Cover concept: the state as abstraction

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From the theoretical starting point that the state is an abstraction, this cover image abstracts our world borders by rotating, reflecting and repeating regions of the earth so that the geographic landmarks are illegible. This was done by sectioning the Mercator projection into a grid of equal rectangles, rearranging each of the rectangles and changing their orientation. This allows the highly recognizable shapes of the Earth's geography, to instead become something unrecognizable and new. Doing so sheds light on the highly political practice of defining state-based geopolitics through arbitrary lines imposed on our world maps. This delineation often disregards natural habitats, divides people groups and fractures landscapes. On a macro scale, our view of the world map is flawed; as many projective maps skew reality, this cover skews it even more. The image also conjures up the impression of viewing the world state system from behind bars – or what we might understand as the geographer's traditional grid-making tools – which highlights how we, as citizens and scholars, are prisoners of our culture, tradition, canonized thoughts, as well as of the will to order this messy world we call home.