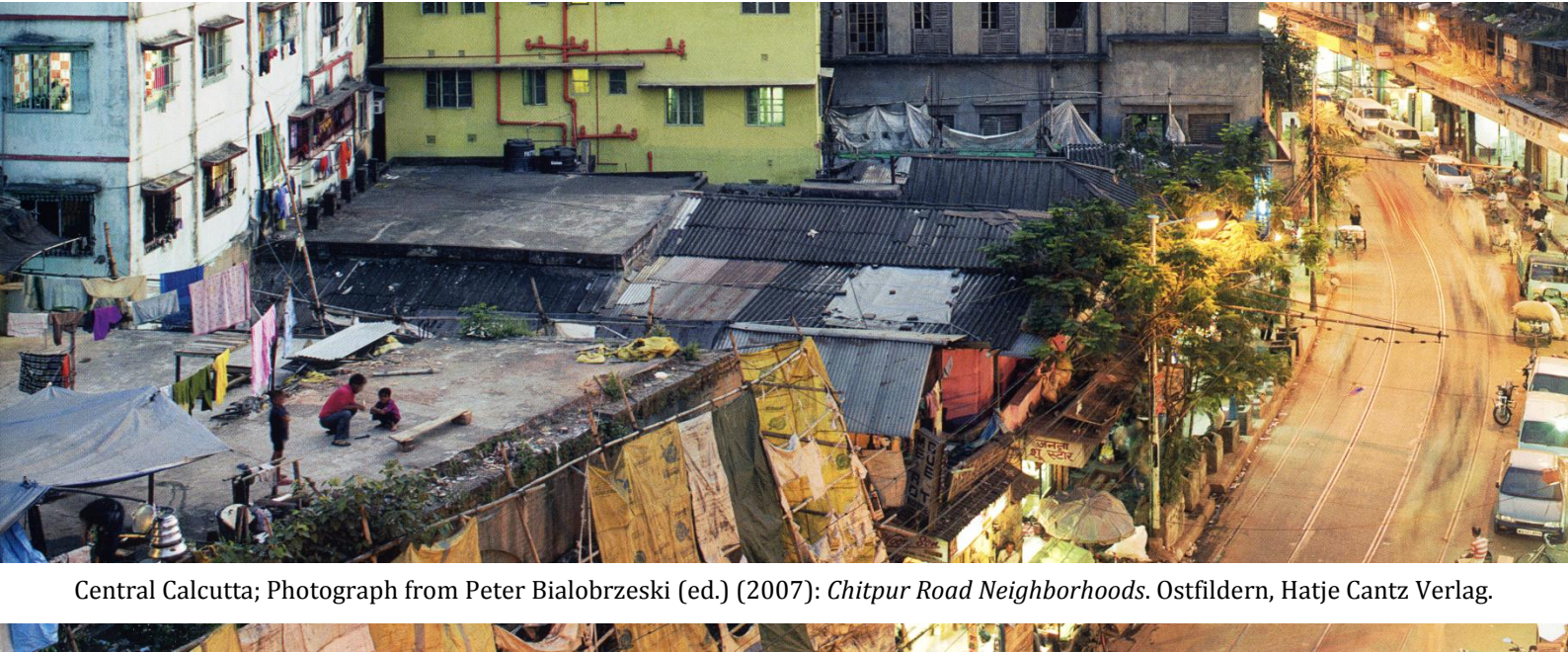




# ***The Vernacular City: Urbanism in Modern South Asian Literature and Film***

Dept of Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures, in cooperation with Forum Urban Spaces (ForUS)

Friday May 16, 2014 \* Karl Jaspers Centre, Vossstr. 2, Room 002 (Library)



Central Calcutta; Photograph from Peter Bialobrzeski (ed.) (2007): *Chitpur Road Neighborhoods*. Ostfildern, Hatje Cantz Verlag.

**This workshop** explores South Asian urbanity and megacities from the perspectives of "vernacular" literature and film (mainly Bengali and Hindi). The term "vernacular" comes with a slight punch and carries a double burden: one being its lower position vis-à-vis English and its concurrent disempowerment, the other its alleged propensity to enable authentic expressions from the ground. Both these aspects need thorough discussion and call for more nuanced assessments. But as for urbanism, it is a fact that the (mega)city has for a long time been a vast topic in many modern South Asian languages. However, the booming research literature on South Asian megacities, mostly driven by globalizing urban planning paradigms, has tended to ignore this production.

How, then, is the city articulated in modern South Asian languages and film? Are there decisive differences between this reservoir of city representations and those in English? How is the urban experience narrativized? Is there a "vernacular" urban ethos, and if so, how is it articulated?

## **SCHEDULE**

- 10:30 am    Introductory remarks (Hans Harder/Barnita Bagchi/Anindita Ghosh)
- 11-12 am    Anindita Ghosh (Manchester): *Kolkata in Popular Performative Traditions*
- 12 am-1 pm   Hans Harder (Heidelberg): *Body-City, City-Body. Urban Imagery Past & Present*
- 2-3 pm       Barnita Bagchi (Utrecht): *The City and Its Ghosts: Lila Majumdar and Beyond*
- 3-4 pm       Nadja-Christina Schneider (Berlin/Heidelberg): *Delhi in Hindi Movies*
- 4:30-5:30 pm Johanna Hahn (Heidelberg): *From lonely to loony flaneur? The genesis of the sarāk'māp in Hindi literature (1950s onwards)*
- 5:30 pm       Final Discussion