

Max Weber Stiftung

India Branch Office

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



Partners

Centre for Modern Indian Studies, Göttingen University (CeMIS)

Project Image Vehicles / *Bilderfahrzeuge*:

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as well as scholars from

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TAPAS / Thinking About the Past

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Foreword

Harald Rosenbach
Chief Executive Director
Max Weber Stiftung

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From the administrator's point of view, the India Branch Office developed in 2019 in a most satisfactory way. If the main task of a research institute's administration is to create conditions in which scholars can work productively, then we have had a very good year. Indeed, academic life at the Branch Office ran very smoothly, with impressive results. The IBO continued to develop both its research focus areas and provide infrastructural support to MWS international travel grants programmes, such as the Gerald D. Feldman grants, and to further third-party projects, such as the BMBF-funded *Bilderfahrzeuge* project.

The fruitful development of the office was an important precondition for what followed. In May, the MWS Board of Trustees nominated an external academic assessment commission. Five researchers from Germany, India and the USA met in October in Bonn to plan an on-site assessment in New Delhi. This visit took place in November and the Board of Trustees will consider its results in May 2020. Provided the commission's recommendations are positive, we hope that the Board of Trustees will pave the way for the Max Weber Foundation to stay in India permanently.

Equally the affairs of the *M.S. Merian - R. Tagore International Centre of Advanced Studies* (ICAS:MP) developed in a most positive way. ICAS:MP is a joint venture financed mainly by the German Ministry of Education and Research on a temporary basis. The project started in 2015 and brings the Max Weber Foundation together with several German and Indian universities and institutions. As ICAS:MP expanded significantly in 2018 the prem-

ises in the Defence Colony office became too limited and we had to find additional office space nearby. This worked out well, but for legal reasons we will reunite the two parts of the office in one location within the next year.

On the whole we look back on a good year that enriched us in many ways. I would like to acknowledge the tremendous efforts and initiative of our administration at the IBO: it is Rohan Seth and Deepanwita Dutta's commitment to the IBO that makes it possible for us to operate smoothly in India. Finally, we are grateful to our many partners in Germany, Great Britain, India and beyond and look forward to continued success in 2020.

Preface

Christina von Hodenberg
Director
German Historical
Institute London



Photograph courtesy of Rob Haines

We look back on a successful year for the India Branch Office of the Max Weber Stiftung. In 2019, we continued to further our long-term aims of facilitating humanities and social science research and fostering the understanding between Germany and India. The IBO runs its own research programme in history, often with an interdisciplinary flavour and a social science element. It enables joint scholarship, particularly on themes which are high on the agenda of German and Indian scholars, stemming from current societal and political concerns in both countries. Our projects run in several parts of India and not just in Delhi.

In 2019, our research focussed on four thematic clusters. First among these are the history and sociology of non-elite education – a field which we have explored since 2013, beginning with a focus on poverty and continuing with a focus on the urban. Our second cluster is labour history, where we work with a group of scholars at Göttingen University on a pilot project on the ‘extended archives of Indian labour’. Our third theme concerns the

politics of heritage and the way history is narrated and sold in modern India. This is where the key expertise of the current Head of Office lies, and where our closest links with ICAS:MP lie. Our fourth and last theme is the movement of people, ideas and images – an area we explore with different approaches such as art history, social history and media history. Topics are as diverse as the movement of 16th to 18th century images and objects into Mughal India; the migrant poor in cities; Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany in India; and feminist ideas circulating in the media.

We are looking forward to building on our successes in 2020 and beyond. If the Max Weber Foundation’s Board of Trustees decides this year to make the Branch Office a permanent entity, our research programme in India will continue and expand. Over time, the IBO Delhi will become independent from the German Historical Institute London. The GHI’s own, London-based India research programme will then collaborate with the Delhi Branch Office on selected pro-

jects and events. The external evaluation of the German Historical Institute London itself, which took place a few months earlier than the IBO’s evaluation in November 2019, strongly backed the India Research Programme and urged continued collaboration with the IBO in Delhi.

This long-term perspective would not have been possible without the amazing staff of the IBO. Overall, I wish to thank its Head, Dr Indra Sengupta, and Deputy Head, Dr Debarati Bagchi, who expertly masterminded the evaluation process in late 2019. I also want to thank Rohan Seth and Deepanwita Dutta for their dedication, and all members of the IBO team for their unwavering support in a year that was probably our busiest to date. Finally, our work in India, which has been so successfully built up over the last seven years, would not have been possible without the goodwill and support of our project partners in India, who have been unstintingly generous with their time and always been there for us, whenever we needed their help.

I General Report

Indra Sengupta

Head of India Branch Office

Head of India Centre/

German Historical Institute London

2019 was a significant year for us at the Max Weber Stiftung's (MWS) India Branch Office (IBO), as we prepared for our evaluation in November 2019 by an external academic committee, which was crucial for the future of the IBO beyond 2020. Notwithstanding the time and effort that such preparations involve, the IBO continued to grow and cement its role as a facilitator of Indo-German research collaboration and a site of production of interdisciplinary humanities and social science research in India. The dual structure of the IBO worked very well, as research oversight remained with the German Historical Institute London (GHIL) and the Central Office of the Max Weber Stiftung retained administrative oversight of the IBO and its administrative staff. I remain Head of the Office in the interim period before the Board of Trustees of the MWS takes a decision on the IBO from 2021 onwards.

In the course of the report year, the IBO successfully made the transition from a single research project (TRG *Poverty Reduction and Policy for the Poor between the State and Private Actors: Education Policy in India since the Nineteenth Century*), which is how it started in 2013, to a cluster of individual and group projects on 4 broad research themes: 1) the history and sociology of non-elite education; 2) labour history; 3) the politics of heritage and history in contemporary India; and 4) the movement of people, ideas



Photograph courtesy of Debarati Bagchi

and images.

The research group *Education and the Urban in India* is our largest project and its work progressed well. The sub-projects *The Changing Urban and Education in Delhi: Privilege and Exclusion in a Mega City* (PI Geetha B Nambissan; RA Yamini Agarwal – JNU Delhi); *Urban Dislocations and Educational Strategies: Metro Colonies, Bengaluru* (PI Shivali Tukdeo); and *Public Education in an Industrial City: Bombay, 1900-1945* (PI Nandini Manjrekar; RA Poushali Basak – TISS Mumbai) made substantial progress. The fourth sub-project *Inner City Schools and the Education of Poor Muslim and Catholic Children in Colonial and Postcolonial Kolkata, 1872-1990s* (PI Indra Sengupta; RA Akash Bhattacharya

– GHIL/MWS IBO) had to be substantially changed, due to two primary reasons: first, getting access to archives in Kolkata proved to be a time consuming and difficult process and second, our RA Akash Bhattacharya had to leave us because he accepted a job offer from the prestigious Azim Premji University in Bengaluru. As a result, the project (now on *Schools, Colleges and the Creation of a Suburb: An Education History of Nineteenth Century Uttarpara*) shifted focus from inner city schools to the development of Uttarpara, a suburb of Kolkata, on the back of educational institutions. The completed part of the project will be published in our Working Paper Series. Debarati Bagchi's (MWS IBO) project on *Education Hubs and the Changing Urban Landscape in the Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR), 1949-2009* also made great strides.

Our labour history theme continued with Robert Raman's (IBO) research on *From Girangaon to 'Mini Pakistan': The Precarious Place of Working Muslims in Twentieth Century Bombay* (PhD thesis, under the supervision of Ravi Ahuja, Centre for Modern Indian Studies, University of Göttingen) and his ongoing work on collecting and digitising the records of India's oldest trade union, the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) for the pilot project *Extended Archives of Indian Labour*. This is a collaboration of the MWS IBO and the University of Göttingen.

The IBO's research collaboration with ICAS:MP also developed well in the report year. This goes for the sub-project *Selling History: Tourist Guides, Bazaar Histories, and the Politics of the Past* (Indra Sengupta, GHIL/IBO in cooperation with Neeladri Bhattacharya, JNU), which is a part project of the module "History as a Political Category". In addition, the

IBO continued to support ICAS in legal, logistical and bank-related matters in India. Close administrative cooperation between the IBO and ICAS became particularly necessary in relation to the directive of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in June 2019 that instructed the two offices to find a common site from which to operate. A number of meetings between the representatives of the MWS, MWS-IBO, ICAS and RBI took place to resolve the problem. These meetings proved to be reasonably successful, although the two offices will have to look for a common space in 2020. Similar administrative support was provided to the projects *Extended Archives of Indian Labour* and *Bilderfahrzeuge*.

Of the IBO's new research collaborations, two third-party (BMBF) funded projects need special mention. Dipanwita Donde joined the IBO in February 2019 on a project position of the transnational project *Bilderfahrzeuge* (Image Vehicles), funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). Her research on *Migration of Images, Texts, Ideas and Objects from Timurid Central Asia to Mughal India, 16th – 18th Centuries* falls under our research theme on the movement of people, ideas and images. A further addition to this theme is the International Standing Working Group (ISWG) on feminism and the media, *Medialization and Empowerment*, which is a part of the BMBF-funded project "Knowledge without Borders: Internationalisation, Networking, Innovation in and by the Max Weber Stiftung". The grant was awarded to Christina von Hodenberg (GHIL) and took off in July 2019. The ISWG, which is a collaboration of the MWS Institutes in London, Rome, Beirut and Washington, works with project partners in India and will organise a

conference and exhibition through the IBO in 2020-21.

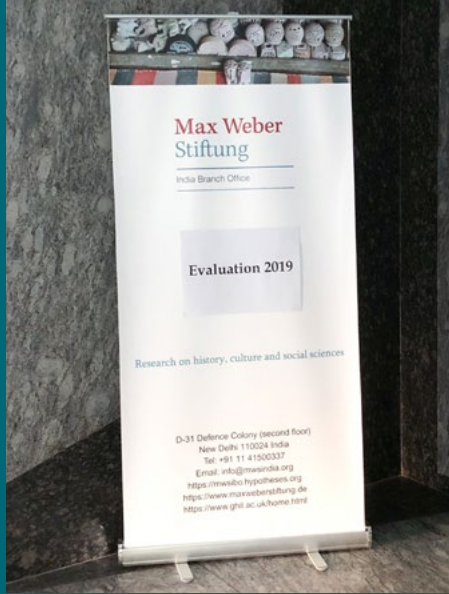
Further applications for funding grants with collaboration partners include *Divisions of Labour. Histories of Formalisation and Informalisation in Postcolonial India* (DFG application). The outcome is still awaited. The IBO has also signed up to a collaboration with a *Graduiertenkolleg* (research training group) on interdisciplinary empire research of the University of Freiburg, for which funding was applied for in 2019. If successful, the *Graduiertenkolleg* will start in 2021.

