

Masterarbeit:

Geographies of transnational solidarity

Although the nation-state remains the predominant framework for political belonging, many non-state actors have sought to articulate care, solidarity, and justice through transnational networks. In Switzerland in 2022, this has taken many forms: “No War” flags hung up in denunciation of the Ukraine war; [punk music](#) composed and performed in support of Myanmar’s resistance; demonstrations in solidarity with protesters in Iran. But Switzerland is not new to transnational solidarity. In the latter half of the 20th century, the country accepted Tibetan and Tamils refugees in the latter half of the 20th century, who were fleeing war and repression back home. These communities continue to spearhead [solidarity movements](#) today.

Students are **invited to research the geographies of transnational solidarity from various angles**. This research can be historical or contemporary, and can take various forms. In so doing, they will contribute to literature on “anti-geopolitics” and related fields, which show how grassroots actors are imagining and enacting alternatives to the dominant global order (see e.g. Keck and Sikkink 1998; Lawreniuk 2022; Rahbari 2001; Routledge et al. 2007). From the perspective of these movements, students may also choose to critique dominant notions of neutrality and nationhood in Switzerland.



Figure 1. A mural at Photobastei, Zurich, painted in support of the resistance in Myanmar, by Cup of Color ([@cupofcolor.ngo](https://www.cupofcolor.ngo)) and volunteers, including the Myanmar diaspora.

This topic is very open, and students are welcome to choose any framing, methodology, and case study that they are interested in. For instance, students may choose to conduct interviews or participant observation with people in Switzerland engaged in these movements. They may also choose to adopt various lenses on the issue, from feminist approaches to care (Silk 2004), to anticolonial approaches to internationalism (Featherstone 2012). Nonetheless, here are some suggested questions:

- How do transnational solidarity movements challenge dominant notions of the nation, state, borders, and/or territory?
- What relations do transnational solidarity movements form across space?
- What kinds of identities form and/or are contested through transnational solidarity?
- How do transnational solidarity movements challenge conventional framings of the Swiss federation and Switzerland’s understanding of its place in the world?
- How do movement participants navigate the ambivalences, challenges, and contradictions of their work – e.g. burnout, stress, privilege, and the challenges of speaking “for” or “with” another?

Language: English

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References

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