



University of  
**Nottingham**

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## **Spaces of Occupation Workshop**

**27 May 2019**

**Kuala Lumpur Teaching Centre**

**University of Nottingham Malaysia**

# Programme

## Registration and Coffee (9:00-9:15)

## Welcome Remarks (9.15-9:30)

Dr. David Baillargeon (University of Nottingham)

## Keynote Address, Q&A (9:30-10:30)

Professor Carolyn Cartier (University of Technology Sydney). “The Problematic of Space in State Strategic Practices, or Why Foucault Abandoned Territory”

## Coffee/Tea

### Panel A. Urban Occupation (10:45-12:15)

**Chair: Dr. Gaik Cheng Khoo (University of Nottingham Malaysia)**

- (i) Dr. Mujtaba Ali Isani (University of Muenster). “Power in Urbanized Cities under Occupation”
- (ii) Dr. Vanessa Hearman (Charles Darwin University). “Under Indonesian Occupation: The City of Dili and the East Timorese Clandestine Youth”
- (iii) Dr. Christine Kim (Georgetown University). “Memory Palaces: Colonial and Military Occupations of Korea’s Royal Residences”
- (iv) Dr. Ian Morley (Chinese University of Hong Kong). “The 1905 Manila Plan and Report: The Reform of Philippine Civilization and the Displacement of the Law of the Indies for the City Beautiful”

## Lunch

### Panel B. The Boundaries of Occupation (13:15-14:45)

**Chair: Dr. Russell Skelchy (University of Nottingham)**

- (i) Dr. Kris Alexanderson (University of the Pacific). “Occupation at Sea: Rethinking the ‘In-Between’ Spaces of Empire”
- (ii) Dr. Yi Li (Aberystwyth University). “Maliwun: The Great Colonial Tin Mine in Southern Burma That Never Was”
- (iii) Dr. Vishvajit Pandya and Dr. Madhumita Mazumdar (Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technology). “Replacement, Displacement and Confinement: Colonial Occupation and the Politics of Space in the Andaman Islands”
- (iv) Dr. Tan Miao Ing (University of Malaya). “The ‘Unruly’ Space: Tanjong Piandang, a Pirates’ Haven to a Fishing Village”

## Coffee/Tea

**Panel C. The Science of Occupation (15:00-16:30)**

**Chair: Dr. Jeremy Taylor (University of Nottingham)**

- (i) Greeshma Justin John (University of Hyderabad). “Spatialities of Cleanliness in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Malayali Society”
- (ii) Joanna Lee (Monash University). “To Mine, or Not to Mine, That is the Question: Conflicting Modes of Colonial Occupation in British Malayan Economic Activities, 1874-1895”
- (iii) Abhishek Nanavati (Georgetown University). “Salads & Space: How Hydroponic Farms Shaped U.S Military Occupations in East Asia, 1945-1972”
- (iv) Varsha Patel (University of Kassel). “Reconfiguring Space: British Military Dairy Farms and Cattle in the Mysore Princely State in South India, 1900-1947”

**Break**

**Final Discussion. Considering Spaces of Occupation (16:45-17:45)**

**Conference Dinner, Location TBD  
(for presenters and panel chairs)**

## Abstracts

**Kris Alexanderson (University of the Pacific)**

*Occupation at Sea: Rethinking the “In-Between” Spaces of Empire*

During the interwar period, European occupation in Asia did not exist solely within the geographic confines of the colony, but rather traversed the “in-between” spaces of the world’s oceans. The Dutch colonial administration in particular viewed oceans as dangerous spaces capable of disrupting imperial power and feared the contiguous waters surrounding the Indonesian archipelago served as a conduit for both the arrival of anti-colonial sentiments and the departure of anti-colonial activists. Indeed, throughout the early twentieth-century, the transoceanic world became a space where increasing numbers of colonial subjects, maritime laborers, and other passengers used their global mobility to challenge terrestrial forms of imperial control outside the enforceable systems of dominance available to Dutch authorities within the terrestrial confines of Indonesia.

