

2022 - Cities are Back in Town Archives

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Yuri Kazepov & Michael Friesenecker, 27.01.2022. Discussant Pierre Wokuri

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Gabriel Feltran, « Stolen Cars: A Journey Through São Paulo's Urban Conflict », 10.02

Launch and presentation of the book *Stolen Cars: A Journey Through São Paulo's Urban Conflict* (Gabriel Feltran ed. Wiley/IJURR, 2022)

From the moment a car is stolen, many people start to make money. Where is this money circulated? What effects does it have on the legal and illegal economies? How does it impact social and political dynamics? Based on an ethnographical study spanning five years, *Stolen Cars: A Journey Through São Paulo's Urban Conflict* tracks the journeys of stolen cars, their owners, and their thieves to examine how the patterns and mechanisms of urban inequalities and violence are reproduced. *Stolen Cars* is an innovative ethnography of urban inequalities and violence in São Paulo, Brazil. Organized around the journeys of five stolen cars, each chapter discusses a specific theme, such as the distinctions between violent robbery and the more commercial non-violent theft or the role of national borders interconnecting illegal and legal economies. The book provides an original theoretical framework for a rarely studied urban and transnational supply chain.

Speaker

Gabriel Feltran, professor at the Department of Sociology of the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar) and a researcher at the CEBRAP in Brazil

Gabriel Feltran was invited scholar and visiting Professor at the University of Oxford (2019), Goldsmiths University of London (2019), and Humboldt University Berlin (2017). Gabriel obtained his PhD in Social Sciences (2008) at the State University of Campinas, with a collaborative period at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS). His work is based on a long ethnography in urban outskirts, focusing on normative regimes, criminal governance, power and violence along illegal market chains. Author of *The Entangled City: crime as urban fabric* (Manchester University Press 2020) and editor of *Stolen cars: a journey through São Paulo's urban conflict* (Wiley, 2022).

Discussion

Laurent Fourchard, Research Professor, Sciences Po, Centre for International Studies (CERI)

Joost de Moor, "The Missing Movement on Urban Climate Adaptation?", 24.02.2022

Seminar Cities WIP (Work in Process)

Urban climate adaptation has become an increasingly urgent challenge – even across the so far relatively unaffected European continent. Moreover, critical climate scholars now underline adaptation's deeply political nature, arguing that what counts as adaptation to one actor may present maladaptation to another. They moreover propose a transformational approach that incorporates adaptation into a radical project to address the fundamental drivers of climate vulnerability in society. Despite this contentious potential, there appears to be little evidence that climate movements across Europe are addressing adaptation. This is all the more surprising given what some depict as the movement's shift towards 'postapocalyptic environmentalism,' which focuses on dealing with, rather than preventing climate disruptions as they are no longer seen as avoidable. Moreover, since transformational adaptation incorporates climate justice as a central tenet, it fits within much of the climate movement's broader agenda. Why, then, do we see so few signs of mobilizations around urban adaptation on behalf of the climate movement or adjacent struggles? In this seminar, Joost de Moor will address this 'mystery' by reviewing main results from several of his recent studies, including a comparative case study of climate movements in five European cities, a case study of the Swedish city of Malmö, ethnographic research with one British climate movement organization, and survey research of participants in Fridays For Future climate strikes across 13 cities in Europe, Australia and the US. He will conclude by reflecting on a more holistic approach to studying the politicization and depoliticization of urban climate adaptation that looks beyond the role of (climate) movements.

Speaker

Joost de Moor, Assistant Professor in Political Science, Sciences Po, CEE

Joost de Moor is Assistant Professor in Political Science at SciencesPo (CEE). His work focuses on the various ways in which citizens concerned about the environment become politically active - individually or collectively - to address their concerns. In particular, he focuses on the ways in which environmental activists navigate a political context marked by the apparent inability of states and international organizations to address crises like climate change, focusing on the dilemmas involved in that. He has published on these topics in journals across fields of political sciences, sociology and urban studies, including in *Environmental Politics*, *Theory & Society*, and *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*.

Eleonora Pasotti, « Resisting Redevelopment: Protest in Aspiring Global Cities », 10.03.22

Cities are Back in Town webinar

In *Resisting Redevelopment: Protest in Aspiring Global Cities*, Eleonora Pasotti explores the forces that enable residents of 'aspiring global cities,' or economically competitive cities, to mobilize against gentrification and other forms of displacement, as well as what makes mobilizations successful. The book examines twenty-nine protest campaigns over a decade in ten major cities across five continents, from Santiago to Seoul to Los Angeles. Eleonora Pasotti examines several partisan and institutional factors that explain protest outcomes. She also sheds light on an approach that is both understudied and remarkably effective - the practice of successful organizers deploying 'experiential tools,' or events, social archives, neighborhood tours, and performances designed to attract participants and transform the protest site into the place to be. *Resisting Redevelopment* is the Winner of the 2021 American Sociological Association Section on Collective Behavior and Social Movements Charles Tilly Distinguished Contribution to Scholarship Book Award and received the 2021 Honorable Mention for the American Political Science Association Urban Politics Section Dennis Judd Best Book Award.

Speaker

Eleonora Pasotti, Professor in the Department of Politics at the University of California, Santa Cruz

Eleonora Pasotti's work focuses on comparative urban politics, with an interest in urban electoral institutions, political economy, and social movements. She is the author of *Political Branding in Cities: The Decline of Machine Politics in Bogotá, Naples and Chicago*, which shows how direct elections, low party discipline, and high rates of municipal fiscal self-reliance enabled a move away from patronage in the mobilization of consensus. In *Resisting Redevelopment: Protest in Aspiring Global Cities*, Eleonora Pasotti in turn examines how the same political landscape impacts state-society relations, and specifically protest.

Discussion

Gilles Pinson, Professor of Political Science and Researcher at the Centre Emile Durkheim, Sciences Po Bordeaux

Beatriz Botero Arcila, "Barcelona's Digital Transformation Plan and the city's quest for an alternative digital future: how much can cities do?", 31.03.2022

Seminar Cities WIP (Work in Process)

In 2016, Francesca Bria, the newly appointed Digital Commissioner of Barcelona, presented Barcelona's Digital Transformation Plan (DTP), an explicit attempt to move "from a model of surveillance capitalism, where data is opaque and not transparent, to a model where citizens themselves can own and control the data". Barcelona's DTP's central objective was to enhance the city's and citizens' data and technological sovereignty and, by doing so, catalyze a whole new form of the digital information economy, a more egalitarian and sustainable one. This presentation will discuss how Barcelona's city-power (formal, political, and economic authority) shaped the design of the DTP and how it shaped its attempts at implementing three of its flagship policies. In sum, Barcelona's new policies were able to push the city in the local government's desired direction - beyond what the orthodoxy would have conceded - yet the attempt was still curtailed by the cities' local government law structure and the broader market structure of the digital information economy. Thus, the presentation will argue that cities are able to make important choices regarding their digital present and futures, but that these choices are limited by their formal authority and previous decisions.

Speaker

Beatriz Botero Arcila, Assistant Professor of Law at Sciences Po, Paris and Faculty Associate at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University. She holds an SJD and an LLM from Harvard Law School and is a lawyer from Universidad de Los Andes, in Bogotá, Colombia. Her research and expertise focus on data governance in urban environments, privacy law, data governance policy, municipal law, platform governance, and legal theory.

Isabelle Anguelovski, Presentation of the book "The Green City and Social Injustice. 21 Tales from North America and Europe", 05.04.2022

The Green City and Social Injustice examines the recent urban environmental trajectory of 21 cities in Europe and North America over a 20-year period. It analyses the circumstances under which greening interventions can create a new set of inequalities for socially vulnerable residents while also failing to eliminate other environmental risks and impacts. Based on fieldwork in ten countries and on the analysis of core planning, policy and activist documents and data, the book offers a critical view of the growing green planning orthodoxy in the Global

North. It highlights the entanglements of this tenet with neoliberal municipal policies including budget cuts for community initiatives, long-term green spaces and housing for the most fragile residents; and the focus on large-scale urban redevelopment and high-end real estate investment. It also discusses hopeful experiences from cities where urban greening has long been accompanied by social equity policies or managed by community groups organizing around environmental justice goals and strategies. The book examines how displacement and gentrification in the context of greening are not only physical but also socio-cultural, creating new forms of social erasure and trauma for vulnerable residents. Its breadth and diversity allow students, scholars and researchers to debunk the often-depoliticized branding and selling of green cities and reinsert core equity and justice issues into green city planning—a much-needed perspective. Building from this critical view, the book also shows how cities that prioritize equity in green access, in secure housing and in bold social policies can achieve both environmental and social gains for all.

Speaker

Isabelle Anguelovski is the director of the Barcelona Lab for Urban Environmental Justice and Sustainability (BCNUEJ), an ICREA Research Professor, a Senior Researcher and Principal Investigator at ICTA and former coordinator of the research group Healthy Cities and Environmental Justice at IMIM. She obtained a PhD in Urban Studies and Planning from MIT before returning to Europe in 2011 with a Marie Curie International Incoming Fellowship. Her research examines the extent to which urban plans and policy decisions contribute to more just, resilient, healthy, and sustainable cities, and how community groups in distressed neighborhoods contest the existence, creation, or exacerbation of environmental inequities as a result of urban (re)development processes and policies. Since 2016, she is the PI of a five-year ERC-funded project called GreenLULUs which examines green inequalities in 40 cities in Europe, the US, and Canada. She is the research group coordinator and co-leader of the research lines "Environmental and Climate Gentrification" and "Urban Climate Risk, Infrastructures, and Justice" at BCNUEJ.

Discussion

Joost de Moor, Assistant Professor in Political Science, Sciences Po, CEE

**Hilary Silver, "Multilevel Governance of Homelessness During the Coronavirus Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities",
14.04.2022**

Seminar Cities WIP (Work in Process)

This paper discusses some of the innovations and difficulties in multilevel governance of homelessness since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. Homelessness varies a great deal geographically. National policies to address it, where they even exist, are administered at a very local level, often in partnership with the private nonprofit sector. Even in the best of times, multilevel governance challenges introduce uneven responses to homelessness and housing instability. When the Covid-19 crisis hit, policy responses were likewise hampered by inefficient coordination among levels of government, especially in federal states like the US, Germany, and Italy. The immediate national actions taken to protect people from the disease such as lockdowns, masking, and social distancing were difficult to apply to those experiencing homelessness, especially rough sleepers. Before federal governments could respond, many regions, states and localities adopted various emergency measures: deconcentrating congregate shelters, moving people - especially those infected - to individual dwelling units, commandeering vacant hotel rooms and apartments, distributing masks, water, and disinfectant.

Encampments were cleared or provided with services, and outreach to street dwellers increased in the interest of public health. The life-or-death urgency of the crisis created an opportunity to break through complacent business as usual, providing a shock to the path dependency of institutionalized responses to homelessness. Yet these initiatives sometimes ran up against subsequent federal policies, such as national health guidelines, eviction moratoria, and direct cash or rental assistance, with rigid regulations, short timelines and premature expiration dates. Some local and state governments lacked prior administrative experience or financial capacities to carry out the federal policies to protect the unhoused during the pandemic. Data collection on homelessness was similarly curtailed, making it difficult to monitor what was happening on the ground, while increased activism by and on behalf of the poor and newly jobless pressured governments to respond promptly to rising needs.

Speaker

Hilary Silver is Professor of Sociology, International Affairs, and Public Policy & Public Administration at George Washington University and Professor Emerita of Sociology and Urban Studies at Brown University. She served as Chair of the GW Department of Sociology, Director of the Urban Studies Program at Brown, and Editor of *City & Community*, the journal of the Community and Urban Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association, which honored her with the Lynd Award for Career Lifetime Achievement.

Javier Auyero, "Notes Towards a Political Sociology of Urban Marginality: Where the Ambivalent State Meets Subsistence Strategies", 05.05.2022

Over the last few decades, debates about policing in poor urban areas have turned from analyzing the state's neglect and abandonment into documenting its harsh interventions and punishing presence. Yet, we know very little about the covert world of state action that is hidden from public view. In *The Ambivalent State*, Javier Auyero and Katherine Sobering offer an unprecedented look into the clandestine relationships between police agents and drug dealers in Argentina.

In this presentation, Javier Auyero examines the illicit relationships that link police forces and participants in the market of criminalized drugs, and describes the conditions of possibility of the "clandestine hands" of the state. After a summary of the research that gave origin to the book *The Ambivalent State*, Auyero will present original archival and ethnographic research on collusive relationships and on how/why these intersect and interact with poor people's subsistence strategies.

Speaker

Javier Auyero is Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Professor at the Sociology Department, University of Texas, Austin. He is the author of *Poor People's Politics*, *Patients of the State*, and *Contentious Lives*. Together with Deborah Swistun, he published *Flammable: Environmental Suffering in an Argentine Shantytown* and, with Fernanda Berti, *In Harm's Way: The Dynamics of Urban Violence*. He is the series editor of the *Global/Comparative Ethnographies Series* at Oxford University Press.

Discussion

Côme Salvaire, Associate Researcher, Sciences Po, Centre for International Studies (CERI)

Walter Nicholls, "Immigration Politics in a Multilevel Jurisdictional Field: A Case Study of Orange County, California", 19.05.2022

This research addresses how metropolitan regions are strategic spaces for pro- and anti-immigrant social movements. In particular, we ask how do different jurisdictions in metropolitan regions impact the strategies of pro- and anti-immigrant advocates? Immigration

scholars maintain that policy emerges from multiple jurisdictions operating at different levels of government. However, many scholars of immigration activism continue to conceptualize activism as unfolding within single jurisdictional containers. This paper aims to close the gap between conceptions of the institutional field and conceptions of activism through a case study of contentious immigration politics in Orange County, California during the 2010s. The paper maintains that a multilevel jurisdictional field distributes political opportunities unevenly to advocates on each side of the issue, shaping the strategic options available to them. How activists respond to these options depends on the distribution of resources to each side across this complex political space. The combination of political opportunities and resources determine the strategies that pro- and anti-immigrant advocates pursue. The paper shows that advocates on both sides were not contained within single jurisdictional walls. Instead, they developed complex geographical strategies that sought to exploit opportunities in friendly jurisdictions to combat threats from unfriendly jurisdictions.

