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Strategy games such as *Dune II* (Westwood Studios 1992)*, Command & Conquer: Generals* (Westwood Studios 2003), *and Age of Empires* (Ensemble Studios 1997) not only let their players know that the world can be re-played in a manageable format with reduced complexity and without any real consequences, but that there are latent and often invisible forms of extra-gamic order that must be negotiated. Computer games in general—and strategy games in particular—are strongly permeated by hidden agendas and naturalized forms of knowledge. Indeed, there is much more than a secret curriculum of strategic and tactical knowledge in these games and their play.

This article presents some thoughts on the forms and functions of this knowledge. It concentrates specifically on discourses of geopolitical thinking in strategy games to argue that these games use and reproduce specific forms of geographical and political knowledge, knowledge which is 1) deeply connected to the ideas behind the extreme national and political thinking of the early 20th century, and 2) forms a way of describing globalized forms of order, policy, and conflict. I begin by unpacking the close linkage between strategy games and spatial concepts in general. I then explore the ways in which the structural arguments of classical geopolitics of the 1920s to 1960s appear in contemporary strategy games. Finally, I examine current booms and renaissances of such geopolitical discourses.

The idea is to conceptualize games as *interdiscourses*, a conceptualization meant to point to a process of invisible translation where the game avails itself of an existing social knowledge and superimposes this knowledge as an "offer" in form of a knowledge-algorithm dedicated to the communication and active appropriation by the player. At the same time, the entanglement of games with expert knowledge by means of special discourse is essential in constituting their dimension of meaning. Accordingly, the analysis of knowledge within a game is a breakdown of its manner of presentation, its course of action, and its implementation in the media. In a broader sense, this study seeks to understand which forms of knowledge are mediated in strategy games and what are the hidden and latently invisible arrangement forms and forms of order that are negotiated in economic, military and urban simulation programs, and construction and management games. In short, my goal is to show how politics are coded as actions in space, and how the German "Lebensraum" policy is connected to Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilization* via *Age of Empires*.

The Spatial Fetishism of Strategy Games

Strategy games can be understood not only as simulations or ludic actions, but as discursive materializations that distribute and stabilize subject-orientated

governmental techniques. Discourses, in this case, are articulating practices that "do not passively represent social circumstances but that constitute and organize them as a flow of social knowledge through time" (Jäger 2004, p.23, own translation). A discourse, therefore, can be understood as a regulated link or formation of utterances. Utterances here does not mean descriptions, grammatical sentences, or speech-acts, but the entirely individualized, contingent, anonymous, pure, and tight materiality of something actually said at a certain time and in a certain place. From this analytical perspective, strategy games are not the articulation of an author or a specific group of people, but the unspecific articulation of knowledge and meaning which flows through a society.

As a first example, I would like to discuss some geopolitical representations and propositions that indicate how strategy games integrate and naturalize some very political and ideological topics and declarations within discourses in popular culture. This framework is not meant to describe computer games as distributors of historically obsolete knowledge and ideologically highly disputable pseudo-science in terms of dangerous propaganda. Rather, the goal is to point out how strategy games contribute to a latent stabilization of a type of knowledge that has, from a superficial perspective, supposedly been overcome historically, scientifically, and politically.

Strategy games are among the oldest and most successful computer games.[1] Indeed, modern strategy games are said to derive their (spatial) paradigm from military-strategic games and simulations (Dunnigan 2000).

Image 1: Reconstruction of the Brunswig table war game of Johann Christian Ludwig Hellwig (1780)

Image 1 shows a classic example. It is "Versuch eines aufs Schachspiel gebaueten taktischen Spiels von zwey und mehreren Personen zu spielen (An Attempt at a chess-based tactical game to be played by two or more persons)," a war game designed in 1780 by Johann Christian Ludwig Hellwig in Brunswig, Germany.[2] In