The maritime world was an important “site” of occupation during the last decades of European occupation in Southeast Asia, as the sea became a realm of both surveillance and subversion, of policing and transgression from the late 1920s until the Japanese occupation of 1942. Ships were sites where colonial struggles played out, where the Dutch government and shipping companies attempted to maintain hegemony outside the geographic confines of the colony and metropole through a web of control—including policing structures onboard, close collaboration with surveillance entities in port cities ashore, and racialized onboard hierarchies meant to “teach” passengers and maritime laborers their expected place within the hierarchies of the Dutch Empire. The ship became a colonial classroom meant to reinforce the Dutch ideals of racial hegemony to globally mobile colonial subjects, workers, and other maritime actors outside the confines of the terrestrial empire. Maritime-based intelligence reveals how extra-national events affected colonial surveillance projects and ultimately defined the struggles over Dutch colonial power in Asia. This paper provides a more complicated history of European occupation in Asia by removing anti-colonial struggles from the nation-state and inserting them into a transoceanic arena.

**Carolyn Cartier (University of Technology Sydney)**

*The Problematic of Space in State Strategic Practices, or Why Foucault Abandoned Territory*

In a 1967 lecture, before the globalisation of late capitalism that would make ‘space’ the keyword of the poststructuralist shift in social theory, Foucault contrasted what he called ‘the great obsession of the nineteenth century’ – history (of course) – with ‘the present epoch’, ‘above all the epoch of space’. A decade later, at the Collège de France, his course, ‘Security, Territory, Population’, indicated forthcoming treatment of the subject. Yet in lecture four, Foucault revised the content away from the pivotal word. He walked in said, ‘Basically, if I had wanted to give the lectures I am giving this year a more exact title, I certainly would not have chosen “security, territory, population.” What I would really like to undertake is something that I would call a history of “governmentality”’. Just like that, ‘governmentality’ replaced ‘territory’. Yet in Foucault’s redirection, we can locate a larger set of questions in geographical thought and

differences in ideas about space and territory in historical geography. In the problematic of space, the subject of territory is one category or type of space. The empirical discussion draws on state strategic practices in colonial and contemporary China and India, including boundary relocation exercises, uses of water bodies to shape occupation, the declaration of non-existent cities, and vectors of territorialisation without boundaries.

**Vannessa Hearman (Charles Darwin University)**

***Under Indonesian Occupation: The City of Dili and the East Timorese Clandestine Youth***

Writers, scholars and tourists have portrayed the city of Dili in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries as a sleepy backwater representative of the long years of neglect synonymous with Portuguese colonisation of the eastern part of the island of Timor. This paper discusses the transformations wrought to the city of Dili, now the capital of the independent republic of Timor-Leste, following the advent of the Indonesian occupation (1975-99) of East Timor. Specifically, it investigates how the youth clandestine movement used the urban landscape to resist the Indonesian occupation and to defend themselves against the repressive occupying army. This paper is part of a larger project examining life for a group of clandestine youth in the mid-1990s in Dili and how spatial features of the city under occupation played a large part in the way they experienced the city. Dili was a simultaneously menacing place as well as a site replete with possibilities for clandestine work. It draws on interviews, memoirs and government reports about the conditions of life in this city.

**Mujtaba Ali Isani (University of Muenster)**

***Power in Urbanized Cities Under Occupation***

Urban militarized zones constitute particularly fertile sites for inquiry for spaces under occupation for two reasons: first, multiple, distinct logics are on clear display in the same relatively contained physical space, representing the complicated layering of power relationships in which the human body is implicated, but infrequently examined. The palpable, observable power relationships-police at checkpoints, military personnel at perimeters, caravans of armored vehicles-allow for a layering of politicized interactions that might not be readily apparent in “peacetime” cities. By looking at extreme cases-urban spaces under duress and the modes of control and resistance that are practiced therein- I can detect examples of power which may be present and relevant in other places, but less readily observable. Second, sophisticated, military-derived technologies are more likely to be prevalent and in operation in conflict or high-risk zones.

