police Cooperation: Between Transnational Crime and Global Policing

The “internationalization of criminalization” is an historical artefact, evolving over time from the nineteenth century onwards, along with the development of international norms and practices regarding slavery, piracy, smuggling, and the “white slave trade.”³⁰ On the other hand, organized crime has a more recent history: It emerged in the 1930s in the United States of America (USA) in relation to drug trafficking and hierarchically structured “Mafia”-type organizations.³¹ It includes a variety of transnational threats to state and human security, such as the trafficking of arms, drugs, people, and natural resources by networked syndicates.³² While it may be the case that old crimes simply get new names,³³ the narrative of transnational organized crime (TOC) as a security threat³⁴ has led to a wide variety of responses by actors, both state and non-state, who collaborate in an attempt to map, understand, and combat the illicit transnational movement of goods, services, money, and people, which dissect and connect different places, actors, and effects across jurisdictions. More importantly, there is an interest in dismantling the mobile criminal groups that gain enough power from the profits they generate to challenge the institutional integrity of states,³⁵ as well as threaten human security through hampering social, economic, and political development.³⁶

Since the end of the Cold War, different regional bodies have emerged in order to tackle transnational crime through partnerships across sovereign jurisdictions. The map of the international law-enforcement cooperation has at present come to include more informal but sustained regional structures such as the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police (ACCP) and the Southeast European Police Chiefs Association (SEPCHA), as well as regional organizations at various stages of institutionalization and degrees of autonomy, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Chiefs of Police (ASEANAPOL); SARPCCO; the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO); the Police Community of the Americas (Ameripol), and the European

30 P. Andreas and E. Nadelman, *Policing the Globe: Criminalization and Crime Control in International Relations*, Oxford 2006.

31 M. Woodiwiss, *Transnational Organized Crime: Global Reach of an American Concept*, in: A. Edwards and G.P. Gill (eds.), *Transnational Organised Crime*, 2003, pp. 13–42.

32 See, for example, UNODC, *Globalization of Crime: Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment*, Vienna 2010.

33 An interesting comparison could be made with the turn of the nineteenth century, when the white slave trade (human trafficking) and anarchism (terrorism) have been linked to the emergence of the first attempts to construct international police cooperation organizations, such as the Police Union of German States (1851–1866) and the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC) in 1923, which became known as Interpol. See M. Deflem, *Policing World Society: Historical Foundations of International Police Cooperation*, Oxford 2002.

34 A. Edwards and P. Gill (fn. 31), p. 246.

35 P. Gastrow, *Termites at Work: Transnational Organized Crime and State Erosion in Kenya*, International, New York 2011, p. 1.

36 J. Cilliers and T.D. Sisk, *ISS Monograph Nr. 188 – Assessing Long Term State Fragility in Africa: Prospects for 26 ‘More Fragile Countries’*, Pretoria 2013, p. 10.

Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), to name but a few.³⁷ Components that become central in informing the conception of such regional bodies include prioritizing information and intelligence-sharing capabilities; building police professionalism; political priorities (e.g. joining elite regional communities for prestige); the need for the harmonization of laws, procedures and practices; the existence of transnational policy discourses and communities, and formal/informal networks among police professionals.³⁸ As noted by Michael D. Bayer,³⁹ informal police-to-police networks based on mutual recognition are an important professional asset in the fight against transnational threats, such as terrorism. As formal procedures in communication and assistance may retard the day-to-day function of policing, the close links built between professionals that meet in various places – training environments, workshops, or conferences – may offer the informal connectivity that allows for information to move beyond borders by building trust through engagement.

Another important reality in the geography of international law enforcement is the uneven development between national capabilities in areas of education, resources, finance, technology, and expertise.⁴⁰ Cross-border training workshops or on-the-job training during joint operations, therefore, become key processes in international cooperation, which forms the foundation for notions of cooperative security by increasing the physical interaction between law-enforcement personnel, not just on the executive level but on the operational level as well. In this environment, actors with vast resources such as the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO-Interpol), Europol, the USA's Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the American Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Australian Federal Police, the United Kingdom's (UK) Serious Organized Crime Agency (SOCA),⁴¹ and the South African Police Service (SAPS) may assert their authority across borders through their ability to finance the placement of police liaison officers, manage information, generate expertise, and access technological resources. This puts them in the position to influence the emerging transnational landscape of policing by offering technological assistance, intelligence, research, training, and operational support. Financial resources, technology, information, and expertise, as well as relative autonomy from the state⁴² constitute the different forms of capital that certain law-enforcement agencies in the transnational security environment can mobilize.

37 For a good list of regional organizations in this regard, see E.G Berman and K. Maze. *Handbook – Regional Organisations and the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms (PoA)*, Geneva 2012.

38 O. Marenin and A. Akgul, *Theorising Transnational Cooperation on the Police and Intelligence Fields of Security*, in: E. Aydinli (ed.), *Emerging Transnational (in)Security: A Statist Transnational Approach*, London 2010, pp. 102–123.

