

Call for Papers:

Bridging the rent gap: New theoretical and empirical narratives

Land rent and rentier capitalism have made a strong return in economic geography and urban studies in recent years (Christophers, 2021; Clark and Pissin, 2020). However, there is a lack of grounded research, and even less on the Global South/East where 90% of the world's population lives and intensive land struggles are taking place on a larger scale.

In this special issue with *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* (TESG), we seek to enrich existing theories and diversify the geographical focus of the extant research on urban rent and rent gaps from – and in dialogue between – the Global North/West and Global South/East contexts. Specifically, we are interested in the following questions:

1. What constitutes land rent today, what does it represent for people, and what benefits and drawbacks it generates, and for whom?
2. To what extent land rent theory can, or cannot, travel beyond the Global North/West? How to differentiate land rent from other assets' values? Should we conceptualize new forms of land rent to understand global urbanization?
3. How is rent gap produced? And, what are the roles of public policies and state institutions? (e.g., tax-free areas, hyper densification, land value capture, triangular development, floating development rights, density bonuses, etc.)
4. To what extent theorizations of land rent and rent gap from outside the Global North/West can enrich existing theories, and perhaps more ambitiously, can help grapple with political and economic changes on the global scale in a relational and comparative way?

We welcome both theoretical reflections that responds to the limits of the extant literature, and empirically grounded case studies to operationalise and refine urban rent theories and rent gaps. We are particularly interested in contributions focusing on the Global South/East, to enable cross-case dialogues and comparisons beyond the dominant experiences of the Global West/North (Peck, 2015).

By bringing together “diverse and divergent accounts” of urban rent theories and rent gaps from different parts of the world, we hope that this special issue may jointly contribute to making the process of theory building on land rent and rent gap “more fragile and uncertain, and theory itself more unstable and less secure in its claims” (Robinson, 2011: 17) while expanding its theoretical scope, seeking to shake the political economy of capitalism up and reorganising critical theory itself (Slater, 2021).

Potential topics may include but not limited to:

- Definitions and redefinitions of rent and monopoly rent
- Land rent in the financialized economy
- Land rent in digital capitalism
- Current rentier land capitalism and classes, ideologies, and hegemonies
- Relational comparison on land: land grabbing, struggles, etc.
- Imaginaries of the global north/west related to land rent in the East/South
- Land de-commonalisation or forms of primitive accumulation
- Forms and experiences of land resistance, including counter-hegemonic/indigenous urban land regimes
- Land value capture and its different expressions in the Global South/East

- Land rent and gender divisions
- State-led national expansionism and land rent
- Land deregulation and expansive policies

Timeline of the Special Issue:

Submission of abstract: December 1st, 2021

Notification of acceptance: December 15th, 2021

Submission of first drafts to guest editors: May 2022

Feedback from guest editors: June 2022

Submission of paper to TESG: September 2022

Re-submission and final decision: late 2022

Abstract Submissions

Interested contributors should send an abstract (max 150 words) and a short bio (including name(s) of the author(s), affiliation, email address, country) to the guest editors Ernesto López-Morales (elopez@uchilefau.cl) and Yunpeng Zhang (yunpeng.zhang@kuleuven.be) until December 1st, 2021.

Abstracts will be jointly selected by the guest editors and the journal.

References

- Christophers, B. (2021) Mind the rent gap: Blackstone, housing investment and the reordering of urban rent surfaces. *Urban Studies*. DOI: 10.1177/00420980211026466
- Clark, E., & Pissin, A. (2020). Potential rents vs. potential lives. *Environment and Planning A*, 0308518X2097130. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X20971308>
- Peck, J. 2015. Cities beyond compare? *Regional Studies*, 49, 160-182.
- Robinson, J. (2011). Cities in a world of cities: The comparative gesture. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 35(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00982.x>
- Slater, T. (2021) *Shaking Up the City: Ignorance, Inequality, and the Urban Question*. University of California Press.