

**Association of American Geographers
Political Geography Specialty Group**

presents

**The 22nd Annual Political Geography
Specialty Group Preconference**

Plaza Hotel
One South Main Street
Las Vegas, Nevada

March 21-22, 2009

Saturday, March 21

8:00 – 9:00 Session 1: Historical Political Geography

Chair: Gabriel Popescu, Indiana University—South Bend

8:00 Thomas Fogarty, University of Northern Iowa, “Resources and Geopolitics of the Very Long Run: Russia

8:20 Michael Glass, University of Pittsburgh, “Visions in the Wilderness: Boundaries and Imaginations in Western Pennsylvania”

8:40 Sayed Hadi Zarghani, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, “Geopolitical Factors’ Effect on the Role and Function of International Boundaries”

9:15 – 10:15 Session 2: Alternative Conceptions of Geopolitics

Chair: Reece Jones, University of Hawaii-Manoa

9:15 Sara Koopman, University of British Columbia, “Alter-Geopolitics: Another Geopolitics is Possible”

9:35 Nathan Clough, University of Minnesota, “Neoliberalism, Contestation, and the Political Ontology of Geography”

9:55 James Sidaway, University of Plymouth, “‘One Island, One Mission, One Team’: Geographies of Rendition”

10:30 – 11:30 Session 3: Local Politics in Conceptualization and Practice

Chair: Clark Archer, University of Nebraska—Lincoln

10:30 Adam Moore, University of Wisconsin-Madison, “Grounding Consociational Democracy”

10:50 Ryan Good, University of Kansas, “Poverty as an Explanatory Variable in Electoral Geography: The Case of Kenya’s 2007 Election”

11:10 Takashi Yamazaki, Osaka City University, “The Impact of U.S. Military Presence on Local Politics in Pre-Reversion Okinawa, Japan”

11:30 – 1:00 Lunch Break

1:00 – 2:20 Session 4: Political Geography and the Environment

Chair: George White, Frostburg State University

1:00 Alec Murphy, University of Oregon, “Potential Implications of Sea-Level Rise on Maritime Regimes”

1:20 Kevin Grove, Ohio State University, “Dangerous Climate Change and the Biopolitics of Environmental Security”

1:40 Anton Gosar, University of Primorska, “Energy-Hungry Europe: Development Projects in South-Central Europe”

2:00 Kolson Schlosser, Western Kentucky University, “Examining the Cultural Politics of Canadian Gemstone Diamonds”

2:30 – 3:10 Session 5: Aspects of the 2008 Election

Chair: Ken Martis, West Virginia University

2:30 Rex Honey, University of Iowa, “Lessons from Iowa for American Politics”

2:50 Ryan Weichelt, University of Central Oklahoma, “Hispanic Influence on the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election”

3:30 – 4:50 Session 6: Migration and Political Geography

Chair: Erik Prout, Texas A&M University

3:30 Corey Johnson, University of North Carolina—Greensboro, and Amanda Coleman, Arkansas State University, “The Internal Other: A Framework for Understanding Regional Exceptionalism and Exclusion”

3:50 Reece Jones, University of Hawaii-Manoa, “Agents of Exception: Border Security and the Marginalization of Muslims in India”

4:10 Mathew Coleman, Ohio State University, “Devolution and the War on Immigrants”

4:30 Charles Abbott, University of Iowa, “African Ethnic ‘National Conferences’ in North America: What We Know Now”

5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Open Discussion: Ethics in Political Geography Research

Moderator: Rex Honey, University of Iowa

7:00 p.m. Dinner

Sunday, March 22

8:00 – 9:00 Session 7 Art, Semantics, and Popular Culture

Chair: Darren Purcell, University of Oklahoma

8:00 Heath Robinson, University of Buffalo, “Political Geography, Political Studies, and Semantic Inoperability”

8:20 Elena dell’ Agnese, University of Milano-Bicocca, “Licence to Torture: Vigilantism and ‘States of Exception’ in Popular Culture”

8:40 Alan Ingram, University College London, “Art Versus Geopolitics: Remapping Security at Green Zone/Red Zone”

9:15 – 9:55 Session 8 Aspects of Geopolitics

Chair: Tom Fogarty, University of Northern Iowa

9:15 Martin Muller, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, “Producing Geopolitical Subjects at a Russian Elite University”

9:35 Luca Muscara, University of Molise, “The Geopolitics of the Bomb and Megalopolis”

10:10 – 11:50 Session 9 Electoral Geography and the U.S. Election of 2008

Chair: Jonathan Leib, Old Dominion University

10:10 Nick Quinton, Florida State University, and Jonathan Leib, Old Dominion University, “Recent Trends in Electoral Geography”

10:30 Bob Watrel, South Dakota State University, and Clark Archer, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, “The 2008 U.S. Presidential Election in Geographical, Historical, and Political Perspective”

10:50 Dick Morrill, University of Washington, Larry Knopp, University of Minnesota-Duluth, and Michael Brown, University of Washington, “Understanding the anomalous results in US presidential elections: What happened to the 2004 anomalous counties in 2008?”

