

Max Weber Stiftung

India Branch Office

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



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Foreword

Harald Rosenbach
Chief Executive Director
Max Weber Stiftung

Photograph courtesy of Jennifer Zumbusch / Max Weber Stiftung



You do not need to have clairvoyant abilities to predict that in 30 years from now historians will refer to 2020 as the year of the Covid-19 catastrophe. The pandemic has overshadowed daily life for the best part of the year and we will have to learn to live with its consequences for a long time to come – in Delhi as well as in London, Berlin or anywhere else in the world. Covid-19 affects everyone without respect for borders or nations. It has meant developing new ways of communication. All of a sudden it became normal to attend meetings at different ‘places’ within a very short period of time – and the digital format became a success.

Despite the pandemic, the India Branch Office (IBO) of the Max Weber Stiftung in Delhi blossomed considerably. Following the recommendation of an independent evaluation, in November our Board of Trustees decided to institutionalize our engagement in India. The binding commitment marks a watershed for the MWS. From now on, India will play a major role in the overall strategic plans of

the foundation. Along with our legal purpose, i.e. the fostering of bilateral relations through research, the IBO will contribute to our worldwide network and generally to global research in the humanities and social sciences.

On a more basic level, too, this year has brought significant changes: In December we left our Defence Colony address. We say goodbye to our colleagues at the American Institute of Indian Studies who for such a long time have been our landlords, partners and friends. We are grateful for the support they generously granted. Our farewell is combined with the hope of many collaborations still to come. Our new home will be the premises of the Council for Social Development, which is beautifully situated next to Lodi Gardens. There we look forward to being reunited with our colleagues of the M.S. Merian – R. Tagore International Centre of Advanced Studies (ICAS:MP).

The management of this year’s numerous challenges was possible only because the staff of the Office did marvellously well.

It was impressive to see how the team tackled and mastered the hurdles of daily life. The Max Weber Stiftung owes them a big thank you.

But leaving Defence Colony is not the last farewell we have to say: on December 31st Dr Indra Sengupta’s term as Head of the India Branch Office came to an end. Being based in London at the German Historical Institute, Indra has been from the start the heart of the MWS engagement in India. Indra has made the office fit for purpose by preparing a smooth transition to institutionalization and paving the way to a secure future. We are deeply grateful to Indra for all that she did for the IBO, the GHI London and for the whole foundation. We hope that as Head of the India Research Programme of the GHI London Indra will continue to be available for advice whenever needed. I am sure that her successor, Sebastian Schwecke, who will join the office early next year, will be as grateful as we will be.

Preface

Christina von Hodenberg

Director

German Historical Institute
London

Photograph courtesy of Rob Haines



Despite a global pandemic that had India and Europe very much in its grip, 2020 was a successful year for the India Branch Office. The year marked the culmination of a long process of transition in which the IBO established itself as a research hub independent from the German Historical Institute London. What began as a largely informally co-ordinated, London-led Transnational Research Group in 2013 is now a full-fledged, autonomous member of the Max Weber Foundation's humanities institutes abroad. With its new head Dr Sebastian Schwecke, its own academic advisory board and its new office in Lodi Estate, New Delhi, the India Branch Office is ideally equipped to foster German-Indian exchange in the humanities in the future. It will no doubt continue and expand its mission to enable collaborative projects across borders, foster German-Indian networks, and support scholars from Germany working in and on India.

The German Historical Institute and its team had to say goodbye to the staff and colleagues in Delhi in December 2020, when the organisational ties were severed. However, this does not mean that we will stop the cross-border conversations that have developed with our friends and partners over the past eight years. We are very much looking forward to the next chapter. Exciting collaborations between the GHIL's India Research Programme and the IBO are already in the making. The pandemic has caused an increase in digital formats – online lectures, workshops and meetings – which has had some advantages, making it easier for scholars to keep in touch and bridge geographical distances. Both face-to-face and digital formats will surely play their part in the next phase of Indian-German scholarly dialogue. I wish the newly independent India Branch Office good luck and lots of success in the next decade.

I General Report

Indra Sengupta

Head of India Branch Office

Head of India Centre / German Historical Institute London

As everywhere else, 2020 was an extraordinary year for the India Branch Office of the Max Weber Stiftung in New Delhi. It was a year marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, which substantially changed the way we work. The challenges we faced were many, not least the sudden transition to working from home, which was a new and unfamiliar experience for the administrative team. Researchers were equally affected, as libraries and archives closed down and even home deliveries of books and other research materials became impossible for several months. Nonetheless, the IBO managed to pull together remarkably well and, while many of our activities had to be slowed down, postponed or moved to digital platforms, our work continued smoothly.

However, it was not all bad news. On the contrary, while Covid-19 raged across the world, the IBO's future in India was secured. We started the year with the very good news that the academic evaluation of our work by an external commission was a success. The Commission was impressed with what the IBO had managed to achieve in its seven-year history on a modest budget and under a non-resident Head of Office. It also made some valuable recommendations for improving performance, several of which we implemented in the report year. There was more good news in store for us: on the basis of the report of the evaluation com-



Photograph courtesy of Debarati Bagchi

mission, the Board of Trustees (Stiftungsrat) of the Max Weber Stiftung took the decision to make the India Branch Office a permanent entity of the MWS in India with the goal of becoming a full-fledged research institute of the Foundation. This was indeed a historic moment as it marked the establishment of the Max Weber Stiftung's presence in a new region: South Asia. This decision also brought to an end the research direction of the IBO by the German Historical Institute London, as from January 2021 the IBO becomes autonomous of the GHIL. An academic advisory board for the India Branch Office was nominated, which in turn selected a new Head of Office for the IBO, who was expected to start in January 2021. In November 2020 the Stiftungsrat confirmed the selection

and appointed Dr Sebastian Schwecke as the new Head of Office. A new chapter in the history of the IBO is thus poised to begin.

In the report year, the IBO retained its focus on the following 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 and images. As already mentioned, research in archives, libraries and field work was severely restricted by the outbreak of the pandemic. However, our senior and early career scholars managed to focus on writing and preparing parts of their research for publication (see individual reports).

Our Open Access Working Paper Series on *Education and the Urban*, which we bring to a conclusion in early 2021, made considerable headway, as the lockdown enabled our contributors to complete and submit their papers. 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. In the course of the report year, three papers appeared online on the MWS's publication platform www.perspectivia.net (https://perspectivia.net/receive/pnet_mods_00001041). A total of 14 papers will be published by early 2021.

The academic events of the IBO took off with the Fourth Max Weber Lecture, on *The Global Revolution of Time in the Nineteenth Century*, delivered by Sebastian Conrad (Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut, Berlin) in January 2020. Unfortunately, due to illness, Professor Conrad was unable to give the talk in New Delhi. The lecture in Kolkata, which was organised jointly with the Goethe Institut - Max Mueller Bhavan, took place as planned. The lecture series has proved to be a great success and consistently draws large and lively audiences.

All academic events that were scheduled for the second half of 2020 were either postponed or moved online. Thus, the planned final conference of the research group on *Education and the Urban*, which was scheduled to take place at the GHI London in September 2020, has been moved to June 2022. The Fifth Max Weber Lecture, scheduled for November 2021, was cancelled. However, in their place, a digital workshop of the research group on *Education and the Urban* was organised in September 2020. The conference on *Archiving, Recording and Representing Feminism: The Global History of Women's Emancipation in the 20th Century*, which was a part of the IBO's collaboration with the International Standing Working Group (ISWG) on feminism and the media *Medialization and Empowerment* (Christina von Hodenberg and Jane Freeland, GHI London), took

place as an online event in December 2020. Both events were very successful.

