

Workshop call for abstracts

TERRITORIALIZING URBAN FRONTIERS: PROPERTY, LOCAL SOCIAL RELATIONS AND THE STATE

Oxford School of Global and Area Studies, University of Oxford, April 8- 10 2019

Conveners: Dr.Tara van Dijk (Oxford) and Prof. Christian Lund (Copenhagen)

Participants should email abstracts by January 25, 2019 to tara.vandijk@area.ox.ac.uk

CONCEPT NOTE:

This workshop investigates at *urban frontiers* - areas where land use, property development, housing and amenities undergo rapid change. These transformations are often either 'ahead of regulation', so to speak, or actively *not* regulated by state planning authorities. The actions of landed elites, builders, real estate developers, brokers, inhabitants (old and new) and entrepreneurs of all shades re-work property right relations and construct urban asset-classes for rent extraction that determine the uneven development of infrastructures and public and private facilities. While this production of urban space can be illegal, punctuated by periods of violence, contradictory and driven by a mix of livelihood strategies and profiteering, organized interests aim to territorialize, i.e. to fix, consolidate and institutionalize a configuration of social relations (property relations in particular) and governance processes best aligned to their political and economic agendas.

Frontier spaces are rarely blank canvases. Where you have people and resources, some form of property regime, however incipient or small scale develops. Already existing regimes with different property rights, operating scales and territorial logics play a role both in 1) how state efforts to territorialize their urban frontiers (for example: through urban development projects, municipal incorporation or annexation, the rationalization of land records and standardization of tenure) are taken up on the ground, and 2) with what consequences in terms of property relations, citizenship and the form and trajectory of urbanization in general.

We find limited (deployed) statutory control in urban frontiers. The actual reach of state regulatory, extractive and distributive capacities tends to be spotty and rather ad hoc. However, intense activities of localized territorialization and strategic, *ex post facto* legalization of unauthorized activities are present. Urban frontiers are inherently contradictory: the formalization of property, the ordering of space, and the concomitant emergence of real estate markets and other institutionalized regimes and circuits of resource valuation introduce a new set of rules and norms into the mix. These state and private sector projects, if operationalized, find themselves having to negotiate with existing material socio-spatial relations. Such encounters represent open moments, when actors of different stripes and scales of operation seek to secure access and control over emergent urban resources.

While urban formalization and expansion may sound orderly, it entails a plurality of competing territorializing projects. In this cacophony of agendas, some actors seek to perpetuate the frontier that enables an intensification of wealth accumulation, for example through real estate speculation and 'land grabbing'. Consequently, urban frontiers do not necessarily move outward in perfect alignment with urban expansion. Rather, urban frontiers are socio-spatial transformations that occur when new possibilities for valorization and wealth accumulation overwrite existing social relations and local property regimes.

For this workshop we invite papers that work at the urban frontiers of land, housing, waste or water and processes of territorialization and frontierification. We are particularly interested in empirically supported work.

Practicalities:

Location: The workshop will take place in Oxford, UK at the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies April 8-10, 2019.

Participants will be selected on the basis of abstracts to be submitted to Tara tara.vandijk@area.ox.ac.uk by **January 25, 2019**. Submitters will hear back by February 5.

Costs: This is a shoe-string operation, and participants will have to take care of their own travel and accommodation. Two lunches and a workshop dinner will be provided. **If budget constraints don't allow for travel – participants could participate via Skype.**

Format: We expect around 15 participants, and therefore ample time to discuss each contribution. Each day will begin with a brief plenary session that sets out the theme and aims for the day. Every paper will be assigned a discussant. First the author has up to 30 minutes, the discussant at least 5 minutes and then we open it up to the whole group.

Output: Special Issue

Workshop Inspired by the following texts:

Lund, C. (2016). Rule and rupture: state formation through the production of property and citizenship. *Development and Change*, 47(6), 1199-1228.

Rasmussen, M. B., & Lund, C. (2018). Reconfiguring Frontier Spaces: The territorialization of resource control. *World Development*, 101, 388-399.

Roy, A. (2012). Urban informality: the production of space and practice of planning. *The oxford handbook of urban planning*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 691-705.

van Dijk, T., Bhide, A., & Shivtare, V. (2016). When a participatory slum sanitation project encounters urban informality: The case of the Greater Mumbai Metropolitan Region. *International Area Studies Review*, 19(1), 45-59.