



Newsletter November 2019

Georg-Simmel-Zentrum für Metropolenforschung / Georg-Simmel Center for Metropolitan Studies

Topics

- Liza Weinstein: Contesting India's World Class Evictions
- Colloquium European Ethnology
- - Colloquium with Andrej Holm
- Other events

Dear friends of the GSZ,

Since the early 2000s, local governments across India have carried out large-scale demolitions in informal settlements and “slum” communities, evicting hundreds of thousands of poor, and otherwise marginalized urban residents. These evictions, which are justified by government officials as necessary to make India’s cities “world class,” have been characterized in academic and popular accounts as part of a global land grab, rooted in the logics of contemporary global capitalism. Breaking from this totalizing narrative, Liza Weinstein’s current work aims to historicize and localize India’s contemporary “world class city” evictions. Her work demonstrates how the housing insecurity experienced by informal residents today has been shaped by the locally specific confluence of global, national, and local level forces, as they have developed over time.

In one piece of this project, Liza Weinstein illustrates the distinct ways that evictions are being contested across India’s major cities and aims to explain why distinct movement forms emerge in different places. Based on interviews, ethnography, and historical research in the Indian cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad, she identifies four ideal-typical models of anti-eviction contestation prevalent across urban India: legal activism, protest politics, political party advocacy, and civil society influence in local administration. She argues that while elements of each model can be found in all four cities, one particular form has emerged as the dominant mode of anti-eviction activism in each place.

In order to explain the city-specific character of these contestations, she draws on theories of “place distinction” and insights from historical sociology to develop a framework that explains how movement forms are shaped by iterative encounters between citizens and the state amid both mundane daily events and large-scale ruptures. How local actors respond to these ruptures, or global and national “triggering events,” she argues, is shaped by earlier entanglements between local government and activists, which then shape future engagements. Illustrating the path dependent character of local activism, she highlights four large-scale ruptures that have differentially shaped the contemporary landscape of housing rights and influenced the character of anti-eviction activism: the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan and arrival of partition refugees into India’s major cities; the mid-1970s “Emergency” declared by then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi; the emergence of Dalit (or low caste) activism in South India; and the political empowerment of the Hindu right and rise of Hindutva since the early 1990s.

Tracing how these historic ruptures reshaped contestations between states and citizens – in distinct ways across major Indian cities – Liza Weinstein details the development of locally specific responses to the world class city evictions observable today. In doing so, she illustrates Manuel Castells important assertion that “cities are the products of history, both of the urban forms and functions inherited from the past, and of the new urban meanings assigned to them by conflictive historical change.

Think & Drink on November 4, 2019, 6pm c.t.

Contesting India's World Class City Evictions: Place Difference, Path, Dependencies, and Local Character of Anti-Eviction Activism

Liza Weinstein is Chair of the Sociology and Anthropology Department and an associate professor of sociology at Northeastern University. Her research and teaching interests focus on cities and globalization, urban political economy, the politics of informality, and state-civil society relations with a regional focus on India.

Venue: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Universitätsstraße 3b, R 002
10117 Berlin-Mitte, Germany

Think & Drink in November

Think & Drink on November 11, 2019, 6pm c.t.

Property, The City and The Law

Adolfo Estalella, Complutense University of Madrid

Think & Drink on November 18, 2019, 6pm c.t.

Where AfD is (not) strong: urbanization, provinciality, anti-politics

Prof. Dr. Bernd Belina, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt

Think & Drink on November 25, 2019, 6pm c.t.

The Emergence of Urban Border Space

Dr. Margit Fauser, University of Applied Sciences Darmstadt

Venue: Universitätsstraße 3b, R 002 (event. 004)

For more information visit the [website!](#)

Colloquium European Ethnology

Kolloquium on November 5, 2019, 6-8pm (evening event)

Systemintegration, aber auch Sozialintegration? Wissenschaft in Ostdeutschland seit 1990 (DE)

Prof. Dr. Peer Pasternack, Halle/Wittenberg

Kolloquium on November 19, 2019, 2pm c.t.

Ummauern: Schwindende Souveränität und Geschlecht (DE)

Beate Binder, Gaby Dietze, Berlin

Kolloquium on November 26, 2019, 2pm c.t.

Logistical natures: Werkstattgespräch (EN/DE)

Forschungskollektiv "Tiere als Objekte", Berlin

Venue: Hausvogteiplatz 5-7, 10117 Berlin

For more information visit their [website!](#)

Interdisciplinary Colloquium "Wohnen in Berlin"

Apply now!

Students of Universities and Colleges from Berlin, that are in the process of writing their final or qualifying theses (BA, MA, PhD) on a housing policy topic, may apply to participate in the interdisciplinary colloquium "Wohnen in Berlin" at the Georg-Simmel-Center for Metropolitan Studies (winter semester 2019/20).

Application deadline is November 10, 2019

Address your application to wohnberlin-gsz@hu-berlin.de.

Other events

CMS Public Lecture Series, November 12, 2019, 6-8pm

"Gemeinwohlorientiertes Wohnen in Berlin - was bringt die Zukunft?"

Panel Discussion with Katalin Gennburg (Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus / Die Linke) and Mario Hilgenfeld (BBU, Leiter Bereich Wohnungswirtschaft/-politik)

Moderation: Aljoscha Hofmann (CMS)

CMS Public Lecture Series, November 26, 2019, 6-8pm

"Chancen und Grenzen der `Solidarischen Stadt`"

Margit Mayer (Center for Metropolitan Studies)

Center for Metropolitan Studies (CMS)

Hardenbergstr. 16-18, Room 103

www.metropolitanstudies.de

Pt.Konferenz - Internationale Konferenz 2019

"New Urban Quarters. Planning the city on a large scale again"

RWTHAACHEN UNIVERSTIY

Chair of Planning Theory and Urban Development

Tuesday, Dezember 3, 2019, 9am - 6pm

Prof. Dr. Agnea Förster

Wüllnerstr. 5b

52062 Aachen

0049 241 - 80 98 300

konferenz@pt.rwth-aachen.de

www.pt.rwth-aachen.de

STADT-RAUSCH-REGIERUNG

Fragmente einer Drogengeschichte Berlins

Sina Fabian (Historian, HU Berlin), Jan-Henrik Friedrichs (Historian, University Hildesheim), Lora Nikolovaa (Cultural Anthropologist, Berlin), Ned Richardson-Little (Historian, University Erfurt)

Aquarium, Südblock

November 12, 2019, 7pm

Skalitzer Str. 6

10999 Berlin

[Application](#)