Speaker

Walter J. Nicholls is Professor of Urban Planning and Public Policy at the University of California, Irvine. His primary research interests are urban politics and policy, social movements, and immigration. He is the author of *The Immigrant Rights Movement* (2019), *Cities and Social Movements* (with Justus Uitermark) (2017), and *The DREAMers* (2013).

Alison Post, "What can studying infrastructure teach us about urban politics? Lessons from intermittent water supply in India", 31.05.2022

Reflecting on a set of related research projects on the politics of water delivery in Bangalore, India, I will propose revisions to a number of standard theoretical accounts of urban politics, as well as methodological approaches to studying urban policy in the Global South and more broadly. Five themes will be emphasized: the importance of understanding bureaucratic politics, and especially the political roles exercised by street level bureaucrats; the need to shift our focus from service access to service continuity; the importance of examining the specific and overlapping roles played by state and non-state actors in service provision; the necessity of acknowledging technical constraints upon the politics of distribution; and complementarities between ethnographic and new modes of quantitative of data collection, such as crowd-sourcing, remote sensing, and geo-tagged surveys.

Speaker

Alison Post, Associate Professor of Global Metropolitan Studies at the University of California, Berkeley

Alison Post holds the Travers Family Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair of Political Science and is Associate Professor of Global Metropolitan Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Her research lies at the intersection of comparative urban politics and comparative political economy, with regional emphases on Latin America and South Asia. She is the author of *Foreign and Domestic Investment in Argentina: The Politics of Privatized Infrastructure* (Cambridge University Press, 2014) and articles in the *Annual Review of Political Science*, *Comparative Politics*, *Governance*, *Perspectives on Politics*, *Politics & Society*, *Studies in Comparative International Development*, *World Development*, and other outlets. She is a former President of the Urban and Local Politics section of the American Political Science Association, and currently Chair of the Steering Committee for the Red de Economía Política de América Latina (Repal).

Discussion

Éric Verdeil, Professor of Geography and Urban Studies, Sciences Po, CERI

levgeniia Gubkina, "How to understand the Soviet built environment: experiments, methods, tools", 30.06.2022

Interpretations of socialist heritage are often quite one-sided or limited. Critical analysis of such heritage requires an extension of methods, knowledge, and fields. During the seminar, levgeniia Gubkina will share her experience and interdisciplinary approach that she uses in her scientific and activist work within various architectural, art and educational projects. It allows her to reveal other layers of social, political and historical through architecture and built environment. The focus will be on the methods and optics that she refers to.

The screening of "You See, Time Becomes Space Here" short documentary will be held within the seminar. This documentary was filmed before the start of a full-scale war in Ukraine within the multimedia project *Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Architecture*. This artwork is the result of a collaboration between director Tetjana Kononenko and architectural historian levgeniia Gubkina. It aims at reflecting the phenomenon of power in an urban environment through personal experience and microhistory. Filming took place on Freedom Square in Kharkiv, a large-scale modernist urban planning project of the interwar period in the then capital of Soviet Ukraine, the main masterpiece of which is the Derzhprom (House of State Industry) – the first Soviet skyscraper built in 1925–1928.

Speaker

levgeniia Gubkina is an architect, architectural historian, and curator of architectural and art projects. She is a co-founder of the NGO Urban Forms Center. Her work specialises in

architecture and urban planning of the 20th century in Ukraine, and a multidisciplinary approach to heritage studies. She has published the books *Slavutych: Architectural Guide* (DOM Publishers, 2015) and *Soviet Modernism. Brutalism. Post-Modernism. Buildings and Structures in Ukraine 1955–1991* (Osnovy Publishing and DOM Publishers, 2019) and curated the multimedia online project *Encyclopedia of Ukrainian Architecture* (2020-2021).

Daniel Agbibo, Presentation of the book "They Eat Our Sweat. Transport Labor, Corruption, and Everyday Survival in Urban Nigeria", 15.09.2022

Accounts of corruption in Africa and the Global South are generally overly simplistic and macro-oriented, and commonly disconnect everyday (petty) corruption from political (grand) corruption. In contrast to this tendency, *They Eat Our Sweat* offers a fresh and engaging look at the corruption complex in Africa through a micro analysis of its informal transport sector, where collusion between state and nonstate actors is most rife. Focusing on Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital and Africa's largest city, Daniel Agbibo investigates the workaday world of road transport operators as refracted through the extortion racket and violence of transport unions acting in complicity with the state. Steeped in an embodied knowledge of Lagos and backed by two years of thorough ethnographic fieldwork, including working as an informal bus conductor, Agbibo provides an emic perspective on precarious labour, popular agency and the daily pursuit of survival under the shadow of the modern world system. Corruption, Agbibo argues, is not rooted in Nigerian culture but is shaped by the struggle to get by and get ahead on the fast and slow lanes of Lagos. The pursuit of economic survival compels transport operators to participate in the reproduction of the very transgressive system they denounce. *They Eat Our Sweat* is not just a book about corruption but also about transportation, politics, and governance in urban Africa.

Speaker

Daniel E. Agbibo, Assistant Professor of African and African American Studies at Harvard University

He was previously Member of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton and Fellow of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC. His research uses mobile ethnography to understand on how state and nonstate forms of order and authority interpenetrate and shape each other, with particular focus on the political economy of everyday life in urban Africa. His articles have appeared in major academic journals, including *Public Culture*, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, and *Current History*. His books

include *They Eat Our Sweat: Transport Labor, Corruption, and Everyday Survival in Urban Nigeria* (Oxford University Press, 2022); *Mobility, Mobilization, and Counter/Insurgency: The Routes of Terror in an African Context* (University of Michigan Press, 2022); and *Transport, Transgression, and Politics in African Cities: The Rhythm of Chaos* (Routledge, 2019). He is the recipient of the Harry Frank Guggenheim Distinguished Scholar Award.

Discussant

Tim Gibbs, Maître de conférences (Associate Professor) in English Studies at the Université Paris-Nanterre

Luca Pattaroni, Amita Bhide, Christine Lutringer. Presentation of the book "Politics of Urban Planning: The Making and Unmaking of the Mumbai Development Plan 2014–2034", 29.09.2022

This book offers an interdisciplinary and dynamic account of the politicization of urban planning in Mumbai, India. It presents a in-depth perspective on the tensions and conflicts pervading the development and regulation of contemporary cities in the wider context of planetary urbanization, and broadens readers' understanding of urban planning, chiefly focusing on the interplay between grassroots movements, experts' involvement, and sociotechnical questions. As the respective chapters of the book show, the various controversies surrounding the Mumbai Development Plan (MDP) have called into question the social and political effects of reshaping the city, the exclusion, and inequalities it has produced, but also the role it confers on the state and the market, and its impacts on the environment. After carefully describing these controversies, the book tackles the fundamental democratic question of who gets to define the future of a city.

Speakers

Luca Pattaroni, *Maître d'Enseignement et de Recherche* at École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL).

Luca Pattaroni is *Maître d'Enseignement et de Recherche* at the Laboratory of Urban Sociology of EPFL where he leads the research group « Urban Hospitalities ». His work is concerned with the expression of differences and the making of the common in contemporary cities.

Amita Bhide, Professor at School of Habitat Studies at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

Amita Bhide has been engaged in teaching at the Institute for over twenty-eight years. A former faculty in the School of Social Work in the Department of Urban and Rural Community Development, she has been deeply involved in issues related to urban poor communities, community organization, housing rights movements and advocacy groups and has undertaken research projects linked to these subjects. She is the recipient of the Inaugural fellowship of the India China Institute on New School University, New York. Professor Bhide's recent work at the School of Habitat Studies has been on urban governance reforms, housing informality, water-sanitation and land issues with a focus on small and medium towns in Maharashtra. Participatory, engendered local governance is a key area of her interest.

Christine Lutringer, Executive Director and Senior Researcher at the Albert Hirschman Centre on Democracy at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva.

Christine Lutringer is trained in political science and international history. She studied in Strasbourg (Institut d'études politiques), Rome (Sapienza University and LUISS) and Geneva at the Graduate Institute. From 2010 to 2016 she was researcher and lecturer with the Institute for Area and Global Studies at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL) in Lausanne. Her work explores democratic practices in the context of the mobilisation of new social and political actors. In particular it examines social movements and their influence on democratic politics and policy-making.

Discussant

Sukriti Issar, Associate Professor of Sociology, Centre de Recherche sur les Inégalités Sociales (CRIS), Sciences Po

Asseel Al-Ragam. Book project: "Agents of Chance: Legacies, Encounters, and Urban Development in Twentieth Century Kuwait", 20.10.2022

The lecture presents a book project that revisits the connections between British indirect rule in Kuwait and development processes that ensured the growth of the urban center and its expansion beyond the town wall. By doing so, it explores the nexus between renewed British pledges to Kuwaiti sheikhs that increased the flow of British goods, loans, and services and development processes that consolidated power in the hands of a few urban notables. This expands the analytical framework of Gulf studies beyond oil/urban development analysis and instead offers a nuanced reading of city growth situated within changes in the political structure of the Gulf and global networks, alliances, and practices established in the first decade of the twentieth century. The lecture presents the genesis of these ideas, the earliest actors that shaped them, and the motivations and reactions to these conditions.

Speaker

Asseel Al-Ragam, Visiting Fellow at CERI-Sciences Po, Associate Professor of Architecture College of Architecture, Kuwait University.

Asseel is an associate professor and the director of the Design Development and Research Lab at Kuwait University's College of Architecture. Until recently, she held the positions of vice dean for academic affairs, research and graduate studies and director of the graduate program. After four years of administrative work, she was awarded a two-year sabbatical leave. She is a visiting scholar at CERI-Sciences Po, where her research focuses on public space planning that responds to the climate crisis. She is also working on a book project that revisits urban planning processes in Kuwait.

Christof Brandtner, The Civic Lives of Cities: Professional Expertise and the Organizational Production of Urban Integration, 1.12.2022

In a wired and globalized world, how do place-based social interactions continue to define cities and their civil society? In response to this question, a recent collection of essays from San Francisco, Seattle, Shenzhen, Singapore, Sydney, and Vienna suggests a dual emphasis on place and organizations. Based on data from the Civic Life of Cities project, we show how comparisons of the people, practices, and partnerships of civil society organizations enable new middle-range theories of civil society. Our approach promises to offer rich comparative insights into similarities and differences among organizations around the globe.

This talk will draw on the San Francisco data and some preliminary global comparisons to examine the organizational production of urban integration. Civil society organizations' presence in cities has been shown to be causally connected to such community-level outcomes as connectedness, crime, entrepreneurship, and crisis resilience. Yet neighborhood and city-level studies conceal when and how organizations contribute to the production two interrelated outcomes: social integration, creating social ties among constituents, as well as systemic integration, connecting constituents to institutional resources. We illustrate how professional expertise shapes the integrative practices of civil society organizations by drawing on quantitative data and in-depth interviews. Bridging organizational and urban studies, we challenge the stylized fact that civil society organizations necessarily foster community and suggest alternative ways to understand and operationalize how organizations are embedded in their urban environment.

Speaker

Christof Brandtner is an assistant professor at emlyon and a senior research fellow at the Stanford Civic Life of Cities Lab.

An organizational sociologist, he studies how institutions, organizations, and urban environments shape the emergence and diffusion of social innovations. He conducts research on civil society organizations, urban governance, and institutional change. His work has appeared in the American Journal of Sociology, Sociological Theory, Organization Studies, and Urban Studies, among others. He is writing *Cities in Action*, a book about cities' efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change (under contract with Columbia University Press).

Discussant

Stijn Oosterlynck, Professor in Urban Sociology at the Department of Sociology at University of Antwerp

Willem R. Boterman and Wouter van Gent, Presentation of the book "Making the middle-class city. The politics of gentrifying Amsterdam", 15.12.2022

Between 1980 and 2015, Amsterdam changed from a poor city under a radical left-wing government to a city dominated by middle classes. Our central concern is to explain and understand this transformation; and to reveal the mechanisms that (re-)made Amsterdam as a middle-class city. This book asks the question how can a city ruled by the socialist or social democratic Labour Party for a century, and internationally famed for its social policies, become a place where gentrification sets the tone and (neo)liberal urbanism takes hold? To answer, we focus on the interlocking socio-economic and political dynamics that have reshaped Amsterdam's social geography. We study the institutional and symbolic politics that have undergirded Amsterdam's transformation, showing that the manifestation of hegemonic middle-class politics are not only about electoral dynamics and new urban policies but also about the symbolic moderation of its negative effects.

Speakers

Willem R. Boterman and **Wouter van Gent** are urban and political geographers at the University of Amsterdam. Their work focuses on the social class based transformation of cities, urban spatial policies and urban politics.

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Agnès Deboulet, Présentation du livre "Sociétés urbaines – Au risque de la métropole", 26.01.2023

En 2050, près de 2 milliards de personnes supplémentaires vivront en milieu urbain, dans des villes et métropoles largement exposées à l'internationalisation des flux et des migrations. Face à une concurrence économique accrue, les villes n'ont d'autre choix que de se restructurer et ces changements confrontent les citoyens et les décideurs à des défis inédits. Cet ouvrage interroge la façon dont ces recompositions urbaines et sociétales majeures se donnent à voir et sont pensées par les décideurs et les habitants. Il interroge les façons dont ces adaptations modifient la définition même des sociétés urbaines dans des contextes de crise climatique et de risque économique. La présentation mettra surtout l'accent sur les relations entre densité, organisation sociale et formes de cohabitation dans des ensembles métropolitains marqués par des inégalités croissantes et soulèvera la question des tensions et mobilisations associées à la troisième vague de rénovation : ses implications sur les quartiers populaires et précaires, le rapport à la démocratie locale et les initiatives citoyennes.

