

## Presentation: From Walled City to Small City; Interrogating Growth and Development

Rabia Nadir  
Center for Media Studies  
Lahore School of Economics

Urban research on Pakistan has in recent years been enriched by the work of anthropologists and historians mapping new domains of urban reality outside the frame of planning, development and identity politics. The field of urban environment studies has not benefited sufficiently from these developments and remains confined to metrics of pollution, contamination and their technological fixes. This talk introduced recent urban environment research by the presenter in collaboration with faculty members associated with the Department of Environment Science and Policy, Lahore School of Economics. The research investigated 'off the map' small cities and iterated a commitment to multidisciplinary approach in environmental research. It shared findings based on ethnographic research in the historical walled city within metropolitan Lahore and small cities of Bhera, Chakwal and Wazirabad. These places were once centres of traditional manufacture and local commerce and are undergoing transformative change induced by the force of globalisation powered by new communication technologies. The restructuring of public sector services is also contributing to the creation of a new dominance of market in the field of education and health. The study highlighted the immense disruption of local production and role of education sector and media in abetting the adoption of high consumption and waste generating lifestyles. Documentation and analysis of the interplay of social and the ecological shifts through extensive fieldwork is a critical need in face of the severity of disruptions in the regional and global environment. The talk provoked discussion about the usefulness and limits of multi-disciplinary approach and directions for a researching socio-ecological metabolism. The opportunity for interaction with a wide audience of south Asian scholars and students added to the significance of the event for the speaker as a learning experience.