

**Urban Studies Seminar  
2016 - 2017****Twice a month,  
Mondays 5 pm - 7 pm****Venue:**Conference Hall  
Zentrum Moderner Orient  
Kirchweg 33  
14129 Berlin-NikolasseePlease register  
at the following address:  
Dr. Nora Lafi  
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80307- 0**Annual Theme: Rethinking Urban-Rural Relations in  
an Age of Migration, Displacement, Environmental  
Transformations and Fringe Urbanization****Chaired by Ulrike Freitag, Nora Lafi and  
Katharina Lange****Thursday, 1 December 2016, 5 pm****Bombay's Urban Edge: Villages, Suburbs, and  
Slums on the City's Fringe**Lecture by **Nikhil Rao** (Wellesley College)

Studies of urbanization in South Asia often assume a distinction between "the village" and "the city." This paper seeks to complicate this distinction by examining peri-urban development on the frontier where the expanding city confronted other forms of settlement.

Focusing on Bombay over the course of the 20th century, the paper examines the ways in which words characterizing the urban edge such as "village," "suburb," and "slum" were used by urban authorities in fluid and overlapping ways to achieve specific political ends. Meanwhile, residents of such peri-urban settlements learned to use such terms to advance their own interests. The urban edge, the paper concludes, was where distinctions between the "city" and the "village" could collapse in the context of competing claims.

**Nikhil Rao** is Associate Professor of History at Wellesley College. His book titled *House, But No Garden. Apartment Living in Bombay's Suburbs, 1898-1964* was published by the University of Minnesota Press in 2013. His current research examines changing notions of real property in Indian cities.