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International Geographical Union Commission on the World Political Map

NEWSLETTER

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Letter from the Chair

Dear friends and colleagues,

The XXIX International Geographical Congress (IGC) is held in the symbolic year – 2000. It stimulates to sum up some of the results of the XX century and to carefully look in the future.

As most of you already know, the IGU Executive has elaborated the plans of its restructuring. Its objective is to make IGU more flexible, to focus the efforts of its branches on main fundamental and practical problems, and to facilitate the participation of the geographical community in large international programmes. The IGU Executive believes that the number of Commissions and Study Groups is too extensive, encourages co-operation between them and expect that that they will merge into new, larger and more influential units, which will be able to find sufficient funding for their actions.

However, the IGU restructuring will be gradual, and it is supposed that Commissions and Study Groups can make their further plans during the period of transition between two nearest IGC, i.e. until the 2004 Congress in Glasgow. Therefore, each Commission can apply for the extension of its mandate for 2000-2004 under the condition that its activities concern a fundamental field or a discipline. We are deeply convinced that political geography is a fundamental, well-established and recognised academic discipline and that its development plays an important role for the whole system of geographical knowledge and for its relations with other social sciences. Political geography is taught in dozens of countries, and several hundreds of geographers have recently confirmed their intention to remain associated with the activities of our Commission. Together with "Political Geography" and some other journals, the IGU Commission on the World Political Map is the major international forum for all those who are interested in this field. On behalf of the Commission and according to the opinion shared by most of us, I have asked the IGU Executive to extend our mandate for 2000-2004. But, anyway, we have to look for supplementary funding of our meetings and activities and probably, to consider in co-operation with the Commission on Public Administration a series of measures aimed to their institutionalisation in the future. We applied to the Rockefeller Foundation for funding of one of our future conferences. Though this first experience was not successful, we certainly have to continue such attempts, and I believe that the members of Commission should prepare them together.

Our Commission is called to identify the role of political geography in the studies of global, regional and local political patterns and to focus on the most important issues in our discipline. Let me stress some of them.

First, the problem of multipolarity in the new geopolitical order. The collapse of the Soviet Union 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 the United States are able to preserve their unique position; whether multipolarity can result from conscious efforts of a state or of a group of states, or it will emerge in a natural way, and will be a consequence of processes of global networks' decentralisation, of the growing role of inter-state regional organisations (such as NAFTA, MERCOSUR or NATO) or non-localised governmental and non-governmental organisations. The problem of multipolarity is inseparably related with discussions around the conflict in Kosovo, in particular, the relationship between the need to defend human rights and democracy and national sovereignty, between the interests of world powers and issues of war and peace.

Second, the problem of the relationship between the real and the imagined world. I mean that 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 centres of power occupying a dominant position and sometime trying to blur the exercise of power.

Third, problems and prospects of nation building in relation with the new geopolitical order. 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 representations. 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 neighbours, but also from «outer circles of states» - from allies and enemies, which divides «us» and «others».

Fourth, the emergence of the so called «fourth world», i.e. of the network of islands of the territories which are not controlled by internationally recognised states. Usual political maps are misleading: they show the territory of each state with the same colour, if all of them would fully control it. The regions outside the reach of their central states, which have created "transitional" or "incomplete" statehood, can be called «pseudo-states». 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 organised chaos" is becoming a stable and more and more unavoidable part of the post-modern geopolitical reality, coexisting uneasily with the developed world. Moreover, it has some appendices inside the settled world, for example, in urban enclaves. 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 globalisation (integration) and disintegration.

As you will see from this Newsletter, the programme of our activity for 2000 is full of promising events. I wish you all the best and hope to see you at our meetings or to hear from you.

Professor Vladimir Kolosov

Chair

IGU Commission on the World Political Map

Future Events

1. The International Conference «Centrality and the World-System

Bordeaux, France, April 26-28, 2000.

IGU Commission on the World Political Map, Laboratory "Territoriality and Identity in Europe", University Michel Montaigne – Bordeaux-3 and National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), France.

Topics to discuss:

1. The Pluricentrality Approach

New universalist concepts of centrality and new world visions. An instance of this is the centre-periphery paradigm which describes the world as an organised set of hegemonic, central, peripheral and semi-peripheral systems. There is also the territory-network pair taken as spatial categories by some specialists, political categories by others and even as vectors for ideological debate.