Hellwig's time, literature on designing and constructing a model for warfare held that game-based learning was superior to abstract learning or the like. Hellwig's description of his own game emphasizes "naturalness" and "sensuousness" of this type of learning.[3] In the preface, for example, Hellwig writes about the "truths" of tactical and strategic warfare, truths that find verification within his game. Elsewhere in the introduction he notes that "The final purpose of a tactical game is to sensualize the substance of the most important appearances of war. The more precisely the nature of this item is imitated, the closer the game comes to its perfection" (Hellwig 1780, p.xi, own translation). Here, Hellwig conceptualizes an idea of a (symbolic) trial action. Within this kind of action, the player naturalizes forms of invisible ideological meaning—the playing of the game can be understood as a hybridization between specific knowledge (e.g., military tactics and strategies) and every day action (e.g., playing an abstract board game). The effectiveness of this didactical gesture is guaranteed through the simulation of experience by the game ("I win by positioning my figures in a certain way according to a plan I made by thinking about future developments"). The simulation is especially effective through the player's identification with the position of action—as a result there is an experience of self-actualization.

Presaging Carl von Clausewitz's later discussions of the art of war (Clausewitz 1993), Hellwig relates the strategy game to the political sphere, affirming the dictum that war is merely a continuation of politics by other means: "The most natural way to end the war even against the enemy's will is rather to deprive him of those means without which he cannot continue the war. […] Therefore, conquering the antagonistic territory has to end the war naturally." (Hellwig 1803, p.§8, own translation). It is not the most brutal fighter who wins the war, but the most political (or even better, scientific) actor. After Clausewitz, war could no longer be conceptualized in terms of natural law. It became part of a rational and scientific, economic, and political system.

Understandably, then, Hellwig's game forces players to counterattack the enemy tactically and strategically. In fact, it is far less about batting men in the field than the skilful control of space and the planning of menacing situations that force the enemy to withdraw. As with chess, the winner is the player who is able to best plan and anticipate in spatial terms, as well as look into the future of the unfolding complex constellations on the board. Two functions thus meet within Hellwig's game that seem to have little to do with one another but are frequently coupled in strategy games: the idea of space as a dominant plane of action, and the idea of a specific didactic that aims at negotiating abstract ideas by offering sensual playful reproduction and reenactment in an educational and enlightening way.

However, there is also a more abstract functionality to the space of games. The topography of Hellwig's game and other strategy games refers to something that is missing: an actual spatial localization. Mass media such as computer games tend to lack a material spatial position or anchoring, and thus rely on compensatory practices. They do not occupy space, as it were; the shown objects are not material but arbitrary symbolic forms. The visuality of game space is the result of symbolic conventionalizations of the medium, conventionalizations which can be described as fetish in a double sense.

Specifically, the constructed game-space functions as a replacement object for something "painfully missing," a lack which is overdetermined. According to Siegmund Freud, a fetish is a description for the attraction of an inanimate and improper sexual replacement object (1978, p.252 ff). The fetish becomes pathological in the case of regular over assessment of the desire. To get lost in a 3D environment such as the one created by *Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories* (Rockstar North 2005) is not dealing with fetishism. On the contrary, a permanent reference to the possibilities and promises of open worlds and sandbox-games seems to be (partly) pathological in the Freudian sense.

On the other hand, fetishism in games can refer to the idea that players ascribe certain unalterable attributes to a game in the sense of a natural law. In Marxist terminology, fetishism describes faith in the immutability of certain social relations: nation, state, family, goods, money, and capital are eternal constants which determine life with the status of a natural law. Marx (1962) points out that commodities especially seem to be connected to this form of fetishism (i.e., commodity fetishism). In commodity fetishism, commodities are conceptualized with attributes such as the ability to be traded. With naturalized and alleged rational knowledge, the logic of commodities is constant and out of subjective control. From this perspective, computer game players have a relatively stable knowledge of the space of a game as an immaterial, symbolic, and mediated space with no connection to the "real world." Game space thus appears as impressions of space that are coded and calculated, fictional, non-performative, and intangible, without any connection to the world. These two (spatial) fetishisms—the Freudian and the Marxian—create a second level or perspective on the specific and discursive meanings of space in games. Players conceptualize the game space not only as the place of (as-if) action, but also as the space for immaterial compensation of the mediation of games as immutable symbolic constructions without any performativity. To the player, the space of the game seems hermetically sealed against the real world.

With this notion of game space in mind, I would now like to make a temporal jump and concentrate on the function of the in-game map as a graphic user-interface and the place for producing a game's space. The main idea I will pursue is that a game's map is one of the primary places for performing symbolic actions, and thus functions as a representation of a symbolic form with intersubjective symbolic validity. I will focus on the question of what social and discursive knowledge is inscribed in game-topographies and strategic spaces, and how this knowledge inscribes itself onto space-conceptualizations in everyday ways of acting and thinking.

