



Call for Papers

Technologies of Globalization

Technische Universität Darmstadt, October 30-31, 2008

Presently (re-)shaping social life as well as economics and science, the effects of globalization are in their turn – and in manifold ways – related to and in fact highly dependent on technology. The first International Conference of the DFG-Research Group “Topologies of Technology” seeks to explore in greater detail and from a deliberately interdisciplinary angle the role(s) and function(s) of world-embracing information and communication technologies, transport and computing facilities in the global age. In particular, the plenary discussions and five interdisciplinary streams attempt to clarify how newly developed technologies contribute to and assist the currently observable developments in the particular field of engineering and, more generally, in labor distribution and organization, how they influence the re-definition of “the local” against the backdrop of “the global,” and in which novel ways they enable mobility (and require new modes of managing these). In addition, space will be given to collateral effects of both globalization and technologies at large such as world-wide efforts of controlling and improving body movement(s), e.g. for the target group of old-age people, in sport science/kinesiology and perceptual computing, and to historical considerations aiming at the disclosure of precursors of technology-enhanced globalizing tendencies.

In accordance with the programmatic assumptions of the research group, abstracts from a wide variety of disciplines are welcome. These include engineering and computer sciences as well as philosophy, sociology, history, economics or cultural (including literary) studies.

Keynote speakers and respondents:

- Thomas Sattelberger, Chief Human Resources Officer and Labor Director *Deutsche Telekom AG* (confirmed)
- Reinhard Blomert, Chief Editor “Leviathan” and associate at the *Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin* (confirmed)
- Jyoti Hosagrahar, Adjunct Professor at the Graduate School of Architecture Planning and Preservation, Columbia University (t.b.c.)
- Johann-Dietrich Wörner, Chairman of the *DLR* (German Aerospace Center) Executive Board (confirmed)

Topics include:

- Managing mobility
- Informatized work: towards a new division of labor?
- Globalization in the production of built environment
- Globalization revisited: world-embracing technologies in a historical perspective
- Aging as a global issue – a challenge for technology and society

Timeline for proposals

Abstract proposals (max. 500 words) must be sent by email or via upload on our website www.tog08.org before April, 15th, 2008

Notification of acceptance or refusal of abstracts will be given before May, 15th, 2008

Complete papers (max. 8.000 words) should be sent before September 30th, 2008

Conference Proceedings

The most outstanding conference contributions will be published after the conference.

Conference Venue

The conference will be held at the conference venue Maritim Rhein-Main Hotel Darmstadt about 30 km south of Frankfurt (<http://www.maritim.de/typo3/deutsch/hotels/hotels/rhein-main-hotel-darmstadt.html>).

Travel

The most convenient airport is Frankfurt Airport (<http://www.airportcity-frankfurt.de>). There is a direct bus shuttle service from Frankfurt Airport to the conference venue. For information on the timetable and prices please consult <http://www.heagmobibus.de/download/pdf/Airliner2008.pdf>. Notice that the bus fee is not included. One-Way-Tickets cost € 7, 10.

The next train station is Darmstadt Main Station, five minutes from the conference hotel.

Accommodation

Participants requiring accommodation are invited to book their own rooms. The Post-Graduate School “Topology of Technology” has block-booked rooms in various categories at the hotel, but reservation should be made before July 15th, 2008. Accommodation is based on a first-come, first-serve basis. When booking please mention “TU Darmstadt”.

Further hotel addresses are available on the Darmstadt Marketing website at <http://www.darmstadt-marketing.de/uebernachten/hotel.asp>.

International Conference „Technologies of Globalization“ 30 – 31 of October 2008, Darmstadt Germany

Conference Registration

Please register before **October 15th, 2008**. For more information see our conference website at www.tog08.org. Registration fees include the conference program and access to all conference streams, coffee breaks, lunch and conference dinner (October 30th, 2008).

Early registration fees (before August 15th, 2008): 360 Euros Category A (Participants from companies), 190 Euros Category B (Scientific participants from Universities and private research institutes), 95 Euros Category C (PhD students, students).

Late registration fees (after August 15th, 2008): 420 Euros Category A, 215 Euros Category B, 120 Euros Category C.

Conference Language

The working language of the conference is English.

