

Editorial

REFERENCIA NORMALIZADA

Consejo de Redacción (2010) “Editorial” (en inglés). *Geopolítica(s). Revista de estudios sobre espacio y poder*, vol. 1, núm. 1, 15-17.

The journal *Geopolítica(s). Revista de estudios sobre espacio y poder*, aims at giving visibility to one field of studies in increasing expansion which is geopolitics, in particular, and to spatial reflections on power relations, in general. After its almost complete abandonment after the Second World War, when it was related to the aggressive and expansionist policies of the German Third Reich, geopolitics has experienced a renewal, especially from critic neo-marxist and post-structuralist perspectives, among others.

Despite conservative geopolitical tendencies —closely linked to the traditional practice of “power politics”— being still present in the intellectual landscape of the beginning of the 21st century, the most original tendencies at present are those of radical geopolitics —plural must be emphasized here, since they do not constitute a unified whole, not even an articulated one. Within this trend, the French Yves Lacoste has been the real pioneer. Since 1976 Lacoste edits the journal *Hérodote*, where many geopolitical analyses have been published and where special attention is paid to the analyses of conflict situations. However, it may be the English Peter J. Taylor, also founder in 1982 of another specialized journal, *Political Geography*, the one who has contributed the most to the establishment of the bases for the renewal of geopolitics. From a radical perspective, he applies the analyses of world-systems of Immanuel Wallerstein to political geography, for he considers that “it offers political geographers an opportunity to go back to the global scale analysis without having to pay tribute to Mackinder”. In addition, it opens up an opportunity to the study of the North vs. South conflicts, beyond the so-called confrontation between the continental and maritime powers, as Mackinder suggested.

Other fundamental bases for the radical renewal of geopolitics have been the attempts to develop a power geography, whose most prominent exponents are Claude Raffestin or Paul Claval. They depart from the idea that power is something which circulates and appears in all social relations as a constitutive element of them and, therefore, produces territory out of space. This way, spatial relations are ultimately power relations, and these comprise the problematic object of study of a Political Geography which aims at distancing itself from the “totalitarian” air of the classic version of the discipline. The relation is the key moment for the analysis of power, given that power disguises itself, hides, is not easily apprehensible, nor, of course, countable. Nonetheless, power shows up on the occasion of the relation, when the poles which confront or join appear, from which moment “fields” of power ready to be analyzed are created.

poles which confront or join appear, from which moment “fields” of power ready to be analyzed are created.

The current which explicitly adopts a perspective named “critical geopolitics” is linked to the pioneering works of John Agnew, although its specific formulation has been carried out by Simon Dalby and Gérardoid Ó Tuathail. Its fundamental idea is the reconceptualization of geopolitics as a discourse which contributes to the cultural construction of the global geopolitical map. Taken as discourse, we can make a difference between “practical geopolitics” and “formal geopolitics”. The former must be understood as a state activity, an exercise by which the world is spatialized in regions defined by certain attributes and characteristics by the bureaucracy in charge of the foreign policies of the states (diplomats and the military, fundamentally), whereas, the latter must be understood as the theories, models and strategies made by “security intellectuals” (academicians, think-tanks investigators, ...) in order to guide and justify the actions of practical geopolitics. Other authors have later introduced the concept of “popular geopolitics”, which refers to the popular culture, the geopolitical reasoning carried out by the media, films, novels,... which decisively contributes to the production and put into circulation of the geopolitical “common sense”, that is, the geopolitical assumptions that citizens take for granted and which, to some extent, make practical and formal geopolitics intelligible. The journal *Geopolitics*, currently published by Routledge, is in a way an outcome of these efforts.

Our journal *Geopolítica(s)* will pay special attention to two regions, Latin America and the Iberian countries, which together make a space of shared cultural and historical links, the Iberian space. Similarly, it aspires to be the geopolitical journal where preferably authors coming from those regions find expression. Notwithstanding, this does not mean that there is no place in the journal for theoretical articles on geopolitics, as well as reflections on other regions of the world. In other words, it is a journal of geopolitics, published fundamentally in Spanish (although articles in Portuguese and English are also welcome), and not only an Iberian journal of geopolitics.

This initiative is the product of a net convergence or collective efforts, coming from the Red de Estudios Socioespaciales (RESE), the project and Euro-Latin American net AMELAT XXI, the net of teachers and investigators of the interuniversity PhD in “Political Conflict and Peace-making Processes” and the area of Political Geography in the Political Science and Sociology Faculty in the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM). Thus, although the journal begins its day’s run with administrative and editorial support of the UCM, it is not an exclusive project of that university. As it may be not otherwise nowadays, in a world of increasing interdependence, in which the collapse of space-time, David Harvey indicates, deepens steadily, individual efforts are doomed to fail. We must retake the idea that mutual help, so Piotr Kropotkin pointed out a long time ago, is the only principle of progress for humanity.

Even though our explicit objective is to serve as a loudspeaker for the recently developed critical perspectives in geopolitics—in particular, those who understand geopolitics as a discourse which must be analyzed and deconstructed—, there will also be space in the journal for works carried out from traditional perspectives—that

geopolitics have traditionally been developed at a global level, and states have been taken as the privileged actors. However, this tendency has ever more been put into question. Then, on the one hand, not taking into account geopolitical actors like the transnational social movements, global NGOs or international organizations leads today to the misunderstanding of many geopolitical issues of the greatest importance. On the other hand, we must also vindicate the study of geopolitics on other scales, in addition to the global, be it the scale of regions within the states (“inner geopolitics” as *Hérodote* does, for example) or the localities scale (the “geopolitics of localities”), but also the scale of those macro-regional spaces which are already more than mere commercial juxtapositions of states. This opening-up to the urban and regional geopolitics runs parallel to an interest for the new issues on which critical geopolitics work, issues like gender geopolitics, knowledge geopolitics, natural resources geopolitics, etc.

In short, *Geopolítica(s)* wants to make a contribution to the development of an analytical perspective plural —methodological and theoretically— and multi-scalar on the relations between space and power, specially in the Iberian and Latin American countries, but open to the world and its global knowledge.