

CfP: Competing Sovereignties: Intertwinement, Contestation, Evolution

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Type:

Workshop

Date:

December 3, 2021

Location:

Germany

Subject Fields:

Area Studies, Contemporary History, Eastern Europe History / Studies, Environmental History / Studies, Social Sciences

This Workshop will be held in accordance with the regulations of the University Regensburg, but the event is intended to take place in person, on site. Necessary preparations to hold the event in either a hybrid, or exclusively digital format will be taken as well, should conditions change.

This Graduate Workshop looks to rethink the concept of sovereignty within, between, and among states by engaging in a dialogue between multidisciplinary scholars within area studies. Through diverse approaches, we will examine state sovereignty in the contexts of environmental and climate challenges, political unions, independence movements, nation-building narratives, multi-national military alliances, international organisations and multinational corporations in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Throughout modern history, the meanings ascribed to the idea have shifted significantly, which is reflected in debates across and within academic disciplines. The dissolution of global empires and

onset of decolonisation in the previous century, as well as the later collapse of the Soviet Union, has radically increased the number of ostensibly sovereign states in the world. Accompanied by dramatically intensified globalisation, emerging sovereignties clashed with and contested crumbling empires. The erosion of one polity's sovereignty therefore spurred the revitalization or rise of more localised sovereignties of emerging nations, states, and tribes. Compounding this process, regional projects of political integration, the system of military alliances during and after the Cold War, the United Nations, institutions such as the World Health Organization, not least global challenges such as climate change, global economic crises, and pandemics provoke new negotiations of a state's sovereignty.

In concrete terms, our discussion is oriented towards scrutinizing the security implications of climate change, pollution, and waste management, or the sovereignty of territorial resource use. The securitization of sovereignty in the global balance of power, nuclear deterrence, the evolution of international institutions and agreements, and the interference of non-state actors into state domestic jurisdictions also inform our perspective. We are guided by a critical perspective of sovereignty as an "organised hypocrisy" (Stephen Krasner) practiced by states, or as a "symbolic form" (Jens Bartelson) in the mindsets of state decision-makers, social movements, and local state agents. We also look to examine the role of intellectuals and civil society in shaping the narrative of sovereign peoples in processes of nation-building. Moreover, the daily practice of sovereignty and the construction of its

understanding by individual practitioners, such as border guards and military contingents, begs questions about the location of sovereignty, from its sources, through sovereign decisions, to its concrete application and performance. Addressing this topic from a multi-polar and multi-scalar approach, this workshop considers arrayed perspectives, such as: the periphery to the center, the individual to the state, and the local to the international.

With this workshop we encourage a discussion between early career scholars working on sovereignty from different disciplines. With this aim, we invite contributions from history, anthropology, literature, sociology, political science, art history, cultural studies, political geography, international law, and any discipline with an Area Studies framework. This discussion encourages contributions spanning a global scope, with special focus on North and South America, Eurasia, East and Southeast Europe, which address questions such as the following:

- How has state sovereignty been reconfigured in the past? What basis does this provide when considering reinterpretation or possible retrenchment of state sovereignty in the future?
- What reinforces state sovereignty and contributes to a resistance to change? Is sovereignty indivisible, or is there room for shared sovereignties?
- How do cultural productions reflect on, aid in the construction of, and deconstruct state sovereignty? How have these processes evolved in the digital age?
- How is the state-centric understanding of sovereignty contested by global environmental challenges? To what extent does environmental activism affect capitalism, especially with regards to planetary sustainability, and challenge current institutions, regulations, and commitments in international relations?
- In what ways are states' sovereignties negotiated within political union projects,

such as the European Union, with a diversification of the contemporary translocal threats?

What role do military alliance frameworks play, such as NATO, as arenas for mediating entanglements of multiple states against shared security challenges?

This graduate workshop endeavors to provide a forum for graduate students and early career

researchers. **We invite paper proposals of max. 300 words (title and abstract) to**

gsoses.conference@ur.de by **21. September 19th**. Please include a (max. 2 pages) CV in your

application. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out no later than the end of September.

Presentations at the workshop should not exceed 15 minutes and the working language will be

English. Additionally, we ask that all accepted panelists submit their written papers (3000 words

max.) by November 15, 2021. Papers will be distributed among all participants beforehand. After the

workshop's conclusion, participants will provide written feedback to their co-panelists in due time.

We aim to publish the working contributions as essays on the blogjournal of Leibniz ScienceCampus

"Frictions: Europe, America and Global Transformations" (<https://frictions.europeamerica.de/>). The

Essays section publishes fully-referenced, peer-reviewed articles. A report of the workshop will be also

published under the blogjournal's Current Debates section.

The organization bears the costs for hotel accommodation for panelists on 02.12. and 03.12.2021.

Moreover, the organization can accommodate up to €150 of travel expenses within Germany. For

international applications, additional funding may be considered. For any

additional enquiries, please
feel free to contact us at gsooses.conference@ur.de.

Your organizing team,
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