



# VISIBLE & INVISIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE & POLITICS OF COHABITATION

Ideas of infrastructure in the humanities and social sciences are rapidly multiplying and expanding. While infrastructure is popularly conceived as the basic structures needed for societal and organizational operation, scholars have pushed this definition to include the cultural, social, and political forces that these material forms shape and are shaped by. Ethnographic studies of infrastructure have elucidated the technical, political, economical, and sociocultural dynamics of information infrastructures (Bowker and Star 1999), waterways (Carse 2012), and roads (Harvey and Knox 2015). In addition to theorizing the physical networks through which goods, people, and power flow, anthropologists have nurtured new understandings of infrastructures of aesthetics and desire (Larkin 2013) and as ontological experiments (Jensen and Morita 2015).

This workshop invites participants to explore how attention to infrastructure would guide us to see the complex dynamics among various human and nonhuman beings that constitute the world. How do we develop the analytics for envisioning the possibility of living in a world left with environmental problems and unequal power relations? The invocation of the Anthropocene, the recently touted and contested title for a new geological age marked by global environmental challenges, prompts new questions that foreground approaches to infrastructure, taking into account environment, ecologies, and the non-human. This move draws attention to attendant *politics of cohabitation* that are wary of the human as a monolithic entity and consider invisible and missing masses, matters, and movements. Such politics open up a notion of infrastructure for further critical and analytical use. *Politics of cohabitation* urges us to investigate the processes that have marginalized indigenous and vernacular ontologies and rendered the already existing practices of cohabitation invisible. Examples include the entanglement of biomedical and traditional healing practices in Japan, the bootstrapping internet engineering in Indonesia, and the translations of knowledge about forest in the formation of global network around gourmet wild mushrooms. Infrastructure intersects technoscience and indigenous and vernacular knowledge as seen in Inuit's navigation practices in the Arctic and the folk plant taxonomy projects in India. Infrastructure that affects water and air becomes an urgent area of investigation in such diverse regions as Italy, Thailand, the lower Great Lakes and beyond. Concerns about environmental infrastructures also emerge in dying agricultural communities in Japan and the mapping of the earth through geodesy.

With this wide breadth, we seek to activate conversations and direct attention to the politics concerning *entanglements* between human and nonhuman beings, infrastructures and ecologies, technologies and environmental processes. We especially pay attention to the dynamics of when and how certain things, people, knowledges and practices become visible and others invisible. In our view, contested visions, imaginations and concerns toward future environments and infrastructures *emerge* in relation to various events and human efforts that make such entanglements visible. Thus, by focusing on *the politics of visualizing such latent ecological relations* among human and non-human entities, this workshop engages with the contemporary methodological challenges and possibilities for humanities and social sciences to develop analytics for living in a world described as the Anthropocene.

