

**International Geographical Union
Commission on Political Geography
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NEWSLETTER 9 (Spring 2008)
Edited by Anton Gosar**

IGU Commission on Political Geography, 2004-2008

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I – Chairman's Column

Dear Commission Members, Friends and Colleagues:

This is my second editing of the CPG IGU Newsletter. I am worried regarding members' interest in participating in sessions at this year's 30th meeting of the IGU in Tunis, Tunisia.

We have received our allotted time for the two sessions we are planning to organize at the 30th Congress of the IGU in Tunis, Tunisia (August 12 – 16, 2008) :

- *GEOPOLITICAL TRENDS IN A 21ST CENTURY GLOBALIZED WORLD; and*
- *CURRENT ISSUES IN POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY*

At present we have 4 commitments (including IGU's vice-president, two members and myself). This is far from the numbers we have expected.

*The low interest is even more surprising due to the fact that our sessions have priority status and are scheduled for Thursday, August 14, 2008 in the morning hours. Once again, **I am asking each one of you to consider participation at the Tunis IGU meeting** (general directions in the Newsletter # 8) and actively contribute to the success of the IGU Tunis 2008 meeting. Forward your abstract not only on the Abstract Submission Form (abstracts@igctunis2008.com), but also as an attachment to me (anton.gosar@guest.arnes.si). Such information would give me grounds for arranging/rearranging the session program.*

*I also would like to announce that we are considering an opening of a **ListServe** of all Political Geography IGU members. Our webmaster Carl Dahlman has offered help in this regard. I am hoping that you will be pleased with information received via this form of communication. To the CPG IGU ListServe we will include E-mails of geographers (known to us) who have in the past published in the field of political geography. We know that there are many more around. We would be pleased if you could forward us those addresses, so we could include their E-mails into our ListServe as well. Our Newsletter will still remain in its form and appearance as before.*

At the beginning of this month (April, 2008) I have participated at a very well organized (Stéphane Rosière; Céline Vacchiani-Marcuzzo) meeting in Reims, France. I was asked to focus in my introductory words on Commission's past achievements and future tasks. I would like to forward my thoughts to the broader audience reading this Newsletter. This is what I had to say in Reims, France:

“The IGU Commission on Political Geography can show-up with extreme professional success it achieved in the past period. Only in the last 4 years of existence 22 meetings, 13 proceedings and around 50 books on several topics of the profession were published by members. Applied knowledge in the political and planning field was transferred. Commission is co-sponsoring several meetings organized by other bodies and has supported active participation of Commission's members on different occasions. This conference on Political Geography is also (morally) cosponsored by the CPG IGU and, to my knowledge, is attended by about 110 interested participants/delegates - despite the fact the organizers announced the meeting as ... “gathering of a small and much closed professional group of people”. The Commission has her own web-page and a relatively good working Steering committee. Therefore, we would like to extend the commission's work as the Commission on Political Geography of the IGU for the next 4 years (2008 – 2012). With this in mind, some of us will participate at the Commission on Political Geography two sessions at the 30th World Congress of the IGU in Tunis in August of this year. We look forward to repeat our success at the regional conference in Tel-Aviv in 2010 and on other events related to the profession and the work we do.

At the dawn of the 21st century, the published works of geographers working in the field of political geography could be positioned within seven research fields. From works being familiar to the author the following themes have been identified:

- Disputes over territory.
- Global economic interplay.
- Relationship between cultures and politics.
- Democratic structures and their spatial implementation.
- Geography of political representation.
- Post-modern developments and threats.
- Critical geopolitics.

The history of research on boundary disputes has a long tradition. Political geographers are concerned over frontiers and resources since the 19th century. This research direction has been in particular a main-stream of research at Durham (United Kingdom), where the respective institution received already both, political and professional recognition for their work. In particular the sea delimitation between states requires well-thought and structured geographical, legal and political inputs. Durham's knowledge was already applied in several international disputes of this sort and tends to be used in the case of the disputed Croatia-Slovenia border as well. Political geographers have also shown interest towards global economic relations. This topic is often related to the issue of wealth and poverty (population vs. financial cores), of the north-south relations and of the interdependency of societies. The discussed topics relate to international migrations (example: Africa – Europe), humanitarian crises and other challenges to the co-existence of the two worlds (first and third). Several authors identified forces behind geopolitical economy, as they have provided strong empirical and theoretical arguments about geopolitical order, geopolitical discourse, territoriality, hegemony, and neoliberalism. On the topic of the relationship between cultures and politics colleagues stress three major themes that have been tackled in the past: 1. the relationship of states to their citizens; 2. the implementation of power by different actors (“geo-policing” – also through video cameras); 3. the impact of spatially outstanding political symbols, including public spaces, monuments, museums and flags

