



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Environmental Justice and Geopolitics of The Sea

2223-1-F7502Q039

Aims

An understanding of the major challenges (acidification, oil and gas drilling, overfishing, and, in the long term, deep-sea mining, bioprospecting, and geo-engineering) posed by the deep seabed.

Understanding of the main questions raised by studying oceanic and transnational spaces in a critical geopolitics perspective.

An advanced ability to critically analyze and interrogate scholarship and discourse framing the oceans, and the geopolitical dynamics underway to conquer sea-power.

An engagement with the challenges of inter-disciplinary study and research.

Contents

The first part relates to the geopolitics of the deep sea and in particular it focuses on the definition, value, ownership, access, health and future state of the resource-rich and highly contested sub-surface ocean.

Then, after a short introduction to the most recent theoretical approaches to political geography and critical geopolitics, the course focuses first on the historical representation of the ocean as a "political and social space" and on how the sea can be framed by international geopolitical discourse, in relation to the processes of territorialisation, geo-power and extra-territoriality of marine spaces.

Detailed program

Marco Grasso

Part I – Geopolitics of deep oceans and environmental justice

The tragedy of the commons

Harvesting the Commons: the Oceanic frontier and the devolution of the seas

Deep oceans: potential and problems

Deep seabed governance: the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea (UNCLOS) and the International Seabed Authority (ISA)

The deep seabed governance: the mining regime

Claiming the commons: Sovereignty and the deep seabed

Claiming the commons: the Arctic deep seabed

Protecting the commons

Climate change and the future of the deep oceans

Elena dell'Agnese

Part II - Political geography of the sea**

The political geography of the sea: a classical approach (maritime boundaries and Law of the Sea, transport and trade, strategy and warfare)

A (critical) political geo-graphy of the sea? thinking about the sea / representing the sea / exploiting the "geopolitical features" of the sea

Geo-graphy and the power of representation /Dividing (and naming) the ocean sea: the East Sea/ Sea of Japan issue

The territorialisation of the sea /Territorial claims and islands disputes: the Dokdo-Takeshima issue

Geographical definitions and island disputes: the Sankeku-Diaoyu issue/ climate change and vanishing islands/reefs: Okininotori: a shima, or a reef'?

A classical approach to the geopolitics of the sea/ the myth of sea power: A.T. Mahan theoretical positions / China as a maritime power and the South China Sea competition (Spratly, Paracel and more)

Sea power, sea nodes and islands as U.S. bases: The Hawai'i and Pearl Harbor, Midway and Wake, Guam

Sea power, sea nodes and islands as overseas U.S. bases/ bases of empire and lily pads: Guantanamo, Micronesia and Marshall Islands, Okinawa, Diego Garcia

LSMPAs (Large Scale Maritime Protected Areas): conservation or geopolitics?

Extra-territoriality and Cruise tourism as an example of globalization

Prerequisites

An adequate grasp of the perspectives of the relevant social sciences (geography, politics, economics, law, and sociology).

Capacity of working according to multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives.

Teaching form

Lectures

Textbook and teaching resource

Marco Grasso

Part I – Geopolitics of deep oceans and environmental justice

Study material

Hannigan, J. (2016). *The Geopolitics of Deep Oceans*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press

Scientific articles and policy briefs pointed indicated below. They are all accessible from within the campus; for accessing them from outside the campus see here:

<https://www.biblio.unimib.it/it/risorse/accesso-alle-risorse-remoto>

The tragedy of the commons

Hardin, G. (1968). The tragedy of the commons. *Science*, 162(3859), 1243-1248.

Breitbart, D., Levin, L. A., Oschlies, A., Grégoire, M., Chavez, F. P., Conley, D. J., ... & Jacinto, G. S. (2018). Declining oxygen in the global ocean and coastal waters. *Science*, 359(6371).

See also, The Atlantic, 'A Foreboding Similarity in Today's Oceans and a 94-Million-Year-Old Catastrophe', [<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/01/suffocating-oceans/550415/>]

Harvesting the Commons: the Oceanic frontier and the devolution of the seas

Hanningan (2016): Introduction and Chapter 1

Van Dover, C. L. (2011). Tighten regulations on deep-sea mining. *Nature*, 470(7332), 31-33.

