

Spatialising the (Geo)Political: Political Geography and Critical Geopolitics Preconference 2012

24/25 August 2012 - Frankfurt, Germany

--- Abstracts ---



AK Politische Geographie

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On behalf of the organising team and the Department of Human Geography at Goethe-University Frankfurt am Main, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Frankfurt. With the conference we hope to be able to provide a forum for intellectual and social exchange for political geographers prior to the IGC 2012 meeting in Cologne. We are particularly pleased to welcome Joanne Sharp and Alexander B. Murphy as the keynote speakers (see below) and would like to extend our thanks to the German Research Foundation (DFG) for funding parts of the conference as well as to the journals *Political Geography* and *Geopolitics*.

Veit Bachmann

Strand A: Integration and Disintegration of the Nation State. The role of the nation state and the territorial order of the world's political map have significantly changed over the past two decades. In the face of ongoing economic globalisation the geopolitical influences of transnational corporations and networks of financial speculation have become ever more palpable. In the political realm, networked players such as terrorist networks, regional warlords and new social movements are growing in importance. Simultaneously, ongoing inter-state conflicts, debates on homeland security, the biopolitics of citizenship, hardening borders and reinvigorated state institutions in the face of financial and fiscal crisis in the EU and the US show that the nation state is far from disintegrating into a space of flows. The conference seeks to invite contributions that discuss these challenging developments from different theoretical perspectives as well as through different case studies.

Strand B: Critical Geopolitics 2012. Four years after the Critical Geopolitics 2008 conference at Durham University, we seek to invite contributions addressing the state of Critical Geopolitics and its evolution as an interdisciplinary research approach across the social sciences. Particular attention shall be paid to Critical Geopolitics' interdisciplinarity in both conceptual and methodological terms as means of exploring interdependencies between the global and the local. How do geopolitical conditions affect local settings and the daily lives of people and how do localized social relations and seemingly mundane practices develop wider implications? The conference seeks to investigate both how the geopolitical is enacted in local settings and how specific personal, social and institutional arrangements shape the geopolitical. Furthermore, it seeks to address how these developments are dependent on, and influenced by, different underlying spatial arrangements and scale interdependencies.

Programme of the Conference

Friday, 24th August

9:30	<i>Registration opens</i>
10:15 – 11:00	Opening session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome• The Goethe-University's Campus Westend• Bringing Political Geography and Critical Geopolitics together (by David Newman)
11:00 – 12:30	Keynote 1 (by Alexander B. Murphy)
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch Break</i>
13:30 – 15:00	Sessions 1: Narrating Changing State Structures / Producing Geopolitical Rationalities
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Break</i>
15:30 – 17:00	Sessions 2: Geopolitics, the State and Beyond / Language and Media
17:00 – 17:30	<i>Break</i>
17:30 – 19:00	Sessions 3: Sites and Spaces of (In)Security / Social and Political Movements
19:00	<i>Reception</i>

Saturday, 25th August

9:30 – 11:00	Sessions 4: Knowledge Diffusion in a Geopolitics of Sport / (The) Critical Geopolitics of Global Inequality and Aid
<i>11.00 – 11:30</i>	<i>Break</i>
11:30 – 13:00	Keynote 2 (by Joanne Sharp)
<i>13:00 – 14:00</i>	<i>Lunch Break</i>
14:00 – 15:30	Sessions 5: Territoriality and the Nation State / Geopolitical Visions and Imaginations
<i>15:30 – 16:00</i>	<i>Final Coffee</i>
16:00	Optional: Frankfurt walk

Keynote 1:

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Trapped in the Logic of the Modern State System? European Integration in the Wake of the Financial Crisis

In the wake of the Single European Act of the mid-1980s and a series of follow-on initiatives aimed at fostering greater integration in Europe, a number of commentators began describing Europe as a 'novel form of political domination' (Schmitter 1991)—even a 'post-modern form of state' (Caporaso 1996). Various initiatives were at play in the 1990s that were not easily captured by the territorial logic of the modern state system (efforts to expand transboundary cooperation, new approaches to spatial planning, etc.), but the movement to adopt a common currency came to dominate the agenda. For all the transformative economic potential inherent to a common currency, the embrace of monetary union arguably reflected a view of European integration that was firmly embedded in the logic of the modern territorial state system. That logic led many commentators to view the success or failure of integration in terms of the degree to which powers were being transferred from state governmental and economic institutions to the central decision-making bodies of the European Union. Those transfers that promoted the concentration of power in Brussels were seen as signs of success, whereas those that challenged centralized decision making were interpreted in opposite terms. Such an approach cast the European Union as a super-state rather than as a new type of political-institutional entity—one in which issues could be addressed at a variety of scales and in regional contexts that make sense in terms of the geographical character of the issues themselves. As a result, the integration project was less subversive of the state system than it might otherwise have been—bolstering the view of the European Union as a distant bureaucracy not adequately attuned to the needs of everyday Europeans and leaving itself exposed to nationalist reactions: a social force with deep roots in the modernist territorial order. Moving the European integration process forward will likely require embracing conceptions of progress that are less tethered to modernist territorial ideas and assumptions.