Geopolitics in Strategy Games

In the interest of discovering how systems of knowledge and the operational conceptualizations of politics as a matter of space are codified in strategy games, it is helpful to look at the close linkage between strategy games and their historic predecessors (i.e., tabletop war games and military simulation programs). Key to this linkage is the fact that strategy games declare conflict itself as the central theme. Indeed, many games make this same declaration: tactical shooters, civilization games, war simulations—the master narrative of each is armed conflict. Construction and management simulations, too, are modelled on conflict (albeit economic conflict).

In *Age of Empires* (Ensemble Studios 1997), for example, the player uses an army to fight for territory. In *SimCity 3000* (Maxis 1999), the player has to conquer free spaces and fight against the enemy of rare resources and time-critical restrictions. Both forms of games, therefore, are political inasmuch as they are about conquering space, managing resources, and displacing enemies. And yet, politics here are coded as actions in space, recalling theories of geopolitics.

In contrast to anthropogeography, classical geopolitics is not a descriptive but operative theory. It is important to differentiate the operative forms of geopolitics as a sort of operative policy from the cognitive interests of a political geography or the school of critical geopolitics. [4] With operative geopolitics, the idea of politics is founded on a materialistic-physical basis.[5] Strategy games stage politics in space according to an ideologically penetrated and artificial discipline that is itself political. In geopolitics, politics and policy do not evolve from social, demographic, economic, or contractual aspects but from physical facts. The foundations of politics as well as the aims of policy are defined in terms of territory. Topology, spatial arrangements, and fields of difference determine political actions and analyses. The territory, the frontier, and the order of space are the primary variables. The materialistic model of geopolitics is, on a secondary level, accompanied by the conceptualization of culture as a biological composite of homogeneous subjects that are somatically located within space(s). This concept was initiated by the biogeographer Karl August Möbius, who first introduced the term "biocenose" [Lebensgemeinschaft][6] in his 1877 *Die Auster und die Austernwirtschaft* [*Oyster and oyster farming*] (see Andreas 2008). Möbius' approach was not to consider animal populations as isolated species, but to analyse the relations between a given species and other animals, plants, environmental factors, and especially the topographical order of these ensembles (Bühler 2006). Möbius not only established a central term of ecology, the biocenose, but also a way of thinking that was to make its way into geopolitical arguments: a culture in terms of such a biocenose could be seen as a homogenous entity in space, a "body of a people" [Volkskörper]. Friedrich Ratzel[7] and other German geopolitical theorists transcribed the idea of networked thinking from the biological to a social context and reduced it to a legitimation of a spatially dominated form of politics and policy .[8]

From the 1920s to 1945, this linkage of a biological conceptualization of culture and a policy based on the matter of territory formed the "lore of blood and soil" [Lehre von Blut und Boden] and the knowledge of the "big space" [Großraum]. In Germany, Hans Grimms' *People Without Space* [Volk ohne Raum] (1926) was read as the legitimation for the natural justice of expanding the ancestral "big space" [Großraum], "soil of culture" [Kulturboden], and "space of living" [Lebensraum]. At the beginning of the 20th century, Ratzel, Karl Haushofer,[9] and Rudolf Kjellen[10] worked on establishing geopolitics as pseudo-scientific lore about the state as a geographical organism within space.[11] The line between political geography and geopolitics involves the splitting of scientific research and practical-propagandistic application. However, geopolitics never managed to become a leading political argument, even under the aegis of national socialism. The geopolitical thinking during times of fascist leadership cannot be equated with German public opinion, the political aims of the German government, or the ideological goals of the NSDAP (see Dijkink 1996, p.29). Today, it is rare to find theorists and practitioners who think in categories of political action that derive primarily from topological or geographical parameters. Rather, it is

much more common to link politics and space in an abstract way, not as an operational and normative-pragmatic reason for action. However, that is just what strategy games do.