Islamabad, Pakistan: Islamabad may not, at first glance, appear to be a militarized city given the contemporary options of Kabul, Baghdad, or any number of cities in Syria, yet the security environment in Islamabad represents a paradigmatic case of Grahams' new military urbanism, as Pakistani armed forces patrol the streets of the capital alongside police and private security details. Islamabad's urban fabric, furthermore, offers a number of enticing sites for critical engagement: first, the city is divided into highly segregated, numbered blocks, the entry and egress to which are overseen by guards at checkpoints-bounded landscapes which might serve as useful sites; second, there is a large diplomatic corps with an equally large, often foreign, security force. The needs of this powerful sector are visible through attendant spatial features and

technologies, and their presence is ubiquitous in many security-related government institutions, whether as instructors, observers, or liaison officers. Thus, Islamabad represents in a single urban space fruitful opportunities for the examination of a variety power phenomena: its micro-borders within the city limits allow for an examination of dynamics surrounding structured interactions between the state and its citizenry.

**Greeshma Justin John (University of Hyderabad)**  
*Spatialities of Cleanliness in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Malayali Society*

This paper attempts to understand the cultural impact of British colonial occupation in south Asia by charting the socio-spatial consequences of modern cleanliness in 20th century Malayalam-speaking regions of southern India. If race is a key frame to understand the introduction of modern cleanliness in colonised regions, this paper will highlight the specifics of caste in investigating its subsequent spread in the indigenous society. Caste, which had been the primary framework of indigenous society, was also a spatial order which demarcated symbolic and corresponding material spaces on the basis of the principle of purity/ *shudham*. From late-19th century onwards, colonial state interventions in the form of modern medicine, sanitary reforms and modern education introduced a series of material and spatial practices that unfolded in sites ranging from the corporeal to the domestic to that of public spaces. In early 20th century Malayalam region, modern sensibilities of cleanliness blended with caste principles of purity, in turn shaping Malayali society's relationship with the existing social and material spaces of caste. The resulting set of spatialities, rather than displacing existing hierarchies in early 20th century, became entangled with them in complex ways. Thus, the emerging, modern spatial practices would be coterminous with existing spatialities of caste while also transforming them. These processes gave rise to spatial regimes which shaped Malayali's perception of the 'self' and 'other' in the decades to come. The arguments will be demonstrated by taking into account different kinds of spatialities as represented in colonial documents and indigenous writings ranging from opinion pieces in periodicals, advertisements, advice manuals and autobiographical narratives.

**Christine Kim (Georgetown University)**  
*Memory Palaces: Colonial and Military Occupations of Korea's Royal Residences*

This paper focuses on the uses of Seoul's royal palaces in the twentieth century to examine the redefinition of urban space and identities of Koreans under Japanese colonial rule and U.S. military occupation. As sites that were inextricably identified with the Chosŏn dynasty, Seoul's five palaces were re-purposed by colonial and later occupation authorities to introduce new cultural and social patterns to the city, resulting in significant changes to the everyday lives of the urban residents.

As part of Japan's imperial project, Seoul's formerly cloistered palace grounds were opened up to the public in a manner resembling early Meiji Japan's use of prominent Tokugawa edifices in Tokyo. Less than five years into colonial rule, Seoul/Keijō could boast of modern cultural institutions epitomizing the spirit of "civilization and enlightenment" such as a zoo, botanical garden, and museum (Ch'anggyōng Palace); an elementary school for the colonial elite (Kyōnghūi); and an industrial exhibition space (Kyōngbok); a public park (Ch'angdōk) and fine

arts museum (Tōksu) were subsequently added. Following the end of Japanese rule, the U.S. military requisitioned many of these to promote a “democratic” vision of Korea, putting them to use to host classical music concerts, dance performances, and a national museum for the newly liberated population.

This paper builds upon recent studies by Hong Sunmin, Son Chōngmok, Se-Mi Oh, Todd Henry, and others that have engaged with perspectives on colonial modernity, urban planning, and national identity in Korean history. It focuses not just on changes to the physical structures of the royal edifices, but to the new social, or lived, experiences that they provided. Ultimately it seeks to chart how the experience of visiting the former palace grounds became a recreational activity that was incorporated into the everyday lives of (urban) Koreans, ultimately eroding the mystique of and reverence towards the former royal house.