Intervenante

Agnès Deboulet, Professeure de Sociologie, Université Paris 8 Vincennes – Saint-Denis, UMR 7852 LAVUE CNRS)

Agnès Deboulet est professeure de sociologie à l'Université Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis et membre du LAVUE (UMR 7218 du CNRS). Elle a récemment été directrice du CEDEJ, un laboratoire membre du réseau des UMIFRE au Caire (2019-2022). Son intérêt pour les compétences des citoyens à créer la ville notamment dans les quartiers précaires l'a progressivement amenée à travailler sur les restructurations urbaines dans les quartiers populaires en interrogeant les questions de citoyenneté, d'ancrage urbain puis de coproduction. Ses recherches sont pour partie réalisées avec des acteurs de la société civile, notamment autour de recherches collaboratives, dont le projet ANR-FAPESP Co-Polis –avec João S. Whitakher). Elle a récemment publié les ouvrages suivants *Middle-Eastern cities in the climate crisis* (OpenEditionsBooks, 2022) avec W. Mansour, *Vulnérabilités résidentielles* (Éditions de l'Aube, 2019) avec F. Bouillon, P. Dietrich-Ragon et Y. Fijalkow et *Repenser les quartiers précaires*, (Études de l'AFD, 2016).

Discussant

Vicente Ugalde, Professeur au Centre d'Études Démographiques, Urbaines et Environnementales du Colegio de México

Vanesa Castán Broto, Embracing change in infrastructure landscapes, 16.02.2023

Infrastructure constitutes a key perspective for the analysis of social change. At the same time, infrastructures exemplify the tension between dynamism and permanence. While they facilitate the constant movement of resource and capital flows, they are also characterised by a visible obduracy that makes them impervious to change. This talk will explore how ideas of change and permanence have been analysed in infrastructure studies. It will especially focus on the alternatives generated from a landscape perspective. Infrastructure landscape perspectives foreground the complex socio-technical and socio-ecological relations that situate infrastructures in specific conditions and locales. Infrastructure landscape perspectives enable analysis beyond utilitarian perspectives on infrastructure, revealing the range of emotional and cultural attachments that shape them.

Speaker

Vanesa Castán Broto is a Professor of Climate Urbanism at the Urban Institute in the University of Sheffield. She directs the projects *Low Carbon Action in Ordinary Cities* (LoACT), funded by the European Research Council, and the project *Community Energy and Sustainable Energy Transitions in Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique*, funded by the UK's Global Challenges Research Fund.

Discussant

Joost de Moor, Assistant Professor in Political Science, CEE, Sciences Po.

Laurent Gayer, Présentation du livre "Le capitalisme à main armée. Caïds et patrons à Karachi", 09.03.2023

Le 11 septembre 2012, 255 ouvriers et ouvrières des Ali Enterprises, fabriquant des jeans pour le compte du groupe allemand KiK, périssent dans l'incendie de leur usine à Karachi. Accident ou attentat ? La tragédie suscite des interprétations contradictoires. Faut-il incriminer les logiques prédatrices de la fast-fashion ou les méthodes mafieuses des partis politiques qui ont mis la ville en coupe réglée ?

Partant de la controverse née de la catastrophe, cette enquête nous plonge dans les zones d'ombre de la mondialisation. Explorant les méandres de la capitale industrielle pakistanaise, elle montre comment l'économie manufacturière fait de l'ordre avec du désordre, du profit avec des conflits – au détriment des travailleurs.

À Karachi comme ailleurs, voyous, miliciens ou ex-militaires s'avèrent de redoutables relais de la domination patronale. La comparaison avec l'Europe, les États-Unis et l'Amérique latine confirme la place centrale de ces marchands de force dans la dynamique du capitalisme. Troupes de choc des luttes antisyndicales, ils participent désormais à la casse de l'État social. Un ouvrage qui lève le voile sur l'envers de la production de nos biens de consommation quotidienne.

Intervenant

Laurent Gayer est directeur de recherche CNRS au CERI-Sciences Po.

Il s'intéresse à la fabrique violente du social à partir d'enquêtes menées en Asie du Sud. Le cœur empirique de ses travaux est la mégapole indocile de Karachi, au Pakistan. Ses travaux les plus récents portent sur les rapports entre capital et coercition dans le sous-continent indien, sur les architectures urbaines de la sécurité ainsi que sur les déclinaisons de la violence justicière à travers le monde. Il vient de publier *Le Capitalisme à main armée. Caïds et patrons à Karachi* (CNRS Éditions, coll. « Logiques du désordre », 2023). Il est également l'auteur de *Karachi. Ordered Disorder and the Struggle for the City* (Hurst, 2014) et, avec Gilles Favarel-Garrigues, de *Fiers de punir. Le monde des justiciers hors-la-loi* (Seuil, 2021).

Pierre-Philippe Combes, "(Machine) Learning from Historical Maps: Land Use and Urbanisation, France c. 1760-2020", 30.03.2023

The presentation is based on two papers that study the evolution of urbanisation in France over the last 250 years using information extracted from historical maps. The first paper uses machine learning technics to extract land use information from historical military maps of the whole of France around 1860. A detailed 200-meter x 200-meter gridded data set is produced for the entire country. Land uses are obtained from Random Forest algorithms, first applied to the 4-meter by 4-meter pixels of the raw maps to extract built-up. The classification of other land uses (forests, crops, pastures, vineyards, water) is based on a Quickshift aggregation of the raw information into superpixels to which a second set of Random Forest algorithms is applied. The accuracy of the classification is very high. A matrix of land-use changes over 1860-2020 is produced.

The second paper uses both built-up and population information on the 200-meter x 200-meter grid to delineate cities at four points in time: 1760, 1860, 1960 and 2015. We describe the process of urbanisation in France over 250 years. In particular, we document the increasing urban share for population and land and the evolution of cities, those that lose urban status, those that emerge, and those that remain. We also describe the evolution of urban concentration, both within-city and between cities. Over time, population concentrates in much

fewer but larger cities and the population size concentration among surviving cities increases. Within-city population and building density gradients from centre to periphery are shown to decline over time.

Speaker

Pierre-Philippe Combes (CNRS Professor at the Department of Economics of Sciences Po and Research Fellow at the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR))

Pierre-Philippe Combes initially joined the Department of Economics at Sciences Po in 2013 as an Associate Professor. As of 2021, he is a member of the permanent faculty as a CNRS Professor.

He is also a Research Fellow at the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR) and the head of the local statistics department of the Conseil National de l'Information Statistique (CNIS - the French statistical advisory committee). His research interests are in urban economics and economic geography, with a special focus on the working of local labour and housing markets and the location choices of firms and households, resulting in possible economic spatial disparities. With co-authors, he's currently developing a programme on urbanisation over time, since the 18th c. Most of his papers regard the French economy but a recent series focuses on China and he works for instance on the delineation of cities in Africa with the World Bank. His work is regularly published in international peer-reviewed journals in economics, such as *Econometrica*, the *Review of Economic Studies*, the *Journal of Political Economy*, or the *Journal of the European Economic Association*, as well as in specialised reviews such as the *Journal of Urban Economics*, the *Journal of International Economics*, the *Journal of Labor Economics*, and the *Journal of Development Economics*. He is a co-editor of the *Journal of Urban Economics*.

Mona Fawaz, "Inhabiting Beirut's Cycles of Boom and Bust",

20.04.2023

This presentation seeks to locate urban dwelling within the cycles of boom and bust that characterize today's cities (Murray 2021). It focuses on the inhabitation of tenants coerced to live in the interstices of these cycles, occupying either residual spaces left in the aftermath of earlier (failed) investments or spaces held through predatory investments in anticipation of future redevelopment (Ren 2014). Following Blomley (2020), the research approaches this precarious condition through the lens of property law, focusing on the asymmetric relations of vulnerability produced by the dominant ownership model. It does so through in-depth investigations of dilapidated residential clusters and buildings scattered across Lebanon's capital city Beirut. We specifically explore the process of ruination that develops at the intersections of capital flows, transforming regulatory environments, population movements, and shifting ownership patterns, showing how these intersections simultaneously generate

displacements and shape opportunities of inhabitation. We argue that a proper assessment of how property law maintains precarious inhabitation should be understood in relation to the larger regulatory framework in which land is imagined and managed as asset. In turn, the logic of the “ownership model” which reduces the city to the sum of privately own lots restricts dramatically tenants’ ability to secure tenure or resist eviction by imposing an individuated process of negotiation and a limited ceiling for what one can claim, ultimately precluding the possibility of living outside the dominant extractive inhabitation that characterizes today’s Beirut. The research is part of a larger investigation of ongoing transformations in Beirut’s housing landscape conducted by the Housing Justice team at the Beirut Urban Lab.

Speaker

Mona Fawaz is Professor in Urban Studies and Planning at the American University of Beirut. She is also a research director and co-founder of the Beirut Urban Lab, a regional research center based at the American University of Beirut and invested in working towards more inclusive, just, and viable cities. She is currently visiting professor at the Department of Geography at École Normale Supérieure in Paris, and also Honorary Professor at the Department of Planning in the Bartlett School, at UCL. Mona’s research stems from the imperative of making cities more just, addressing urbanization through the lenses of informality and the law, land, housing, property and space, always responding to the urge of informing planning theory and practice. Her findings are published in scholarly articles, book sections, and reports, and she has held several international fellowships. She currently serves as editor for the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, and she serves on the board of the journals Planning Theory and City and Society.

Xuemei Bai, Transforming Towards Sustainability In and Through Cities, 11.05.2023

This talk will explore three things: 1) Urbanization and cities in the context of sustainability; 2) Sustainability experiments and transition within and across cities, drawing on our work in Chinese, Japanese and Australian cities; and 3) Sustainability transition through cities, looking at the role of cities in accelerating energy transition and the importance of linking cities to safe and just Earth System Boundaries, drawing on our recent work within Earth Commission which is aiming at identifying safe and just Earth System boundaries, and in particular its Working Group 5 looking at methods and challenges of translating Earth system boundaries to cities and businesses.

Speaker

Xuemei Bai, Distinguished Professor, Fenner School of Environment & Society, Australian National University

Distinguished Professor Xuemei Bai joined the Fenner School of Environment & Society at ANU in 2011. Her research focuses on the science and policy of rapid urbanization and urban system sustainability, including: understanding the structure, function and processes of urban social ecological systems, the drivers and impacts of urbanization, evolution of urban systems, urban metabolism, cities and climate change, urban sustainability experiments, low carbon transition, and more recently on Anthropocene futures and Earth system sustainability. She published extensively on these topics, with many appearing in journals such as Nature, Nature Sustainability, and Science.

Prof. Bai is a member of the Earth Commission, leading its Working Group 5 on methods of cross-scale translation from planetary limits to local actors. She is the founding Co-Chair of Future Earth Urban Knowledge-Action Network, which was launched at the 2016 UN Habitat III Conference in Quito. She has served as a Lead Author for four major global assessments, i.e. the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, Global Energy Assessment, IPBES Global Assessment, and the IPCC AR6 WGIII. Prof. Bai is a Fellow of Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia since 2017, and was named as one of the World's 100 Most Influential People in Climate Change Policy in 2019 and 2022. She is the Laureate of the Volvo Environment Prize 2018, and the Global Economy Prize 2021.

Discussion

Charlotte Halpern, Tenured Researcher in Political Science, CEE, Sciences Po.

Caroline Knowles, Presentation of the book "Serious Money: Walking Plutocratic London", 01.06.2023

London is a plutocrat's paradise, with more resident billionaires than New York, Hong Kong or Moscow. Far from trickling down, their wealth is burning up the environment and swallowing up the city. But what do we really know about London's super rich, and the lives they lead? To find out more about this secretive, security-heavy elite, sociologist Caroline Knowles walks the streets of London from the City to suburban Surrey, via Kensington, Notting Hill, Mayfair and elsewhere. Her walks reveal how the wealthy shape the capital in their image, creating a new world of gated communities and luxury developments. A move behind closed doors takes us ever further into the dark heart of the plutocratic city, from multimillion-pound mansions to high-end hotels and gentlemen's clubs. Along the way we meet a wide and wickedly entertaining cast of millionaires, billionaires and those who serve them: bankers, aristocrats, tech tycoons, Conservative party donors, butlers, bodyguards, divorce lawyers and many, many more. By turns jaw-dropping, enraging and enlightening, Serious Money explodes the fiction that wealth is a condition to aspire to, revealing the isolation and paranoia which accompany it when the plutocrat's recompense - a life of unlimited luxury - ultimately proves hollow. It is a powerful

reminder that it is not just the super-rich who get to make the city: we make it too, and could demand something different. Because serious money is good for no one - not even the rich.

Speaker

Caroline Knowles is a Global Professorial Fellow in the School of Geography at Queen Mary, University of London, and Director of the British Academy's GCRF Urban Infrastructures of Well-Being Programme, working with 23 research projects in cities in the global south. Author of many books, articles and chapters in edited collections, her most recent books are [Flip-Flop: A Journey Through Globalisation's Backroads](#), published by Pluto Press in 2014 and reprinted in 2015 and [Serious Money: Walking Plutocratic London](#), published by Penguin Random House 2022.

Discussion

Jean-Baptiste Chambon, PhD candidate in Sociology, CEE, Sciences Po.

Maria Kaika, Roger Keil, Tait Mandler, Yannis Tzaninis, Presentation of the book "Turning up the heat: Urban political ecology for a climate emergency", 14.09.2023

Since its emergence in the 1990s, the field of Urban Political Ecology (UPE) has focused on unsettling traditional understandings of the 'city' as entirely distinct from nature, showing instead how cities are metabolically linked with ecological processes and the flow of resources. More recently, a new generation of scholars has turned the focus towards the climate emergency. *Turning up the heat* seeks to turn UPE's critical energies towards a politically engaged debate over the role of extensive urbanisation in addressing socio-environmental equality in the context of climate change.

