

Paper Titles and Abstracts

Kevin Brazil: "Schmerzespuren": W. G. Sebald and the Traces of Planned Violence.

In W. G. Sebald's *Austerlitz* (2001), London's most famous fictional architectural historian of recent years defined his task as bringing to light the 'Schmerzespuren' of the built world: the 'marks of pain...which trace countless fine lines through history'. This belief that architecture and the city are residues of previous acts of violence runs through Sebald's work: in his fictional and photographic explorations not only of London, but of Manchester, Paris, and Prague; or of railways stations, prisons, and concentration camps. One line which Sebald's work traces are the painful marks of colonialism, and this paper will draw out the relationship in Sebald's work between the violence of colonialism and the violence of architecture. Or rather, this paper will argue that Sebald's work proposes that the intertwined acts of colonial and architectural violence are never wholly experienced or understood by those who suffer them. Instead, like Austerlitz, we must respond, in the fictional imaginary, to the affective states of agony and fear generated urban space as the first step in responding to the real and actual history of planned violence: urban, colonial, or otherwise.

Bob Eaglestone: "You've got to answer to the guns of Brixton": Representations of Violence in South London.

Brixton has notoriously been seen as a site of violence, whether in the work of Linton Kwesi Johnson in the 70s or 80s, or in more recent fiction of Alex Wheatle or in popular culture ('The guns of Brixton'). The aim of this paper is to explore the changing varieties of the depiction of violence in 'migrant'/minority poets and novelists from the very extensive 1981 riots to the present day.

Matthew Feldman: From Conrad's 1907 to our 7/7: London bombings as a case study of "networks of support".

This paper commences by looking at the prescience of Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* which, despite its eloquent mastermind, depicts the attempted bombing of London by 'simple' Stevie. This approach to the dynamics of terrorism is in keeping with recent research on the vulnerabilities – psychological or otherwise – of radicalised extremists in the last generation. Yet more importantly, by focussing on London during these years, this presentation turns to two instances of terrorist bombings targeting London since 1999. In both cases, David Copeland and the 7/7 bombers, like Stevie, came from 'networks of support' that were not, *strictu sensu*, traditionally hierarchical, terrorist groups. In fact, distinguishing between latter groups like the IRA, and wholly self-radicalised lone-wolf terrorists like the US's Unabomber, this paper will argue, is the single most pressing issue facing the study of home-grown terrorism today.

Sarah Nuttall: *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis Revisited*.

In rethinking and extending work done several years ago on Johannesburg as 'elusive metropolis', the presentation will begin with some remarks about planning and violence: to what extent is urban planning key to the ways in which violence is calculated, and inflicted on certain categories of people? What forms of destruction and remaking do current conceptions of 'planning' involve? How does this play out in a context in which, more so than ever, the market, rather than the state, is the 'planner' of so much in the urban landscape. In the course of my presentation, I will discuss the move from speculation to renovation in Johannesburg, the ambiguities of finding common ground on the edge city, the task of building an 'open stage' for performance in this city, and the politics and poetics of infrastructure. The talk will draw on a range of work, including non-fiction, fiction and photography, to consider the multiple ways we might think about the both planning and infrastructure in the post-colonial city, across both South and North.

GJV Prasad: London in South Asian Eyes.

The imperial centre no doubt had its impact on its own residents but it also played a significant role in the imagination of the citizens of the colonies, even much after their independence. This paper will look at a couple of reactions of Indians visiting London during the Raj and at least one literary representation from after Indian independence to show how the colonised mind negotiated London.

Nicholas Simcik-Arese: A Sayaa and the "Deep State": Everyday conspiratorial subjects and metaphorical bureaucracy in Julie Mehretu's depictions of Tahrir Square, Cairo.

In her paintings "Mogamma", Julie Mehretu strives to represent the "grey" "thirdspace" of symbolic urban forums through a process of marking, layering and erasing. From the square, amidst the myths and martyrdoms that give Tahrir its political relevance as spectacle, emerge two ghosts of counter-revolution: the Sayaa – Egyptian vernacular for a street trickster in waiting - and the "Deep State" – a term used to describe the monolithic power of everyday administrative remnants from the Mubarak regime. This paper explores how Mehretu's emphasis on the telescopic complexity of sites of collective urban violence parallels the logic sustaining Egypt's conspiratorial tropes.

Iain Sinclair: Excavating the Overground: A Day's Walk Around London's Orbital Railway.

This talk will concentrate on what Iain has been uncovering, by way of a single day's walk, about the property speculation, retail colonialism and population cleansing around London's recently completed Overground railway. The talk serves as a reprise, on a more modest scale, on Iain's M25 project.

Jo Tyabji: Performing Structural Violence.

Physical violence, even when perpetrated behind closed doors, is visible, audible, recognisable. Further, visibility may be the aim, the perpetrator seeking recognition, whether in the eyes of their victim or a spectator. Structural violence is by definition embedded, invisible – indistinguishable from the quotidian social structures that shape the norms we live by. Performance can make the structures visible. The victim becomes the enactor, the spectator encounters the perpetrator – who is their self, met within a world both more stark and more mutable.

Roundtable Titles

Tom Cowan: OpenSecurity: examining cities as conceptualised, planned or contested sites of conflict, security or resistance.

Tonica Hunter: From top-down to bottom-up: changes in "literary" responses to the London 2011 riots.

Rosie Lavan: War and the Irish Town: Derry and Belfast, 1968-1972

James Whitfield: The Origins of Discord: Caribbean immigrants and policing in post-war London.