Keynote 2:

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Geopolitics at the margins

Geopolitics has tended to focus upon a language of binaries, of inside:outside, good:evil and so on. In some respects, the theoretical premise of critical geopolitics has followed this, developing critiques of dominant geopolitical projections or anti-geopolitics as a resistance to this. Drawing inspiration from postcolonialism, this paper will regard power as always and everywhere more complex and hybrid than this; as mimicry that both accepts and resists the status quo. This paper seeks to develop the convergence of postcolonial and political geographies (what I have elsewhere referred to as 'subaltern geopolitics') through empirical work undertaken in Tanzania, recognising both a struggle for recognition through the formal sphere of politics, and attempts to resist it and produce alternatives.

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European Geo- and Biopolitics of and at the Senegalese Border

The EU's agency for border and migration management, FRONTEX, operates from within the Senegalese Ministry of Internal Affairs in a "cooperation" effort to fight "illegal migration" from West Africa. This penetration of FRONTEX into the political apparatus of a country far from European territory is only one example of how domestic issues, such as immigration, have merged with external policy fields, such as development or security, and are practiced within and beyond the border.

Conducting in-depth ethnographic field work enables an updated understanding of how a European border regime is installed and practiced in Senegal, which is favored by the EU to test pilot-projects on migration. This paper will do an ethnographic mapping of a European Border Regime in Senegal since the establishment of the EU's Global Approach to Migration in 2005. Following that current European externalized migration policies are conceptually located in the social science debate on biopolitics. Does the way how migration is governed beyond European territory indicate a reactivation of traditional geopolitical discourses or rather does it indicate a biopolitical shift? This paper aims to address the above bipolar theoretical question and suggests as a tool of analysis a third option of a geo- and biopolitical hybrid form.

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On the Geopolitics of Need: The Production of Geopolitical Images through Aid Organizations

Private aid and development organizations' advertising campaigns use textual and visual images to convey stories of misery and distress all the way from 'third world countries' and 'crisis areas' directly into the daily lives of people in the 'developed' world. These images often show helpless 'black' children or defenceless women on the one side, met on the other hand by selfless and capable 'white' aid workers.

This paper presents the theoretical framework and first empirical results of an interdisciplinary research project, which is based on comparative and discourse analytical approaches. From the perspective of critical geopolitics it analyses the quite often dichotomous nature of geopolitical concepts and constructions of space displayed by non-state humanitarian aid organizations since their inception. The analysis of the construction of distress and need for help focuses on its regional and territorial spatialisation as well as on aspects of social stereotyping and gender construction.

In order to contrast aid organizations of different kinds and to trace shifting argumentative structures over time, the analysis of children funds is juxtaposed to that of non-governmental development aid and emergency relief agencies. To what extent is the organizational landscape of aid tied up in the dualistic discourse of 'development' and 'humanitarian aid' through which it (re-) produces the colonial division between fragile and highly advanced world regions? This is of particular interest as the aid industry claims to assist in bridging this gap and tackling inequality through the 'goodwill' and assistance provided to their supported constituency.

The paper analyses the powerful link between donor campaigns to hegemonic discourses and collective constructions of identity producing stereotypical imaginations of less developed regions. The theoretical framework of our empirical study on the representation of need will be based on a large array of marketing and commercial advertising material from selected aid organizations.

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Lily-pad geopolitics: Romania in the global war on terror

The literature on the GWOT has studied its impact on many aspects of domestic and international politics, including transatlantic relations, governance and governmentality, imagined global geographies, and urban geopolitics. However, little attention has been devoted to the manner in which actors such as Romania have reacted to, adapted to, and even embraced the geopolitical rationality of the GWOT. This paper analyses the effects of the GWOT on the geopolitical representations of states which host US bases, in particular Romania. The starting hypothesis is that the GWOT not only refigured the world in strategic terms and ascribed particular geopolitical identities to the states which host bases, but has also prompted host states to see themselves as lily-pads, rather than culturally and historically embedded political entities. Focusing on the interplay between narratives of national identity and strategic necessity, the paper explores Romania's appropriation of the rationality of the GWOT, and the effect this had on national geopolitical representations.

