



SOAS
University of London



**Citizen Academia Network (CAN) Workshop
20 September 2014**

Venue: SOAS, University of London, Brunei Gallery (Room B111)
Organisers: Dr. Rita Sakr and Professor Caroline Rooney (University of Kent)
Dr. Karima Laachir (SOAS Centre for Cultural, Literary and
Postcolonial Studies)

Walls, Barricades, Borders, Gates: Political Negligence and the Twenty-First-Century City

Conference Rationale

This interdisciplinary workshop will bring together experts in the study of the cultural, political, historical, and social dynamics of the twenty-first century urban environment, especially in the MENA region and Europe. It will draw on the participants' expertise regarding *the state of the 'citizen' in the politically negligent state* and the outlook for activist, resistant practices of border-transgressing citizenship as well as community-led campaigns for socio-economic empowerment and inclusivity. In this respect, the workshop will examine the impact of territorial markers and borders on the construction and destruction of urban communities and the implications of these continued transformations for security discourses and practices. Some of the questions that can be raised in this context include:

In the multicultural, multi-faith city, who is the Citizen?

In the city of settlements, refugee centres, and prisons, what defines Security?

In the city of multiple flags, what is the significance of a neighbourhood?

In the city of gated communities and council estates, where is the Playground?

In the city of police stations and corporate buildings, what is Civil Disorder?

In the city of graffiti-sprayed and bullet-ridden walls, what is Resistance?

In the city of police checkpoints and protest barricades, what is Street Life?

In the city of tear gas and suicide bombs, what is Political Violence?

Between the suburb and the slum, where is the City?

...and among the various challenges to sustainable urban life, how can community leaders, architects, urban planners, activists, artists, and others contribute to countering political negligence with urban vigilance and creativity?

Conference Programme

9.30 a.m. Registration (coffee/tea)

9.45 Welcome and introduction

10.00-11.00. First panel: ***Re-imagining Istanbul*** (Chair: Karima Laachir)

Keya Anjaria (SOAS): 'Mapping Contested Identity in 21st Century Istanbul'

Sefik Huseyin (SOAS): 'De-Orientalising Orientalist & Ottomanist Discourses of Istanbul's Space'

11.00-11.30 Tea/coffee break

11.30-1.00. Second panel: **Contesting Occupation and the Wall** (Chair: Caroline Rooney)

Sophia Brown (University of Kent): 'Waiting in line at Qalandia checkpoint: disputing dispossession through everyday journeys'

Wendy Pullan (University of Cambridge): 'In the Shadow of the Wall: What makes Jerusalem's Separation Barrier possible?'

Glenn Bowman (University of Kent): 'Urbicide: Encystation and the Attempted Murder of Arab Jerusalem and its Suburbs'

1.00-2.00 Lunch

2.00-3.00. Third panel: *Image, Violence, and the City* (Chair: Rita Sakr)

Sonja Mejcher-Atassi (American University of Beirut): 'Images of Resistance'

Liam Kennedy (University College Dublin): 'On Photography, Violence and Conflict'

3.00.3.15 Tea/coffee break

3.15-4.45. Fourth panel: *Migration, Inequality, and the Margins of the City* (Chair: TBA)

Geetha Creffield (Goldsmiths): 'Singapore: Who Owns What? Foci on Governmentality, Polity and Migrant Performativity in the Global City'

Rita Sakr (University of Kent): 'Re-*Transit Beirut*: Diasporic, Refugee, and Other Spaces'

Fran Tonkiss (LSE): 'Crossing Urban Borders'

4.45-5.15 Tea/coffee break

5.15-6.45. Fifth panel: *Public Space and Agency* (Chair: TBA)

Walid El Hamamsy (University of Cairo): 'Middle Eastern Popular Culture and the Shifting of Cultural Borders'

Charles Tripp (SOAS): 'Battlefields of the Republic: cities, public space and public agency'

Kim Knott (University of Lancaster): The (non)negotiability of sacred spaces

7.30 Dinner (Conference Dinner)

For registration: Please contact Dr Rita Sakr (R.Sakr-519@kent.ac.uk)

Registration Fee: Full Fee £20.00 (including lunch and tea/coffees); Students' and Discount Fee: £10.00