Exploring socio-spatial disparities in Western and socialist cities
Theoretical challenges and empirical insights

Digital Workshop Nov. 20th 2020 organized by IRS Erkner

Socio-spatial disparities were a major point of interest in the early days of modern urban history research. Segregation of workers, upper classes, ethnic or religious minorities in different quarters of cities was regarded as a key indicator of social injustice and a trigger of class struggles in liberal capitalist societies. In the last two decades historians have developed new approaches which revise old ideas on the purely negative effects of socio-spatial segregation. In contrast the function of “arrival quarters” and socially homogenous quarters for the integration of immigrants is underlined. Moreover, we see that problems of socio-spatial disparities in Western welfare regimes and socialist cities have not yet been analysed in a comparative and comprehensive way from a cross-cultural perspective.

The workshop will explore urban social disparities in the late 20th century with a focus on two key problems of research:

1. Which theoretical approaches and methods do we have to describe socio-spatial disparities in Western welfare and in socialist cities and to critically evaluate them in a common conceptual framework?
2. Which fresh concepts and results of empirical research do we have which integrate dynamics of ethnicity, migration, gender etc. and the communicative and cultural dimensions of socio-spatial disparities and go beyond traditional approaches towards urban social segregation?

Program

10.00 Introduction
■ (Christoph Bernhardt IRS)

10.15 Theoretical approaches and concepts
■ Social Segregation after Class and Empire (Simon Gunn, CUH Leicester)
■ Socio-spatial disparities in socialist societies and cities (Christoph Bernhardt, IRS Erkner)
■ Disparities as Experience? How to reconstruct and interpret the perception of being left behind (Sebastian Haumann, TU Darmstadt)
■ Comment (Alexander Nützenadel, IfG Humboldt-University)

11.30 Empirical insights: Social disparities in European cities, late 20th c.
■ Central Arrival Quarters in 20th Century Post-War Urbanisation: Stockholm and Oslo (Hakan Forsell, Univ. Stockholm)
■ Socio-spatial disparities and ethnic boundary-making in mixed Albanian-Slavic cities of Socialist Yugoslavia (Pieter Troch, Univ. Ghent)
■ Tracing the Global Career of “Gentrification” in the late 20th Century (Christiane Reinecke, Univ. Osnabrück)
■ The Advocacy Planning and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States (Marianna Charitonidou, EZH Zurich)
■ Comment (Marjaana Niemi, Tampere)

13.00  Break

13.30-14.30  Internal Discussion on Session EAUH 2021, Special Issue etc.