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Propositions accompanying the thesis

Transparency from Space? How Non-Governmental Actors Use Satellite Imagery for Security Governance

by

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1. The commercialization of high-resolution satellite imagery enables non-governmental actors to monitor various security threats including nuclear programs, human rights violations, disasters and environmental degradation.

2. Much of International Relations theory focuses on social concepts. Socio-material approaches to security introduce a sensibility to the power of objects, highlight the importance of relations among (non-)human entities, and question the prevalent divide between the human and the material, and politics and technology.

3. Socio-material approaches to security represent a diverse research program that draws on a variety of disciplines and research traditions. Accordingly, they sometimes alienate other security scholars because of their lack of methodological clarity, peculiar terminology and metaphor-laden descriptions.

4. Making explicit theoretical concepts in combination with ground theory methods serve as a useful complement to structure and guide data collection and analysis of socio-material studies of security.

5. Human and technological factors interact in non-governmental remote sensing to create security problematizations from the bottom up. The potentials and constraints of satellite technology co-produce security threats and render them credible.

6. The different actualization of the potential of commercial satellite imagery bears four distinct modes of non-governmental remote sensing.

7. Non-governmental remote sensing understands transparency as the amount of publicly available information on a security threat and seeks to maximize transparency driven by the conviction that it helps to bring about peace and security in global politics.

8. Non-governmental remote sensing forces transparency, blurs the lines between transparency and surveillance and brings about various complications for the governance of security.

9. "The exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and shall be the province of all mankind." (Article 1, Outer Space Treaty of 1967).