

NATALIE KOCH ✧ CURRICULUM VITAE*

nkoch@syr.edu ✧ 144 Eggers Hall, Syracuse NY 13244

I am a political geographer working on the topics of geopolitics, state power, nationalism, energy and environmental politics, (urban) megaprojects, and techno-developmentalism. Empirically, my research focuses on the Arabian Peninsula, where I study the many transnational ties that bind the Gulf countries, actors, and ideas to other parts of the world.

EMPLOYMENT

Syracuse University, Department of Geography and the Environment, Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs

- Professor, *May 2022* –
- Director of Undergraduate Studies, *August 2023* –
- Associate Professor, *May 2017* – *May 2022*
- Assistant Professor, *August 2012* – *May 2017*

Heidelberg University, Institute of Geography

- W3 Professor of Human Geography, *August 2022* – *April 2023*
-

EDUCATION

University of Colorado, Boulder (2009-2012)

- Geography, PhD, 2012
- Dissertation: *The city and the steppe: Territory, technologies of government, & Kazakhstan's new capital*

University of Colorado, Boulder (2008-2009)

- Geography, MA, 2009
- Thesis: *Nation-building, geopolitics, and the Andijon uprising: Securitizing discourses in Uzbekistan*

Dartmouth College (2003-2006)

- Geography; Russian Area Studies, BA, 2006, *Summa Cum Laude*
- Thesis: *Geopolitical discourses and the Aral Sea desiccation: A case study of Kyzylorda oblast*

Harvard University (2007-2008)

- Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies, MA program, transferred
-

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS *

* For reviews and media, see
<https://nataliekoch.com/books/>

2022 *Arid empire: The entangled fates of Arizona and Arabia*. London: Verso.

2018 *The geopolitics of spectacle: Space, synecdoche, and the new capitals of Asia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

EDITED BOOKS *

2025 *The Wiley Blackwell companion to political geography (Second edition)*. Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell (with co-editors, V. Mamadouh, C-Y. Wang, J. Agnew).

2022 *Spatializing authoritarianism*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.

2020 *Handbook on the changing geographies of the state: New spaces of geopolitics*. Northampton: Edward Elgar (with co-editors, S. Moisisio, A. Jonas, C. Lizotte, J. Luukkonen)

2017 *Critical geographies of sport: Space, power, and sport in global perspective*. New York: Routledge.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- 2025 The symbolic power of sustainability in Gulf megaprojects: The case of Expo City Dubai. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 18(2): 279-292.
- Green nationalism from above: Authoritarian state power and the greening of UAE nationalism. *Nations and Nationalism* 31(4): 946-965.
- Authoritarian developmentalism in the digital age: Selling techno-futures and state capitalism in the Gulf. *World Affairs* 188 (4): e70043.
- 2024 Scientific nationalism and museums of the future in Germany and the UAE. *Political Geography* 113: 103144.
- Cultural diplomacy at second-tier global events: The case of Qatar's 2023 Horticultural Expo. *GeoJournal* 89(5): 209.
- Sustainability spectacle in the Gulf. *Current History* 123(857): 330–335.
- Teaching geopolitics through sport. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 48(1): 31-36.
- 2023 Sustainability spectacle and “post-oil” greening initiatives. *Environmental Politics* 32(4): 708-731.
- Event ethnography: Studying power and politics through events. *Geography Compass* 17(12): e12729.
- Geographies of nationalism. *Human Geography* 16(2): 200-211.
- Free speech or obedient speech? Revisiting liberal speech norms in “closed contexts.” *Area* 55(4): 489-495.
- 2022 The state fetish: Producing the territorial state system at a World's Fair. *FOCUS on Geography*: <https://focusongeography.org/publications/photoessays/uae/index.html>
- Greening oil money: The geopolitics of energy finance going green. *Energy Research & Social Science* 93: 102833.
- Gulf hydrogen horizons: Why are Gulf oil and gas producers so keen on hydrogen? *IASS Discussion Paper*. IASS-Potsdam: <https://www.rifs-potsdam.de/en/output/publications/2022/gulf-hydrogen-horizons-why-are-gulf-oil-and-gas-producers-so-keen-hydrogen>
- Wastelanding Arabia: America's ‘Garden of Eden’ in Al Kharj, Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Historical Geography* 77: 13-24.
- Sports sponsorship and Gulf geopolitics. *Orient* 2022 (III): 6-11.
- 2021 The political lives of deserts. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 111(1): 87-104.
- The desert as laboratory: Science, state-making, and empire in the drylands. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 46(2): 495-509.
- Whose apocalypse? Biosphere 2 and the spectacle of settler science in the desert. *Geoforum* 124: 36-45.

Desert geopolitics: Arizona, Arabia, and an arid-lands response to the territorial trap. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 41(1): 88-105.

Food as a weapon? The geopolitics of food and the Qatar-Gulf rift. *Security Dialogue* 52(2): 118-134.

- Related podcast available at: <https://sagepolitical.libsyn.com/sd-episode-3>

The geopolitics of renewables in Kazakhstan and Russia. *Geopolitics* 26(2): 521-540 (with V-P Tynkkynen).

2020 The corporate production of nationalism. *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography* 52(1): 185-205.