11:10 Ken Martis, West Virginia University, “The Electoral Cartography of Voting Shifts and the 2008 Presidential Election”

11:45 – 12:45 Open Discussion: Priorities in Political Geography Research

Moderator: Alec Murphy, University of Oregon

African Ethnic "National Conferences" in North America: What we know now

Charles W. Abbott, University of Iowa

My doctoral dissertation on Nigerian hometown associations and ethnic unions generated a taxonomy to understand the two classes of organizations. "The hometown association works for the improvement of the town" and tends to invest in fixed public assets in the hometown. "The ethnic union promotes the advancement of the ethnic group," an objective often focused on intangibles. Advancement of the ethnic group focuses on the status of the ethnic group as a whole, lauds "ethnic champions," and lobbies for jurisdictional change. Ethnic unions' latent functions include elite circulation, elite recruitment, and the promotion of ethnic histories, lexicons, myths, founding documents, and the creators of such works.

As of 2005, roughly ten Nigerian ethnic groups (such as Yoruba, Igbo, Tiv, Urhobo, Itsekiri, Ogoni, Ijaw, Ibibio, and the pan-Northern Zumunta) had a North American annual conference. Some had consistently met annually for ten years. Here I provide findings from a follow-up investigation: are the groups still meeting in North America every year? Have any groups fragmented into smaller factions (often based on their constituent metropolitan chapters, which are more stable)? Have any lapsed entirely? Has the number of organized ethnic groups increased? What are some of the best-organized or most-visible non-Nigerian groups (for example, Asante, Ewe, Kikuyu, or Zulu)?

My findings derive from web resources, personal interviews, and field observations (including attendance at meetings of Zumunta—Missouri and two national UNANA (Urhobo) meetings (in Chicago and Bettendorf, Iowa).

The 2008 Presidential Election in Geographical, Historical, and Political Perspective

Clark Archer, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Fred M. Shelley, University of Oklahoma; and Robert Watrel, South Dakota State University

This paper focuses on two aspects of the geography of American presidential elections. The first is long-term structural changes in the pattern of voting within the electorate. This involves identifying historical voting epochs or normal vote periods in which the geographic structure of voting is maintained for several elections. The electoral epoch or normal vote period will last until issues in a future election, called realigning elections, cause a sharp alteration in the preexisting geographic pattern and a new epoch or normal vote results. The voting epochs or normal vote periods are useful for identifying the regional or sectional voting patterns during these elections. This paper uses a T-mode factor analysis to identify voting epochs or normal vote periods in, using county-level data for US presidential elections from 1872 to 2008. Our analysis identifies nine electoral epochs or normal vote periods for this time period. The second aspect of the geography of American presidential elections involves the examination of historical voting trends or sectionalism. Sectionalism or the idea that regional interests, to varying degrees, are reflected in voting patterns has a long tradition in American politics. Previous research at a state-scale of observation suggests that popular presidential voting patterns have tended to exhibit strong geographical cleavages which correspond to a three-section model, distinguishing Northeastern, Southern, and Western sections. The prevailing "winner-take-all" method of aggregating electoral votes by state likely contributes to the appearance of these three major sections in the outcomes of many presidential elections. However, long term time-series analyses of sub-state presidential voting patterns using county-level data for all of the United States at once have been rare. S-mode factor analysis is employed to examine county-level voting returns for the US from 1872 to 2008. We and conclude that a five-section solution best

describes the historical voting patterns over the study period at the county-level. They include two historical voting regions within the American South, one in the interior West, a northern US and West Coast region, and Northeast US region.