as a domain of power. The topic of “the spatial structures of democracy” is a traditional theme for geographers. Recently it is viewed from two different angles: it relates to the introduction and outcomes of democratic processes in previously non-democratic countries and it deals with structures and outcomes of governance at different levels of policy making in well established democracies. The spatial impacts of skepticism towards international organizations, like NATO and NAFTA, are discussed on the upper level of the scale, whereas the impositions of the Western cultural values on indigenous societies have become the trade-mark of the lower level of regional discussions of the topic. On this level the urban-rural fragile relationship, including environmental threats, are often discussed as well. The studies on the geography of political representation have, as in the discussed topic above, become wide-spread with the diffusion of democracy. Electoral geography, in its spatial and historical perspective, has made several steps forward towards an “applied science”. This is in particular the case on the local and regional level where past studies in political geography have become an important tool in election campaigns. As a result of such studies, electoral districts have been “refurbished” - not only in traditional democracies but in transitional nation-states as well. The political geography of post-modern developments and threats is, in contrary to the above, a very recent subject of the profession. Works on how to manage resources, in particular nature, tend to appear in professional geopolitical literature within the second half of the last decade. Then, they’ve discussed nuclear waste disposal sites, land-use conflicts and the general environmental politics on regional and state level. Migration waves of cheap labor from Africa and Euro-Asia to Europe widened the discussion of the “resource management” even further by tackling human resources as well. Within political geography discussions of the “internet age”, including developments and threats related to the ongoing telecommunication revolution, are still rare. Rare are also discussions on threats related to the global climatic change and their consequences on the “world political map”. The last, but not least important and discussed topic within the profession is traditionally entitled “critical geopolitics”. Related subjects in this part of the profession would normally relate to 1.) criticism of the global political relations, 2.) one’s own state involvement in national and international issues and toward 3.) political decisions nation-state leaders and elites are making. Authors have tend to be skeptical towards orthodox geopolitics in general, and have often questioned the existing distribution and structure of power and knowledge.

The Commission on Political Geography is called to identify the role of political geography in the studies of global, regional and local political and spatially related patterns and to focus on the important issues in the discipline. They were (often) imposed on us through political activities of the elites - like the recently imposed general treat of fear (from terrorism, migrants, crime, climatic disturbances, etc.). The Steering Committee of the Commission is confident that the working agenda for the next decade would include at least three major directions on which members of the Commission would work towards:

- The new geopolitical order;
- The prospects of nation building;
- The threats related to the well being of nations.

The new geopolitical order. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the 9/11 events radically transformed the globe from a roughly bipolar system to one which remains undefined, but weakly unipolar. Many powers declare their adherence to the idea of multipolarity. It is not clear yet whether possible new poles could challenge American hegemony, or will the United States be able to preserve their unique position. The Far Eastern „tigers“, in particular China are challenging it, but the European Union and the politically and militarily re-awakened, energy and resources rich Russia is not far back. Africa is again the target of the named powers' interests – like in regard to resources (energy, minerals and labor - just to name a few) and the populated and developed world is again approached in regard to consume, especially the EU and the US. European challenges and problems on the global scale are to be put forward. Europe at present consists of the nation-states being “in” or “out” - focusing the European Union of 27. The reconciliation of the EU’s enlargement from 15 to 27 nation-states is far from being solved and will take half of a century to be arranged. Further enlargement will be an ongoing process, either because outsiders want in, or because internal dynamics would require adjoining outsiders to join. The Euro-Asian and Mediterranean fragile political and spatial basin is envisioned in this regard. Will Russia be a part of the problem or part of the solution is still not clear!

In the cultural, economic and military domain the European Union supposedly should play a serious role on the global scale. The European civilization identified also as the Western Civilization, with its roots in the Greek, Roman and Christian-Jewish cultural tradition, is undoubtedly a world player. The economy of the EU remains to be among the three leading generators of the world. The economies of countries geographically positioned around the European Union are profoundly affected by its economic policies. But, militarily the EU's impact is much less profound. Militarily the EU is not emancipated. Individual countries are military allies of the US, but Europe as a whole still does not exist militarily and the question is if it ever will. Parallel to this, globalization will involve Europeans in the affairs of others and the other way around. Globalization will give rise to further European place specificity, the need for some authority to use Europe as a subject of territoriality – like demarcation, communication thereof, social control by means of territorial control, etc. New institutions will be needed! “The United States of Europe” have, in 2000 been put forward as a federalist idea by the German foreign minister *Joschka Fischer*. It has been countered immediately, in 2001, by the formula of the “United Europe of States” by the French president during his speech to the German Bundestag. The countries of the European Union have repeatedly made a point of not looking for a shared culture and have stressed the importance of its cultural diversity (“unity in plurality”). Within these parameters political preferences seem to develop in the future. The EU's Lisbon Accords of 2007 are again a small step in that direction. On the other hand, Europe has experienced shockwaves in its territorial order since the 1990's (at present: Kosovo). Namely, nationalism in Europe is still running high - and not only in regard to territory. The EU is (traditionally) protecting its space against the “hordes” of outsiders by defending nation-state's and its regional subsidiaries. Multipolarity on the global scale may result only from conscious efforts of a group of states (European Union). It is least likely that a global multipolarity will emerge in a natural way or by being a consequence of processes of global networks - like decentralization, the growing role of inter-state regional organizations (like in the case of the French president Sarkozy's “Mediterranean Union”). But, one should note that this process is extremely complex. The problem of multipolarity is namely inseparably related with discussions around the actual problems of the Western Balkans (Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the Near East (Palestine/Israel, Afghanistan/Pakistan, Iran/Iraq) where the relationship between the need to defend human rights & democracy and national sovereignty is dealt through the interests of above named world powers and handled much to often through war and peace.

