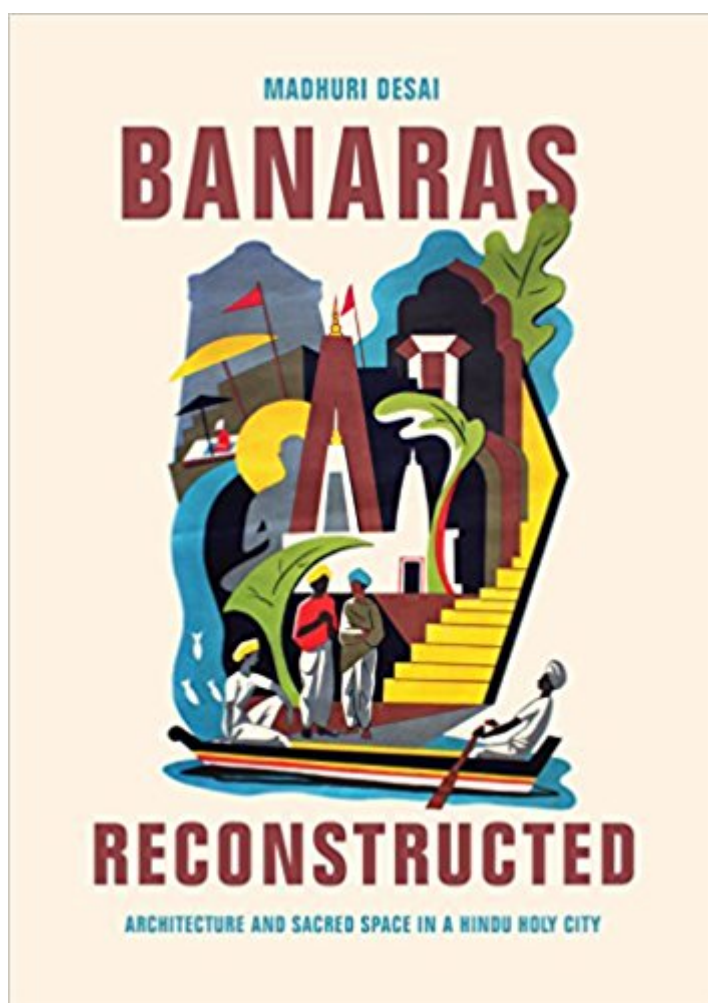


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# Banaras Reconstructed: Architecture And Sacred Space In A Hindu Holy City (Global South Asia)



## Synopsis

Between the late sixteenth and early twentieth centuries, Banaras, the iconic Hindu center in northern India that is often described as the oldest living city in the world, was reconstructed materially as well as imaginatively, and embellished with temples, monasteries, mansions, and ghats (riverfront fortress-palaces). Banaras's refurbished sacred landscape became the subject of pilgrimage maps and its spectacular riverfront was depicted in panoramas and described in travelogues. In *Banaras Reconstructed*, Madhuri Desai examines the confluences, as well as the tensions, that have shaped this complex and remarkable city. In so doing, she raises issues central to historical as well as contemporary Indian identity and delves into larger questions about religious urban environments in South Asia.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Banaras Reconstructed is a comprehensive and thorough work of research focusing on a pilgrimage city whose 'timelessness' is a veneer much in need of historicization." —Alka Patel, University of California, Irvine  
"Banaras Reconstructed astutely integrates a wide range of pilgrimage texts, contemporaneous histories, and visual representations with close analyses of the built environment to give us at long last a volume that dynamically brings together the multifarious layers of this city." —Rebecca M. Brown, author of *Displaying Time: The Many Temporalities of the Festival of India*  
"Desai recuperates a forgotten history and weaves together various strands of material and religious culture of Banaras from Mughal times to

the nineteenth century, when the legend of the city's eternity crystallized and came to be widely disseminated. This book is a powerful piece of scholarship, a breakthrough in the study of this important South Asian site." — Muzaffar Alam, University of Chicago

Madhuri Desai is associate professor of art history and Asian studies at the Pennsylvania State University. She is the coeditor of *Colonial Frames, Nationalist Histories: Imperial Legacies, Architecture, and Modernity*.

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