RC21 Conference "Sensing and Shaping the City" in Antwerp (Belgium), 6-8 July 2020

CfP for session #46
The Political Consequences of Gentrification
Deadline: 15th March 2020

Considerable debate and controversy continue regarding the effects of gentrification on cities, neighborhoods and residents. While there is a significant amount of research describing the influence of neoliberal policies on urban restructuring, gentrification and displacement, only little is known about their political consequences. To what extent are these processes affecting (1) the political participation and attitudes of residents and displaced persons, (2) the composition of urban electorates and their preferred political parties and (3) the political agendas, processes and alternative policies that may have the potential to overcome undesired outcomes?

With gentrification becoming a global urban strategy (Smith 2002) and hence being a worldwide observable phenomenon (Lees et al. 2015) it became evident that market liberalization, political deregulation and a class-based local demand were the main driving forces of global urban inequalities. While in some countries the middle classes remain the demand-side drivers of urban restructuring and gentrification, in other cases they have been overtaken by supply-side factors such as financialization of housing and shifting tenurial systems. The subsequent rise of property values and rents that climb even beyond the economic capabilities of the urban middle classes keep on pushing housing issues back into local political agendas in recent years. Therefore, urban governments and political parties are concerned with finding adequate answers to fulfill the steady demand of affordable housing by an increasingly socio-economically diverse population.

The inability or unwillingness by political actors to address the housing issues caused by gentrification is bound to generate a political discontent and a loss of trust in local governments. Against the background of an increasing competition over housing on tight markets this may as well open up opportunities for populist reactions cause by such housing issues. These might fall on fertile ground in gentrifying neighborhoods where long-time residents encounter cultural diversity, economic inequality and a loss of social capital provoked by a dynamic population turnover in a formerly homogenous environment, causing them feelings of economic deprivation and cultural alienation. Of course, the question of the political consequences of gentrification might be read differently in other parts of the world, where political regimes are less responsive to the needs of their population. Here gentrification and economic marginalization may spark solidarization, political mobilization and protest.

Given the ongoing processes of gentrification worldwide and the shifting political geographies of recent times this session intends to bring together different views on the political consequences of gentrification for residents, neighborhoods, cities and urban policies. Submissions can be based on the following questions:

- How does gentrification affect political participation (e.g. voting turnout, political attitudes)?
- How do urban electorates and party preferences change with gentrification?
- What are the implications of those changes for urban governments?
- Which other forms of political action and participation are caused by gentrification?
- How do political parties in cities react to processes of gentrification?
- Which regulatory instruments exist and are used to handle gentrification?
- When and why do governments regulate gentrification and related processes?

Abstract submission (max. 250 words)**:**
https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/conferences/rc21-sensing-the-city/call-for-papers/

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Literature

Lees, Loretta, Hyun Bang Shin, and Ernesto López-Morales, eds. 2015. *Global Gentrifications: Uneven Development and Displacement*. Bristol, UK Chicago, IL: Policy Press.
Smith, Neil. 2002. "New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy." *Antipode* 34(3):427–50.