



The Spaces of Democracy and Democracy of Space network

There has been a ‘spatial turn’ in the social sciences and humanities. Increasing awareness of how we are responsible to others in distant places is throwing up new modes of analysis, thinking, tensions and questions; all of which foreground ‘the spatial’. Debate has moved away from the assumption that space is a pre-given background or even container of political life. Political subjectivity and passions are not necessarily bordered within territorial states, or constrained or captured by modern frameworks of representation, such as political parties and trade union movements. And so thought and discussion of political subjectivity is increasingly directed to the spatial circulation and interconnections of passions, technosciences, movements of people, new social movements, media and information, among others; and to *how* these all flow into and effect situated political subjects and practices. Recent examples are abundant: from climate change to human rights, from Iraq to Afghanistan. We have set up a new network which takes this spatial turn as an object of analysis in and of itself. And ask the question: how is the spatial turn in the social sciences and humanities disciplining the way in which we understand democracy today?

The emerging "*Space of Democracy and the Democracy of Space*" network involves around 800 academics globally, working across the social sciences and humanities. We are presently actively seeking out institutional sites, in different geographical locations, for the network to operate through. There are emerging nodes in Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, the United States, Canada, England, Greece, Turkey, Switzerland, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. Once established, these and other nodes will eventually take conversations through the different disciplines via academic workshops, academic journals, public debates, the general media and website interfaces, for example. The network is structured around the themes of ‘territorial, post-territorial and issue based politics’, ‘the ethical commitments being forged through the spatial turn’, ‘representation and participation’, ‘geographies of connection and the remaking of political identities’, and ‘material spaces of politics’.

The network is under the direction of Jonathan Pugh, who has ongoing support from Noortje Marres, Yannis Stavrakakis, Maria Theodorou, David Slater, Sally Weller, Swapna Banerjee-Guha, Doreen Massey, Chantal Mouffe, Nigel Thrift, Aletta Norval, Mo O’Toole, Deborah Thien, Miles Irving, David Featherstone, David Howarth and Liza Griffin, among others. Liza Griffin heads up the ‘early career’ strand, which includes a growing number of PhD and post-doctoral researchers. We also undertake many public debates on the five themes noted above. The network as a whole has no political agenda, which is why we continue to seek to involve a wide range of people.

*If you are interested in the network, please contact **Jonathan.Pugh@ncl.ac.uk**.*

Some of those who have participated so far ...

Some of those who have actively signed up to take part in events and/or publications so far include Tony Benn, Clare Short, Zygmunt Bauman, Tariq Modood, Doreen Massey, Saskia Sassen, Chantal Mouffe, Peter Osborne, Ed Soja, Nigel Thrift, Carl Mitcham, Nick Cohen, Sian Glaessner, Patsy Healey, Bernard Crick, Tim Ingold, Jo Littler, Mary Mellor, Susie Orbach, Will Hutton, Maria Theodorou, Omar Al-Qattan, Aletta Norval, Steve Rayner, Jenny Pickerill, Jim Martin, Gregor McLennan, AbdouMaliq Simone, Alejandro Colas, Tahir Abbas, Tom Bentley, Angana Chatterji, David Harvey, Swapna Banerjee-Guha, Sheila Jasanoff, Michael Watts, Caspar Hewett, David C Wood, Paul Kingsnorth, David Featherstone, Phil Macnaghten, James Heartfield, David Boyle, Catherine Fieschi, Gregor McLennan, Amir Saeed, Clive Barnett, Maarten Hajer, Frank Furedi, Hilary Wainwright, David Chandler, Dora Apel, Neal Lawson, Amir Saeed, Hartmut Behr, Tom Bentley, Andy Dobson, David Boyle, John Forester, David Howarth, Barry Gills, Jason Toynbee, Uma Kothari, Scott Lash, Nina Laurie, Hugh Silverman, Oliver Marchart, Phil McNaghton, Susan Owens, Jonathan Pugh, Steve Rayner, Jenny Robinson, Richard Sennett, Joe Smith, Yannis Stavrakakis, Deborah Thien, Neera Chandhoke, Francoise Verges, Sarah Whatmore, Steve Hinchliffe, Debora Halbert, Gregory Ulmer, Liza Griffin, David Oswell, Oren Yiftachel, Daniela Korbas Magal, Andrew Barry, Jane Bennett, Matthew Fuller, Albena Yaneva, Christopher Fynsk, Terrell Carver, and Sandra Halperin.

