

## Descriptif d'enseignement / *Course descriptions*

Etudiants internationaux / International undergraduate program

2022-2023

### Titre du cours

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## ***SPACE AND POWER***

Type de cours : Cours magistral

Langue du cours/Language of instruction : Anglais

### Enseignant(s) – *Professor(s)*

Nom Prénom Hubbard Anne-christine

Titre ou profession MCF Université de Lille

Contact : [anne-christine.hubbard@univ-lille.fr](mailto:anne-christine.hubbard@univ-lille.fr)

### Résumé du cours – Objectifs - *Course description – Targets*

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The aim of the course is to reflect on the relationship between space and power: how space shapes and determines certain forms of power, and how power in turn takes on specific spatial dimensions. The notions of a territory and national boundaries, e.g., which seem so self-evident, are in fact a very specific historical construct, elaborated with precise political aims; they also rest on a particular conception of space and of geometry, without which the notion of a territorial nation-state could not have been invented.

More generally, while philosophy and political science have abundantly reflected on time as a key component of political regimes, they have regularly neglected space as an instrument of power, even though it is no less important in establishing, sustaining and reinforcing law, governance and political control. Space is not an empty, homogenous container: it is a social and political reality, which is the result of social, historical and political power struggles.

The course will consider various figures and aspects of this spatiality of power; in particular, we will look at the importance of geometry in creating the conditions for the modern nation-state, notably through the invention of cartography. It will further show how spatial thinking allows for fresh conceptual approaches to political issues, such as cosmopolitanism, minority rights, property rights or immigration ethics. We will also look at the relationship between space and state violence, as is e.g. manifested by phenomena such as ethnic cleansing or forced population displacements; we will also explore the politics of space, how space is gendered, what “odd” spaces (the sea, underground spaces, et.al.) tell us about us as humans, or how given political ideas and values shape and transform space, notably in urban planning and through the concept of landscape.

### Evaluation - *Assessment*

#### *Course requirements and evaluation:*

Oral participation is actively encouraged.

The evaluation will consist of a final paper. Its object, format and deadline will be given during the first lecture.

## **Plan – Séances - Course outline**

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### **Course outline:**

#### **Week 1: General Introduction – Why is Space a Problem for Politics?**

Why is space consistently absent from political reflection? The importance of the spatiality of power. Looking at politics through the prism of space, understanding “geopolitics” in its original meaning of political geography.

#### **Weeks 2-3: From the Closed Cosmos to the Infinite Space**

Changing conceptions of space: from the Aristotelian notion of space and cosmos, and the Greek *Oekumene*, to the modern expanse. Space and Place.

#### **Week 4: Linear Perspective and the Invention of Cartography**

A “miraculous conjunction” of geometry and politics: the concomitant emergence of linear perspective and cartography in early modernity, paving the way for the modern polity. Art and science.

#### **Weeks 5-6: The Cartographic State and its Imperialist Expansion**

What is the specific spatiality of the territorial nation-state? How did it inaugurate a specific relationship between space, representation of space, and power? The link between territory, cartography and sovereignty. Cartography as a privileged tool of colonial control.

#### **Week 7: Applying Spatial Thinking: The Philosophical and Political Problem of Cosmopolitanism, Immigration Ethics. Walls and Borders.**

Is it possible to overcome the spatiality of national territoriality and think the conditions of possibility of cosmopolitanism?

#### **Week 8: Odd Spaces: Underground Spaces, Outer Space, Seas and Oceans**

What do these non-terrestrial spaces tell us about our being-in-the-world?

#### **Week 9: Visualising Property**

The extremely potent spatial power of private property. How private property, the institutionalization of which is one of the main features of the modern nation-state, is based on a particular spatiality.

#### **Week 10: A Political Concept: The Invention of the Landscape**

The notion of landscape is a combination of geometry and a very modern notion of the individual and the polity, and embodies a particular relationship between man and the environment. The concept of landscape as a key tool to understanding a new relationship to nature, and to the Anthropocene.

### **Week 11: The City. Urban Space**

How cities originate from, and are shaped, by specific political ideas. Cities and citizenship. The political meaning of urbanity. Gendered Space.

### **Week 12: Walking.**

How and why walking transforms space.

### **Bibliographie - Bibliography**

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- Etienne Balibar**, *The Nation Form: History and Ideology*
- Charles Baudelaire**, *The Painter of Modern Life*
- Charles Beitz**, *Political Theory and International Relations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979, Section 2, pp. 68-130.
- Walter Benjamin**, “Paris, Capital of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century” in *The Arcades Project*, pp. 15-21.
- Jeremy Bentham**, “Principles of the Civil Code, Part 1, chap. 8, “Of Property”.
- Michael Biggs**, “Putting the State on the Map: Cartography, Territory, and European State”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 41, No. 2, Apr. 1999, pp. 374-405.
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- Jordan Branch**, *The Cartographic State*
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- Descartes**, Principles of Philosophy, Part II, parag. 1-18.
- Matthew Edney**, *Mapping an Empire – The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765-1843*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1990, pp.15-36 and 332-340.
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- “Deconstructing the Map”, *Cartographica*, vol. 26, No 2, summer 1989, pp. 1-20.

- “Silences and Secrecy: The Hidden Agenda of Cartography in Early Modern Europe”, *Imago Mundi*, 40, 1988, pp. 57-76.

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- *Rebel Cities*

**Eric Hobsbawm,** *Nations and Nationalism since 1871*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990, chap.3, pp. 80-89.

**Edmund Husserl,** *Philosophy and The Crisis of the European Man*, 1935.

**Tim Ingold,** *Lines - A Brief History*, Routledge, chap.3 “Up, across and along”, pp. 71-90.

**Leif Jerram,** *Streetlife*, “No place for a lady?”, pp. 121-140.

**Patrick Joyce,** *The Rule of Freedom – Liberalism and the Modern City*, Verso, London 2003, Introduction and chap. 1.

**Immanuel Kant,**

- *Critique of Pure Reason*, Transcendental Aesthetic, Exposition of Space, pp. 42-49
- *Toward Perpetual Peace*

**Alexandre Koyre,** *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, ch.IV and V.

**Henri Lefebvre,** *The Production of Space*, transl. D. Nicholson-Smith, Blackwell, London, 1991, pp. 25-33 (parag. XI to XV)

**Liisa Malkki,** “National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees”, in *Cultural Anthropology*, 1992

**Doreen Massey,** *For Space*, London, Sage, 2005, chap. 11 pp. 107-117 and chap. 14, 149-161

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**James Romm,** *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*

**Carol Rose,** *Property and Persuasion*, Westview

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**H. D. Thoreau**, *Walking*

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