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Towards an “eco-critical geopolitics”? Dystopian literature and environmental discourse

“Ideas about environment, population, and resources are not neutral. They are political in origin and have political effects” (Harvey, 1974). Indeed, ignoring the “political implication of the population-resource relation theory”, and of other environmental matters, today seems difficult, and dangerous, at the same time. Yet, while possible connections between international politics and ecological issues are vastly discussed, little attention is devoted in the production, dissemination and reception, of environmental discourses and ideas in geopolitical frames (with a few exceptions: see Shapiro, 2005). In the field of popular geopolitics, for instance, while the relevance of the so called *film vert* in developing an environmental awareness is quite clear, a more theoretical analysis focused on the kind of environmental rhetoric at stake is not always present. Even poorer is the methodological apparatus brought into play. From this viewpoint, a good help could be provided by the intersection of the theoretical apparatus offered by “critical geopolitics”, from one side, with environmental discourse analysis from the other, and with other disciplinary perspectives, apparently even more distant by geo-graphical analysis. Specifically, useful methodological tools can be offered by “ecocriticism”, a new trend recently emerged in literary criticism, is focused on the relation between human beings and “nature” inside literary works and, more generally, in popular culture (see Garrard, 2012). An example of this kind of approach, which, making a syneresis, we could label “eco-critical geopolitics”, is obtainable by the analysis of some dystopian literary classics, such as *We*, *The Brave New World*, and *Fahrenheit 451*. Indeed, even if the plot is not mainly focused on ecological issues, in all the three novels, landscape descriptions and the use of a given lexicon, of specific tropes, and of certain figures of speech, contribute in offering a glimpse of the environmental worries and awareness of their time.

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A very, very stable world thanks to the same old narratives; and China is going to win

The mantra of the International Relations and of the Geopolitics was and continue to be the one of “instability”. The danger of -, to prevent the -, to contrast the instability (generically evoked) are the keywords which justify the states geopolitical actions at all levels, but overall the actions of the so-called hegemonic states. But since the end of the WW2 the global geopolitical world has been very stable, thanks to the Cold War (with very few crisis events), and today it is even more stable thanks to the systematic and mass media use of two old narratives: the one of the danger of the rogue (and failed-, quasi-, non-) states and the one of the unique economic model.

Both narratives get the goal to kindle the support or at least the non-opposition of a large part of the public opinion of the affluent countries, which is the only relevant one in the geopolitical and economic realm. The acceptance of the world as it is, as a result of narratives in the affluent societies or as result of traditional *genre de vie* (iconografic cultural islands) in the less affluent societies, is the main factor of stability all over the world. The inner (and hidden) dynamics of world power and the readjustment among the pivotal actors (i.e. the role of China) are almost totally played in the economic sector, but under the umbrella of the distracting narratives of the geopolitical insecurity. The presentation tries to show how both narratives work and why they favour the China’s geo-political-economic strategy.

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Walking on the Razor's Edge: Religious Groups and the Arab 2011 Spring

The 2011 mobilization of masses in several countries in the Arab world, known in the Western media as the "Arab Spring," has caught many by surprise, given its resilience, demands for democracy, scope, and the general absence of ideology and charismatic leadership behind it. Suddenly, individuals including the Facebook young generation, have gathered in public places, sharing similar feelings of revolt and the demand for fundamental change in their societies and economies, to make what seemed impossible possible. This chapter explores the stance of religious groups and institutions toward and within the Arab Spring. These groups in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Syria and Yemen as well as Bahrain and elsewhere have had a unique position. In general, they support justice and equality for all citizens as Islam espouses, but they have had to act moving on a razor's edge, so to speak. The present paper argues that that religious groups have had to be especially careful in their actions and extent of support to the Arab Spring in their specific country. First and foremost, they had to act so as not to appear as associated with or inspired by al-Qaeda's quest for regime change--an accusation propagated specifically by the Libyan, Yemeni and Syrian leadership in confronting protesters in these states. At the same time, religious groups have felt the necessity to participate in these mass insurgencies and make their presence felt so that they will not be left behind once the regime changes. Characteristically, religious groups are more organized than many others participating in the protests but their role in each country that witnessed the Arab Spring has to be assessed case by case. The involvement of religious groups differs from one country to another, due to a range of factors, including their strength among the masses, the specific religious character of the country and their relationship with the respective regimes prior to 2011. The analysis of these groups also sheds light on the character of processes of democratization and liberation that Islamic activists can accept as processes of change move forward.

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Geopolitics and the Olympics

In anticipation of the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia, this paper explores the multiple and overlapping geopolitics surrounding the Olympic Games. While Chapter 5 of the Olympic Charter notes, “No kind of demonstration or political, religious or racial propaganda is permitted in the Olympic areas”, the modern Olympic movement has had to contend with wars, boycotts, protests, walkouts and even terrorist attacks. Indeed, at different times in its history, the Olympics have been very (geo)political games.

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Constructing Globality in the Development Discourse of the World Bank and UNDP

What contributions have international organizations (IOs) made to the construction of globality as a socio-spatial category? How do they refer to globalized spaces and how do they reproduce them in their organizational discourses? These questions concern the discourse of globally active international organizations that can be conceived of as major influences in the (re)production of globality itself. By putting certain issues on the agenda and offering solutions that can only be delivered by them and on a global scale they have regulated the discourse both of specific problems and the idea of a world community concerned by these problems. Among these IOs are the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), whose definitions of development have competed and shaped the global development discourse over time. One of the key issues within this development discourse has been inequality, traditionally related closely to the realm of nation states, but framed as a global issue here. Accordingly, our paper deals with the emergence of a global semantics of inequality within world society, in particular in the context of the development discourse produced in these two major international organizations. In a corpus linguistic and discourse analysis of official texts produced in the World Bank and UNDP we trace how references to a global imaginary correspond to political programs of overcoming inequality. These programs are concerned with poverty reduction, gender mainstreaming, environmental security and other aspects of heterogeneity. Overall, we aim to trace which specific discourses, e.g. on issues of global justice, the climate, environmental protection, poverty etc., serve as the main vehicles for the emergence of such a global semantics of inequality and, in turn, the construction of globality.