2. The Intercentrality Approach

The many-centred UNO model may well survive but become devoid of its substance whereas two models of radical intercentrality are emerging: arguably intergovernmental links may intensify and the business world embark on a transnational merger binge. Conceivably there will be more and more inter-state mediation either on a regional basis like the MERCOSUR or NATO, or in a non-localised context like the G7. The globalisation of firms is seen as following the same evolution as the global economy is being infiltrated by secret societies, be they mafia or otherwise, and as the major non-governmental organisations are taking over public interest interventions hitherto undertaken by individual states. Therefore the intercentralisation of the world would lead to the making of a structurally mixed world.

3. The Ultracentrality Approach

Does power become concentrated as it is globalised ? This is the central question which leads us to examine some of the changes which accompany the major trends in the redistribution of power which can be observed either from a geographical or a geopolitical viewpoint, or through the social divides as they appear within a continent or even worldwide.

For those who wish to stay on (Saturday 29th), a visit will be organised into the Graves vineyards, the Sauternes region, Montesquieu's castle, and participants will raise their glasses to L'Esprit des Lois.

Secretariat: Valérie Alfaut, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme d'Aquitaine, 33405 Talence Cedex, France. Tel. 33 5 56 84 68 01; fax: 33 5 56 84 45 61. Email: euridis@msha.u-bordeaux.fr. See: www-tide.montaigne.u-bordeaux.fr.

Deadline for all papers: April 3, 2000.

2. International Conference «Understanding the Place - Looking Ahead

Gorizia, Italy, and Portorož - Portorose, Slovenia. May 24 - 27, 2000.

The Conference themes :

- current European dimensions, patterns and trends in political geography, including the enlargement of the European Union and NATO;
- trends in world population with focus on migrations in Europe;
- current and likely future trends and developments in East/Central Europe, including the Balkans;
- the cross-border cooperation, in particular in the frame of Euro-Regions;
- the post-communist space and the democracy implementation through voting preferences;

- minority and majority territorial identity;
- the environment in which political geography operates in research and in practice on the micro scale;
- the political geography contents as part of tourism geography;
- past, present and future in political geography research.

In the framework of the Conference a special workshop on «Borders and Border Communities in the New Millennium» will be organized in cooperation with the Science and Research Centre of the Republic of Slovenia, Koper. Time and location: Portorož – Portorose, Friday, May 26, 2000, 15:00 - 19:00. Contact : Dr. Milan Bufon, Head of the Research Group (Email : milan.bufon@zrs-kp.si).

The conference is taking place in a beautiful part of the Mediterranean Europe. In this century it all began with the Hemingway's battlefield of Caporetto and Isonzo (described in Farewell Arms), continued with Churchill's invention of the term Iron Curtain, with reference to Trieste, and recently exploded with the break-up of Yugoslavia. Portorož-Portorose is an internationally known holiday center and climatic health seaside resort. The town of Gorizia has 100.000 inhabitants, is located on the Italo-Slovenian border in Italy, 44 kilometers to the north of the port of Trieste.

Organizers suggest also the six-days post-conference excursion «The Recovery of the Balkans» (Portorož-Portorose - Ljubljana - Zagreb – Dubrovnik - Cavtat - Medjugorje - Mostar – Sarajevo - Pale - Sutjeska - Trebinje - Dubrovnik - Zagreb - Ljubljana – Trieste).

Registration. The fee is inclusive of 1) participation in all meetings and other conference activities (receptions on May 24 and 25; conference dinner on May 26; coffee and lunch on May 24, 25, 26 and 27; excursion - transportation/guiding/entrance fee - on May 25; fieldwork - transportation/guiding - on May 26); 2) guide-book on the conference and the region with the inclusion of the abstracts of papers presented; 3) copy of the conference proceedings. Registration form received with payment before March 30, 2000 is EUR 75, (\$75); after March 30, 2000 - EUR 125, (\$125). An accompanying person's fee of EUR 50 (\$50).

