

*CFP: Main Session M-POL-2 at the European Association of Urban History (EAUH)  
conference, Antwerp, 2–5 September 2020*

**Struggles for the City: Toward a History of Urban Social Movements (1800–present)**

We are looking for papers to join us in working towards a history of urban (social) movements during a three-hour session. Historians have recently turned their attention to the numerous urban struggles that erupted in the aftermath of the rebellious 1960s. In doing so, they offered important insights into the emergence of urban social movements. In particular, they showed that urban experiences, urban aesthetics, and urban space became central concerns for a young generation of social movements that began to forge new collective identities. From the set-up of community centers to the fight for architectural preservation to squatting, these movements, historians argue, developed strategies that epitomize a significant shift to post-material values and ideals. Yet by focusing on the second half of the twentieth century, historical research has given the impression that urban social movements somehow appeared out of the blue. The history of urban mobilization, in other words, lacks dramatically in historical depth.

Against this backdrop, our session looks into similarities and differences as well as continuities and discontinuities in the history of urban struggle from the “age of revolutions” to the “new” social movements in the long 1970s and their aftermath. We seek contributions that critically analyze specific aspects of struggle rather than detailed portrayals of historical urban movements. We are particularly interested in papers that either buttress or challenge the dichotomy of “old” and “new” social movements. We encourage contributors to reflect also on structural context—social, political, economic, and cultural—as this shall assist us in rethinking this dichotomy. Apart from establishing “objective” connections visible in urban movement practices, ideologies and representations of urban problems over time, this session also invites discussions over the “subjective” connections, i.e., particularly in the form of memory and historical references among urban movement activists. This shall facilitate the narration of a trans-generational history of urban movements that goes beyond the “old” and “new” dichotomy. Finally, we are very much interested in contributions that engage with practices of struggle, including analyses of the corporeal or spatial nature of contestation. Topics might include, for instance, the socio-demographic composition of movements, the ideological commitment of activists, the particular grievances they addressed or the demands they formulated. There will be no geographical restriction but papers on non-Western experiences as well as transnational, comparative or diachronic discussions are especially welcome.

All paper proposals (max. 300 words incl. title) must be submitted through the EAUH2020 website by 1 October 2019, <https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/conferences/eauh2020/papers/>. Please include also a short bio. When submitting your proposal please mark it for this session (M-Pol-2). The session is co-organized by José María Cardesín Díaz (A Coruña), Philipp Reick (Jerusalem), Mikkel Thelle (Aarhus), and Christian Wicke (Utrecht). Stefan Berger (Bochum) will function as Discussant. Please send all inquiries to [Philipp.Reick@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:Philipp.Reick@mail.huji.ac.il).