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Territorial Identity in the integrating and disintegrating Europe. Biographical Reflection

Close to 20% of residents living on the territory of former Yugoslavia (1919 – 1991) have in the pre-disintegration census (1981) considered themselves as Yugoslav. With the break-up they found themselves in a limbo. Bureaucracy of the new nation-states has, in some cases, neglected them (new) citizenship. The case of “the erased” – “izbrisani” has made headlines and has put the Slovenian government on the European court. Threatened minorities, religious and ethnic groups are changing identity continuously. The paper discusses the example of the author and his multiple territorial identities related to the space and time he lived in. His decision to become “European” opens the demand for a minority status within the EU, and brings several ethnic and economic questions into the foreground of discussion.

The EUROSTAT survey on the “European Nation” points out that just 2% of the EU-25 residents consider themselves European first, ahead of any other identity. Even if combined, European identity is considered in one way or another just among 45% of the EU citizens. The majority of respondents consider their national identity glued only to their nation-state frame. The worst identification with Europe was registered in the UK (27%), followed by Lithuania (34%) and Estonia (38%). Europe is considered to be an additional ethnic/national label predominantly in Luxembourg (57%), Belgium (52%), France (52%) and Netherlands (51%) followed by the “New Europe nations” of Malta (56%), Cyprus (53%), and Slovenia (51%). Slovenia is the only EU transition nation-state where European in several combinations of ethnic/national identities prevails. Since the fall of communism ethnic “nation-state nationalism” has strengthened in the West and East. There, the strengthened patriotism (nationalism) is fed by the worrisome economic situation and the unsolved historical agenda.

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Shaping Humanitarian Aid – Geographical Imaginations of Disasters and Rationalities of Aid Organisations

With over 3,000 humanitarian organisations competing for donors' attention, Germany represents a large market for charitable donations. This 'humanitarian market' is to a large extent dependent on donations by individuals. It is striking that especially contributions for humanitarian aid are characterised by short term donation booms. Furthermore, a comparison of different cases shows that donations vary strongly depending on type and location of the disaster. While some disasters appear to be 'donor darlings', others trigger much less charitable enthusiasm: whereas donations after the tsunami in Southeast Asia in 2004 reached unprecedented heights, the interest in the flooding in Pakistan in 2010 remained relatively low. Using a postcolonial and poststructuralist discourse-theoretic perspective, the paper will ask how representations of the 'needy other' are created after disasters, how geographical imaginations about disaster regions and humanitarian aid are (re)produced and which alternative views are marginalised by these framings. Furthermore, it analyses how hegemonic discursive formations affect humanitarian organisations' rationalities, how humanitarian practitioners handle the conflict between their dependency on charitable giving and the contrasting representations of disasters and to what extent geographical imaginations influence the choice of regions where humanitarians imply their aid. Focussing on the production of knowledge about humanitarian disasters media reports that frame events as humanitarian emergencies will be analysed. By comparing news programmes and newspaper articles about humanitarian disasters, the research project examines how geographical imaginations of disaster regions are discursively constituted and (re)produced and which arguments are used in favour of humanitarian aid in the specific cases.

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(Dis)owning space: resistance in an Indian metropole

This paper explores the politics of slum dwelling and slum demolitions in the state of Maharashtra, India. Specifically I have used the case study of the slum *Golibar*, which means 'firing range' in Hindi. This name was given to the slum due to the fact that the location of the slum was at one point, army land, a firing range which was abandoned and subsequently squatted. Golibar is located in Khar East, not too far from the city center. Looking through the lens of "Right to the City" discourses (Lefebvre, Harvey, Davis, Mitchell) I examine at the production of space in Mumbai's slums and the way in which various actors such as politicians, NGO's, tourists, and residents of the city alike shape the discourse around ownership and space. Through a critical analysis of these ideas and theories, I use field notes from participatory observation and on-the-ground interviews I conducted in Delhi, Bangalore, and Mumbai to develop a comprehensive understanding of social justice in the realm of slum life and the modes of urban resistance which are employed in Mumbai against neoliberal urban planning and demopolitan practices.