The geopolitics of Gulf sport sponsorship. *Sports, Ethics & Philosophy* 14(3): 355-376.

Deep listening: Practicing intellectual humility in geographic fieldwork. *The Geographical Review* 110(1-2): 52-64.

2019 Capitalizing on cosmopolitanism in the Gulf. *Current History* 118(812): 349-354.

AgTech in Arabia: 'Spectacular forgetting' and the technopolitics of greening the desert. *Journal of Political Ecology* 26(1): 666-686.

Resource nationalism. *Progress in Human Geography* 43(4): 611-631 (with T. Perreault).

Post-triumphalist geopolitics: Liberal selves, authoritarian Others. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies* 18(4): 909-924.

Laboratories of liberalism: American higher education in the Arabian Peninsula and the discursive production of authoritarianism. *Minerva* 57(4): 549-564 (with N. Vora).

2018 The geopolitics of sport beyond soft power: Event ethnography and the 2016 Cycling World Championships in Qatar. *Sport in Society* 21(12): 2010-2031.

Green laboratories: University campuses as sustainability 'exemplars' in the Arabian Peninsula. *Society & Natural Resources* 31(5): 525-540.

Disorder over the border: Spinning the spectre of instability through time and space in Central Asia. *Central Asian Survey* 37(1): 13-30.

Mosques as monuments: An inter-Asian perspective on monumentality and religious landscapes. *cultural geographies* 25(1): 183-199 (with A. Valiyev and H. Khairul).

Sport and the city. *Geography Compass* 12(3): 12:e12360.

2016 We entrepreneurial academics: Governing globalized higher education in 'illiberal' states. *Territory, Politics, Governance* 4(4): 438-452.

Is a 'critical' area studies possible? *Environment & Planning D* 34 (5): 807-814.

Banal Nationalism 20 years on: Re-thinking, re-formulating and re-contextualizing the concept. *Political Geography* 54: 1-6. (with A. Paasi)

Is nationalism just for nationals? Civic nationalism for non-citizens and celebrating National Day in Qatar and the UAE. *Political Geography* 54: 43-53.

The 'personality cult' problematic: Personalism and mosques memorializing the 'father of the nation' in Turkmenistan and the UAE. *Central Asian Affairs* 3(4): 330-359.

- Related talk available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d66ix1C8WrQ>

2015 Urban boosterism in closed contexts: Spectacular urbanization and second-tier mega-events in three Caspian capitals. *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 56(5): 575-598 (with A. Valiyev).

Gulf nationalism and the geopolitics of constructing falconry as a 'heritage sport.' *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 15(3): 522-539.

Everyday inclusions: Rethinking ethnocracy, *kafala*, and belonging in the Arabian Peninsula. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 15(3): 540-552 (with N. Vora).

'Spatial socialization': Understanding the state effect geographically. *Nordia Geographical Publications* 44(4): 29-35.

Exploring divergences in cross-regional comparative research: The spectacular cities of Central Asia and the GCC. *Area* 47(4): 436-442.

The violence of spectacle: Statist schemes to green the desert and constructing Astana and Ashgabat as urban oases. *Social and Cultural Geography* 16(6): 675-697.

2014 'Building glass refrigerators in the desert': Discourses of urban sustainability and nation-building in Qatar. *Urban Geography* 35(8): 1118-1139.

The shifting geopolitics of higher education: Inter/nationalizing elite universities in Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, and beyond. *Geoforum* 56: 46-54.

Bordering on the modern: Power, practice, and exclusion in Astana. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 39 (3): 432-443.

2013 Introduction – Field methods in 'closed contexts': Undertaking research in authoritarian states and places. *Area* 45(4): 390-395.

Technologizing the opinion: Focus groups, coercion, and performance. *Area* 45(4): 411-418.

The 'heart' of Eurasia? Kazakhstan's centrally-located capital city. *Central Asian Survey* 32(2): 134-147.

Kazakhstan's changing geopolitics: The resource economy and popular attitudes about China's growing regional influence. *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 54(1): 110-133.

Sport and soft authoritarian nation-building. *Political Geography* 32: 42-51.

Why not a world city? Astana, Ankara, and geopolitical scripts in urban networks. *Urban Geography* 34(1): 109-130.

2012 Urban 'utopias': The Disney stigma and discourses of 'false modernity.' *Environment and Planning A* 44(10): 2445-2462.

- 2011 Security and gendered national identity in Uzbekistan. *Gender, Place, and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 18(4): 499-518.
- 2010 The monumental and the miniature: Imagining 'modernity' in Astana. *Social and Cultural Geography* 11(8): 769-787.
- Interethnic tensions in Kyrgyzstan: A political geographic perspective. *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 51(4): 531-562 (with A. Bond).