39 M.D. Bayer, *Blue Planet: Informal International Police Networks and National Intelligence*, Washington D.C. 2010.

40 E. van der Spuy, *Regionalism in Policing: From Lessons in Europe to Developments in Southern Africa*, in: *African Studies Review*, 6 (1997) 6, <http://www.issafrica.org/pubs/ASR/6No6/VanDerSpuy.html> (accessed 13 March 2013).

41 SOCA was disbanded in 2013.

42 M. Deflem (fn. 33), p. 20; M.D. Bayer (fn. 39), p. xvi.

Two environmental factors, therefore, have influenced the turn towards forming regional police-cooperative ventures since the end of the Cold War: The first is the functional reaction to transnational crimes, and the second is the broader globalization of policing through the increased international and transnational connectivity between police professionals. Although broader trends may influence the regionalization of law enforcement generally, each venture must be understood to have formed in its own context. Furthermore, each project has not necessarily involved the same processes or degrees of institutionalization. What also becomes clear is that cooperation takes shape in different arenas and at different levels. The negotiation of regional arrangements may on a more macro level involve state actors or police executives that negotiate the parameters of law enforcement in terms of state sovereignty, thus comprising the formal project or regionalism. Yet, once formal political partnerships are conceived, the operationalization of policing as a day-to-day approach to security may take place in both formal and informal settings between police professionals who participate at different levels of the organization's functioning. The culmination of different processes could be termed the regionalization of the organization, as new relationships emerge to order the conceived regional space.

The rest of the paper will, therefore, look at the particular case of SARPCCO, which emerged in 1995 as a cooperative venture between the police chiefs of 11 Southern African states. The first part briefly elaborates on its evolution, highlighting specific characteristics and relationships that have solidified within the context in which the organization emerged and has been evolving and maturing. The second section makes use of the portals of globalization lens to look at the regionalization of SARPCCO. Several socio-spatial arenas are exposed wherein different actors at different levels meet to further construct SARPCCO as an emerging regional police space.

4. The Evolution of SARPCCO: 20 Years of Policing across Borders in Southern Africa

With the end of the Cold War approaching in the late 1980s and the gradual demise of the apartheid regime in the early 1990s, a space opened up for a profound shift in the relationships between states in Southern Africa. A “realist paradigm of war, destabilization and distrust”⁴³ gave way to potential cooperative partnerships in the quest for regional peace and security. As the politics of regional economic integration were being negotiated between state actors in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), SARPCCO emerged in 1995 as a semi-autonomous police association. SARPCCO brought eleven police chiefs in SADC together to unite their national police forces/services under a new regional emblem; these included Angola, Botswana, Leso-

43 M. Baregu and C. Landsberg, Introduction, in: M. Baregu and C. Landsberg (eds.), *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges*, Boulder, CO 2003.

tho, Malawi, Swaziland, Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.⁴⁴

SARPCCO emerged out of relationships built by police executives in the framework of the Frontline States⁴⁵ Chiefs of Police within the Interstate Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC).⁴⁶ On the other hand, it may furthermore be related back to efforts on the side of the then South African Police (SAP) to establish linkages in the region to combat problematic cross-border crimes, especially vehicle theft, prior to the end of apartheid.⁴⁷ In this post-conflict environment, police executives had to renegotiate the regional policing context. This context was characterized by interstate competition and mistrust related to state security. In order to facilitate cooperation in curbing crime, information would have to move across borders, and politics would have to be kept out of professional police relationships.

In 1997, SARPCCO was officially recognized as a regional organization⁴⁸ and furthermore institutionalized by ministers of police with the signing of the intergovernmental Agreement in Respect of Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in the Field of Crime Combating (SARPCCO Agreement) and the adoption of the first SARPCCO constitution.⁴⁹ SARPCCO was, thus, afforded legal support by its member states. Importantly, the SARPCCO Agreement allows for the operationalization of multilateral and bilateral joint operations and investigations across their sovereign jurisdictions, as well as the sharing of information, expertise, and skills between countries.⁵⁰ Furthermore, an agreement was reached on priority regional crimes that would guide further efforts to enhance police capabilities and competencies.

SARPCCO defined priority crimes in 1997 as follows:⁵¹

44 SARPCCO, 10 Years SARPCCO: The Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization: 1995–2005 (2005), p. 4.

45 The Frontline States were established in 1970 to formulate a coordinated policy on apartheid South Africa and liberation movements mobilizing against this strong regional actor. For a perspective on what was happening at the time, see, for example, M. Evans, *The Frontline States, South Africa and Southern African Security: Military Prospects and Perspectives*, in: *Zambezia*, 5 (1984) 12, pp. 1–19, or more generally M. Baregu, *Economic and Military Security*, in: M. Baregu and C. Landsberg (eds.), *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges*, Boulder, CO 2003, p. 19.

