History 175 Calcutta and Dacca: Exploration in South Asian Urban History

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East Hall 03
Office Hours, Wednesday 2pm-4pm, or by appointment
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Course Summary
Explore the changing social and cultural geographies of South Asia’s major cities, especially Calcutta, Dacca, but also Bombay, Lahore and Karachi, in the 19th and 20th centuries. Themes include the history of colonial and post-colonial architecture and public works and the shifting relationship between Hindu and Muslim cultural identity and urban geography. We also consider gender, class and caste in terms of slums, bastis and red-light districts and the connections between urban and suburban areas. Students will receive training at the Tufts Geo-Information Systems (GIS) lab and use GIS to visualize urban geographies for class research. Students will also get involved in helping to develop informative content on South Asian urban history for the general internet public on a new website http://bengaloralhistory.tufts.edu. For the main research project, students will have the opportunity to focus on an Asian metropolis of their choice, in consultation with the instructor.

Required books

Bapsi Sidhwa, City of Sin and Splendour: Writings on Lahore (2006)

Excerpts will be assigned from the texts listed in each week. Full texts are only assigned from the ‘required books’ list.

Unit I
Weeks 1-4 History of Colonial Capital Cities and ‘Second Cities’

Week 1

Introduction
Sukanta Chaudhury, Calcutta: The Living City vol. I

Week 2

Week 3


Week 4


Week 5


Jeremy Seabrook, Chap. 3 “Migrants to the City”, Chap. 10 “Slums and Settlements”, *In the Cities of the South: Scenes from a Developing World* (1996)

Unit II Regimes of Urban and Suburban Space

Week 6

Willem van Schendel, *The Bengal Borderland: Beyond State and Nation in South Asia*


Week 7


Week 8


Week 9

Bapsi Sidhwa, City of Sin and Splendour: Writings on Lahore (2006)


Week 10

Behram Rustomji, Karachi during the British Era: Two Histories of a Modern City (2007)


Unit III The Experience of the Postcolonial City

Week 11


Aidan Southall, The City in Time and Space (1998)

Week 12
Suketu Mehta, *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found*

**Week 13**

Alev Çinar and Thomas Bender, eds., *Urban Imaginaries: Locating the Modern City* (2007)

Michael Smith and Thomas Bender, *City and Nation: Rethinking Place and Identity* (2001)

**Week 14**
