The spaces of (new) media: spatiality in digital, audiovisual cultures (MCMV05005)

Introduction

Initially, new media were credited with a redefinition of spatial systems, leaving traditional concepts like embodiment and materiality behind in favour of a disembodied cyberspace. This space seemed to transgress all kinds of socio-political, artistic and physical boundaries. However, from recent developments in new media culture one can discern a critical reconsideration of this concept of virtuality that manifests itself in new, remediated forms of material and embodied spaces.

This course looks at the use of spatiality in the digital arts and new media. It analyzes how specific audiovisual products (e.g. pervasive games, virtual architecture, locative art, net.art, gps drawings, the digital earth, satellite images) deal with space and its materialities and/or virtualities. By looking at spatial concepts like mapping, exploration, urbanism, networks, virtual reality, cyberspace, travelling, boundaries, mediation and mobility, more knowledge will be gained about new media and spatial theory.

Aim

The aim of the course is to enhance the student's theoretical understanding of space and digital culture. The students should be able to frame theoretical discussions pertaining to the subject, as well as contributing to these discussions themselves. Furthermore, the methodological aim of the course is to teach the student how to work on a thick description and analysis of a case-study in which a further intellectual development of ideas on space and digital culture is pivotal.

The course consist of a general part in which a theoretical and historical framework will be created to understand the relation between new media and space. Additionally particular cases will be discussed that provide particular views on the relationship between space and digital culture.

Assignment in teams

Teamwork is an important part of this course since the final assignment will consist of a group-project. Students have different tasks in this communal project and will be graded individually according to their personal and team contribution.

A team of approximately 6 students will choose a theme (so **not** an object) for a special journal issue. This group will also convene outside actual class hours. The teams function as an editing board that is in charge of issuing a special issue for the (fictional) academic journal *The Spaces of (new) Media: Spatiality in Digital Audiovisual Cultures.*

Each member is also a contributor to this special issue in one of the following roles:

1. Editor (1)
Writes an introduction of approx. 2500 words (ex. notes en bibliography) that situates the special issue within the broader context of the course/journal (overview of the field, relating the specific theme to the field, introduction of articles in special issue). The chief-editor is also responsible for coordinating the team (deadlines, etc.)

2. Author (4 to 5)
Authors write a case study of approx. 3500 words (ex. notes and bibliography). The chosen case studies need to be explicitly situated within the group theme. *(Either English or Dutch)*

Every member of the team will also perform the following tasks:
- Copy editor: Layout, spelling, style, structure, annotation, etc.
- Peer reviewer: Comments on the content of the drafts of other group members

All articles will be peer-reviewed and copy-edited twice, so as to make sure that all members of the group have performed both roles. The team will decide upon the planning of this procedure.

Every student will keep a track of its progress by compiling a **dossier**. This dossier will contain assignments, e-mail correspondence, drafts versions of the article, reflection on the teamwork, and so forth. The quality of the dossier will co-determine the final mark (article 70%, participation 20%, dossier 10%). One time absence max.

Role of instructor: Chief editor

The teacher of this seminar should be seen as the chief-editor. This means that the teams are requested to report to her/him during consultation hours. The teams are expected to be able to report to her/him in a concise and clear manner

Individual assigments

Student write four weekly reading assigments for their dossier (500 Words in total) Do not a write summary, take your own position. Use these texts to progressively zoom in on your own point for the journal contribution.

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Roster - Spaces of (new) media: spatiality in digital, audiovisual cultures (MCMV05005)

Week	Content of class	Assignments for next class (homework)
1 **7/2/2012** **9/2/2012**	- Introduction of the course - Brainstorming and formulating themes - Formation of teams around proposed themes	– Distribute roles + tasks among team members – Make team planning and working agreements Individual assignment: text 1, 2, 3 (500 words – for week 2)
2 **14/2/2012** **16/2/2012**	>> No class meeting this week! <<	- Individual assignment: make a 300 word summary of your own article (for week 3, take with you to next class to discuss)
3 **21/2/2012** **23/2/2012**	- Evaluate & discuss individual assignment - Setting up a structure - Discuss roles in team - Presentation of abstracts; What is my point? Relevance in broader academic discussion?	- Work on structure of articles (goes to peer reviewer) - Peer reviewing structure (among editor & authors) - Literature search (take to next meeting) - Assignment text 4,5,6
4 **28/2/2012** **1/3/2012** <u>Consultation hour</u> (ca. 20 minutes per team)	- Evaluate & discuss individual assignment - Finding and using literature - Evaluate structure	- Revision of structure - Plan for lay-out journal - Preliminary annotated bibliography (take to next meeting) - Assignment text 7, 8, 9
5 **6/3/2012** **8/3/2012** <u>Consultation hour</u>	- Evaluate & discuss assignment - Discuss literature	- Look for additional literature (10-15 articles or chapters in total per article) - 1st draft article (to copy editor & peer reviewer) - Prepare presentation next week - Assignment text 10, 11
6 **13/3/2012** **15/3/2012** <u>Consultation hour</u>	- Evaluate & discuss assignment - Presenting 1st drafts - Reviewing and copyediting	- Copy editing 1st draft (back to authors) - Peer reviewing 1st draft (to authors and chief-editors - Midterm reflection on process and cooperation (in dossier)
7 **20/3/2012** **22/3/2012**	- Incorporating reviews - Discuss and evaluate midterm reflection	- 2nd draft articles (to authors and chief-editors & copy editors - Prepare presentation

