

# Who Owns the City? Dynamics of Urban Ownership in the 19th and 20th Centuries

**Veranstaltungsort** Antwerp University

**Termin** 02.09.2020 10:00 Uhr - 05.09.2020 21:30 Uhr

## Annual Conference of the European Association for Urban History at Antwerp University on September 2-5, 2019

This session investigates patterns of landownership and property rights in urban settlements across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Who owns our cities is a question that frequently resurfaces in academic and popular debate, from the anarchist writings by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon to the recent work of Saskia Sassen. The organization of ownership radically impacts residential, consumption and investment patterns, and ultimately shapes the layout and functioning of our cities. Employing an inclusive notion of ownership that surpasses judicial definitions, the aim of our session is to scrutinize how land claims and land grabs have influenced the physical and social fabric of cities inside and outside of the European continent. By extent, we are interested in the actors exercising ownership rights, their methods to support their claims, and the actors who disputed such claims.

The question of ownership matters as landowners influence how and where people live, work, play and travel. As land is a scarce resource, it endows its owners with power and wealth. Ultimately, it is they who decide how land and the structures on it get used. Because discussions over ownership usually take place behind closed doors and property rights do not always leave a physical imprint, urban historians working on the modern period have largely left the topic untouched. Heeding to the call in Richard Rodger's keynote lecture at the preceding EAUH conference, we invite historians of the modern period to add to a more comprehensive and multifaceted narrative of urban landownership.

## Contact

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Zur Veranstaltung (Link)

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