

Esoteric Islamic Practices, Affective Space, and Money Management in Contemporary Pakistan

Abstract:

I am seeking funding for two interrelated aspects of my larger research project. One, I propose to conduct 2-3 months of archival research in the India Office Records in London, UK on colonial governance in Karachi, Pakistan. Second, I intend to carry out a 6-month ethnographic fieldwork in Dubai on the networks that connect the local merchants of Karachi to the Pakistani merchant diaspora in the UAE. The archival research will explain how spatial ordering affected bazaar practices of the Sindh province. This research will focus on the techniques, during colonial rule, of urban planning and its impact on Karachi's built environment. My ethnographic fieldwork will provide insight into how Dubai emerged as a major hub of trade and finance in the region. This research speaks to a growing body of anthropological work on economies of ritual, money, and space, as they relate to market forces, globalization, and neoliberalism.