

**CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES, CALCUTTA,
R-1 BAISHNABGHATA PATULI,
KOLKATA 700094**

GENERAL SEMINAR

Eric L. Beverley
Associate Professor of History, Stonybrook University, NY
will give a talk titled:

“Endowing Land across Time, Space and Jurisdiction: Waqf and Hyderabad State”

Even as Muslim charitable endowments disconnected landed property from circulation as commodity, they forged connections across geographical distance and jurisdictional difference. The creation of endowments such as waqf enacted the territorial sovereignty of the South Asian state of Hyderabad. By endowing lands outside Hyderabad State or dedicating revenues from one property to institutions or people in another polity's jurisdiction, Hyderabadis yoked together diverse places and circuits. Taking examples of waqf and related forms of 'religious' property tenure from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this paper analyzes the transnational productivity of endowments in a context where major European empires expanded among multiple minor states. Never formally colonized, Hyderabad was a Muslim-ruled state in South Asia with robust connections across oceans and empires. The rise and consolidation of European imperialism and global capitalism depended on territorial processes such as the creation and regulation of land markets and drawing and policing of administrative boundaries. Endowments became localized means for disrupting and scrambling these processes and their effects. Empires fortified 'Islamic law' as a key source of legitimate authority, subjecting texts and interpreters to rigorous state-led codification and regulation. The scope and penetration of colonial debates and legal reform projects were highly limited in places like Hyderabad. Subjects and officials in Hyderabad used waqf not only to shelter properties from market forces and changing state regulatory regimes, but also to formalize connections and transpose legal interpretations and agendas across complex political geographies.

Date: Friday, 24th March, 2017, 3 – 5 pm
Venue: CSSSC's Seminar Room, Patuli Campus

Trina Nileena Banerjee
(Convener, Seminar Committee)

All are welcome to attend.