

**Center for Transnational Relations,
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Office Hours Monday 10.30 – 12.30

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S 15373 Worlds of Our Making: Constructivist Theories of International Relations

Tuesdays, 16.00 – 18.00; Garystr. 55/B

Overview of the Course

This course offers an advanced introduction to the development of constructivist theorizing about global politics. It covers prominent constructivist theories in IR as well as their social theoretical foundations, different methodological strategies for conducting constructivist research, and selected case studies. Throughout the course, particular emphasis will be on feminist and postcolonial contributions to as well as critical engagements with constructivist approaches in IR. One of the overarching questions of this course therefore is: whose worlds have different constructivists actually investigated when they studied the "world of our making" (Onuf, 1989)? The course starts with by now classic controversies over the status of constructivist theories vis-à-vis rationalist and post-structural or "radical" approaches in IR. The course then investigates, in turn, the import of sociological theory into what have become known as "conventional" constructivists, competing notions of discourse, and contemporary research on the geneses, diffusion, and effects of norms (as well as processes of socialization/normalization) in IR. Each of the four blogs of this seminar will be concluded by an in-depth case study, which explores methodological issues and addresses thereby the question of how to actually do constructivist research in IR.

Readings and Organisation of the Course:

This course will be run as a seminar course. This means that it will be driven by student participation, engagement and enthusiasm, with the course provider playing a facilitating role. The seminar method is intended to hone a number of skills—the ability to do close readings of key theoretical texts, to identify core issues, to set an agenda for discussion, to engage in debate, to argue and persuade

The course runs over 14 sessions, starting on 14th April 2015. For each session (except session 2 and 13), two readings are provided and will be available on blackboard. All students are expected to carefully read **all** texts. Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to do some further reading independently and in accordance with their own personal research interests. In each session, a group of up to three students will comment on the assigned readings for the session (max. 15 minutes); depending on the size of the class, we will include some small group work exercises while reserving the bulk of each session for plenary discussion.

Outline of the Course:

- 1) Introduction

Theoretical Foundations: Seizing the Middle Ground?

- 2) Reconstructing Constructivism
- 3) Seizing the Middle Gound or Critical Project?
- 4) Wendt's Constructivism

Sociological Approaches

- 5) The Stanford School
- 6) Institutions and Bureaucratic Culture
- 7) MethodsStudies: Ethnography and Participant Observations of “the International“

Two Faces of Discourse

- 8) Habermasian Approaches – and Feminist Responses
- 9) Foucauldian Approaches – and remaining Philosophical Questions
- 10) Methods/Case Studies: How to Study Discourse? The Case of the ICC

Norms and Normalization

- 11) The Global Diffusion of Norms...
- 12) ...and their Local Appropriations
- 13) Methods/Discussion: How (not) to do Critical Norm Research?

- 14) Conclusions

Assessment:

Teilnahmeschein:

For a Teilnahmeschein, every student enrolled in this class is asked to:

- Regularly attend the seminar
- Do the required readings for each session
- Give one presentation (**Referat, 12-15 minutes**) and prepare a two-page summary of the text presented. The presentations should cover all essential readings for the respective session; up to three people can team up for a presentation and the written summary. **The written summaries of the texts have to be emailed to me and Stefan Wiechmann (stefan.wiechmann@fu-berlin.de) within one week after the presentation in class.**
- In case we have more students than texts to be presented, some students might just prepare summaries for *two* sessions (summarizing both texts for the respective session). **These summaries have to be emailed to me before the session.**

Presentations: presentation should last for not more than 15 minutes. Rather than simply offering a summary of the texts, presentations should critically engage their core arguments by asking:

- a) What are the main questions/problems/concerns that the texts address?
- b) What are their main assumptions?
- c) And, what kinds of explanation do these assumptions generate?
- d) How plausible do you find these assumptions/explanations in light of the literature you already know?

Summaries: should follow similar lines of inquiry and thereby critically analyse a given text and not just rehearse its main arguments. For further information on how to write summaries, please also see:

http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/polwiss/forschung/international/europa/studium_lehre/hinweise_downloads/rezension.pdf

Leistungsschein:

In order to receive a Leistungsschein, students have to fulfil all the requirements for a Teilnahmeschein as well (see above); i.e. without presentation or two session-summaries, you will not be able to get a Leistungsschein at the end of the course.

Additionally, you need to submit an *Exposé* AND a Hausarbeit OR Referatsausarbeitung

- *Exposé:*
 - 3 pages long, detailing your research question, relevant literature, and proposed strategy to address/answer the research question.
 - The point of the *Exposé* is to get you thinking about the final coursework early on, so please remember: this is preliminary work; all of the above can change in the process of actually writing the essay or Referatsausarbeitung
 - The **deadline** for the *Exposé* is **Tuesday, 23rd June 2015**.

