

Syllabus of Politics and Space

Where does politics take place? How are political spaces constituted? Are they always a priori fixed or a product of social interactions? How has the relationship between politics and space changed in the digital era? Is Offline-politics the same as Online-politics? Where exactly does Online-politics take place? Since the »spatial turn« in the 1980ies the notion space has gained much attention in western cultural and social science. The integration of post-Marxist, post-colonial and post-structural approaches has led to a new understanding of space which is now seen as a product of social interaction (see Henri Lefebvre). In political science, especially in International Relations, however, many analyses still rely on a static definition of spatiality. The place of politics remains the nation-state. Even new challenges or crises such as the European refugee crises are often responded to with the use of traditional political instruments (for instance, the refocus on powers and borders of the nation-states within the EU). Furthermore, new spaces of political articulation in the digital sphere (like for example social media and networks) exist parallel to traditional spaces (city, states, international organization, etc.). In the long-term, this overlap also demands for a new definition of politics. In this seminar, we hence deal with the important relationship between politics and space. By recurring to central texts of political philosophy, we try to understand main features of the notions space and politics. In a second step, we analyze how these notions are used (and produced) in current affairs. We focus on different spatial scales – global, national, urban and digital.

Type of Course: Seminar

Expectation of students: Active Participation, Presentation/Group Work, Written Essay (1,500 words)

Assessment: Participation (10%), Group Work + Written Essay (90%)

Reading list

There are several thematic blocs in this seminar. We discuss how the notions space and politics are used in very different contexts (national, urban, regional, international/global and digital sphere). We are using various kinds of material: academic literature (philosophy, sociology, political science, etc), short stories (mostly Chinese Science Fiction), movies and real-life projects.

Reading List:

Agnew, J. 199. The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory. *Review of International Political Economy* 1(1): 53-800.

Arendt, H. 1958. *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press: Chapt. 2.

Castells, M. 2000. *Toward a Sociology of the Network Society*. *Contemporary Sociology*, 29 (5): 693-699.

Castells, M. 2008. *The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance*. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1): -93.

Chen Qiufan 2015, *The Smog Society*, available here: <http://www.lightspeedmagazine.com/fiction/the-smog-society/>

(陈楸帆 . 霾 – Chinese Translation available)

Coaffey, J. et al. 2009. *The Visibility of (In)security: the Aesthetics of Planning Urban Defences Against Terrorism*. *Security Dialogue* 40, nos 4-5: 489-511.

Deleuze, G. 1992. *Postscripts on the Societies of Control*. *October* 59:3-7.

Floridi, L. 2014. *The 4th Revolution. How the INfosphere is Reshaping Human Reality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: Chap. 2.

Godehardt, N. 2014. *The Chinese Constitution of Central Asia. Regions and Intertwined Actors in International Relations*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan: Chap.3.

Godehardt, N. 2016. *No End of History. A Chinese Alternative Concept of International Order*. SWP Research Paper 2. Online.

Habermas, J. 1991. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press: Introduction.

Hao Jingfang 2016. *Folding Beijing* (translated by Ken Liu). In: *Invisible Planets: 13 Visions of the Future from China*. London: Head of Zeus Ltd.: 219-263.

(郝景芳 2012. *北京折叠* Chinese translation available)

Lefebvre, H. 1991. *The Production of Space*. Cambridge, MA. Basil Blackwell, Ltd.

Lefebvre, H. 2003. *Space and the State*. In: Neil Brenner, et al. *State/Space*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing: 84-101.

Lewis, M. and Wigen, K.E. 1997. *The Myth of Continents. A Critique of Metageography*, London: University of California: Introduction, Chap 2, Chap 6.

Mouffe, C. 2008. *Art as public issue: how art and its institutions reinvent the public dimension*. *Open* 14: 6-15.

Muller, B. et al. 2016. *Collective Discussion: Ferocious Architecture: Sovereign Spaces/Places by Design*. *International Political Sociology* 10: 75-96.

Postel-Vinay, K. 2007. *The Historicity of the International Region: Revisiting the "Europe and the Rest" Divide*. *Geopolitics* 12(S4): 555-569.

Rid, T. *Rise of the Machines: A Cybernetic History*. WW Norton &CO: Chapter on Space.

Ruggie, J.G. 1993. Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations. *International Organization* 4 (1): 139-174.

Movies:

Minority Report (2002, Steven Spielberg)

Divergent (2014, Neil Burger)

Project:

<http://www.ecolandclub.com/>

<https://vimeo.com/81077935>

(also on Weixin)