

## "The co-construction of urban and intellectual dynamics in 18th-century Calcutta"

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This talk explores the history of the first century of Calcutta's existence, from a swampy village of mud-huts in 1690 to the second most important city of the British empire at the end of the 18th century. During the same period, Calcutta also emerged as a world-renowned centre of scientific knowledge making in botany, geology, geodesy, map-making, geography, history, linguistics and ethnology. Calcutta thus provides an excellent case study of the co-construction of knowledge and urbanity in the early-modern context of globalisation. As a contact zone between different ethnic, professional and religious communities, each with their specific knowledge practices, it was through the legal management of difference in this cosmopolitan context that new knowledges were produced in this city. The talk thus seeks to deparochialise the current focus on cosmopolitanism and early-modern knowledge formation from the European and North Atlantic worlds to include the maritime worlds of Asia.