

Abstracts

Andreas Fischer-Lescano/Philip Liste

Völkerrechtspolitik

On Differentiation and Coupling of Politics and Law in World Society
ZIB, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 209-249

Although IR scholars are increasingly focusing on the topic of international law, the interdisciplinary relations are, however, dominated by mutual misunderstanding. The phantasmagoria of unlimited political scope for social design stands vis-à-vis the legal utopianism arguing that only law is an appropriate means to realize the values of peace and humanity on the international level. Since the seminal works of E. H. Carr and Hans J. Morgenthau on the one hand and Hans Kelsen and George Scelle on the other, IR as well as Legal Scholarship has regularly reproduced these dichotomies. In the course of a reformulation of the concepts of Völkerrechtspolitik (politics of international law and international law of politics) the article aims to transcend mono-dimensional observations of law and politics. The authors argue that an integration of actors of a global civil society into the concept of Völkerrechtspolitik opens up the chance to break with the conventional etatist dichotomies of dogmatic and political conceptions of law.

Martin Höpner

Parties or Nations?

The Two Cleavages in the Field of European Financial Market Integration
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The integration of European financial markets lags behind the integration of product and service markets with their quicker removal of trade barriers, and has suffered another setback with the adoption of the takeover directive in 2003/2004. The following analysis demonstrates that the removal of integration barriers is based on two cleavages: a party political conflict along the left-right axis and a distributional conflict between different national varieties of capitalism. The conflict between varieties of capitalism has greater explanatory power than the left-right conflict. The empirical chapter concentrates on the crucial vote on a comparatively liberal version of the takeover directive that took place in the European Parliament on July 4, 2001. It is argued that the creation of a single European financial market is unlikely – at least in the short or mid term perspective.

Jochen Walter

Politics as System?

System-Terms and System-Metaphors in Political Science and International Relations
ZIB, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 275-300

In observing the semantics of IR theory, the omnipresence of the term »system« seems striking: it is possible to find concepts of a political, an international, a global or a world system. While the appropriateness of these attributes of systemness are widely debated, only scant attention has been paid to the content and meaning of the term »system« itself. The contribution observes the problematic consequences for political science and IR which result from the adoption of the system-term from General Systems Theory and Cybernetics. While the introduction of technical metaphors evokes the picture of a technical or mechanical political system on the one hand, the definition of a political system leads the theories of IR to conceive the international system as a non-political system on the other. In order to avoid the analyzed problems, a communications-based alternative theoretical re-reading of the notion of »system« will be provided.

Olivier Minkwitz

Democracies and Military Effectiveness

Why Democracies Tend to Perform Better
ZIB, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 301-336

Are democracies more likely to win their wars and do they operate more effectively on the battlefield than non-democracies? A controversy over these questions has emerged, which in light of current wars involving democracies not only has consequences for policy but also touches on core questions of IR. The debate has been sparked by the dataset and the explanation of the phenomena. Two explanations have been put forward. On the one hand democracies select their wars more carefully and on the other they fight more effectively on the battlefield. Critics counter that the data is inherently flawed and that the causal mechanism is unsound. The debate is far from being resolved. As a provisional result the debate points to a under-determination of the concept of military power in IR. Regime type as well as material factors are necessary to determine military effectiveness.

Benjamin Herborth

On the Politics of Demarcation

A Reply to Andreas Behnke

ZIB, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 383-390

Andreas Behnke's attempt to provide a deconstructivist reading of the responses liberal theorists have given to the events of 9/11 sheds light on the important question of whether phenomena of exclusion and cultural difference are themselves systematically excluded in liberal accounts. However, by drawing conclusions about both the theoretical position of the respective authors and »liberalism« in general on the basis of a set of polemically arranged quotations from rather miscellaneous writings and policy interventions, Behnke fails to realize the creative potential of his project. Instead of actually breaking up the distinctions at work in the criticized texts, he stages a paradigmatic confrontation, which merely reproduces the patterns of engagement common to the supposedly attacked »mainstream«. Moreover, a conception of the political inspired by Carl Schmitt, which Behnke finally subscribes to, implies a strategy of re-substantialization, which dogmatically insists on an ontologization of political boundaries. The political theories of Derrida and Habermas can be sharply distinguished from such a strategy as they represent different attempts to counter substantializing tendencies in political thought.

Oliver Flügel/Anna Geis

A Limited Transgression of Boundaries

A Reply to Andreas Behnke

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In his essay (ZIB 1/2005) Andreas Behnke claimed that in particular the terror acts of 9/11 and their consequences had evinced the inaptness of liberal theories to develop an adequate understanding of the »new« international relations. He concluded that we were in need of a new understanding of the character and the boundaries of the political which could account for these new conflict scenarios. In this response it is argued that this kind of critique of liberalism on the one hand misconceives central features of the project of political liberalism but on the other rests itself upon several premises of liberal political thought. Furthermore, the Schmittian concept of the political, which underlies Behnke's attempt to »deconstruct« liberal positions, is problematized. Finally, it is criticized that institutional perspectives were strongly neglected in the essay although they deserve special attention when dealing with the question of the political.

Andreas Behnke

»I Mistrust all Systematizers and Avoid Them«

A Response to my Critics

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The response to Herborth's and Flügel/Geis' critiques of my forum contribution on »9/11 and the Limits of the Political« focuses above all on their problematic interpretations of central elements in Derrida's, Schmitt's, and Connolly's work. Against Herborth, I assert the irrelevance of a Derridean deconstruction of identity as a critique of the Schmittean decision about the friend/enemy distinction. In Flügel/Geis' critique I find fault with their uncritical re-iteration of an essentialist reading of Schmitt, and a trivializing rendition of Connolly's concept of agonistic respect. Both errors lead the authors to a theoretical position in which they raise only questions about my project that it is trying to transcend. Both critiques remain therefore stuck in the worldview of the Liberal systematizer, which cannot adequately conceptualize the encounter with the Other.