Contact

For all conference issues visit our website at www.tog08.org or write an email to info@tog08.org. For detailed information concerning the streams and for the submission of abstracts please use the following email addresses:

- Managing mobility: stream1@tog08.org
- Informatized work: towards a new division of labor?: stream2@tog08.org
- Gloalization in the production of built environment: stream3@tog08.org
- Globalization revisited: world-embracing technologies in a historical perspective: stream4@tog08.org
- Aging as a global issue – a challenge for technology and society: stream5@tog08.org

Program and Organizing Committee

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<http://www.ifs.tu-darmstadt.de/index.php?id=gradkoll-tdt>

Stream 1 - Managing Mobility

Technologies of globalization are dealing with an increase in the mobility of people, artifacts and symbols. This mobility needs to be managed, both on the large-scale dimension of transport and traffic and on the micro-scale dimension of local everyday human mobility. Future engineering challenges include the optimization of operational capacities as well as the development of sustainable solutions, while social science perspectives are engaged in grasping and theorizing various meanings and practices of mobility, and discuss concepts such as deterritorialization, locality, or mobile connectivity.

Encouraging the flow of insights and ideas beyond existing disciplinary boundaries the *managing mobility* panel ties up with these new approaches. It wants to reveal state-of-the-art technologies as well as technological prospects that meet the growing demand for transport. These include conceivable visionary approaches which balance ecological awareness and economic interests under consideration of the need for hub capacity expansion. A historical and sociological perspective then might specify the – often implicit – assumptions and paradigms that govern current technologies as well as our ideas of future mobility. Research in the field of technology studies has shown that mobility is embedded in a “seamless” socio-technical web composed of diverse agents, infrastructures, technologies and everyday practices. Such insights are needed to thoroughly understand how mobility has restructured space and time and how it has re-worked the prevailing kinds of (im)mobility as well as practices of moving and communicating. On the individual level, managing mobility translates into managing practices of physical and more communicational related mobility. Individuals have developed strategies to compensate for the demands of „being mobile“ that have transformed culture and identity. Each movement implies cultural adjustment that has left traces in the lives of the individuals. But what social, cultural and technological circumstances mobilize some individuals and immobilize others? How does this change concepts of boundary, locality and community and what does it mean for cultural studies?

The panel thus wants to bring together the following themes and aims:

- Theorizing and conceptualizing mobility
- Designing transport and mobile communication technologies
- Approaches on optimizing and managing operational capacities in global hubs
- Material streams as well as streams of capital and information
- Mobility of work, working for mobility
- Migration, Identity and Culture

Stream 2 - Informatized work: Towards a new division of labor?

Widely accepted as key factors of globalization, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) generate among other things a virtual information space which connects project teams as well as organizations, and as such foster the production, handling and management of digitized data all around the world. Changes in the nature of work are inevitable once a new global division of labor develops: new organizational settings such as global networks effectively (re-)distribute work, production and knowledge between different companies or locations; processes of outsourcing, as well as near- and offshoring can be observed. Collaborative and cooperative work like global engineering faces new options of connecting dispersed project teams, yet it is also confronted with new challenges evoked by the complexity and competitiveness of organizational networks.

This session focuses on these changes on ICT use, work and organization.

Key questions include, and possible subjects for submissions are:

- How does the re-distribution of work influence the emergence of new organizational settings, and vice versa?
- Do the trajectories of (re-)distribution differ between the various kinds of work or between industrial sectors?
- Do further impacts on (re-)distribution processes exist? Which consequences have these activities for the employees at the different locations where work is executed?
- What does outsourcing and offshoring mean for inter- and intraorganizational collaboration?
- What challenges have to be managed by dispersed working teams?

Stream 3 - Glocalization in the Production of Built Environment

Ever since the late 1980s, the notion of *glocalization* – linguistically, a blending of “global” and “local” - has been on the agenda of academic debate (Roland Robertson) and political practice: “Think globally, act locally” was thus the central motto of the Rio world summit in 1992. The idea that universal challenges can only be resolved in local contexts prevails crucial in the discussion of environmental sustainability, too. While raising a renewed interest in “naturalness”, the proposed relationship of global thinking and local implementation has for some time been a pre-eminent issue in the context of built environment. In fact, urban and infrastructure planning and architecture are highly enlightening examples of how the concept of “glocalization” can succeed and where it fails. Creating and shaping space, these disciplines are informed by universal paradigms and standards while at the same time coping with material and social peculiarities of a given setting.