Sielen, A. B. (2013). The devolution of the seas: the consequences of oceanic destruction. *Foreign Affairs*, 92(6), 124-132.

Diaz, R. J., and Rosenberg, R. (2008). Spreading dead zones and consequences for marine ecosystems. *Science*, 321(5891), 926-929.

Deep oceans: potential and problems

Thurber, A. R., Sweetman, A. K., Narayanaswamy, B. E., Jones, D. O. B., Ingels, J., & Hansman, R. L. (2014). Ecosystem function and services provided by the deep sea. *Biogeosciences*, 11(14), 3941-3963.

Armstrong, C. W., Foley, N. S., Tinch, R., & van den Hove, S. (2012). Services from the deep: Steps towards valuation of deep sea goods and services. *Ecosystem Services*, 2, 2-13.

Mengerink, K. J., Van Dover, C. L., Ardron, J., Baker, M., Escobar-Briones, E., Gjerde, K., ... & Sutton, T. (2014). A call for deep-ocean stewardship. *Science*, 344(6185), 696-698.

Deep seabed governance: the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea (UNCLOS) and the International Seabed Authority (ISA)

Hanningan (2016): Chapter 2

Wolfrum, R. (2008). Legitimacy of international law and the exercise of administrative functions: the Example of the International Seabed Authority, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and International Fisheries Organizations. *German Law Journal*, 8, 2039-2060. ONLY SECTION C, pp. 20145-2054.

Kim, B. M. (2014). Governance of the global commons: the deep seabed, the Antarctic, outer space. *KIEP World*

Economy, 4(29).

Guntrip, E. (2003). The Common Heritage of Mankind: an adequate regime for managing the deep seabed. Melb. J. Int'l L., 4, 376.

Deep seabed governance: the mining regime

Jaecel, A., Gjerde, K. M., and Ardron, J. A. (2017). Conserving the common heritage of humankind—Options for the deep-seabed mining regime. *Marine Policy*, 78, 150-157.

Boetius, A., & Haeckel, M. (2018). Mind the seafloor. *Science*, 359(6371), 34-36.

Claiming the commons: Sovereignty and the deep seabed

Hanningan (2016): Chapter 3

Werner, W., & Aalberts, T. (2016). Mastering the globe: Law, sovereignty and the commons of mankind. In *The Politics of Globality since 1945* (pp. 89-105). Routledge [A not formatted version is available here:

[https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/38711813/Globality_-_Mastering_the_Globe](https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/38711813/Globality_-_Mastering_the_Globe_-_Aalberts_Werner_final.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1554202086&Signature=x2rNIgeJ23yfX3veUh4mCYP8xc0%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DMastering_the_Globe_Law_Sovereignty_and.pdf)

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[disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DMastering_the_Globe_Law_Sovereignty_and.pdf\]](https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/38711813/Globality_-_Mastering_the_Globe_-_Aalberts_Werner_final.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1554202086&Signature=x2rNIgeJ23yfX3veUh4mCYP8xc0%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DMastering_the_Globe_Law_Sovereignty_and.pdf)

Claiming the commons: the Arctic deep seabed

Borgerson, S. (2013). The coming Arctic boom: as the ice melts, the region heats up. *Foreign Affairs*, 92, 76.

Berkman, P. A., & Young, O. R. (2009). Governance and environmental change in the Arctic Ocean. *Science*, 324(5925), 339-340.

Rothwell, D. R. (2013, April). The Law of the Sea and Arctic Governance. In *ASIL Annual Meeting Proceedings*, 107, pp. 272-275. American Society for International Law.

Protecting the commons

Hanningan (2016): Chapter 4

The Economists, 'The tragedy of the high seas',

[<https://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21596942-new-management-needed-planets-most-important-common-resource-tragedy-high>]

Climate change and the future of the deep oceans

Hanningan (2016): Conclusions

McGee, J., Brent, K., & Burns, W. (2018). Geoengineering the oceans: an emerging frontier in international climate change governance. *Australian Journal of Maritime & Ocean Affairs*, 10(1), 67-80.

