



RENCONTRES SCIENTIFIQUES IGG

Institut de géographie (IGG), Université de Neuchâtel

Semestre de printemps 2022, Alvéole de géographie, 12.15 – 14.00

20.10.2022

Devran Koray Öcal, Postdoc, Institut de géographie, Université de Berne

Everyday Geopolitics and Invisibilization of state violence: Militarization of Kurdish communities' everyday spaces in Turkey's border towns

This talk delivers a feminist geopolitical analysis of quotidian militarism in Kurdish majority border towns, in South-Eastern Turkey. The Turkish state has long been waging war against Kurdish armed forces, considered separatist and terrorist. However, despite the official discourse, which holds Kurdish communities separate from militant groups, the Turkish state's military tactics have targeted the region's civilian communities. Moreover, the military regime in Kurdish-populated border villages does not run merely with regular operations and patrolling. Instead, it seems to be resorting to extrajudicial practices, such as random harassment-fires, accidental killings, torture, and rape to paralyze the social life of Kurdish villagers. As these military tactics are *not* official and operate covertly, randomly, and informally, the judicial system, which is already biased in prioritizing national defense, does not work. The state's violence quickly becomes invisible and ends up in impunity. As a result, feelings of intimidation, insecurity, despair, uncertainty, and trauma become a part of Kurdish villagers' everyday lives. This talk addresses two questions: **How can geopolitical strategies be analyzed from a feminist political perspective by focusing on ordinary people's social lives, emotions, and everyday life relationships? How can we understand the effectuation of state power through invisibility, impunity, and legal abandonment?**

03.11.2022

Jonas Aegerter, Doctorant, Institut de géographie, Université de Neuchâtel

Living the Urban Digital Edges: Aesthetics and Experiences of Exclusion in the digitizing city

Everyday life in cities is subject to profound changes. Our cities and urban lives are increasingly digital. They are so in practice and context: We use Google Maps to navigate the city, WhatsApp to chat and fix appointments, Airbnb to explore the possibilities for accommodation in places we plan to move to and service platforms like Uber, Just Eat or Amazon either to move in urban space or to avoid physical movements. Further, visual digital platforms like Instagram progressively play a role in the marketing and positioning of cities, making some aspects of their urbanity hyper-visible, while obfuscating others. In short, digital platforms mediate urban relations and as such become a constitutive part of the contemporary city (Barns 2020). During my talk, I sketch out the project of understanding how digital intermediation redefines (or not) processes of urban exclusion. I will discuss the opportunities of adopting an “aesthetic” (Rancière 2006, Degen and Rose 2022) approach to urban marginality – asking what aspects and spaces of urban life are rendered (in)visible through digital platforms – and combining this with a “vitalist” (Lancione, 2016) approach

to investigate how everyday life practices are affected on the ground, both in spaces of hypervisibility and invisibility.

08.12.2022

Nora Komposch, Doctorante, Institut de géographie, Université de Berne

Daniel Sven Wolfe, Premier assistant, Institut de Géographie, Université de Lausanne

Yvonne Riaño, Prof. Institut de géographie, Université de Neuchâtel

***La nouvelle équipe directive de l'Association Suisse de Géographie (ASG) se présente :
Recherches actuelles***

The Swiss Association of Geography (ASG) is the umbrella association of Swiss geographers. Its members include specialised and regional geographical societies as well as the geography institutes of Swiss universities. The ASG is led until the end of 2022 by Francisco Klauser (NE), its president, and Sara Landolt (ZH) and Martin Müller (LA), its vice presidents. From 2013, the ASG will be led by a new team and be located at the IGG: Yvonne Riaño (NE), its president, and Sven Daniel Wolfe (LA) and Nora Komposch (BE) its vice presidents. The new team presents their current scientific work.

Nora Komposch

Access to health care in temporary liminal spaces: geopolitics of im/mobility in Spain's strawberry industry

Huelva is Europe's largest strawberry-producing region and every year tens of thousands of female migrant farmworkers contribute with their labor to this export commodity. They work long shifts, receive poor wages, live with several workers in small spaces, and are exposed to different health risks. Since most of the seasonal farmworkers live during their temporary work right on the farm, accessing health care represents an additional challenge. I explore the questions of how migrant farmworkers get access to health services, how they help each other out with feminist self-organization or political actions and the hurdles that remain to be overcome in this regard. Thereby I discuss the entanglements between circular migration arrangements, the working conditions in Huelva's strawberry production and the farmworkers' access to health.

Daniel Sven Wolfe

More than a sport: Urban development and geopolitics through mega-events

Mega-events like the Olympics and the Football World Cup are enduringly popular worldwide for their sport and spectacle. At the same time, these global, mobile celebrations typically involve billions of dollars of capital investment, colossal changes to the built environment, and political programs that function at every scale from the global to the intimate. They are urban, political, and economic projects of surprising power, leaving lasting changes to the cities and societies that host them. In this short personal overview, I explain why mega-events matter, and I trace my academic journey with them, from the United States to Russia, Switzerland, and beyond.

Yvonne Riaño

Resisting closed borders: Strategies of Cross-Border Mobility by Colombian Deportees

My academic career began using a socio-cultural geography approach to understand the social networks and strategies of self-governance of excluded populations in Latin American *barrios*. Following a feminist and intersectional approach, I later studied the socio-economic integration and exclusion of highly skilled migrants in Switzerland, and their transnational networks. Currently, I use a feminist geopolitical perspective to understand the strategies of resistance that Colombian deportees living at the border between Colombia and Venezuela develop to counteract the spatial immobilities imposed on them by the state and armed criminal groups (guerrillas and paramilitaries). I discuss how they create social links across the political border, and opportunities for survival by conducting micro-businesses that span both Colombian and Venezuelan territories.

Organisation des rencontres scientifiques IGG: Prof. Dr. Yvonne Riaño