Within the Max Weber Stiftung, the IBO continued its involvement with the conference series organised jointly by the three Branch Offices of the Max Weber Stiftung (GHI West, and the China and India Branch Offices) on the theme *In Global Transit*. The conferences engage with the theme of experience of exile and knowledge production in exile. The second conference of the series, on *Forced Migration of Jews and other Refugees (1940s-1960s)*, took place in Berkeley on 20-22 May 2019. On the theme of Jewish exile in India in the twentieth century, the pilot project on *German-speaking Jewish Refugees and India, 1930s –1950s* by Joseph Cronin had to be prematurely terminated, since Joseph Cronin took up a sought-after position as Lecturer at Queen Mary University, London. The findings from his pilot study have been published in an article, Framing the Refugee Experience: Reflections on *German-speaking Jews in British India, 1938–1947*, in the *Bulletin of the GHIL*.¹

The research of the IBO appeared in individual publications of our scholars, past and present, totalling 16 in the report year 2019 alone. Our Open Access Working Paper Series on Education and the Urban picked up pace in 2019, as four papers came were published online on the MWS's publication platform [www.perspectivia.net](https://perspectivia.net/receive/pnet_mods_00001041) (https://perspectivia.net/receive/pnet_mods_00001041). The series is peer reviewed and provides a platform for quick publication of the research produced by our junior and senior scholars as well as selected external scholars working on the topic. Further papers are due for publication in 2020.

In addition to publications, in 2019 the IBO pursued an active programme of generating Open Access digital source repositories from almost all its historical projects as well as a bibliographic repository for young scholars working on the topic of the intersection of education and the urban. Source repositories included a Zotero library on the sources of the history of mass education in India, which was completed in 2019. A set of 44 oral interviews gathered by a pilot project on *Life Stories of the Experience of 'Alternative' Education in the 1970s (2013-16)* was made accessible on demand. Digitised source repositories created in collaboration with external partners include *The Extended Archives of Indian Labour* (with CeMIS, University of Göttingen) and a range of images collected by the project *Migration of Images, Texts, Ideas and Objects from Timurid Central Asia to Mughal India, 16th–18th centuries* (BMBF-funded project *Bilderfahrzeuge*). For the project *Selling History: Tourist Guides, Bazaar Histories, and the Politics*

¹ GHIL Bulletin, Vol 41, No. 2 (November 2019), pp. 45-74.



Photograph courtesy of Indra Sengupta and Rohan Seth



of the Past in the Late 20th and early 21st Century (a sub- project of ICAS:MP), the IBO has stored and preserved primary source material, consisting of popular tourist guidebooks and tracts that circulate around heritage sites in India, which have been collected as a part of this project. The work will continue in 2020.

Supporting young and early career scholars has always been the goal of the IBO and the success of the TRG in enabling young scholars to complete their PhD and postdoctoral projects and get placements at Indian, German and UK universities is evidence of this. In addition to creating the digital source repositories and Open Access papers mentioned above, in 2019 the IBO started two reading groups: one of these was on critical theory and philosophy of education and the second, in collaboration with JNU Delhi and the *Bilderfahrzeuge* project, on the legacy of Aby Warburg. These groups meet every two months, either at the IBO or at JNU, and draw young scholars from universities in and around Delhi, including many former fellows of the TRG *Education and Poverty*. Debarati Bagchi and Dipanwita Donde were in charge of the respective reading groups. A winter school on the methods of global history, organised in collaboration with the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies and directed at bringing young scholars from Germany and India together and providing research training for them, is planned for February 2020. There has been considerable interest, especially amongst young scholars from Germany, in the school: of the 41 applications received, 20 were from young scholars at various German universities, including universities not specialising in Indian or South Asian studies. Since 2015, the IBO has been a part of the MWS's Gerald D Feldman international travel grants

scheme for young scholars. Interest in applying for these grants for the purpose of a research stay in India has been steadily increasing and in 2019, of the 13 awards, 3 were for a research stay in India. For a fledgling Branch Office of the MWS, this is a substantial success rate.

Of its academic outreach programmes, the IBO's Max Weber Lecture Series, which began in 2018, turned out to be very successful in 2019 and drew large and animated audiences consisting of some of India's most distinguished scholars in the humanities and social sciences. The lecture series, which takes place twice a year, consists of a set of two lectures given by a distinguished German or international scholar at two different academic sites in India, one of these being Delhi. In February 2019, the Second Max Weber Lecture was delivered by Andy Green of the Institute of Education, University College London, in Delhi and Mumbai respectively. For the autumn of 2019, we organised the Third Max Weber Lecture in Kolkata and Delhi respectively, in collaboration with the Goethe Institute Max Mueller Bhavan. The talk, on *The Politics of Humiliation: Historical Trajectories*, was given by Ute Frevert of the Max Planck Institute for Human Development and the Free University Berlin. The talk in Delhi was followed by comments from the Indian context by Rajeev Bhargava (CSDS) and both talks led to a very lively discussion. The Lecture was a new form of collaboration for the IBO, for the first time with a long-established German cultural organisation in India, and it proved to be a successful and extremely rewarding experience. Our sincere thanks are due to the Directors of the Goethe Institutes in Delhi and Calcutta for their warm and generous support.

Staff matters

In addition to the 3 long-term members of the administrative staff, the IBO appointed a total of 6 Junior Research Associates (on 50-100% positions, 2 of these being third-party funded) and 1 Senior Research Associate (80%). Scholars working on their own research projects were given long term positions of up to two years. Scholars working in a research assistance capacity were employed for shorter periods, which depended on the requirements of individual projects. As mentioned above, two of our research staff (Akash Bhattacharya in New Delhi and Joseph Cronin in London) accepted job offers at prestigious universities in India (Azim Premji University, Bengaluru) and the UK

(Queen Mary University, London), which in part is a testament to the success of the IBO. Thanks to the extension of the *Bilderfahrzeuge* project and the creation of a project position at the IBO, Dipanwita Donde joined us in February 2019.

Restructuring of roles in 2018 resulted in better teamwork and increased efficiency amongst the administrative staff. Should the MWS Board of Trustees decide to make the IBO a permanent entity, a new, resident Head of Office would take the office to a new level, for which it is well prepared.

All in all, 2019 was a packed but extremely fruitful year.

II Project Reports

1. Education and the Urban

Public Education in an Industrial City: Bombay, 1900 to 1945

Nandini Manjrekar (Principal Investigator) and Poushali Basak
TISS, Mumbai

The project aims to understand the growth of primary education in Girangaon, the mill district of Bombay, between 1900 and 1945, against the backdrop of debates among the city's bureaucracy represented by the Bombay Municipal Corporation, the city's elites comprising nationalist leaders, mill-owners and elected representatives, and the growing and increasingly politicised industrial workforce. The period between 1918 and the 1930s saw an intensification of these debates reflecting the growing educational aspirations among different sections of the city's population. This period also witnessed selective enforcement of free and compulsory primary education (FCPE) in two wards in the city, F and G, that largely made up the area of Girangaon. Debates of the time reflect motives on the part of the colonial administration to discipline the city's workforce, primarily those working in the mills, towards inhabiting certain norms of city life. Regular attendance in schools, acquiescence to norms of public hygiene and sanitation were seen as primary goals through FCPE in the area. The debates around public education in this period equally reflect the desires of different social, religious and linguistic groups of

the working class for an equitable public education, and nationalist articulations of the need for social uplift of 'backward' sections through education.

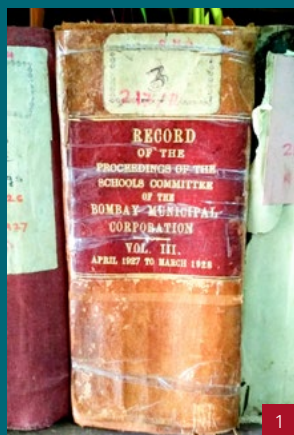
Work done in 2019-20

The major work this year has been collecting primary data for the project from the different archives of the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM). In particular, we were able to access proceedings of the School Committee of the Bombay Municipality, which oversaw implementation of the FCPE programme in the city's F and G wards. Apart from details of meetings of the Committee, these records include correspondence with educational institutions, community associations and property owners pertaining to issues regarding setting up of schools in different areas of these wards. The Administrative Reports of the Municipality on the other hand give a chronological understanding of how and why FCPE got initiated, the various debates around its introduction, challenges related to its implementation, and how civic authorities viewed the schooling of working-class children. The meaning of

primary education for working class, for whom political education was not always confined to the ambit and regularities of school education, can be understood through a comparison of the different archival data and when cross-referenced through the existing literature on mill workers in Bombay. From these records, it has also been possible to gain a spatio-temporal perspective on the expansion of FCPE in Bombay city.