46 The ISDSC was an informal structure bringing together seurocrats from Frontline member states. With the evolution of SADC, the ISDSC became the informal secretariat for SADC's Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. See, for example, A. Zacarius, *Redefining Security*, in: M. Baregu and C. Landsberg (eds.), *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges*, Boulder, CO 2003, p. 39. For more recent updates, see A. van Nieuwkerk, *Security Co-operation in the Southern African Development Community: Insights from the New Institutionalism*, in: *Scientia Militaria, South African Journal of Military Studies*, 34 (2006) 2, p. 10, <http://scientiamilitariajournals.ac.za/pub/article/view/21/46> (accessed 25 March 2014).

47 This perspective is gained from consulting the Annual Report of the Commissioner of the South African Police, RP 68 – 1990; RP 68 – 1991; RP 68 – 1992. Pretoria.

48 SARPCCO (fn. 44), p. 2.

49 Ibid.

50 SAPS, *Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Co-operation Organisation (SARPCCO): Heads of Criminal Investigation Service Meeting on 1997-10-06*, October 8 1997, <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/1997/1015AA00597.htm>. (accessed 13 April 2014).

51 Ibid.

1. smuggling of illegal firearms and ammunition, stolen motor vehicles, and illicit drugs, diamonds, and precious metals;
2. corruption in respect of transnational crimes;
3. the infiltration of illegal aliens and their involvement in criminal activities;
4. the effects of commercial crime and illegal exploitation of currency (counterfeit and money laundering), and
5. the falsification of identity documents, travel documents, and ownership documents of stolen vehicles.

By the end of the first decade of the organization's existence, after Mauritius and the Democratic Republic of Congo both joined the group, SARPCCO had managed to collect a complex mix of police forces/services under its banner – each with its own colonial criminal-justice legacies, and varying degrees of development and resources – and used English, French, and Portuguese as official working languages.

An important aspect shaping SARPCCO's identity is its initial autonomy from the more formal SADC, which has been the main driver in the region for economic and security integration, thus defining Southern Africa as a subregion of Africa. SARPCCO's autonomy relates to its symbiotic relationship with Interpol.⁵² Emerging already in 1923, Interpol describes itself as the world's largest police organization.⁵³ Interpol has no police powers on the ground, but it provides products and services to its member states through its "high-tech infrastructure of technical and operational support."⁵⁴ In this way, members are able to stay on par with the evolution of crime. Most importantly, the "neutrality" of the organization is paramount in its efforts to extend law enforcement beyond sovereign jurisdictions, and thus it is strictly forbidden – under article 3 of its constitution – to undertake any activities of a political, military, religious, or racial character.⁵⁵ Neutrality has been one of the key means through which Interpol has been able to extend its reach and power, as it strategically situates itself within the space where it can facilitate cooperation "even where diplomatic relations do not exist between countries."⁵⁶ Much of this kind of thinking has influenced SARPCCO's norms and practices⁵⁷ towards "providing the most efficient and effective international law-enforcement cooperation for a safer Southern Africa and safer world."⁵⁸

52 Personal Correspondence, Major general and brigadier in Legal Services Division, South African Police Service, Pretoria 2014.

53 INTERPOL, "Overview," <http://www.interpol.int/About-INTERPOL/Overview> (accessed 13 March 2014).

54 Ibid.

55 Constitution of the ICPO-Interpol, I/CONS/GA/1956 (2008), <https://www.interpol.int/About-INTERPOL/Legal-materials/The-Constitution> (accessed 25 March 2014).

56 Interpol, "The Constitution," <http://www.interpol.int/About-INTERPOL/Legal-materials/The-Constitution> (accessed 25 March 2014).

57 This is the author's impression gained from, among other things, comparing the different norms in SARPCCO and Interpol constitutions; the priority crimes both organizations focus on, and SARPCCO's and Interpol's standards on cooperation and political neutrality.

58 SARPCCO, "About," <http://www.sarpcco.org/index.php/about/mandate> (accessed 20 March 2014).

Interpol and SARPCCO have a strategic partnership; SARPCCO's secretariat is housed at an Interpol Subregional Bureau (SRB) established in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1997. Personnel from the various member countries are seconded to this facility, which coordinates SARPCCO's activities, centralizes information and intelligence on regional crime trends in the form of a Regional Organized Crime Threat Assessment,⁵⁹ and offers a space in which different police professionals are both employed by Interpol, as well as exposed to a law-enforcement landscape beyond their national borders. The negotiation between the Zimbabwean government and Interpol to establish an Interpol SRB⁶⁰ must be understood in the context of the emergence of a regionalization policy in Interpol in 1985.⁶¹ Interpol has since established six regional bureaux in various parts of the world that act as central nodes to support the international network of National Central Bureaux (NCBs) in each of its now 190 member states.⁶² Moreover, the global actor gains a regional presence through which it can offer its products and services – technical tools, 24-hour response, investigative skills, and police training⁶³ – as well as propose regional operations focused on regional priorities.⁶⁴

On the level of SADC, the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security (the SADC Organ) was established in 1996 and formalized in 2001 through the signing of the Protocol on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation. Until 2007, the relationship between SARPCCO and the SADC Organ was characterized by what Elrena van der Spuy refers to as “a lack of cooperation.”⁶⁵ Although this might have kept SARPCCO out of the way of political interference,⁶⁶ according to Van der Spuy, it also left the organization to

59 Personal Correspondence, Regional Specialized Officer Interpol SRB/SARPCCO Coordination Office, Harare, 6 February 2014.