In this frame the Question of World Shatter Belts evolves. *Kelly* (1986) stated that “*a shatter-belt is a geographic region over whose control “great powers” seriously compete. Great powers are having strong interest and opportunities are present for establishing a gateway within region. States in shatter-belt regions are typically described as fragmented in terms of race, language, religion, and nationality, and as relatively underdeveloped economically. States are mutual antagonistic, unable or unwilling to cooperate economically, politically, and militarily. They exhibit substantial conflict within as well.*”. *Hensel&Diehl* (1995) report that since WW2 out of 389 disputes involving armed forces 242 – namely 62% were registered within the world shatter belt regions: 84% of the conflicts were over territory of the neighboring state in which military actions 400.525 people have died (in non-shatter-belt disputes “just” 6.276) and 202 month of war were recorded. There, 88 foreign interventions were put in place, whereas in non-shatter-belt conflicts just 22 interventions from “outsiders” were registered. The Western Balkans, and at present Kosovo, is an area where the interests of “great powers” collide. The South-East Central European shatter-belt is namely outside the dominant area of the competing great powers, but an overlapping arena of competition for centuries. Great powers tend to hold approximately “equal footing” regarding politico-geographic spheres of influence there. A superpower military presence is situated in the region. States evolved from the collapse of Yugoslavia are politically immature due to being young and inexperienced (not established strong governmental structures). States of the region are fragmented – both internally and between one another – in terms of ideology, ethnicity, history and religion.

The prospects of nation building. The founding and specification of the state as national community with respect to other subjects of international law is organically connected with national identity. In terms of critical geopolitics, it involves «high» (official foreign policy acts and documents) and «low» (symbols, school textbooks, political cartoons, etc.) geopolitical representation. They have the common objective to create a cohesive set of national myths and images of national history and national space - in other words, representations about a set of borders, which separate the country not only from its immediate neighbors,

but also from «outer circles of states» - from allies and enemies, which divides “us” and “others”. Border disputes are typical for such territories. “Psychostates” – namely areas, which are not controlled by internationally recognized states – are another topic our interest should be focused at. Political maps are often misleading: they show the territory of each state with the same color, as if all of the territory would be in full control of the state, the central government. But, there are regions outside the reach of their control, which have the status of a "transitional" or "incomplete" statehood. They are, or were, highly involved in local wars, and their unsettled political status makes further conflict possible. «Pseudo-states» survive due to their specific international role (the processing of the flows of transnational speculative capital, the cleaning of «dirty money») and/or the wide use of various technologies of survival (illegal traffic of drugs and weapons). This network of "well organized chaos" is becoming a stable and more and more unavoidable part of the post-modern geopolitical reality, coexisting uneasily with the developed world. The problem of “the fourth world” is also the problem of separatism, of its ethnic, religious, economic, historical and political roots and of its position in the continuum of disintegration movements and in general of the dialectical relation between globalization (integration) and disintegration (Kolossova, 2002).

Threats related to the well being of nations (including inter-cultural relations and the many induced disasters by humans – like terrorism, genocide, poverty and many s. c. natural disasters, including global warming). The pattern of real risks for peace and international security can be fundamentally different from the picture which is being drawn by international think-tanks, by joint commissions and especially by mass media acting to the benefit of the centers of power, occupying a dominant position and sometimes trying to blur the exercise of power. Several major geographical works in the past have noted that wealth and goods are not evenly spread around Europe, nor the world. The levels of poverty are increasing rather than decreasing. Combined with the terrible effect of AIDS, particularly in Africa, as well as growing pressures on the environment, there is no wonder that people rightly question the direction where the world's most powerful nations are taking us if current policies continue. Equality in terms of economic and social rights remains therefore illusive for many. *Anatole France* once sarcastically said “...we will from now on live in a world of perfect justice in which the rich and the poor have the equal right to sleep under the bridge...”. The growing imbalance in global spending is most obvious if spending of world's governments is presented to the public: at the dawn of the new century 900 billion US\$ and more is spent annually on defense and only around 56 billion US\$ on development assistance for the poor. If the priorities were reversed the war against terrorism would be better served. People without hope are easily influenced by the terrorists. In embracing these challenges, the EU, for all its shortcomings, has succeeded in developing an alternative vision of the world economic order. It has become more focused on sustainable development, which is today the real challenge of global governance. This challenge includes that of ensuring North-South convergence, and the protecting of the environment against the pressure of higher world growth. EU should persuade other major players, such as the U.S.A., to join in meeting this challenge. The global warming and the spatial and political impacts of this human/natural disaster could lead to new wars in which focus not oil but water will be.

As we all know, the enlargement of the EU, to include twenty seven countries and four hundred and fifty million people was, in particular:

- The reconciliation between nations and peoples of a continent previously divided and
- The step towards a new identity for Europe in the world.

