

**Geography 533  
2010/11, Term 2**

**Political Geography:  
Subjectivity and Territoriality**

**Class meets:** Wed. 9-12, Room Geography 223

**Instructor:** Merje Kuus.

Room 235

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Office Hours: Wed. 1:30-2:30 p.m.

**Course description:**

This course is concerned with the ways in which political practice is bound up with geographical definition – with spatially defined conceptions of inside and outside, center and margin, Self and Other. Within this broad problematic, the readings focus on two themes: subjectivity and territoriality. We will explore how individual and collective subjects are produced and how such productive processes unfold spatially. The debates sparked by these questions extend well beyond political geography. The readings draw from various subfields of human geography as well as international relations, sociology, political theory, and anthropology. The essays are selected not only to offer interesting arguments but also to explicitly take us inside several philosophical and methodological debates in geography and in the social sciences more broadly. As will be apparent below, methodological questions about materiality, causality, and evidence will come up throughout the course.

In exploring the above themes, we will first (in January 19-February 2) examine how power regulates social life from the interior – through the creation of subjects and the creative efforts of these subjects – and how this happens spatially. I would particularly like to clarify (on February 9 and 23) the role of policy professionals in the production of political space and the difficulties of studying that role. We will then investigate the production and management of difference at multiple scales. Much of political practice involves demarcating ‘our’ space and ‘theirs’, and specifying how ‘their’ place is different from ‘ours’ (and thereby possibly a threat to ‘us’). The readings here (in March 2-23) focus on the construction of territorial and non-territorial identities, the role of danger from the ‘outside’ in the consolidation of the putative community ‘inside’, and the possibilities of resistance within these processes. Throughout, we will try to make sense of both the constructed nature and the tangible effects of identity claims. Toward the end of the course (on March 30 and April 6), we will concentrate explicitly on methodological questions about research practice and the positionality of the researcher. The goal here is not to learn research techniques as such; rather, we will engage with some of the thorny debates that underpin the various techniques.

**Readings:** All course readings will be on reserve at the Geographic Information Centre (GIC) on the first floor of the geography building (Room Geography 112).

**Assessment:**

Research paper (15 pages double-spaced plus references): 50%. Due on April 21 at 3pm in the departmental office.

Brief discussion points on readings: 25%. I ask you to write two comments or criticisms on the readings assigned for each class. (This amounts to a total of 11 responses, one set of two responses for each weekly set of readings.) These are intended to facilitate discussion. The responses should not be long, a paragraph per comment. *These are due in class on the day that the particular readings are discussed. If you miss the class for any reason, I will not accept the responses for that week.*

Class participation: 25%

Assessment will be based on one research paper, short comments on readings as outlined above, and class participation. The research paper can be on any topic insofar as it engages with the themes and issues discussed in the class.

**Discussion topics and readings (subject to minor changes):**

**January 5. Introduction.**

No reading.

**January 12. NO CLASS.**

No reading

**January 19. Sovereignty**

Arendt, Hannah. 1985 [1967]. The perplexities of the Rights of Man. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt, pp. 290-302.

Agamben, Giorgio. 1998. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, pp. 1-30; 119-143; 166-180

Connolly, William E. 2004. The complexity of sovereignty. In Jenny Edkins, Veronique Pin-Fat, and Michael Shapiro (eds.) *Sovereign Lives: Power in Global Politics*, London: Routledge. pp. 23-40.

**January 26. Territoriality**

Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri. 2000. 1.2 World order, pp. 3-21; 1.2. Biopolitical production 22-41 and 2.6. Imperial sovereignty, pp. 183-204, In *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Agnew, John. 2005. Ch. 2: Hegemony vs. empire, pp. 12-37, and Ch. 3: American hegemony and the new geography of power, pp. 37-70. In *Hegemony: The New Shape of Global Power*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

## **February 2. Governmentality**

Foucault, Michel. 1991. Governmentality, in G. Burchell, C. Gordon, and P. Miller (eds.). *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 53-72.

Rose, Nikolas. 1992. Governing the enterprising self. In Heelas, Paul, and Paul Morris. *The Values of the Enterprise Culture: The Moral Debate*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 141-164.

Dunn, Elizabeth C. 2005. Standards and person-making in east-central Europe. In Aihwa Ong and Stephen Collier eds. *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 173-193.

Bondi, Liz. 2005. Working the spaces of neoliberal subjectivity: psychotherapeutic technologies, professionalization and counseling. *Antipode* 37: 498-514.

## **February 9. Professionals of geopolitics: cooptation and agency**

Arendt, Hannah. 2006 [1963] The accused, and An expert on the Jewish question. In *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. London: Penguin, pp. 21-55.

Cohn, Carol. 1987. Sex and death in the rational world of defense intellectuals. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol.12, no.4, pp.687-718.

Goldman, Michael. 2005. 'Producing green science inside headquarters', in *Imperial Nature: The World Bank and Struggles for Social Justice in the Age of Globalization*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. 100-150.

Gusterson, Hugh. 2004. Becoming a weapons scientist. In *People of the Bomb: Portraits of America's Nuclear Complex*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 3-20.

## **February 16. Reading Break. NO CLASS.**

## **February 23. Studying policy: methodological dilemmas**

Barry, Andrew, and Walters, William. 2003. 'From EURATOM to 'Complex Systems': technology and European government.' *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 28(3): 305-329.