60 Interpol, Establishment of Interpol Sub-Regional Bureau in Harare, Zimbabwe: Resolution No. AGN/63/RES/21, 1994; <http://www.interpol.int/content/download/22503/211369/version/4/file/AGN-1994-RES-22%20-%20Establishment%20of%20an%20INTERPOL%20Sub-Regional%20Bureau%20in%20Nairobi,%20Kenya.pdf>, and Interpol, Adoption of the Draft Convention Between the Organization and Countries Served by the sub-Regional Bureau in Harare: Resolution No. AGN/65/RES/20, [accessed 25 March 2014], <http://www.interpol.int/content/download/22407/210391/version/4/file/65-RES-20-Ang.pdf>. (accessed 25 March 2014).

61 Interpol, Regionalization, Establishment of a Sub-Regional Bureau for South America: Resolution No. AGN/54/RES/2, 1985, <http://www.interpol.int/content/download/22809/214907/version/5/file/AGN-1985-RES-2%20-%20Regionalization%20-%20Establishment%20of%20a%20Sub-regional%20Bureau%20for%20South%20America.pdf> (accessed 25 March 2014); Interpol, Regionalization within the ICPO-Interpol: Resolution No. AGN/64/RES/07, 1995, <http://www.interpol.int/content/download/22468/210869/version/5/file/AGN-64-RES-7%20-%20Regionalization%20within%20the%20ICPO-INTERPOL.pdf>. (accessed 25 March 2014).

62 Four of those SRBs are in Africa and act as regional hubs for other regional police cooperation organisations: Abidjan (West African Police Chiefs Committee); Nairobi (Eastern Africa Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation); Harare (SARPCCO), and Yaoundé (Central African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation). See Interpol, “Best Practices” in Combating Terrorism: Executive Summary <http://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/docs/best-prac-interpol.pdf>. (accessed 1 April 2014).

63 Interpol, Central African Police Chiefs Meet to Discuss Regional Security Issues, 12 January 2008, <http://www.interpol.int/News-and-media/News/2008/N20080124>. (accessed 1 April 2014).

64 For an example of Interpol-led operations, consult the Interpol News and Media Room, <http://www.interpol.int/News-and-media/Media-room>. (accessed 1 April 2014).

65 E. van der Spuy, Police Cooperation in the Southern African Region: Politics and Practicalities, in: *Crime Law Social Change*, 51 (2009), p. 245.

66 M. Shaw, Organised Crime and State Responses in Southern Africa, in: *The South African Yearbook of International Affairs*, 2001/02, Johannesburg 2001, pp. 115–120.

move forward with minimal political backing.⁶⁷ In order to “enhance the fight against organized crime and cross-border illegal activities in countries of the region,”⁶⁸ a process was set in place to integrate SARPCCO into the ISDSC under the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO I) that was launched in 2004. The main stated objective was to “create a peaceful and stable political and security environment through which the region will realize its objectives of socio-economic development, poverty eradication and regional integration.”⁶⁹

Described as “the general guidelines that spell out the specific activities, in accordance with the protocol’s objectives,”⁷⁰ SIPO I is an instrument to enable the implementation of the SADC development agenda.⁷¹ Four sectors – political, defence, state security, and public security – are demarcated through which the protocol is to be operationalized. The public-security sector aims to address threats associated with organized crime syndicates. It does so by coordinating the activities of law enforcement, public safety, correctional services and prisons, immigration, parks and wildlife, customs, and refugee agencies.⁷² It may, therefore, be noticed that not only has crime, especially border crossing and organized crime, become a regional security concern, but also, in theory, is connected to a broader regional development agenda centred on socio-economic development.