With the enlargement one should have not only responded to the aspirations of its citizens and economy, but should have provided a leadership role for Europe in addressing global challenges. *Jean Monnet*, the visionary of the founding fathers once said “*European integration is not an end in itself, but a stage on the road to the organized world of tomorrow*”. Slovenia has the opportunity to contribute and shape-up EU's policies. Slovenia's current EU Presidency EU (January– July 2008) is an excellent opportunity to bring, through cross-border regional co-operation, at the regional level an added value to the European integration process. Slovenia's involvement as a 'twinning partner' with the countries of the Western Balkans and the transfer of its expertise in pre-accession work are important. Sadly, Kosovo's independence has numbed Slovenia political action in the region and in general. France's “Mediterranean Union” and Germany's global warming initiative have gained more media and political attention! But, on a broader level,

Slovenia's participation in the increasingly active role of non-governmental organizations could still enhance awareness of the EU's responsibilities in terms of development assistance for the poorest countries. But, more needs to be done by Slovenia together with all its partners in the EU to meet the challenges facing us.

Let me put stress again on one problem Europe is facing: nationalism! In the Croato-Slovene border dispute this becomes increasingly obvious on a nation-state scale. In January 2007 a survey among Croatian readers of the newspaper "Večernji list" was tackling the fragile Slovenian-Croatian political relation. The survey among 13.000 readers showed that Slovenes (9%) are with Serbs (12% - a 4 year war to gain Croatian sovereignty!) and the Montenegrins (6% - attack on Dubrovnik in 1991!) the least welcomed nationals. Bosniaks (29%), Hungarians (26%) and Italians (18%) are in Croatian eyes much better off (Kajzer, 2007). I am convinced that one would get similar results, if the questionnaire would be performed by one of the many Slovenian newspapers. In the interest of both Croatian and Slovenian governments would be that tensions regarding border disputes would finally be resolved and that the economic co-operation be improved. Slovenia, as a member of the European Union and, regarding GDP, twice as strong as Croatia could only gain. Croatia, on the other hand, would find a partner in the EU not only during own efforts to become member, but would also later have a partner, as both countries would lobby for their and other interests common to the region. Let me conclude with a - to my opinion - very appropriate sentence of Madeleine Albright: "*The great divide in the world today is not between east and west or north and south; it is between those who are prisoners of history and those who are determined to shape history.*" (Nijman, 1998). Regarding the Croato-Slovene border dispute, political geographers of both countries have provided reasonable solutions, which were supported by international expertise (see: Klemenčič M. and Gosar A., 2000).

II – Future Events

The International Political Science Association (IPSA) will hold the Montreal 2008 Conference at Concordia University from April 30 to May 2. The theme of the Conference is "New Theoretical and Regional Perspectives." Professors Simon Dalby (Carleton University) and Patricia Martin (Université de Montréal) will give papers as the representatives of the Research Committee 15 (RC15 Political and Cultural Geography) of the IPSA. For more information, please look at: <http://www.montreal2008.info/site/>.

RC15 was reorganized after the IPSA World Congress in Fukuoka, Japan 2006 and is currently co-chaired by Professors Sanjay Chaturvedi (Punjab University) and Takashi Yamazaki (Osaka City University). RC15 will also organize sessions on political geography and geopolitics for the next IPSA World Congress in Santiago, Chile from July 12 to 16 2009. Its theme is "Global Discontent? Dilemmas of Change.". Co-chairs will expect many of steering committee and correspondent members to be able to participate in this exciting event. They will continue to be notified of the Congress through news letters of the IGU Commission of Political Geography. For more information, please look at: <http://www.ipsa.org/> and <http://secure.santiago2009.org/>. RC15 has its own website at: <http://www.cas.muohio.edu/rc-15/index.html>.

Preliminary Program for an **International and Interdisciplinary Conference at the University of Kentucky** 21-24 July 2008 > ENGINEERING EARTH : THE IMPACTS OF MEGAENGINEERING PROJECTS. Co-Organizers: Stanley D. Brunn and Andrew Wood, Department of Geography, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0027, Brunn@uky.edu Andrew.Wood@uky.edu

Invited Discussants:

- Susan Cutter, Carolina Distinguished Professor, Department of Geography, University of South Carolina, Past President of the Association of American Geographers: research interests: environmental hazards, global change, political, gender
- William Graf, Education Professor and Chair, Department of Geography, University of South Carolina, Past President, Association of American Geographers: research interests: river processes, policy for public land and water
- Thomas Wilbanks, Corporate Research Fellow and Leader, Global Change and Developing Country Programs, Environmental Sciences Division, Oak Ridge National Laboratory; Past

President, Association of American Geographers: research interests: energy and environmental policy, developing countries, global change, technology and society, institution-building

First Day

Morning: Session A: The State and Security, and Social Engineering

Co-Organizers Brunn and Wood: "The Concept of Engineering Earth"

Derek Alderman (East Carolina University) and Robert Brown (Appalachian State University) "When a New Deal Is Actually an Old Deal:

The Role of the TVA in Engineering a Jim Crow Southern Landscape"

Nancy Hudson-Rodd (Edith Cowan University, Australia) "High Security Offshore-Island Prison: Constructing Asylum Seekers as Criminals"