BOOK CHAPTERS

- In Press* Resource nationalism. In J. Hearn, D. Halikiopoulou, and G. Krasniqi (eds.), *Edward Elgar encyclopedia of nationalism*. Northampton: Edward Elgar.
- The role of national oil companies in Gulf public diplomacy. In M. Zweiri (ed.), *Debating public diplomacy in the Arab Gulf state*. New York: Routledge.
- 2026 Nationalism. In C. Flint (ed.), *Elgar concise encyclopedia of geopolitics*. Northampton: Edward Elgar, 133-136.
- 2025 Introduction. In V. Mamadouh, N. Koch, C-Y. Wang, J. Agnew (eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell companion to political geography (Second edition)*. Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 1-15 (with V. Mamadouh, C-Y. Wang, J. Agnew)
- Power. In V. Mamadouh, N. Koch, C-Y. Wang, J. Agnew (eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell companion to political geography (Second edition)*. Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 93-111 (with J. Painter).
- When Yugoslavia was the Wild West. In T. Beasley-Murray, W. Bracewell, and M. Murawski (eds.), *Anti-Atlas: Critical Area Studies from the East of the West*. London: UCL Press, 187-195.
- 2024 Authoritarian regimes and the environment. In N. Lindstaedt and J. Van den Bosch (eds.), *Research handbook on authoritarianism*. Northampton: Edward Elgar, 213-227.
- Geographies of authoritarian politics. In A. Wolf (ed.), *Oxford handbook of authoritarian politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 2023 Milk nationalism: Branding dairy and the state in the Arabian Peninsula. In S. Wippel (ed.), *Branding the Middle East: Communication strategies and image building from Qom to Casablanca*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 185-203.
- 2022 Sporting cities and economic diversification in the Arabian Peninsula. In P.M. Brannagan and D. Reiche (eds.), *Routledge handbook of sport in the Middle East*. New York: Routledge, 287-296.
- The political geography of economic nationalism. In A. Pickel (ed.), *Handbook of economic nationalism*. Northampton: Edward Elgar, 14-28.
- Introduction: Spatializing authoritarianism. In N. Koch (ed.), *Spatializing authoritarianism*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1-21.
- 'On the cult of personality and its consequences': American nationalism and the Trump cult. In N. Koch (ed.), *Spatializing authoritarianism*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 194-121.

- Conclusion: Authoritarianism spatialized. In N. Koch (ed.), *Spatializing authoritarianism*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 382-388.
- Urban life in Central Asia. In D. Montgomery (ed.), *Central Asia: Contexts for understanding*. Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 196-213.
- 2021 Rethinking spectacular cities: Beyond authoritarianism and mastermind schemes. In E. Marat and R. Isaacs (eds.), *The Handbook on Contemporary Central Asia*. New York: Routledge, 168-179. (with M. Laszczkowski).
- Environmental geopolitics in Central Asia. In J. Van den Bosch, A. Fauve, and B. De Cordier (eds.), *European handbook of Central Asian studies: History, politics and societies*. Hannover: ibidem, 811-852.
- Deep listening: Practicing intellectual humility in geographic fieldwork. In K. McSweeney and A. WinklerPrins (eds.), *Geographical fieldwork in the 21st century*. New York: Routledge: 52-64. (book reprint of 2020 Geographical Review special issue)
- 2020 Methodological nationalism. In A. Kobayashi (ed.), *The international encyclopedia of human geography* (2nd ed., Vol. 9). Oxford: Elsevier, 245-248.
- Changing geographies of the state: Themes, challenges, futures. In S. Moisis, N. Koch, A. Jonas, J. Luukkonen, C. Lizotte (eds.), *Handbook on the changing geographies of the state: New spaces of geopolitics*. Northampton: Edward Elgar, 1-28 (with S. Moisis, A. Jonas, J. Luukkonen, C. Lizotte).
- InterAsian Islamisms: Monumental mosques and modernity in Kazakhstan and Qatar. In B. Batuman (ed.), *Cities and Islamisms: On the politics and the production of built environment*. New York: Routledge: 15-30.
- 2019 Privilege on the Pearl: The politics of place and the 2016 UCI Road Cycling World Championships in Doha, Qatar. In N. Wise and J. Harris (eds.), *Sporting Events, Places and Societies*. New York: Routledge.
- National Day celebrations in Doha and Abu Dhabi: Cars and semiotic landscapes in the Gulf. In A. Diener and J. Hagen (eds.), *The city as power: Urban space, place, and national identity*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 189-202.
- 2018 Disorder over the border: Spinning the spectre of instability through time and space in Central Asia. In E. Lemon (ed.), *Critical Approaches to Security in Central Asia*. New York: Routledge. (book reprint of 2011 Central Asian Survey special issue)
- 2017 Introduction: Critical geographies of sport in global perspective. In N. Koch (ed.) *Critical geographies of sport: Space, power, and sport in global perspective*. New York: Routledge, 1-11.
- Athletic autocrats: Understanding images of authoritarian leaders as sportsmen. In N. Koch (ed.) *Critical geographies of sport: Space, power, and sport in global perspective*. New York: Routledge, 91-107.
- Conclusion: Toward a critical geography of sport: Space, power, and social justice. In N. Koch (ed.) *Critical geographies of sport: Space, power, and sport in global perspective*. New York: Routledge, 237-252 (with D. Jansson).
- 2016 Cowboys, gangsters, and rural bumpkins: Constructing the 'other' in Kazakhstan's 'Texas.' In M. Laruelle (ed.), *Kazakhstan in the making: Legitimacy, symbols, and social changes*. Lanham: Lexington, 181-207 (with K. White).