**Joanna Lee (Monash University)**

*To Mine, or Not to Mine, That is the Question: Conflicting Modes of Colonial Occupation in British Malayan Economic Activities, 1874-1895*

Of all the mineral reserves on the Malay Peninsula, tin was by far the most common and lucrative. Correspondingly, when the beginnings of British rule in 1874 coincided with the second industrial revolution’s clamour for tin, the Peninsula’s rich tin-fields rapidly became the bedrock upon which its colonial government was raised. Tin-mining was central to economic progress, yet in tracing the works of various administrators, we find many agitating for agricultural development instead.

In this paper, I examine how these economic activities in British Malaya inspired conflicting perceptions about land usage and, by extension, the type of colonial occupation that should occur. Colonists imposed disparate meanings onto the Peninsula’s landscape and people as they struggled to reconcile incompatible social, economic, and intellectual motivations. Reading examples from public and political texts, I argue that perceptions of mining and agriculture were influenced by two frameworks: that of what constituted the ‘ideal’ colonial society, and the picturesque aesthetic.

For the former, the British viewed mining with ambivalence due to its finite resources and unruly Chinese mine-workers, who were hardly ideal settlers. Contrastingly, agriculture provided both sustainable revenue and a seemingly more docile population in the form of Indian migrants, or Malay peasants. Simultaneously, colonists influenced by the picturesque aesthetic idealised the Peninsula as a more primitive social and physical space, still unravaged by industrialisation. Administrators familiar with the industrialised metropole represented British Malaya as part of a rural, pristine periphery, thus casting these two places as dichotomies of a terrible modernity and paradisiacal past. The British were therefore torn between wanting to ‘improve’ the Peninsula via economic development, while also preserve and protect it.

By foregrounding the roles of these ambivalent perceptions in colonial geographies, this paper hopes to contribute elements of cultural and intellectual history into present British Malayan environmental historiographies.

**Yi Li (Aberystwyth University)**

***Maliwun: The Great Colonial Tin Mine in Southern Burma That Never Was***

This paper looks at the case of Maliwun, a village on the Burmo-Siamese border with rich tin deposit, in the late nineteenth century. When the East India Company annexed southern Burma after the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-26), Calcutta took a keen interest in Burma's mineral wealth on the Tenasserim coast, pondering its commercial contribution to the imperial market. A special attention was paid to Maliwun, where tin deposit with great potential was located. Indeed, the same tin belt, extending southwards through the Malay Archipelago, would soon change the natural and social landscape in British Malaya and southern Siam. The curious thing, however, is that while in places such as Perak, Phuket, Ranong and Bangka, successful mining operations and steady output were ensured, Maliwun remained a disappointment for waves of investors and miners from the West and the East. What was more frustrated is the fact that, from geography to climate, from British policies and practices to Chinese capitals and labourers, almost everything necessary in the production line was apparently identical in Maliwun, yet it just did not happen. What was it that made Maliwun so difficult and different? Although a satisfying conclusion is yet to be reached, this paper presents a fascinating story of Maliwun in an intra-regional and inter-colonial context, and traces multiethnic actors' involvement in transforming a jungle frontier to a modern, profitable, and industrial site (or the failure of it).

**Ian Morley (Chinese University of Hong Kong)**

***The 1905 Manila Plan and Report: The Reform of Philippine Civilization and the Displacement of the Law of the Indies for the City Beautiful***

With the signing of the Treaty of Paris in late-1898 administration of the Philippines switched from Spanish to American hands. In the years following this watershed the American colonial government fundamentally restructured the nature of local society via passing thousands of laws so that, for instance, the national economy could be enlarged, road, rail, and bridge infrastructure implemented, public education promoted, standards of public health elevated, *and* towns and cities redesigned.

Central to the process of reshaping the Philippine built fabric was the American architect-planner Daniel Burnham who, after visiting the Philippines in late-1904/early-1905, imported City Beautiful planning rationality. Helping diminish the built vestiges of Spanish colonialism the application of the City Beautiful model helped reshape both the physical form and meaning of urban places: as an outcome they were to take on a modern character for the first time.

