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SUB-DOMAIN: 6. SUSTAINABILITY OF THE CITIES

PANEL TITLE: CONTESTATIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS IN CITIES: QUESTIONS OF CULTURAL AND URBAN POLITICAL ECOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Cities are the public and personal spaces from ancient civilizations to medieval empires to contemporary metros. A hybrid network of social relationships occurs to meet the nitty-gritty of economic opportunities in the city. Access to infrastructure such as roadways, housing, schools/colleges; resources like clean/ample water, sanitation, health care, and green spaces have been central in determining social diversity and occupancy. The different stories of migrants revolve around culture, income, technology, and power relations. This leads to various social and political constructions of spaces/environment, infrastructure, resources, and sustainability of city spaces. Contestations in everyday practices over city resources and infrastructure are growing. This exemplifies the degree of negotiations made across various stakeholders through the prism of political economy and power politics. In this process, adaptations made are noteworthy. Developing countries with increasing population size compete over resources of everyday practices struggling for necessities such as water, sanitation, food and health care, housing, and amenities.

Against this backdrop, this panel seeks to situate everyday contestations and negotiations in cities using the lens of cultural and urban political ecology. The discussion will include the use & abuse of the spaces/resources; management of infrastructure; privatization; roles of different actors/agencies- government and non-government; food insecurity; pollution etc. The presenters are expected to focus on the questions of Scarcity, Access, and Management to answer: How cities have urbanized, featured, and evolved with the everyday crisis over resources? Who are the major players of power politics in urban lifestyle management? How does socioeconomic status reflect access to and control over facilities and resources? How to understand the channels of material flow or resources in urban areas to situate inequality and injustice?

Keywords: Cultural Ecology, Migrants, Power relations, Resources, Political Economy

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