

GEOPOLITICS FROM A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

Code:	
Term:	Spring
ECTS credits:	4
Lessons per week:	60 + 60 min
Language:	English
Instructor:	Dr. Aliaksei Kazharski
Form of study:	lecture+seminar

Prerequisites

N/A

Course description

The course aim is to introduce critical geopolitics as an approach that will allow the students to grasp the socially constructed nature of geopolitical entities and to critically examine the practices of “writing” global space.

Course structure

INTRODUCTORY SESSION. Course objectives and requirements

SESSION I. Geopolitics: genealogy of the notion and its contemporary contexts

Required reading

- Dodds, K. Geopolitics a Very Short Introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007: Chapter 1 & Chapter 2

SESSION II. The imperial roots of geopolitics: geography, power and the “production” of global space

Required reading

- Mackinder H.J. (1904) The Geographical Pivot of History. *The Geographical Journal*, Vol 23., No 4, 421-437
- Tuathail G. Critical Geopolitics: The Politics of Writing Global Space. Routledge, 1996: pp. 16-43

SESSION III. Popular geopolitics: spatiality in entertainment, media and culture

Required reading

- Dodds, K. Geopolitics a Very Short Introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007: Chapter 6
- Jacobs F. (2013) From Winterfell to King's Landing. How the Cartography of Game of Thrones Explains the World. *Foreign Policy*

SESSION IV. Territories and identities: geopolitics of the national Self

Required reading

- Dodds, K. Geopolitics a Very Short Introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007: Chapter 4
- Ejodus F. and Subotić E. Kosovo as Serbia's Sacred Space: Governmentality, Pastoral Power, and Sacralization of Territories. In Ognjenović G., Jozelić J. (eds). Politicization of Religion, the Power of Symbolism. Palgrave, 2014

Recommended reading

- Golianová, Veronika. Crimea annexation and the forming of public opinion in Russia: deconstructing the symbolism. Bachelor thesis, Comenius University, 2015

SESSION V. The United States and its geopolitical narratives

Required reading

- Bull, H. (1980) Kissinger: The Primacy of Geopolitics. *International Affairs*, Vol. 56, No. 3, pp 484-487
- Bush, George. 2002 State of the Union address.
Available: <<http://edition.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/01/29/bush.speech.txt/>>
- Dodds K. Global Geopolitics. A Critical Introduction. Pearson Education, 2005: Chapter 1
- Tuathail G. Critical Geopolitics. The Politics of Writing Global Space. Routledge, 1996: pp. 181-195

SESSION VI. Europe and its “makers”: spatial delineation and European identity

Required reading

- Diez, T. (2004) Europe’s Others and the Return of Geopolitics. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 17, No. 2
- Morozov, V. Rumelili B. (2012) The External Constitution of European Identity: Russia and Turkey as Europe-makers. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 47:28

SESSION VII. Cultural construction of regions: The East in European imagination

Required reading

- Wolff, L. *Inventing Eastern Europe*. Stanford University Press, 1994: Introduction & Chapter One

SESSION VIII. Cultural construction of regions: The Balkans in European imagination

Required reading

- Todorova, M. *Imagining the Balkans*. Oxford University Press, 2009: Chapter 3 & Chapter 5

SESSION IX. When the “East” is talking back: geopolitical myths of “Central Europe” and the Visegrad Four

Required reading

- Ash, T. G. (1986) “Does Central Europe Exist?” in *The New York Times Review of Books*, 9 October.
- Ash T.G. (1999) The Puzzle of Central Europe. *The New York Review of Books*, March 18,
- Kazharski, A. The End of “Central Europe”? Rise of the radical right and contestation of identities in Slovakia and the Visegrad region [2016 draft]
- Kundera, Milan. 1984. “The Tragedy of Central Europe”. *New York Review of Books*. 31 (7): 33-38.
- Moisiu, S. (2002) EU Eligibility, Central Europe, and the Invention of Applicant State Narrative, *Geopolitics*, 7:3

Recommended reading

- Todorova, M. *Imagining the Balkans*. Oxford University Press, 2009: Chapter 6

SESSION X. Size matters? The discourse of geopolitics and civilizations in Russia

Required reading

- Dugin, A. Eurasian Mission. An Introduction to Neo-Eurasianism, Arktos 2014: pp. 7-27
- Laruelle, M. (2004) The Two Faces of Contemporary Eurasianism: An Imperial Version of Russian Nationalism. *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, 32:1
- Laruelle, M. (2012) Larger, Higher, Farther North...Geographical Metanarratives of the Nation in Russia. *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, Vol. 54, No. 5

SESSION XI. Geopolitical movie and pizza day.

Evaluation Criteria

Every student will be expected to present a position paper on one of the session topics and, based on the required literature, to prepare one question for every presenter during all other sessions. For every session all students will be expected to have carefully read all the required sources and be prepared to discuss them.

The position paper can be developed into a final paper (a minimum of 5,000 words). Using additional sources is strongly recommended. Plagiarism will result in an automatic "F" for the entire course.

Grade composition:

- Position paper presentation – 30%
- Questions & class activity – 40%
- Final paper – 30%

Course Evaluation (%)

A – excellent:	100-93%,
B – very good:	92-84%,
C – good:	83-74%,
D – satisfactory:	73-63%,
E – sufficient:	62-51%,
Fx – fail:	50-0%.