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**Locating Karachi's Urban Poverty**

My paper contributes to a historical understanding of a very important social problem in Pakistan, that of inequality and especially urban poverty. My paper foregrounded empirical questions about rural to urban migration, the politics of urban housing, attitudes towards the poor, and the control of urban space in the long 19th century in an attempt to overcome the nationalization of Karachi's urban poverty problem. Due to the administrative unity within the colonial period many migrants moved up and down the western coast, and the largest numbers of migrants into both Karachi and Bombay came from Ratnagiri and Cutch. Lyari in Karachi was thus a much older shantytown than Dharavi in Bombay; Dharavi was likely not densely settled until well into the 1930s, 1940s and beyond, whereas Lyari was a site of urban reform, renewal, and even complaints as early as the 1910s. Such facts enable an understanding of urban impoverishment that moves outside of the nationalist imagination so that Karachi's urban poor don't become constrained as "Pakistan's" poverty problem until well after 1947. Thus deeper historical processes resulted in urban disenfranchisement and alienation. Karachi's poorest dwellers, when placed in their proper historical circumstances prior to their legibility as Pakistan's impoverished citizens, allows us to see larger economic and social processes which encapsulated the vast majority of the Western subcontinent through the turn of the nineteenth century, before such peasant migrants were distinguished from each other through the politics of regionalism, nationalism, and Partition.