David Harvey

Spaces of neoliberalization: towards a theory of uneven geographical development

2nd edition

Geography

Franz Steiner Verlag

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction: Hettner-Lecture 2004 in Heidelberg

PETER MEUSBURGER and HANS GEBHARDT

The Department of Geography, University of Heidelberg, held its eighth 'Hettner-Lecture' from 28 June to 2 July 2004. This annual lecture series, named after Alfred Hettner, Professor of Geography in Heidelberg from 1899 to 1928 and one of the most reputable German geographers of his day, is devoted to new theoretical developments in the crossover fields of geography, economics, the social sciences, and the humanities.

During their stay, the invited guest-speakers present two public lectures, one of which is transmitted via teleteaching on the Internet. In addition, several seminars give graduate students and young researchers the opportunity to meet and converse with an internationally acclaimed scholar. Such an experience at an early stage in the academic career opens up new perspectives for research and encourages critical reflection on current theoretical debates and geographical practice.

The eighth Hettner-Lecture was given by David Harvey, Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at the City University of New York Graduate Center. David Harvey is widely recognized as one of the most innovative and influential geographical thinkers of the last 40 years. His *Explanation in geography* (1969) provided a major contribution to the methodological debate over geography as a spatial science that captivated geographers in the 1960s. Harvey's subsequent move from the UK – where he had lectured at Bristol University – to the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore coincided with a profound shift in the intellectual foundations of his research. With *Social justice and the city* (1973), Harvey produced a pioneering text in critical urban studies that explored the relevance of Marxist ways of thinking to account for and challenge poverty and racism in Western cities. His *The limits to capital* (1982), a geographical extension of Marx's theory of capitalism, firmly established Harvey as leading Marxist geographer with his reputation extending well beyond the confines of the discipline. Harvey returned to urban issues in *The urbanization of capital* (1985) and *Consciousness and the urban experience* (1985), before embarking on his most successful book to date, *The condition of postmodernity* (1989), a materialist critique of postmodernism written while he held the Halford Mackinder Chair in Geography at the University of Oxford. More recently, Harvey has revisited and further explored issues of social justice and the idea of utopia in *Justice, nature and the geography of difference* (1996) and *Spaces of hope.* (2000). His latest books are *Paris, capital of modernity* (2003) and *The new imperialism* (2003).

During the Hettner-Lecture 2004 David Harvey presented two public lectures entitled 'Free market capitalism and the restoration of class power' and 'Towards a

general theory of uneven geographical development',[1] both of which are published here in revised form, together with an essay on 'Space as a key word' and a short photographic documentation. Three seminars with graduate students and young researchers from Heidelberg and nineteen other European and US universities took up issues raised in the lectures. The seminars were entitled 'The new imperialism', 'Geographical knowledges/political powers', and 'Space as a key word'.

We should like to express our gratitude to the *Klaus Tschira Foundation* for generously supporting the Hettner-Lecture. Particular thanks are due to Dr. h.c. Klaus Tschira, our benevolent host in the *Studio* of the foundation's magnificent *Villa Bosch*. We would like to thank Prof. Dr. Angelos Chaniotis, Vice-Rector of Heidelberg University, and Prof. Dr. Peter Hofmann, Dean of the Faculty of Chemistry and Earth Sciences, for their welcome addresses at the opening ceremony in the university's *Alte Aula*.

The Hettner-Lecture 2004 would not have been possible without the full commitment of all involved students and faculty members. We thank Tim Freytag and Heike Jöns for their effective organisational work and the planning and chairing of the seminar sessions with graduate students and young researchers. We are also grateful to the students who helped with the organisation of the event. The concerted effort and enthusiasm of all participants once more ensured a successful Hettner-Lecture in Heidelberg.

[1] 'Free market capitalism and the restoration of class power', *Alte Aula der Universität*, Monday, 28th June 2004, 18.15; afterwards reception. 'Towards a general theory of uneven geographical development', *Hörsaal des Geographischen Instituts*, Tuesday, 29th June 2004, 15.15. The second lecture was followed by a public discussion, chaired by Michael Hoyler (Loughborough).

NEO-LIBERALISM AND THE RESTORATION OF CLASS POWER