How has Kyoto Got the Blues?
Cultural Globalisation and Interference of Different Spatialities

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Drawing primarily on ethnographic data from an on-going research on blues scene in Kyoto, this article explores different concepts of spatiality in order to outline some of the routes through and with which Afro-American blues music and culture migrated in the 1970s and continues to be performed today in Japan, in particular to Kyoto. Current theories and arguments on modernity and globalisation indicate that processes with which the local is influenced by the global are complex and non-linear, in which local agents are “phantasmagorically” interconnected and can “reside” in different and interfering spaces at any time. To examine this notion of spatial multiplicity and interference in cultural globalisation, this article focuses on a couple of the analytical modes of spatiality. Firstly, it will assess the analytical categories of space proposed by David Harvey – “absolute space”, “relative space” and “relational space”. Secondly, it will inspect three notions of spatiality argued by Actor Network Theorists John Law and Anne-Marie Mol – “network space”, “fluid space” and “fire space”. If the former refers to a more general sense of the term “space” – in which people and things move – the latter refers to spatiality of people (or things) themselves that move while transforming themselves. It is in their interconnection and interference that allow us to understand the connection between Kyoto and blues.