Supporting young and early career scholars has always been an important goal of the IBO. In February 2020, just before the coronavirus-related lockdown began in India, the IBO organised its first winter school for early career scholars from India and Germany. The topic was *Global History- Challenges and Opportunities* and the focus was on the methods of global history. The winter school was organised in collaboration with the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies, the Heidelberg Centre South Asia in New Delhi, and the German Historical Institute London. The school generated lively discussions and proved to be successful in opening up methodological conversations between young scholars in India and Germany. Further, our reading groups for early career scholars, led respectively by Debarati Bagchi and Dipanwita Donde, continued digitally throughout the lockdown and, in fact, managed to attract early career scholars not just from India, but also from Europe and the USA.

Digitisation of the sources that the IBO has collected and stored over the years remains an important activity of the IBO. Due to paucity of resources, this could only be undertaken in a piecemeal fashion and not as systematically as we would have wanted. In 2020 the IBO joined the consortium of German universities and

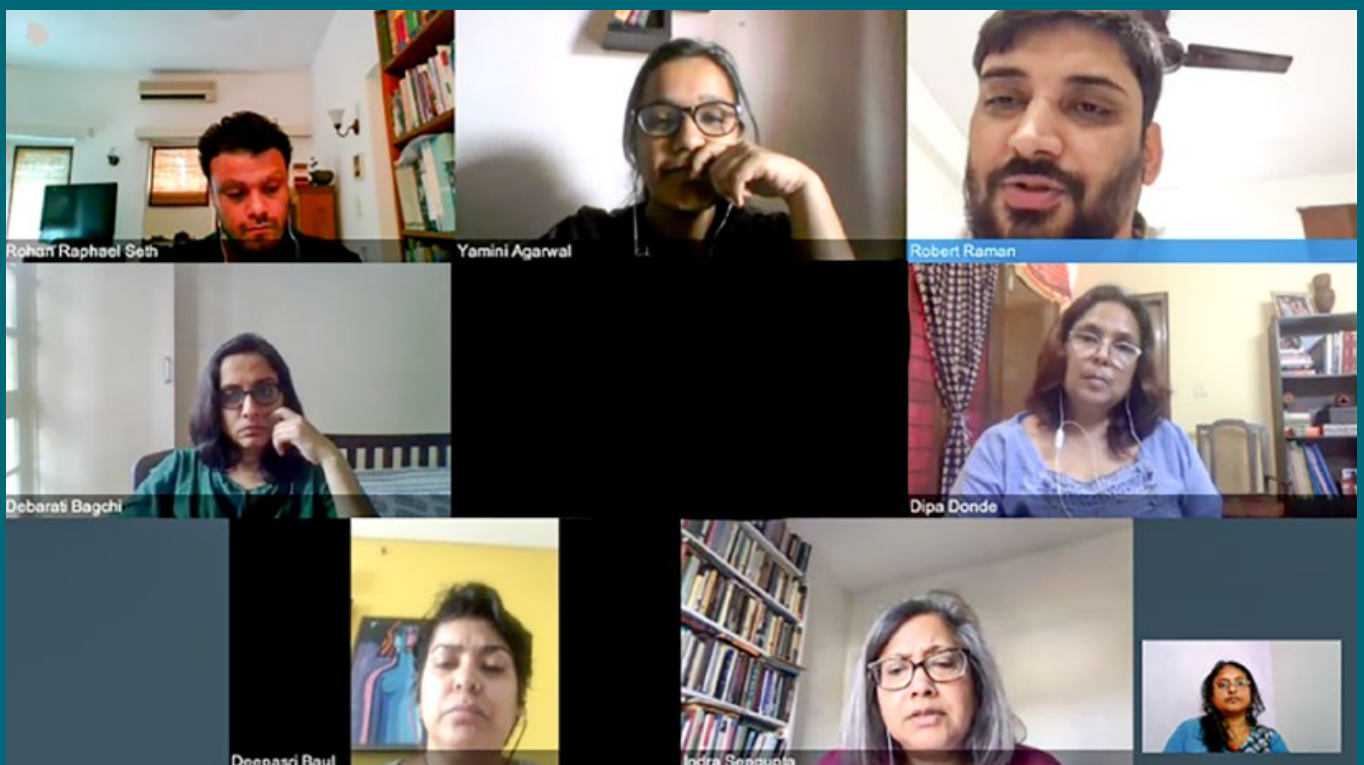
research centres as a participant in the application for the DFG-funded research database infrastructure initiatives NFDI-4Memory and TextPlus. If the application is successful, the IBO will become a part of one of the largest database and digital networks in social science and humanities research in Germany. We expect that this will enable the IBO to store and manage its significant collections better and make these available to scholars in India, Germany and elsewhere by means of Open Access.

The work of the India Branch Office as a service provider to support the research of the Max Weber Stiftung's networks continued in the report year. The IBO's collaboration with ICAS:MP remains productive both on the level of research and administration. My research (jointly with Neeladri Bhattacharya) for the ICAS:MP TM1 *History as a Political Category* made as much progress as possible under current circumstances (see separate report). The IBO administration worked closely with the administrative team of ICAS:MP to ensure that, even under the circumstances of a pandemic, we were able to meet the mandatory requirement, laid down by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), to move into a common site by the end of 2020. In December 2020, the IBO relocated from Defence Colony to ICAS's premises in Lodi Colony. Thus, ICAS and the IBO are now housed in the same premises, but

on separate floors. This arrangement will continue until a more suitable site can be found once the pandemic is under control and normal life resumes. The IBO continued to provide administrative support to the projects *Extended Archives of Indian Labour* and *Bilderfahrzeuge*.

Of the IBO's new collaborations, the most significant of these in the report year was the collaboration with the German Centre for Research and Innovation (DWIH). In early 2020 the IBO was accepted as a supporter of the DWIH in India. As one of the few German organi-

sations abroad that focus exclusively on humanities and social science research, the Branch Office was able to bring this specific expertise to the German Centre's activities in India. One example of our productive collaboration was a discussion on the New Education Policy (NEP), announced by the Government of India in 2020, that the German Centre organised along with us on 14 October 2020. Our Principal Investigators and project partners, Professors Geetha B. Nambissan, Nandini Manjrekar and Shivali Tukdeo spoke on the subject from different perspectives.



MWS IBO Staff Meeting
Photograph courtesy of Deepanwita Dutta

Staff Matters

As a result of the policy decision of the Max Weber Stiftung to make the India Branch Office a permanent entity, our key staff were retained on a permanent basis. In addition to the 3 long-serving members of the administrative staff and one senior research associate, the IBO acquired a further position in administration. Prateek Batra joined the IBO administration in November 2020. All these positions are now permanent. As the research projects of the India Research Programme of the German Historical Institute London come to an end, the number of research associates at the IBO went down, with only 2 positions of 50% each being in place in 2020. The tenure of both research associates ends in February 2021.

As my term as Head of the India Branch Office comes to an end, I wish to thank everyone at the IBO, our administrative and our research staff, our project partners, our many friends and advisers in India and Germany, for their remarkable support and enthusiasm for our work. I wish the Max Weber Stiftung's Branch Office in India all the best in future and my successor Dr Sebastian Schwecke every success in a very exciting role. The India Research Programme of the German Historical Institute looks forward to working closely with the IBO on a number of projects.