For example, strategy games define the liberation of an occupied space as the precondition for (political) victory. The enemy's strategic or tactical subjection and domination is important, but less so than liberating a given space from even the last sign of the enemy. If the space is consequently liberated, it is incorporated into the player's territory. This may be the most obvious form of geopolitics in strategy games: the hybridization of politics-as-conflict, space, and the appropriation of space in a strategic sense as established by Clausewitz and others. Additionally, strategy games show war—as a form of politics—primarily as a struggle for resources which are located in space themselves. Prior to in-game conflict, strategy games emphasize resource-management, a production economy, and the goal of guaranteeing adequate capital for production. To control resources means to win.

This is very much in keeping with a conception of space as Lebensraum—the extension of one's own territory as the key to conflict-politics. With Lebensraum, power is directed to the appropriation of space, and acquired space derives its value from the resources contained within it. Expansion as an act, however, does not only aim at space as the moment of politics, but can also be financed by or out of space. This materialistic principle of politics as a form of space is reflected in other material forms in space. For example, strategy games generally define the state as an organism, as a linear networked formation of organs. To be healthy, the state must grow and thus gain more space. Think of a multiplayer match in *Age of Empires III* (Ensemble Studios 2005): at a certain moment, all players face the same problems—their resources of gold, wood, and food will run out, and so they will have to gain control over more space with new resources. To control more space, players will have to build a complex commodity chain to produce units, soldiers, and weapons. These tools are produced in special buildings, which in turn require space to build them. This complex interrelation of production chains, resource management, and military operations can be described as a cross-linked homogenous political body. *Age of Empires III* and other strategy games seem to fulfil the concept of "Lebensraum gibt es nur für ein Volk," a close biological-geographical unit between space and people.[12]

As a result, strategy games often contain the idea of center-periphery constellations. The infrastructural and military agglomerations are typically arranged in the form of a center (e.g., marketplace, central base, home harbour) and different build-up zones, suburbs, or production or defence areas (e.g., trading post, outpost, settlement). This organization points to Walter Christaller's theory of the "central place" [Theorie zentraler Orte]. Christaller argues that there is a natural spatiality which develops from concepts of economics, transportation, and governance, a spatiality that leads to a hierarchical order of different forms of places, towns, and other structures. One can easily see the embodiment of this theory in *Civilization IV* (Firaxis 2005). The game forces the player to arrange colonies, settlements, and major towns hierarchically and concentrically (see images 2 and 3).
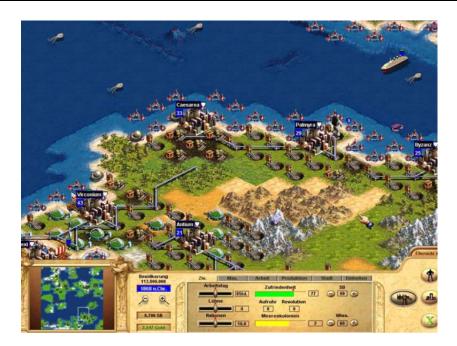
Image 2: (Sid Meier´s) Civilization IV *(2005), Firaxis Games / 2K Games*

Image 3: 1701 A.D.: Dawn of Discovery *(2006), Related / Sunflowers*

Another result of such spatial politics is a consequent constitution of topographic fields of difference. By definition, strategy games suggest a strict binaristic view of their worlds and related conflict-politics. Theirs is a notion of "them against us/me," which constructs a specific view of an "other." This view culminates in a border line (shown or imagined), an invisible or visible space of the enemy. The construction of such a border is often the construction of a separation of two opposing forces, with different views of the world, ideologies, ways of living, or races.[13] This differentiation

materializes in various representational forms. It is the main argument for geodeterminism, that is, the preferred form of the land-sea-antagonism (e.g., *1701 A.D.: Dawn of Discovery* [Sunflower Interactive 2007]), the natural justice of colonialization, the inferiority of specific races determined by their living space (e.g., *Civilization IV*), and the construction of a specific discourse of the naturalness of borders or the glorification of country life, agricultural economics, and artisanry (e.g., *The Settlers: Rise of an Empire* [Blue Byte 2007]).

