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Architecture_MPS, University of Cyprus; Cyprus Institute

Abstract / Initial Proposal Form:

1. Paper / Proposal Title:

The Struggle for Public Housing in Israel and New Trajectories for Citizenship

2. Format: verbal presentation

Written paper / verbal presentation / screening / short film / other – please specify

3. Author(s) Name: Gal Levy

4. Email contact details: galle@openu.ac.il

5. University or Company Affiliation: The Open University, Israel

6. Abstract (300 words):

Popular political participation is undisputedly a major principle in modern democracies. Yet, its specific patterns, and moreover the particular directions it takes amongst non-middle class strata, leaves both liberals and Marxists perplexed. While the former expect disadvantaged groups to follow their universal message, the latter still awaits the working class to awake from its false consciousness. In recent decades, both of these ideological opponents seek to adapt their participatory models to better address the cultural/identity attributes of the marginalised hoping that this will deliver their emancipatory message better.

The social protest since late 2010 has shown a new trajectory in citizen participation that does not register with either tradition. That is, while not organising as a class-for-itself the marginalised also do not subscribe to a universal discourse of rights. By examining the struggle for public housing in Israel, I consider the role of these new forms of political participation and rethink how they challenge the liberal/Marxist dichotomy. The paper thus proposes new conceptual directions for the state-of-the-art theorisation of popular political participation.

7. Author(s) Biography (200 words maximum for all authors): _____

Gal Levy (BA, MA, TAU; PhD, LSE) is a senior teaching faculty & researcher at the Open University, Israel. Gal has published on the relationships between education, ethnicity, religion and citizenship in both Jewish and Palestinian societies in Israel. His chapter on Contested Citizenship of the Arab Spring and Beyond has been published in The Routledge Handbook of Global Citizenship Studies (edited by E. F. Isin and P. Nyers, 2014). Current research projects include alternative education in the Palestinian society in Israel, citizenship enactment in the Arab and Jewish societies, and urban citizenship and political activism since 2011. In recent years Gal has been involved in collaborative work with researchers from Cyprus (both Greek and Turkish) on education on conflict and citizenship in divided societies.

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