In 2009, SARPCCO was formally brought under the fold of SADC with a revised constitution setting out SARPCCO and SADC’s new relationship. Due to SARPCCO’s prior autonomy and aforementioned relationship with Interpol, the integration process was not smooth, requiring a longer period of negotiation already starting around 2006.⁷³ In 2012, the revised Harmonized Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO II) was launched, with a new stand-alone police sector to support the four sectors already established under SIPO I. As the implementing institution, SARPCCO has therefore gained political recognition on a SADC level. Yet, as observed by Anthoni van Nieuwkerk,⁷⁴ SIPO II struggles to explain the purpose of the police sector in a way that distinguishes it from the public-security sector, with the list of challenges faced by both sectors being

67 Van der Spuy (fn. 65), p. 245.

68 SADC, Statement by his Excellency Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Chairman of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security, on the occasion of the launching of the Revised Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ (SIPO), Arusha, Tanzania (20 November 2012). <https://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CDoQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.sadc.int%2Fdocuments-publications%2Fshow%2F1159&ei=2rBnU-qAG4GN4wSFwIDYAg&usq=AFQjCNERUxro bGUXRqQW-anK47BDJBHGOA&bvm=bv.65788261,d.bGQ>. (accessed 24 March 2014).

69 SADC, Strategic Indicative Plan, <http://www.sadc.int/about-sadc/overview/strategic-pl/strategic-indicative-plan-organ/>. (accessed 23 April 2014).

70 SADC, Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ on Politics Defence and Security Cooperation 2002, pp. 5, 35, http://www.sadc.int/files/9113/6492/3812/sipo_en_3.pdf. (accessed 24 March 2014).

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid., pp. 35–42.

73 Personal Correspondence, Deputy National Commissioner Detective Services South African Police Service, Pretoria 2014.

74 A. van Nieuwkerk, African Security Series No.6 – Towards Peace and Security In Southern Africa: Critical Analysis of the Revised Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation (SIPO) of the Southern African Development Community, Maputo, MZ, 2012.

virtually identical. Furthermore, SADC has thus far not found the resources to fully support SARPPCO, while the police organization has had to become part of a bigger organizational structure that dilutes its specific interests.⁷⁵ It is, therefore, not too clear what function SARPPCO fulfils in SADC's long-term security outlook. Cooperation between regional law-enforcement agencies against cross-border crime remains a key priority, but rather than outlining a clear distinction between law enforcement and the much broader function of policing, it seems that SADC is rather accommodating SARPPCO, who remains semi-autonomous in practice and focused on law-enforcement interventions against cross-border crime.

On the macro level, SARPPCO represents a particular regional organization emerging in Southern Africa in the post-apartheid context. Southern Africa here constitutes a sociopolitical arena, where interests converge over the ordering of geographic space. Central to the organization's emergence was the ability of police chiefs to reposition adversarial relationships between security agencies in a post-conflict environment and, therefore, reorder the way in which policing across the region is approached. SARPPCO's initial autonomy from the political stalemates in SADC to its positioning in the broader international system of law enforcement through Interpol has also afforded it a certain legitimacy and scope beyond its regional context, making it an actor in its own right. While SARPPCO's initial thrust to facilitate regional law-enforcement cooperation evolved outside of the formal SADC regionalism, its reluctant merger with SADC in 2009 points to the politics of regional order in the Southern African context that is still negotiated in terms of national interests of states. This does not only involve the security of states in terms of transnational threats, but the control over regional policing and regionalism as a broader political project.

Yet, to understand SARPPCO beyond its rhetorical commitments to cooperation, and to enter into the discussion of regionalization, one must take a closer look at how cooperation within and through the institution has taken place and, thus, shapes the way in which international police relationships are ordered on the regional level. The next section takes a more intimate look at the regionalization of SARPPCO by drawing on different socio-spatial arenas, where actors have engaged in processes that have come to shape SARPPCO as a cohesive regional institution.

5. Socio-spatial Arenas in the Production of SARPPCO

SARPPCO is driven by the notion that effective and successful cross-border cooperation is built upon the harmonization of legislation, the construction of a regional policing culture, the nurturing of mutual trust, and effective communication and information exchange. The organization has worked on different levels to ensure that these criteria

75 Personal Correspondence, Deputy National Commissioner Detective Services South African Police Service, Pretoria 2014.

are met;⁷⁶ these activities include: 1) information exchange and education in the form of annual meetings and training workshops; 2) joint operations on the ground directed at the most common TOCs; 3) research and development directed at ultimately influencing policy formation and the harmonization of legislation, and 4) interaction through sports and recreation in the form of the SARPCCO Games.

The architecture, as set out by its constitution,⁷⁷ consists of the Chiefs of Police Committee, Interpol SRB/SARPCCO Coordination Office, the Permanent Coordinating Sub-Committee (PCSC), the Legal Sub-Committee (LSC), the Training Sub-Committee (TSC), and the Women's Network. Beyond the Interpol SRB that was mentioned earlier, SARPCCO has no defined "place" as such where its structures are located. Rather, substructures can be thought of as "think tanks,"⁷⁸ in which police professionals, who represent their member countries, meet in various locations and times to rationalize strategies to operationalize transborder crime control and law-enforcement cooperation in the region. Through the culmination of their work, they set out the parameters of regional policing and represent sociopolitical arenas, in which regional police cooperation both takes place and through which further cooperation stems. Due to spatial constraint, not all structures and working groups within the organization can be discussed; here I focus on the three that form the backbone of operationalizing regional law-enforcement cooperation – the PCSC, the LSC, and the TSC.