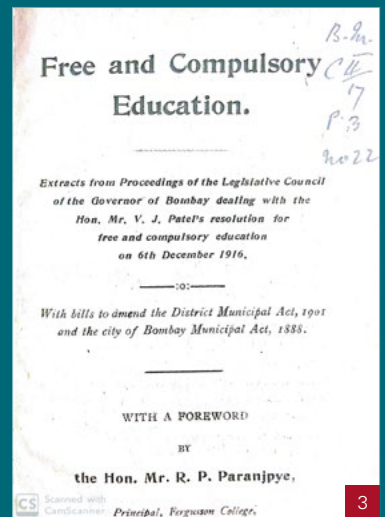
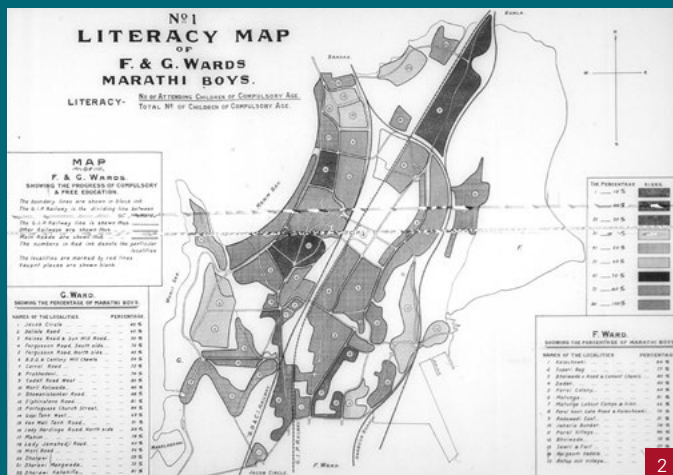
Certain records as well as newspaper and other reports on primary education in Bombay city were also accessed through

the digital archives of Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune, and the Asiatic Society of Mumbai, as well as from the India Office Records of the British Library, London. All these refer to political debates of the time in the Bombay Presidency around educational provision, social access and the lives of the working class in the Girangaon area. Extracting and collating relevant material from the records, refining the analytical framework and writing of the working paper for publication in the online Working Paper Series of the project on *Education and the Urban* is currently under way.



1. Bombay Municipal Corporation, Proceedings of the School Records Committee, Education Department.
2. Literacy maps in Wards F and G by medium of instruction and gender, 1926
Source: India Office Records, Asian and African Collections, British Library, Administration Report of the Schools Committee, Bombay Municipality 1926-27.

3. Vitthalbhai Patel's resolution for Free and Compulsory Education in Bombay.
Source: India Office Records, Asian and African Collections, British Library General Reference Collection 8357.c.22 conditions of the wage-earning classes in Bombay, London: PS. King and Son, Ltd.



The Changing Urban, Educational Aspirations and Opportunities: Perspectives from the Margins of Delhi City

Geetha B. Nambissan (Principal Investigator)

JNU, New Delhi

This project maps the rapidly changing urban and educational landscape in the city of Delhi. It investigates the implications of these changes on the aspirations and strategies of poor migrants on the margins of the city. The study includes groups, such as Dalits and Muslims, which have experienced economic and social vulnerability because of poverty and marginalized identities of caste and minority status. Such marginalization includes segregated spatial locations where they reside. Gender also mediates marginality and influences opportunities for better life chances. The study is based mainly on a review of relevant secondary

research on Delhi in order to map urban transformations and changes in the systems of schooling (public and private) that the city has witnessed and examines how this has led to privilege and disadvantage for its inhabitants. Using the lens of marginality, the project analyses what these changes have meant for the schooling opportunities, aspirations and future life chances of children.



1. A government school for girls in Bawana

2. Bawana: Bawana, a resettlement colony in north-west Delhi

3. Students at a government schools for boys in Bawana

Photograph courtesy of Yamini Agarwal



Work done in report year

- a) Relevant secondary material on Delhi as a rapidly transforming 'mega' and now 'world class city', focusing on the post-independence decades, has been reviewed. This includes the city's Master Plans, and policies related to urbanisation, the resettlement of unauthorised colonies and the establishment of educational institutions. Research studies on the poor in the city have also been reviewed.
- b) Field work was carried out in Bawana, a resettlement colony in north-west Delhi. Families uprooted as a result of the demolition of their settlements in Yamuna Pushta (in central Delhi) in 2004 were rehabilitated in this colony. Interviews were carried out with a few families residing in the colony to explore their struggles for livelihood and education. Discussions were held with teachers working in the schools in the colony and some NGO workers.
- c) Interviews are being transcribed.

I expect that the project will be completed by June 2020.

Ethnicity, Aspirations and Education: A Study of Young Women from the North-East Region residing in an urban village in Delhi

Geetha B. Nambissan (Principal Investigator) and Yamini Agarwal (Junior Research Associate)
JNU, New Delhi

An important strand of urban migration is that of young people who aspire for better educational and professional opportunities that the city is seen to offer. As the centre of administrative, bureaucratic and professional opportunities and as well as high quality educational institutions, Delhi is particularly attractive. A sizeable number of those who come to Delhi for this purpose are youth from the north-eastern states of India, where educational institutions are inadequate and of relatively poor quality. Youth from this region find accommodation in what are classified as 'urban villages' within Delhi. These are former villages engulfed by the city where lax building norms have provided opportunities for affordable rent and led to a transformation of these spaces, making them a unique mix of the

rural and urban. Fragmentary research on migrants from the Northeast in Delhi as well as newspaper reports point to the verbal and physical violence that they face within the city because of stereotypes and prejudices that prevail about the region to which they belong and its culture. Women in particular are subject to sexual harassment as well. Yet we find an increasing number of young people from the different states in the Northeast coming to Delhi to access education and occupations that the city offers.

The study focuses on 10-15 young women from the Northeast residing in one such urban village in Delhi – Munirka – that has transformed primarily because of the relatively cheap accommodation that it makes available. It explores the

journeys of these women from their states of origin to Delhi, their struggles to find a place to live, access to education/occupations and their efforts to make a home in the city. The project attempts to understand how ethnicity and gender mediate their day-to-day lives in the neighbourhood, the city and its institutions, and their strategies to 'fit in' as well as to create a social space of their own. Perceptions of the Northeast and young people from this region will also be explored by interviews with key persons in the urban village.

Work done in report year

- d) Relevant literature, research studies, newspaper reports and social media postings by/about migrants from the Northeast of India have been compiled.
- e) Interviews with participants will begin in February 2020.

We expect to complete the project by August 2020.

Presentations/Conference Lecture

1. Geetha B. Nambissan, panel discussion on *Marginality and the Urban: Linkages and Intersections*, GHI London, 26 June 2019
2. Geetha B Nambissan, *Caste and the Politics of the Early Public in Schooling: Reflections on the Dalits' Struggle for an Equitable Education*. Distinguished Lecture at the International Conference of the Comparative Education Society of India, Delhi, 10 December 2019.
3. Yamini Agarwal, *The Sikhs, Education and Identity*. Paper presented at the Tenth International Conference of the Comparative Education Society of India on 'Education, Inclusion and Equity', at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 10 December 2019

Schools, Colleges and the Creation of a Suburb: An Education History of Nineteenth Century Uttarpara

Akash Bhattacharya (Junior Research Associate)
MWS IBO

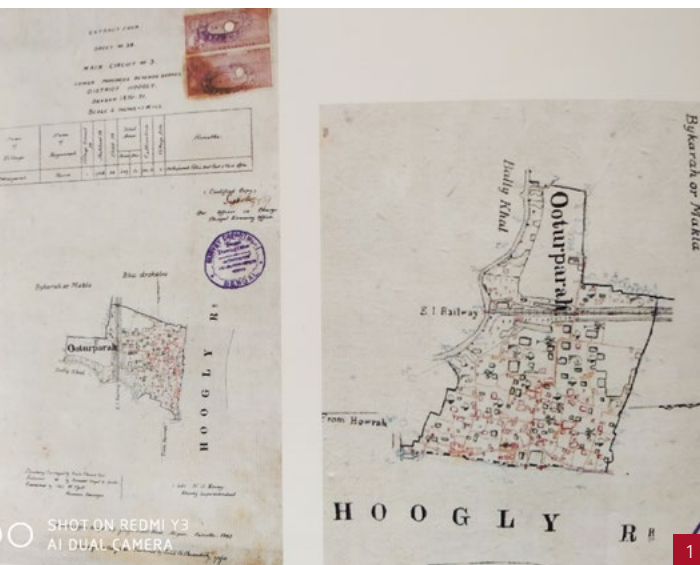
A couple of centuries ago Uttarpara in the Hooghly district, now a bustling suburb of Kolkata, was little more than an obscure northern corner of a village called Bali located roughly twenty kilometres from the Esplanade area of the colonial city. Come forward by another half a century and you will find both administrative and vernacular public discourses referring to Uttarpara as a sub-

urb of Calcutta. Starting from the 1850s, in the three decades that followed, Uttarpara emerged as a major hub of educational activity and witnessed massive infrastructural "development". It was designated a municipality in 1862 and granted a government college in 1887. At the heart of transformation lay the *zamindari* house of the Mukherjees, which invested heavily in agricultural "improve-

ment” and made Uttarpara their administrative capital.

In my research, I focus on the historical specificity of the locational transformation of Uttarpara in the nineteenth century, in an effort towards understanding suburbs in post-colonial countries in their historical context. A range of areas emerged as suburbs of Calcutta in the second half of the nineteenth century. Industrialisation transformed Rishra, the

military cantonment changed Barrackpore while continued missionary activity suburbanised Serampore. In contrast to these, Uttarpara tells us a story of suburban growth through the interconnected operationalization of three modernising projects – infrastructural development in Uttarpara, agricultural improvement in rural Hooghly and the expansion of education in both – under the leadership of “enlightened *zamindars*”.



1. Uttarpara in maps, c. 1877

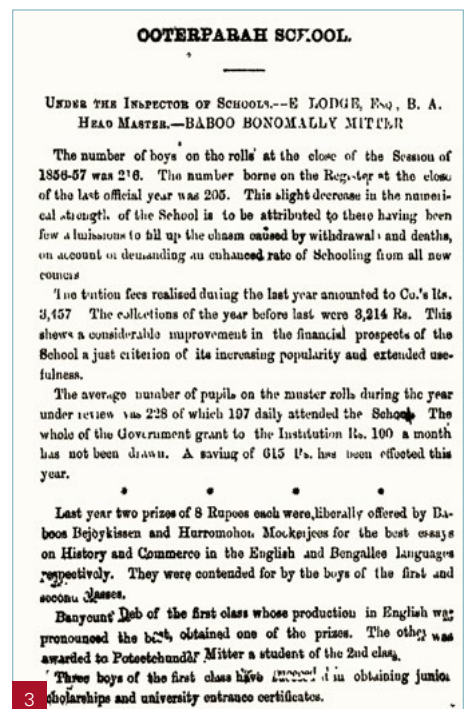
Source: Prabuddha Chattopadhyay (ed.) *Uttarpara: Ekti Alokprobaho*, Uttarpara Jaykrishna Sadharan Granthahagar, Uttarpara, 2009, p. 674.