Strategy games thus construct a narrative that implies a specific form of political knowledge, a form that has two levels. First, there is the concrete implementation of geopolitical paradigms within the narrative and fields of action. Second, there is a more abstract formation of the production of a specific knowledge concerning space. The space of a strategy game becomes *per se* a space of political action. Strategy games transform a specific form of spatial-representation—the ubiquitous map—into a space of conflict, a space of visibility of appropriation and controllability. The strategy game's construction of space is one defined by geopolitical knowledge: the strategy game is the repeated narration of the "clash of civilizations."

Clash of Civilization

At this point, it is important to note that I am not arguing that strategy games stabilize a certain ideological paradigm that is merely a nationalist rhetoric of legitimation. The geopolitical articulations of Ratzel, Haushofer, and others do not stand alone in the history of geography and world politics.[14] According to Yves Lacoste, geopolitics did not die at the end of national-socialism. On the contrary, geopolitical thinking had its most powerful impact during the global conflicts following World War II. In Germany, a circle of critical geographers who practiced geopolitical research in order to cleanse German history formed around Peter Schöller. At the same time that these sorts of geopolitical reformulations were emerging, so too was a critical geography in the Anglo-American context of critical studies and political geography. Inspired by the work of Edward Said (1981), geographers such as Derek Gregory (1978) and Gearoid Ó Tuathail (1996) analyzed the discourses of language, signs, and cartographic representations as categories of everyday life as well as forms of societal meaning. In France, geopolitical theory congealed in the geography and cartography journal *Hérodote*. In this case, operative rather than analytical concepts of spatial politics are discussed from a materialistic Marxist perspective (see Lacoste 1990, p.9; Dijkink 1996, p.4).[15] The well known and epoch-making works of Vidal de la Blanches and the resulting school of "Annales" combine geography, history, milieu, and mentality studies along these lines.[16] Geopolitics is thus not an exclusively national-socialist pseudo-discipline for legitimating expansion and conquest. It is also a discursive knowledge[17] that materialized in diverse forms and contexts at the beginning of a century that might be seen as the first "global" century.

In the United States, a strategic exploitation that was primarily based on geopolitical paradigms emerged around military geography. This form of geopolitics was based on the communist threat and developed positions concerning issues from Southeast Asian policy to the Central American policy and the Cold War.[18] Perhaps its most prominent version can be found in the *Clash of Civilisations* (1996) by Samuel P. Huntington. Huntington's argument is a return to early geopolitics. Although arguing

in terms of social and cultural identity, he is reestablishing the classical (and well known) arguments of the interconnection of territory, geography, nation, policy, and a spatial struggle between states, nations, and cultures. For Huntington, the core of geopolitics seemingly alludes to a truism: human beings exist within nature and space, they pursue policies in these spaces which can bring about conflict from time to time, and the borders of national states are not always identical to the "natural" borders of policies and peoples. If we understand this basis as the paradigm for a non-operational description, we can succeed in creating geography that integrates politics, spatial research, and anthropology in a reasonable way. However, the operational turn of such an analysis needs critical attention as the step from analysis to intervention is operational and led by ideologies. In a certain way the world view presented by Huntington seems to be an analogue to the way strategy games construct their worlds. *Clash of Civilization* is indistinguishable from the *Civilization*-series (or the *Age of Empires*-series, the *A.D*-series, or the *The Settlers*-series). The book and these games construct an interdiscursive narration of politics in space which is highly normative and reductive. Like the geopolitical aspects of a strategy game, Huntington constructs a world which is determined by center-periphery constellations, land-sea-antagonisms, geodeterminated forms of conflict lines between cultures, and a complete lack of understanding that culture and nation are concepts which cannot be described homogenously (as a body, biocenouse, or organism). To equate culture and nation is not only reductive, but an active masking of a socio-geographic paradigm: the idea that culture is the product of a hybridization of different subjects, meanings, and micro- and macrostructures (Crang 1998, p. 21).

Conclusion

Policy is a configuration of territorial structures by discourses and ideologies. Space can be a politically constituted formation. Strategy games regularly define policy as both a conflict and a spatial pattern. Armies and other units have to be trained or built and positioned in space, knowledge must be acquired, and space must first be explored and then acquired (initially economically by the extraction of resources, then by the expulsion or elimination of the enemy). Strategy games thus establish space as an essential form of their functionality. These games not only take place in space and find their visuality in the topology of maps and virtual spaces, but they also make the appropriation of space the primary goal. Indeed, the complete dominance of an area usually marks the end of a round or the entire game.