Previous and forthcoming events....

Newcastle University – 19th May, 2006

“Debating (de)territorial governance”.

Speakers: Professor David Chandler (Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster), Dr Caspar Hewitt (Newcastle University), Barry Gills (Newcastle University), Hartmut Behr (Newcastle University).

Sponsored by The Great Debate and the ESRC.

Harvard University – 2nd April, 2007

“The *Space of Democracy* and the *Democracy of Space*: conversations with architects and planners”.

Speakers: Dr Jonathan Pugh (Newcastle University).

Sponsored by Harvard University and The British Council (US Branch).

Cornell University – 6th April, 2007

“The *Space of Democracy* and the *Democracy of Space*: The Claim of International Development”.

Speakers: Dr Jonathan Pugh (Newcastle University).

Sponsored by Cornell University and the British Council (US Branch).

Centre for the Study of Democracy (CSD) seminar – 15th May, 2007

“Representation and its discontents”.

Speakers Dr Jonathan Pugh (Newcastle University).

Sponsored by CSD.

Newcastle University - 25th June, 2007 (in association with The Great Debate)

“The New Politics of Climate Change”

Speakers: Professor Steve Rayner (Director: James Martin Institute, University of Oxford; Professor Phil Macnaghten (Director: Institute for Hazard and Risk Research, Durham University); and Dr Joe Smith (School of Social Sciences, Open University).

Sponsored by Newcastle City Council, the Economic and Social Research Council’s Science in Society Programme and the Royal Town Planning Institute (Northern Branch).

Annual Conference of the Institute of British Geographers/ Royal Geography Society – 30th August, 2007.

“Critical Territorial Politics”. Speakers: Sir Bernard Crick, Hilary Wainwright (Editor, Red Pepper), Professor David Chandler (Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster), Tony Benn and Professor Sarah Whatmore (University of Oxford). Sponsored by the Barry Amiel and Norman Melburn Trust, the RGS-IBG Participatory Geographies Working Group and ESRC.



from Left to Right: Tony Benn, Sir Bernard Crick, Sarah Whatmore, Jonathan Pugh, Hilary Wainwright and David Chandler

Newcastle University – 12th October, 2007

“Space-time and the political”.

Speakers: Professor Doreen Massey (Open University), Professor Chantal Mouffe (Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster), Professor Tim Ingold (University of Aberdeen), and Professor David Howarth (University of Essex).

Sponsored by the ESRC.

Newcastle University – 11th January, 2008

“The Spaces of Democracy of Planning”

Speakers: Professor John Forester (Cornell), Professor Patsy Healey (Newcastle University), Professor Susan Owens (University of Cambridge) and Professor Maarten Hajer (Universiteit van Amsterdam).

Sponsored by the ESRC, the Global Urban Research Unit, Newcastle University, and the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, Newcastle University.

Newcastle University – 21st January, 2008

‘Authority, Democracy and Human potential’

(in association with The Great Debate)

Speakers: Caspar Hewett

Sponsored by The Great Debate and the ESRC.

Essex University – March 12th 2008

“The *Space of Democracy* and the *Democracy of Space*: Reflections upon the vision for the network by career academics”.

Speakers: Jonathan Pugh, Noortje Marres, David Featherstone, Liza Griffin, David Howarth and Aletta Norval.

Sponsored by University of Essex and the ESRC.

Centre for the Study of Invention and Social Process (CSISP) Goldsmiths College, University of London – June 6th 2008

“The Physique of the Public”.

Speakers: Andrew Barry, Jane Bennett, Matthew Fuller, David Oswell, Brian Wynne, Sarah Whatmore and Alben Yaneva.

