

Meusburger Receives AAG Presidential Achievement Award

Professor Peter Meusburger of the University of Heidelberg, Germany, is the recipient of the 2010 AAG Presidential Achievement Award. The award will be presented prior to the Past President John Agnew's address on Thursday, April 15, at the 2010 AAG Annual Meeting in Washington D.C. The Presidential Achievement Award recognizes individuals who have made long-standing and distinguished contributions to the discipline of geography.

A frequent participant in AAG Annual Meetings since the 1980s, Meusburger has single-handedly established a strong set of ties between English- and German-medium geography. Through the annual Hettner Lectures he established at the University of Heidelberg, he brought American and British geographers to Germany for a week of lectures and seminars from 1997 to 2007, with funding from the Klaus Tschira Foundation. Intensive seminars on Space and Knowledge under the same auspices began in 2007. These initiatives have opened up institutional linkages and established cross-national personal networks that are benefiting the discipline as a whole.

Meusburger, whose higher education was entirely at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, has a long history of scholarship and service to geography in Germany and beyond. He has been an important figure

in the intellectual revival of German-language geography, moving it away from its largely applied focus in the post-World War II years and encouraging doctoral students to expand the range of their studies beyond Germany and to actively engage with foreign geographers.

From 1983 until 2007, Meusburger was Director of the Department of Geography at the University of Heidelberg. By way of example, his own research on the social and economic geographies of Hungary is remarkable for its theoretical depth and empirical rigor, an example of which is the co-edited book *Transformations in Hungary: Essays in Economy and Society* (2001). At the same time, he has also supervised a large number of master's and doctoral students who have become important disciplinary leaders in their own right. They now occupy university positions outside of the German-speaking countries as well as in major institutions in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria.

Finally, Meusburger's individual contribution to scholarship on the geography of knowledge and education has been central to a field that has only recently come into its own in the English-speaking world. He has emphasized the ways in which knowledge is



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formed in geographical settings and circuits and circulates according to rules and rubrics that reflect geo-economic and geopolitical orders and hierarchies. Some of his most important recent publications include *Bildungsgeographi: Wissen und Ausbildung in der räumlichen Dimension* (1998) and the co-edited *Clashes of Knowledge* (2008) and *Milieus of Creativity: An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Spatiality of Creativity* (2009).

Since 2007, Meusburger has been Distinguished Senior Professor at the University of Heidelberg. From 2001-03 he was President of the Society of German Geographers. His honors and awards include visiting professorships and fellowships in Hungary, England, Brazil, and the U.S. (Clark University), the Franz von Hauer Medal of the Austrian Geographical Society, and the Honorary Ring of the Austrian President.

At a time when it has become fashionable to talk about internationalizing the academic curriculum and acknowledging that the field of geography is not reasonably restricted by political borders, Peter Meusburger's initiatives and activities represent what can be achieved through serious intellectual commitment and hard work on behalf of a more internationalized geography. ■