

**state – space symposium N° 1**  
**Biopolitics of Scale**

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**April 7 – 8, 2009**

**Berlage Institute**

Botersloot 25

3011 HE Rotterdam

The Netherlands

**Tuesday, April 7th**

**16.00 – 16.10**

**Vedran Mimica**, Welcome address

**16.10 – 16.20**

**Katja Diefenbach & Lukasz Stanek**,  
Introduction

**16.30 – 17.30**

**Andrea Cavalletti**, The City and the  
Security Paradigm

**17.30 – 18.30**

**Sven-Olov Wallenstein**, Biopolitics  
and the Ordering of Urban Space

**18.30 – 19.00**

**Break**

**19.00 – 20.00**

**Mark Purcell**, Scale, the city, and  
contemporary urban movements

**20.00 – 21.00**

**Discussion**

**Speakers**

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**Andrea Cavalletti**,

IUAV Venice University

**Sven-Olov Wallenstein**,

Södertörn University Stockholm

**Mark Purcell**,

University of Washington

**Workshop**

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**Pier-Vittorio Aureli**

**Katja Diefenbach**

**Miguel Robles-Duran**

**Lukasz Stanek**

**Roemer van Toorn**

**Peter Trummer**

**Workshop:**

**Wednesday, April 8th**

**Moderation: Roemer van Toorn**

**10.00 – 10.20**

**Katja Diefenbach**, The Space in  
which Change Changes. Politics and  
the Government of the Uncertain

**10.20 – 10.40**

**Lukasz Stanek**, Oskar Hansen:  
biotechnological urbanism in socialist  
Poland

**10.40 – 11.00**

**Pier Vittorio Aureli**, From City-state  
Space to Capital City Space: Obser-  
vations on the Formal and Political  
Changes in the Architecture of the  
City Square in Europe between XIVth  
and XVIIth Century

**11.00 – 11.20**

**Miguel Robles-Duran**, Anachronisms:  
Bio-politics and the State of Modern  
Architecture

**11.20 – 11.40**

**Peter Trummer**, Population Thinking  
in Urbanism

**11.40 – 13.00**

**Discussion**

The symposium „Biopolitics of Scale“ addresses the role of modern states in processes of urbanisation by focusing on the production and transformation of scalar regimes.

The production of scales as platforms and containers of social practices was an essential part of the emergence of modern urbanism as a biopolitical project since the 18th century; it facilitated the introduction of new procedures of state administration of life and distribution of risk on the territory.

The investigation of production, merger, dissipation and transformation of scales reveals a common denominator of the current processes of urbanisation, including the management of the growth of cities; the regulation of circulation of commodities, people and ideas; the distribution of infrastructure, security and welfare; new doctrines of monument protection; and the introduction of new financial instruments which facilitate these operations.

This symposium will discuss scales as designed, produced and contested rather than given by nature, and it will question the ability of architecture and urbanism to reclaim the political economy of scale as their field of competence.

The programme state-space is conceived by Lukasz Stanek

[www.state-space.janvaneyck.nl](http://www.state-space.janvaneyck.nl)

The symposium „Biopolitics of Scale“ is organised by Katja Diefenbach and Lukasz Stanek

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**JVE**

#### The City and the Security Paradigm

Hobbes founded the modern conception of State. He did this, as everyone knows, in the name of security.

“The Obligation of Subjects to the Sovereign — reads the Leviathan’s XXI chapter — is understood to last as long, and no longer than, the power lasts, by which it is able to protect them”. Now, here everything depends on a time phrase, on the parenthesis no longer, whose paradoxical meaning soon emerges clearly.

A century after Hobbes, J. von Sonnenfels offered a brilliant solution to this paradox, elaborating the as yet unsurpassed formula of the security paradigm. In his Fundamental Principles of Police the Leviathan’s “no longer” is turned exactly upside down: the power relationship now actually lasts longer, beyond the security and the freedom of the subject.

This new model – we could call it security/insecurity system - corresponds to a specific device for political-spatial articulation: it activates its own mobile partitions at the level of the new bio-political notion, that of population, which will manifest itself according to different degrees of intensity, positive or negative.

— Andrea Cavalletti is professor of Aesthetics and Italian Literature at the Iuav University of Venice. He has edited several books (of mythologist Furio Jesi, of Hayim Nahman Bialik and others) and published essays on literature, philosophy, political philosophy and urbanism. He is the author of *La città biopolitica. Mitologie della sicurezza* (The Bio-Political City: Mythologies of Security), Bruno Mondadori, Milan: 2005, and of *Classe* (Class), Bollati Boringhieri, Turin (forthcoming: March 2009).

#### Biopolitics and the ordering of urban space

In Foucault’s analysis of biopolitics, the question of architecture and urban space plays a discreet, although decisive role. In the lecture series on “Security, Territory, Population,” and then in the subsequent lectures on “The Birth of Biopolitics,” Foucault in fact points to the idea of the city as a point of intersection for all those discourses that would coalesce into the modern conception of biopower, although this theme remained undeveloped in his writings.

In my talk, I will draw on some of the ideas developed by Foucault, but also on the analysis of the invention of urbanism as a theoretical discourse proposed by Françoise Choay, in her analysis of “The Rule and the Model,” where the pioneering

efforts of Ildelfonso Cerdá play a major role. I will argue that the transition from architecture as a representation of order to architecture as a technique for ordering, which began already in the late 19th century, implied a shift from the singular object to the urban structure, and that this difference in scale is what allows for a different understanding of space as something produced by architectural and urbanistic tools.

— Sven-Olov Wallenstein teaches philosophy and aesthetics at Södertörn University in Stockholm, and is the editor-in-chief of *Site*. He is the translator of works by Winckelmann, Kant, Hegel, Frege, Husserl, Levinas, Heidegger, Derrida, Deleuze, and Agamben, as well as the author of numerous books on philosophy, art, and architecture. Recent publications include *Essays, Lectures* (2007), *The Silences of Mies* (2008), the first Swedish translation of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* (together with Brian Manning Delaney, 2008), and *Biopolitics and the Emergence of Modern Architecture* (2009). He is currently completing a book on Hegel’s *Phenomenology* and the first Swedish translation of Lessing’s *Laocoon*.

#### Scale, the city, and contemporary urban movements

In my talk I will discuss the scale issues surrounding new urban movements for the right to the city, asking questions about scale that lead us to question just how central the city is to the right to the city, or if it makes more sense to think in terms of a right to inhabit /space/ more generally. The upshot would be that a right to the city runs the risk of privileging a particular scale (and here the scale debates could discuss the importance of seeing scale as socially constructed) in a way that is not useful for contemporary movements. If we can instead think in terms of a right to inhabit, then such politics is opened up and able to operate on many different scales. Alternatively, if we think of the city as an important node in a network of flows (more than as a local scale nested in larger ones), then a concept of a right to the /city/ per se might be more useful.

— Mark Purcell received his degree in geography from UCLA. He is currently an Associate Professor of Urban Planning at the University of Washington in Seattle. He is the author of *Recapturing Democracy: Neoliberalization and the Struggle for Alternative Urban Futures* (2008). His current research concerns urban politics, plan-

ning, and political theory, with a particular focus on new ways to conceive of democratic movements for a right to the city.