Joni Seager (Hunter College) "Comprehending the Incomprehensible: Military Environmental Agency"

Morning: Session B: Security and Social Engineering

Milan Bufon (University of Primorska, Slovenia) and Rado Genorio (Government of Slovenia) "Engineering Borders and Border Landscapes: Effects of the Introduction of the Schengen Regime on the Slovenian Internal and External Boundaries"

Philip Steinberg (Florida State University) "Engineering Beyond the Land-Sea Divide: Three Case Studies from the Outer Limits of the Possible"

Afternoon: Session A: Regional Development and International Actors

Edward Malecki and Michael Ewen (both: Ohio State University) "Megaproject: A Four Decade Perspective of the Gulf Development Model"

Anton Gosar (University of Primorska, Slovenia) "National and Transnational Development Projects in South Central Europe: Implications in EU's Slovenia and the Western Balkans"

Alina Newkirk (Moscow State University) "Character and Scale of the Violations of the Environment as a Result of Man-Caused Influence of a Mining Complex of the Largest Iron Ore Deposit of Russia"

Afternoon: Session B: Regional Development and International Actors

Alexander Diener (Pepperdine University) "Trans-State Road Construction as a Catalyst of Ecological and Social Change: The Case of Mongolia"

Felipe Calvao (University of Chicago) "Extracting Value in a Mining Complex: Diamond Concessions in Angola and the Engineering of Meaning"

Jian Zao and George Zellante (University of South Australia) "Chinese Construction Industry: Governance Structure, Procurement Systems and Culture"

Second Day

Morning: Session A: Megaprojects (Specific)

Ben Smith (Florida International University) "Engineering New Geographies with the Burj Dubai"

Pernilla Ouis (Malmo University, Sweden) "Engineering the Emirates: The Evolution of a New Environment"

James McCarthy "The Social and Environmental Geographies of Boston's "Big Dig""

Izhak Schnell (Tel Aviv University) "We Shall Dress You in a Robe of Cement and Concrete: Comparisons Between Environmental Discourses in Israel on the National Water Carrier (1950s) and the Cross-Israel Highway (1990s)"

Morning: Session B: Megaprojects (Specific)

Philip Micklin (Western Michigan University) "Siberian Water Transfers: "Project of the Century?"

Martin Reuss (Army Corps of Engineers, Retired Senior Historian) "The Lower Mississippi as a Technological System"

Adamu Tanko (Bayero University, Nigeria) "Mega Dams for Irrigation in Nigeria: Nature, Dimensions, and Geographies of Impacts"

Mohammad Eskandari (Clark University) "Sweet for Whom: Sugar Cane

Plantation in Southern Iran and the Experience of Development from Above”

Afternoon: Session A: Communications and Transportation Technologies

Maria Paradiso (University of Sannio, Italy) “Earth Engineering and the Impacts of Megaprojects: Information Geography as an Interface Between Engineering and Geography?”

Barney Warf (University of Kansas) “Engineering Time and Space with the Global Fiber Optics Network”

Jean Paul Rodrigue (Hofstra University) “Mega-Freight Terminals, Mega Logistics, and Mega Flows”

Aharon Kellerman (University of Haifa, Israel) “Geographical Aspects of International Airports: Passengers in an Authoritative Environment”

Afternoon: Session B: Event Planning and New Capitals

Mark Wilson (Michigan State University) “Event Engineering: Urban Planning for Olympics and World’s Fairs”

Ray Bromley “Linking Local Projects into Regional Schemes: The Grand-Scale Landscape Architecture of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. and Benton MacKaye”

Shonin Anacker “Hiding the Public in Plain Sight: State Construction and the Astana Project”

Kenneth Corey (Michigan State University) “Planning and Implementing Capital Cities: Lessons and Prospects for Intelligent Development”

Third Day

Morning: Session A: Religion, Social Order and Social Justice

Samuel Otterstrom and Richard Jackson (Brigham Young University) “The State of Deseret: The Creation of the Mormon Landscape in the Western United States”

Wil Holden (University of Calgary) “Ecclesial Opposition to Nonferrous Metals Mining to Guatemala and the Philippines: Neoliberalism Encounters the Church of the Poor”

Kunta Lahiri-Dutt (Australian National University, Canberra) “Gendering the Mega-Project of Mining: Sustaining the Livelihoods of Women and Men in Mining Regions”

Morning: Session B: Environment and Sustainability Issues

Graeme Hugo (University of Adelaide, Australia), Yan Tan (Flinders University, Australia) and Yong Chen (Sichuan University, China) “Consequences of Rural Migrants Displaced by the Three Gorges Dam: A Case Study of Rural Resettlers in Sichuan Province”

Markku Tykkyläinen and Olli Lehtonen (University of Joensuu, Finland) “Transition to High-End Wood Processing and Wood Energy Production and Its Socio-Spatial Implications in Rural Resource Based Economics”

Nigel Smith (University of Florida) and Henrique dos Santos Pereira (University of the Amazonas) “Agricultural History of the Amazon Floodplain: Lessons for Development and Conservation”

Stanley Trimble (University of California, Los Angeles) and Edyta Zygmunt (University of Silesia, Poland) “Megaengineering of the Environment: Effects of Modern Soil Conservation Measures on Two Regions of the Humid United States”

Afternoon: Session A

Peter Hugill (Texas A & M University) “Re-Making America, Soil Science, Earth Moving, Highways and Dams”

Ernie Yanarella and Christopher Rice (both: University of Kentucky) “Modernist Hubris, Ecological Apocalypse and Scientific-Technological Salvation in Kim Stanley Robinson’s Global Warming Trilogy; The Specter of Terraforming”

Afternoon: Session B

Concluding Remarks (publication, follow up conference, listserv, etc.)