Neoliberalism, Contestation, and the Political Ontology of Geography

Nathan Clough, University of Minnesota

Although recent calls to shift the focus of neoliberalism studies to explicitly include resistance, contestation, and struggle (Leitner, Peck, and Sheppard 2006) have been well received, there seems to be little headway in meeting this call. In this paper I argue that dominant trajectories of political theory that inform much of the literature on neoliberalism in geography ontologically privilege domination and Power over contestation and struggle. This often unspoken and apparently unexamined ontological commitment positions hopeful engagements with radical movements as illogical and utopian, thus disabling attempts to take contestation seriously. In order for a serious study of contestation and struggle to make theoretic sense geographic theory requires an ontology adequate to a politics of hope. I suggest that elements of Autonomous and Open Marxism can serve to supplement the political ontology of marxian geography such that the study of struggle can logically and consistently come to the fore.

Licence to torture: vigilantism and “states of exception” in popular geopolitics’ discourses

Elena dell’Agnese, University of Milano-Bicocca

In the work of the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, a “state of exception” is a “zone of indistinction, between inside and outside”, where there is no difference between law and force (Agamben, 1995:181). The concept has been circulated by critical scholars in the last decade, in the attempt to make sense of the break with normal politics following the attacks of September 11th (Salter, 2007). In “Agamben’s geographies of modernity” (Minca, 2007), camps and borderzones have been recognized as good examples of “states of exception”. But the notion can profitably be used to comprehend other “zones of indistinction between inside and outside”; settlement frontiers, for instance, are uncontrolled spaces (Bodley, 1990) where (colonial) powers do not implement government control, allowing private citizens to seek their fortunes with no legal impediments.

In this perspective, the American “Wild West”, where justice was administered at the point of a gun and killing the indigenous people was not considered a crime, can be considered as a “state of exception”. As such, it has been popularized by the Western, a cinematic genre where the act of taking the law into one’s own hands (vigilantism) – under the protection of a far-off State - is usually represented as heroic. By definition, Western movies are located in the Old West, and so they are supposed to circumscribe “the allegory of vigilantism as belonging to an earlier state of society” (Slotkin, 1998: 276). But the structure of the Western and the Frontier Myth can easily metamorphose in more modern scenarios, conflating the heroic ethic of the past with the geopolitical impasses of the present (Slotkin, 1998). Classic war movies such as *Green Berets* and *Rambo* are permeated by a continual confusion of past and present. But also more recent films, such as *Three Kings*, or *Hidalgo. A true story*, can be interpreted as an attempt of translating the “uncontrolled frontier” ‘s ethic into a contemporary setting.

Resources and Geopolitics of the Very Long Run: Russia

Thomas Fogarty, University of Northern Iowa

For more than a thousand years Russia has been a state controlling a very large territory occupied relatively sparsely by a variety of peoples. Its economy has been based on extraction of resources and control of the transportation routes by which those resources are exported. To remain the stable holder/exploiter of its territory Russia has developed over a millennium an increasingly distinctive and pervasive series of political forms, from the non-partible distributed succession of the early eleventh century to the multiply layered social distribution of 'privileges' in the Soviet Union. This paper explores the secular influence of a continuing geopolitical problem on the development of distinctive socio-political institutions within a state.

Visions in the Wilderness – Boundaries and Imaginations in Western Pennsylvania

Michael R. Glass, University of Pittsburgh

This paper traces the development of administrative lines upon a formerly blank map, noting the collisions between scale, power, and identity that influenced the way urban political spaces evolved in western Pennsylvania. The development of western Pennsylvania during the nineteenth century involved the construction and evolution of successive political boundaries and geographical imaginations by communities, entrepreneurs and politicians, and concluded with the ascendance of the City of Pittsburgh as the region's leading industrial city.

The development of western Pennsylvania's political spaces between 1770 and 1870 is relevant to plans for urban political reform in twenty first century cities in North America and Europe. In particular, the inability for political spaces to keep pace with social and technological innovations should provide a cautionary note for theorists and planners who have rediscovered regional governance as a means to combat the 'problems' of urban fragmentation. Moreover, I argue that whereas political geographers often think of borders and boundaries in terms of international relations, the important contributions that geographers have developed at that scale can be readily extended to local boundary studies.

Poverty as an Explanatory Variable in Electoral Geography: The Case of Kenya's 2007 Presidential Election

Ryan Zachary Good, University of Kansas

Political geography has often sought to explain the spatiality of elections by attributing their results to specific variables. In Kenya, there is a history of using ethnicity as such a variable. This paper attempts to debunk this rhetoric by using poverty as an explanatory variable. Using the case study of Kenya's 2007 presidential election, correlations were calculated between numbers of poor individuals in each voting constituency and total votes for each of the top vote receivers. Results show that attributing election results to a single causative factor underplays the complexities of Kenyan politics. The paper closes by positing alternative causes for the high spatial variation in elections in Kenya.

