Global Production Networks and World Cities

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Content of the course

The global economy is organised along global production networks and world cities. Global production networks incorporate all kinds of network relationships and encompass all relevant sets of actors with regard to a specific process of production and commercialisation. World cities meanwhile serve as basing points of global capital. They are highly concentrated command points from where global economic processes are controlled.

This course serves as an introduction to global production networks and world cities. Key conceptual literature and outstanding empirical studies are presented by the lecturer and discussed with the students. The compatibility of the two concepts is assessed. Against this background, the findings of an on-going research project on ‘Gateway Cities and their Hinterland’, financed by the German Research Foundation and the São Paulo Research Foundation, are presented by the lecturer so as to discuss achievements, shortcomings and ways ahead for this project with the students.

Programme and literature

Block 1: Concepts and methodologies in research on global production networks


Block 2: Concepts and methodologies in research on world cities


Block 3: Thinking global production networks and world cities together


• Christof Parnreiter. 2014. ‘Network or Hierarchical Relations?: A Plea for Redirecting Attention to the Control Functions of Global Cities’. Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie 105.4: 398–411.

• Christof Parnreiter, Christoph Haferburg and Jürgen Oßenbrügge. 2013. ‘Shifting Corporate Geographies in Global Cities of the South: Mexico City and Johannesburg as Case Studies’. Die Erde 144.1: 1–16.


• Thomas J. Sigler. 2013. ‘Relational Cities: Doha, Panama City, and Dubai as 21st Century Entrepôts’. Urban Geography 34.5: 612–33.

Block 4: Gateway cities in the oil and gas sector

• Moritz Breul. Forthcoming.


• Sören Scholvin et al. 2017. ‘Gateway Cities in Global Production Networks: Exemplified by the Oil and Gas Sector’. Unicamp Texto para Discussão . Forthcoming.


• Sören Scholvin et al. 2017. ‘Plugging into Global Production Networks: Density, Distance, Division and the Local Context of Brazil’s Oil and Gas Sector’. Unicamp Texto para Discussão. Forthcoming.