In this paper an overview of Burnham's 1905 plan for Manila, the keystone in America's aspiration to restructure Philippine urban places, is given. Utilising digital humanities tools an appraisal of Burnham's 1905 Manila report *as a literary document* will be tendered: this helps to identify how the text, whether intentional or not, spoke of Philippine cultural evolution. Given Theodor Adorno recognized that to think of societal administration is to think of cultural change, and to think of cultural change is to likewise think of societal administration, such line of reasoning has pertinence owing to Burnham's Manila scheme being devised to help facilitate efficient governance in conjunction with the display of the prestige of the American colonial regime and the modernization of Philippine civilization. Thus, drawing reference to grand



roadways, vista, new public spaces, as well as the instigation of new monuments and secular celebrations, a fresh understanding of how Burnham's 'New Manila' articulated the evolution of Philippine society under American supervision will be presented.

**Abhishek Nanavati (Georgetown University)**

***Salads & Space: How Hydroponic Farms Shaped U.S Military Occupations in East Asia, 1945-1972***

Through the occupations of Japan (1945-52), Okinawa (1945-72), and South Korea (1945-48), the United States military attempted to create its own biosphere—an ideal environment that was tuned to a “modern American” constitution—within Korean, Japanese, and Okinawan ecosystems. The U.S. Army used cutting-edge technology to overcome perceived environmental barriers, produce “hygienic, morale-building” vegetables, and offer its growing forces a familiar diet. The housing of U.S. personnel elucidates two concurrent processes. First, the endeavor to create hermetic, little “American” colonies, with familiar lifestyles. Second, the effort to create something entirely abstract and universal: a transposable urban future—transplantable farms linked to transferable suburban homes—whose formula for a “comfortable” life was theoretically useable anywhere in the world.

Military installations are often characterized as independent islands, or “Little Americas,” isolated from surrounding environments. These supposedly self-enclosed bubbles, however, were not completely divorced from the local environment nor the partisan perceptions of their builders. By tracing the how military planners conceived of the East Asian ecological landscape, I show how their idea of “contamination” affected the physical environment and food supply of the occupation. Moreover, rather than focus simply on architects and urban planners, I look at how other experts, military engineers, medical officers, sanitation specialists, and nutritionists, played roles in shaping occupation spaces and lifestyles within them.

This story combines military and environmental history with a history of nutrition through the use of hydroponic farms to field fresh salad vegetables. It is an on-the-ground account linking historiographies of occupation, cultural expressions of hygiene, and agricultural history. Moreover, it ties the military-base-as-colonial-outpost to a fear of “occupied” land—as soil and as the terrain of the colonized subject. The creation of occupied “Others” or colonized bodies happened not only in bars and brothels, labor relations and status of forces agreements, but even in something as everyday as the provisioning of food. Lastly, it provides a case study to advance our understanding of the manipulation of natural and built environments in the expanding “informal” American military empire after World War II. This paper is part of my broader dissertation, which contributes to the burgeoning, interdisciplinary field on the fraught cultures and power relations of the American system of global military bases.

**Vishvajit Pandya and Madhumita Mazumdar (Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technology)**

*Replacement, Displacement and Confinement: Colonial Occupation and the Politics of Space in the Andaman Islands*

In 1789, when the earliest British colonizers landed on the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal they saw it as ‘terra nullius’ or empty space with bands of ‘savages’ ‘prowling’ and ‘dancing’ over what was seen as a Rousseauesque landscape, free from societal constraint, private property and law.

With British occupation fully established by 1858 the colonizers saw the incomprehensible savages as objects of ‘scientific’ curiosity to be observed, captured and tamed for further study. But the larger project of colonial occupation in the Andaman Islands followed a ‘settler colonial’ logic that demanded the colonization and settlement of the land with people outside and the forced containment if not ‘annihilation’ of the Islands’ indigenous people. The colonial project was sustained in the post-colonial times too through the same idea that the Andamans was empty space that had to be filled by ‘disciplined natives’ or mainland India’s ‘excess populations’ who would transform the tropical forest to crop yielding plantations and farming fields.

While this part of the story of the colonial occupation and settlement of the Andaman Islands has been told, what is left mostly unaddressed is the story of the pre-colonial Islands, as a ‘culture zone’ defined by distinctive livelihoods, languages and cosmologies of hunter-gatherer groups. These groups though marked by individual cultural attributes moved along the North South Axis of the Islands and maintained complex relations of communication and exchange between themselves. With the expansion of the penal settlement in Port Blair located in the southern parts of the Islands this practice of intra-group relations became jeopardized and finally eroded. Earlier relations of exchange crumbled and hostility between groups within the “culture zone” intensified. The logic of settler colonial occupation targeted those very spaces of exchange and communication between the hunter-gatherer groups that had sustained them over centuries.

