are proud to present

Learning from Lahore

An Illustrated Talk on the urban history of Lahore

by

Professor Will Glover
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Director, Graduate Studies, History, Univ. of Michigan

Dr. Munis Faruqui
Co-Chair, Berkeley Pakistan Initiative and
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will lead a conversation with
Prof. Glover following the presentation

The event is free and open to the public.
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Learning from Lahore, A Synopsis

A few years ago I wrote an urban history of Lahore during the colonial period. The book analyzed the city through episodes of both construction and imagination—as a site of distinctive urban artifacts, on the one hand, and of distinctive urban attitudes, on the other. The book was a sustained argument, at one level, that cities like Lahore are crucial sites for understanding how modern urbanism developed as a global process, as opposed to something exclusive only to the West. My current work raises a question I left unchallenged in that book: what are the “boundaries” of Lahore—or any city, for that matter—and where should urban stories begin and end?

It has been a truism among urban historians that cities exist in a context: that processes relevant to city life don’t simply end at the municipal boundary. In India, both literally and metaphorically, the journey from the village to the city has formed a central focus of social scientific study and state policy recommendations; it is also a major motif in modern South Asian cinema and literature. While most of these motifs underscore deeply etched differences between rural and urban patterns of life, my talk will raise the question of what happens if we let these distinctions blur? What is lost, and what is gained, if we see the countryside as integral to urban life and processes?

– Will Glover