Welcoming the new Head of Office, Dr Sebastian Schwecke, and Dr Indra Sengupta's farewell

Photograph courtesy of Deepanwita Dutta

II Project Reports

1. The History and Sociology of Education and its Relationship with Poverty

Education and the Urban in India since the Nineteenth Century

Public Education in Bombay's Mill District in the Early Twentieth Century

Nandini Manjrekar (Principal Investigator) and

Poushali Basak (Junior Research Associate)

Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai

The emergence of Mumbai as India's premier urban metropolis was directly related to the development of its textile industry from the mid nineteenth century. The rich archive on Bombay (as it was known up to the 1990s) provides a lens to the growth of the early city. Extensive research has been done on the spatio-cultural changes in Bombay, with a focus on issues related to housing, sanitation, neighbourhoods, city planning and the work and lives of its industrial workforce, largely composed of migrants from the rural hinterland. These scholarly works that explore the making of the city, have largely left unaddressed the place of public schooling in the wider imagination of the somewhat unique urban modernity that Bombay came to represent. This research project was an attempt to recover the history of public education in the city, moving away from colonial and nationalist narratives of well-known educational institutions.

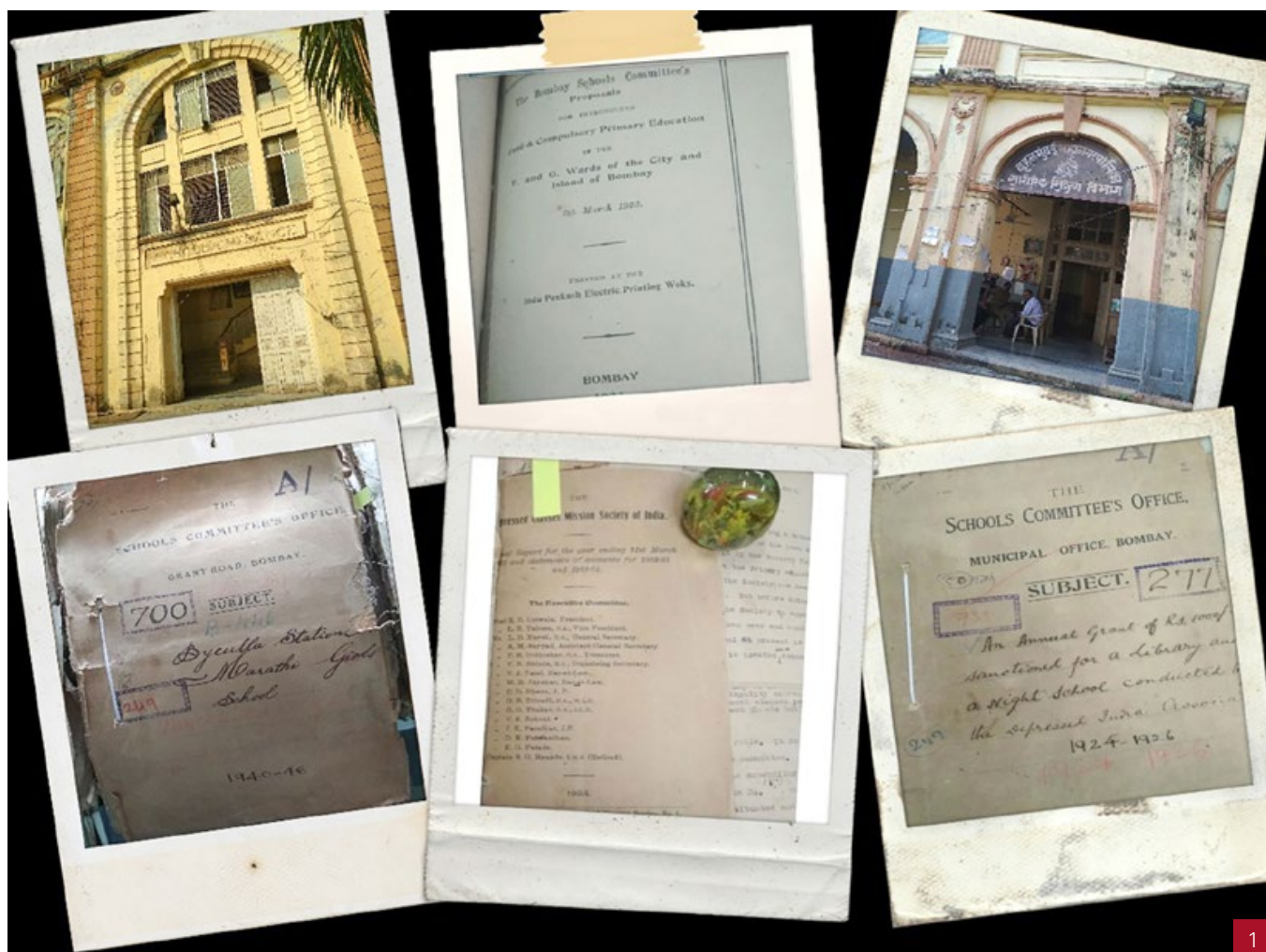
This project interrogates the contexts in which children of the industrial working class were sought to be educated in the mill districts of Bombay in the first half of the twentieth century. The study specific-

ally looks into the efforts made by the colonial government and the city's elites to initiate formal primary education for the growing working class. While 'Free and Compulsory Primary Education' (FCPE) was envisioned in both villages and the cities of the Bombay Province, this project specifically looks at its ideation and implementation in the mill districts of Bombay in the 1920s and 1930s. The F and G wards of the city, collectively known as the area of Girangaon (the village of the mills), were selected for the first stage of implementation of FCPE in the city, with the rationale that these were empirically the most backward wards and in need of civic intervention.

Work Done in Report Year

The project principally draws on the Proceedings of the Schools Committee of the Bombay Municipality and the Annual Administrative Reports of the Municipal Corporation of Bombay. We have consulted the unpublished correspondence between different institutions (Corporation, Schools Committee, community associations, property

at the Asiatic Society Library, Mumbai, the journal archive of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and sources from the India Office Records, British Library, London. Our secondary sources include unpublished dissertations, scholarly writings on the city and its working classes, and a few personal reflections of social workers engaged with welfare work in the area. Locating and collating archival data was done between October 2018 and May 2019. We identified some gaps in the official records and accessed some of these, such as the 'literacy maps' of Girangaon developed as planning tools by the Schools Committee in the mid-1920s, at the India Office Records (IOR), London in June 2019. The



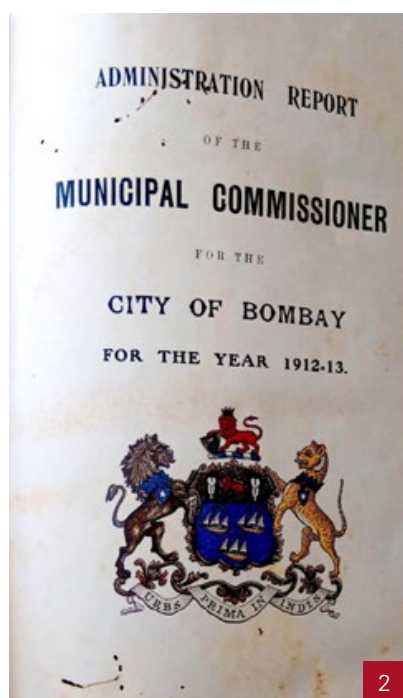
IOR provided us primary data in the form of submissions to various Commissions and Committees of the Bombay Provincial Government. Analysis and writing up a working paper were completed by November 2020.

The historical context of epidemics, wars, labour unrest, nationalist movement, the work of social reformist organisations and the changing socio-cultural lives of workers framed the discursive contours of FCPE in Girangaon, in the first half of the twentieth century. The study attempted to locate its trajectory within the debates engendered by these contexts. The records suggest a few interesting features of the role of FCPE in Girangaon at this particular historical juncture. For example, while trying to bring the Depressed Classes, minorities and Backward Classes to schools, enrolment and attendance were taken to be markers of literacy. This mode suggests that primary public education was imagined more as an instrument of social

control and disciplining of the working class into norms of urban citizenship than actually imparting meaningful education. At the same time, education in a more expansive sense was linked to the political consciousness of workers who welcomed the introduction of FCPE in Girangaon. Their representatives engaged in area committees set up by the Schools Committee, voiced demands for inclusion of different languages of instruction as well as safe and clean premises for their children's schools. The project suggests that, while framed by the logic of colonial and elite governance, public education did enable a different socio-political imagination for Bombay's working classes, regardless of whichever caste, community or religion they belonged to, and in this sense it constructed the city's cosmopolitanism. This is a line of inquiry worth pursuing in further research on public education in the city.