5.1 The PCSC

As an operationally oriented organization, SARPCCO has been successful in negotiating priorities among members and mobilizing action on the ground through joint, simultaneous, and bilateral operations.⁷⁹ The PCSC consists of the heads of Criminal Investigative Divisions (CID), who represent officers at the forefront of practical issues regarding law enforcement on the ground in their national contexts. Through the PCSC,

76 J. Cilliers, *Monograph 43: Building Security in Southern Africa – An Update on the Evolving Architecture*, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria 1999, n.p.

77 SARPCCO has had two constitutions. The second constitution was drawn up when SARPCCO officially became part of SADC in 2009. Until then, the council of chiefs of police (CCP) was the highest decision-making body of the organization, the permanent coordinating committee (PCC) presiding over the subcommittees. Under SADC, the PCC became a sub-committee and the CCP became a committee under the ISDSC. Information based on *The Constitution of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation Constitution, 1997, and Revised Constitution of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation Constitution, 2009*, as well as *Personal Correspondence, Major general and brigadier in Legal Services Division, South African Police Service, Pretoria 2014*.

78 *Personal Correspondence, Deputy National Commissioner Detective Services South African Police Service, Pretoria 2014*.

79 The following information is based predominantly on *Personal Correspondences: Divisional Commissioner Detective Services, South African Police Service, Pretoria, 2014*, and *Deputy National Commissioner, Detective Services, South African Police Service, Pretoria, 2014*. It is also supported by SARPCCO (Interpol), 2008, *Profile of the Southern African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (SARPCCO)* <http://www.interpol.int/Public/ICPO/SRB/SARPCCO.pdf> (accessed 1 April 2014), as well as the findings in Van der Spuy (fn. 39), 2009.

objectives are aligned and issues are discussed in order to organize multilateral or bilateral law-enforcement interventions.

During the planning of the calendar year, the head detectives are expected to have three slots set out for joint operations, which will eventually have been conducted across the territories of each of the now 15 member states of the organization. The region may be divided into smaller subregional clusters, based on members that share geographic proximity or have common interests in directing attention to specific criminal activities and organizations that transcend their national jurisdictions. The spatial allocation also serves to enhance the use of limited resources and decrease the expenditure on manpower. In the planning phase, each country grouping allocates a chair that heads the coordination of further meetings, wherein priority crimes and periodization(s) are negotiated in relation to the calendar year. Operations then take place in one country at a time, where police personnel from different countries meet to cooperate on the ground and move across the region until operations have occurred in every member's sovereign territory. The SARPCCO Agreement is not only focused on multilateralism, but offers the opportunity for and urges bilateral cooperation between police forces where other legal agreements may be lacking.⁸⁰ This form of cooperation was seen to be the most constant and fruitful from interviews within SARPCCO substructures. The reason is that they are quicker to organize, as well as more specific to the needs and priorities of countries that may share an interest in a specific criminal activity. Such operations may be directly proposed by the head of a CID in one country to another through the connections made via the PCSC. The subcommittee, therefore, acts as a channel through which cooperation is more easily facilitated through informal connectivity, bridging the often lengthy processes of letter writing and requests through formal channels of diplomacy or even Interpol mechanisms.

From time to time, the Interpol SRB in Harare proposes conducting simultaneous intelligence-led operations over a specific period – normally on a quarterly basis – across the whole region. These operations, like joint operations, are directed at agreed upon priority crimes, with the operations then organized locally. In such operations, personnel from different divisions, such as uniform police, detectives, and crime intelligence collaborate in multinational environments. This either happens on the ground or through communication, as the sharing of information becomes a key to success. The Interpol SRB and the network of communication between NCBs are central in facilitating the real-time movement of information and intelligence between participating agencies and units, to coordinate activity across the wide geographic area. After the operations are conducted, the information that is collected is fed through to the Interpol SRB in Harare, where it is consolidated, in turn offering a region-wide picture of crime trends.

The PCSC, therefore, represents one of the most important arenas through which regional cooperation is formulated in SARPCCO. When the heads of CIDs engage with

80 Personal Correspondence, Major general and brigadier in Legal Services Division, South African Police Service, Pretoria 2014.

one another, SARPCCO becomes the operational entity it is intended to be. Yet, it becomes clear that the operations also constitute informal sites of interaction by police professionals on the ground. Keeping with international norms and regulations regarding sovereignty, only the host country has the power to police in its territorial jurisdiction. Extraterritorial actors, thus, play supportive roles offering expertise, knowledge, and, when needed, technological support. As noted by one police executive:

I think that among the things that these operations have, you have got some informal training that you are part of ... you have got the experts that are working together ... here you have the South Africans who may have been trained in an advanced way, but when they operate here, because they are not police officials, they do not have the power as police officials in that country, they come as advisory capacity ... the reality is that they do not have police powers in other countries, so they must be supportive of the local police, so there is this informal training that takes place, you can also call it training in the field.⁸¹

The regularization and normalization of practices are, therefore, facilitated through both planning and initiating operations. These processes may take place on different scales, yet in these arenas police professionals engage in the sharing of ideas and knowledge, while being exposed to other working environments and professional cultures. Regionalization, therefore, takes place at different levels through multiple processes facilitated through, as well as bound together by, the broader SARPCCO regionalism. To further facilitate operations and to overcome obstacles, the PCSC is importantly supported in areas of law and training.

