



# Warwick Political Geography (Dis)Assembling State Spaces 19-20<sup>th</sup> May 2016

## KEYNOTE AND PLENARY ABSTRACTS

**Keynote Address:** “The rule of walls: an architectural reading of the State’s “legitimate” use of violence” - **Léopold Lambert**, founder and editor of the **Funambulist.net** (chaired by Prof. Stuart Elden)

The notion of “legitimate use of violence” by the state, although far from new, still allows an understanding of the way our societies operate, according to a particular societal order. The punctual action of the police is often used to illustrate this notion, but the structures that condition it rarely incorporate architecture as a key actor. This lecture therefore proposes to examine this state violence through the scope of architecture using several examples: the militarization of Apartheid Palestine, the neo-colonial police stations of the Paris banlieues (suburbs), the foreseeable policed gentrification of Molenbeek in Brussels, the dehumanizing walls and container camp of Calais. Although emerging from significantly different political contexts, these case studies have in common that they implement themselves through architecture, using the latter’s intrinsic violence in order to force a political order on bodies.

**Léopold Lambert** is an architect[e], writer, editor, and podcaster based in Paris and New York. His website gathers the various facets of his work (mostly since 2010), the hope being that the designed and cartographic work engages a prolific dialogue with the theoretical one (books, articles and lectures). He is the editor-in-chief of *The Funambulist Magazine*, as well as its blog, and its podcast *Archipelago*. In 2010, he wrote the book *Weaponized Architecture: The Impossibility of Innocence* (dpr-barcelona 2012) that examines the inherent characteristics of architecture that systematically makes it a political weapon in general, and also more specifically in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.



**Plenary Address: “Assemblage, Globalization and the State” - Prof. Michael Woods, University of Aberystwyth** (chaired by Prof. Nick Vaughan-Williams)

The role of the State in globalization has been a key area of debate among globalization scholars, with some emphasizing the erosion of State sovereignty and others arguing that the State continues to play a significant role in shaping, resisting and even driving globalization. Such debates, however, have tended to be conducted within a framework that regards globalization as a top-down, homogenizing process. Less has been written about the State within relational perspectives on globalization that emphasize the local reproduction of the global and distributed agency. This paper seeks to address this concern by considering the State within an assemblage approach to globalization and place. It first outlines key features of an assemblage approach to globalization, drawing variously on DeLanda, Deleuze and Guattari, Foucault and Latour, before examining how both globalization as a process of assemblage/agencement, and global ‘assemblages’ as social, economic and political formations interact with ‘place-assemblages’ to reconstitute localities. Noting that this analysis may initially appear to sideline the State – highlighting micropolitics, the direct interaction of local and global actors, and an agnostic approach to human and non-human agency – the second part of the paper consequently turns to re-evaluate the position of the State. Returning to DeLanda and to Deleuze and Guattari, the paper considers the performativities of the State in practices of coding and de-coding, striation and smoothing, that disrupt, mediate and facilitate the engagement of local and ‘global’ assemblages. These actions will be briefly illustrated through examples of dairy industry restructuring in New Zealand and immigration in rural Ireland.

**Michael Woods** joined Aberystwyth University as a Lecturer in Human Geography in 1996, having completed his PhD at Bristol University. Mike’s research interests focus on rural geography and political geography and he has led the department’s New Political Geographies Research Group between 2004 and 2008 and since 2013. His research has been recognized with John Fraser Award for Research Excellence in Rural Geography by the Association of American Geographers in 2010. He is Editor of the *Journal of Rural Studies* and a member of the editorial boards for *Dialogues in Human Geography* and *European Countryside*. His publications include textbooks, *Rural* (Routledge, 2011), *Rural Geography* (Sage, 2005), *An Introduction to Political Geography* (1e 2004, 2e 2014, Routledge) and *Key Concepts in Rural Geography* (Sage, 2015), the monograph *Contesting Rurality: Politics in the British Countryside* (Ashgate, 2005), and edited books, *New Labour’s Countryside: Rural Policy in Britain since 1997* (Policy Press, 2008), and *Globalization and Europe’s Rural Regions* (Ashgate, 2015).