Urban Citizenship Revisited

Rights, Recognition and Distribution in Berlin and Tel Aviv

International Symposium at Humboldt-University Berlin

The Urban and Regional Sociology Program at Humboldt-University Berlin is excited to announce the International Symposium: Urban Citizenship Revisited. Rights, Recognition and Distribution in Berlin and Tel Aviv. The symposium will survey the field of urban citizenship practices in Berlin and Tel Aviv and theorize urban citizenship from a comparative and multidisciplinary perspective. Scholars from Israel, Germany, and other European countries will discuss current forms of inclusion and exclusion into the political, civic, economic, and cultural spheres of both cities, as well as theoretical questions concerning the analytical and normative framework of the urban citizenship concept. Note that the Symposium will be held in English.

When: **September 15th & 16th 2011**

Where: **Department of Social Sciences at Humboldt-University Berlin**

                        Universitätsstraße 3b, 10099 Berlin, Germany

Keynote Lecture by Oren Yiftachel & **Closing Remarks** by Roland Roth

Confirmed speakers: Yishai Blank // Talja Blokland // Nir Cohen // Henrik Lebuhn // Britta Grell // Duygu Gürsel // Christine Hentschel // Andrej Holm // Ina Kerner // Adriana Kemp // Kira Kosnick // Armin Kuhn // Stephan Lanz // Talia Margalit // Galia Rattner // Gökce Yurdakul

Organizing Team: Talja Blokland // Henrik Lebuhn // Talia Margalit // Oren Yiftachel

Student Assistants: Susanna Raab // Tilman Versch

The Symposium is free of charge. Please register via Email at: stadtsoz@hu-berlin.de

********** ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS **********

PANEL & WORKSHOP I)
PUBLIC SPACE, URBAN CULTURE, AND THE RIGHT TO DIVERSITY

PAPER 1: New Citizens, Old Diversity: Labor Migrants and Networked Spaces in Tel Aviv, by Nir Cohen (Ruppin Academic Center, Israel) and Talia Margalit (Tel Aviv University, Israel)

ABSTRACT The past two decades have witnessed continuous inflows of African labor migrants (and, more recently, refugees) into the city of Tel Aviv. While considerable attention has been paid to the incorporation challenges faced by these groups, including their difficulties in gaining access to basic social services, little regard has been given to the ways by which their presence impacts long existing social dynamics in the city. In contrast to traditional views, which conceptualize non-Jewish migrants as the binary opposition to Jewish residents of the host city, intruders on the shared and homogenous socio-cultural urban space, our analysis seeks to problematize the city, rendering it a multiplicity of distinct, yet highly connected social spaces already inhabited by diverse groups, both Jewish and not. In this paper we argue that the new diversity exacerbates already existing tensions in the urban system (and beyond). Taking as a point of departure the December 2010 events, in which residents of southern neighborhoods protested against what they called 'the Africanization' of Tel Aviv, blaming richer residents of central and northern neighborhoods for protecting migrants/refugees' right to remain, we examine the ways by which the new urban citizens have destabilized long-conceived social relations, adding new layers of contention to what is already a highly diverse city. We suggest this new diversity (and its discontents) ought not to be understood using simple binary categories (e.g., north/south, wealthy/poor), On the contrary, we contend it must be seen against the transformation of the city into a series of networked spaces, impacting on/impacted by practices both near and far. Using a flat ontology, we show that the struggle over urban space (and citizenship) links up – rather than divides – these spaces and the groups inhabiting them. It is precisely the city's new diversity, we argue, that forces veteran groups/identities to re-construct their old terms of engagement, embedding them in re-configured sets of socio-spatial relations.

PAPER 2: Conflicting Diversities: Urban Leisure Publics and Struggles over Space in the Neoliberal City, by Kira Kosnick (Goethe-University Frankfurt/Main, Germany)

ABTRACT In this paper, I discuss the framing of conflicts over public space as they unfold in a climate of neoliberal urban transformation in contemporary Germany. Examining how the

alleged concerns of a 'queer community' have been pitted against the alleged moral agenda of Muslim immigrants in the country, examples of conflicts over public leisure spaces in Berlin will give insights into how different cultural minority positions are mobilized against each other in a national as well as urban environment marked by a neoliberal re-evaluation of diversities and inequalities.