Energy Hungry Europe: Development Projects in South-Central Europe

Anton Gosar, University of Primorska

On May 25th 2005, the inauguration of the Baku – Tbilisi – Ceyhan, British Petroleum oil pipeline was celebrated. The completed project was the first one of many in the future which should support the energy hungry Europe. The perception of the projects is viewed differently by the costumers and suppliers, in particular Russia. The 2008 Russia's invasion into Georgia is perceived by some experts as show of force to threaten such and similar projects not in accordance with plans of this energy giant.

The South Stream is Russia's own gas pipe-line project (Russia – Bulgaria – Italy/Austria) which was initiated as a counterpart to the North Stream (Russia – Germany). The Baltic underwater pipeline is under heavy political pressure from governments of the North. What is unique to the South Stream, the Gazprom's recent project, is the confidence that the project will be short in execution (2013). As an opposite example to the set timeframe one should name EU's project Nabucco. The EU's idea was initiated in 2004 and was aimed to deliver natural gas from the Caspian Sea Region and Central Asia via Turkey to Southern Europe. At the 1st Bled Forum in 2006, a Slovenian government and businessmen meeting place (where Russia was missing), the project was highly praised by European politicians and businessmen, but the miscommunication of participating politicians from the Caucasus and the Caspian region showed what a difficult task this could become. Asked about Nabucco Gazprom's Miller said: "Nabucco - isn't that an opera? ... With a tragic ending?!" (Szabo, 2008).

In the paper other energy projects, like the Volta oil pipe-line and the LNG terminals in South Central Europe will be discussed. Ecologic problems related to the projects, the gas price issue and political tensions related to the Europe-Turkey and Ukraine – Russia relationships will be discussed as well. The 2008/2009 winter has proven how important the energy supply and distribution of Europe is.

Dangerous Climate Change and the Biopolitics of Environmental Security

Kevin Grove, The Ohio State University

While alarmist reports on the future dangers of climate change have garnered increased attention, off the radar a number of policies and programs are already attempting to address the various state and human security threats associated with climate change. One such program is catastrophe insurance, which has received increased attention as a way to secure against the threats natural disasters such as hurricanes pose to economic development, state security, and human welfare. Theoretically, catastrophe insurance will increase the funds available for disaster recovery, make these funds available more rapidly than other forms of disaster financing, and encourage proactive and cost-effective loss mitigation activities. However, insurance is also a "widely underrated" biopolitical technology – that is, a mechanism of government that regulates and produces life – that operates through commodifying and managing contingency. I argue here that the emergence of insurance as a security mechanism reflects the rearticulation of environmental security discourses through biopolitical rationalities of security. I examine the contours of this emerging discourse an analysis of World Bank and UN discourse on insurance and disaster management. Rather than offering security through geopolitical strategies that identify a source of danger and exclude this source, insurance promotes security through the inclusively expanding capacities for self-government and entrepreneurial risk management. Development and security converge in this discourse as the expansion of insurance enrolls a wider swath of the global population in neoliberal social order.

Lessons from Iowa for American Politics

Rex Honey, University of Iowa

Iowa plays a role disproportionate to its size in the American presidential nomination process. Simultaneously it has an electoral redistricting process that, arguably, could serve as a good model for much of the rest of the country. This paper is a defense of what seems inappropriate and an argument for more attention to something that seems worthy of replication.

With regard to the nomination process, the political evolution that has given Iowa and New Hampshire the opening roles, the critics generally focus on two inequities: the inherent unfairness of the same places always being first; and the overly rural, overly white populations of the two states. While each criticism has its merits, arguments are also available to maintain the privileged status of the two states. One is that the so-called "retail politics" possible in these two states allows voters to vet candidates in ways not possible in larger states where less personal, face to face interactions would dominate. In addition, the citizens are in fact practiced at this vetting. Placing candidates in settings where they must respond spontaneously rather than just with scripts allows citizens to gain much deeper insight into the candidates' strengths and weaknesses. In terms of redistricting, Iowa uses a largely apolitical process that not only reduces opportunity for gerrymandering but also reduces incumbent advantages.