Workshops and Conferences

Nandini Manjrekar, *Public Education in the Mill District of Bombay, 1900-1940*, paper presented at the Online History of Education Research Conference, International Centre for Historical Research in Education (ICHRE), UCL London, 9 July 2020.



1: A Collage of School Committee Records

Source: Office of the Schools Committee of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, Gilder Tank Building, Allibhai Premji Road, Mumbai.

2: Administrative Report for the Municipal Commissioner for the City of Bombay, 1912-13

Source: Central Archives Cell of Bombay Municipal Corporation, Dadar, Mumbai

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

Geetha B Nambissan (Principal Investigator)
Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi

In this project I map the rapidly changing urban and educational landscape in the city of Delhi informed by a critical spatial perspective and a relational framework of exclusion and privilege. I draw on secondary literature from urban and educational studies as well as on an exploratory study conducted towards the end of 2019 in Bawana, a resettlement colony located on the periphery of the city.

I highlight the socio-spatial inequalities that emerged as Delhi traversed its way to achieving 'mega' status by 2000 as well as its subsequent attempts to become a 'world-class' city. I argue that educational fault lines that emerged by the time Delhi became a mega-city were largely shaped by exclusionary state policies around urban settlements. Subsequent urban transformations in 'world-class city making' led to large-scale demolitions of poor settlements that compounded educational inequalities. The role of the state and policies on the urban and education are flagged through the study.

The findings from the exploratory study in a re-settlement colony in Delhi provide a glimpse into the education of children among families, predominantly Dalits and Muslims, who have experienced economic and social vulnerability. I show how schooling opportunities, aspirations and future life chances of children are influenced by social and spatial marginality resulting from their location on the margins of the city.

Publications

I have completed the study and a draft working paper entitled *The Changing Urban and Education in Delhi: Privilege and Exclusion in a Mega City*. I am in the process of finalising the working paper and it will be published in January 2021.

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 particu-

lar 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 across Delhi. The study 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. It also maps their places of preference which are mainly urban villages in the city that have transformed primarily because of the relatively cheap accommodation that it makes available. 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

The fieldwork for the study was delayed extensively due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We decided to not undertake ethnography of one of the urban villages where youth from these states predominantly stay. Subsequently, interviews with participants were shifted online to Skype. One had to keep in mind the availability of the participants for the interviews, many of who had shifted to their home states due to the pandemic and were working from home. Interviews with three women were conducted by November 2020. They were transcribed. More interviews are in the process. We hope to finalise the paper by June 2021.

Workshops and Conferences

Geetha B Nambissan, *Education for Sustainable Development*, web panel discussion at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements, 10 July 2020.

Publications

Geetha B Nambissan, "Caste and the Politics of the Early 'Public' in Schooling: Reflections on the Dalit Struggle for an Equitable Education," *Contemporary Education Dialogue*, 17 (2), 126-154, 2020.

Geetha B Nambissan, "Low-Cost Education for the Poor in India: Contemporary Concerns". The JMC Review: *An Interdisciplinary Social Science Journal of Criticism, Practice and Theory*, Volume 4, 2020.

Yamini Agarwal, "Teaching Identity in Schools: Learning to be Sikh in India", *Sikh Formations: Religion, Culture, Theory*, 16 (4), 423-440, 2020.

Yamini Agarwal, "'Is this home? Not so much!': Gender, Ethnicity and Belongingness to the City", *German Historical Institute London Blog*, 19 November 2020. <https://ghil.hypotheses.org/218>

Yamini Agarwal, Doctoral Thesis Announcement, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, DOI: 10.1080/01425692.2020.1847458, 1 December 2020.

Urban Dislocations and Educational Strategies: Metro Colonies, Bengaluru
Shivali Tukdeo (Principal Investigator) and Amar Mali (Research Assistant)
NIAS, Bengaluru

Paying attention to the re-structuring of Bengaluru that is underway since 2010, our research focuses on the connections between urban infrastructure, disadvantaged communities and the place of education in the ever-changing city. Steered by global imperatives, the urban reforms have largely occurred in the domains of infrastructure development and transportation services. The Metro Rail project has been one of the signature urban development initiatives, resulting in significant structural and social re-organising of the city. During the construction of the metro in its initial phase, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) started the process of acquiring land in the city. Two settlements, centrally located and densely populated, were cleared out and rehabilitated to the periphery of the city. Our work focuses on the two neighbourhoods that were dislocated and re-settled as metro colonies. Distance from the city-center, limited mobility and restricted access to public institutions mark the lives of the residents of the two colonies. We began this project by understanding how the families responded to the Metro project that brought a number of changes in their lives and what place education held for them. While reliable access to good education continues to be a distant reality for the marginalized, our paper unpacks the conditions under which families, despite being in precarious conditions turn to education.

Work Done in Report Year

Based on our preliminary analysis of the data, we formulated the following themes: (1) dislocation and resettling (2) starting over (3) livelihoods (4) schooling matters. In expanding these themes and representing the data collected, a number of connections became apparent. Research on urban infrastructures and its impact on communities and research on parents from disadvantaged communities and school-preparedness are the themes that have emerged strongly in our writing. Our work speaks to two inter-related research agendas: the changing nature of family and its impact on education; and the scope of urban reforms and their connection to education. In its relatively new disciplinary engagement, the research on urbanisation has drawn attention to a range of issues including urban informality, spatial re-organisation, legality and mobility. Research on sociology of education and sociology of education policy has drawn attention to the changing clusters of actors and influences on education as well as changing goals of education. As cities become central to the re-working and channeling of flows of people, capital and goods, what does this mean for public education? As the urban poor are increasingly defined by the development discourse as a category to be empowered through means of education, how do we think of a possible re-working of the relationship

between the poor and formal education? The city of Bengaluru has been extensively researched in recent years especially in relation to information industry and new forms of consumption. However, the scholarly engagements centering on education and urban expansion are inadequate. Our paper attempts to fill the void.

As the collaborate endeavour focusing on education and the urban comes to a close, it is heartening to see the wide range of projects that took shape as part of our collective engagements. The

working paper series, workshops with doctoral students and the formation of academic networks have contributed to opening up a much-needed space in India around research on education and the urban.

Workshops and Conferences

Shivali Tukdeo, *Urban Dislocations and the Illusion of Educational Choice*, paper presented at the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar on February 20, 2020.

Spaces of leisure, Metro colony
Photograph courtesy of Amar Mali



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

Debarati Bagchi (Senior Research Associate)

MWS IBO

Project Description

Delhi witnessed the establishment of public-funded universities and research institutes with acres of gated land during the first few decades after India's independence, particularly since the first University Commission published its report in 1949. However, with the liberalisation of the Indian economy in the 1990s, there was a boom in private investment in higher education. This coincided with, and often facilitated, an urban expansion. My project explores the connections between higher education institutions and urban transformation in the Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR) since early 2000s. 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. My project tries to address this gap by drawing attention to issues like land and locality in the study of higher education. It is quite difficult to trace any mention of the process of acquisition, allocation or demarcation of land for the university and the transformation of neighbourhoods around the university in the archival records on education. Similarly, specific discussions on university land seem to be largely absent in the Land Department records. My study argues that from early 2000s, the domain of higher education in India witnessed a phenomenal shift, fostering a very specific relationship between education, land

acquisition and urbanisation. This enabled a certain discourse on the links between the land market and the education market, thus bringing education and the urban in conversation with each other. To locate this shift, my research examines the processes involved in the emergence of an education hub at the agrarian fringe of a mega city and the ensuing transformation of the region. Specifically, I focus on the connected processes of land acquisition for universities, investments in education and 'urbanisation' in Sonipat, a district in Haryana lying at the northern border of Delhi.

