

# COMPARATIVE INFRASTRUCTURES

SOUTH AND NORTH

24-25 SEPTEMBER 2015 | ENGLISH FACULTY, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

This final 'Planned Violence' workshop will draw on the conceptual work of the Network's previous three meetings in London, Delhi and Johannesburg and gather their differing threads together in a final two-day discussion. As the word 'infrastructure' has been central to the project throughout, the workshop will reflect on what might actually constitute infrastructure, whilst further exploring the way in which the literary relates to the infrastructural. Can the literary sentence be configured as itself a form of infrastructure? Do post/colonial urban infrastructures shape the literary genres and forms emerging from those environments? Are these formal developments and emerging genres invested with a capacity to diagnose the structural violence ingrained into infrastructural space?

As the Network completes its movement from the Global North (London) to cities in the Global South (Delhi and Johannesburg) and back again (Oxford), this workshop will emphasise the importance of comparative study across and between these cities, as well as beyond, to other post/colonial urban environments such as those in China, Thailand and the US. The workshop will also turn its gaze on Oxford itself as a divided city and explore the planned violence of its university and non-university 'towns'. These comparative analyses of different urban contexts and manifestations of planned violence from across the globe will continue to be informed by the Network's overarching line of pursuit: the exploration of the relationship between literary and other cultural forms and different kinds of protest and resistance. To what extent can we draw continuities between planned violence in the South and the North? How can we learn from tactics of cultural resistance and patterns of literary experimentation and representation from the Global South even as we address methods of planned violence in the Global North, and vice versa?

## PROGRAMME

### Day 1: Thursday 24 September

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|----------------------|--|
| <b>9.00 - 9.30</b>   | <b>Registration and tea/coffee</b>   |
| <b>9.30 - 10.00</b>  | <b>Welcome and Introduction: Planned Violence in London, Delhi and Johannesburg</b><br>Elleke Boehmer, Dominic Davies, Pablo Mukherjee, Pamila Gupta |
| <b>10.00 - 11.00</b> | <b>Opening Keynote: Defining Infrastructuralisms</b><br>Michael Rubenstein, 'Infrastructuralism'<br>Pablo Mukherjee (chair)                          |
| <b>11.00 - 11.30</b> | <b>Tea/coffee</b>  |

**11.30 - 13.15 Panel 1: Literary Cities, Cultural Resistance**

Ole Birk Laursen, 'Indian Anti-colonial Nationalism and the Spectre of Anarchism'

Florian Stadtler, 'Indian popular cinema and Urban cityscapes – A Politics of Resistance?'

Louisa Layne, 'Sound systems and other systems: Urban aesthetic spaces in the work of Linton Kwesi Johnson'

Stuti Khanna, 'Crime and the Media: How a City's Meaning is Made'

Laura Marcus (chair)

**13.15 - 14.15 Lunch**

**14.15 - 16.00 Panel 2: Comparative Cities, South and North**

Loren Kruger, 'Edgy Cities South and North: Transnational Contexts for Comparing Johannesburg and Chicago'

Stephen Legg, 'The Space of the Mohalla: Political Mobilisation of and in Delhi's Urban Communities'

Pamila Gupta, 'Blue Johannesburg'

Terence Cave, 'China Miéville's Weird Collocations'

Edward Dodson (chair)

**16.00 - 16.30 Tea/coffee**

**16.30 - 17.30 Place-Hacking: Exploring the Global City**

Bradley Garrett

Dominic Davies (chair)

**17.30 - 18.00 Wine reception**

**18.00 - 19.00 Dramatic Performance: 'Alice and the Bag-Lady' (working title)**

Mandala Theatre Company (Artistic Director Yasmin Sidhwa and players)

**20.30 Workshop Dinner at Pierre Victoire, 9 Little Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX1 2HP**

**Day 2: Friday 25 September**

**9.00 - 9.30 Tea/coffee**

**9.30 - 10.30 Panel 3: Under Cities**

Sarah Harrison, 'Contingent Infrastructures: Waste, Violence and Community in Contemporary Mumbai'

Maurizio Marinelli, 'The Politics of Aesthetics and the Critique of Violence in Urban China: The Case of Tianjin between Past and Present'

Ankhi Mukherjee, 'Slums and the Postcolonial Uncanny'

Selma Dabbagh (chair)

**10.30 - 11.00 Tea/coffee**

- 11.00 - 12.30**    **Panel 4: Oxford as a Divided City**
- Stephen Tuck, 'The Student Campaign for Open Housing'  
Will Ghosh, 'Thames Valley Royal'  
Georg Deutsch, 'The Aesthetics of Greed: A Short History of the Castle Mill Debacle in Oxford'  
Elleke Boehmer and Dominic Davies, 'Oxford's Planned Violence: A Photo Essay'  
Louisa Layne (chair)
- 12.30 - 13.30**    **Lunch**
- 13.30 - 15.00**    **Panel 5: Postcolonial Northern Cities: Practice and Performance**
- Corinne Fowler, Divya Ghelani and SuAndi: 'Landmarks: Literary Interventions into Britain's Postcolonial, Post-Industrial Spaces'  
Ruvani Ranasinha (chair)
- 15.00 - 15.30**    **Tea/coffee**
- 15.30 – 16.00**    ***Isolarion*: Walking the Cowley Road**
- James Attlee
- 16.00 - 16.45**    **Closing Plenary: Future Archaeologies of Planned Violence**
- Elleke Boehmer, Dominic Davies, Pablo Mukherjee, Ruvani Ranasinha, Alex Tickell
- 16.45 - 17.30**    **Cowley Road Walk**
- 17.30 - 19.00**    **Reading and Live Music Performance at Art Bar, The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford, OX4 1UE**
- Kei Miller  
James Attlee and Nonstop Tango