The collection brings together theoretical discussions and rigorous empirical analysis by key scholars spanning three generations, engaging UPE in current debates about urbanisation and climate change. Engaging with cutting edge approaches including feminist political ecology, circular economies, and the Anthropocene, case studies in the book range from Singapore and Amsterdam to Nairobi and Vancouver. Contributors make the case for a UPE better informed by situated knowledges: an embodied UPE that pays equal attention to the role of postcolonial processes and more-than-human ontologies of capital accumulation within the context of the climate emergency. Acknowledging UPE's rich intellectual history and aiming to enrich rather than split the field, *Turning up the heat* reveals how UPE is ideally positioned to address contemporary environmental issues in theory and practice.

Speakers

Maria Kaika is Director of the Centre for Urban studies and Chair in Urban Regional and Environmental Planning at the University of Amsterdam. Her research focuses on urban political ecology, the embodied politics of urban infrastructures, and the relation between environmental and housing precarities. She is also the author/editor of: *The Political Ecology of Austerity* (2021, Routledge, New York; with R Calvario and G Velegrakis); *Urbanizing degrowth: Five steps towards a Radical Spatial Degrowth Agenda for planning in the face of climate emergency* (2023 *Urban Studies* Special Issue with Varvarousis, A, Demaria, F and March, H); *In the Nature of Cities: urban political ecology and the metabolism of urban environments* (2006 with N Heynen and E Swyngedouw; Routledge, London); *City of Flows: Modernity, Nature and the City* (2005; Routledge, New York).

Roger Keil is Professor in the Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change, York University. He researches global suburbanization, urban political ecology, cities and infectious disease, infrastructure, and regional governance. Among his recent publications are *Suburban Planet* (Polity, 2018) and *After Suburbia* (UTP, ed. with Fulong Wu, 2022) as well as *Pandemic Urbanism* (Polity, 2023, with S.Harris Ali and Creighton Connolly) and *Turning Up the Heat: Urban political ecology for a climate emergency* (MUP, ed. with Maria Kaika, Tait Mandler and Yannis Tzaninis, 2023). Keil is a Fellow of CIFAR's Humanity's Urban Future program.

Tait Mandler is a postdoctoral researcher in the Knowledge, Technology, and Innovation group at Wageningen University. Their research interests include urban political ecology, agrifood economies, everyday life of chemical exposure, and anthropology of the senses.

Yannis Tzaninis is urban and social geographer, and his research focuses on urban political ecology, European suburbanisation and discourses of space. He has published on cosmopolitanism, post-suburbia, utopias, place-making, and educational inequalities.

Discussion

Joost de Moor, Assistant Professor in Political Science, CEE, Sciences Po.

Mona Harb, Urban Governance in Dysfunctional States: City-Making by the “Republic of NGOs in post-blast Beirut, 21.09.2023

This talk explores urban governance and city-making in the context of dysfunctional states, taking as its case-study one of the latest disasters in the Lebanese capital—the explosion of the Port of Beirut on August 4, 2020.

Based on participant observation, interviews, and a survey with more than 100 actors, we map the post-blast response at the national and international level underscoring the ineffectiveness of the aid industry and the dysfunctionality of state actors (Harb et al., forthcoming). We then investigate how actors on the ground effectively managed the repairs of more than half of the homes and businesses in the neighborhoods affected by the Port blast, notwithstanding grave shortcomings (BUL 2023). Such actors include national and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), as well as political groups, religious foundations, university-based groups, professional organizations, and collectives. Dozens of them received funding from the Lebanese diaspora. We identify six clusters of actors that form two more-or-less consolidated networks. One is a tighter network, centered on newer and smaller national NGOs that are well-connected to international NGOs and FBOs, as well as to professional groups. The other is a more atomized network, made of older and bigger actors, mostly national FBOs and political-sectarian foundations. The talk proceeds to examining the variations of actors with regard to the provision of goods and services. We find that while most converged on the delivery of particularistic goods—such as food packages, cash support and small physical repairs, the network of national NGOs stands out in the investments they made in the provision of collective goods—namely the restoration of heritage buildings and the rehabilitation of open spaces, parks and community facilities. We argue that these interventions produced increments of relatively equitable city-making practices, despite many policy odds. We conclude by reflecting on the productive, yet contingent, role of NGOs and FBOs in advancing what Lipietz and Bhan have framed as “practices of commoning” (2022), amidst the gloomy context of urban governance in dysfunctional states.

Speaker

[Mona Harb](#) is tenured professor of urban studies and politics at the American University of Beirut where she is also co-founder and research lead at the award-winning [Beirut Urban Lab](#). Her research investigates how ideas and practices of commoning are produced, contested and/or captured by urban actors and governance processes in contexts of disasters.

She has published and co-edited several books, and more than one hundred journal articles, book chapters, and other publications. Her books include: *Le Hezbollah à Beirut: de la banlieue à la ville*, *Leisurely Islam: Negotiating Geography and Morality in Shi'i South Beirut* (co-authored with

Lara Deeb), *Local Governments and Public Goods: Assessing Decentralization in the Arab World* (co-edited with Sami Atallah), *Refugees as City-Makers* (co-edited with Mona Fawaz et al.).

Harb is the recipient of grants from the IDRC, Open Society Foundation, Ford Foundation, LSE-Emirates Fund, EU-FP7, Wenner-Gren, ACLS, and the Middle-East Awards. She serves on the editorial boards of *IJURR*, *IJMES*, *Environment and Planning C* and *CSSAME*.

Currently, she is the coordinator of the AUB graduate programs in Urban Planning, Policy and Design, and was previously Associate Dean of her faculty, and Chairperson of the department of Architecture and Design. She provides professional advice on urban development issues for several international organizations (ESCWA, WB, EU, UNDP).

George C.S. Lin, "Muddling on Pathways of Urban Redevelopment: Same Rhyme, Different Tones, and Diverse Trajectories of Chinese Urbanism", 05.10.2023

Inspired by both ongoing debates of universalism/globalism vis-à-vis polycentrism/postcolonialism and an observed shift of emphasis in Chinese urbanization from urban sprawl to urban renewal, this research investigates the diverse trajectories of urban redevelopment in five leading Chinese cities, namely Beijing, Wuhan, Guangzhou, Shanghai and Shenzhen. The remaking of China's urban landscapes is found to be shaped not simply by forces of agglomeration economies or bid-rent dynamism but more by the contestation and negotiation between a fragmented authoritarian state and an increasingly sophisticated, albeit effectively manipulated, society. Contrary to normal expectation, urban redevelopment is found to be more prominent in the land supply of the cities in the less developed interior than others located in the demographically dense and economically advanced coastal regions. Administratively, urban redevelopment tends to prevail in those modes of land disposition that are either monopolized by the state or subject to close-door negotiation. Existing land users are motivated by a decentralized power of decision-making and a share of the land conveyance income previously monopolized by the state. Redevelopment is less contentious in a "village-in-the-city" where decisions are made by the collective organization internally than the other involving developers externally. Land use intensity and efficiency have been improved alongside intensified social exclusion and marginalization. The research foregrounds state-society interplay as a key to help solve the riddle of an urban China so ambivalent when seen in the lens of neoliberalism. It calls for a critical evaluation of the current urban renewal policies that completely ignore the interests of the migrant population—the main contributors and yet biggest losers of China's urban redevelopment. Theoretically, the research advocates a new agenda for urban studies aiming at theoretically engaged and empirically grounded comparative urbanism—one that is attentive to pan-urban/cross-city patterns, recurrent

processes, causal relationships, scalar contingency, and positionality as well as contextual sensitivity.

Speaker

George C.S. Lin is Director of the International Centre for China Development Studies, Chair Professor of Geography and Associate Dean (Research) of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Hong Kong. His research interests include China's urbanization, land management, political economy of urban redevelopment and the emerging geography of low-carbon urbanism. He is the author of *Red Capitalism in South China: Growth and Development of the Pearl River Delta* (UBC Press, Vancouver, Canada, 1997), *Developing China: Land, Politics, and Social Conditions* (Routledge, London, 2009), co-author of *China's Urban Space: Development under Market Socialism* (Routledge, London, 2007), and many articles. Professor Lin has served as Chair of the China Geography Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers (2007-08), Vice-Chair of the Economic Geography Commission (2006-2012) and Councilor (2014-2018) of the Geographical Society of China, Head of the Department of Geography (2006-08), and Associate Dean (Research) of HKU Faculty of Social Sciences (2012-2017). He has been on the editorial boards of international scholarly journals including *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *The Canadian Geographer*, *Urban Geography*, *The Chinese Geographical Science*, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, and *Area Development and Policy*. He is the recipient of Young Canadian Researcher Award (IDRC, Ottawa, Canada, 1992); University Teaching Fellow (HKU, 1998), University Outstanding Researcher Award (HKU, 2021), *Qiushi* Chair Professorship (Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China, 2014), *Zijiang* Chair Professorship (East China Normal University, Shanghai, China, 2010), Prestigious Fellowship in Humanities and Social Sciences (HKRGC, 2022) and many competitive research grants from international funding agencies. He is an elected Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences (FACSS) of the UK.

Juan del Nido, "Taxis vs. Uber: knowledge, practices and technological disruption in an urban setting", 19.10.2023

Based on an ethnography of Uber's conflict with Buenos Aires' taxi drivers, in this presentation I will discuss how technological disruption affects the political, economic and ethical relations that bind us together. By 2016, over a century and a half of rules, value hierarchies and exclusions rendered practices, bodies and relations knowable in the taxi industry, under the premise that in its transactions meet strangers who will never be able to know each other in any meaningful way. Uber's arrival that year, and immense popularity, opened up two fronts of dispute with a rhetoric of disruption. First, the effective ability to turn virtually anyone into a driver for money transformed a *political* problem, understood through institutions (courts, governments) and hierarchies (driving licences, medical check ups) into a *moral* problem, where

at stake was the “right to choose”. Second, the ability to rate drivers made it conceivable that five identical golden stars could suffice to understand ourselves, each other and the relations that bind us, in this case in the flurry of an urban transaction. In both senses, I will ask: what kinds of rhetorics, affects and ethical dispositions sustain the logics of tech disruption? What kinds of subjects – civic, political, economic – inhabit tech disruption and how?

Speaker

Juan del Nido is Research Associate at the University of Cambridge’s Max Cam Centre for Ethics, Economy and Social Change. Originally trained as an economist, he worked as a political consultant in Buenos Aires before turning to social anthropology to study political and economic reasoning and the ethics of new technologies. His work has been awarded the Royal Anthropological Institute’s Sutasoma Award for Research of Outstanding Merit and has been published by *Economic Anthropology*, *The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology*, *The Anthropology of Work Review*, and *Hipertextos*. He has produced policy recommendations for the Argentine Congress and the British Parliament and written opinion columns for Argentina’s national daily *La Nacion*. His book *Taxis vs. Uber: Courts, Markets and Technology in Buenos Aires*, (Stanford U. Press, 2021) examining the conflict around Uber’s arrival in Argentina was awarded the Carol R. Ember Book Prize by the Society for Anthropological Sciences.

Patrick Le Galès & Jennifer Robinson, Launch of the book “The Routledge Handbook of Comparative Global Urban Studies”, 09.11.2023

The Routledge Handbook of Comparative Global Urban Studies is a timely intervention into the field of global urban studies, coming as comparison is being more widely used as a method for global urban studies, and as a number of methodological experiments and comparative research projects are being brought to fruition.

It consolidates and takes forward an emerging field within urban studies and makes a positive and constructive intervention into a lively arena of current debate in urban theory. Comparative urbanism injects a welcome sense of methodological rigor and a commitment to careful evaluation of claims across different contexts, which will enhance current debates in the field. Drawing together more than 50 international scholars and practitioners, this book offers an overview of key ideas and practices in the field and extends current thinking and practice.

The book is primarily intended for scholars and graduate students for whom it will provide an invaluable and up-to-date guide to current thinking across the range of disciplines which converge in the study of urbanism, including geography, sociology, political studies, planning,

and urban studies.

Speakers

Patrick Le Galès, FBA, MAE, is CNRS Research Professor of Sociology, Politics and Urban Studies at Sciences Po, Centre for European Studies and Comparative Politics. He was the founding Dean of Sciences Po Urban School. He is a co-editor of the European Journal of Sociology/archives Européennes de Sociologie, and the EJS.ARChives. He was once the editor of the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, and president of SASE (Society for the Advanced of Socio-Economics). His urban research was firstly about European cities and urban regions on questions of governance, urban policies, class making and mobility, published as *European cities: social conflicts and governance* (OUP 2002), *Changing governance of local economies* (with C. Crouch and al., OUP 2004), *Globalising minds, roots in the city* (with A.Andreotti and F. Moreno Fuentes, Wiley 2015), *La métropole parisienne comme anarchie organisée* (with F.Artioli, Presses de Sciences Po 2023). His current research project WHIG (what is governed and not governed in large metropolis) is based upon the comparison of Paris, London, São Paulo and Mexico.

Jennifer Robinson is Professor of Human Geography and co-Director of UCL's Urban Laboratory. Previously she has worked at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the LSE and the Open University. Her book, *Ordinary Cities* (Routledge, 2006) developed a post-colonial critique of urban studies. Her new book, *Comparative Urbanism: Tactics for Global Urban Studies* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2022), proposes new methodological foundations for urban studies. Earlier empirical research explored the history of apartheid cities, and the politics of post-apartheid city-visioning. Current empirical projects focus on the politics of large-scale urban developments (London, Johannesburg, Shanghai) and the transnational circuits shaping African urbanisation (Accra, Dar es Salaam, Lilongwe).