Art Versus Geopolitics: Remapping Security at Green Zone/Red Zone

Alan Ingram, University College London

This paper considers convergences between critical analytical strategies in geography and recent artistic interventions in relation to contemporary practices of geopolitics and security. Drawing on the concept of refamiliarization and taking inspiration from recent artistic and curatorial strategies, it advances a reflexive contrapuntal analysis of a particular exhibition, Green Zone/Red Zone at Gemak in the Hague (Netherlands). It is argued that the exhibition is interesting for a number of reasons. Discursively, it was an explicit attempt to go beyond the limits that structure Western experiences of geography, terror and security. It also sought to disrupt the dominant regimes of visibility and control through which the war on terror has been forwarded. Displaying works of varying form and nature, it confronted visitors with a range of embodied and performative representations and experiences. And it brought together a variety of situated knowledges from many places caught up in the war on terror and contemporary securitization, offering rich potential for geographical counterpositions. The paper criticizes certain critiques of 'political art' and proposes an approach that is more geographical and more engaged.

The internal other: a framework for understanding regional exceptionalism and exclusion

Corey Johnson, UNC-Greensboro, and Amanda Coleman, Arkansas State University

Societies have historically sought to spatialize difference 'to other' even within the boundaries of supposedly unified polities. This spatialization of difference is the focus of this paper. Drawing on Previous scholarship on this subject and upon several empirical case studies, we wish to examine the dialectical relationship between two important features of othering. First, there is the assignment of difference based on differential economic performance. Second, there is the assignment of cultural difference. Specifically, we are interested in how the creation of the other in a given context can be a response to anxieties about economic inequalities (i.e. economic othering), and how that in turn relates to particular regions becoming repositories for undesirable national traits (i.e. cultural othering). The processes by which particular places or regions become "othered" are not only interesting in the abstract, but also carry with them material consequences. Building on work by Jansson and others, this paper argues that internal orientalism, while a relatively new theoretical framework, operates and has operated within many different temporal and historical contexts. To demonstrate this, we visit three case studies that examine the formation of internal others across three very different national contexts: (1) the

southern United States in the post-colonial period; (2) the Mezzogiorno in Italy during the transition from feudalism to capitalism; and (3) East Germany in the post-communist era.

Agents of Exception: Border Security and the Marginalization of Muslims in India

Reece Jones, University of Hawai'i-Manoa

The narratives of fear and uncertainty from the discourse of the "global war on terror" have been used by many governments to expand securitization processes. As more aggressive security tactics have been deployed, scholars have sought to understand the changing relationship between individual rights and the authority of sovereign states by drawing on Giorgio Agamben's insights into the state of exception. This paper argues that borderlands are a key site for investigating the connections between the state of exception and securitization processes because political borders are the symbolic markers of the limits of a sovereign's authority. The paper traces the securitization of the borderlands between India and Bangladesh and it describes the increasingly exceptional measures employed by Indian border security forces in order to prevent terrorist threats from entering India. At the intersection of the state of exception in the borderlands and the securitization narratives and practices of the global war on terror, Muslims in both India and Bangladesh are marginalized in the affairs of the state and targeted in state sanctioned violence. The article concludes that borderlands, as an explicitly spatial example of the state of exception, are a crucial site for understanding the decision on the exception and for creating a space for resistance.

Alter-Geopolitics: Another Geopolitics is Possible

Sara Koopman, University of British Columbia

Anti-geopolitics has been an important contribution to critical geopolitics, in that it brings resistance that happens outside of the academy into the mix. Yet one limitation of the term anti-geopolitics, as Paul Routledge uses it (2003), is that it does not necessarily imply a grassroots or progressive challenge, but rather any material or discursive challenge to geopolitical hegemony made "from below", that is, by those who are dominated by it. For understanding the impact of many social movements the term may be both too broad (including all sorts of challenges) and too specific (depending on how one defines dominated and 'from below'). Movements around the world are not only challenging hegemonic geopolitics, but are creating a new geopolitics themselves by engaging in their own grassroots relations of solidarity. The term anti-geopolitics focuses only on resistance, not on building something new. Many movements work not only to resist, but to move bodies on their own, and together create broader security for more bodies in more places. As such, they engage in what could be called feminist geopolitics "on the ground". Jennifer Hyndman defines feminist geopolitics as both a critical approach and a political practice (2001), yet academic feminist geopolitics has rarely looked at the practice as engaged in by social movements. A focus on projects like these could offer to political geography something like what Gibson-Graham have brought to economic geography. This paper argues for a greater academic work on, and collaboration with, these alternative practices that it terms "alter-geopolitics".