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Revisiting the nation state in Africa: An appraisal of the Lancaster house conference on Somalia

Since 1990 Somalia has been referred to as a failed state. It has since disintegrated into regions controlled by warlords and further compounded by the presence of religious, clan and political leaders each assuming control of the region. Somalia's disintegration begun in 1990 after Siad Barre's ouster. Hailed as one of the few nations states in Africa, Somali's disintegration is multifaceted and indeed can only be studied using a variety of approaches. The aim of the paper however is not to only conceive the problem through ontological or factual interpretations, but rather to justify the need to appreciate the various approaches through which we can identify methodological approaches to study Somalia. There are a number of things that need to be understood. The first is that Somalia has historically been a nation. During independence, unlike other African countries, Somalia was already a consolidated nation comprising of one major ethnic group speaking one language and a majority practicing Islam. However, Somalis are also found in the neighbouring states of Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti. Unlike these three states which comprise several nations, Somalia has needed little effort in nation building. Needless to say, Somalia has been disintegrating since the 1990's. It has disintegrated into the three nation states of Somalia, Somaliland in the North and Puntland in the North East. Besides, Somalia has further witnessed disintegration based on clan identity and religious extremism. And even after several initiatives and agreements, Somalia's re integration defies local and international efforts that have sought to reintegrate and consolidate the failed state. And while Puntland and Somaliland are not keen on reintegration with Somalia, the recent Lancaster conference on Somalia has cast attention on renewing efforts at integrating the nation state of Somalia. The aim of the article is to assess the possibilities of getting Somalia together back again amid socio political and socio economic tension. The paper will also critique the suggestions made during the Lancaster house conference. It will conclude by providing suggestions on the appropriate methodological approach to reintegrate Somalia.

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Democracy needs territoriality – even more under post-national conditions

In recent geographical debates about the future of the nation state and ongoing territorial transformation one aspect seems to be insufficiently considered: the spatial premises of democracy. Two widely accepted preconditions for democratic rule suggest a significant territorial reference: Firstly, democracy requires a clear definition of the *demos*, forming the basis of political self-determination. Secondly, democratic rule is dependent upon the existence of trust and solidarity among the constituents; this in turn leads to the necessity of a collective identity. In traditional understanding, these preconditions have been fulfilled by the congruence between a culturally quasi-homogeneous nation and its territorial democratic state. In the light of globalization however, this position is being challenged. Based on the assumption of a strict contingency, especially post-national theories and cosmopolitan ideas promote a decoupling of state and nation. These claim priority of universalistic democratic values over pre-political essentialisms – yet, at the same time, raising the question how the preconditions of democracy could be fulfilled alternatively: How could the necessary definition of the *demos* and its identity look like? How could trust and solidarity be ensured? In this contribution it shall be argued that precisely those concepts postulating a decoupling of nation and territorial state implicitly point to an increasing importance of territoriality. By delegitimizing ethnic origin as a critical factor for defining the *demos* (*ius sanguinis*), they consequently prioritise the territorial principle (*ius soli*). At a more detailed look it becomes clear that these concepts even promote new models of overlapping and “decision-dependent” territorialities. Therefore, post-national and cosmopolitan democratic ideas are far from leading to de-territorialized politics, they rather clarify that democracy fundamentally rests on territorial categories – even more after uncoupling pre-political essentialisms. However, at the same time, it is questionable whether territoriality could fulfill all the democratic preconditions by itself. This calls for further theoretical work in the field of democratic territoriality.

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The European Union eyes Russia: territory, energy and brides

This paper engages arguments about the European Union's neo-imperial gaze upon its East. Indeed, the hegemonic post-Cold War narrative of modernising, liberalising, exploiting and ultimately 'Europeanising' Russia smells of 19th century colonialism. Similarly, a second powerful storyline that has recently reinvented Russia as a threatening Oriental Other could also fit under the umbrella of this neo-imperial argument. It is proposed here, however, that there is a twist in this second story that results in an inversion of the first - and the disappearance of the neo-imperial logic. Rather than being the inferior backward Other that colonial discourses construct, Putin's Russia is valorised, envied and emulated precisely in its backwardness. In keeping with a critical geopolitical focus on space, materiality and gender, the argument draws on three cases: Russian territoriality, energy conflicts and mail-order brides. This will help us to hammer out an understanding of the geopolitical eye as a psychoanalytic category.

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Transnational Expertise: Political Geographies of Knowledge in Brussels

At the heart of European integration is the production of knowledge about how European space works or ought to work. To comprehend the process, we must understand what knowledge claims, from where, succeed in Brussels and what claims do not—and how and why this is so. The most recent governance crises in the European Union underscore that the political and social space of Brussels knowledge production is far from the positivist image of objective expertise that is projected by the EU's bureaucracy itself. Rather, there are distinct geographical and geopolitical dynamics at play, especially the newly resurgent East-West and North-South stereotypes. Such stereotypes are especially visible in relations with Russia, which continues to be the subject of intense geopolitical maneuvering in Brussels.