For further information, please, contact Dr. Anton Gosar, Conference Administrator, Department of Geography, College of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Aškerčeva cesta 2, SI - 1001 LJUBLJANA, Slovenia, Tel.: ** 386 61 1769 241; Facsimile: ** 386 61 1259 337; Email: anton.gosar@guest.arnes.si, or Dr. Maria Paola Pagnini, Co-organizer, Department of Political Sciences, University of Trieste, Piazzale Europa 1, I - 34100 TRIESTE, Italy, Tel.: ** 3904081599100; Fax: **39040577867; Email: pagnini@univ.trieste.it

3. The XXIX International Geographical Congress

Seoul, August 14-18, 2000

The IGU Commission on the World Political Map Conference: "Changing Political Mosaics of the World: Processes of Integration and Disintegration". Kanghwa, August 8-13, 2000.

Part 1: States and Territories: Processes of Integration and Disintegration

August 8: Processes of Integration

Session 1 (Morning)

a. Westphalian and Post-Westphalian states and territories

- b. Economic integration and collective security
- c. Cross-border cooperation

Session 2 (Afternoon)

- a. Small states and security in the globalizing world
- b. Foreign aid and peace-making
- c. Globalisation and glocalisation

Reception: Kanghwa County

August 9: Processes of Disintegration

Session 3 (Morning)

- a. The rise and demise of empires in the postmodern world
- b. Self-proclaimed states and uncontrolled territories in the globalizing world
- c. International community and territorial engineering: global and local issues
- d. Territories under international protectorate
- e. Dependence and underdevelopment in the Third World

Session 4 (Afternoon)

- a. Nationalism and ethnic separatism
- b. Political regionalism and self-determination
- c. Devolution of internal power and decline of sovereignty

August 10 and 11: Field trip to a Korean border region

Kanghwa-Paju-Panmunjom-Chorwon/-Dongduchon-Euijongbu-Kanghwa

Reception: Euijongbu City

Part 2: Asia-Pacific Rim in the Postmodern World

August 12: Conflict and Cooperation

Session 5 (Morning): Conflict

- a. The end of Asia-Pacific century?
- b. Geopolitical order in East Asia: the balance of power and security
- c. Territorial dispute and minority politics
- d. Conflict in the Korean peninsula

Session 6 (Afternoon): Cooperation

- a. Transformation of political and economic systems
- b. Transnational economic cooperation

Session 7 (Evening)

Public Session: Living with Diversity in the Asia-Pacific Rim

Tea Party: Kanghwa County

August 13: Round Trip in Kanghwa Island (Korean historical sites).

Registration: the full conference registration fee is \$350 (students and accompanying persons: \$ 250; the deadline of payment is May 1). It includes: 1) conference abstracts and field trip guidebook; 2) accommodation (Kanghwa, Chorwon); 3) meals and

refreshments; 4) local transportation; 5) two-days field trip to the Korean border region (theme: "Civilian life in the military controlled area"); 6) half-day round trip in the Kanghwa Island.

Local organizer: Prof. Jai-Han Kim, Department of Geography Education, Chongju University, 360-764, Republic of Korea. Fax: 82 431 229 8582. Email: zhkim@chongju.ac.kr.

Other Events

The Department of Political Geography and Regional Studies of the University of Lodz, Poland, will be organizing on 13-15 September 2000 the 7th "Lodz" International Political Geography Conference. The topic of the conference is "*Changing Role of Border Areas and Regional Policies*". The following problems will be discussed: 1) state policy in border zones; 2) co-operation along the external borders of the European Community; 3) local transborder initiatives; 4) cultural dimension of borderlands; 5) borderlands of the former socialist countries; 6) role of borderlands in developing an international co-operation.

Deadline: one-page abstract before 30 April 2000 in English. Fee: USD 250, including full board and accommodation, conference materials, publication of papers, study tours, and party. Contact: Dr. Marek Sobczynski, Department of Political Geography and Regional Studies of the University of Lodz, Collegium Geographicum, ul. Kopcinskiego, 31, PL-90-142 Lodz, Poland. Email: marsob@krysia.uni.lodz.pl.

Past Events

1. The International Interdisciplinary Conference "Challenging the American Century"

Loughborough, England, 1999, July 1-4. Organizers: Professors Peter Taylor and David Slater. Sponsored by IGU WPM Commission. Participants: about 50 from 10 countries.