Security and gendered national identity in Uzbekistan. In D. Dixon and S. Marston (eds.), *Feminist geopolitics: At the sharp end*. New York: Routledge, 55-74. (book reprint of 2011 GPC special issue)

Oil wealth expands opportunities for women in the Middle East. In M. T. Burnett (ed.), *Natural resource conflicts: From blood diamonds to rainforest destruction (Vol. 1)*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO: 299-302.

A fragile stability in Central Asia. In M. T. Burnett (ed.), *Natural resource conflicts: From blood diamonds to rainforest destruction (Vol. 1)*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO: 400-403.

2015 Domesticating elite education: Raising patriots and educating Kazakhstan's future. In M. Ayoob and M. Ismayilov (eds.), *Identity and foreign policy in Central Asia and the Caucasus*. New York: Routledge, 82-100.

2009 Ivy League and geography in the US. In R. Kitchen and N. Thrift (Eds.) *International encyclopedia of human geography (1st ed.)*. Oxford: Elsevier. Volume 5: 616-621 (with R. Wright).

REVIEWS, COMMENTARIES, POLICY MEMOS, AND MEDIA

In Press Review: Niklas Haller (2025), *Drawing boundaries: Oil, empire, and the making of the Emirati state*. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*.

Review: Christian Henderson (2026), *Monarchies of extraction: The Gulf states in the global food system*. *Journal of Arabian Studies*.

2026 The rise and fall of the US Army Camel Corps. *History Today* 76(1): 20-22.
<https://www.historytoday.com/archive/history-matters/rise-and-fall-us-army-camel-corps>

2025 Digital developmentalism as authoritarian developmentalism. *Dialogues on Digital Society* 1(3): 256-260.

Gulf futures and the World's Fair: A view from Expo 2025 Osaka. *Les Clés du Moyen-Orient*:
<https://www.lescledumoyenorient.com/Gulf-futures-and-the-World-s-Fair-A-view-from-Expo-2025-Osaka.html>

Central Asia relies on Gulf as it targets energy transition. *Bourse & Bazaar Foundation Insight Brief*:
<https://www.bourseandbazaar.com/articles/2025/1/22/central-asia-relies-on-gulf-investment-as-it-targets-energy-transition>

You've probably heard of Western movies — but what about East German Westerns? (April 10). *KJZZ*: <https://www.kjzz.org/the-show/2025-04-10/youve-probably-heard-of-western-movies-but-what-about-east-german-westerns>

Desert geography: The entangled fates of Arizona and the Arabian Peninsula (March 23). *Afikra*:
<https://www.afikra.com/talks/podcast-interview/natalie-koch>

2024 From date palms to alfalfa: How Arizona became fertile ground for Saudi farms (August 28). *AZPM Tapped*: <https://originals.azpm.org/p/tapped3/2024/8/28/221562-from-date-palms-to-alfalfa-how-arizona-became-fertile-ground-for-saudi-farms/>

Gulf AgTech for investment, not food security. *Wilson Center MENA 360°*:
<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/gulf-agtech-investment-not-food-security>

Desert solar—A spectacular fiction, not a spectacular future. *MERIP Middle East Report* 311:
<https://merip.org/2024/07/desert-solar-a-spectacular-fiction-not-a-spectacular-future/>

Opinion: No, the Saudis haven't stopped pumping Arizona groundwater. *Arizona Capitol Times*: <https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2024/03/28/no-the-saudis-havent-stopped-pumping-arizona-groundwater/>

Gulf sport geopolitics and Western cultural hegemony. *AspeniaOnline: International Analysis and Commentary*: <https://aspeniaonline.it/global-sports-and-the-gulfs-sovereign-wealth-funds/>

- Re-printed in Italian: L'offensiva sportiva del Golfo. *Aspenia: Revista di Aspen Institute Italia* 2 (2024): 97-103.

Seeking surprise in political geography. In A. Curley, R. Lee, M. Sollai, S.S. Hughes, B. Meché, M. Lane, and N. Koch, "Review forum: Reading Natalie Koch's, *Arid empire: The entangled fates of Arizona and Arabia*." *Political Geography* 111: 103010.

Solar power's water problem in the Gulf. In M. Haghirián and M. Fantappiè (Eds.), *Avenues for Regional Energy Cooperation in the Gulf* (pp. 34-39). Rome: Istituto Affari Internazionali. <https://www.iai.it/en/pubblicazioni/avenues-regional-energy-cooperation-gulf>

- Pre-printed at: <https://www.bourseandbazaar.com/articles/2023/12/17/solar-powers-water-problem-in-the-gulf> (*Bourse & Bazaar Foundation Insight Brief*, 2023)

Water, water everywhere — But you have to stop and think (February 28). *Freakonomics Radio*: <https://freakonomics.com/podcast/water-water-everywhere-but-you-have-to-stop-and-think/>

2023

The problem with rallying around the (Ukrainian) flag. *Space and Polity* 27(2): 252-256.

Saudi agribusiness thirsty for Arizona's dwindling water (October 4). *The World*: <https://theworld.org/media/2023-10-04/saudi-agribusiness-thirsty-arizonas-dwindling-water>

The seduction of desert spectacles: Talking "Arid Empire" with Natalie Koch and Andrew Curley (July 4). *Public Books*: <https://www.publicbooks.org/the-seduction-of-desert-spectacles-talking-arid-empire-with-natalie-koch-and-andrew-curley/>

Prof. Natalie Koch explores the relationship between Arizona and Saudi Arabia in "Arid Empire" (June 15). *Voices of the Middle East and North Africa*: <https://soundcloud.com/vomekpf-1/prof-natalie-koch-explores-the-relationship-between-arizona-and-saudi-arabia-in-her-book-arid-empire>

Revisiting "For ethnography in political geography." *Political Geography* 102: 102837.