This paper examines what transnational expertise might mean in the context of EU-Russia relations: who make knowledge claims, how, and with what effects, and how they use geographical and geopolitical tropes in that process. The empirical material is derived from over eighty in-depth interviews with EU policy professionals, mostly in Brussels. Empirically, the paper clarifies how geographical stereotypes are being rejuvenated, contested, and transformed in Brussels today: how concepts such as northern and southern, eastern and western, old and new, member states are actually used by the EU policy professionals who devise and implement EU's policies toward Russia. Conceptually, the analysis is situated within the scholarship of critical geopolitics, critical policy studies, and geographies of knowledge. It contributes to our understanding of geopolitical and policy processes in the bureaucratic settings in which they actually unfold on a daily basis.

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“Global” language politics – “local” setting?

Often, geopolitics is scrutinised from a global perspective. Yet, local settings do play an essential role in shaping global politics. In my paper, I will shed light on the question how the global “politics of spreading” of the German language is enacted within a special local setting – that of France.

More precisely, I will apply a theory of practice approach to explore the following questions: how are the practices of the “promotion” of German language influenced by a decentralising spatial order? To what extent does that create scale interdependencies? (Not least, that refers to the discussion about scale and offers an empirical example of its application.) Applying a cultural theoretical perspective that looks at practices rather than actors, what role do personalities still play?

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A small-state geopolitics?

In the past as well as in the present, geopolitics has predominantly been about great powers and been practiced from great power perspectives. It is in this respect characteristic that Ó Tuathail and Agnew's influential 1992 article in *Political Geography* conceptualised critical geopolitics as 'the study of the spatialization of international politics by core powers and hegemonic states'. But geopolitical practices are not confined to powerful states. Since the end of the cold war, in particular, we have thus seen the emergence of critical analyses of what could be termed 'small-state geopolitics', and some contributions to the critical historiography of geopolitical traditions points in a similar direction. Yet we are still to see more systematic discussions of how geopolitical practices are adopted, adapted and developed from small-state perspectives. Provisionally, 'small-state geopolitics' could here be conceptualised as a situated perspective on the small-state 'self' and on the wider world in which also notions of being 'small' should be critically analysed as products of geopolitical practices. The paper will explore the notion of small-state geopolitics and suggest themes and problems that could be critically investigated in this respect.

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Projecting national languages abroad: French, German, and English as European lingua franca

France and Germany are seen as the motor of European integration, but neither French nor German are the main language of the EU institutions or the main language of transnational communication in the European Union. On the contrary, German and French are losing ground as languages of international communication. The ascendancy of English is however highly contested, and France and Germany deploy language policies to foster the status of French and/or German and to boost the use of these two languages in European transnational encounters. The paper explores the geographical imaginations and the geopolitical visions that inform the changing linguistic foreign policies of the two states since World War II and considers the impact of major geopolitical events such as the division of Germany and Europe, supranational cooperation, decolonisation, the end of the Cold War and German reunification on the position of French and German. It focuses on the linguistic issues linked to European integration and more specifically on the consequences of successive enlargements. Finally it analyses the changing responses of France and Germany to "the English problem" and the consequences for individuals involved in European encounters at different levels.

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Critical geopolitics of the state

The state has remained one of the key constitutive concepts and intellectual problems in contemporary critical political geography and, thus, in critical geopolitics. Even though one may argue that the link between state theory and critical geopolitics has been somewhat loose, critical geopolitics is self-evidently about the third dimension in Herbs (2008) list of political engagement. This is a form of scholarship that seeks to deconstruct, criticize and even resist the spatial practices of the state. My paper opens up this theme by discussing critical geopolitics with regard to the state as an intellectual problem. The idea is to single out critical geopolitical thinking on the state through some of the most known classical texts which were published in the 1990s as well some more recent contributions. I use these literatures as a springboard to discuss what I call the neoliberal geopolitics of the state as one of the possible themes that diversifies the critical geopolitical study of the state. I suggest that bringing the literature on spatial political economy into a closer dialogue with critical geopolitics would be worthwhile.

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The center of calculation as the locus of translational power, or: How to govern the Olympics?

This contribution seeks to intervene in discussions around power and its spatial reach through developing the concept of translational power. Drawing on Bruno Latour's center of calculation as a figure of thought, it conceptualizes translational power as emerging through the dual processes of circulation of immutable mobiles and combination of knowledge into abstracted form. Translational power emerges from associations that are established through circulation, but at the same time it is tied to a center that performs the acts of combination and thus becomes able to govern at a distance. The paper illustrates this dynamic through examining the organization of the Olympic Games and the recent move of the IOC to assume a stronger coordinating role. Exploring how the introduction of a knowledge management system aimed to turn the IOC into a center of calculation, what kind of power at a distance this brought into being and where it broke down, it attempts to show what the concept of translational power can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the spatialities and (socio-) materialities of power.