5.2 The LSC

Sovereign jurisdiction is the key obstacle to international law-enforcement mobility. Different colonial histories across the regional space have led to a variety of criminal justice systems that emerged after independence. Differences in legal traditions, therefore, constitute boundaries to transborder law-enforcement harmonization and operationalization. According to the SARPCCO Agreement:

The parties shall consult with each other as to legislative or administrative steps that may be necessary to ... remove any legal obstacles or impediments that may be found to exist in the execution of the provisions of the agreement.⁸²

The LSC, which is comprised of the heads of legal units, supports the PCSC through attending to legal matters that may hamper police cooperation, and lobbies for harmoni-

81 Personal Correspondence, Deputy National Commissioner, Detective Services, South African Police Service, Pretoria 2014.

82 SARPCCO, Agreement in Respect of Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in the Field of Crime Combating, 1997, p. 3.

zation of regional legislation.⁸³ The LSC can only make recommendations by producing model laws that must then be negotiated on the national level to become effective. But, the SARPCCO constitution and code of conduct represent key documents setting out principles and guidelines that standardize relations between different national agencies, as well as minimum standards for professional conduct. In the case of the code of conduct, the LSC was supported by the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT)⁸⁴ and the Human Rights Trust of Southern Africa (SAHRIT) to produce an end product that draws on various international and regional human-rights mechanisms. The code of conduct sets out the minimum professional standards for police forces/services in the region. Actual implementation on the national level is, however, inconsistent and problematic, as cases of police brutality, corruption, and the abuse of police powers by the personnel of service/forces across the region have been widely documented.⁸⁵ On the other hand, the code of conduct has opened up a space for measuring regional police forces/services against a common set of principles regarding democratic policing. This has been operationalized by civil society, especially through engagement by the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum (APCOF) and its continental network of academics and policy professionals.⁸⁶

5.3 The TSC

Another obstacle on the operational level relates to the lack of expertise and knowledge in investigating complex, specialized forms of crime. The TSC, made up of the directors of training institutions, plays a supporting role by coordinating and conducting regional, operational, police-training needs analyses and implementing capacity-building interventions.⁸⁷

An important method supporting this diffusion of knowledge is the “train-the-trainer” method, where the focus is on educating specialists, who are then able to further diffuse knowledge nationally. Training and education, thus, serve to enhance capacity and, therefore, work towards the standardization of practices, promoting professionalism, enhancing specialization, building trust, as well as potentially relieving the police forces/services that are more experienced from having to elaborately support their partners.⁸⁸ While

83 SARPCCO (Interpol) (fn. 79) 2008.

84 See website of the Association for the Prevention Of Torture, <https://www.apr.ch/en/resources/sarpcco-code-of-conduct-for-police-officials-2001/>. (accessed 13 March 2014).

85 Police corruption, the use of force, and human rights abuses have been documented in most of the countries under the SARPCCO banner. For further reading, consult S. Tait, I. Ndung'u and T. Walker (eds.), Workshop Report: The SARPCCO Code of Conduct, Taking Stock and Mapping Out Future Action, Johannesburg, South Africa, 16–17 March, 2011, Pretoria, pp. 12–13, and A. Dissel and C. Frank (eds.), Policing Human Rights: Assessing Southern African Countries' Compliance With the SARPCCO Code of Conduct for Police Officials, Somerset West, ZA (2012), pp. 121–122.

86 A. Dissel and C. Frank (fn. 85).

87 SARPCCO Constitution (fn. 77), 2009.

88 Impressions gained from Personal Correspondence, Component Head: Management, Leadership and International Development, South African Police Service, Pretoria, 10 January 2014.

specialization is, thus, promoted on the regional level, what happens on the national level is, however, outside of SARPPCO's control. Gaps between the national and the regional scale become problematic. While specialist knowledge may be developed on the regional level, shifts in the working environment on the national level may mean that trained individuals are subsequently moved to another division. Furthermore, professionals sent to take part in training or operations may not be of that particular expert field. Further obstacles, therefore, accumulate, as knowledge that is supposed to be diffused among colleagues may be lost due to personnel or structural changes on the national scale.