Discussion

Bruno Cousin, Associate Professor of Sociology at the Centre for European Studies and Comparative Politics (CEE), Sciences Po

Diane Davis, Charles Dyer Norton Professor of Regio

Paavo Monkkonen, When will local governments take meaningful action on fair housing? The impacts of a 2018 law in California, 30.11.2023

Localized resistance to fair housing and social integration is a challenge facing cities around the world. A 2018 California law requires local governments to affirmatively further fair housing when updating their eight-year housing plans, mandating 'meaningful action' towards fair housing goals. We assess the impact of this law by examining eight Southern California municipalities' 2021-2029 housing plans. In addition, we ask whether local governments are planning for integration by measuring the spatial distribution of planned sites for new housing, including low-income housing, in nearly 200 municipal plans. We find that the 2018 law generated many new local housing programs, yet most of these programs have low potential for impact. Even cumulatively, they are unlikely to meaningfully advance fair housing goals. Moreover, local governments did not use their most meaningful policy level, land use planning, to change their segregated status quo. One reason is the procedural logic of housing plan development. The state does not set expectations about what or how much change is needed to achieve fair housing goals. In fact, we find that the two local governments with the most in-depth housing plans, which included many innovative housing programs, are also the cities with the most segregationist plans, concentrating sites for affordable housing in their least affluent neighborhoods. Our analysis identifies oversight challenges for local action fair housing, and we recommend reforms for implementing state or national agencies. Although our focus is on the recent California experience, the research is relevant to the broader issue of intergovernmental conflicts over land use planning.

Speaker

Paavo Monkkonen is Professor of Urban Planning and Public Policy at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, currently a visiting researcher at Sciences Po. He has published over 40 articles on the ways policies and markets shape urbanization and social segregation in cities around the world. His scholarship ranges from studies of national housing finance programs to the impacts of local land use regulations, and spans several countries in Latin America and Asia. Paavo recently launched the [UCLA Latin American Cities Initiative](#), Ciudades, to develop and deepen knowledge networks among students, educators, and professionals in South, Central, and North America. His current projects include a comparison between fair housing policies in California and several European countries.

Armelle Choplin, Book Presentation: “Concrete City: Material Flows and Urbanization in West Africa”, 7.12.2023

Concrete City: Material Flows and Urbanization in West Africa delivers a theoretically informed, ethnographic exploration of the African urban world through the life of concrete. Emblematic of frenetic urban and capitalistic development, this material is pervasive, shaping contemporary urban landscapes and societies and their links to the global world. It stands and circulates at the heart of major financial investments, political forces and environmental debates. At the same time, it epitomises values of modernity and success, redefining social practices, forms of dwelling and living, and popular imaginaries.

The book invites the reader to follow bags of cement from production plant to construction site, along the 1000-kilometre urban corridor that links Abidjan to Accra, Lomé, Cotonou and Lagos, combining the perspectives of cement tycoons, entrepreneurs and political stakeholders, but also of ordinary men and women who plan, build and dream of the Concrete City. With this innovative exploration of urban life through concrete, this book delivers a fascinating journey into and reflection on the sustainability of our urban futures.

Speaker

Armelle Choplin is professor of Geography and Urban Planning at the University of Geneva. Her research explores how cities are produced and experienced in the Global South, especially in Africa. She is currently conducting research on the construction boom and the political economy of concrete in Africa. She has recently published *La Mondialisation des Pauvres, Loin de Wall Street et de Davos* (Le Seuil, 2018 with Olivier Pliez), *Matière Grise de l'urbain, la vie du ciment en Afrique* (MétisPresses, 2020), and *Concrete City, Material flows and Urbanization in West Africa* (Wiley, 2023).

Discussant

Marco Cremaschi, Professor of Planning and Urban Studies at the Centre for European Studies and Comparative Politics (CEE), Sciences Po

Additional 2023 seminars (information missing) :

Agnès Deboulet	26/1/2023	Vicente Ugalde
Vanesa Castan Broto	16/2/2023	Joost de Moor

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Marc Barthelemy, Towards a Science of Cities, 08.02.2024

Towards a Science of Cities

The recent availability of data about various aspects of cities allows us to envision a science of cities validated by empirical observations. In this talk, I will discuss and illustrate with examples three major points that constitute the pillars of such a program: data (focusing on mobile phone data), modeling (including parsimonious models, simulations, and digital twins), and links with policymakers and planners.

Speaker

Marc Barthelemy is a former student of the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Paris (rue d'Ulm). After his thesis on random walks in random media, Marc focused on disordered systems and their properties, and since 1992, he has held a permanent position at the CEA. Marc is now Research Director at the Institute of Theoretical Physics (IPHT) in Saclay and a member of the Center of Social Analysis and Mathematics (CAMS) at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS).

His research interests moved towards applications of statistical physics to complex systems, complex networks, theoretical epidemiology, and more recently on spatial networks. Focusing on both data analysis and modeling with the tools of statistical physics, Marc is also working on various aspects of the science of cities, including urban morphology, transport networks and mobility, scaling in cities, etc.

Marc published 160+ papers in international journals, and various books for Cambridge University Press (Structure and Dynamics of Cities, 2016), Springer (Morphogenesis of Spatial Networks, 2018; Spatial networks, 2022), Oxford University Press (Statistics and Dynamics of Urban Populations, to app

Deborah Fromm, "Public Security, Private Interests: On Social Conflict in Contemporary Brazil", 29.02.2024

Public Security, Private Interests: On Social Conflict in Contemporary Brazil

Crime, violence and urban militarisation are themes widely explored in the urban studies literature focused on large Latin American cities. With high homicide and violent crime rates, the region features prominently in discussions of public security, accelerated urbanisation and violence. A series of urban ethnographies has explored how violence is connected to the conduct of everyday life, cultural and social representation, and urban territorial governance, processes of city-making and the reproduction of social inequalities. There is little discussion, however, about the financialisation of urban security and the role of private sector actors, especially the insurance sector, in the production of new forms of commodified policing and a contested urban order in the Global South. Based on an ethnography conducted between 2017 and 2022 with actors in the Brazilian insurance industry - brokers, executives, union presidents and other representative political entities, lobbyists, actuaries, insurance employees and owners of small outsourced private security companies - my findings contribute to a better understanding of the deep connections and interdependencies between criminal and formal markets undertaken either by state agents or by financial and corporate agents selling forms of legal-illegal protection. The focus on this legal-illegal boundary thus shifts the question of 'urban violence' from poverty and marginality to a more relational way of thinking about the conflicts over the appropriation of urban wealth.

Speaker

Deborah Fromm, Visiting Fellow, London School of Economics and Political Science.

Deborah Fromm is an urban ethnographer working on extreme inequalities, protection services and the frontiers between legal and illegal security markets in the South. She is a Visiting Fellow at the Department of Geography and Environment at the London School of Economics and Political Science awarded with the Urban Studies Foundation International Fellowship. She holds a PhD and a MA in Social Anthropology at University of Campinas with visiting periods at Goldsmiths College (University of London) and the Centre for Research and Studies in Social Anthropology (Ciesas, Mexico City)

Brodwyn Fischer, "Slavery's City and the Genesis of Urban Informality", 14.03.2024

Slavery's City and the Genesis of Urban Informality

How is the history of slavery linked to urban inequality in the Americas' largest and most enduring slave society? This talk approaches that question through the visual and relational infrastructures of slavery in nineteenth century Brazil. By suggesting links between slavery's city

and the genesis of urban informality as a primary mode of city-building and governance after abolition, I suggest some of the ways that contemporary socio-racial inequalities can be understood as afterlives of Brazil's most foundational injustice.

Speaker

Brodwyn Fischer, Professor of History, University of Chicago

Brodwyn Fischer (Ph.D. Harvard 1999) is Professor of History at the University of Chicago. Her research and teaching focus on the intersecting histories of cities, law, race, inequality, slavery and social movements in Brazil and Latin America. Her publications include articles and translations in English and Portuguese as well as *A Poverty of Rights: Citizenship and inequality in Twentieth Century Rio de Janeiro* (Stanford 2008); *Cities from Scratch: Poverty and Informality in Urban Latin America* (with Bryan McCann and Javier Auyero, Duke 2014); *The Boundaries of Freedom: Slavery, Abolition and the Making of Modern Brazil* (With Keila Grinberg, Cambridge U. Press 2022); and *Informal Cities: History, Power and Precarity in Latin Europe, Latin America, and Colonial North Africa* (with Charlotte Vorms, forthcoming, University of Chicago Press, 2025). She has won several national book and article awards, and her research has been funded by the ACLS, the Fulbright-Hays Program, the Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for Humanities, and the SSRC. In 2022-3, she was a Fellow at the Harvard Radcliffe Institute, writing a book called *Intimate Inequality*

Franco Bonomi Bezzo, "Then and Now: Why do past and present Neighborhoods shape Attitudes towards Inequality?", 21.03.2024

"Then and Now: Why do past and present Neighborhoods shape Attitudes towards Inequality?"

Place and inequality are remarkably intertwined. But when it comes to the study of attitudes towards inequality, the places where individuals live are an overlooked factor. The purpose of this study is to reappraise what has been found in qualitative case studies through a quantitative analysis and to investigate the mechanisms linking experiences of collective material deprivation and attitudes towards inequality. Taking a Durkheimian view, we claim that individual attitudes not only depend on individual predispositions but also a) on the community where the individuals have grown up and b) on the community where individuals currently live. Drawing on existing research on political socialization, we claim that contemporary exposure to deprivation is important, as is exposure during childhood, due to its long-lasting effects on how individuals perceive the world around them later in adulthood. We investigate the differential relevance of community deprivation on two British cohorts, born in 1958 or in 1970. Our findings show that living in more affluent areas is associated with being less against inequality. Growing up in an affluent neighbourhood showcase similar, though smaller, effect. Interestingly, attitudes towards inequality are more strongly correlated with neighbourhood trajectories along the life

course then individual social class trajectories. These effects tend to be larger for people born in the 1970s than for people born in the 1958. These results suggest that while people who have grown up in a phase of expansion of the Welfare state may have felt lower anxiety about inequality, those who have grown up during the full expression of Thatcherism might have developed stronger feelings towards inequality.

Speaker

Franco Bonomi Bezzo is a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Milan working on the ERC project De-industrializing Societies and the Political Consequences (DESPO) with Prof Anne-Marie Jeannet. Franco received his PhD in applied social and economic research from the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex in July 2020. From January 2020 to April 2021, he held a post-doctoral position at the French national Institute of Demography (INED), where he has remained affiliated. Trained as an economist, Franco's interests have been increasingly shifting towards the intersection between sociology, political science, demography, and economics. Franco's research focuses on the analysis of socio-cultural determinants of inequality at the meso-level. He is interested in analysing how the physical and cultural context in which individuals are embedded in shape their opportunities across the life-course. Franco has investigated this theme by looking specifically at neighbourhoods, communities, and cultural norms as meso-level determinants of inequality.

Chair

Brenda Van Coppenolle, Sciences Po, CEE, CNRS

Andreina Seijas, Shaping the night: How data illuminates the human experience after dark, 04.04.2024

Shaping the night: How data illuminates the human experience after dark

We are witnessing a new era in urban governance where real-time data streams are enabling cities to predict and optimize the dynamic patterns of urban life. However, data-driven findings are incomplete without human-centered insights to understand how people and place shape one another. Gehl's methods and digital tools to study people's lived experience reveal that public life at night is very different from public life during the day. Drawing from years of experience in night-time governance and urban design, this presentation will showcase the transformative power of people-centered strategies in creating safer, more inclusive and sustainable environments after dark.

Speaker

Andreina Seijas is a Venezuelan researcher and international consultant with more than 15 years of experience in urban development and policy in Latin America, Europe and the United States. Through her doctoral studies at the Harvard Graduate School of Design she specialized in night-time governance and planning, a novel field of research and practice. As Associate at Gehl, she is responsible for Urban Activation projects in EMEA and is currently based in Paris, France. Previously, Andreina worked as a consultant for the Housing and Urban Development Division at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in Washington DC; was Policy Associate at the Council of the Americas in New York City; and Information Manager for the Chacao Municipality in Caracas. Andreina's international experience with the public and private sectors as well as with academia shapes her pragmatic and collaborative approach to urban planning and design.

Kamel Boukir, De la paranoïa et de la haine. L'instabilité du monde du crime en banlieue parisienne, 25.04.2024

De la paranoïa et de la haine. L'instabilité du monde du crime en banlieue parisienne. (On paranoïa and hate. The instability of the criminal world).

Les théories de la désorganisation sociale étudient le crime comme un raté de l'expérience, un défaut dans la trame du social. Dans le sillage du travail pionnier de William F. Whyte sur l'organisation des "slums", cette présentation documente l'organisation sociale de l'expérience criminelle au carrefour d'un milieu et d'un type de subjectivité. À partir de l'éthique du défi et du sens de la démesure qui caractérise les relations de complicité dans le monde criminel, je documente l'avènement d'une subjectivité sous le joug de la paranoïa qui, du fait de labilité des loyautés, jette les protagonistes dans un monde frappé par une perpétuelle instabilité. Paradoxalement, si cette instabilité est le moteur d'une surenchère de violence qui parvient à arrêter cette spirale de l'incertitude, elle n'y parvient que moyennant une infidélité à ses engagements.