Natalie Koch, *Arid Empire: The Entangled Fates of Arizona and Arabia* (May 22). *New Books Network*: <https://newbooksnetwork.com/arid-empire>

A tale of two deserts: Are Saudi cows to blame for Arizona's water crisis? (May 11). *NHPR Outside/In*: <http://outsideinradio.org/shows/a-tale-of-two-deserts-are-saudi-cows-to-blame-for-arizonas-water-crisis>

Saudi Arabia's thirst for Arizona's water (April 20). *World Affairs, On Shifting Ground with Ray Suarez*: <https://www.worldaffairs.org/media/blog/1065>

Desert politics from Arizona to Arabia, with Natalie Koch (March 23). *The Gateway*: <https://soundcloud.com/user-639102351/desert-politics-from-arizona-to-arabia-with-natalie-goch>

Natalie Koch untangles the weirdly connected environmental fates of Arizona and Saudi Arabia: In conversation with Andrew Keen (March 22). *Lit Hub's Keen On*: <https://lithub.com/natalie-koch-untangles-the-weirdly-connected-environmental-fates-of-arizona-and-saudi-arabia/>

The tangled fates of Arizona and Arabia (March 16). *The Landscape, The Center for Western Priorities*: <https://westernpriorities.org/2023/03/the-tangled-fates-of-arizona-and-arabia/>

We can't engineer our way out of the water crisis in the Southwest US (March 1). *New Scientist*: <https://www.newscientist.com/article/2361721-we-cant-engineer-our-way-out-of-the-water-crisis-in-the-southwest-us/>

After oil: The challenge and promise of getting the world off fossil fuels (February 23). *The Conversation Podcast*: <https://theconversation.com/after-oil-the-challenge-and-promise-of-getting-the-world-off-fossil-fuels-podcast-200512>

Dictating the desert: Plants and settlers take root in a new mythology of Arizona (February 1). *Lapham's Quarterly*: <https://www.laphamsquarterly.org/roundtable/dictating-desert>

Folge 73: Arid Empire: The Entangled Fates of Arizona and Arabia – A Book Talk with Natalie Koch (February 1). *Quo Vadis USA?* <https://www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de/podcasts/index.html>

New book 'Arid Empire' by Natalie Koch explores ties between Saudi and Arizona farmers that go back nearly a century (January 18). *KJZZ*: <https://kjzz.org/content/1836416/ties-between-saudi-and-arizona-farmers-go-back-nearly-century>

Natalie Koch on arid empire, camel colonialism, and desert imaginaries (January 7). *Terrain*: <https://www.terrain.news/p/natalie-koch-on-arid-empire-camel>

Why are Saudi farmers pumping Arizona groundwater? A conversation with Natalie Koch (January 1). *High Country News*: <https://www.hcn.org/issues/55.1/south-interview-why-are-saudi-farmers-pumping-arizona-groundwater>

2022

Guest essay: Arizona is in a race to the bottom of its water wells, with Saudi Arabia's help (December 26). *The New York Times*: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/26/opinion/arizona-water-colorado-river-saudi-arabia.html>

Arizona farmers grew Saudi Arabia's farming empire. Now, the monarchy has a chunk of the state's water (June 17). *12 News, NBC Arizona*: <https://www.12news.com/article/news/local/water-wars/saudi-arabia-arizona-farm-alfalfa-1940/75-c7eb6295-3c5e-4b7e-8989-fbf4d41c6aa7>

Authoritarian space-time. *Political Geography* 95: 102628.

Planting flags in water. *Dialogues in Human Geography* 12(2): 302-306.

Spatializing authoritarianism. *New Books Network, New Books in World Affairs*: <https://newbooksnetwork.com/spatializing-authoritarianism>

Natalie Koch on authoritarianism and cults of personality. *Agora, GW IERES Illiberalism Studies Program*: <https://www.illiberalism.org/natalie-koch-on/>

Global sport and Gulf's sovereign wealth funds. *AspeniaOnline: International Analysis and Commentary*: <https://aspeniaonline.it/global-sports-and-the-gulfs-sovereign-wealth-funds/>

Book review: *Sport, statehood and transition in Europe: Comparative perspectives from post-Soviet and post-socialist societies*. *Eurasian Geography & Economics* 63(2): 302-304.

- 2021 From Beijing to Qatar: The new geopolitics of sports in 2022. *The World in 2022*, Italian Institute for International Political Studies: <https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/beijing-qatar-new-geopolitics-sports-2022-32678>

The Gulf's sovereign wealth fund cities. *AspeniaOnline: International Analysis and Commentary*: <https://aspensiaonline.it/the-gulfs-sovereign-wealth-fund-cities/>

Политическая география Центральной Азии: границы, ресурсы, политика, экология. Интервью с Натали Кох [Political geography of Central Asia: Borders, resources, politics, ecology. Interview with Natalie Koch] (August 10). *Central Asian Analytical Network*: <https://www.caa-network.org/archives/22029>

- 2020 German pigs, and the autocrats who loved them. *Los Angeles Review of Books*: <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/german-pigs-and-the-autocrats-who-loved-them/>

Islamophobia and the uneven legal geographies of ethnonationalism. *Political Geography* 83: 102187 (with N. Vora).