Elena dell'Agnese

Part II - Political geography of the sea**

1. Political geography, geopolitics, critical geopolitics.

The political geography of the sea: a classical approach (maritime boundaries and Law of the Sea, transport and trade, strategy and warfare)

Glassner M.I., The new political geography of the sea, *Political Geography Quarterly*, 1986, pp. 6-8

A (critical) political geo-graphy of the sea? (thinking about the sea / representing the sea / exploiting the "geopolitical features" of the sea)

Steinberg, P.E. (1999) Navigating to Multiple Horizons: Toward a Geography of Ocean-Space, *The Professional Geographer*, 51, 3, pp. 366-375

2. Geo-graphy and the power of representation: The geo-graphy of the ocean sea

Dividing (and naming) the ocean sea

Steinberg, P.E. (1999), Lines of division, lines of connection: Stewardship in the world ocean, *Geographical Review* 89, 2, pp. 254-264

The East sea/ Sea of Japan case study

Chi Sang-Hyun, *One feature, two names and many issues: The political geographies of naming the sea between Korea and Japan*, eastsea1994.org/data/bbsData/14912842071.pdf

3. The “political geography of the sea”: the territorialisation of the sea

Territorial claims and islands disputes (Dokdo-Takeshima)

Suk Kyoon Kim (2008), Understanding Maritime Disputes in Northeast Asia: Issues and Nature, *Int'l J. Marine & Coastal L.*, pp. 213-247

4. Geographical definitions and island disputes (Sankeku-Diaoyu)

McCormack G. (2013), Much Ado over Small Islands: The Sino-Japanese Confrontation over Senkaku/Diaoyu, *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 11, 21, pp. 1-20

climate change and vanishing islands/reefs (Okininotori: a shima, or a reef?)

Yamamoto L., Esteban M. (2010), Vanishing Island States and sovereignty, *Ocean & Coastal Management* 53, pp. 1–9

5. A classical approach to the geopolitics of the sea: the myth of sea power (A.T. Mahan)

Sumida J. (1999): Alfred Thayer Mahan, geopolitician, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 22, 2-3, 39-62

China as a maritime power and the South China Sea competition

Nohara J.J. (2017) Sea power as a dominant paradigm: the rise of China's new strategic identity, *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies*, 6, 2, pp. 210-232

6. Sea power, sea nodes and islands as U.S. bases

The Hawai'i and Pearl Harbor, Midway and Wake, Guam

Vine D., (2015) *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World*, Metropolitan Books, New York, Introduction, Capp. 1 and 2

7. Sea power, sea nodes and islands as overseas U.S. bases: bases of empire and lily pads

Guantanamo, Micronesia and Marshall Islands, Okinawa, Diego Garcia

Vine D., (2015) *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World*, Metropolitan Books, New York, Cap 3.

8. LSMPAs (Large Scale Maritime Protected Areas): conservation or geopolitics?

Sand P.H. (2012), 'Marine protected areas' off UK overseas territories: comparing the South Orkneys Shelf and the Chagos Archipelago, *The Geographical Journal*, 178, 3, pp. 201–207

Leenhardt P., Cazalet B., Salvat B., Claudet J., Feral F. (2013). The rise of large-scale marine protected areas: Conservation or geopolitics? *Ocean & Coastal Management*, 85, pp. 112-118

9. Extra-territoriality 2: Cruising ships: Cruise tourism as an example of globalization? (History and Development, Crews, Employment, exploitation)

Semester

Second Semester

Assessment method

Marco Grasso

****Parte I - Geopolitics of deep oceans and environmental justice**

Paper 2000-2500 and oral discussions

Elena dell'Agnese

Parte II - Political geography of the sea

2,000-2,500 word paper on an issue analyzed during the course and selected by the instructor.

Office hours

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Sustainable Development Goals

GENDER EQUALITY | CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION | CLIMATE ACTION | LIFE BELOW WATER | PEACE,
JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