2. Uttarpara Public Library, set up in 1859, was one of the focal points of the transformation of Uttarpara

Source: www.sriarobindoinstitute.org/saioe/Sri_Aurobindo/calcutta/uttarpara_jaykrishna_library

3. The Uttarpara School occupied a prominent place in the reports of the Department of Public Instruction's report as early as 1857-58

Source: *Report of the Department of Public Instruction, 1857-58, Appendix A, p. 293.*



Bookended by the opening of a bridge and a Government school in 1846 and that of the Government College in 1887, our project focuses on the trajectory of educational expansion as part of the above-mentioned threefold scheme of improvement. How the local elites envisaged the place of education within the scheme and how they reworked the government policies to give shape to their aspirations constitutes the key object of our enquiry. The research allows us to shed light not only on the historical constitution of suburbs in India but also helps us to connect the histories of education and urbanism in new ways. Departing from existing approaches towards the latter, which have done little more than highlight its role in the constituting the socio-cultural milieu of the colonial city, I placed the connection between education and the urban in the context of the suburbs. That in turn has allowed us to integrate the history of colonial spatial transformations beyond the confines of the colonial city into both educational studies as well as urban studies.

I have been working with three sets of sources for this project. The Proceedings of Education and the Department of Public Instruction Reports, alongside miscellaneous government reports on education forms the set of “official” sources on education. That is complemented by the official archives on nineteenth century urban development. Sources on local history such as local Bengali periodicals, biographies of leading reformers of the area, and select institutional records of schools, colleges and libraries, forms the third set of materials that I are trying to look at. I have looked at the Municipal records of Uttarpara Kotrung Municipality, and the Education Proceedings (Government of Bengal) at the West Bengal State Archives, vernacular materials including local journals such as the Education Gazette, reports of civil society organisations such as the Uttarpara Hitokorry Sabha, and biographies of leading figures such as Joykrishna Mukherjee Peary Mohan Mukherjee at the Joykrishna Library, as well as published reports of the Department of Public Instruction (Bengal).

Urban Dislocations and Educational Strategies: Metro Colonies, Bengaluru

Shivali Tukdeo (Principal Investigator) and Amar Mali (Research Assistant)
NIAS, Bengaluru

Introduction and Background

Displacements, eviction and rehabilitation have become common aspects of urban development initiatives. Focusing on restructuring of the city of Bengaluru over the last decade, especially in the context of new modes of transportation, this project pays greater attention to two rehabilitated neighbourhoods in the city.

The Metro train project has been a signature feature of the post-2000 development in Indian cities, starting with initial operations in Delhi, Kolkata, Bengaluru and moving gradually to other cities. Capital intensive projects such as the Metro rail highlight the linkages between public transportation, infrastructure-driven development and new ways of accessing the city. As the construction was underway, the Bangalore Metro Rail Cor-

poration Limited (BMRL) proceeded to acquire land in the city. Two settlements, centrally located and densely populated, were cleared out and rehabilitated to the periphery of the city. For the residents of these *Bastis*, the dislocation meant two contrasting pieces of reality: on the one hand, loss of their social world and, on the other, livelihood opportunities and acquisition of certain material resources as part of compensatory processes. The following questions inform our project: How do families start over in an ever-changing city like Bangalore? In what ways does dis/relocation create new margins that link to the city? How do planning for education and school preparedness become part of the resettled families? Our interest in the project stems from issues that are of contemporary relevance; but urban eviction and its aftermath in terms of rehabilitation and resettlement has long been connected to urban reforms and transformation. Research in a number of domains including urban informality, spatial reorganisation, development, shifts in public provisioning offer productive engagements for education and the urban in the context of the life of Bangalore.

In the last few months we have identified four major themes that have helped us in the analysis of contemporary urban conditions. We have also engaged with the central texts that respond to Bangalore's social history, regimes of urban planning and the politics of governance.

Methods

Our work is broadly situated within qualitative inquiry, leading us to deploy multiple approaches in engaging the field. First, we advance a critical reading of the Metro project in Bengaluru and pay

attention to the ways in which the construction of Metro is closely connected to the construction of the changed city, mobility in the city, access and affordability. From city plans to strategy documents for urban transportation to NGO and civic organisations' counter documentation about the feasibility of the Metro project: the varied sources allow us to put together competing visions and imagination of the city.

The sites of our field work have been two of the main resettlement colonies as well as the Metro offices in the city, schools and neighbourhoods of the Metro colonies. The two Metro colonies include houses constructed adjacent to the Metro staff quarters' premises. While one site has several small blocks of houses, each block comprising four small housing units, the other site is more horizontally spread out, leaving some room for the front yard, which is shared by a number of houses. Both the sites are at the periphery of Bangalore and regular public transportation is more than a kilometre away. Our field engagements include long interviews with the residents, discussions and dialogue sessions, along with detailed observations as we spent time in both the colonies. An important aspect of the making of the Metro colony is its proximity to the staff quarters, yet a marked separation from it. Except for sharing the premises, the resettled housing colony and the staff colony are different in terms of the quality of housing, provisions of electricity and water supply and safety. In their first steps towards starting over, the residents of the resettlement colony have to make sense of the segregation, made evident with a barbed wired fence. In their attempts to readjust in the new place, many residents have invested in two-wheelers in order to commute, as availability of transportation is difficult. We have collected narratives,

life-histories and spoken to a number of people outside of the Metro colonies that we are currently in the process of analysing.

Analysis

Our field visits to the Metro resettlement colonies made us aware of the spatial distinctiveness of the two colonies. Marked by an absence of basic provisions such as drinking water, child care support, public schools, bus services and health care facilities, the two neighbourhoods appear distanced from the city in many ways. Lack of good quality schools and an urgency to secure admissions in good schools was repeatedly voiced by parents in our interactions.

The following themes help us structure our analysis:

1. Dislocation and Resettling: As families move from the city centre to the fringes, they encounter a number of issues. The anxiety surrounding valid official documentation trumps all the other worries. The move has resulted in the loss of income for a number of

women who were earlier engaged in domestic work in peoples' homes or janitorial work in hospitals or other establishments.

2. School Admissions: Chains of Dependence: Among the availability of schools in the expanding market, parents value English medium schools that have low fees and transportation facilities. Expenses involving transportation and coaching make education one of the most economically stressful decision.

3. Importance of Good Schools: There is a consensus on the importance of good schooling for the future of children. From discipline-oriented, academic-oriented to that of financially affordable, good schools mean many things. As families strategise for securing admissions, entry through the Right to Education (RtE) Act involves a long and arduous process.

We hope to complete our article, to be published in our online *Education and the Urban Working Paper Series*, by April 2020.

Education Hubs and the Changing Urban Landscape in the Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR), 1949-2009

Debarati Bagchi (Senior Research Associate)
MWS IBO

My project explores the complex connections between higher education institutions and the history of urbanization in postcolonial Delhi-National Capital Region. I examine the transformations

of policy on higher education between the University Commission of 1948 and the National Knowledge Commission of 2007. The research focuses on the question of education infrastructure in

postcolonial India by looking specifically at the inter-related issues of land, the rental economy and university-neighbourhood relations. My ethnographic and archival research examines how the setting up of universities contributes to socio-economic transformations in the neighbourhood and redefines the frontiers between the rural and the urban.

Work Done in Report Year

Framing the project

The project was initially conceived as a study of private university led urbanisation around Delhi-NCR since mid-2000s. Over the last few months of the report year, it has evolved into a more historical project that approaches the question of “education and the urban” since India’s independence from British colonial rule in 1947. Delhi witnessed the establishment of public funded universities and institutes with acres of gated land during the first few decades after India’s independence. Some of the earliest of these were the Indian Institute of Technology (established in 1961) and Jawaharlal Nehru University (founded in 1969), both located in South Delhi. However, with the liberalization of the Indian economy in the 1990s, there was a boom in private investment in higher education. My research looks into the various stages of the expansion of higher education in postcolonial India and specifically tries to understand how, from early 2000s, this sector witnessed a phenomenal shift, on the back of a particular relationship between education, land acquisition and urbanization. The two sites of field research are Munirka village in South Delhi and Akbarpur Barota village in Sonipat.

Developing the research question and the methodology

While education studies and urban studies have flourished as rich areas of historical research in South Asia, the interface of education and the urban has received little scholarly attention from scholars. The project addresses this gap by drawing attention to issues like land and locality in the study of higher education in postcolonial India. I argue that the lack of conversation between the two research areas does not merely reflect a gap in the historiography. Rather, it has been structured by the two different kinds of archives that have traditionally been used for writing the histories of the two concerned fields. We find very little mention of the process of acquisition, allocation or demarcation of land for the university in the records of the Department of Education. Similarly, specific discussions on university land seem to be largely absent in the Land Department records. Thus, it is crucial to combine productively the study of archival documents with oral history interviews to understand better the larger historical question concerning the relationship between higher education and urban transformations.

Locating sources and sites for the study

I use a combination of archival records and oral history methods for my research. I try to understand the shifts in the policy landscape by looking into the University Education Commission (1949), Kothari Commission (1966), National Policy on Education (1968, 1986) and National Knowledge Commission (2007). Alongside these, I use the reports of the five year plans beginning from 1951 till

the eleventh plan year of 2007-2012, to understand how the vision of the post-colonial Indian state on higher education evolved during these years. Besides archival research, oral history helps me understand how people grapple with the phenomenon of urban change around universities. I use interviews with teachers, students and workers (often recruited from the locality) at the universities and landlords, shop owners and residents of the neighbouring villages.