Of spectacle and intertextuality. In: *Review forum: Reading Natalie Koch's 'The geopolitics of spectacle: Space, synecdoche, and the new capitals of Asia'*. *Political Geography* 76: 102043 (with E. Holland, S. Lin, J. Sidaway, P. Das, S. Hughes, R. Mohammad, A. Murphy, A. Simone, C. Sneddon, and G. Toal).

Book review: Dan Rabinowitz, *The Power of Deserts: Climate Change, the Middle East, and the Promise of a Post-Oil Era*. *Review of Middle East Studies* 54(2): 360-362.

- 2019 Unboxing Central Asian studies. In: *Book Discussion: Review of Natalie Koch, The Geopolitics of Spectacle: Space, Synecdoche, and the New Capitals of Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018). *Central Asian Affairs* 6 (4): 327-341 (with S. Harris-Brandts, D. Kudaibergenova, and M. Laszczkowski).

Spectacular cities (March 13). Interview for BBC Radio 4, *Thinking Allowed*: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00035p8>

Critical geographies of sport: Space, power, and sport in global perspective. Interview with *New Books Network*, *New Books on Sport*: <https://newbooksnetwork.com/natalie-koch-critical-geographies-of-sport-space-power-and-sport-in-global-perspective-routledge-2017>

- 2018 Book review: Rokem and Boano (eds.), *Urban Geopolitics: Rethinking Planning in Contested Cities*. *Eurasian Geography & Economics* 59 (3-4): 554-556.

Sports and heritage in the UAE (December 15). *LSE Middle East Centre Blog*: <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/mec/2018/08/03/gulf-nationalism-and-invented-traditions/>

Renewables in Kazakhstan and Russia: Promoting 'future energy' or entrenching hydrocarbon dependency? *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* #538: <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/renewables-kazakhstan-russia-future-energy-or-entrenching-hydrocarbon> (with V-P Tynkkynen).

The geopolitics of renewables in Kazakhstan. *George Washington University Central Asia Program Memo* #211: <http://centralasiaprogram.org/archives/12555>

How global sporting events run on bribes & help dictators (June 11). Podcast interview with *Cracked*: <https://www.cracked.com/podcast/how-global-sporting-events-run-bribes-help-dictators/>

Trophy hunting. Podcast interview with UVA's *Global Inquirer*: <https://soundcloud.com/user-825537515/trophy-hunting>

The World Cup and migration: Looking ahead to Qatar 2022 (August 20). *Jadaliyya*: <http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/37872/The-World-Cup-and-Immigration-Looking-Ahead-to-Qatar-2022> (with N. Vora).

Gulf nationalism and invented traditions (August 3). *LSE Middle East Centre Blog*: <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/mec/2018/08/03/gulf-nationalism-and-invented-traditions/>

Ikonisches Ashgabat: Die monumentale Logik der turkmenischen Hauptstadt als politisches Symbol [Iconic Ashgabat: The monumental logic of Turkmenistan's capital as a political symbol]. *Zentralasien-Analysen* 125: 7-10: <http://www.laender-analysen.de/zentralasien/pdf/ZentralasienAnalysen125.pdf>

Book review forum: *The Great Baseball Revolt: The Rise and Fall of the 1890 Players League*. *AAG Review of Books* 6(2): 141-153 (with D. Mitchell, B. Gardener, N. Conner, M. Gripshover, M. Friedman, M. Huber, and B. Ross).

Trump, one year later: Three myths of liberalism exposed. In "Reassessing the Trump presidency, one year on." *Political Geography* 62: 207-215 (with P. Steinberg, S. Page, J. Dittmer, B. Gökariksel, S. Smith, A. Ingram).

2017 Book review: *States of discipline: Authoritarian neoliberalism and the contested reproduction of capitalist order*. *Antipode Foundation*: https://radicalantipode.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/book-review_koch-on-tansel.pdf

Qatar and Central Asia: What's at stake in Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan? *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* #484: <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/qatar-and-central-asia-whats-stake-tajikistan-turkmenistan-and-kazakhstan>

Orientalizing authoritarianism: Narrating US exceptionalism in popular reactions to the Trump election and presidency. *Political Geography* 58: 145-147.

Geopower and geopolitics in, of, and for the Middle East. *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49(2): 315-318.

Book review: Benjamin Smith, *Market Orientalism: Cultural economy and the Arab Gulf States*. *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49(1): 195-197.

2016 Restructuring extractive economies in the Caspian basin: Too little, too late? *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* #441: <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/restructuring-extractive-economies-caspian-basin-too-little-too-late> (with A. Valiyev).

- Reprinted on Russian-language newspaper *RBK Daily* at: <http://www.rbc.ru/opinions/politics/23/12/2016/585cd55e9a7947598745ccaa>

La fauconnerie, un 'sport-héritage' dans la péninsule arabique [Falconry as a 'heritage sport' in the Arabian Peninsula]. *Conflits : Revue de géopolitique* 10: 60-61.