This paper builds on both conventional archival records and ‘ethno historical accounts’, to draw attention to the colonial ‘spatial political economy’ and its implications for the Andaman Islanders for whom the historical experience of colonial occupation, presents a process of displacement, replacement and ultimately confinement in ‘reserves’ defined by the post colonial state. It tries to understand how the spatial logic of occupation that worked through the severance of zones of exchange destroyed an entire cultural zone, decimated the bulk of its inhabitants and rendered them irredeemably ‘vulnerable’. The paper tries to conclude that any easy description of the Andaman Islanders as a people, ‘frozen in time’ with no history of their own or relations between themselves or ‘outsiders’ is both fatuous and untenable. With its particular historical framing of the nature and implication of colonial occupation this paper tries to put perspective to the recent public debates on the Sentinel Islanders and their alleged killing of an unwelcome ‘outsider’.

**Varsha Patel (University of Kassel)**

***Reconfiguring Space: British Military Dairy Farms and Cattle in the Mysore Princely State in South India, 1900-1947***

This paper explores the theme of cultures of occupation from the vantage point of cultural practices associated with dairy farms and slaughter houses that accompanied the British empire in India around the turn of the twentieth century. In doing so, it examines the ways in which dairy cows' occupation of city space, changed the material space of the former Princely state of Mysore where the British empire had a cantonment and a settlement. Drawing upon the digitized records of the archive of the former Princely State of Mysore that fringed the British empire in South India, and records of somewhat digitized national archive of India, this paper examines the changing configurations of space, place, material culture and cultural practices associated with dairy and meat diets in Bangalore, South India between 1900 and 1947. I argue that the cultures of occupation that the British empire engendered promoted specific milk breeds of cattle and enabled the circulation of exotic animals. The arrival of the British military dairy farms and the imperial dairy research institute interacted with the Mysore Palace's much older dairy farm that aspired to carve a place for itself as a center of cross breeding research. The British and Princely experiments, sedentarized the formerly nomadic cattle herders and transformed the landscape of rural Mysore. This process transformed the landscape that was formerly teeming with draught breeds of cattle, driving out the previously valued transport workers— bullocks away from the city and towards slaughterhouses on the outskirts of the British cantonment in Bangalore. Concurrently, as milk became popular and motor vehicles and railways entered the picture, the draught bullocks left their space while dairy cows made a place for themselves in this urbanizing region.

**Tan Miao Ing (University of Malaya)**

***The “Unruly” Space: Tanjong Piandang, a Pirates’ Haven to a Fishing Village***

Tanjong Piandang is a Chinese fishing village in Kerian, Perak. It first appeared in Anderson's work in 1824 as a favourite resort for pirates. This paper investigates how the colonial government tried to maintain the order of this space and the local resistance that attempted to keep the colonial power out their village.

In J.W.W. Birch's journal, he described the Chinese at Tanjong Piandang as “a very bad lot” who robbed the Malays and committed petty robberies whenever they can. According to a 1888's report by A.T. Dew, collector and magistrate and harbour master of Matang and Port Weld, Perak, the people in Tanjong Piandang had the reputation of being a lawless, turbulent lot and from whose numbers it was notorious that gang robbers, thieves and other criminals were recruited. During the Larut War, all the Chinese (all Teochew) in Tanjong Piandang belonged to Ho Sen Kongsi, a small society of mixed membership including Hokkien, were involved in the war.

The first Perak Resident J.W.W. Birch decided to put up a police station in Tanjong Piandang after his first visit to the village in March 1875 and later introduced a new revenue farm system. This caused resentment among the villagers and resulted in riots. The British colonial

government tried to demolish the settlement twice by burning down the village after the riots. However, after which, villagers soon gathered together and rebuilt their houses.

This paper uses Tanjong Piandang as a case to study how colonial power and local resistance jointly shape a space. Besides interviewing the villagers, this study examines old maps, journals of British officials, newspapers cuttings and records from National Archives to construct an early history of the village.