Building on the first section that focused on SARPPCO's evolution and position in the Southern African arena, the preceding section attempted to shift the lens from the sociopolitical arena of SADC to the various socio-spatial arenas within the SARPPCO architecture itself. The three substructures represent some core characteristics of the globalization of policing. For SARPPCO to operationalize its approach to regional law enforcement, certain obstacles must be overcome; these include facilitating the movement of law-enforcement personnel across borders, harmonizing legislation and policies across the jurisdictions of member states, setting priorities, standardizing practices, and exchanging information and knowledge. The substructures, therefore, represent both institutions in which these different objectives are rationalized, as well as socio-spatial arenas where police executives meet and exchange ideas. The outcomes of these negotiations do not only bring into being products such as model laws, standard operating procedures, and training curricula; through concrete outcomes – including operations, meetings, and workshops – police personnel from various divisions engage in multinational environments, which exposes them to the sharing of ideas, different working environments and methods, as well as the potential of a professional collegiality that extends across borders. Informal connectivity helps to build networks of trust that may facilitate further cooperation when in the field. This deepens the perspective on processes of regionalization and broadens the base of actors involved in the regional project, as agency is located at different levels of the more formal regionalism constituted by SARPPCO.

6. Conclusion

This article introduced regional police cooperation as an interesting area of study to the broader field of regionalism studies. This was done by operationalizing the NRA's particular approach to the study of regionalisms, focusing the lens on Southern Africa and the SARPPCO project. The NRA has successfully exposed the multiplicity of regionalisms, and highlights the dynamic nature of regionalization processes. On the other hand, there is room within the NRA for further methodological development, when attempting to take into account both regionalization and globalization processes and their entanglement in what has been called the globalization/regionalization nexus. The portals of globalization framework from global history was proposed as a viable tool that may work towards this end. Due to an overlapping agreement found in the “spatial

turn,” the portals of globalization framework was deemed a fruitful methodological tool for interrogating specific arenas, where processes of regionalization and globalization meet through actor-based strategies in dealing with changing spatial relations.

Regionalism in the case of law enforcement was linked to both the increased movement of criminalized objects and their effects across sovereign jurisdictions, as well as the broader globalization of policing. Therefore, the region has become an important scale through which international police cooperation is ordered on the more abstract global level. Yet, it was stressed that in each case regional organizations emerge within specific contexts that further influence their shape and evolution. The case of SARPCCO was presented as the emergence of a specific, regional police organization in Southern Africa, in the context of changing spatial relations between states in the post-Cold War and post-apartheid Southern African context. SARPCCO itself was found to be an emerging actor that takes part in the ordering of Southern Africa as a regional sociopolitical arena in the making. The portals of globalization framework was used to deepen the investigation of the regionalization of law enforcement in SARPCCO by focusing on substructures in the organization’s architecture.

The portals of globalization lens also helped to direct attention to specific structures in the SARPCCO organization that constitute more than just organs in a body, but socio-spatial arenas through which the regionalization of SARPCCO takes place. It becomes clear that the regularization of interactions and the standardization of practices facilitated through SARPCCO have bolstered regional security cooperation in Southern Africa, as well as having opened up a space for police professionals to engage with one another across borders. This has not only been visible on the macro level through the rhetoric of regional integration and joint policy formation. More importantly, these activities are strongly centred in mid-level cooperation between police executives on the substructural level, where policy is formulated and regional initiatives are launched. Furthermore, this reaches down to the operational level, where law-enforcement agents from different divisions cooperate on the ground. Through training and joint operations, law-enforcement personnel meet and take part in the broader SARPCCO project, where they are able to make their own contacts and are exposed to the working environments of colleagues in other countries. This informal networking is probably one of the most important micro-level instances where regional partnerships are formed, ideas are diffused, and trust is built. SARPCCO has, therefore, been successful in terms of producing a sustainable operational approach towards the fight against transnational crime on the regional level. This has been strengthened through establishing an institutional memory, ensuring continuity, as well as facilitating the construction of a regional collegiality among police professionals engaged in region-level planning and operationalization.

On the other hand, there is more research that must be done with regard to the specific actors and interests that shape outcomes. For research focusing on security arenas, it remains difficult to gauge what power relations really look like in organizations such as SARPCCO, as doors are generally closed to outsiders and the rhetoric of partnership and cooperation often masks power dynamics. Furthermore, the socio-spatial arenas through

which regionalization takes shape are not necessarily found in one specific place or institutional setting. They also happen at different levels, where different types of actors and agencies may be involved, thus adding to the complexity of the study. For the researcher, gathering information becomes a difficult and tedious affair, as it involves working with different sources and methods at various stages of research and fieldwork. More thought will have to go into operationalizing further studies in this direction, which will help to deal with these complexities.

Finally, this article has shown that portals of globalization as a framework may be used beyond just the historical study of globalization processes. When applied to regionalism and studies with an interest in the production of new spatial orders, the lens helps to deepen the study of regionalization through focusing on arenas where processes of regionalization and globalization become more concrete, and where actors' interests and activities simultaneously shape and are shaped by broader socio-spatial relations.