Why no 'water wars' in Central Asia? Lessons learned from the Aral Sea disaster. *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* #410: <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/why-no-water-wars-central-asia-aral-sea-disaster>

Spatializing everyday anthropology: A response to Svetlana Peshkova's *Women, Islam, and Identity: Public Life in Private Spaces in Uzbekistan*. *Central Asian Affairs* 3(1): 84-87.

- 2015 The Sochi syndrome afoot in Central Asia: Spectacle and speculative building in Baku, Astana, and Ashgabat. *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* #371: <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/sochi-syndrome-afoot-central-asia-building-baku-astana-and-ashgabat> (with A. Valiyev).
 ■ Reprinted on openDemocracy at: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/sochi-syndrome/>
- 2014 *The Birth of Territory*: Should political geographers do conceptual history? *Dialogues in Human Geography* 4(3): 348-351.
- Book review: *Ethnographies of the state in Central Asia: Performing politics*. *Central Asian Survey* 33(4): 566-568.
- Grounding Central Asian geopolitics. *Geopolitics* 19(1): 227-233.
- Book review: *Globalizing Central Asia: Geopolitics and the challenges of economic development*. *Central Asian Survey* 33(1): 115-116.
- Reading John Agnew and Luca Muscarà's *Making Political Geography*. *Political Geography* 38: 46-56 (with V. Mamadouh, E. dell'Agnese, T. Yamazaki, C. Flint, L. Muscarà, and J. Agnew)
- 2013 Technologizing complacency: Spectacle, structural violence, and 'living normally' in a resource-rich state, *Political Geography* 37: A1-A2.
- 2009 Book review: *Palgrave concise historical atlas of Central Asia*. *Central Asian Survey* 28(3): 335-336.
-

RECENT PRESENTATIONS & LECTURES

- 2026 The façades of authoritarian developmentalism: Selling techno-futures and state capitalism in the Gulf. Invited lecture at conference "Façade Politics," Council on East Asian Studies, Yale University. New Haven, CT. May 9.
- Arid empire and extractive ecologies. Invited lecture at conference "Globalized ecologies: California and the Middle East," Department of Middle Eastern Studies, University of Southern California, Dornsife. Los Angeles, CA. April 23.
- 2025 Authoritarian developmentalism and urban techno-futures in the Gulf. Keynote address, Inaugural Alexander B. Murphy Distinguished Geography Lectureship, Department of Geography, University of Oregon. Eugene, OR. October 16.
- Green colonialism from the Gulf: GCC energy investments in Central Asia. Conference presentation, "Green colonialism and green sacrifice: critical perspectives on the politics of green transitions," Johns Hopkins University - Universitat Pompeu Fabra Public Policy Center. Barcelona, Spain. July 4.
- EXPO 2025 and the geopolitics of the future. Invited lecture, Department of Geography, Osaka Metropolitan University. Osaka, Japan. May 24.

Authoritarian developmentalism and urban techno-futures in the Gulf. Invited talk, “‘Technically Urban’: Emerging Intersections between Technology, Society, and the City” workshop, Department of Sociology, University of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh, PA. April 23.

Gulf post-oil energy diplomacy in Central Asia. Invited talk, “Crude awakening: Central Asia’s post-carbon future” conference, Center for Eurasian, Russian, and East European Studies, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University. Washington, D.C. April 11.

Arid empire: The entangled fates of Arizona and Arabia. Invited lecture, Center for Middle East and North Africa Studies Lecture Series, Binghamton University/SUNY. Binghamton, NY. March 20.

Nationalism & the politics of authoritarianism. Invited lecture, Loughborough University Nationalism Network. Loughborough, UK (via Zoom). March 12.

- Available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbTD1yDgmSI>

2024 Authoritarian state power and the green nationalism in the UAE. Invited colloquium lecture, GeoSpectives, McGill University. Montreal, Canada. November 1.

Arid empire: A conversation with author Natalie Koch. Seminar presentation for “DESERTING: Power and resistance in arid lands,” Online Talk Series. Altar Centro de Investigación. Altar, Mexico (via Zoom). October 24.

Arid empire: A conversation with Natalie Koch. Invited webinar, Huntington-USC Institute on California and West, University of Southern California. Los Angeles, CA (via Zoom). September 17.

- Available online at: <https://vimeo.com/1010421047/80a73719f0>

Green nationalism from above: Authoritarian state power and the greening of UAE nationalism. Presentation at “Lifeworlds of Energy and Environment in the Gulf,” 34th Exeter Gulf Conference. University of Exeter. Exeter, UK. June 28.

Unbounding Central Asia: Geopolitics from below and global connections. Invited keynote, Tartu Conference on East European and Eurasian Studies, University of Tartu. Tartu, Estonia. June 20.

The Gulf countries growing engagement in Central Asia: Current state and implications. Invited panelist for the Strategic Dialogue on Central Asia Virtual Seminar, DGAP (German Council on Foreign Relations) and Davis Center for Russian & Eurasian Studies, Harvard University. Cambridge, MA, via Zoom. June 19.