In this article, I have argued that strategy games primarily stage geopolitical strategic knowledge, and that the games can be divided into two levels that account for such a knowledge. On the one hand, there is a concrete implementation of geopolitical paradigms in the fields of strategy and action narratives; on the other, there are more abstract patterns of production of a specific knowledge of an area. Strategy games reshape a special form of spatial representation—the map—to a conflict area and an area of visibility, acquirability, and controllability. The territory of the political typically shows itself within strategy games as an abstract cartographic two-dimensional space. Units act in the crowd, and nature defines the prospects of the political conflict. Controlling resources and space is the core-motivation of policy, and the commonsensical point of view.

And yet, the commonsensical needs increased attention. It is a formation which often points out a process in which something artificial or arbitrary is changed into something which seems natural (Geertz 1977). With computer games, the entry point into exploring naturalization lies within the production of the immediacy of the experience. The concept of the sensualization of abstract regulative knowledge and rationality of action is helpful for understanding productions of immediacy. Sensualization can function as a conceptualization of the naturalization of arbitrary, ideological, or produced and manufactured knowledge. The result of this immediacy is a form of knowledge which, mostly unseen and unrecognized by the playing subject, "slips" through the sensualization and application of a discursive knowledge. Reflecting on how and with what kind of consequences something artificial/manufactured becomes naturalized in games seems a highly productive way of understanding how games work. This deals with the question of how the computer game hides its artificiality in terms of technique. In a certain sense, this recalls one of the fundamental questions of modernity and industrialization: How does the manufacturing of our environment become a naturalized, self-evident, and indubitable process (Nohr 2008)? The answer is fairly simple in a broad view: mass media traditionally tend to cloak their appearance and technical qualities partially or totally in order to become agents within a society. The symbolic would not be functional without its own concealment. But it is much more interesting to look behind this kind of naturalization. As I have discussed in this article, strategy games also declare something as "natural" that is artificial, offering a reproduction of history that is *only* operationalized politics.[19]

And so the question of the hidden agendas and naturalized forms of knowledge in strategy games which prompted this article seems a little clearer. The shared object of space—shared between the functionality of game play and a specific formation of knowledge—is the point where a specific knowledge is transformed from an abstract discursive constellation into commonsensical knowledge. It is important to understand that this process of coupling is not an invisible didactic of an abstract knowledge. The functionality of the process is guaranteed by the naturalness of both components: human beings play games as if they were part of their nature. In the same way, geopolitics can seem natural in a very delicate sense. Abstract, ideological, and discursive forms of knowledge are reprocessed here in order to be "internalized." This reprocessing (of norms and values, for example) ensures itself by cloaking the fundamental intersubjective forms of validity. The adjustment of the subject to the regulative social norm masks itself with the adjustment to the constitutive agreement: the accepted rule, the framing of the computer game as ostensibly free of consequences, the voluntary use of a medium, and so on. Thanks to the computer game leading us playfully to geopolitics, we also may find the idea of a clash of civilizations natural.

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Notes

[1] The story of strategy games is as old as the history of games itself. It is easy to see that a game such as chess is also an abstract strategy game. To write a history of strategy games is therefore silly—too much has been lost in history. A good starting point for commercial strategy games, however, is *Tactics* (Charles S. Roberts/Avalon Game Company 1954), a board game which introduced some of the game mechanics remediated later in computer games. According to Roberts, "*Tactics* introduced a totally new method of play which had no parallel in games designed to that point [...]. It was revolutionary to say that you could move up to all of your pieces on a turn, that movement up to certain limits was at the player's option and that the resolution of combat was at the throw of a die compared to a table of varying results. As simple as this sounds now, the new player had to push aside his chess-and-checkers mindset and learn to walk again" (Roberts 1983). Maybe the way from *Tactics* to Chris Crawford´s *Tanktics—Computer game of Armored Combat on the Eastern Front* (Avalon Hill 1981) is an (allegoric) starting point (see e.g. Deterding 2008).

[2] The game was published as a book and was analyzed and reconstructed recently in Brunswig. For detailed information, see Nohr and Böhme (2009).