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8 **27/3/2012** **29/3/2012**	- Presentation of special issues (prefinal drafts)	- Copy editing of 2nd draft (back to authors) - Peer reviewing of articles (back to authors)
9 **3/4/2012** **5/4/2012**	>> No class meeting this week! <<	– Finalizing journal
10 + 11 **18/4/2012**		- 18 April 2012, 17:00 Deadline submitting journals & dossiers in pigeonhole muntstr. 2a

Text 1

Poster, Mark. "Digitally Local Communications: Technologies and Space." <u>The Global and the Local in Mobile Communication: Places, Images, People, Connections</u>. Budapest, June 10-12 2004.

- *What does Poster mean with the terms "Geography of Nowhere" and "Heterotopia" and how does he connect these terms to new media and space. Does he find these terms helpful for understanding new media?*
- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ? Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

Text 2

Nunes, Mark. "Chapter 1." <u>Cyberspaces of Everyday Life.</u> Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

- *Nunes speaks about spatial Internet practices. Which ones does he discuss and how does he connect them to particular philosophical perspectives?*
- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ? ? Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

Text 3

Hayles, Katherine N. "Flesh and Metal: Reconfiguring the Mindbody in Virtual Environments." <u>Configurations</u> 10.2 (2002): 297-320.

- *Hayles writes that "changes in environment are deeply interrelated with changes in embodiment" (p. 299). What does she mean by this? Use an example.*
- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

Text 4

Elden, Stuart. <u>"There Is a Politics of Space Because Space Is Political"</u>: Henri Lefebvre and the <u>Production of Space</u>. 2004. Available: http://anarchitektur.com/aa01-lefebvre/elden.html.

- *Explain what Lefebvre means by the production of space and what his triadic model entails.*
- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ? Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

Text 5

Castells, M. "Communication, Power and Counter-power in the Network Society." <u>International Journal of Communication</u> 1.1 (2007): 238-266.

- *Which connections does Castells discern between communication, power-relations and a "network society"?*
- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ? Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

Text 6

Appadurai, A. "Chapter 2". <u>Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization.</u> Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press. 2006. 27-47.

- *What does Appadurai mean with "cultural flows" and how is this related to spatiality?*
- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ? Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

TEXT 7, 8 & 9: FROM CYBER TO…

Text 7

Souza e Silva, Adriana de. "From Cyber to Hybrid: Mobile Technologies as Interfaces of Hybrid Spaces." Space and Culture 9.3 (2006): 261-78.

- *What does De Souza e Silva mean with hybridity and why is this important for our understanding of new media?*
- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ? Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

Text 8

Kalaga, Wojciech. "The Trouble with the Virtual." Symploke 11.1-2 (2003): 96-103.

- *Explain the title of this text.*
- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ? Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

Text 9

Schwartz, Leigh. "Fantasy, Realism, and the Other in Recent Video Games." Space and Culture 9.3 (2006): 313.

- *How does Schwartz relate realism and spatiality to computer games?*
- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ? Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

TEXT 10 & 11: ONLINE/OFFLINE URBAN SPACES

Text 10

Mackenzie, A. "From Café to Parkbench: WIFI and technological overflows in the city." Mobile Technologies and the City. Ed. John Urry & Mimi Sheller. London, New York: Routledge, 2006. 137-151.

- *How are the terms "Hertzian Landscape" and "overflow" according to the author related to Wi-Fi hotspots in London?*
- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ? Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

Text 11

Vertesi, J. "Mind the Gap: The London Underground Map and Users' Representations of Urban Space." Social Studies of Science 38.1 (2008): 7-33.

- *Why does Verstesi maintain that the map of the London underground could be conceived as a "GUI" (Graphical User Interface)?*

- *In which ways could this article be valuable for your own research and in which ways does it differ? Which sources (that are not part of this course's reading list) could you suggest as complimentary literature for your own research?*

An Atlas of Cyberspaces. M. Dodge. London. 2005.

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