- Hausarbeit:
 - 6000 words (including footnotes but without bibliography) +/- 10% (i.e. 5400 – 6600 words; anything longer or shorter will result in a reduction of the final grade).
 - For further information on how to write a Hausarbeit, see http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/polwiss/forschung/international/europa/studium_lehre/hinweise_downloads/Hausarbeit_Empfehlungen.pdf

- Hausarbeiten need to be submitted electronically to tobias.berger@fu-berlin.de **and** in writing. You can simply drop the printed version in the letterbox outside lhnestr. 22 or post them to me via snail mail.
- The **deadline** for the Hausarbeiten is **15th August 2015**.
- Referatsausarbeitung:
 - 3000 words (including footnotes but without bibliography) +/- 10% (i.e. 2700 – 3300 words; anything longer or shorter will result in a reduction of the final grade).
 - Like Hausarbeiten, Referatsausarbeitungen need to clearly articulate a research question and answer this question with reference to the relevant literature(s).
 - Referatsausarbeitungen should refer, at least broadly, to the topic of the presentation given in class (or one of the two sessions you wrote a summary about).
 - Referatsausarbeitungen need to be submitted electronically to tobias.berger@fu-berlin.de **and** in writing. You can simply drop the printed version in the letterbox outside lhnestr. 22 or post them to me via snail mail.
 - The **deadline** for the Referatsausarbeitungen is **15th August 2015**.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated! Plagiarism and academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, submitting the same course work for credit in different courses, copying from your fellow students, paying other people to do the coursework for you, or "...the failure to acknowledge sources of facts, information, analyses, interpretations, and arguments that you incorporate in your work, whether from a source that is written, spoken, or on the internet, and whether or not it is published or unpublished. Appropriate documentation of your sources is necessary when you quote, paraphrase or

incorporate information and ideas generated by others“.¹ This applies to all course work submitted for this course, i.e. Hausarbeiten, Referatsausarbeitungen **and** the short summaries submitted for a Teilnahmeschein.

In case of plagiarism, the course work will be graded 5.0 and the case will be referred to the Examination Office. For the relevant procedures, please also see (unfortunately only in German):

http://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/studium/downloads/downloads_lehre/rundschreiben_plagiate_polsoz_juni2014.pdf

Office Hours and Email:

Mondays, 10.30 – 12.30 or by appointment. Room 107, Ihnestr. 22. Please do register on the sheet outside my office door for a slot.

If you have any questions about the course, readings, or assessments, you can always email me. I will try my best to answer all emails within 48 hours. If you have not heard back from me after 72 hours, please do send me a reminder!

If you cannot make it to my office hours but would like to meet and discuss any issue relating to this course or your overall studies, please just drop me an email and we can try to arrange an alternative slot. If you would like to discuss essay or presentation outlines, please do send me a copy of these outlines at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Resources:

¹ Definition adopted from Jeffrey T. Checkel (2015), Syllabus “Governance, Identity, and War“; available at <http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/internationalstudies/documents/outlines/1154/409-1154checkel.pdf>

The main readings for each week will be available via blackboard. You are expected to have at least read the core texts for each week. In addition, students are strongly encouraged to do some independent research on topics of their interest. This course operates on both conceptual and empirical levels and covers a lot of ground both in terms of theoretical approaches as well as different political issues discussed. Although you may pursue specific topics that particularly interest you (say, for example, the International Criminal Court, global Human Rights Regime, or the politics of specific regions), please do remember that this is first and foremost a theoretical class – and both our discussions in class as well as the presentations and essays prepared for this course should refer back to the theoretical issues at hand. In order to appreciate these debate more fully, you are also encouraged to read a bit outside the established canon of International Relations and look at, for example, textbooks and key texts produced within adjacent disciplines like sociology. Some suggestions for particularly important works are listed below:

Berger, Peter L., and Thomas Luckmann (1967). *The social construction of reality. A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday.

Foucault, Michel (1977). *Discipline and Punish*. London: Penguin Books.

Foucault, Michel (1982). 'The Subject and Power', *Critical Inquiry*, 8:4, 777–95.

Foucault, Michel (1998). *The history of sexuality*. Harmondsworth u.a: Penguin Books.

Giddens, Anthony (1984). *The constitution of society. Outline of the theory of structuration*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Habermas, Jürgen (1984). *The Theory of Communicative Action - Vol. I. Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Cambridge: Polity.

Habermas, Jürgen (1987). *The Theory of Communicative Action - Vol. II. Lifeworld and System: The Critique of Functionalist Reason*. Cambridge: Polity.