[3] It is possible to show some parallels between Hellwig's arguments and the school of philanthropic didactics. There are analog arguments on the topics of sensualization and the immersive model of learning in the works of Joachim Heinrich Campe and Johann Bernhard Basedow (Sandkühler 2009).

[4] For the latter, see Lacoste 1990, Gregory 1978, Ó Tuathail 1996, or Schöller 1957.

[5] Lacoste defines geopolitics as an intellectual process or a point of view which stresses a perspective in which specific spatial and geographic constellations of mainly political phenomenality are put in focus (Lacoste 1990, p.29).

[6] A biocoenosis describes all the interacting organisms living together in a specific habitat (or biotope).

[7] The German geographer Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904) is one of the earliest authors in the first wave of geopolitics. His *Politische Geographie* (1897) is one of the most influential writings in this discursive tradition (see Kost 1988).

[8]   This is quite similar to what was done with evolution theory at the time. The transformation from the anthropological and biological theory of Darwinian evolution to an operative and normative political social evolution theory for Germany is deeply connected with the works of Ernst Haeckel (see Desmond and Moore 1994).

[9]   Karl Ernst Haushofer (1869 –1946) is perhaps the most important figure for understanding fascist geopolitics. The German general and geographer developed the concept and terminology of geopolitics from widely varied sources, including the writings of Oswald Spengler, Alexander Humboldt, Karl Ritter, Friedrich Ratzel, Rudolf Kjellén, and Halford J. Mackinder. In 1923 he founded the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (Journal for Geopolitics). Some of the main concepts of Haushofer's theory (which found their way into national socialist politics through his close friend Rudolf Hess) were the idea of the organic state, the Lebensraum, "pan-regions [Panideen]" (the concept points to an understanding of the world as driven by a few multinational spheres), and the land power/sea power dichotomy (see Kost 1988).

[10]   Rudolf Kjellén (1864-1922), a Swedish political scientist, seems to have been the first to use the term "geopolitics." He was inspired by Ratzel (see Kost 1988).

[11]   This is perhaps one of the main points in the work of Friedrich Ratzel: to stress a close relation between nation, people, and soil through the idea and concept of the state (see Schöller 1957; Kost 1988).

[12]   Flohr 1942, p.394: "There is only space of living for the people" (own translation).

[13]   This is the ideological and operative core of normative geopolitics, the legitimation of an other: "The German-Russiona Border is not the border between two states, but between two worlds" (Friedrich Ratzel [1898]: Deutschland. Eine Einführung in die Heimatkunde; quoted after Dijkink 1996, p.17).

[14]   The German geography-theorist Peter Schöller, for example, said as early as the 1950s that geopolitical arguments were to be expected in the 1920s to the 1940s. Beyond their discrediting through their misuse in the context of national and national-socialist ideologies, geopolitics in its various shades and history is far more than a historically specific functional political "pseudo-discipline." Schöller and others showed how a short time after the end of national socialism the name "geopolitics" was banned while the major ideas still remained: "…from 1951 onward it [geopolitics] has with new problems and in a more prominent way entered once more the field of academic discussion" (Schöller 1957, p.1).

[15]   This is a strange parallel, referring to the accentuation of materialism in both approaches.

[16]   The Annales School (named after its journal, *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*) was formed around the end of the 1920s by French historians interested in using social scientific methods and with an emphasis on social rather than

political themes. Marc Bloch, Lucien Febvre, Fernand Braudel or Philippe Ariès are some of the well-known members of the Annales School.

17   Because of the temporality and dynamics of discourses, it is impossible to trace a linear and obvious history of geopolitics. The nature of discourses means that one must cope with a (mostly invisible) meandering of knowledge.

18   Of course, the cold war was not just a symbolic system of geopolitical policy (as, for example, was the "domino theory"). The concepts of thermonuclear balancing or the arms race were obviously not driven by a metaphor of spatiality.

19   How far and to what extent players are enmeshed in game means that common sense can be illuminated by a look at the borders of the strategy game genre. Even tactical shooters (e.g. *Call of Duty* [Infinity Ward 2003]) effect totally different models of politics. In these sort of games, conflict-policy is always de-centered, subjective, swarm-orientated, and non-rational. There is hardly an objectified and cartographic space; on the contrary, the landscape is defined by subjective experience. Tactical shooters are no less ideological in their depictions of space and policy. They are just totally different.