



Post-doctoral profile

Research framework

Work-Package: "Producing the ordinary city"

Heads:

Renaud LE GOIX: *Géographie-cités* (UMR 8504)

Antonine RIBARDIERE: Prodig : *Pôle de Recherche pour l'Organisation et la Diffusion de l'Information Géographique* [Research Unit for the Organization and Dissemination of Geographic Information] (UMR 8586)

Position description

"Exploring the ordinary public spaces in Greater Paris: uses and developments in the former red belt"

In the urban studies field, there is now an extensive body of research into public spaces. But where large cities are concerned, the majority of studies are still devoted to the most emblematic or central spaces (PADDISON and SHARP, 2007; BODNAR, 2015). The aim of this post-doctoral research is to gain a better understanding of the way in which urban public spaces are constructed and renewed in predominantly residential areas or secondary centers. The subject is all the more important as these spaces are, in turn, increasingly being caught up in the move towards metropolization, with a strong impact on urban forms, the social make-up of the neighborhoods and even urban practices, which can affect the openness and accessibility of public spaces (LOW, SMITH, 2006). Depending on the candidate's prior research experience, these processes may be analyzed through the prism of urban behaviors and practices, from the viewpoint of spatial planning and public policies, or at the interface of these aspects, for example by examining social and political regulations.

The politico-administrative and socio-spatial reconfigurations under way in Greater Paris and especially in the former red belt make it a particularly interesting terrain for exploring this issue. After undergoing sweeping economic, social and urban changes as a result of deindustrialization, the local working-class societies have given way to working-class neighborhoods characterized by economic insecurity (BACQUÉ, Fol, 1997 ; BACQUÉ, SINTOMER, 2002). Today these fringe suburbs



are still taking in large numbers of migrants and shanty towns are once more springing up. But as some neighborhoods go through a process of gentrification (RAAD, 2014), the search for attractiveness also seems to be gaining ground, in tandem with major urban planning projects involving several levels of government and private or para-public stakeholders. Against this backdrop, how are public spaces being rearranged? Are they simply reflecting the far-reaching changes in the city and in local societies? More importantly, are they a vector or even an instrument of change, for example by serving attractiveness policies or even private interests? Or, on the contrary, are they a means of resisting these changes, notably through the "working-class continuities" (GIROUD, 2007)?

The post-doctoral fellow will be expected to make both empirical and theoretical contributions to the research in progress within the Work-Package, on working-class neighborhoods and public spaces. Whatever the profile of the person hired, he/she will be expected to study public spaces on several scales and in their relationships with social and urban change. Paris's former red belt will be the main case study for this post-doctoral research. Comparisons with the standpoints of other major European cities, depending on the candidate's previous experience or centers of interest, will be welcomed.

References cited:

- PADDISON R., SHARP J. (2008), Questioning the end of public space: reclaiming control of local banal spaces, *Scottish Geographical Journal*, 132-2, 87-106.
- BACQUE M.-H., FOL S. (1997), *Le devenir des banlieues rouges*, Paris, L'Harmattan.
- BACQUE M.-H., SINTOMER Y. (2002), *Peut-on encore parler de quartiers populaires ?*, *Espaces et sociétés*, n°108-109, 29-46.
- BODNAR J. (2015), Reclaiming public space, *Urban Studies*, 52-12, 2090-2104.
- GIROUD M. (2011), *Usages des espaces rénovés et continuités populaires en centre ancien*, *Espaces et sociétés*, n°144-145, 37-54.
- LOW S., SMITH N. (2006), *The Politics of Public Space*, London/New York, Routledge.
- RAAD L. (2014), *Transformations sociales en banlieue rouge. Politiques locales, stratégies résidentielles et inscription territoriale des classes moyennes*, PhD thesis, Université Paris Diderot.

Planned collaborations

By investigating public spaces situated outside the most central and emblematic sites of metropolization, the uses and modes of production of which are seldom studied and are even rendered invisible, the above research proposal is fully coherent with the objectives of the "Producing the ordinary city" WP. As such, it will continue, and add a new reference to, a body of research on Paris's former red belt (the retail sector and retailers, public policies and governance) or, in a broader perspective, Greater Paris (cf. colloquia "*Inventer le Grand Paris. Regards croisés sur Paris et les métropoles*", for example) at the crossroads of a number of disciplines including geography, spatial planning and history.

The person hired will be hosted by the *Géographie-cités* laboratory and will receive its support for conducting the field survey. Within this laboratory, the post-doctoral fellow will fit into the overarching public-space research effort, which draws together different focus areas and different



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teams. Apart from a number of ongoing theses and projects, this collective enterprise is conducted within the framework of the public spaces forum, with a seminar on “Public spaces and mobility” co-organized with the MRTE laboratory (University of Cergy-Pontoise) and the LIAT laboratory (ENSA Paris-Malaquais). The post-doctoral fellow will support ongoing work on public spaces in Plaine Commune and in particular those surrounding the future train stations on the Grand Paris Express line. This support may take various forms, including field surveys, analysis of the materials gathered, and collective publications. He/she will also be asked to help organize seminar sessions or a one-day WP conference.

For the purposes of this post-doctoral research, the person hired will be able to draw on the collaborative partnerships forged in recent years with researchers at the *Université Paris Est* and the LabEx Urban Futures project, whether they are geographers, sociologists, urban planners or historians, to study urban change in Greater Paris, following on from a number of other projects (such as the Paris 2030 project, “*Faire ses courses dans le Grand Paris*” on shopping in Greater Paris).

Required skills and abilities

The candidate must hold a PhD, preferably in geography or spatial planning/urban planning, or in other social science disciplines (e.g. anthropology, sociology, contemporary history). He/she must have a sound knowledge of both social and urban issues in European cities and the literature on urban public spaces, and be able to reconcile empirical and conceptual research. A good command of qualitative research methods is required in order to conduct the field survey, along with research experience in the field of public spaces, either in the Paris region or in another major European city.

Additional information

Contract start date	Between 01/09/2018 and 01/12/2018
Length of contract	1 year
Post-doctoral fellow's supervisors (members of the WP making the request)	Antoine FLEURY and Sylvie FOL (UMR <i>Géographie-cités</i>)
Host laboratory	Laboratory name: UMR <i>Géographie-cités</i> Address: 13 rue du Four 75006 PARIS
Net monthly remuneration	Approx. €2,324



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Recommendations for the candidates:

Recruitment procedure and schedule:

The application must be submitted electronically by application form (<http://www.form-labex-dynamite.com/postdoc/en/>). It must demonstrate that the candidate fulfils the requirements indicated in the post-doctoral profile (specified tasks and skills). The application will include:

- a description of the research project (5 pages maximum) specifying the research-related issues, the methodology to be used, a feasibility report and project schedule ;
- a covering letter;
- a curriculum vitae;
- a list of publications with internet links (if available);
- the doctoral thesis (PDF version);
- the doctoral thesis defence report (not required for candidates having defended their thesis in a foreign country and for candidates having defended their thesis too recently. The latter will include a **letter confirming the forthcoming oral defence of the candidate's research thesis prior to 12 June 2018**);
- a copy of the doctoral degree (or certificate).¹

The deadline for the submission of applications is Sunday, April 22 2018 (inclusive).

For your information: when the deadline has passed, the LabEx Dynamite will contact the director of the host unit and will add one letter of invitation to the application.

The successful candidate following the assessment of the applications and interviews (which will take place during the week of 11 June 2018) will be informed of the results from 18 June 2018.

¹ The thesis must have been defended fewer than five years ago.