Speaker

Kamel Boukir est maître de conférences à l'EHESS. Il a consacré sa thèse de doctorat à *La vie morale des « cités »*. Il s'est penché sur l'éthique du défi et le sens de la démesure que les jeunes cultivent dans leur entre-soi. Dans le but de comprendre les ressorts des hiérarchies juvéniles, il a suivi pendant plusieurs années des cohortes de jeunes d'une banlieue parisienne, issus pour la plupart de familles de migrants, depuis la bande d'adolescents à l'école et la MJC, au business de stupéfiants et aux « embrouilles », en passant par le terrain de football et la salle de jiu-jitsu brésilien. Il a ainsi dégagé les perspectives de ces jeunes dans leurs milieux de vie le long de leurs trajectoires biographiques, en remontant à la naissance de réseaux de camaraderie depuis l'enfance. Ensuite, un post-doctorat sur *La référence à l'islam au quotidien* lui a donné l'occasion de prolonger son enquête en se focalisant sur les différentes expériences

religieuses auquel l'islam donne lieu, à la fois dans ses manifestations matérielles, rituelles et spirituelles, aussi bien dans les gestes du quotidien en contexte liturgique (prières, récitation, formules de politesse, etc.) que dans les espaces domestiques. Il a été lauréat de plusieurs bourses (Bourse d'accomplissement de la Caisse des Dépôts, Bourse

**Quentin Ramond, Spatial inequality and attachment to society
across socioeconomic groups: longitudinal evidence from Chile,
16.05.2024**

Spatial inequality and attachment to society across socioeconomic groups: longitudinal evidence from Chile

This study examines how residential segregation affects individuals' attachment to society, including attitudes such as sense of national belonging and identification, social and institutional trust, adherence to social norms, and behaviors like supportive social relationships, civic engagement, and political participation. It also investigates whether the association between neighborhood conditions and attachment to society varies across socioeconomic groups. We focus on Santiago, Chile, one of the most segregated cities worldwide. We combine large-scale survey data from the Chilean Longitudinal Social Study (2016-2022) with administrative data at the census tract level. Using panel regression models, we find that exposure to disadvantaged neighborhoods strongly reduces people's attachment to society, specifically regarding the relational and political components (e.g., sociality, trust, and participation). Conversely, individuals' feeling of national belonging and identification decreases in affluent areas. In addition, we document large heterogeneity in the influence of residential segregation depending on individuals' socioeconomic resources. Remarkably, sense of belonging increases in better-off neighborhoods among deprived residents, while trust and participation increase in affluent neighborhoods, but only among wealthy residents. We conclude that the spatial concentration of affluence reinforces the influence of individual resources in increasing attachment to society among the urban wealthy, whereas the concentration of poverty, which reduces individuals' life opportunities, may hinder the development of dispositions that lead to greater attachment to society.

Speaker

Quentin Ramond is an assistant professor at the Centre for Economics and Social Policy (CEAS) at the Mayor University, Chile. He obtained his PhD in sociology in 2019 at the Centre for Research on Social Inequalities and at the Laboratory for Interdisciplinary Evaluation of Public Policies, Sciences Po. Quentin's research interests include urban sociology, sociology of education, housing, social cohesion, and public policy. He specializes in examining

neighborhood and school segregation processes and how they produce inequalities and shape individuals' preferences, constraints, and behaviors.

Adrienne LeBas, Can Social Intermediaries Build the State?

Taxation and Informal Governance in Lagos, Nigeria, 20.06.2024

Can Social Intermediaries Build the State? Taxation and Informal Governance in Lagos, Nigeria

In recent years, many low-income countries have attempted to formalize and extract tax revenue from their large informal economies. Why have these efforts so often failed? In this presentation, LeBas presents her book project with Jessica Gottlieb (University of Houston), which explores how taxes-for-services exchange – the central framework used in tax policy and research – may be complicated by the presence of strong, non-state institutions. Where states are weak, these social actors often provide services and extract revenue on their own, and they may also bargain with the state on behalf of citizens. LeBas and Gottlieb draw on over two years of fieldwork in Lagos, Nigeria, to determine whether weak states might "piggy back" on these strong and socially embedded social institutions in their attempts to expand their tax bases. The centerpiece of the book is a field experiment conducted in partnership with Lagos Internal Revenue Service and the Lagos Market Women and Men's Association, but the authors also draw on qualitative research and original survey data. They show that strong social institutions are unlikely to serve as effective agents of state tax appeals, but these institutions may produce unexpected constituencies for formalization and fiscal exchange. The book presents a new theory of how individuals choose whether to engage with the state, which stresses the central importance of non-state institutions in structuring informal economies.

Speaker

Adrienne LeBas (PhD, Columbia University) is Associate Professor of Government at American University's School of Public Affairs. Prior to joining AU, she taught at Michigan State University and was a Prize Research Fellow at Nuffield College, University of Oxford. Her research interests include democratization, political violence, and taxation. She is the author of the award-winning *From Protest to Parties: Party-Building and Democratization in Africa* (Oxford University Press, 2011) and articles in the *American Political Science Review*, the *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Political Studies*, and other journals. In addition to the book project presented in this talk, LeBas is also writing a book on electoral violence and grassroots economies of violence provision. She is currently a visiting scholar at CERI, Sciences Po.

Claire Bénit-Gbaffou, Local Officials and the Struggle to Transform Cities. A view from post-apartheid South Africa, 26.09.2024

Presentation of the book « Local Officials and the Struggle to Transform Cities. A view from post-apartheid South Africa »

Why are even progressive local authorities with the 'will to improve' seldom able to change cities? Why does it seem almost impossible to redress spatial inequalities, deliver and maintain basic services, elevate impoverished areas and protect the marginalised communities? Why do municipalities in the Global South refuse to work with prevailing social informalities, and resort instead to interventions that are known to displace and aggravate the very issues they aim to address?

Local Officials and the Struggle to Transform Cities analyses these challenges in South African cities, where the brief post-apartheid moment opened a window for progressive city government and made research into state practices both possible and necessary. In debate with other 'progressive moments' in large cities in Brazil, the USA and India, the book interrogates City officials' practices. It considers the instruments they invent and negotiate to implement urban policies, the agency they develop and the constraints they navigate in governing unequal cities. This focus on actual officials' practices is captured through first-hand experience, state ethnographies and engaged research. These reveal day-to-day practice that question generalised explanations of state failure in complex urban societies as essential malevolence, contextual weakness, corruption and inefficiency. It is hoped that opening the black box of the workings of state opens paths for the construction of progressive policies in contemporary cities.

The book is available [here](#) in open access.

Speaker

Claire Bénit-Gbaffou, PhD Geography, MA Planning, is a former fellow of Ecole Normale Supérieure (Ulm). She was an associate professor in the School of Architecture and Planning at Wits University (Johannesburg, South Africa) from 2008 to 2018, and has been posted since 2018 in the Département de Géographie, Aménagement, Environnement at Aix Marseille University (France). Her research focuses on the governance of large cities, and the relations between local activism and urban policy change. She is currently exploring practices of institutional activism in cities encountering a 'progressive moment', such as post-apartheid Johannesburg and Marseille under the Printemps Marseillais coalition.

Discussant

Laurent Fourchard, Research Professor, CERI, Sciences Po

Suzanne Hall, Migration methodologies, 10.10.2024

Migration methodologies

How do we come to understand the pervasive politics of discriminatory bordering alongside the improvisational practices of crossing? In this talk I explore why it is helpful to think across near and far compositions of bordering, as much as worldly and highly personal claims to space. I turn to the commonplace realm of street livelihoods in the de-industrialised peripheries of UK cities, to highlight multiple forms of racial displacement that dislocate citizenship status, secure work and affordable space. The everyday reveals these acute aspects of a combined political economy of displacement, as much as the modes of making citizenship outside of and adjacent to the state.

Speaker

Suzanne Hall, Professor and Head of Department of, Sociology, LSE

Suzanne Hall is an interdisciplinary urban scholar and has practised as an architect in South Africa. She is Professor in the Department of Sociology at the LSE. Suzi's focus is on everyday claims to space and how political economies of displacement shape racial borders, migrant livelihoods, and urban multicultures. She is author of *The Migrant's Paradox* (University of Minnesota press, 2021) and *City Street and Citizen* (Routledge, 2012), and co-edited *The Sage Handbook of the 21st Century City* with Ricky Burdett (2018).

Nora Elizabeth Barakat, Bedouin Bureaucrats. Mobility and property in the Ottoman Empire, 24.10.2024

Presentation of the book "Bedouin Bureaucrats. Mobility and property in the Ottoman Empire"

Bedouin Bureaucrats examines how tent-dwelling, seasonally migrating Bedouin engaged in these processes of Ottoman state transformation on local, imperial, and global scales. Narrating the lives of Bedouin individuals involved in Ottoman administration, Nora Elizabeth Barakat brings this population to the center of modern state-making, from their involvement in the pilgrimage administration in the eighteenth century and their performance of land registration and taxation as the Ottoman bureaucracy expanded in the nineteenth, to their eventual rejection of Ottoman attempts to reallocate the "empty land" they inhabited in the twentieth. She places the Syrian interior in a global context of imperial expansion into regions formerly deemed marginal, especially in relation to American and Russian empires. Ultimately,

the book illuminates Ottoman state formation attempts within Bedouin communities and the unique trajectory of Bedouin in Syria, who maintained their control over land.

Speaker

Nora Elizabeth Barakat is a historian of the late Ottoman Empire and the Modern Middle East. Her research focuses on people, commodities and landscapes in the interior regions between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Her first book, *Bedouin Bureaucrats: Mobility and Property in the Ottoman Empire*, came out with Stanford University Press in 2023, and her articles have appeared in the *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* and the *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*. Her current research explores the twentieth-century legacies of late Ottoman economy-making efforts in the Eastern Mediterranean, Iraq and the Persian Gulf, particularly the codification of civil law. Nora teaches Modern Middle East History at Stanford University, and previously taught at New York University Abu Dhabi and Qatar University. She is the co-founder of the collaborative research groups OpenGulf and Ottoman Political Economies.

Discussant

Sukriti Issar, Associate Professor of Sociology, CRIS, Sciences Po

Lucia Allais, Topographic Cities: Urbanism, Antiquities, and the Modernization of the Ground in mid-century Lebanon, 14.11.2024

Topographic Cities: Urbanism, Antiquities, and the Modernization of the Ground in mid-century Lebanon

This talk addresses how modernist urban and architectural principles permeated midcentury Lebanon, by looking at the modernization of the idea of the ground in three history-rich cities: Baalbek, Tripoli, and Byblos. While Ottoman *Tanzimat* reforms had introduced notions of private property, and French cadastral laws had further formalized planning; and while an image of modernity emanated from Mandate-era buildings in Beyrouth, and archaeological legislation reached new momentum across greater Syria in the prewar, it was not until the 1940s that Lebanon's ground became a cohesive national design project under the rubric of "topography." This lecture addresses the urban, architectural, and landscape aesthetics that were born in this period as the land came to be conceived as a single surface: searchable for resources, navigable by its landmarks, and systematically inhabitable and exploitable. The focus is on schemes proposed and debated by a variety of actors, including expert-urbanists such as Michel Ecochard and Constantin Doxiadis, architects employed by the national Antiquities

service under Maurice Chéhab, and the evolving group of Lebanese engineers and architects who published in the journal *Al Mouhandess*.

Speaker

Lucia Allais is Associate Professor of Architectural History, and the Director of the Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture, at Columbia University (New York). Her first book, *Designs of Destruction: The Making of Monuments in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago, 2018) traced how global monuments survived, and a new internationalist preservation regime arose, from the massive destructions of the 20th Century. Allais has written widely on the ways the built environment is designed to reflect historical change. She has received a number of grants and prizes, including fellowships from the CASVA, the Mellon Foundation, the Radcliffe Institute and, most recently, the Sarton Medal for the History of Science from Ghent University. Allais is a founding member of the Aggregate Architectural History Collaborative and an editor of the journal *Grey Room*.

Des Fitzgerald, The City of Today is a Dying Thing: In Search of the Cities of Tomorrow, 28.11.2024

Presentation of the book " The City of Today is a Dying Thing: In Search of the Cities of Tomorrow"

We are living in one of the greatest periods of urbanisation in human history, with more cities in the world today than ever before. But is this definitely a positive thing? Are cities actually good for us? And what would the city of the future look like if we tried to make one that definitely was - would anyone want to live there? This book is about the fascinating and sometimes strange world of the people asking these questions - people trying to remake our cities from the literal ground up. It's the story of an attempt to get a hold of what the city of the future might look like according to some of the most influential and far-sighted people working to change it; to figure out when and how it was, exactly, that we all became convinced that city life was so bad for us. It's also a book about trees.

Speaker:

Des Fitzgerald is a sociologist and medical humanities scholar based at the Radical Humanities Laboratory, and Department of Sociology & Criminology at University College Cork. His interests are in sociologies of the psychological and brain sciences, which he has most recently transacted through an interest in how urban studies and architecture have taken up insights from these fields. He is the author, most recently, of *The City of Today is a Dying Thing* (Faber and Faber: 2024) and *The Urban Brain* (with Nikolas Rose. Princeton: 2022). He is a graduate of University College Cork, the University of Cambridge and the London School of Economics, and

his work has been supported by the Wellcome Trust, the Leverhulme Trust, the Volkswagen Foundation and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) among others.

Discussant

Francesca Ferlicca, Postdoctoral Researcher, Urban School, Sciences Po

Tom Slater, Municipal Housing and Community in Cape Town: Lessons from the Bloemhof Flats, 12.12.2024

Municipal Housing and Community in Cape Town: Lessons from the Bloemhof Flats

In this talk I explore how experiences and memories of a Cape Town municipal housing project sustained people who were forcibly displaced from that project under apartheid in South Africa. Archival study of the Bloemhof Flats in Cape Town's District Six, and group interviews with its former residents, inform an exploration of the relationships between municipal housing and community formation, and its impact on people's lives, both under apartheid and in its wake of material hardships. Against the political motivations that underpin the ongoing stigmatisation of municipal housing, evidence from the Bloemhof Flats demonstrates how municipal housing can serve as a cradle for dignity, family, reciprocity, kinship, and hope. I trace how residents appropriated state mechanisms of social control to form a community so strong that it has lasted well beyond the apartheid system, even though the spatial and material dimensions of that community were taken so brutally from its members.

Speaker:

Tom Slater is Professor of Urban Planning at Columbia University. Trained as an urban geographer, he works in the style of institutional political economy and researches a range of urban issues, particularly gentrification and displacement, territorial stigmatization, critical urban theory, and housing justice movements. He is the author/co-author of 6 books and over 75 scholarly articles, and over the last decade, he has delivered lectures in 20 different countries. His work has been translated into 9 languages, and he has held Professorial Fellowships at the University of Trento, Italy; the University of Cape Town, South Africa; and the University of Chile-Santiago. He sits on numerous editorial boards and is a former Editor of the *Journal of Urban Affairs* and *The Sociological Review*.