The Electoral Cartography of "Voting Shifts" and the 2008 Presidential Election

Kenneth C. Martis, West Virginia University

The 2008 United States presidential election has been heralded by many as historic and trend setting for numerous reasons. Yet, perhaps the greatest stir among political geographers

and electoral cartographers was not the state changes in the Electoral College map, nor the changes in the county majority support map, but a series of maps produced by *The New York Times* depicting county “voting shifts” comparing the 2008 results to those of 2004 (and 2000, 1996 and 1992). These maps, and the cartographic technique, are deserving of attention by electoral geographers. Numerous variables, including a failing economy and an unpopular Middle East war, prompted the national Democratic vote to shift from a 3 point loss (51 to 48%) in 2004 to a 7 point win (53 to 46%) in 2008. In spite of this significant Democratic gain the voting shifts map depicts a significant number of counties (22 percent) voting more Republican. Notably, these counties are mostly in a contiguous region extending through Appalachia and the Upper South. Variables explaining this voting pattern, most importantly race, will be discussed and the possibility of a new voting region hitherto “hidden” in electoral analysis.

Grounding Consociational Democracy

Adam Douglas Moore, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Despite years of research the merits of consociational political institutions in mitigating conflict in ethnically plural states remains contested. One difficulty in assessing consociationalism is that institutional designs adopted in divided states rarely coincide with theoretical prescriptions. Instead bargaining during the constitutional process typically produces a mixed system incorporating consociational, centripetal and majoritarian elements. A second factor complicating analysis of institutional design and ethnic conflict is the impact of territorial autonomy, or federal arrangements. While federalism can be adopted independent of or in conjunction with other institutional prescriptions, consociational federalism is often advocated in cases where ethnic groups are geographically concentrated.

In this paper I focus on this particular combination of consociational power sharing and territorial autonomy. I begin with a brief discussion of consociational advocates’ assumptions about ethnic identity and interaction which shapes their view on the usefulness of federalism in managing ethnic conflict. Next I examine consociational federalism in Bosnia. Bosnia is a near ‘ideal type’ consociational federal regime with internally consistent and interlocking institutional structures. Therefore, in contrast to institutionally mixed states, it is possible to clearly identify the effects of mutually reinforcing consociational institutions closely linked with federal structures and offer a more grounded assessment of power sharing prescriptions. I argue that consociational federalism in Bosnia has not mitigated ethnic conflict. Instead it has accelerated centrifugal pressures and reinforced the political and social division of the country. Consequently it is more accurate to describe the resulting state as a fragmented ethnocracy than consociational democracy.

Understanding the anomalous results in US presidential elections: What happened to the 2004 anomalous counties in 2008?

Richard Morrill, University of Washington; Larry Knopp, University of Minnesota-Duluth; and Michael Brown, University of Washington

We begin with a few maps and discussion of the broad trends from the 2008 results, and how these support or modify the popular dimension of polarization in the US electorate. We first look at the changed margins of victory, and then at patterns of change, counties that became more or less Democratic or Republican or changed between parties.

The main section looks at sets of anomalous counties from 2000-2004, and discusses what happened in 2008. The sets are for New Mexico, Mississippi, North Carolina, all with D-

ward shifts, but then at Kentucky-Tennessee, with increased Republican strength, then back to “bluer” areas: Iowa-Wisconsin-Minnesota, New England, and finally, Montana and Idaho.

Producing geopolitical subjects at a Russian elite university

Martin Muller, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main

How discourses acquire the power to turn people into discursive subjects has been somewhat of a black box in critical geopolitics and critical international studies. This paper demonstrates how discourses produce geopolitical subjects through both language and social practice. For this purpose it makes use of material from ethnographic research at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO), the premier university for educating future Russian elites. With Foucault, MGIMO produces docile bodies and objectifies knowledge through various small disciplinary techniques. It is this disciplining effect which provides for the successful functioning of the hegemonic discourse of a strong Russia at MGIMO. This geopolitical identity of a strong Russia is articulated as a response to the crisis of identity following the dislocation after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Yet, antagonistic forces always block the full realisation of a strong Russia. What lies at the heart of this identity is thus a constitutive lack that makes for a fundamental ambiguity: articulations of a strong Russia are always intertwined with the imminent possibility of a weak Russia.