The Department of Political Geography and Regional Studies, University of Lodz is organising the 11th 'Lodz' International Political Geography Conference that will be held on September 17-19, 2008. The subject of the conference is: *Historical Regions Divided by the Borders*. The conference organizers intend to discuss the following issues:

- historical regions divided by the borders and processes of European integration,
- Europe of homelands or Europe of regions? Dilemmas of EU regional policy,
- Administrative or historical-cultural region? The past of regions in the united Europe
- Divided historical regions in the world
- The role of EU regional policy in persistence of interregional ties
- The cultural heritage of historical regions

Traditionally, the theme of the conference is connected with the place where it is held. This time it will be Świnoujście on Usedom Island on the extremely north-west part of Poland in historical region of Pomerania divided by Polish-German border. As the organisers wish to print a pre-conference publication (including conference programme, guide to excursions, and abstracts of all papers) the participants are kindly requested to send one-page abstracts of their contributions in English till 30th of April, 2008.

All papers presented at the conference and accepted by editors will be published in the next volume of *Region and Regionalism* No. 9. A complete version of the paper (not exceeding 8 pages including figures and bibliography) recorded on a floppy disc or CD using Word for Windows text editor should be delivered to the conference secretary during the event. The organizers assure a bus transportation from Lodz to the place of the conference on 16th of September, 2008 and back to Lodz on 20th of September, after the breakfast. The next circular will include detailed instructions for those who would prefer to get to the proceedings place on their own. The conference fee is 300 EUR, to be paid by transfer to Bank PKO S.A. II O/Łódź, Uniwersytet Łódzki 14 1240 3028 1111 0010 0434 7782 (Political Geography) till 30th of April, 2008, or directly before the conference. The fee covers full board (starting from dinner on 16th of September to breakfast on 20th of September) and hotel accommodation in double rooms (single rooms available with 10 EUR extra charge per night), conference materials, publication of papers, study tours, and a party. In case of a withdrawal from the conference, the organisers should be notified until 1st of August, 2008. Otherwise the possible expenses will be charged to the participant.

Organizing Committee: Prof. Marek Koter – University of Lodz, Honorary Chairman; Prof. Krystian Heffner – Silesian Institute in Opole; Prof. Marek Sobczykński – University of Lodz & Polish Geographical Society.

III – Past Events

Stéphane Rosière is reporting on the Reims International Conference of Political geography (April 2 - 4th 2008). Following its tradition in theoretical research in geography, the geography department of the University of Reims organized an international conference of political geography (*Space of politics: concepts and scales*) on April 2 - 4th 2008 under the aegis of International Geography Union (represented by Vladimir Kolossov, Vice-President of the IGU and Anton Gosar, president of the IGU's Commission on Political Geography, and the French political geography and geopolitics committee of the UGI (represented by President Stéphane Rosière). The scientific committee of the conference and the Reims organization committee intended to set up a conference dealing with the different concepts and scales mobilized to think the "space of politics". More precisely, the organization committee aimed at:

- Giving an updated overview of the concepts, themes and scales mobilizing geographers and all academics dealing with political space. These concepts and themes are not necessarily new, but most of them have been profoundly transformed in the course of the twentieth century.
- Underlining the hiatus between the relatively marginal position of the academic field within society and the increasing demand for information and analytical skills regarding the political aspects of space.
- Bringing together scientists (geographers or not) concerned with the themes researched in political geography and geopolitics and promoting professional connections between academics.

The conference brought together around one hundred scholars and researchers (from PhD students to retired scholars), mostly geographers, coming from a dozen of countries. France, United States, United Kingdom, Brazil and Switzerland were, respectively, the most represented countries. The meeting was divided into two plenary sessions (introduction and conclusion, with simultaneous translation) and 15 workshops welcoming papers in French or English. The 77 communications finally held (26 in English or 33%) underlined the huge variety of themes of the contemporaneous political geography (and geopolitics) deeply reviewed for a century. The emergence of “new” themes (globalization, ecology, gender, terrorism, etc.) did not eclipse older themes (territory, sovereignty, power). At the contrary, the “old” and “new” concepts interpenetrate. Following the main line of the conference, many speakers used a fruitful inter-scalar approach. Cultural differences between francophone or English “schools” were sensible. Reflecting the transformation of the administrative grid (with the creation of “communautés” regrouping the 36,000 communes of the French territory), French more abundantly spoke about the territory’s transformation (the European context of creation of new states explain this tropism), the election analysis was more frequent among French too. At the opposite representations of space and strategies of agencies were more representative of Anglo-Saxons. On a human point of view the meeting was successful, organizers and participants congratulated each other on the opportunity to bring together the community of “political space scholars”, hoping that more regular theoretical conferences of political geography may be hold in the future.