Hidden histories of U.S. Gulf science diplomacy. Work-in-Progress Fellow Seminar, Wilson Center. Washington, D.C. April 30.

Arid empire: The entangled fates of Arizona and Arabia. Invited talk, Arizona Author Series, Arizona State Library. Phoenix, AZ (via Zoom). March 15.

ADVISING & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

CURRENT SERVICE

- 2024- **Member**, Associate Professor Mentoring Committees (x3), SU Dept. of Geography and the Environment
- 2023- **Director of Undergraduate Studies**, SU Dept. of Geography and the Environment
- 2017- **Member**, Leadership Council of the Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs, SU Maxwell School

2017- **Director**, Central Asia and the Caucasus Initiative, SU Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Association of American Geographers (AAG)
- Association for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies (AGAPS)
- Middle Eastern Studies Association (MESA)

EDITORIAL BOARDS

- *Eurasian Geography & Economics* (Taylor & Francis, since Spring 2018)
- *Geography Compass* (Wiley, since Summer 2022)
- *GeoJournal* (Springer, since Spring 2018)
- *Geopolitics* (Taylor & Francis, since Summer 2018)
- *Nationalities Papers* (Cambridge University Press, since Fall 2018)
- *Political Geography* (Elsevier, since Spring 2021)

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, & AWARDS

- 2026 Middle Eastern Studies Undergrad Research Assistantship Award, SU Maxwell School Moynihan Institute
- 2025 Advanced Seminar Grant, New Mexico School of Advanced Research (Dec. 2026)
- 2025 Middle Eastern Studies Undergrad Research Grant, SU Maxwell School Moynihan Institute (\$1500)
- 2024 Minghi Distinguished Book Award, Political Geography Specialty Group (AAG)
- 2024 Appleby-Mosher Fund for Research Grant, SU Maxwell School (\$2000)
- 2023 Wilson Center Fellowship (2023-24)
- 2023 Middle Eastern Studies Program Faculty Research Grant, SU Maxwell School Moynihan Institute (\$2000)
- 2021 Potsdam Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS-Potsdam) Fellowship (2022-23)
- 2021 Middle Eastern Studies Program Faculty Research Grant, SU Maxwell School Moynihan Institute (\$2000)
- 2020 South Asia Center Curriculum Grant, SU Maxwell School Moynihan Institute (\$1500)
- 2019 Appleby-Mosher Fund for Research Grant, SU Maxwell School (\$1500)
- 2019 Duke Global Asia Initiative & SSRC InterAsia Program, Transregional Research Junior Scholar Fellowship Consolidation Grant (2020)
- 2019 SU Collaboration for Unprecedented Success and Excellence (CUSE) Grant, Syracuse University (2019-21)
- 2018 Humboldt Fellowship for Experienced Researchers, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (2019-21)
- 2018 Merget Fellowship, Maxwell-in-Washington, Syracuse University (2019-20)
- 2018 Fulbright Core Scholars, Middle East & North Africa Regional Research (UAE, Qatar) (2019-20)
- 2018 Visiting Fellows Alumni Grant, Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki (2018)
- 2017 O'Hanley Faculty Scholar, SU Maxwell School (2017-2020)

PRE-TENURE

- 2017 Pre-proposal Research Grant, Department of Geography, Syracuse University (\$2500)
- 2016 Daniel Patrick Moynihan Award for Outstanding Teaching, Research and Service (SU Maxwell School)
- 2016 Meredith Professors' Teaching Recognition Award (Syracuse University)
- 2015 SU Office of Sponsored Programs Small Grants Competition (\$8000)
- 2015 Fulbright Core Faculty Teaching Fellowship in Azerbaijan, US State Department (*declined*)
- 2015 NSF Catalyzing New International Collaborations (\$10,899)
- 2014 Political Geography Specialty Group Stanley D. Brunn Young Scholar Award (AAG)

- 2014 Appleby-Mosher / Wasylenko Faculty Research Grant, SU Maxwell School (\$600)
- 2014 Central Asia Fellowship, Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki (€2600)
- 2013 SSRC Postdoctoral Fellowship for Transregional Research (\$31,000)
- 2013 Pre-proposal Research Grant, Department of Geography, Syracuse University (\$2500)
- 2012 Appleby-Mosher Fund for Research Grant, SU Maxwell School (\$1200)
- 2012 Political Geography Specialty Group Graduate Student Paper Award, 1st Place (AAG)
- 2012 Urban Geography Specialty Group Graduate Student Paper Award, 1st Place (AAG)
- 2011 NSF and Academy of Finland Nordic Research Opportunity at University of Oulu (\$5000)
- 2010 NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant (\$12,000)
- 2010 Millar Graduate Student Prize, 1st Place (National Council for East European & Eurasian Research)
- 2010 Russian & Eurasian Specialty Group Graduate Student Paper Award, 1st Place (AAG)
- 2010 Graduate Student Affinity Group Paper Award, 1st Place (AAG)
- 2009 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Recipient (\$30,000/year + tuition for 3 years)
- 2009 IREX Individual Advanced Research Opportunities Program (\$8000)
- 2008 Geography Department Fellowship Award (University of Colorado, Boulder)
- 2007 Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship, Russian (Harvard)
- 2007 Davis Center for Russian & Eurasian Studies Fainsod Prize (Harvard)