Potential Implications of Climate Change on Maritime Legal Regimes

Alexander B. Murphy, University of Oregon

Rising sea levels in the wake of climate change have the potential to undermine existing legal regimes that govern control of the world’s oceans and continental shelves. Climate-driven environmental changes are already destabilizing the Arctic and fostering new types of alliances. By altering commonly accepted baselines that are used to determine the right of states to extend control outward from their shores, they also have the potential to undermine fragile accords in the maritime arena, and to create new sources of instability. From a policy perspective, recognizing that rising sea levels will likely undermine existing maritime regimes points to the need for proactive agreements that anticipate changes in the configuration of coastlines. Conceptually, the potential for environmental change to alter jurisdictional arrangements points to the importance of challenging the long-standing tendency to treat the environment as a constant in geopolitical analyses.

The Geopolitics of the Bomb and Megalopolis

Luca Muscara, University of Molise

A young French political geographer working in the United States met a physicist in Princeton in the early years of the Cold War. From their encounter a project later started and after a few years a book was published. Its impact was such that its author is now remembered mostly as an urban geographer. The book was *Megalopolis*. The author was Jean Gottmann. And the atomic scientist was J. Robert Oppenheimer.

Why was the latter so interested in this project? Which political geography was Gottmann theorizing in those same years in France? Which relevant implications could this have for our historical understanding of their ideas?

Recent Trends in Electoral Geography

Nicholas Quinton, Florida State University, and Jonathan Leib, Old Dominion University

In the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, political geography emerged from its 'moribund backwater.' Among the leaders of this resurgence was the subfield of electoral geography, as many of the leading political geographers of the time helped advance the subdiscipline. The rise of electoral geography culminated at the 1988 PGSG pre-conference in Los Angeles and the subsequent publication of papers from that pre-conference (*Developments in Electoral Geography*, edited by R.J. Johnston, Fred Shelley and Peter Taylor). However, criticisms of major strains of work in electoral geography were also on the rise at the time, with such charges of 'methodological obsession', 'rampant empiricism', and a lack of concern for social theory leveled against much of the work in electoral geography. The purpose of this paper is to survey work over the past twenty years in electoral geography to examine 1) whether and to what extent electoral geography has declined as an important subfield of political geography, 2) trends in the topics and places studied within electoral geography, and 3) whether and how geographers have responded to the criticisms and critiques of the subdiscipline.

Political Geography, Political Studies, and Semantic Interoperability Issues in the Scholarly Investigation of "Things like France"

Edward Heath Robinson, University at Buffalo

The term "state" is multiply ambiguous. In some contexts, "state," is used interchangeably with "nation," "country," and even "nation-state" to refer to things like France, Germany, and Spain. In others, "state" is used to refer to things like Alabama, New York, and Missouri. Part of an education in political geography is to acquaint students with the terminology of the discipline. Introductory political geography textbooks define "state" to refer to things like France and often contrast it with "nation" which refers to things like the Kurds. However, political geographers have written many different definitions for "state," and some of them are contradictory. The knowledge engineering community has recognized part of the reason different definitions for "state" exist. Even once "state" is understood to refer to things like France, "state" can still refer to a particular kind of non-physical geopolitical entity or to a particular kind of physical location, depending on the context. This ambiguity accounts for some of the differences between definitions for "state" but this paper extends that disambiguation. It identifies at least six different ways political geographers use the term "state." This has ramifications for commensurability of both intradisciplinary and interdisciplinary research and in semantic interoperability efforts for knowledge engineering. This paper proposes the creation of an ontology for geopolitical information, similar to that used in bioinformatics for biomedical information, to decrease ambiguity in terminology, reduce semantic interoperability with other disciplines, and facilitate information exchange.

Examining the Cultural Politics of Canadian Gemstone Diamonds

Kolson Schlosser, Department of Geology and Geography, Western Kentucky University

The global diamond industry has restructured its supply chains over the past ten years due to its association with violent conflicts in parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. Consequently, the commodity chains that constitute the industry need to be re-examined in terms of the international discourse on 'conflict diamonds,' complete with the cultural, racial and geopolitical overtones motivating and informing these restructurings. This research focuses on Canada for two reasons. First, it is emerging as a prominent supply source for the industry, ranking now as the third largest producer of diamonds by value in the world. Second, Canadian diamonds are marketed as allegedly 'pure' or 'conscience-friendly' alternatives to African conflict diamonds.