Work Done in Report Year

The outbreak of Covid-19 and the subsequent national lockdown in India since March 2020 made it impossible to conduct fieldwork or visit archives or libraries. I have therefore spent the year consulting primary and secondary resources available online, sharpening the chief arguments and formulating the conceptual points based on my initial empirical findings.

I study the specific dynamics of the education market in relation to urbanisation in a proposed 5000 acres education hub – Rajiv Gandhi Education City – in Sonipat. The setting up of universities contributed to socio-economic transformations in the neighbourhood and redefined the frontiers between the rural and the urban.



A plot of Rajiv Gandhi Education City, Sonapat, Haryana

Photograph courtesy of Navdeep Boora

Over the last two decades, a number of elite universities have emerged on the margins of several megacities in India. Huge amounts of land have been allotted to corporate investors for the establishment of these elite higher education institutions. A parallel boom in housing and infrastructure projects can be noticed in the areas surrounding these universities. All these have been facilitated by cer-

tain changes in the legal and regulatory framework of the state encouraging corporate investments in higher education. I argue that education hubs can be a site for studying 'frontier urbanism' and the entanglements of the agrarian and the urban in South Asia.

I have been able to access some official documents related to urban planning

in and around Delhi. These include the Master Plan for Delhi-2021 and notifications and development plans of the Town and Country Planning Department of the Haryana government. Based on these reports, the study sketches how the Sonipat-Kundli region in Haryana has been envisioned from 2003 as a multifunctional urban complex. I have also consulted the reports of the University Grants Commission Regulations of 2003 and the National Knowledge Commission of 2007 to understand how private investment in education has been facilitated by the Indian government in the post 1990s decades. I juxtapose my reading of the official documents with newspaper reports and papers of two legal cases related to land acquisition in Sonipat for the Rajiv Gandhi Education City. Telephone interviews with some local people helped me shed some light on the farmers' agitation against land acquisition in Sonipat.

Workshops and Conferences

Based on the above findings, I presented a draft paper at the internal online colloquium of the 'Education and the Urban in India' Research Group on 24-25 September 2020.

Presentation title: *Education Hubs in Sonipat: Exploring Land-University Nexus in the National Capital Region (NCR), India*

Co-convenor of *Winter School on Global History: Challenges and Opportunities*, organised jointly by Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office (MWS IBO), New Delhi, German Historical Institute London and Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies, Heidelberg University, 17-21 February 2020.

Publications

Blog essay *National Education Policy 2020: A discussion on Educational Policy Reform in India*, 14 October 2020, German Historical Institute London Blog, 17 December 2020. <https://ghil.hypotheses.org/244#more-244>

Education Hubs in Sonipat: Exploring Land-University Nexus in the National Capital Region (NCR), paper accepted for publication in the Education and the Urban Working Paper Series, MWS IBO, forthcoming February 2021.

II Project Reports

2. Politics of History and Heritage

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

Indra Sengupta

In collaboration with Neeladri Bhattacharya
and Deepasri Baul

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. As the Nehruvian narratives of India as a united nation of diverse groups are giving 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.

Following the completion of initial fieldwork on selected sites in the states of West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh and the hiatus referred to, fieldwork picked up again in late 2019 and early 2020 largely due to the fact that we were able to find an extremely competent research assistant in Dr Deepasri Baul. Fieldwork focused on the northern Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. This region is significant to our research for two additional reasons. First, it has many popular Hindu pilgrimage sites, which attest to its importance within a globalised tourist economy, and second, it has a long history as a hotbed of Hindu nationalist politics since the colonial period. In late 2019 several field trips were undertaken to well-known religious centres in the region, including Vrindavan, Mathura, Banaras, Ayodhya, Gorakhpur, Haridwar and Rishikesh. From these sites we have collected hundreds of publications like travel guides, local histories, cheap fiction, religious

tracts and chapbooks from temple complexes, main bazaars and bookstores of local publishers.

In June 2020, the work of collation of this vast archive of nearly 500 books with a detailed annotated index of these titles began. We have begun work on an introduction to the collection that will provide an overview of the material collected, an analysis of themes with regard to the module's research questions as well as suggest possible areas of research that this archive could support in future.

However, by and large, our work in 2020 had to be limited to a single field trip in January, as the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic made both international and research trips within India mostly impossible. This had a severe impact on the progress of our project. Hence, our work was largely limited to compiling the annotated index.

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-months 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 conceptualisation 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 the Marathi Granth Sangrahalaya and Awami Idara.

Current Status of the Research

In the course of 2020, I have been working on the unfinished chapters of my dissertation. I completed the first draft of my thesis in April 2020. I am currently revising the chapters in the light of comments and suggestions received from my supervisors. My plans of revising the chapter drafts, however, have been seriously affected by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the prolonged lockdown in Delhi and the closure of all libraries and archives, access to secondary literature and archival resources, which is crucial to fill in the existing gaps in the chapters, drafts turned out to be difficult. Thus, while, I am currently working on the second draft of my chapters my plans for submitting the thesis have been hindered.

Work on the Extended Archives of Indian Labour

In the report year, the work on the archives of Indian labour in the wake of the outbreak of the Corona virus pandemic faced unforeseen challenges. Due to the prolonged lockdown in Delhi

and the closure of the V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, where the files and scanned copies of the archive of Indian labour project have been housed, I faced difficulty in accessing new files. Since June 2020, when the lockdown was partially lifted, I have been able to access some new files again. After reworking on the entire metadata and the digital files, we are now in the process of transferring the second and final round of reworked metadata and files to the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, where the digital repository is going to be housed and maintained.

Workshops and Conferences

Presented a paper titled “Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, the Chronicler of Late Colonial Bombay” at the conference *Shaping National Consciousness: The Words and Works of Khwaja Ahmed Abbas*, organised by Khwaja Ahmed Abbas Memorial Trust and National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language at India International Centre, New Delhi, India on 29 February 2020.

II Project Reports

4. Movement of Peoples, Ideas and Images

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

Third-Party Project: A part of the transnational research project
Bilderfahrzeuge: Aby Warburg's Legacy and the Future of Iconology
funded by the Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
Dipanwita Donde

Project Description

As part of the *Bilderfahrzeuge* project at the IBO, I research meanings, intentions and ideas concealed in Mughal paintings that evidence transcultural encounters between Central Asia and Mughal India. The study, analysis and interpretation of images and inscribed texts that often-accompanied pictorial compositions, provides an entry into the intellectual matrix of the Mughal elite, and helps identify the impact of Persian Sufism on image-making practices in Mughal art. In addition, the poetics between text and image provides a methodology for examining Mughal paintings contextualised within its own cultural practices, such as in classical Persian poetry, literature and philosophy. To overcome the labels of “influence”, “derivations”, or “progress” that dominate studies of the relationship between Mughal and Western art and to address limitations inherent in the imposition of categories in the study of images, I ex-

plore the new methodological approaches of transmateriality and transmediality for my study.

Work Done in Report Year

In the report year, I have had the opportunity to look at texts, images and ideas that engage with transcultural and trans-historical processes to think through the concepts of portability of objects and the mobility of peoples and ideas.