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State-(re)building through “Protectorate & Projectorate”? – The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The paper presents conceptual and empirical findings concerning the ongoing political power struggle that has hampered Bosnia and Herzegovina’s nation building process ever since the implementation of the Dayton Peace agreement 16 years ago. It critically interrogates the notion of the nation state against the backdrop of a kleptocratic “partyocracy” system (cf. Interview OSCE 2012) characterized by a strictly controlled hierarchy in the predominantly ethno-nationalistic parties and their associated social networks of corrupt state companies. At the same time, supranational institutions (i.e. European Union), international organizations (OSCE, World Bank, IMF) and NGOs driven by transnational donors are operating with a variety of competing nationhood concepts in their individual attempts to transform B&Hs constitutional framing and to modernize the state institutions’ administrative capacities. Their overall goal is to consolidate a functioning state as a point of departure for neoliberal reform agendas. Meanwhile, they are faced with obstacles arising from the patchwork nature of the Dayton constitutional framework, mainly a complex political power struggle over competing clientelistic, conservative and reformist agendas and their contradictory geopolitical imaginations about territorial orders. To this day, this difficult and complex political setting can be found on almost every institutional level of this war-torn country and it poses a major obstacle for any kind of reform. Drawing on Foucaults governmentality studies the presentation seeks to draw attention to the importance of various rationalities, technologies and territorializations at play in this political struggle, including a global neoliberal position introduced by international institutions and donors. In this context, tendencies such as ethnicity-based secessionism, European supranationalization and globalized financial neoliberalization are understood as variable re-articulations of the nation state. It is argued that positive imaginations related to ordoliberal, central European statehood and efficiency alongside strong linkages between European Unions’ and Bosnian-Herzegovinians’ modes of kleptocracy are what ultimately keeps this fragile state together.

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Transecting Security and Space in Phnom Penh

This paper approaches Cambodia's capital city of Phnom Penh through an analysis of everyday security via a series of transects. Traversing landscapes of power, we pass dozens of security guards whilst encountering a police force closely implicated with the reworking of political-economic power and privilege in contemporary Cambodia. The presence and pasts of violence and power in Cambodia become legible when we walk through Toul Sleng, now a museum dedicated to the memorialization of the atrocities committed by the Khmer Rouge, past the Vietnam-Cambodia Friendship monument and through a mega-Casino to the surreal 'moon landscape' of a former lake, designated as a 'development' zone. When Phnom Penh recently hosted an ASEAN Summit, President Hun Sen declared that 'Cambodia is not for sale' in an angry exchange with journalists who quizzed him about China's influence. However the sale and enclosure of swathes of Cambodian land and property are sources of ongoing tension and profit. Scrutinizing these requires careful consideration of the meanings and operation of security whereby the most powerful security provider in Phnom Penh is neither wholly public nor fully private, but a hybrid entity in which public police and military personal and their equipment are purchased. This is symptomatic of circulation/operation of state/capital in Cambodia.

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Spatializing political solidarity: European social movements building 'constructive resistance' to neoliberalism

This work is inspired by critical geography that is actively engaged with social movements involved in forms of constructive resistance to the forces of globalization and neoliberalism they held to be responsible for the reproduction of social injustice.

The aim of this article is to explore how European social movements have actively contested TINA (there is no alternative to capitalism) arguments, while constructing alternative trading practices in solidarity with marginalized peoples in the Global South particularly through engagement in solidarity trade. This practice has been developed by solidarity groups, collectives and radical associations belonging to autonomous social movements who, inspired by fair trade, have committed themselves to importing products from marginalized communities in the Global South (in the case of this thesis, coffee from the Zapatista communities of Chiapas in Southern Mexico) as a sign of political support.

The study uses the example of the European Zapatista solidarity network (the REDPROZAPA) to explore the nature of this transnational organization involved in radical political practices such as solidarity trade by considering them in the context of recent theoretical insights that see social movements as 'autonomous' and 'prefigurative' as opposed to the more reductionist concept of social change within the governmental framework of much of the traditional social movements literature.

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The influence of transnational cooperation in sports on nation state

Sport is far more than a form of entertainment in modern world. It has become a highly politicized activity used for production and reproduction of national identities and nation states. As many other activities, sport was subordinated to national framework in modern nation states. This is most visibly manifested in dominating power of national sport associations, in subordination of international to national competitions and in the restrictions of international mobility of athletes. Lately a new trend can be observed. Especially in Europe, but also in other parts of the world, we are witnessing an intensive growth of transnational cooperation in the field of sport. The growing importance of transnational competitions, increasing mobility of athletes and diminishing role of national organizations are moving sports away from national frameworks. Consequentially sport is undermining and transforming nation state.

The article explores the impact of cross-border and transnational cooperation in sport on nation state. The research is focused on seven successor states of Yugoslavia. What forms of cross-border cooperation in sport have emerged in last two decades in former Yugoslavia? In what ways do they differ from previous form of cooperation? How and to what extend is this development undermining the role of nation states in sport and in general? How do nation states respond to these trends? What is the reaction of general public? These are the most important questions the article tries to address.