Neumann, Iver B. 2007. 'A speech that the entire ministry may stand for,' or: why diplomats never produce anything new. *International Political Sociology* 1, 183-200.

Jackson, Patrick Thaddeus. 2008. Can ethnographic techniques tell us distinctive things about world politics. *International Political Sociology*, 2 (1) 91-93.

Vrasti, Wanda. 2008. The strange case of ethnography and International Relations. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 37 (2) 279-301.

Schwegler, Tara A. 2008. Trading up: reflections on power, collaboration, and ethnography in the anthropology of policy. *Anthropology in Action* 15 (2): 10-25.

One possible addition

### **March 2. Identity/difference**

Connolly, William E. 2002. Confessing Identity/Belonging to Difference. In *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press (Expanded edition), pp. xiii-xxxi.

O'Tuathail, Gearoid, and John Agnew. 1992. Geopolitics and discourse: practical geopolitical reasoning in American foreign policy. *Political Geography* 11: 190-204.

Campbell, David. 1993. Ch. 1. War stories, in *Politics Without Principle: Sovereignty, Ethics, and the Narratives of the Gulf War*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner. pp. 7-20

Campbell, David. 1999. Apartheid geography: the political anthropology and spatial effects of international diplomacy in Bosnia. *Political Geography*, 18: 395-435.

### **March 9. Nation/culture**

Holmes, Douglas. 2000. Ch. 1 Inner landscapes, Ch. 2 Flowering of cultures, in. *Integral Europe: fast-capitalism, multiculturalism, neofascism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 1-16; 19-36;

Stolcke, Verena. 1995. Talking culture: new boundaries, new rhetorics of exclusion in Europe *Current Anthropology* 63(1): 1-24 (including responses)

Billig, Michael. 1995. Introduction. In *Banal Nationalism*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 1-12.

Brubaker, Rogers. 2004. In the Name of the Nation: Reflections on Nationalism and Patriotism. *Citizenship Studies*, 8 (2): 115-127.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 2006. Kindness to Strangers, in *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. New York: Norton, pp. 155-174.

### **March 16. Violence and security**

Hardt, Michael, and Negri, Antonio. 2004. 1.1. Simplissimus, 1.2. Counterinsurgencies, in *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. New York, NY: Penguin, pp. 3-62.

Zizek, Slavoj. 2002. Passions of the real, passions of semblance. In *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*. London, Verso, pp. 5-32.

Der Derian, James. 2001. Prologue, Ch. 4. Simulation triangle, in *Virtuous War: Mapping the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Complex*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp. xi-xxii; 13-47.

Bigo, Didier. 2007. 'Detention of Foreigners, States of Exception, and the Social Practices of Control of the Banopticon.' In Rajaram, Prem Kumar and Grundy-Warr, Carl (eds) *Borderscapes: Hidden Geographies and Politics at Territory's Edge*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 3-34.

### **March 23. Conformity/Resistance**

Scott, James. 1990. Domination, acting, and fantasy. In *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 17-44.

Rose, Mitch. 2002. The seductions of resistance: power, politics, and a performative style of systems. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20: 383-400

Bennett, Jane. 1992. Kundera, Coetzee and the politics of anonymity, in *Politics and Irony*, eds. J. Seery and D. Conway. New York: St. Martin's Press, pp 151-170.

Zizek, Slavoj. 2002. Happiness after September 11. In *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*. London, Verso pp. 58-82.

Zizek, Slavoj. 2008. Tolerance as an ideological category, in *Violence*. New York: Picador, pp. 140-177.

### **March 30. Discourse and practice: methodological dilemmas (again)**

Wyly, Elvin. 2009. Strategic positivism. *The Professional Geographer*, Vol. 61 No. 3, pp. 310-322.

Thrift, Nigel. 2000. It's the little things. In Dodds, Klaus, and David Atkinson (eds). *Geopolitical Traditions: A Century of Geopolitical Thought*. London: Routledge, pp. 380-387.

Brubaker, Rogers, and Frederick Cooper. 2000. Beyond 'identity'. *Theory and Society* 29(1), 1-47.

Pouliot, Vincent. 2007. "Subjectivism": towards a constructivist methodology. *International Studies Quarterly* 51, 359-384.

Agnew, John A. 1999. Regions on the mind does not equal regions of the mind. *Progress in Human Geography*, vol.23, no.1, pp.91-96.

## **April 6. Regional expertise and positionality**

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1997. The unintended consequences of Cold War area studies. In Noam Chomsky et al. *The Cold War and the University: Toward an Intellectual History of the Postwar Years*. New York: The Free Press, pp. 195-232.

Yiftachel, Oren. 2003. Editorial: relocating 'the critical'? reflections from Israel/Palestine. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 21: 137-142.

Timar, Judit. 2004. "More than 'Anglo-American', it is 'Western' hegemony in geography from a Hungarian perspective." *Geoforum*, vol.35, no.5, pp.533-538.

Sidaway, James. D. 2000. Postcolonial geographies: an exploratory essay. *Progress in Human Geography* 24(4): 591-612.

Agnew, John. 2007. Know-where: geographies of knowledge of world politics. *International Political Sociology* I, 138-148.

Agnew, John. 2006. Open to surprise? *Progress in Human Geography* 30 (1): 1-4.

**Final paper due at the departmental office at 3pm on April 15.**