Currently, I am working on four ideas 1) Images of birth as repositories of cultural memory; 2) Images of sickness and death as memorials in Mughal art; 3) *lyār-i Dānish*, – a sixteenth century Persian literary translation that serves as a vessel of transculturation; and 4) The grieving figure - the introduction of key motifs to induce affect and pathos in Mughal illustrated folios. I am applying a globalising perspective for examining processes of production, contexts of meaning and

re-interpretation of artworks to examine the ability of Mughal artists to introduce affective gestures, postures, emotion and dramatisation in their compositions.

In January 2020, I accompanied members of the Archaeological Institute of America as a lecture host, for a tour of heritage and cultural sites in Mumbai and South India. In February 2020, I attended the Winter School, Global History: Challenges and Opportunities, and reported on some of the sessions organised at the IBO. In early March 2020, I visited Hyderabad for presenting a paper at a conference organised by the Persian Department at the English and Foreign Languages University in Hyderabad.

Since the global lockdown in late March 2020, our project director, Prof Andreas

Beyer, swiftly organised online monthly general meetings, where all our directors and colleagues met together and one colleague presented a paper to our closed group. I have attended all the meetings held since April 2020. In addition, I regularly attend the Global Bilderfahrzeuge sub-group meetings with our director, Prof Gerhard Wolf, along with my four colleagues, where we discuss our individual project ideas, the lecture-series 'Not A Copy' organised by our sub-group and hosted by the Warburg Institute, London, as well as present our papers among colleagues. Further, we regularly meet and discuss relevant texts at our Reading Group, consisting of colleagues from Hamburg, Berlin and New Delhi.

In addition to attending meetings for the *Bilderfahrzeuge* project, I have regularly attended online meetings with Dr Indra Sengupta and other researchers at the Max Weber Stiftung and also presented my research at the IBO Researcher's internal colloquium, held on 28 September, 2020.

In the report period, I have written two blog texts for the *Bilderfahrzeuge* website and one text for the German Historical Institute London blog.



The Hanging of Mansur al-Hallaj
Divan of Amir Khusrau Dihlavi (d. 1328), Mughal
c.1602-03, Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

Source: Artwork in the public domain, photograph provided by Walters Art Museum

Workshops and Conferences

Co-organiser of *Bilderfahrzeuge* Lecture Series 20/21 (Group: Global '*Bilderfahrzeuge*' and Mobile Memory) 'NOT A COPY'. Two lectures have been held so far:

Winnie Wong (UC Berkeley), Imperfect Facsimiles: *Forgery in the Library* on 14 October 2020.

Aaron M. Hyman (Johns Hopkins), The Copy as the *Work of the Original* on 25 November 2020.

Participation and presentation of paper, "Diffusion and Assimilation of Images and Ideas between Central Asia and Mughal India: A Study of Illustrated Manuscripts (14th - 16th centuries)", at the conference *Indo-Persian Manuscripts: Issues and Challenges in the Modern Time*, at the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad on 6-8 March 2020.

Lecture host, accompanying members of Archaeological Institute of America for a tour of heritage and cultural sites in Mumbai and South India, 28 Jan – 5 Feb 2020. Delivered the following lectures:

"A Brief History of Oral, Textual and Material Cultures in India, 1500 BCE – 600 CE", 28 January, Mumbai, 2020.

"The History and Politics of the Sari and Dhoti", 30 January, Pasumalai, Madurai, 2020.

Publications

Blog essay: "The Grieving Figure in Scenes of Loss and Mourning in Mughal Manuscript Painting"; November 2020, <https://bilderfahrzeuge.hypotheses.org/5230>

Blog essay: "The Greedy Dog - Gestures, Postures and Emotions Portraying Degrees of Vice and Virtue in the Sixteenth - Century *lyā-i Dānish*,"; in *German Historical Institute London Blog*, October 2020. <https://ghil.hypotheses.org/157>

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

III Conference and Workshop Reports

Winter School on *Global History: Challenges and Opportunities*

India International Centre, New Delhi

17 – 21 February 2020

Organised jointly by Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office (MWS IBO), New Delhi, German Historical Institute London (GHIL) India Research Programme (IRP), Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies, Heidelberg University and the Heidelberg Centre South Asia, New Delhi

Convenors

Felix Brahm, GHIL

Monica Juneja, Heidelberg University

Indra Sengupta, MWS IBO, New Delhi and GHIL

Debarati Bagchi, MWS IBO

Pablo Holwitt, Heidelberg Centre South Asia, New Delhi

The Winter School brought together postdoctoral and early career scholars from Germany and India working with the methods and approaches of global history. The week-long event was divided into three thematic teaching sessions. These were followed by a final session, held over the last two days, in which the participants presented their own research, taking into account the concepts and methods discussed in the three teaching sessions. An excursion to the Mehrauli Archaeological Park was organised as a part of the event. The thematic sessions dealt with three areas of global history: the history of pedagogic practices, the history of peripatetic objects, and the

history of labour. There was also a panel on *The Languages of Global History* (see separate report).

The Winter School opened on 17 February 2020 with a welcome address by Indra Sengupta, followed by a brief introduction by Monica Juneja and Felix Brahm. The first session initiated the discussion on global history with a focus on education. Parimala V Rao (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi) delivered a lecture on 'Global Entanglements and Colonial Education Policies in India', in which she sketched a broad picture of how global ideas left a mark on the colonial education system in India. She



1. Thematic Session 2: Peripatetic Objects
2. Thematic Session 3: Labour in Global History
3. Winter School Participants from Germany and India

Images 1-3: Photographs courtesy of Deepanwita Dutta



4. Winter School Group Photo
- Photograph courtesy of MWS IBO*

5. Excursion to the Mehrauli Archaeological Park, New Delhi
- Photograph courtesy of Debarati Bagchi*



began with a brief introduction to the England-Scotland relationship and pointed out that, as a result of the Scottish Enlightenment, Scotland had a more secular, regularised, and egalitarian education system than England. Many Scotsmen appointed in India contributed to educational experiments there, and Rao cited the expansion of school education in Etawah under two Scottish officials: H. S. Reid and A. O. Hume. The American War of Independence and the loss of British colonies in North America made officers of the East India Company overly cautious about retaining power in India. Elite British officers like Lord Cornwallis, who fought and lost in the American colonies, believed that the establishment of seminaries and colleges in America was one of the causes of the loss of the colonies there, and hence he wanted to keep Indians insulated from English education. Fear of losing India through the spread of radical ideas was acute: the hoisting of the flag of the French Revolution in Calcutta in 1830 or the popularity of Thomas Paine's *The Age of Reason* among students in the city unnerved the officials of the East India Company. Yet the Scottish officer Charles Grant strongly opposed this attitude.

The second thematic session on 18 February 2020 was Monica Juneja's lecture on 'Peripatetic Objects'. Juneja noted that art history as a discipline had been fairly slow in responding to the 'global turn', and it was only now aiming to 'catch up' by building upon ongoing debates. Juneja drew our attention to the ideas of the 'globe' and the 'world'. The 'globe', she said, is an abstract and imagined space; yet it also implies a spherical, interconnected space containing

zones of mobility. In comparison, 'world' indicates an inhabited place containing lived memories, providing contexts for relations transacted on global levels. Juneja cautioned that the terms should not be conflated, since art historians have to deploy them depending on how they are addressing the question of 'scale' in doing global art history. Juneja also stated her preference for the analytical category of 'transculturation', explaining that it implies long-term cultural relationships that transcend the boundaries of modern nation states. Drawing upon art historical methodologies that account for the portability and materiality of objects, Juneja emphasised that objects were exchanged through trade, consumption, travel, and diplomacy. The mobility of objects from their production to their transportation and assimilation in other regions, cultures, and time periods—as well as their reappearance in the present day, particularly through exhibition spaces and museums—enables the tracing of object biographies through the lens of transcultural relationalities. By means of case studies, Juneja examined connected histories shaped by travelling objects. She referred to exotic and fragile objects (such as porcelain, chinoiserie, or jades) that arrived from Asia, and the 'encounter' between these objects and European collectors in the heart of Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These objects came to represent European collectors' imagination of 'exotic' Asia, which did not necessarily align with the territorial boundaries of Asia.