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Think Tanks in Ukraine: Practicing Geopolitics In-Between

Whether in the United States, Russia or China, whether in governmental policies, academic accounts or news reports, 'geopolitics' has persisted as a seemingly useful and intelligible way of thinking, talking and writing about the practice of international affairs. By drawing on recent fieldwork insights, the paper addresses the production and contestation of 'geopolitical' knowledge and belief in Ukrainian think tanks. It explores in particular the discourse of the country's foreign policy choice between the European Union and the Russian Federation, and Ukrainian think tanks' mundane participation in its construction. Furthermore, the allegedly hybrid spaces of think tanks' work, those in-between academia, government and the media, are examined in Ukraine's context with an eye to the wider significance of studying think tanks' agency through the lens of critical geopolitics.

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Anarcho-libertarianism, geographical imaginaries, spatial embeddings, and the politics of anti-statist movements: a critical analysis of the seasteading movement

Political actors have long drawn on utopian imaginaries as models for idealized libertarian commonwealths. A recent inheritor of this tradition is the seasteading movement, which, through an ideology that blends right-wing entrepreneurial anti-statism and left-wing anarchist anti-statism, seeks to "further the establishment and growth of permanent, autonomous ocean communities [by] enabling innovations with new political and social systems" on semi-stationary, floating platforms. The seasteading movement is unique among such projects because its promoters explicitly herald the material qualities of the space within which the seastead is to be located as essential to the realization of the libertarian dream. The sea is seen as the ideal environment for the flourishing of personal freedoms and the unleashing of human innovation because it is deemed to be a space of friction-free mobility, and thus boundless choice. From this fluid foundation, the movement suggest that the sea, which Christopher Connery notes has long been "capital's favored myth-element," can expand from being a space of economic choice to one of political choice, as the mobility of the sea fosters a market in political systems (with the presumptive winner being the political system that places the fewest restrictions on individual freedoms). By tracing the roots of this apparently fringe movement to the ideologies and personalities of mainstream U.S. economic thought, San Francisco/Silicon Valley bohemian-entrepreneurial culture, and maritime imaginaries, this paper suggests that even if seasteading will never come to fruition the fusion of cultural trends that it represents is indicative of a significant political strain in the U.S. and beyond, and thus is worthy of serious investigation.

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Intervening in the Intervener's Self-Other Representations? Germany and Afghanistan through the eyes of a German left-wing quality newspaper

Drawing on poststructuralism, postcolonialism and critical discourse analysis, the paper examines the representations of Germany and Afghanistan in a German left-wing quality newspaper. After US and UK, Germany contributes the third-largest largest number of troops to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). ISAF was established by the UN in 2001 to improve security, enable reconstruction and development and strengthen governance in Afghanistan. The paper first discusses Germany's political, economic and military features, such as its multilateral focus and the highly contentious role of the army in society. It further investigates the main UN, NATO and German government documents regarding ISAF, followed by a brief discussion of the humanitarian intervention literature. This contextualisation forms the background for a study of the reporting by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ) on the NATO bombardment of two fuel trucks in Afghanistan in September 2009. The following outrage in Germany about the many innocent victims stemmed mainly from the fact that a German officer had requested the bombardment. By interpreting the textual and visual representations of German and Afghan actors in SZ, the paper seeks to answer its central research questions. What is the role of binaries such as developed/underdeveloped, secure/insecure and civilised/uncivilised in the representations of the 'Self' (Germany) and the 'Other' (Afghanistan)? To what extent do the (re)constructed national identities allow for heterogeneity, ambiguity and change? How permeable is the boundary that the SZ draws between the identities of Germany and Afghanistan? Many previous newspaper discourse analyses yielded valuable insights into the modes of representation of right-wing newspapers and tabloids. This paper expects to contribute to this literature by exploring whether, in the words of David Campbell, a large left-wing quality newspaper "denaturalizes and unsettles the dominant way of constructing the world".

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Japan's geopolitical vision and practices on the Indian Ocean: their shifts and implications

Since the defeat in the Second World War, Japan has become dependent on international maritime trade for its recovery and prosperity. Due to its geographical configuration as an island state, Japan ranks the sixth in the size of territorial water and EEZ in the world. Japan's inevitable dependence on natural resources overseas, especially petroleum in the Middle East, has made the security of sea lane of communications or SLOCs crucial for the state's future. The SLOCs for Japan stretch from the East China Sea through the Indian Ocean to the Persian Gulf, in other words, along the southern fringe of the Arc of Instability. However, the Japanese constitution restricts the use of Japan's military forces outside its territorial water, meaning that Japan has had to seek non-military ways to secure the SLOCs. There have been two ways for this: the provision of ODA for countries along the SLOCs and the use of U.S. military forces according to the Japan-U.S. alliance. This division of labor between Japan and U.S. and between economy and military has loosened especially since 9/11; Japan is attempting to participate in international activities to secure the SLOCs, such as U.S.-led military campaigns against Afghanistan. This paper explores the above-mentioned historical shifts in Japan's geopolitical vision and practices on the Indian Ocean and identifies its political economic implications in the hegemonic order of Asia as a whole.