PROGRAMME

"India's Colonial and Postcolonial Cities"
Mardi 9 mai 2023 de 16h30 à 19h

Conférence organisée dans le cadre du séminaire mensuel de l’équipe Savoirs et Espaces Anglophones (SEA) du laboratoire LISAA (Littératures, Savoirs, Arts) de l’Université Gustave Eiffel qui est engagée dans un vaste programme de recherche portant sur la ville.

16h30-16h45 : Présentation de la thématique et des intervenantes (Dr Sandrine Soukai)

16h45-17h25 : Dr Marianne Hillion (Université de Strasbourg) : « From Garden-Cities to Gated Communities: Social Exclusion and the Environment in Contemporary Indian Writing in English ».

17h40-18h30 : Pr Ananya Jahanara Kabir (King’s College London) : « Fort Creole: India's Transcolonial Enclaves and their Postcolonial Afterlives ».

18h30-19h00 : Questions et échanges avec les conférencières.

*Communications en anglais. Questions et échanges : anglais ou français.

Organisation: Sandrine Soukai (sandrine.soukai@univ-eiffel.fr).
Pour une participation en présentiel, merci de vous inscrire par email avant le 3 mai.

Pour une participation en ligne : https://univ-eiffel.zoom.us/j/81666889476

Lieu : Cité Descartes – bâtiment Copernic
Salle de recherche V3071 (3ème étage)
5 boulevard Descartes – Champs-sur-Marne 77454 Marne-la-Vallée Cédex 2
Marianne Hillion – University of Strasbourg

From garden-cities to gated communities: literary representations of social exclusion and segregation in contemporary Indian cities

While great cities have become the symbol of ‘New India’ on the global stage since the 1990s, contemporary Indian urbanism is also partly characterised by the seclusion of the middle classes within private residential and commercial enclaves. These spaces are sometimes imbued with a pastoral imaginary and often located in the heart of the city, dismissing any idea of a common urban space. Drawing on Anthony King's work on the links between the colonial city and the global city (2004), I would like to probe this contemporary middle-class hostility to the city and the practices of social exclusion that it justifies, by placing it in the history of colonial urban planning. The recent transformations of Delhi offer a striking instance of the enduring legacy of the segregationist ideology which presided over the construction of the imperial capital as a ‘garden-city’ in 1911. This paper will thus analyse the ways in which literary texts reconfigure anti-urbanism and its contradictions as they appear in the Indian capital city, shedding light on discourses and practices of socio-spatial segregation as well as urban outcasts’ transgression of these lines. I will look at the politics of the various aesthetic strategies (ranging from realism to dystopia) used by contemporary English-language writers like Raj Kamal Jha, Prayaag Akbar, and Arundhati Roy to represent this divided urban space.

Marianne Hillion is Senior Lecturer in the English department at the University of Strasbourg and a member of SEARCH. Her research focuses on the cultural and literary representations of urban space in postcolonial context, with a particular interest in post-1990s Indian cities. She co-hosts SLAC, a monthly seminar on materialist approaches to literature (ENS Ulm / Campus Condorcet). Full bio [here](#).
Fort creole: India’s transcolonial enclaves and their postcolonial urban afterlives

‘Fort Creoles’ are languages that emerged in and around fortified enclaves set up by Europeans in extra-European spaces for the protection of their military and trade interests. My talk uses this concept from Creole linguistics as an entry-point for the fortifications that Europeans began establishing at strategic points on India’s coasts from the 15th century onwards. What kind of lives were lived here, what cultural innovations did they catalyse, and what is their memorial imprint? Drawing on fieldwork in three sites, Kochi, Pondicherry, and Tranquebar, and using comparative materials from early European forts across the Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds, I propose we see European-built forts in India as motors of creolisation, that stand, furthermore, in dynamic tension with the postcolonial urban afterlives that sprang up around them.

Ananya Jahanara Kabir is Professor of English Literature at King’s College London, and the winner of the Infosys Prize for the Humanities (2017) and the Humboldt Research Prize (2018). She is the author of Territory of Desire: Representing the Valley of Kashmir and Partition’s Post-Amnesias: 1947, 1971, and Modern South Asia. She is currently writing her next book, Alegropolitics: Connecting on the AfroModern Dance Floor. Her new research project is on Creole Indias.