2025 - Cities are Back in Town Archives

2025 - Cities are Back in Town

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Diogo Silva Corrêa, Faith and Crime: The Complex Interplay Between Evangelicalism and Drug Trafficking in Rio de Janeiro's Favelas, 13.02.2025

Faith and Crime: The Complex Interplay Between Evangelicalism and Drug Trafficking in Rio de Janeiro's Favelas

In this talk, I examine the intricate interplay between Evangelism and criminality in the favela of Cidade de Deus, Rio de Janeiro. Based on two years of immersive fieldwork in a church deeply connected to former drug traffickers, I analyze these dynamics through three distinct sociological scales.

At the macro level, I investigate the cultural and symbolic transformations in Rio de Janeiro's peripheral communities, with Cidade de Deus as the focal case. Historically, drug trafficking was associated with Afro-Brazilian religious practices, but this has shifted with the increasing influence of Evangelism. This "evangelization" is evident in practices such as the banning of Afro-Brazilian rituals, the removal of imagery like São Jorge, and the prominence of biblical symbols, such as painted psalms and monumental church constructions. I explore how this interaction between the drug trade and Pentecostalism has not only transformed the cultural landscape but also given rise to a distinctive Pentecostal style shaped by the context of local violence.

At the meso level, I delve into the life histories of high-ranking former drug traffickers who have converted to Pentecostalism. Using the sociological concept of "career," I analyze the stages of their transformation from traffickers to "ex" and how they reinterpret their past crimes through the lens of their new religious identities. These narratives reveal common challenges—ethical dilemmas, practical barriers, and existential crises—that emerge as they navigate their new lives.

At the micro level, I present an in-depth case study of a single former drug trafficker over two years, during which he oscillated between criminal activities and his commitment to the church. Through weekly recorded meetings, I employ a method I call the "sociology of intimate problems," exploring conversion as an ongoing and dynamic process. This approach reveals how the normative regimes of crime and the church coexist and compete within a single self, with conversion continuously renegotiated amidst moral conflicts and personal struggles.

By integrating these three levels of analysis, I highlight the pivotal roles of crime and evangelical churches in shaping life in Rio de Janeiro's favelas. This multiscale approach demonstrates how these normative regimes influence social organization, redefine the meaning of conversion, and open new pathways for individual and collective transformation in these complex urban contexts.

Speaker:

Diogo Silva Corrêa is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Vila Velha (UVV) and a guest lecturer at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS). He is an associated researcher at the Centre d'Études des Mouvements Sociaux (CEMS-EHESS) and serves as the coordinator of the Laboratory of Studies in Theory and Social Change (LABEMUS-UVV/UFPE). Holding a PhD in Sociology from EHESS and IESP-UERJ, his research delves into biographical transformation processes, with a focus on pathways out of crime, gender transitions, and urban social dynamics. He is the author of *Anjos de Fuzil: Uma Etnografia das Relações entre Pentecostalismo e Vida do Crime na Favela Cidade de Deus*, as well as a co-author of three books and over 30 academic articles.

Holly Randell-Moon, First Nations foundations: cities and the infrastructuring of settler colonisation, 03.04.2025

First Nations foundations: cities and the infrastructuring of settler colonisation

The infrastructuring of First Nations land into cities is a central project of settler colonisation. In the lands now known as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, settler-colonial myths of 'uncultivated' territory justified English invasion and settlement. These myths continue to inform contemporary infrastructure development and discourse which resist First Nations' sovereignties and self-determination even as the latter unsettles settler-colonial infrastructuring. This chapter offers a predominantly theoretical account of how urban infrastructuring is a constitutive feature of settler colonisation and how settler-colonial urban imaginaries construct both urbanisation and infrastructure as non-Indigenous.

Speaker:

Holly Randell-Moon, Senior Lecturer in Indigenous Australian Studies, Charles Sturt University

Holly is a non-Indigenous researcher and Associate Professor in the School of Indigenous Australian Studies, Charles Sturt University, Australia. She uses critical race and whiteness studies theories to situate her Anglo-Celtic family and settler ancestors within the social and built landscapes of settler colonisation. Along with Ryan Tippett, she is the editor of *Security, Race, Biopower: Essays on Technology and Corporeality* (2016). She edits *Somatechnics: Journal of Bodies - Technologies - Power*.

Angelo Martins Junior, Coloniality of Migration & Moving Difference: Brazilians in London & Africans in São Paulo, 20.03.2025

Coloniality of Migration & Moving Difference: Brazilians in London & Africans in São Paulo

Drawing on in-depth interviews and ethnographic observations, this presentation examines how Brazilian colonial and post-colonial histories and legacies differentially shape the migration experiences of Brazilians in London and Sub-Saharan Africans in São Paulo. It argues that critically interrogating how the constitution of the so-called Global Colonial World continues to influence the experiences of contemporary individuals on the move—or those striving for mobility—can help us challenge homogenising categories of "the migrant," including categories such as the transnational migrant and the "modern slave."

By the time slavery was abolished in Brazil, in 1888, 4.9 million Africans had been forcibly taken to Brazil as slaves. After abolition, Brazil embarked on a whitening project – influenced by eugenic racial assumptions – which incentivised European immigration as way to 'civilise' the new nation by 'improving' its mixed 'blood'. This new population of European (and Japanese) migrants was concentrated almost entirely in the south and south-east of Brazil, regions that, since independence, had acquired the central position in the national economy, especially with the production of coffee and, later, industrialisation. At the same time, anti-African immigration acts were imposed in the country, while the formerly enslaved and their descendants have been marginalised both in the configuration of urban space and in the labour market, dealing with daily exclusion, discrimination, degradation and state violence. Today, moving geographically ruptured the racial privilege of many lighter skinned and white middle-class Brazilians (decedents of Europeans) in London, who had never previously felt it possible that they would be perceived as a de-valued inferior Other, as a 'social problem'. For them, being positioned as a 'migrant' implied the possibility of experiencing classed, 'racial' and social degradation. Meanwhile, sub-Saharan Africans in Brazil face daily harassment, racial attacks, poverty and exploitative work despite Brazil's current progressive asylum and immigration legislation.

Speaker:

Angelo Martins Junior, Assistant Professor in Sociology , Birmingham University

Dr Angelo Martins Junior is Assistant Professor in Sociology at the Department of Social Policy, Sociology & Criminology, University of Birmingham, where he is currently Co-Director of the Institute for Research into International Migration & Superdiversity (IRiS). He undertakes ethnographic research in the areas of difference, intersectionality, social inequalities and decolonial sociological approaches to contribute to debates on Migration, as well as on 'Modern Slavery'. Angelo has carried out extensive research on how differences of 'race', class and gender, rooted in colonial histories, are constantly being re-created and negotiated in the

everyday making of inequalities faced by marginalised and criminalised populations (i.e migrants, informal workers, and sex workers) experiencing various forms of precariousness, inequality, exploitation and violence in Brazil, Europe, and Western Africa. Author of *Lives in Motions* (WhyteTracks, 2014) and *Moving Difference: Brazilians in London* (Routledge, 2020).

Kimberley S. Johnson, Dark Concrete: Black Power Urbanism and the American Metropolis, 24.04.2025

Presentation of the upcoming book "Dark Concrete: Black Power Urbanism and the American Metropolis"

Dark Concrete is about how the Black Power movement re-shaped urban politics in the US - from expectations to practices. While the national and international dimensions of the Black Power are often focused on, Kimberley Johnson looks at the movement at the local level, highlighting Newark, East Orange, Oakland, and East Palo Alto and three policy areas: housing, education, and policing. She examines how the Black Power Urbanism movement had its own local meanings as it was defined by local activists, neighborhood residents, parents, tenants and others who sought to repair cities and particularly black neighborhoods that were shattered due to urban renewal and highway construction, as well as ongoing political and economic disinvestment. Dark Concrete depicts how local conditions shaped the emergence of the Black Power Urbanism movement, and in turn, the ways in which these local movements reshaped urban politics, institutions and place.

Speaker:

Kimberley Johnson is a Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis, New York University (NYU). Professor Johnson's research interests include American political development, Congress and the bureaucracy, race and ethnic politics, and urban studies. She has published extensively on topics such as bureaucratic growth, urban and local politics, urban spatial development, and the development of the modern American state. Johnson has been recognized for her contributions to scholarship and practice, including the Tow Distinguished Professorship for Scholarship and Practitioners, the EBH Chair in Urban Studies and Political Science at Barnard College. Johnson has received grants and fellowships from the Ford Foundation, the NEH, and the Mellon Foundation. Johnson is currently the John G. Winant Visiting Professor of American Government, Rothermere American Institute, University of Oxford. Johnson's book publications include *Governing the American State* (Princeton University Press 2007); *Reforming Jim Crow* (Oxford University Press, 2010); and *Dark Concrete: Black Power Urbanism and the American Metropolis* (Cornell University Press, forthcoming, December 2025).

Discussant:

Alisha C. Holland, Creative Construction: The Rise and Stall of Mass Infrastructure in Latin America, 05.06.2025

Presentation of the upcoming book: Creative Construction: The Rise and Stall of Mass Infrastructure in Latin America

Infrastructure is at the heart of contemporary development strategies and critical for vibrant cities. Yet short time horizons are thought to impede infrastructure provision in democracies. Why do elected politicians invest in infrastructure projects that will not be completed during their time in office? The answer depends on understanding what infrastructure is and does in politics. I argue that the political rewards from infrastructure projects come from the associated contracts. Like many goods and services, infrastructure investments are neither fully privatized, in the sense of transferring ownership to the private sector, nor fully public, in that the state directly builds projects. Governments instead contract out to the private sector. In Latin America, politicians use their discretion in the contracting process to secure campaign donations, as well as personal rents. They also manipulate contracts—and particularly the use of public-private partnerships (PPPs)—to hide project costs, shift liabilities to future administrations, and move project decisions away from legislatures. Detailed evidence from 1,000 large infrastructure contracts and qualitative case studies of urban subways, highways, and energy projects demonstrate why politicians invest in infrastructure and why projects often fail to produce the economic development and urban welfare gains promised.

Speaker:

Alisha C. Holland is the Gates Professor of Developing Societies in the Government Department at Harvard University. Before joining the Harvard faculty, she was an Assistant Professor in the Politics Department at Princeton University and Junior Fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows. Her first book, [*Forbearance as Redistribution: The Politics of Informal Welfare in Latin America*](#) (Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics, 2017), looks at the politics of enforcement against property law violations by the poor, such as squatting, street vending, and electricity theft. She is finishing a new book on the politics of mass infrastructure investments in Latin America.

Discussant:

Marcela Alonso Ferreira, PhD Candidate, CEE, Sciences Po

Laurence Rocher - Circularités urbaines: Du gouvernement (extra)territorial des flux résiduels. 11.09.2025

Presentation of the upcoming book: Circularités urbaines. Déchets, énergie, CO₂ : enquête sur le bouclage des flux résiduels

Cet ouvrage cherche à comprendre les facteurs complexes et multi-échelles qui gouvernent les résidus urbains et autorisent ou non un bouclage des flux dans une perspective d'économie circulaire. Des opérations, réussies ou non, de valorisation des déchets et d'énergie (sous la forme de chaleur fatale) sont étudiées dans plusieurs métropoles fortement industrialisées (Dunkerque, Lyon, Lille et Rotterdam). L'enquête est également a-territoriale car ces flux sont très fortement cadrés par un ensemble de normes et d'instruments qui relèvent de plusieurs politiques sectorielles et niveaux de gouvernance. Cette double investigation révèle les interdépendances qui lient déchets, énergie fatale et CO₂, autant de flux résiduels entremêlés caractéristiques des métabolismes urbains. Tout en apportant un éclairage sur l'action publique environnementale contemporaine, l'ouvrage souligne les limites d'une économie circulaire porteuse de promesses mais aussi de profonds dilemmes.

Speaker:

Laurence Rocher est professeure d'études urbaines à l'Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3 et membre du laboratoire Environnement, ville, société. Elle enseigne les enjeux environnementaux dans des formations en urbanisme et en géographie. Ses recherches portent sur les flux et infrastructures urbaines selon une approche sociopolitique.

Discussant:

Marta Tramezzani, PhD Candidate, CEE, Sciences Po

Ana Beraldo - Managing ordinary life: (Im)predictability, Violence and Solidarity in Latin American Urban Margins. 02.10.2025

Managing ordinary life: (Im)predictability, Violence and Solidarity in Latin American Urban Margins.

In a favela in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, daily life unfolds in the streets – children play, neighbours socialise, and local venues are lively. In contrast, a similarly impoverished neighbourhood in Buenos Aires, Argentina, features empty streets and locked doors, with residents avoiding public space. Both settings have a strong local drug trade and are described as violent by their inhabitants and by the surrounding society, yet their urban experiences diverge sharply. This work, based on extensive comparative ethnographic research, examines the factors that

contribute to such disparities. Particular attention is paid to the ways in which multiple normative arrangements can make social interaction – and, in particular, violence – more or less predictable. It also demonstrates how the predictability of violence, more than violence itself, shapes everyday life, guides community practices, and enables (or constrains) solidarity networks in marginalised urban areas.

Speaker:

Ana Beraldo is a researcher at the Center for Studies on Criminality and Public Safety at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (Brazil) and at the Center for Studies on Violence at the National University of San Martín (Argentina). Her research explores the multiple governance arrangements shaping Latin America's urban margins and their relationship to violence, with a focus on how these dynamics affect the everyday lives of residents in impoverished areas. She is the author of *Negociando a Vida e a Morte: Estado, Igreja e Crime nas Margens Urbanas* (EdUFSCar, 2022). From 2021 to 2024, Beraldo held a postdoctoral fellowship funded by the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET) at the School of Interdisciplinary Advanced Social Studies, National University of San Martín (EIDAES/UNSAM), and in 2025 she was an Urban Studies Foundation International Fellow at the Sciences Po Urban School.