The theme for the third day (20 February 2020) was the concept of labour in global history. Prabhu Mohapatra (University

of Delhi) discussed the emergence and spread of 'informal labour' as a relatively new concept in the global history of labour. He reminded the audience that, to understand the growth and spread of informal and precarious labour, we need to understand the trajectory of the rise and eventual transformation of formal labour. Referring to Marcel van der Linden's work, he started the lecture with the story of the emergence of 'labour' as a Eurocentric concept perceived as a configuration of industrial, male, unionised wage labour in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This definition was both geographically and temporally specific to Europe and North America. Mohapatra explained the ways in which historians have tried to locate heterogeneous forms of labour from across the globe in order to break away from the Eurocentric definition. He then traced the genealogy of informal labour through its relation with other cognate terms like informal sector, informal economy, and the two crucial ideas of informality and precarity. The massive expansion of global wage labour and a recognition of workers outside this labour force led to an understanding of 'informal work' as a global phenomenon-work that remained excluded from the traditional definition of wage labour. Breaking away from the Eurocentric definition of formal labour, historians attempted to bring geographically and temporally diverse forms of informal labour together under the rubric of labour history. Mohapatra argued that this heralded a fundamental shift in the global history of labour.

In the last one and a half days, seventeen early career scholars presented their research on various themes of glob-

al history. Arun Thomas (University of Hyderabad) presented on the subject of intoxicants as cultural commodities in the social life of British Malabar. Heeral Chhabra (University of Delhi) engaged with animals as colonial subjects, legalising 'cruelty' to animals for military purposes, and transnational debates on humane or non-cruel methods of culling 'strays'. Julian zur Lage (University of Hamburg) problematised the writing of histories without travelling to the locations referred to. Sandipan Mitra (Presidency University, Kolkata) discussed how anthropology as a university discipline facilitated research by Indian authors on caste and race. Om Prasad (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi) spoke on the scientific workers' movement in India, mapping the place of science and technology in nation-building. Stella Kneifel (University of Erfurt) traced the migration of Arab students to universities in the German Democratic Republic and explored how they behaved and related to each other in the university space. Agnes Piekacz (Bielefeld University) spoke on the history of British military clothing and the ban on the sale and distribution of second-hand uniforms from Britain to South Africa. Susanne Quitmann (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich) spoke on the transregional history of child migrants to Australia and Canada from Britain in the period between 1870 and the 1960s. Nokmedemla Lemtur's (University of Göttingen) project focused on high-altitude mountaineering expeditions in the Himalayas as transcultural encounters between European explorers and indigenous communities. Akash Bhattacharya (Azim Premji University, Bengaluru) looked at the relationship between education and the making of a

suburb, focusing on nineteenth-century Uttarpara in light of wider discourses on education. Johanna Ziebritzki (Heidelberg University) discussed two pioneering figures of Indian art history and traced their roles as educators, collectors, and intellectuals in the process of nation-building in early twentieth-century India. Frederik Schröer (Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin) examined the sense of community and new systems of knowledge creation among Tibetan refugees during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Saumya Agarwal (Heidelberg University) shed light on the extensive wall paintings of Shekhawati, which are found on cenotaphs, temples, shops, wells, and houses. Josefine Carla Hoffmann (University of Göttingen) explored the collaboration between India and Germany in training workers for the rapidly growing steel, engineering, and automotive industries in post-Independence India. Maria-Daniela

Pomohaci (University of Göttingen) presented a social history of sanitation workers in late colonial Calcutta (now Kolkata). Samuel Sathya Seelan's (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi) presentation focused on an ethno-graphic study of sanitation workers in Bangalore. Norman Aselmeyer (European University Institute, Florence) explored the spatial and social transformations in Nairobi that came with the construction of the Uganda Railway in 1895.

The presentations opened up lively conversations and interesting engagements with the thematic sessions of the Winter School. The senior scholars reflected on the presentations and helped the participants sharpen their engagement with the methods of global history.

Report by Debarati Bagchi, Yamini Agarwal, and Dipanwita Donde (MWS IBO, New Delhi)

Panel Discussion on *The Languages of Global History*
India International Centre, New Delhi
18 February 2020

Speakers

Felix Brahm, GHIL

Monica Juneja, Heidelberg University

Joachim Kurtz, Heidelberg University

Dhruv Raina, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Rekha Vaidya Rajan, Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung, Hyderabad

Moderator and Commentator

Neeladri Bhattacharya, Ashoka University, New Delhi

A panel discussion on *The Languages of Global History* took place on the evening of the second day of the Winter School. Neeladri Bhattacharya opened the discussion by briefly reflecting on the historical trajectory of the 'global turn' in history writing. The first speaker, Felix Brahm, pointed out at the very outset that the selection of terms and concepts was one of the most crucial challenges of doing global history. He highlighted that global historians had a clear preference for all things connected, which is reflected in their lavish use of the terms 'connections' and 'entanglements'. Brahm argued that global history addressed various kinds of relations and thus it was a challenge to decide which metaphor would capture a particular relationship when deployed on a transnational and transcultural scale. He used the example of the term 'commodity chain' to illustrate his argument, questioning whether it could be used to understand production relations on a global scale.

The second speaker, Monica Juneja, discussed the usefulness of certain global history concepts in art history. She em-

phasised the need to give up the myth of 'origins' and look more into the processes of transculturation: how concepts travel, take root in other cultures, and are reappropriated. She emphasised that transculturation as a concept could enable art historians in South Asia to engage with the pressing contemporary issue of a globally connected field of art, and also with the metropolitan gallery spaces that turn objects into museumised art. It could also help art historians to understand the transactions between textual and artistic practices.

The third panellist, Rekha Vaidya Rajan, addressed the subject from the perspective of German literary studies. She reflected on the possible intersections between literary and cultural studies on the one hand, and the methods of global history on the other. Given Germany's short colonial history, German literature followed a very different trajectory from its British or French counterparts, and so-called 'postcolonial literature' never became a part of German literature. From the 1970s onwards, works by authors who were migrants in Germany

started being published. The language of the establishment, through various exclusionary categories such as 'literature by guest authors', 'literature of the foreigners', or 'literature of the migrants', tended to keep these transcultural works outside the pale of German literature. Rajan argued that this transcultural literature brought about a qualitative change in the literary landscape of Germany as it questioned the homogeneity of German culture.

Dhruv Raina focused on the rise of the concept of 'indigenous sciences' in the 1980s and how that eventually led to an interest in 'indigenous knowledge' as a subject of postcolonial science studies. The 1980s saw the conjuncture of post-Kuhnian science, postcolonial science studies, feminist philosophies, and the attempt to deconstruct positivist science. Postcolonial science studies in India and China, for instance, started to focus on 'alternatives' to the universalist notion of the 'indigenous'. Raina also highlighted that this epistemological shift went hand in hand with certain shifts in the discourses of institutions like UNESCO, a key player in the mainstreaming of the 'indigenous'. He concluded with the thought that in times of global environmental crisis and diminishing returns, science studies needs to reimagine its analytical language.

The final speaker of the panel, Joachim Kurtz, discussed the writing of global history in East Asian languages. He spoke about how these languages have often challenged the hegemony of Western languages and used terms that are specific to their cultural sensibilities. He cited the example of a Chinese word that connotes 'all under heaven', which is increasingly being used in Chinese international relations to refer to ancient Chinese civilization. There is another school in Chinese studies that advocates the complete rejection of Western languages and a return to indigenous languages and vocabularies in order to write the histories of non-Western civilizations. However, Kurtz argued, the real challenge lay in conceptualising a methodology that could make all sorts of meaning-making processes accessible under the rubric of global history. Both Rajan's and Kurtz's presentations raised important questions concerning the idea of 'translation' in the field of global history.