I examine the phenomenon of higher education and urban transformation at two different sites. The first of these sites is the Munirka village in South Delhi, bordering the campus of the state-funded Jawaharlal Nehru University established in 1969. The second site concerns the village of Akbarpur Barota, neighbouring the O.P.Jindal Global University, a private university funded by the Jindal Steel Group, which came up in 2009 in Sonipat in the northern fringes of Delhi. These

1. Jawaharlal Nehru University, established in 1969.

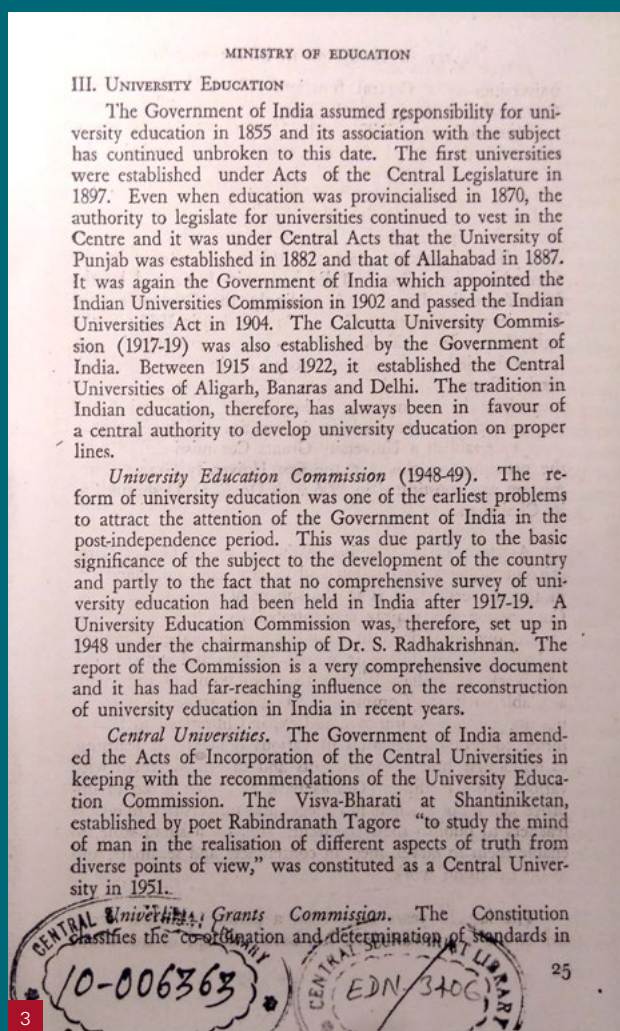
Source: www.educationworld.in/jawaharlal-nehru-university-between-the-devil-and-saffron-tide/

2. O. P. Jindal University, established in 2009.

Source: O. P. Jindal University official Facebook page

3. A snippet from the archive on higher education in post-independence India.

Source: *Review of Education in India 1947-1961*, New Delhi: National Council of Education Research and Training, Ministry of Education, 1962.



two sites respectively bear the mark of two crucial historical moments: the first marks the high-noon of the public university and the second, the beginnings of the private. A study of the two contrasting sites will enable a better understanding of how the setting up of university campuses enables various kinds of shifts in property relations and transforms the social fabric of the neighbourhood.

Initial findings

My initial field visits have opened up interesting questions for the research. It can be observed that, at two different junctures in the history of higher education in India, land acquisition resulted in very different patterns of urban transformation. Munirka village represents an “urban village” of South Delhi with its strong agrarian history, pockets of authorised and unauthorised settlements and a strong caste and kinship network that controls the rental economy of the area. Over the years, Munirka has become a hub of cheap accommodation and market for outstation students coming to study at the Jawaharlal Nehru University. Rental economy and social relationships in Munirka have been largely shaped by its proximity to a public university. My field research during the coming months will try to build upon these initial findings and explore further connections between the university and its neighbourhood.

Akbarpur Barota village is located in the district of Sonipat, beside the highway that connects the states of Delhi, Haryana and Punjab. Jindal University has come up as a pocket of urbanised elite higher education campus amidst the largely agrarian landscape of Sonipat. The University bears the tag of a “global university” and is integrally connected with the vast acres of Jindal Global City, a housing project of the Jindal Group promoting “world class” urban living. Akbarpur Barota stands as a stark “outside” to the securitized campus of the new university. However, there are interesting connections that have developed between the village and the university in terms of business and work opportunities. The field visits at Sonipat during the coming months will aim to grasp these connections better. The research will finally try to understand how the university-locality relationship differs in the two sites.

Plan of work

The field research will be conducted during the months of January to April 2020. On the basis of the first phase of research, I will contribute a paper for the *Education and the Urban Working Paper Series*.

II Project Reports

2. Selling History:

Tourist Guides, Bazaar Histories, and the Politics of the Past

Selling History: Tourist Guides, Bazaar Histories, and the Politics of the Past

Indra Sengupta

Head of India Branch Office

Head of India Centre/German Historical Institute London

In collaboration with Neeladri Bhattacharya (Principal Investigator),

JNU, New Delhi

and Sourav Mahanta and Deepasri Baul (Research Assistants)

My research is a joint project with Neeladri Bhattacharya as a part of ICAS:MP, thematic module *History as a Political Category*. It is also a part of my longstanding research interest in the politics of the past, of heritage and historical monuments.

The project examines the mutually constitutive relationship between political change and locally produced and circulated, 'popular' historical narratives in India since the 1980s. The aim is to understand the mutually constitutive relationship between ideas of the past that prevail on these sites and the changing political since the 1980s. These narratives have often centred on built heritage sites (such as the Babari-Masjid in Ayodhya). The region I study (Bengal and Orissa) has a weaker association with such forces of Hindu nationalism. Nevertheless, as the recent parliamentary election results of May 2019 indicate, the influence of these political forces is rapidly increasing. As the Nehruvian narratives of India as a nation of diversity give way to narratives

of a homogenous nation, it is necessary to move beyond the realm of academic history to look at more popular versions of the past that circulate around specific places. This will provide us with clues to the development of political attitudes, such as the formation of sectarian identities in small locales and regions that are far away from the political centre of the Indian nation.

Like the larger project in which it is embedded, my research focuses on inexpensive travel guides, 'bazaar histories' and chap books. These books are rarely written by professional historians (although some authors claim academic affiliations) and are sold in a limited area around specific sites of historical or political importance. As a particular genre of historical representation, these guides and local histories often challenge national master narratives, at the same time borrowing from them. My project focusses on the site of Murshidabad in West Bengal and looks at both the content and the context of guidebooks and

histories that circulate there: it looks at what kinds of narratives of the past are recounted, who writes and publishes these books, how they are financed, and who reads them.

Murshidabad, the capital of the Nawabs of Bengal since the early eighteenth century, is still replete with giant mansions, not only the Nawab's residence but the palatial houses built by the rich merchants Jagat Seth, the local Raja of Nasipur, Kathgola, Kasimbazaar and many more. Murshidabad's historical significance is as the site of the defeat of the local Nawabs of Bengal and the beginning of colonial rule in India in the middle of the 18th century. In particular, it is related to the involvement of Bengal's own Nawabs in signing away their country to a foreign power. Thus, for long it was a lieu de memoire of national humiliation, as national histories would have it. Today, Murshidabad is significant in the politics of Eastern India as an important parliamentary constituency, abutting India's border with Bangladesh, with a population of two-thirds Muslim and one-third Hindu. Courting Muslim voters has been traditionally pursued by all major political parties.

Local historical accounts in the guidebooks we have collected offer us interesting counter narratives: rather than defeat and national humiliation, they focus, for example, more on family relationships and family betrayal amongst the nawabs, or on the harmonious co-existence of Hindus and Muslims in the region. These accounts contain stories from the households of the Nawabs and the private lives of the court aristocracy. Courtesans, wives possessed by evil spirits, the Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula's longing for Rani Bhavani's daughter and similar tales are



Back Cover of a Tourist Guide Book from West Bengal

Source: IBO Collections

the central themes of these chapbooks. When we first conceptualised the project, such histories drew our attention.

However, more recently, we find that the rise of the internet and social me-

dia has significantly influenced historical narratives in and of Murshidabad. It has linked the local with larger spatial scales of politics and of the production and circulation of local history. An example is the work of the prosperous and influential local community of the *Sheherwalis*, who move easily between Murshidabad, Kolkata and international circles and are as active in the international heritage movement as they are in Murshidabad's local history circles. In 2010, they established the Murshidabad Heritage Society, which organises heritage tours of Murshidabad with a focus on spiritual-cultural Hinduism. The histories told at such tours, which also challenge national master narratives, and their significance for a changing political space in India since the late twentieth century now also form a part of the study.

In the report year, the early field work conducted in West Bengal (Bishnupur, Murshidabad and Maldah), Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh by our Research Assistant Paulami Guha Biswas in 2017-18 was followed up by two phases of fieldwork, respectively in January-February and November 2019. One part of the fieldwork covered sites of pilgrimage (Vrindavan, Mathura, Benaras, Ayodhya, Gorakhpur,

Haridwar and Rishikesh), some of which such as Ayodhya are politically charged, for the larger project. A part of this fieldwork, conducted by our Research Assistant Sourav Mahanta, was a further field study in Murshidabad. The purpose of the field study was twofold: 1) to gain access to the archival and library collections of the *Sheherwali* community to locate their own histories in the history of Murshidabad and 2) to take part in the heritage tours organised by the Murshidabad Heritage Development Society and record the narratives told on these tours. I started analysing the material collected in 2018 and this part of the work will continue in 2020. Along with Neeladri Bhattacharya, I plan to present the research findings in an ICAS:MPTM1 conference planned for 2021, where we plan to discuss these findings in a comparative perspective with scholars working on similar material and asking similar questions both in India and elsewhere.

The fieldwork has produced a photo collection, sound recordings, and a substantial collection of local history texts and tourist guidebooks, which are stored at the IBO.