IV – Experience and Work of Members

Professor Sanjay Chaturvedi was elected as a Co-Chair of Research Committee 15 (Political and Cultural Geography) of International Political Science Association (IPSA), in March 2007, along with Takashi Yamazaki of Osaka University. Further details about the objectives of RC 15 and the composition of its Board of Officials can be found on the website: <http://www.cas.muohio.edu/rc-15/index.html> and colleagues are requested to suggest possible ways and means of ensuring active collaboration between RC 15 of IPSA and the IGU Commission on Political Geography, including organizing joint conferences as well as panels at the next IPSA Congress in Santiago, Chile, in July 2009.

Professor Sanjay Chaturvedi is pleased to inform/update colleagues on the activities of the Indian Ocean Research Group (IORG), Inc. The principal objective of the IORG is to act as a facilitator and coordinator of social-science policy-oriented dialogue and research on the nature and impact of the human uses of the Indian Ocean, with the overall objective of realizing peace, co-operation and ecologically sustainable development in the Indian Ocean region. The Group will also: *encourage* research networking, including distance education, among institutions of higher learning, *facilitate* dialogue between cultures and civilizations in the region, *act* as a resource base of data and information on the region, *provide* consultancy services to interested government agencies and business groups, *help* facilitate intra-regional investment and trade, and *initiate* a policy-oriented dialogue, in the true spirit of partnership, among governments, industries, NGOs and communities, towards realizing a shared, peaceful, stable and prosperous future for the Indian Ocean region. The IORG aims at holding regular meetings on key integrative themes at different locations around the Indian Ocean Rim in collaboration with local host institutions. Launched at Panjab University in Chandigarh (India) in November 2002, the IORG held its second meeting in Tehran in February 2004 on the theme of ‘Energy Security and the Indian Ocean’, in association with the Iranian Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS). The Third meeting of the IORG was held in Kuala Lumpur in July 2005 on the theme of ‘Sea Lane Security in the Indian Ocean’, in association with Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA), and the Fourth at the Sultanate of Oman in February 2007, in association with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. Out of every meeting, the IORG aims at publishing at least one book which summarizes its main research findings to be launched at the subsequent meeting. The IORG is most pleased and proud to announce its third book entitled, ‘The Security of the Sea Lanes of Communication in the Indian Ocean’, published by the Maritime Institute of Malaysia. The IORG also publishes a biannual journal called *Indian Ocean Survey*. The details of the IORG objectives, activities and publications can be found on its website: www.iorgroup.org and colleagues are requested to feel free to seek more information if they so desire.

Professor David Newman has spent much of the past two years on an extended Sabbatical leave in the UK, part of the time as Leverhulme Fellow at the University of Bristol and, more recently, as a visiting

scholar at Queen Mary College, University of London. During that period he has completed a manuscript on the role of borders in the contemporary world, entitled *Borders in a Borderless World*. As part of his work with the more practical elements of ethno-territorial conflicts, especially in the Middle East, Newman has been looking at the role of academic disciplines, such as Geography, History and Archaeology, in the formation of national identities and the way in which these disciplines are used by competing national groups to lay claim over territory. This is reflected in the way in which the research agendas are formed, the nature of alternative and exclusive Israeli and Palestinian narratives and the ways in which these are contested in the academic literature. This work is reflected in a special issue of the journal *Israel Studies*, edited by Newman, and devoted to the geographical and territorial dimensions of Israeli society and politics, as well as a chapter, entitled *The Formation of National Identity in Israel/Palestine: the Construction of Spatial Knowledge and Contested Territorial Narratives* shortly to be published in a book edited by Nikki Slocum at the United Nations University, entitled *How Identity Constructions Promote Peace or Conflict*.

V – Suggested Readings in Political Geography

Elena Dell’Agnese prepared a short list of Italian political geographers’ 2007 publications:

- Boria E., *Cartografia e potere*, UTET, Torino, 2007.
- Campione G., *Narrazioni di geografia politica. Pratiche comunicative e produzione di senso*, Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli, CZ, 2007.
- Campione G., *La variabile cinese nella geopolitica europea*, in Palagiano C. e al., eds., *L’impresa di Marco Polo*, TIELLEMEDIA, Roma 2007.
- Campione G., *Lo scambio tra elargizione e consenso*, in Mafai S., ed., *Riflessioni sulla storia della Sicilia dal dopoguerra ad oggi*, Salvatore Sciascia edit., Caltanissetta, 2007.
- Campione G., *Iconologie Mediterranee*, in Pagnini M.P., Scaini M., *Le metafore del Mediterraneo*, EUT, Università di Trieste, 2007.
- Cerreti C. and Fusco N., *Geografia e minoranze*, Carocci, Roma, 2007.
- Cerreti C., *La toponomastica della sovranità. Evidenze e ipotesi sul fondamento della territorialità politica attraverso l’analisi di relitti toponimici*, *Geostorie*, 2007, 1.
- Clegg J. e Turco A., eds., *Dire la guerra, fare la guerra*, Diabasis, Reggio Emilia, 2007.
- Coppola P. (con F. Amato e A. Lamberti), *Popolazione e quadri sociali*, in AA.VV., *Due secoli della Provincia – Due secoli nella Provincia*, (Napoli, settembre-novembre 2007), Paparo ed., Napoli, 2007.
- dell’Agnese E., *Tu vuo’ fa l’americano: la costruzione della mascolinità nella geopolitica popolare italiana*, in dell’Agnese E. and Ruspini E., eds., *Mascolinità all’italiana*, Utet libreria, Torino, 2007.
- dell’Agnese E., *La mascolinità del cowboy nel cinema western americano tra iconografia nazionale e identificazione narcisistica*, in G. Grossi and E. Ruspini, eds., *Ofelia e Parsifal. Modelli e differenze di genere nel mondo dei media*, Cortina, Milano, 2007.
- dell’Agnese E., and Vitale T., *Rom e Sinti: una galassia di minoranze senza territorio*, in Amiotti G. and Rosina A., eds., *Identità e integrazione. Passato e presente delle minoranze nell’Europa mediterranea*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2007.
- Jelen I., *La società civile nel Kazakistan della transizione post sovietica. Unica politica possibile o ultima ideologia rimasta?*, *Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana*, 2007, 2.
- Jelen I., Croci C., eds., *Snapshots from the globalizing world. Working Papers from the International Summer School Borders3 in Political and Economic Geography*, 3. Edition, Tarvisio, August 28th - September 2nd, 2007, Editoriale Università Trieste.
- Lizza G., *Geopolitica delle prossime sfide*, in stampa.
- Zarrilli L., *Lifescapes. Culture Paesaggi Identità*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2007.

Luca Muscarà offered the following list of literature to be considered:

- Jean Gottmann, *La politique des Etats et leur géographie*, Paris: CTHS, 264+XXI p., ISBN 978-2-7355-0624-8. (New French edition of Gottmann’s seminal work of on political geography by the French Comité de Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques.)

- L'orbite de la géographie de Jean Gottmann, (La Géographie, 1523bis - Hors Série) Paris: Société de Géographie, 312 p., ISSN 1627-4911. (The proceedings of the international meeting held in Paris on March 29/30, 2005 with abstracts in French, English and Italian, and a section on Gottmann's political geography.)
- Limes, Rivista Italiana di Geopolitica. (Rome, edited by Lucio Caracciolo). A personal sampling: n°1 – 2008: Vulcano pakistano (Geopolitics of Pakistan); n°6 - 2007: Il clima dell'energia (Geopolitics of Energy and Environment); n°4 - 2007: Il mondo in casa (Geopolitics of Diasporas and Migrations); n°1 - 2007: L'America in panne (US Geopolitics, with a section on the Horn of Africa).

Clark Archer informed us of the:

- J. Clark Archer, Stephen J. Lavin, Kenneth C. Martis and Fred M. Shelley, Historical Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections, 1788-2004 Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2006 ISBN-10: 1-56802-955-1 (The Atlas has received several awards, including "Best Single Volume Reference in Humanities and Social Sciences for 2006" from the Professional and Scholarly Publishing Division of the Association of American Publishers.) More information can be found at: www.cqpress.com

Sanjay Chaturvedi has informed us about his publishing:

- Chaturvedi, S. and Painter, J. "Whose World? Whose Order? Spatiality, Geopolitics and the Limits of the New World Order", Cooperation and Conflict (Sage) Vol. 42, No. 4, December 2007.
- Chaturvedi, S. SECURITY OF THE SEALANES OF COMMUNICATION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION (Kuala Lumpur: Maritime Institute of Malaysia, co-edited with Dennis Rumley and Mat Taib). 2008
- Chaturvedi, S. PARTITIONS: Reshaping Minds and States (London: Frank Cass/Routledge Series in Geopolitics, (co-authored with Stefano Bianchini, Rada Ivekovic, and Ranabir Samaddar) 2005. South Asian edition brought out in 2007.
- Chaturvedi, S. "Securing Energy Flows: Social Constructions of the Indian-Ocean Space" in V.R. Raghavan and W. Lawrence S. Prabhakar (eds.) Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean Region: Critical Issues in Debate, New Delhi: Tata McGraw Hill, 2008.
- Chaturvedi, S. "Autonomous Voices of the First Nations" in Paula Banerjee and Samir Kumar Das (eds.) Autonomy Beyond Kant and Hermeneutics, London: Anthem Press, 2007.
- Chaturvedi, S. "Diaspora in India's Geopolitical Visions: Linkages, Categories and Contestations", in Wirsing, R.G. and Azizian, R. M. (ed.) Ethnic Diasporas and Great Power Strategies in Asia", New Delhi: India Research Press. 2007.
- Chaturvedi, S. "India's Quest for Strategic Space in the 'New' International Order: Locations, (Re)Orientations and Opportunities", in Purnendra Jain (ed.) Asia-Pacific and New International Order (New York: Nova Science Publishers), 2006.

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