A commodity chain analysis focusing on the cultural and representational politics of the Canadian gemstone diamond industry is potentially useful because it helps to connect the global cultures of consumption that sustain the industry with the local cultural politics in the diamond-producing regions of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories and Attawapiskat, Ontario. This also helps destabilize these representations of Canadian diamonds along with the use of 'blood diamonds' discourse as a false measuring stick against which social and environmental justice in northern Canada is measured. This is an important step in securing economic and environmental sustainability in northern Canadian bioregions. This paper focuses primarily on the geography of the Canadian diamond industry and the cultural politics involved, and reflects on the potential of a commodity chain analysis for rethinking connections between race, landscape and consumer cultures.

'One Island, One Team, One Mission': geographies of rendition

James Sidaway, University of Plymouth

This paper interprets the strategies that have been associated with the war on terror against the backdrop of historical geographies of colonial violence and dispossession. It argues that wider anxieties about the sources of danger, criminality, violence and terror have become intertwined. These reveal as much about sensibilities of race, class and security as they do objective dangers. Thus the paper argues that, in the British case, detentions and deportations marked by race are connected with and form part of an overlapping regime of security, immigration and asylum. This is exemplified via an account of the trajectory British sovereign territory of Diego Garcia.

Hispanic Influence in the 2008 Presidential Election

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During the 2008 Democratic Primaries, Hillary Clinton easily won the Southwest states strengthened by the overwhelming support of Hispanic voters. In Texas, along the Rio Grande Valley, Clinton carried most counties by garnering seventy-five percent or more of the vote against Barack Obama. After Clinton conceded the Democratic nomination to Obama, many questioned if the Hispanic vote would carry over for Mr. Obama into the General Election in November. While many counties in the Southwest U.S. with large Hispanic populations have typically shown strong support for Democrats in previous elections, some in the Media speculated the small gains by Republicans in 2000 and 2004, coupled with the defeat of Hilary Clinton, would give the Republican candidate, John McCain, stronger gains in 2008 than previously observed. Using data collected on presidential elections from 1980 to 2008, this paper will examine Hispanic voting trends among these elections. Using a t-mode factor analysis, counties with larger Hispanic populations will be analyzed. The t-mode analysis will identify voting patterns within the study area during the eight elections. For example, this analysis will identify how similar voting patterns were in counties with large Hispanic populations between 2008 and 2004.

The Impact of U.S. Military Presence on Local Politics in Pre-Reversion Okinawa, Japan

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This paper historically explores political competition within a Japanese city that has 'hosted' U.S. military bases and clarifies the impact of U.S. military presence on local politics. Near the end of WWII, U.S. military forces landed on Okinawa, an island prefecture in Japan

and put it under military control until 1972. During this 27-year period, Okinawa was significantly transformed so that its land, people, and economy could accommodate U.S. military bases and personnel. In order to suppress anti-U.S. (leftist) elements and secure their presence, U.S. military forces in Okinawa promoted pro-U.S. (conservative) elements and utilized political cleavages among Okinawans. The formation of Okinawan political parties reflected such cleavages. Political conflicts between pro- and anti-U.S. elements often characterized the politics of local governments that hosted U.S. military bases. Using the documents made by the U.S. Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR), this paper reveals how USCAR intervened in the politics of Koza City in the 1960s in order to undermine the reputation of a leftist mayor. Despite the various efforts of USCAR, this paper points out, anti-U.S. elements persisted in the city leading to the reelection of the mayor. It is concluded that the economic dependence of Okinawans on U.S. military bases did not necessarily mean their political subjection to the U.S. governance as shown in the anti-U.S. riot in 1970.

Geopolitical Factors effective on role and function of the International boundaries with emphasis on the borders Islamic Republic of Iran

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Borders define geographic boundaries of political entities or legal jurisdictions, such as governments and states. and so prevent transfer goods, animals or people illegally. One of the important issues in the international borders, the role and functions of different boundaries and more important than knowing various factors affecting them. Experts design different roles and functions for borders for example, struggle, communication, delimitation, , insulator and etc.

It seems that based on a new approach and a general attitude can divide the most important border functions into two groups defensive-security and communication-commercial .On the other hand, geopolitical factors different Effective on role and function of the borders, including the cases can be as pointed out: The political system of neighboring countries in the two sides of the border, relative position country atmosphere and the type of strategic control over the region, kind of attitude and behavior states towards the border, reserves and natural resources in the border region. This article has tried to analyze efficacy geopolitical factors on the role and function of the international boundaries.