II Project Reports

3. Labour History

From Girangaon to 'Mini Pakistan': The Precarious Place of Working Muslims in Twentieth Century Bombay

Robert Rahman Raman

MWS IBO

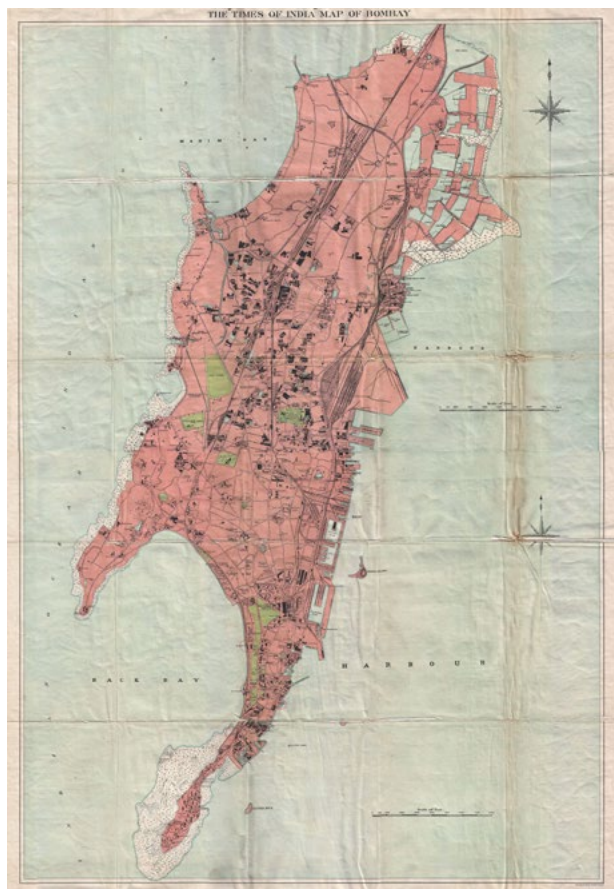
Project Description

My PhD research, on the social and political history of labour in Bombay (now, Mumbai), focuses on the plebeian culture of Girangaon, the so-called 'village of textile mills.' The term "Girangaon" came increasingly into use, especially in the aftermath of the six-month long mill worker's general strike of 1928, to signify Bombay's working-class neighbourhoods. Housing a substantial section of workers employed in Bombay mills, along with various other sections of the urban workforce living in various localities marked by region, language, caste and religion, Girangaon developed its own unique history and heterogeneous political culture. This history and political culture of Girangaon embodied a range of diverse socio-political currents within different neighbourhoods that existed side by side. Of these, neighbourhoods predominantly inhabited by Muslim migrants from various parts of the subcontinent have not been explored systematically in the existing literature on the city.

The prevailing tendency in both public discourse and scholarly work has been

to depict the heterogeneous political culture of Girangaon as essentially Maharashtrian and Hindu. Hence, the diverse and divergent histories of these neighbourhoods have as yet not been analysed on their own terms. More specifically, an understandable but disproportionate historiographical as well as ethnographic focus on the 'saffronisation' of Bombay along with the rise of Shiv Sena has resulted in a blinkered view of linguistic and religious minorities of Bombay's urban milieu. By studying the Muslim workers neighbourhoods like Madanpura, Mominpura, Nagpada or Kamatipura, my research provides a window to an alternative understanding of the diversity and richness of Girangaon's political culture and the transformations it witnessed during the first half of twentieth century.

The main objective of my research project is to study long-term changes in the identification of Muslim dominated neighbourhoods in Girangaon by its inhabitants as well as others as "Muslim" neighbourhoods and the impact of these precarious 'placings' on the social and political landscape of Bombay as a whole. Specifically, the project



explores the transformation of localities in Bombay from “working-class neighbourhoods” with many Muslim inhabitants in the early decades of twentieth century into “Muslim neighbourhoods” in the years following independence, sheltering many workers. It further looks into how these “working-class neighbourhoods” which in the early decades of the twentieth century were identified as an integral part of Girangaon received the derogatory label of “Mini-Pakistan” to indicate their “alien,” quasi-extraterritorial and “unnatural” character in the years immediately following India’s partition in 1947.

To study this shift, I use Frederick Cooper’s conceptualization of the processes of identification. This allows me to map the shifts emerging in the way the Muslim workers of Girangaon navigated between relational and categorical modes of identification and how in changing situations and contexts they were identified by others (Cooper 2005, Ch. 3). For the study, along with colonial records and private papers, I make extensive use of relevant primary sources in English and other Indian languages that have been largely neglected by historians. These include various newspapers, periodicals, pamphlets, biographies and autobiographies produced in Urdu, Marathi, Hindi and English, and housed in libraries like Marathi Granth Sangrahalaya and Awami Idara.

Current Status of the Research

In the course of 2019, I have been working on the unfinished chapters and revising the already-written ones in the light of comments and suggestions I have received. During this last one year I have specifically looked at the records of the National Archives of India, Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, and P.C. Joshi Archives on Contemporary History in New Delhi to fill in existing gaps in the chapters that I have already written.

I have further revised my earlier plan of writing six chapters to five chapters for the thesis, out of which, so far, I have completed drafts of four chapters, and I am currently working on the draft of the fifth and last chapter.

Work on *the extended archives of Indian labour*: In this last one year, after going through the existing records, I began to work on the old metadata, which was

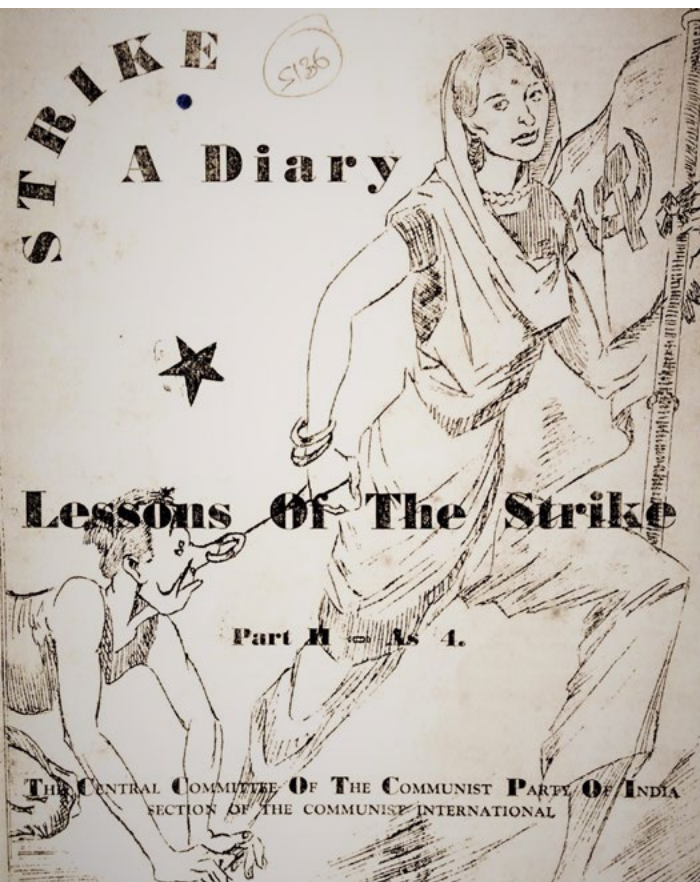
generated almost two decades back, when the records were digitalised. Besides standardising it, I started writing abstracts of the files. After our meeting with the representatives of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, where the digital repository would be housed and maintained, in September 2019 we made changes in the old metadata. These changes that included rearranging the file in folders and streamlining the old and introducing new columns to make them compatible, were based on the suggestions of the experts at the IISH Amsterdam. Since September 2019, I have been working on writing abstracts of the remaining files in tandem with the new metadata, in close collaboration

with other colleagues in our Labour history network outside the IBO. In December 2019, we transferred the first round of reworked metadata along with the digital files to IISH to check compatibility and upload.

Publication and presentation in the past year

Presented a paper titled '*The General Strike of 1919 and the making of Bombay's mill District*' at an international conference organised by University of Bombay and University of Leicester titled *Exploring the Unexplored: New Perspectives on the History of Mumbai* in Satish Pradhan Dnyansadhan College, Thane, India, 5-7 January 2019.

Publication: "Civil Disobedience and the City: Congress and the Working classes in Bombay, c.1930-32", in Prashant Kidambi et al, eds., *Bombay before Mumbai: Essays in Honour of Jim Masselos*, Hurst & Company, London, 2019



Cover page of the second part of the strike diary published by communist party of India

Source: Maharashtra State Archives

II Project Reports

4. Third-Party Project

Migration of Images, Texts, Ideas and Objects from Timurid Central Asia to Mughal India, 16th – 18th centuries²

A part of the transnational research project *Bilderfahrzeuge*:³ Aby Warburg's Legacy and the Future of Iconology, funded by the Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

Dipanjita Dinda

Project Description

The research project seeks to provide a fundamental contribution to a cultural history – through a history of images and ideas practised in an interdisciplinary and international setting. My project is a part of the research theme, “Movement of Peoples, Ideas and Images” of the IBO. My research examines meanings, intentions and ideas concealed in Mughal paintings that evidence trans-cultural encounters between Central Asia and Mughal India. These hidden riddles will reveal the rich archive of historical, political, social and cultural memory, woven into a distinct pictorial tapestry, for constructing a legitimate dynastic identity for Mughal emperors in India.

In the sixteenth century, there was a dense traffic of images that migrated

from Central Asia to the Indian subcontinent. Some of this movement was physical – moving through the vehicle of travelling objects and artists; some of it was virtual, with imaginative artists of Hindustan trying to create a vision of the Timurid/Central Asian heritage. My research focuses on this dynamic moment when Mughal artists attempted to depict the imagined glory of the Timurid empire in illustrated manuscripts. To record and display the greatness and grandeur of their empire, several Timurid princes had initiated prestigious illustrated manuscript projects, showcasing the artistic brilliance of calligraphers, artists, colourists, and album makers, employed at the imperial courts. On account of their portability, illustrated manuscripts were easily transportable, and arrived from Herat (in present day Afghanistan) to India, particularly after the decline of the Timurids

² I am a Junior Research Associate in the International Research Project, “*Bilderfahrzeuge*: Aby Warburg's Legacy and the Future of Iconology.”

³ The term *Bilderfahrzeuge*, literally meaning “image vehicles”, was coined by the German art historian Aby Warburg



Detail of Akbar Receiving Iranian Ambassador, The first Akbarname (Book of Akbar), Mughal c. 1590s

Photograph courtesy of Victoria and Albert Museum, London

in early sixteenth century. These illustrated manuscripts, containing images and texts that described the history and culture of the Timurids, served as models for Mughal artists while narrating and illustrating the Mughal reign in India.