Hacking, Ian (1999). *The social construction of what?* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Hacking, Ian (2002). *Historical ontology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Outline and Readings:

1) Introduction

No readings

Theoretical Foundations: Seizing the Middle Ground?

2) Reconstructing Constructivism

Guzzini, Stefano (2000). 'A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations*, 6:2, 147–82.

3) Seizing the Middle Ground or Critical Project?

Adler, Emanuel (1997). 'Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics', *European Journal of International Relations*, 3:3, 319–63.

Price, Richard, and Christian Reus-Smit (1998). 'Dangerous Liaisons? Critical International Theory and Constructivism', *European Journal of International Relations*, 4:3, 259–94.

4) Alexander Wendt's Constructivism

Wendt, Alexander (1992). 'Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics', *International Organization*, 46:2, 391–425.

Zehfuß, Maja (2001). 'Constructivism and Identity: A Dangerous Liaison', *European Journal of International Relations*, 7:3, 315–48.

Sociological Approaches

5) The Stanford School

Meyer, John W., John Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco O. Ramirez (1997). 'World Society and the Nation-State', *American Journal of Sociology*, 103:1, 144–81.

Finnemore, Martha (1996). 'Norms, culture, and world politics: insights from sociology's institutionalism', *International Organization*, 50:02, 325–47.

6) Institutions and Bureaucratic Culture

Barnett, Michael N., and Martha Finnemore (1999). 'The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations', *International Organization*, 53:04, 699–732.

Barnett, Michael (2005). 'Humanitarianism Transformed', *Perspectives on Politics*, 3:04.

7) Methods/Case Studies: Ethnography and Participant Observation of “the International”

Cohn, Carol (2006). 'Motives and methods: using multi-sited ethnography to study US national security discourses', in: Brooke A. Ackerly, Maria Stern and Jacqui True (eds.), *Feminist methodologies for international relations*. Cambridge, UK, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mosse, David (2013). 'The Anthropology of International Development', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 42:1, 227–46.

Two Faces of Discourse

8) Habermasian Approaches – and Feminist Responses

Risse, Thomas (2000). "'Let's Argue!': Communicative Action in World Politics', *International Organization*, 54:1, 1–39.

Hutchings, Kimberly (2005). 'Speaking and hearing' Habermasian discourse ethics, feminism and IR', *Review of International Studies*, 31:01.

9) Foucauldian Approaches – and open Philosophical Questions

Epstein, Charlotte (2008). *The power of words in international relations. Birth of an anti-whaling discourse*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. CHAPTER 1 “Making Meaning Matter in International Relations”

Taylor, Charles (1984). ‘Foucault on freedom and truth’, *Political Theory*, 12:2, 152–83.

10) Methods/Case Study: How to Study Discourse (and which one)? The Case of the ICC

Deitelhoff, Nicole (2009). ‘The Discursive Process of Legalization: Charting Islands of Persuasion in the ICC Case’, *International Organization*, 63:01, 33.

Clarke, Kamari M. (2009). *Fictions of justice. The International Criminal Court and the challenge of legal pluralism in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press. CHAPTER [tba]

Norms and Normalization

11) The Global Diffusion of Norms...

Risse, Thomas, and Stephen C. Ropp (2013). ‘Introduction and Overview’, in: Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp and Kathryn Sikkink (eds.), *The persistent power of human rights. From commitment to compliance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chandler, David (2013). ‘Promoting democratic norms? Social constructivism and the ‘subjective’ limits to liberalism’, *Democratization*, 20:2, 215–39.

12) ...and their Local Appropriations

Acharya, Amitav (2004). ‘How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism’, *International Organization*, 58:02.

Jabri, Vivienne (2014). ‘Disarming norms: postcolonial agency and the constitution of the international’, *International Theory*, 6:02, 372–90.

13) Methods/Discussion: How (not) to do Critical Norm Research?

[These readings are in German – slightly modified translated versions can be found in the World Political Science Review, 2014, Vol.1]

Engelkamp, Stephan, Katharina Glaab, and Judith Renner (2012). 'In der Sprechstunde: Wie (kritische) Normenforschung ihre Stimme wiederfinden kann', *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen*, 19:2, 101–28.

Deitelhoff, Nicole, and Lisbeth Zimmermann (2013). 'Aus dem Herzen der Finsternis: Kritisches Lesen und wirkliches Zuhören der konstruktivistischen Normenforschung. Eine Replik auf Stephan Engelkamp, Katharina Glaab und Judith Renner', *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen*, 20:1.

Engelkamp, Stephan, Katharina Glaab, and Judith Renner (2013). 'Ein Schritt vor, zwei Schritte zurück? Eine Replik auf Nicole Deitelhoff und Lisbeth Zimmermann', *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen*, 20:2.

14) Conclusions