Discussant:

Patrick Le Galès, CNRS Research Professor, CEE, Sciences Po

Maren Larsen - Worlding Home: An Urban Ethnography of Peacekeeping Camps in Goma, DRC. 16.10.2025



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Worlding Home: An Urban Ethnography of Peacekeeping Camps in Goma, DRC

This book opens up and interrogates the socio-spatial dynamics of contingent camps inhabited by United Nations peacekeepers in and around the city of Goma, DRC. Between 2017 and 2019, the city of Goma and two adjacent towns in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

accommodated UN peacekeepers from Asia, Africa, and Latin America in over 20 different camps. This study brings the productive tension between these camps and the city to life through an ethnographic study of peacekeepers as urban, social actors who make and re-make their camps and the city itself, and who frame and re-frame what it means to be at home and what it means to be in the world. In setting off from a novel starting point for global urban studies research, it proposes an analytic of camping to not only think cities through elsewhere, but as elsewhere. More information and an open access version of the book is available [here](#).

Speaker:

Maren Larsen is an urban anthropologist and Senior Lecturer in Urban Studies at the University of Basel, where she chairs its Pedagogy Committee and coordinates the Critical Urbanisms M.A. program. She will join the University of Zurich's Geography Department in 2026 as an Ambizione Fellow working on climate-induced, planned relocation in Saint-Louis, Senegal.

Discussant:

Laurent Fourchard, Research Professor, CERI, Sciences Po

Amani Hassani - Navigating Colour-Blind Societies: Racial Governance and Urban Erasure in Denmark's Ghetto Policies. 6.11.2025, 5:30pm-7:00pm CEST

Navigating Colour-Blind Societies: Racial Governance and Urban Erasure in Denmark's Ghetto Policies

This talk builds on my recently published book [Navigating Colour-Blind Societies](#), a comparative ethnography of young urban Muslims coming of age in Copenhagen and Montreal in the decade after 9/11. Through personal narratives and urban ethnography, the book highlights how racialisation and spatialisation are interconnected—shaping who belongs where, whose presence is questioned, and how urban life is structured by racial, classed, and gendered hierarchies.

Extending these insights, my recent research examines Denmark's 2018 public housing—or “ghetto”—policies as mechanisms of racial governance aimed at managing and erasing Muslim communities. Drawing on ethnographic work in Aarhus, Odense, and Copenhagen, it analyses how these policies operate through the logics of coloniality, framing Muslims as threats to Danish social cohesion. The experiences of residents in targeted estates reveal the importance of community care, intergenerational ties, and informal support networks.

Together, the book and this newer research show how racial governance and urban erasure intertwine in Denmark's colour-blind context, shaping both national imaginaries and everyday life in racialised neighbourhoods.

Speaker:

Amani Hassani is a Lecturer in Sociology at Brunel University London. She leads the research project "The Other's Right to the City," funded by the Leverhulme Trust. The project examines Denmark's ghetto policies and their impact on racialized residents. As an urban ethnographer working across sociology, anthropology, and human geography, she critically engages with racialisation, Islamophobia, and social justice in urban contexts. Her previous work has focused on Muslim urban life in Denmark and Canada, exploring questions of class, gender, and racialisation through ethnographic methods and critical interdisciplinary approaches.

Discussant:

Tommaso Vitale, Full Professor of Sociology, CEE, Sciences Po & Dean of Sciences Po Urban School

Clément Barbier - Seeking Attractiveness. Large-scale urban renewal projects in the metropolitan areas of Lille and Hamburg. 13.11.2025, 5:00pm-7:00pm CET

Seeking Attractiveness. Large-scale urban renewal projects in the metropolitan areas of Lille and Hamburg.

In his [latest book](#), Clément Barbier traces how two 'problem neighbourhoods' have progressively been placed at the center of metropolitan urban marketing strategies thereby shedding light on the origins and functioning of policies designed to make cities more attractive. Drawing on a cross national sociological analysis of the Union project in the north-east of the Lille metropolitan area and the International Architecture Exhibition (Internationale Bauausstellung – IBA) in Hamburg, his research takes us behind the scene of local government and development companies tasked with transforming the image, population and economy of two declining areas that at first glance might seem to have nothing in common. It reveals how public authorities, having contributed to deindustrialise these areas, are now unable to attract the innovative companies, skilled workers and foreign investors they are vainly seeking. The figures of economic, architectural and environmental excellence are thus part of the same myth of public action, in the name of which elected officials, technicians and experts strive to create exemplary gentrification policies.

Speaker

Clément Barbier is an associate professor at the Université Polytechnique des Hauts-de-France in Valenciennes, affiliated with the Laboratoire Sociétés et Humanités and associated with the Centre d'Études et de Recherches Administratives Politiques et Sociales. His work deals with the localised governance of capitalism, focusing on large-scale urban renewal projects, real estate conversions of the industrial bourgeoisie and logistics employment regimes. He recently published *En quête d'attractivité. Le renouvellement urbain par grand projet dans les métropoles de Lille et Hambourg* (2025) and coordinated *Gouverner les territoires du Nord. Capitalisme, race et pauvreté* (2024) with Vianney Schlegel and Janoé Vulbeau.

Discussant:

Céline Gipoulon, Deputy Director, École du Renouvellement Urbain

Thomas Aguilera, Francesa Artioli & Claire Colomb - Housing Under Platform Capitalism. 04.12.2025, 5:00pm-7:00pm CET

Housing Under Platform Capitalism: The Contentious Regulation of Short-Term Rentals in European Cities

Fifteen years after the launch of Airbnb, most cities around the world have adopted measures to regulate short-term rental markets. Yet, across different territories—particularly in Europe—a wide variety of governance and regulatory approaches can be observed. Drawing on comparative, multilevel research and employing mixed methods, this book analyses 12 major touristic European cities (Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Lisbon, London, Madrid, Milan, Paris, Prague, Rome, and Vienna) to highlight and explain the emergence of distinct *regulatory regimes*. In some cities, public policies aim to curb the growth of short-term rentals to protect affordable housing for residents or to mitigate the impacts of overtourism. In others, regulation seeks to support and legitimize the market, enabling taxation and enhancing territorial attractiveness. This diversity of responses is shaped by institutional and socio-economic factors—such as welfare state regimes, forms of urban capitalism, and housing market dynamics—as well as by political mobilizations involving citizen movements, property owners, financial actors, tourism and housing stakeholders, and local and national governments. This book examines the capacity of states and cities to govern housing, tourism, and, more broadly, platform capitalism. It contributes to the comparative study of multilevel urban governance, state theory, and the political economy of contemporary capitalism.

Speakers

Thomas Aguilera is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Sciences Po Rennes - University of Rennes, France.

Francesca Artioli is Assistant Professor of Spatial Planning and Urban Policies at the Université Paris-Est Créteil, France.

Claire Colomb is Professor of Land Economy (Planning, Public Policy, and Urban Studies) at the University of Cambridge, UK

Discussant:

Beatriz Botero Arcila, Assistant Professor of Law at Sciences Po Law School

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Joanie Cayouette-Remblière - The relational side of urban segregation. 05.02.2025

The relational side of urban segregation

This study examines homophily in neighborhood ties in France, defined as the tendency to establish ties with individuals similar to oneself. Drawing on survey data from 14 neighborhoods in Paris and Lyon, the study focuses on homophily based on gender, age, conjugal status, socio-occupational status, and place of birth. The findings reveal a high degree of homophily in neighborhood ties, shaped by both individual characteristics and neighborhood contexts. In socially mixed contexts, residents show stronger homophily by socio-occupational status and place of birth, suggesting increased selectivity. However, individual choice is only part of the picture: meeting opportunities also matter. While living close together increases diversity in gender, age, and place of birth, micro-segregation within buildings limits effects on socio-occupational homophily. Ties formed through school-related contacts tend to be more homophilic in terms of age, gender, and conjugal status, but similar to other ties regarding socio-occupational status and place of birth. Conversely, connections through condominium meetings or local associations foster socio-occupational homophily while bridging divides along other dimensions. These findings can inform policies to promote social mixing by emphasizing the relational structures of urban life.

Speaker: Joanie Cayouette-Remblière

Joanie Cayouette-Remblière is a sociologist and researcher at INED (French National institute for demographic studies). Her research focuses on social mix, social ties, the recomposition of social classes, and educational trajectories. She coordinated the *My Neighborhood, My Neighbors* survey and recently published [Ce que voisiner veut dire](#) (PUF, 2025), co-authored with Jean-Yves Authier.

Discussant: Audrey Chamboredon, PhD Candidate in Sociology, CRIS, Sciences Po

Malini Sur - Mobilizing Air: Cycling, Environmental Crisis, and Post-Carbon Futures. 19.02.2025, 10:30am-12:00 CET

Mobilizing Air: Cycling, Environmental Crisis, and Post-Carbon Futures

What political topographies does air pollution produce? How do bicyclists in large Asian cities experience, navigate, and mobilize air in their everyday lives? And what do these practices reveal about life amid environmental crises? Drawing on ethnographic research with cyclists and activists in Kolkata, this paper addresses these questions through the analytic of air politics: the multiple registers through which air is sensed, imagined, and mobilized as a political substance. I argue that, despite its apparent intangibility, air politics is profoundly terrestrial, constituted through urban infrastructures, labor regimes, and uneven geographies of exposure. Attending to everyday encounters with polluted air foregrounds how environmental crisis is lived, negotiated, and politicized in cities, while also illuminating the emergence of post-carbon imaginaries in the Anthropocene. In Kolkata, these dynamics are most sharply articulated in the frictions between economically marginalized cyclists, for whom the bicycle is integral to livelihood, and activists who frame cycling as a technology of health, sustainability, and climate mitigation. These uneven relations to air and mobility reveal how cycle politics both reproduces and unsettles existing social hierarchies, complicating the vehicle's promise as a universal response to urban environmental crisis.

Speaker: Malini Sur, Associate Professor of Anthropology, Western Sydney University

Malini Sur is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Western Sydney University. Her research explores how political and climatic forces shape the mobility of people, goods, ideas, and technologies. She is the author of *Jungle Passports: Fences, Mobility, and Citizenship at the Northeast India–Bangladesh Border* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021), which received the President's Book Prize (South Asian Studies Association of Australia), Bernard S. Cohn Book Prize (hon. mention), and a Choice Outstanding Academic Title. She has co-authored and co-edited five books and special issues on mobility, infrastructures, and repair, and published in leading journals including *Cultural Anthropology*, *Comparative Studies in History and Society* and *Political and Legal Anthropology*. She has served as President of the Australian Anthropological Society (2023–2024). Her documentary films (*Life Cycle*, 2016; *Parramatta Redux*, 2025) and photographic works have been screened and exhibited internationally. Her research has been supported by the Australian Research Council, Dutch Research Council, Singapore's Ministry of Education, Chevening Scholarship, Tata Trusts, and the Parramatta Council.

Discussant: Roberto Rodríguez, Associate Researcher, CEE, Sciences Po

Margot Delon, Thomas Pfirsch & Dominique Rivière - Les métropoles d'Europe du Sud à l'épreuve des crises du XXI^e siècle. 12.03.2026, 5:00pm-7:00pm CET

Les métropoles d'Europe du Sud à l'épreuve des crises du XXI^e siècle. 12.03.2025

Comment « faire face » aux crises socio-économique, financière, sanitaire ? Comment « faire avec » un contexte marqué par l'incertitude et la précarité mais aussi par des porosités croissantes entre différents champs de l'urbain ? Ces questions se sont posées récemment avec acuité dans les grandes villes d'Europe du Sud : crise des « subprimes » (2008), crise dite des migrants (2015), crise sanitaire (2020-2021)... Autant de secousses qui, dans un contexte de blocage de la dynamique d'intégration européenne, révèlent des fragilités à l'œuvre et accélèrent les mues de l'action publique touchant à la régénération urbaine et culturelle, mais aussi celles des mobilisations citoyennes concernant la culture, le logement ou l'accueil des migrants, tout comme elles amplifient la montée en puissance de stratégies « d'entreprises de soi » au niveau d'individus -et/ou des familles- sur fond d'expansion de l'économie des plateformes touristiques et de marchandisation de la ville.

La/ les crise(s) offrent ainsi un effet de loupe pour observer des mutations urbaines en cours. C'est donc par une approche comparative et nourrie du travail de terrain (Athènes, Rome, Naples, Milan, Barcelone, Valence, Catane, Séville...) que cet ouvrage, issu d'un réseau pluri-disciplinaire (géographes, sociologues, urbanistes) et international, se propose de contribuer à la réflexion. La thèse défendue est que l'approche située offre -précisément parce que telle- un point de vue utile pour remonter en généralité et alimenter le débat sur la métropolisation et l'adaptation aux crises contemporaines.

Speakers:

Margot Delon est sociologue au CNRS et au Centre nantais de sociologie. Elle enquête actuellement sur les frontières de la marchandisation du logement en France et en Italie. Elle collabore notamment aux projets [Migrafisc](#) et [Vilmouv](#) et a publié [Enfants des bidonvilles, une autre histoire des inégalités urbaines](#) (La Dispute, 2024), issu de sa thèse (Sciences Po, 2017).

Thomas Pfirsch est maître de conférences HDR à l'université Polytechnique Hauts de France (Valenciennes), et associé à l'UMR Géographie-cités. Il est spécialiste de géographie urbaine et sociale, et plus particulièrement des villes italiennes et méditerranéennes. Ses travaux portent sur les mobilités des classes moyennes et supérieures et leurs rapports à l'espace, ainsi que sur les liens entre famille et territoire. Il co-dirige actuellement le programme de recherche [Vilmouv](#) - "Villes en mouvement. Mobilités et recompositions socio-spatiales dans les espaces urbains de Méditerranée". Il a récemment publié [Familles sans frontières. Le cas des nouvelles migrations italiennes à Paris](#) (ENS Editions, 2025).

Dominique Rivière est géographe, professeure émérite à l'Université Paris cité et membre de l'UMR Géographie-cités. Elle travaille sur l'Italie et l'Europe - politiques urbaines et européennes, recompositions de l'État, inégalités, mobilisations territoriales...- et a coordonné le programme « [Métropoles crises et mutations dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen](#) » de l'École française de Rome ainsi que l'ouvrage *Les métropoles d'Europe du Sud à l'épreuve des crises du XXI^e siècle*, Collections de l'École française de Rome, 2024, 368 p.

Discutant: Eric Verdeil, Professeur des Universités, CERI, Sciences Po