Key questions

How can the historical, political, social and cultural memory of the Mughals be traced in illustrated manu-

scripts? What were the particular events, episodes and genres, which expressed a shared cultural heritage with Timurid ancestry, favoured by the Mughals for shaping their dynastic identity?

How significant was classical Persian literature for translating meanings, intentions and ideas into conversations between text and image in illustrated folios? Were Mughal artists successful in rendering gestures, postures and emotions, contained in Persian literary works,

for expressing moods and feelings upon portrait-personalities of chief protagonists, including emperors, in historical and classical manuscripts?

Did the encounter with Western art, brought by Jesuits to the Mughal courts in the 16th century, transform the art of Mughal artists? Did the Mughal artist merely “mimic” the artistic vocabulary accessed from European art for achieving realism in documenting historical events and details from life? Or, did “borrowings” from European art particularly benefit Mughal artists in developing a signature pictorial language for expressing emotions, feelings and dramatization?

Approach

My study takes issue with the accepted view of the dominance of the impact of Western art on Mughal art. Instead, it sees in the Central Asian roots of Mughal art as strong an influence. At the same time, these original images were customised by Mughal artists as they migrated from Central Asia to Hindustan. The study, analysis and interpretation of images and inscribed texts that often accompanied pictorial composition will provide an entry into the intellectual matrix of the Mughal elite, and help identify the impact of Persian Sufism on image-making practices in Mughal art. Further, the poetics between text and image will provide a methodology for examining Mughal paintings contextualised within its own cultural practices, such as in classical Persian poetry, literature and philosophy.

Work done in report year

I joined the *Bilderfahrzeuge* project in February 2019. In March 2019, I attended a meeting at the Warburg Institute, London, to introduce myself and present my research ideas to the project directors and research associates. In June 2019, along with my colleagues, I planned, hosted and participated in a workshop, “Image-Vessels”, at the Warburg Institute, London. In November 2019, I visited Berlin to attend a workshop, Toxic Art Histories, hosted by the Cluster of Excellence “Matters of Activity,” Zentral-labor, Berlin. During my visit, my project director, Prof Gerhard Wolf, enabled my research of many Timurid and Mughal paintings (15th – 16th centuries) preserved at the Staatsbibliothek and the Museum for Islamic Art. I also attended talks, met scholars and curators of museums and archives associated with Mughal/Islamic art. In November 2019, I interacted with several professors and members of the Evaluation Commission, as well as presented my research at the evaluation procedure of Max Weber Stiftung, IBO, New Delhi.

In the report year, I began to assemble a database of images collected from several sources that include my photographs of original paintings taken at archives, libraries and museums; images from digitized manuscripts available on online museum collections and scanned images from published material. This image collection is a part of the database the bigger project will generate. Instead of using a limited chronological timeline, I have classified my material according to people, environment, object and emotion. I have also studied a 16th century Persian text, *Iyāri Dānish*,

a book of animal fables translated and illustrated several times over the centuries. By comparing the rich poetics of text and image contained in manuscripts produced between 15th - 17th centuries, this part of my research will a) trace the assimilation or rejection of ideas and motifs transferred from Persian illustrations; and b) identify tools of verisimilitude transferred from European painting and prints, and applied by Mughal artists for expressing dramatization, feelings and emotions upon animal protagonists.

Publications

Blog essay: "Synthesis between Text and Image: Sarnath Bannerjee's Graphic Fiction," (to be published) in *Bilderfahrzeuge*>Blog>Review, 2020. <https://bilderfahrzeuge.hypotheses.org/3950>

Book Review: Kavita Singh, *Real Birds in Imagined Gardens* (2017), published in *Bilderfahrzeuge*>Blog>Readings, 2019. <https://bilderfahrzeuge.hypotheses.org/3950>

"The Mughal Sikander: Influence of the Romance of Alexander on Mughal Manuscript Painting," *Dialogue of Civilizations: India and Greece*, ed. Anil Kumar Singh, Aryan Books International, 2019, pp. 201-217

"A Mole on Akbar's Nose: Subjectivity in Mughal Portraiture in Response to Persian Sufism," *India and Central Asia*, Institute of Indo Persian Studies and the India International Centre, New Delhi, 2019 (manuscript in preparation)

Workshops and Conferences

Planning, hosting and participating in Image/Vessel – a workshop organized by the International Research Group, 'Bilderfahrzeuge' at the Warburg Institute, London, 17-18 June 2019. Presentation of paper, "Birth of Timur" at the workshop

Presentation and talk at the Warburg Institute, London, 14 March 2019, "Rustam and Akbar: Poetics between Text and Image in Mughal Manuscript Painting"

Reading Group: The Warburg Legacy:

1st Reading: 23 August 2019, Fritz Saxl, *Why Art History*, 1957. Venue: School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Participants: Students of MA (Visual Studies, Theatre and Performance Studies, Cinema Studies) In collaboration with: Professor Parul Dave Mukherjee

2nd Reading: 14 January 2020, Monica Juneja, *Global Art History and the "Burden of Representation"*, 2012. Venue: College of Art, Delhi University, New Delhi. Participants: Students of MFA (Painting)

III Conference and Workshop Reports

**Panel discussion on Education, Marginality and the Urban:
Linkages and Intersections German Historical Institute London
26 June 2019, 5-7 pm
Debarati Bagchi
MWS IBO**

Speakers:

Isabel Ramos Lobato, ILS Research Institute for Regional and Urban Development Dortmund
Nandini Manjrekar, Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS) Mumbai
Shivali Tukdeo, National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) Bengaluru
Geetha B. Nambissan, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Delhi
Georgie Wemyss, University of East London

Moderator and commentator:

Meg Maguire, King's College London

A panel discussion on *Education, Marginality and the Urban: Linkages and Intersections* took place at the German Historical Institute London on 26 June 2019, 5-7 pm. The panel discussion was framed by the conversations and early findings of the research group on *Education and the Urban in India*, which is run by the Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office and the India Research Programme of the German Historical Institute London. The project consists of multi-sited research studies by several Indian scholars on the relationship between education and the complex dynamics of urbanisation. In particular, the research pays attention to the production of social differentiation and marginality in colonial, postcolonial

and contemporary urban India. The panel was planned to bring together some of the principal investigators of the group with scholars from the UK and Germany who are working on related themes to share perspectives emanating from their research engagement within different socio-political and urban contexts. The discussion focused on the intersectionalities of education, marginality and the urban space. The panel discussion was aimed at developing a sharper theoretical and empirical understanding of the linkages between education and marginalisation in different urban contexts.

The panel discussion started off with the welcome address by Christina von

Hodenberg, the Director of German Historical Institute London, followed by a brief introduction by Indra Sengupta. The first speaker, Isabel Ramos Lobato, presented her work on *Education and the urban: Free choice policies and their impact on school segregation*. Her presentation discussed the different dimensions of school segregation in the context of city schools in contemporary Germany. She explained how socio-spatial structure, individual practices and institutional context function as three key factors that intersect and converge leading to school segregation in an urban context. With the help of maps of the city of Mülheim an der Ruhr, she demonstrated how German cities have witnessed increasing social and ethnic polarisation. This can be the key to understanding social segregation of primary schools. Although implementation of free primary schools was supposed to increase parental choice and equal opportunities, a spatially varying and socially selective school choice pattern could be traced. Thus, individual practices become another crucial element determining school choices. The choice criteria and constraints of middle-class parents differ from the working-class parents. An interesting find was that working-class parents deliberately dissociate themselves from the so-called elite schools. Such boundaries pave the way for segregated educational pathways. Free choice becomes a non-realistic option. Admission policies, school autonomy and differentiation of the school market (for example, various schools offering courses to attract elite parents) serve as the institutional context that deepens school segregation. Thus, urban segregation, school segregation and the segregation of choice and belonging come together to produce education inequality. The presenter concluded by suggesting that urban and school policies

need to be integrated in order to address such inequalities.

The second panellist, Nandini Manjrekar, presented her research on *Public Education in an Industrial City: Bombay, 1900-1945*. She began with a historical account of the making of Girangaon as a village of the mills and its location within the modern industrial metropolis of Bombay. The presentation traced the shifting landscape of public education in Girangaon. From the 1920s, after the Montague-Chelmsford reforms, education was handed over to local municipal corporations. The passing of the Bombay Provincial Primary Education Act in 1923 was followed by the implementation of Free and Compulsory Primary Education (FCPE) in Girangaon. This initiated a mill-district specific labour education

Source: German Historical Institute London

Panel Discussion

Education, Marginality and the Urban: Linkages and Intersections

An event of the GHIL India Centre




Photo courtesy of Johannes Manjrekar

Speakers

Isabel Ramos Lobato (Dortmund)
 Nandini Manjrekar (Mumbai)
 Geetha B. Nambissan (New Delhi)
 Shivali Tukdeo (Bengaluru)
 Georgie Wemyss (London)


Moderation and Comments

Meg Maguire (London)

at
 German Historical Institute London
 26 June 2019, 5-7 pm

**Max Weber
Stiftung**

Foundation
German Humanities
Institutes Abroad



**German
Historical
Institute
London**

in Bombay and reflected the agenda of the colonial state to discipline workers and their children and orient them to city life. Thus, primary education got entangled with the discourses of public hygiene and sanitation propagated by civic planning agencies like City Improvement Trust and Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC). The paper discussed the teacher recruitment procedures, curriculum, language medium and percentage of attendance and dropouts in these schools during their initial days. Night schools were started, mass meetings were conducted to create awareness about education. Between 1925 and 1933, there was an increase in the number of schools and enrolment. However, the schools functioned under various constraints like lack of adequate space, struggles over financing between the BMC and the Government and non-attendance of students due to their early engagement in wage work.

Photograph
courtesy of
German Historical
Institute London

Shivali Tukdeo, the third speaker of the panel, presented a paper titled *Urban*

Dislocations and Educational Strategies: Metro Complexes, Bengaluru.