This Conference aimed to challenge the mosaic of meaning that surrounds traditional notions of the American Century. Viewed as the projection of a globalizing power, resistance to Americanization was analyzed, especially in the cultural field (in France, Latin America, and in other parts of the world), as well as the emergence of alternative sources of global vision, and the configuration of hybrid cultures that go beyond the universalizing project of American power. The posited decline of US hegemony, and considerations of the future destiny and place of the USA in the new century was discussed. Several papers were devoted to a debate on the relations between the domestic and foreign dimensions of Americanization, on the intersections between the development of social and economic ideas and strategies within and their subsequent export to other societies of the modern world.

2. The International Conference "Political Landscapes: On the Threshold of 21st Century and Emerging Patterns"

Chandigarh, India, 1999, December 13 -15. Organizer: a Commission's full member Professor S.Mehta. Panjab University. Sponsored by IGU WPM Commission.

Theoretical, Conceptual and Methodological issues relating to political landscapes were tackled at the Conference. But its major topic were political landscapes in the world

periphery, in particular, the role of technologies of survival (illegal traffic of weapons, drugs, money laundering, transnational speculative capital, etc.). A part of communications were devoted to problems and prospects of nation building, to the interaction of the state with minority communities and to regional/territorial policies in multiethnic situations, especially in the areas of separatist movements. A great attention was paid to stability of states in the context of globalisation and internationalization. There was an attempt to estimate the main features of the new geopolitical world order and, in particular, the new role of its different elements, such as international aid, the UN systems and its regional Commissions, old and new global actors – inter-governmental organisations (Commonwealth, French Community, OPEC, etc.).

Other Past Events

The international multi-disciplinary conference “*Boundaries and Borders in a Globalized World: New Opportunities or Old Problems?*” Vancouver, BC, Canada, August 25-28, 1999. Organized by the International Boundaries Research Unit (IBRU) at the University of Durham, and by the University College of Cariboo, Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia.

On publications and further activities of IBRU contact: Michelle Speak, IBRU, University of Durham, Suite 3P, Mountjoy Research Centre, Durham DH1 3UR, UK. Email: Michelle.Speak@durham.ac.uk.

Publications

Resulting from WPM Commission activities since 1996.

Newman, D., ed. *Boundaries, Territories and Postmodernity*. London: Frank Cass, 1999.

Geopolitics, 1999, vol. 3 (3). The special issue “Nationalism and Identities in a Globalised World”.

Geography and Nationalism, Geography Research Forum (Beer Sheva, Israel), 1999, vol.19.

Political Geography, 1999 The special issue.

Geopolitics, 2000, vol. 4 (1). The special issue: “Geopolitics and Globalization” (Kliot, N. and D. Newman, eds.).

Geopolitics, 2000, vol. 4 (2). The special issue: “Boundaries in a Globalized World” (Kliot, N. and D. Newman, eds.).

Geopolitics at the End of the 20th Century: the Changing World Political Map. Kliot, N. and D. Newman, eds. London: Frank Cass, 2000 (forthcoming).

GeoJournal. The special issue “Territorial Change and National Identities in Eastern and Western Europe”. Pringle, D. guest ed., 2000, vol.46 (accepted in October 1999, forthcoming).

Noroi. The special issue “Thinking the Atlantic in Geography”. Sanguin, A.-L., guest ed., 2000, forthcoming.

Boundaries under Stress. Blake, G. and C. Schofield, eds. London, 2000 (forthcoming).

Political Geography. The special issue on the academic legacy of Ratzel. O'Loughlin, J. and M.-P. Pagnini, eds. 2000, forthcoming.

Europe between Political Geography and Geopolitics, Memorie della Societa' Geografica Italiana, Roma, 2000, 2 vol. Antonsich, M., and M.-P. Pagnini, eds. (Proceedings of the IGU-WPM meeting "Europe between Political Geography and Geopolitics. On the Centenary of Ratzel's Politische Geographie", Trieste, December 1997).

Mare Nostrum, Geopolitics of the Mediterranean and its Margins (Adriatic, Aegean and Black Sea). A.-L. Sanguin, dir. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000 (forthcoming).

Atlas of States: Global Change 1990-2000. N.Y.-London: John Wiley and Sons, 1999.

IGU-CPG Website: www.cas.muohio.edu/igu-cpg

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Maintained by Carl Dahlman dahlmac@muohio.edu
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