To start the discussion, Neeladri Bhattacharya teased out the tropes and categories that the five panellists associated with the practice of global history, and highlighted how their papers creatively spoke to each other. He emphasised the necessity of reversing the lens and focusing on the 'local', without which it would be impossible to imagine the constitution of the global. The presentations were followed by a lively discussion.

Report by Debarati Bagchi

IV Events

Workshops and Conferences

17 – 21 February 2020

Winter School on Global History: Challenges and Opportunities India International Centre, New Delhi

Organised jointly by Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office (MWS IBO), New Delhi, German Historical Institute London (GHIL) India Research Programme (IRP), Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies, Heidelberg University and the Heidelberg Centre South Asia, New Delhi

Convenors

Felix Brahm, GHIL

Monica Juneja, Heidelberg University

Indra Sengupta, MWS IBO, New Delhi and GHIL

Debarati Bagchi, MWS IBO

Pablo Holwitt, Heidelberg Centre South Asia, New Delhi

The winter school was directed at PhD and early career scholars mainly from German and Indian universities who are interested in the approaches of global history, regardless of the region they specialise in. There were three thematic sessions: 1) the history of labour; 2) the history of pedagogic practice and 3) the history of peripatetic objects. The sessions engaged with the relationship between global history, the history of colonialism and local or micro-history and the methodological challenge posed by languages and concepts to the writing of global history.

Speakers for Thematic Sessions

Parimala V Rao, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Monica Juneja, Heidelberg University

Prabhu Mohapatra, University of Delhi



The Languages of Global History

Panellists (L - R): Neeladri Bhattacharya (Delhi, Chair), Felix Brahm (London), Monica Juneja (Heidelberg), Rekha Vaidya Rajan (Hyderabad), Dhruv Raina (Delhi), and Joachim Kurtz (Heidelberg)

Photograph Courtesy of Deepanwita Dutta

18 February 2020

Panel Discussion on *The Languages of Global History* India International Centre, New Delhi

As part of the Winter School, a panel discussion on The Languages of Global History was organised on 18 February 2020.

Speakers

Felix Brahm, GHIL

Monica Juneja, Heidelberg University

Joachim Kurtz, Heidelberg University

Dhruv Raina, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Rekha Vaidya Rajan, Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung, Hyderabad

Moderator and Commentator

Neeladri Bhattacharya, Ashoka University, New Delhi



Photograph Courtesy of Deepanwita Dutta

24 – 25 September 2020

Virtual Internal Colloquium of the Research Group on *Education and the Urban in India since the Nineteenth Century*

The Education and the Urban Research Group of the MWS IBO organised a two-day virtual internal colloquium on 24-25 September 2020. The Principal Investigators and Research Associates presented drafts of their working papers for the Education and the Urban Working Paper Series.

Convenors

Indra Sengupta (MWS IBO & German Historical Institute London),
Debarati Bagchi (MWS IBO), Yamini Agarwal (MWS IBO)
Yamini Agarwal, MWS IBO

Speakers

Debarati Bagchi, MWS IBO
Akash Bhattacharya, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru
Nandini Manjrekar, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai
Geetha B Nambissan, JNU, New Delhi
Shivali Tukdeo, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru

10 – 12 December 2020

Virtual Conference on Archiving, Recording and Representing Feminism: The Global History of Women's Emancipation in the 20th Century

The conference was the second meeting of the International Standing Working Group (ISWG) on Medialization and Empowerment. It brought together scholars from history, sociology, anthropology, media and cultural studies, and gender studies to explore the connections between the media, archiving and the history of feminism. The three-day conference enabled discussions on the changing forms in which ideas of feminism were circulated and received has shaped how we understand the history of feminism.

Convenors

Christina von Hodenberg, German Historical Institute London

Jane Freeland, German Historical Institute London

Partners

Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office (MWS IBO)

New Delhi German Historical Institute Washington DC

German Historical Institute Rome, Orient Institute Beirut

Other Events

A Discussion on the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

German Centre for Research and Innovation (DWIH)-MWS IBO

Online Event

14 October 2020

The German Centre for Research and Innovation (DWIH), New Delhi in collaboration with MWS IBO organised an online discussion on the National Education Policy (NEP) announced by the Government of India in 2020. The three speakers were Principal Investigators of the Education and the Urban research group of the IBO.

Speakers

Geetha B Nambissan, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Nandini Manjrekar, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Shivali Tukdeo, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru

Moderator and Commentator

Katja Lasch, German Centre for Research and Innovation (DWIH) New Delhi

IV Events

Max Weber Lecture Series

Fourth Max Weber Lecture

30 January 2020

The Global Revolution of Time in the Nineteenth Century
Speaker: Sebastian Conrad, Free University Berlin

Organised by the Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office
in collaboration with
The Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany
Jadavpur University
and Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan
Kolkata

Venue: Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Kolkata

The nineteenth century witnessed a fundamental transformation of notions of time on a global scale. Around the world, time-hallowed practices of time measurement and of time-related cosmologies had to come to terms with a new global regime. This new time regime constituted a four-fold revolution, introducing the concepts of standardization, of global synchronicity, of progressive time, and of deep historical time. In this talk, Sebastian Conrad argued that this temporal revolution cannot be equated with the diffusion of European temporality, but it needs to be understood as a multifaceted response to global challenges.

The talk scheduled to be held in New Delhi on 27 January had to be cancelled, due to the speaker falling ill.

Fourth Max Weber Lecture by Sebastian Conrad at the Goethe Institut/
Max Mueller Bhavan Kolkata

Image 1 photograph courtesy of Debarati Bagchi

Image 2 photograph courtesy of Goethe Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan Kolkata



Working Paper Series Education and the Urban in India

Mehandale, Archana and Swagata Raha: Schools as Safe Spaces: An Analysis of Public Narratives and Policy Actions in Bengaluru – Working Paper Series 2020/5

Saxena, Sadhna: Changing Urban Education Trends: Case Study of a ‘Small Town’ in Madhya Pradesh – Working Paper Series 2020/6

Agarwal, Yamini: Urban Marginalisation, Exclusion and Education: The Widows’ Colony in Delhi – Working Paper Series 2020/7

Khan, Razak, Place of Knowledge: Education and Urban History in Rampur – Working Paper Series 2020/8

Publications of MWS IBO Researchers

Agarwal, Yamini. “‘Is this home? Not so much!’: Gender, Ethnicity and Belongingness to the City”. German Historical Institute London Blog, 19 November 2020.

<https://ghil.hypotheses.org/218>

Agarwal, Yamini. Doctoral Thesis Announcement, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, DOI: 10.1080/01425692.2020.1847458, 1 December 2020.

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Bagchi, Debarati. National Education Policy 2020: A Discussion on Educational Policy Reform in India, 14 October 2020. German Historical Institute London Blog, 17 December 2020. <https://ghil.hypotheses.org/244#more-244>

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Nambissan, Geetha B. Caste and the Politics of the Early 'Public' in Schooling: Reflections on the Dalit Struggle for an Equitable Education. *Contemporary Education Dialogue*, 17 (2), 126-154, 2020.

Nambissan, Geetha B. Low-Cost Education for the Poor in India: Contemporary Concerns. *The JMC Review: An Interdisciplinary Social Science Journal of Criticism, Practice and Theory*, Volume 4, 2020.

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www.bpb.de/apuz/303637/zur-generation-der-45er-staerken-und-schwaechen-eines-deutungsmusters

VI People

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(1 March – 31 May 2020)

Funded by ICAS (until October 2020)

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