The presentation looked into the entry of metro rail in Bangalore's social life and the ensuing changes in urban topography. Big infrastructure projects force the urban poor to relocate from the centre of the city to the fringes. This results in loss of work (particularly for women), increase in expenses of commuting to the city and an overall loss of contact with the city. The resettlement colonies often share premises with the Metro Staff quarters, but they are segregated and live under miserable conditions. Water and sanitation facilities are poor, they have no proper roads or transportation. Also, there are no *Anganwadis* or care centres for the poor nearby; rather, a number of private schools have come up in the neighbourhood. The urban poor are now trapped into the anxieties of admission in 'good schools' and chains of dependence that the English medium schools create. Thus, cyber cafes now provide 'assistance' with admissions, and private, paid coaching classes for English proficiency

become a compulsion. In the resettlement colonies, schools have become a source of economic stress among the people who have lost access to the city.

The next speaker of the panel was Geetha B. Nambissan, who spoke on *The Changing Urban and Education in Delhi: Privilege and Exclusion in a Mega City*. The paper traced how Delhi transformed from being a planned mega city in the 1960-61 to a world class city in the post-1990s. She reflected on



how the planning process itself was limited to small defined core areas, whereas the rest remained unplanned, illegal and unauthorised. She called this 'the informal production of urban spaces'. The city underwent increasing spatial polarisation by the 1990s and by 2000 and beyond, there was a shift in discourses on spatial makeover of the city, the relocation of settlement colonies in the fringes of the city and the citizenship of the poor. The discourse of the 'world class' went hand in hand with the efforts of criminalising slum dwellers and turning the urban poor from citizens to encroachers. Geetha Nambissan referred to her field research at the Bawana resettlement colony in Delhi to illustrate how these shifts altered the access of the poor to school education. There were no schools in Bawana for at least 2 years. Lack of public schools led to the cropping-up of unregulated private schools in the fringes of the city. The paper shows how urban transformations led to spatial exclusion of the poor and this, in turn, deprived them of access to education even after the passing of the Right to Education Act in 2009. The presentation showed the connection between right to the city and right to education.

The final speaker Georgie Wemyss presented a paper on *Education, Everyday Borderings and Hostile Environments*. The presentation, based on studies of East London, showed how borders have moved from the margins to the heart of the cities. An anti-immigration discourse and the extreme right have gained momentum all over the UK. De-territorialised border controls have become means of controlling both the number of migrants and the discourse of the UK as a desired space for immigration. The paper used the lens of 'everyday bordering' to understand the creation of educa-



tion borders in the UK. Campaigners like Against Borders for Children (ABC) have fought against nationality and country-of-birth data collection in schools across England. Their aim was to keep immigration checks out of schools and children in education. Finally, in 2018, the government issued guidance to stop this practice. However, bordering continues in the enrolment and admission processes in college and university education.

*Photograph
courtesy of
German Historical
Institute London*

After the five panel presentations, Meg Maguire discussed the larger questions that the panel addressed. She pointed out how all the five papers spoke to each other and together they brought out the complexities of the connections between education and the urban. She particularly pointed out that the papers highlighted the various ways in which the state plays a role in determining this connection. The panel concluded with a lively discussion.

IV Events

Workshops and Conferences

26 June, 2019

Panel discussion on Education, Marginality and the Urban: Linkages and Intersections

German Historical Institute London

The panel discussion is framed by the conversations and early findings of the research group on Education and the Urban in India, which is run by the Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office and the India Centre of the German Historical Institute London. The project consists of multi-sited research studies by several Indian scholars on the relationship between education and the complex dynamics of urbanisation. In particular, the research pays attention to the production of social differentiation and marginality in colonial, postcolonial and contemporary urban India. The panel will bring together some of the principal investigators of the group with scholars from the UK and Germany who are working on related themes to share perspectives emanating from their research engagement within different socio-political urban contexts. The discussion will focus on the intersectionalities of education, marginality and the urban space. The following lines of inquiry are of interest to us:

1. Schooling in the city and its relationship to contemporary discourses and practices of urban development
 2. Educational policy and multiple marginalisations of race, class, caste, gender, religion and nationality
 3. Neo-liberal globalisation and intersectionalities of education, marginality and the changing urban
- Through this discussion we hope to arrive at a sharper theoretical and empirical understanding of the linkages between education and marginalisation in different urban contexts.

Speakers: Isabel Ramos Lobato (ILS Research Institute for Regional and Urban Development Dortmund), Nandini Manjrekar (Tata Institute of Social Science Mumbai), Geetha B. Nambissan (JNU Delhi), Shivali Tukdeo (National Institute of Advanced Studies Bengaluru), Georgie Wemyss (University of East London)

*Moderator and commentator:
Meg Maguire (King's College London)*

20 – 22 May, 2019

In Global Transit Forced Migration of Jews and Other Refugees (1940s – 1960s)

**German Historical Institute | Pacific
Regional Office at the University of
California, Berkeley**

Second Conference in the Series
“In Global Transit” organized by the
German Historical Institutes in Washing-
ton and London in cooperation with the
Max Weber Stiftung Branch Offices in
Delhi and Beijing, and The Magnes Col-
lection of Jewish Art and Life, University
of California, Berkeley

Conveners: Wolf Gruner USC Shoah
Foundation Center for Advanced Gen-
ocide Research, Los Angeles Simone
Lässig German Historical Institute Wash-
ington Francesco Spagnolo The Magnes
Collection of Jewish Art and Life, Berke-
ley Swen Steinberg Queen’s University,
Kingston.

Max Weber Lecture Series

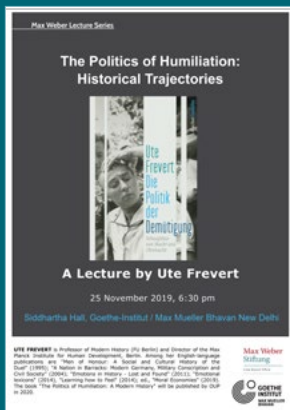
22 & 25 November, 2019

Ute Frevert

Max Planck Institute for Human Development
The Politics of Humiliation: Historical Trajectories

The talk is about the power of public shaming and humiliation in the modern world. Such strategies were either meant to punish and reintegrate a person, who had violated social norms, or to debase and stigmatize those whom others wanted to exclude from groups

or society at large. The talk follows the development of such practices since the late eighteenth century in legal, education and foreign policies, mainly with regard to Europe, China, and India. It focuses on the concept of human dignity and why this has become paramount.



Venues:

22 November 2019: Jadunath Museum and Resource Centre, Kolkata

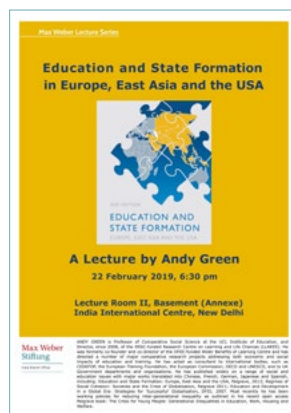
25 November 2019: Goethe Institut, New Delhi

Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan
Photograph courtesy of Tribhuwan Sharma





Photograph courtesy of Indra Sengupta



22 & 26 February, 2019

Andy Green

UCL Institute of Education

The Crisis for Young People. Generational Inequalities in Education, Work, Housing and Welfare

Education and State Formation in Europe, East Asia and the USA

Education has always been a key instrument of nation-building in new states. National education systems have typically been used to assimilate immigrants; to promote established religious doctrines; to spread the standard form of national languages; and to forge national identities and national cultures. They helped construct the very subjectivities of citizenship, justifying the ways of the state to the people and the duties of the people to the state. In this lecture, Andy Green discusses the social origins of mass education in the West, including the roles played industrial and urban change, proletarianisation and liberalism, and how nation-building lay at the heart of the creation of modern education. The more affluent states today often prioritise skills formation over citizenship

formation, but newly developed states continue to use education as a crucial vehicle for state-building. Most notably, education has been a tool of successful state formation in the developmental states of East Asia. While human capital theories have focused on how schools and colleges supply the skills for economic growth, Green shows how the forming of citizens and national identities through education has often provided the necessary condition for both economic and social development.

Venues:

22 February 2019: India International Centre, New Delhi

26 February 2019: School of Education TISS Mumbai

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VI People

HEAD OF OFFICE

Dr Indra Sengupta	Head of India Research Programme / German Historical Institute London (GHIL)
-------------------	--

DEPUTY HEAD OF OFFICE and SENIOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Dr Debarati Bagchi	MWS India Branch Office
--------------------	-------------------------

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS (Project: Education and the Urban)

Professor Nandini Manjrekar	Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) Mumbai
Professor Geetha B. Nambissan	Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Delhi
Dr Indra Sengupta	MWS India Branch Office / GHIL
Dr Shivali Tukdeo	National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) Bengaluru

RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

Ms Poushali Basak	MWS India Branch Office / TISS Mumbai (1 January-30 June 2019)
Mr Akash Bhattacharya	MWS India Branch Office (1 January- 31 July 2019)
Mr Robert Rahman Raman	MWS India Branch Office
Dr Dipanwita Donde	MWS India Branch Office

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Ms Yamini Agarwal	MWS India Branch Office / JNU Delhi
-------------------	-------------------------------------

ADMINISTRATION DELHI

Ms Deepanwita Dutta	Deputy Office Manager & Programme Coordinator, Delhi
Ms Sukanti Ekka	Administrative Assistant, Delhi
Mr Rohan Raphael Seth	Office Manager, Delhi

ADMINISTRATION BONN

Ms Beatrice Rennhack	Max Weber Stiftung – India Department, Bonn
----------------------	---

ADMINISTRATION LONDON

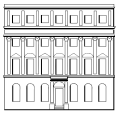
Ms Katharina Becker	Secretary, India Research Programme / GHIL
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Editorial Assistance: Katharina Becker

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German Humanities
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www.facebook.com/GHILIndiaCentreMWS

MWS India Branch Office

D31 Defence Colony (second floor)
New Delhi 110024
India

Tel + 9111 41500337

E-Mail: info@mwsIndia.org

mwsibo.hypotheses.org

maxweberstiftung.de

ghil.ac.uk/india_centre.html