

GEO-SCAPES: MEDIALIZING THE EARTH

Workshop – 14th - 15th September 2021

Organized by Tommaso Morawski (PhD)

Graduiertenkolleg Media Anthropology

Bauhaus-University Weimar

Until the first photographs of Earth were taken from space, the planet could not be perceived in its entirety by standing on its surface. In order to represent its spherical form, an act of imagination was required that, through the use of the medium of cartography, would translate the imperceptible into the visible. This simple annotation, contained in the book by the British geographer Denis Cosgrove, *Apollo's Eye: A Cartographic Genealogy of the Earth in the Western Imagination*, highlights the symbolic and cultural-historical value of terrestrial images, which for much of human history have represented the icon of our mythical space, the essence of our holistic existence, the document of our spatial imagination. Furthermore, it invites us to think about the importance of the Apollo space program which, although short, since its inauguration in 1961 has marked a turning point in the relationship between media, the Earth and its representations. A real “spatial revolution” – to use a term dear to the German philosopher and jurist Carl Schmitt – which, through the grafting of a mechanical eye, for the first time transferred the subject’s point of observation into a new cosmological position.

The workshop *Geo-scapes: Medializing the Earth* questions the effects that this “ecumenical disorientation” has had on the languages of art and politics, on the cultural techniques of visualization, and on the way space is perceived, disciplined and organized. On the one hand, representations of planet Earth as isolated in cosmic space and without political boundaries have offered imaginative support to the maturation of a modern cosmopolitanism and the birth of a new ecological and environmentalist discourse, promoting artistic practices such as the Land Art or Peter Kennard’s montages. On the other hand, these representations have also accelerated the process of the Earth’s “medialization”, as exemplified by Al Gore’s Digital Earth, Google’s mapping systems, but also by new satellite technologies and the increasingly intensive use of drones. A complex of elements whose interconnections have not yet been properly explored, but which prove to be of high public interest, considering that the image of the Earth is the sign on the basis of which all the economic, political and cultural phenomena that are commonly called global are defined.

Information

The workshop will be held as a hybrid event, taking place at the Bauhaus-University Weimar while including online participation and discussion.

Participants: Frédérique Aït-Touati (Paris), Jean-Marc Besse (Paris), Teresa Castro (Paris), Mark Dorrian (Edinburgh), Lorenz Engell (Weimar), Bernhard Siegert (Weimar), Matteo Vegetti (Mendrisio), Tommaso Morawski (Weimar)

Host: Dr. Tommaso Morawski

Website: <http://www.uni-weimar.de/grama>
<http://www.uni-weimar.de/geoscapes>



Graduiertenkolleg
Medienanthropologie

Bauhaus-Universität Weimar