



במסגרת הסמינר המחלקתי של החוג ללימודי אסיה נארה את:

Debjani Bhattacharyya
(Drexel University)

Urbanism at Water's Edge: Calcutta's Deltaic History

Water is overwhelming life in coastal and riverine cities across many parts of the world. We are responding in multiple ways: by fortifying the coasts, draining and pushing water out of lands, and sometimes making room for river in our constant struggle to remain dry. Each of these responses are situated in deep colonial history. Taking the example of the growth and settlement of Calcutta in the swamps of Bengal, this talk will explore how we came to inhabit land-making and land-reclamation as urbanization through the nineteenth-century. Decentering debates around epidemiological urbanization, I explore how property operated as a technology of drying. Using a couple of case studies beginning from 1770s I argue that property and its many instantiations in law and economy became a tool for transforming the landscape and ecology of the delta in creating Calcutta. I will follow the journey of the swamps and marshes as they move from the colonial courtroom in the late 18th-century, through the nineteenth-century engineer's desk and finally the land speculator's grasp in the twentieth and twenty-first century. I conclude by showing how the fluid landscape of the tidal delta shaped urban law, infrastructure and the land market in colonial Calcutta.

יום שני 20 בינואר 2020, כ"ג טבת תשע"פ, 12:15-13:45, מצפור אביבה וסמי
עופר, בניין אשכול

נשמח לראותכם בין אורחינו