Sponsored by the CSISP and the British Academy.

The Athens Byzantine and Christian Museum in collaboration with SARCHA (School of ARCHitecture for All), Athens, November 2008

Negotiating the Un-built: Interdisciplinary Interactions on Space and Democracy

Speakers: to be confirmed

Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster, November, 2008

“Europe in a multi-polar world”, organised by Chantal Mouffe

Speakers: to be confirmed

Sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council and the Centre for the Study of Democracy.

Forthcoming workshops in 2009 and 2010 will

involve the different nodes of the network

reflecting upon the network vision statement

(which we will publish in 2009/2010).

An example of a “*Spaces of Democracy and Democracy of Space network*” project

“What is radical politics today?”

The network is undertaking an ongoing project entitled: “*What is radical politics today?*” This explores the nature and character of radical politics today. It examines what it means to be engaged in radical politics; investigating how radical politics works to shape and frame what we think of ourselves, issues and debates. Themes include:

What is signified as “radical politics” today? The project thereby examines how those who signify themselves as being involved in radical politics today understand the nature of the political subject. In answering the question, different models of radical politics will be explored. For example, what are the differences and similarities between issue-based politics (GM foods, human or animal rights), anarchic models, and stakeholder politics, and how do they understand the constitution of the political subject?

Another theme focuses upon the tensions which are being foregrounded as a result of the pluralisation and diversification of different ways of “being political” (internet activism, local, national and international pressure groups, representative government, and so on). For example, what are the tensions between different post-territorial movements (human rights, environmentalism, anti-war campaigns) and more traditional elected, representative institutions. What does the nature and character of such tensions reveal about the character of radical politics today?

The third theme examines the changes and transformations that have been brought about through radical politics today. How do movements like the anti-war coalition or the anti-capitalist movement effect change, in practice? Do they represent a significant challenge to the status quo? How is political expression sought, articulated and achieved?

A number of workshops have been scheduled to explore these themes, including ...

California State University, Long Beach – 5th August 2008

“What is radical politics today?”

Speakers including: Nigel Thrift and Ed Soja

Sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council and California State University.

Newcastle University – 5th Dec 2008

“What is radical politics today?”.

Speakers including: Will Hutton.

Sponsored by Newcastle University.

Forthcoming book: “What is radical politics today?”

This will be written for a general public audience, with contributions coming from ...

Nigel Thrift, Tony Benn, Clare Short, Zygmunt Bauman, Peter Osborne, Jo Littler, Mary Mellor, Jenny Pickerill, Jim Martin, Gregor McLennan, AbdouMaliq Simone, Tariq Modood, Tahir Abbas, Alejandro Colas, Tom Bentley, Gregory Ulmer, Angana Chatterji, David Harvey, Carl Mitcham, Swapna Banerjee-Guha, Sheila Jasanoff, Michael Watts, Neal Lawson, Sian Glaessner, Neera Chandhoke, Ed Soja, Nick Cohen, Saskia Sassen, Jason Toynbee, Paul Kingsnorth, David Featherstone, James Heartfield, David Boyle, Dora Apel, Catherine Fieschi, Peter Hallward, Gregor McLennan, Christopher Fynsk, Hugh Silverman, Amir Saeed, Clive Barnett, Maarten Hajer, Omar Al-Qattan, Terrell Carver, Daniele Albertazzi, Jim Martin, Frank Furedi, Debora Halbert, David C Wood, Hilary Wainwright, Ken Worpole, Susie Orbach, and David Chandler.

The *Spaces of Democracy* and *Democracy of Space* network: linked events

Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster, 12th Feb, 2008, 6pm, The Boardroom, University of Westminster, 309 Regent Street, London

Architecture and Democracy: The Impossibility of a Spatial Perception of Europe?

Speakers: Rem Koolhaas and Markus Miessen

Essex University, 12th - 13th June, Colchester, United Kingdom

Capitalism, Faith, Nature

Speakers: William Connolly, Jane Bennett

The network has also been variously supported by...



**Participatory
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