

RE-INVENTING THE POSTCOLONIAL (IN THE) METROPOLIS

Call for Papers

24th Annual GNEL / ASNEL Conference
Chemnitz University of Technology
09 – 11 May 2013

Convener: Prof. Dr. Cecile Sandten

Keynote Speakers:

AbdouMaliq Simone, Professor of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London
Amit Chaudhuri, Professor in Contemporary Literature, University of East Anglia
Husain M. Naqvi, award-winning author of the novel *Home Boy*, Karachi
Rolf J. Goebel, Professor of German, University of Alabama in Huntsville

The notion of the postcolonial metropolis has gained prominence in the past two decades, both within and outside of postcolonial studies. However, fields such as sociology and urban studies have tended to focus on the economic inequalities and class disparities, among other structural and formative aspects of the postcolonial metropolises, which are specific to Western conceptions of the city at large. If metropolises are seen as structured and ordered signs of Western civility and modernity, postcolonial cities are often dubbed as, albeit dismissively, 'megapolises' of 'excess' and 'overpopulation' that lack proper order or parameters. It is only recently that postcolonial metropolises have come into limelight in the writings of Suketu Mehta, Chris Abani, Amit Chaudhuri, Salman Rushdie, Aravind Adiga, Helon Habila, Sefi Atta, Zakes Mda, Zoë Wicomb, among others. Most of these works attempt to probe urban specificities, that is, the physical and cultural topographies of postcolonial cities, while highlighting their agential capacities in defying, appropriating, and abrogating the superimposition of both Western urbanity and urbanism. To that end, Bill Ashcroft's notion of 'transnation' (not to be confused with 'transnationalism') argues that cities in the postcolonial world often serve as transcultural hubs for intra-national, internal diasporic tensions and contentions. Similarly, Paul Gilroy's thesis on 'conviviality' appeals for poly-cultural configurations of Western topography (cities in particular) that are shaped by new waves of immigrants and diaspora. As a number of postcolonial critics have argued, both city and metropolis are Western metaphors and conceptions that cannot articulate the complex constellations of postcolonial spaces of modernity and urbanity. In light of these challenges, the conference provides a platform to reflect upon the themes that address, but are not restricted to:

- Theorizing the postcolonial metropolis
- Palimpsest, metroglorification, "diffuse urbanism"
- Literary and linguistic representations of urban space
- Cinematographic representations: The postcolonial metropolis and the moving image
- Imaging the postcolonial metropolis: Photography, digital art, graphic novel, music
- Architecture, urban space and identity formation(s)
- Colonial legacies: Memory, diaspora and the postcolonial metropolis
- 'Postcolonialization' of the European metropolis
- Re-mapping postcolonial metropolitan topography: Slums, financial hubs and cultural centres
- Globalization and capitalism: Re-configuring postcolonial metropolitan spaces as transnational market places
- Re-conceptualizing of gender and sexuality in urban space
- Juxtaposing or fusing rural landscape and urban cityscape
- Crime and underworld in the postcolonial metropolis
- Flânerie and the postcolonial metropolis
- Festival cultures and the postcolonial metropolis
- From indigenous environment to urban slum dwelling?

Please send abstracts of papers (20 minutes, 200 words), poster presentations, proposals for contributing to the teachers' workshop, or suggestions for the presentation of work in progress to: gnel2013@tu-chemnitz.de or

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For more information please visit www.tu-chemnitz.de/gnel2013.

The call for papers will close on 22 February 2013.

Speakers at the ASNEL conference from Austria, Germany and Switzerland are required to apply for ASNEL membership and pay their membership dues before they can be included in the conference programme. This does not apply to keynote speakers and other invited speakers, to representatives beyond Postcolonial, English or American Studies, and participants of the Under Construction workshops (for details see www.gnel.de).