PAPER 3: Kanak Attak invades the City: Challenging Citizenship and Integration Policies, by Duygu Gürsel and Gökce Yurdakul (Humboldt-University Berlin, Germany)

ABSTRACT How do immigrant intellectuals react to the citizenship and integration debates in Germany in the last decade? After the dramatic transformation of the German citizenship law in 1999, the relevant debates on immigrant integration policies are increasingly discussed around three major questions: Who is German; what are the criteria of belonging to German society and polity and how will Germany proceed with immigrant integration policies. Although many studies focus on the German state authorities' perspective to these three questions, in this paper, we aim to reflect the social entanglements and paradoxes of immigrant groups, specifically of *Kanak Attak*, and how they respond to the changing German citizenship law and immigrant integration policies in the last decade. *Kanak Attak* is a social movement, a part of the transformation of the struggle of the immigrants by 1990s and 2000s, however also it presents a new social movement in Germany by a newly forming immigrant intelligentsia, which is different than current stereotypes of immigrant groups. They enter to the stage of struggles of migration in Germany with the provocative name of *Kanake* which is indeed a pejorative word for foreigners in Germany to draw the attention not to ethnic difference rather to political difference which takes position against the mainstream and conformism (hegemony). The new perspective that they develop is the 'autonomy of migration' which perceives migration as a social movement with a special kind of political power. *Kanak Attak* focuses on the struggles of migration as their starting point of their analysis in order to understand how racism reorganizes itself in each crisis, and in this case the crisis of German citizenship and immigrant integration. Drawing on Gramsci, we discuss how this intellectual group unveil the integration discourse as the new hegemonic project which, they argue, hierarchizes the immigrant groups and legitimizes the exclusion. We show how *Kanak Attak* forms a counter-hegemonic discourse through their claim for legalization and inclusion in Germany. In conclusion, we argue citizenship as belonging is not as an institution that is imposed by the state, but it is a collective process which all members of the society can contribute to its formation (Balibar)

PANEL & WORKSHOP II)

HUMAN SECURITY AS A LOCAL PUBLIC GOOD

PAPER 1: Confronting Social Exclusion in Deprived Neighbourhoods: Successes and Failures in Berlin, by Britta Grell (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin, Germany)

ABSTRACT Berlin remains the German capital of poverty. In some deprived inner city districts, unemployment rates hover near 30 percent. For the past decade, "Neighbourhood Management" and other area-based programs have become the main approach of the city government to tackle social exclusion by activating and strengthening individual human resources as well as local networks and community services. Focusing on family and child support policies, the presentation will highlight some of the positive outcomes of such an approach, for example the "Neighborhood Mothers Program" (Stadtteilmütter), followed by a discussion of its main weaknesses and failures.

PAPER 2: Affordability and Citizenship: Contested Meanings of Affordable Housing and the Struggle over Urban Citizenship in Tel Aviv, by Yishai Blank (Tel Aviv University, Israel)

During the past fifteen years, Tel Aviv has undergone dramatic economic, demographic and political transformations. After a long haul of urban decline, it experienced an influx of people comprised of the richest echelons, of poor migrant workers and asylum seekers from all over the world, of young students and of upper middle class families, all flocking into it, seeking job opportunities, better local amenities, and a vibrant urban environment. An unprecedented economic boom, fostered by global market forces, propelled and accompanied these demographic and cultural changes. Real estate prices surged, further crowding out poorer populations and inducing gentrification. Partly a result of its economic success and partly a result of unrelated ideological and political changes, Tel Aviv's economic and political dependency of the central government decreased, enabling it to assert an independent local identity and agenda.

Real estate boom did not happen only in Tel Aviv, but throughout the entire country. A result of a sequence of governmental policies and of market forces, property prices increased dramatically, putting pressure on middle class families as well as on the poor. Consequently, over the past three years, Israelis have witnessed a discursive explosion concerning affordable housing. All of a sudden, a term which had never been used began appearing everywhere and being used by everyone: in municipal planning committees, in city politics, in parliamentary discussions, in

central government policy proposals, in the newspapers (local and national), in the building and construction sector, in NGO-talk and activism, and in the academia. This new concept quickly became highly contested: what should "affordable housing" mean? Who will benefit from it? Who is going to be responsible for it? And who is going to decide on these important issues? Tel Aviv was the first major city to pick up the challenge of affordable housing by seriously attempting to give meaning to the term "affordable housing," incorporating it into its planning and its strategic vision. These attempts were promoted and helped by academics, activists and local politicians, but were very quickly met with opposition from citizen groups, NGOs, members of the political opposition, and academics. The struggle over the meaning of "affordable housing," I argue in this paper, turned out to be a battle over the content and nature of urban citizenship in Israel in general and in Tel Aviv in particular. Debates about who should be entitled to such affordable housing were, in fact, about who owns the city and to whom it should belong. Who, then, should be the main beneficiaries of affordable housing: Migrant workers and asylum seekers? Young, Tel Aviv-born couples? Poor families from the Southern neighborhoods of the city? Or, perhaps, Arab-Palestinian families from Jaffa, who are at risk of being displaced due to gentrification? In addition, arguments about who determines the criteria for affordable housing—should it be the central government or the city itself, should it be done through private associations or only through public entities—stemmed from a disagreement over what urban citizenship means, how independent should it be from the national one, and how participatory should it be. Should urban citizenship be understood as augmenting the central-national one, or should it be articulated as being independent from it or even in opposition to it? As conflicts between the central planning authorities and those of Tel Aviv municipality evolved, it became clear that at stake was not merely the issue of affordable housing, but of the place local identities, priorities and communities should be given in contemporary Israel. The paper analyzes these various questions by examining municipal programs, legislative attempts, political discourse, NGO activities and academic discussions over affordable housing in Tel Aviv.