Some key questions for this session include:

- Which are the current global paradigms influencing planning and architecture? How did they develop? Do they encourage and facilitate sensitivity to local contexts?
- Who are the actors on the global and local level, are the first identical with the second? Are they connected through networks? How does the inter-level exchange work?
- At which stage in the planning process do local contexts start to matter?
- How do localized experiences influence the universal discourse? Are there specific local contexts that dominate the development of universal paradigms?
- How do the planning disciplines absorb and conceptualize the notion of glocalization? Is it just another twist in the long history of transnational exchange?
- What does this mean for researchers and practitioners?

Stream 4 - Globalization before the letter: World-embracing technologies in a historical perspective

This session seeks to cast light on narratives and historical developments that pre-figure what is now buzzworded globalization: the factual emergence and ultimate rise of world-embracing, transnational tendencies in the fields of trade and commerce, communication and labor organization, and their effects on local or regional society formations in the late 20th and early 21st century. Numerous socio- and economic-historical approaches have in the last few years tackled the precursors of today's phenomenon of globalization; initiatives of this kind include the implementation of Global History M.A. degree courses and extensive research activities. Our focus will more specifically be on the role and function (as well as description and appropriation) of technology, ranging from the construction of a finally world-embracing telegraphic network in the early years of the 20th century and the rise of cargo ships and standardized container as well as harbor equipments beginning in the mid-1950s to fictional representations predicting the arrival of a supra-national world society and economy based on gadgets like pneumatic tubes: an early version of the worldwide web that plays a pre-eminent role in Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* of 1887. We invite contributions from historians of technology, researchers of business history or from literary and cultural studies that effectively and innovatively investigate past developments of this kind by picking up the thesis of a globalization "before the letter" and grafting these more particularly on the respective historical state of the arts in technological progress. This explicitly includes comparative approaches – e.g., how does the pre-history of globalization materialize in economically and politically different systems such as capitalism as opposed to communist regimes? – as well as investigations organized by parameters such as race, class and gender or generic considerations (sci-fi, (anti-)utopian literature etc.).

Topics include, but are not restricted to

- Americanization prolonged and expanded: continuities and differences from early 20th century technology-enhanced production modes (Fordism, Taylorism) to present-day labor organization, including the comparison with non-American modes of production (Toyotism etc.)
- Craftsmanship in a global(ized) context: Change of knowledge and skills in the process of globalization, the development of multinational companies and their capabilities
- Skills and knowledge in a global(ized) context: From embodied skills to formalized knowledge, capabilities as an important technical factor for multinational companies
- Human resources and the cultural and economic history of global workforce mobility: brain drain (respectively gain)
- Changing technologies of financial distribution and their impact on producing economy: global markets for futures, options and derivatives effecting the standardization of production (and lives)
- "Global(ization) literature": emergence of a novel literary category/genre, or just another case of old wine in new bottles? Probing the limits of current technology-related genres (sci-fi, (anti-)utopian narratives) against the backdrop of 21st century "world (citizen) literature"

Stream 5 - "Aging as a global issue - a challenge for technology and society"

Demographic change characterizes an aging society which raises a growing, global concern: how can we care for the elderly in the future? Following the wishes of the elderly and/or chronically ill, we want to discover how assistive technology can help to assure them an independent way of life. The fact that more and even younger people suffer from chronic diseases amplifies the impact on the demand for care. Rather than following the principle “use-it-or-lose-it”, we intend on the one hand to assist, preserve, or improve existing human capabilities and, on the other hand, to take a complementary view to introduce new instruments for the caregivers and the medical profession.

This opens three key aspects. First, under the auspices’ observation a target has to be identified, i.e., an answer to the question of where technology might help. Second, in the deployment phase, technology has to be made usable and acceptable. Finally, we take a reflective perspective on the social implications of technology. In this context, the standardization effect is a topic which frequently appears in the discourse about globalisation. The effect refers to widespread social changes induced by the introduction of new technologies. Since, for example, human-computer interaction extends beyond today’s modalities, novel standardized interaction patterns and perceptual computing methods will be required (i.e., human body movements).

Having this background, the stream’s objective is to focus on the given topics from different perspectives by bringing together geriatricians, sport scientists, computer scientists, sociologists, and philosophers.

Topics

- health & activity monitoring
- modelling human behaviour and discovering behavioural patterns
- assistive technology in therapy or rehabilitation
- assistive technology for aging adults
- sensing modalities for monitoring patients
- technology-assisted intervention studies
- vision & reflection - what might be possible (scenarios) & what has been achieved so far
- user acceptance
- standardization - social changes caused by technology