PAPER 3: Excluded Berlin: Housing at the Margins of Urban Citizenship, by Andrej Holm (Humboldt-University Berlin, Germany)

ABSTRACT: Berlin is internationally known as tenants' city (with only 14 percent of self used ownership) and housing was long time coined by a relaxed housing market. Since around 2005 we have to observe rising rent prices in most of Berlin's neighbourhoods and a strongly market driven allocation of housing. However, a rising competition to access to housing highlights structures of disadvantage beyond the economy. With examples of limited housing

access of Roma-families with restricted residence permit status, Turkish house seekers and households depending on social transfer the contribution will point out various kinds of discrimination. A lack of residence authorisation, kinds of racial discrimination and administrative restriction on housing will be interpreted as different shortfall of Urban Citizenship.

PANEL & WORKSHOP III)
PARTICIPATION IN URBAN POLITICS

PAPER 1: The Making of Partnership and 'Networked Experts'. Urban Renewal and Participation in Yaffo Gimmel, by Adriana Kemp and Galia Rattner (Tel Aviv University, Israel)

ABSTRACT The presentation deals with the notion of "partnership" amidst new liberal configurations of urban governance. Premised on ideas of participatory democracy and the centrality of public-private cooperation in the advancement of urban governance, partnership has emerged as a favorite child of public policy. Whereas much of the literature on partnership, critical and mainstream alike takes a functional view on the phenomenon, assuming the existence of possible partners and examining the modes wherein partnership functions, we shift our focus to the sociological labor involved in the formation of partnership and in its ongoing sustenance. Taking hue from an actor-network approach, our main question is what makes partnership happen and how? We draw on an ethnographic study of Yaffo Gimel, a low income neighborhood in Tel Aviv-Yaffo , in which the buildings – originally built by a public housing company – were declared "unsafe" by a municipal warrant. This allows us to analyze the transformation of coercive urban renewal projects into new forms of intervention that rely on the mediating and performative power of networks to constitute self-regulatory and disciplinary modes of urban participation and citizenship. Central to these new forms of intervention is the figure of the "networked experts" whose expertise lies in the ability to generate networks, bring in 'vehicular' ideas and broker collaborations with a variety of strange bedfellows constituencies.

PAPER 2: From Citizenship to Social Struggle. Participation Mechanisms as a Point of Reference for Protest and Self-Organization in Berlin, by Armin Kuhn (University of Potsdam, Germany)

ABSTRACT Within the renaissance of urban movements we saw in Berlin in the last years, local initiatives and social movement groups frequently took advantage of institutionalized participation mechanisms to enforce their claims. Especially petitions for a referendum are increasingly used to set their own demands on a public agenda, to achieve a wider legitimation and to build up political pressure on the city administration. Some of the biggest urban movement campaigns in the last years – the mobilization against the privatization and development of the spree river shore of Kreuzberg and Friedrichshain ("Mediaspree") and the struggle for a social and cultural centre in the squatted Bethanien, a former hospital in Kreuzberg 36 – show that the reference to participation mechanisms does not necessarily absorb urban movements into a disciplinarian logic of government constraints. The examples show that institutionalized participation mechanisms can be a starting point for a a grassroot mobilization that goes beyond the formulated demands – without ever being able to escape the danger of being coopted and contained.

PAPER 3: Be Berlin! Governing the City through Citizenship, by Stephan Lanz (Viadrina University Frankfurt/Oder, Germany)

ABSTRACT Based on the theoretical approach of the Governmentality Studies and on Nicolas Rose´s concept of "Government through citizenship", I will discuss some actual strategies of governing the urban space of Berlin. Understanding governance with Foucault as the contact point, "where the [way] individuals are driven by others is tied to the way they conduct themselves", I am especially interested in the question, how forms of political government within the actual dispositive of governing the city via cooperation procedures between public and private actors, relate to techniques of governing oneself. With the help of this theoretical approach, we can see how seemingly opposite political strategies and positions within actual political debates and conflicts in Berlin are basing on very similar principles: how, on the one hand, oppositional political strategies refer to official political programmatic and how, on the other hand, government and urban developers make use of ideas and urban imageries of oppositional groups.