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The Transnational Research Group (TRG) “Poverty Reduction and Policy for the Poor between State and private Actors: Education Policy in India since the Nineteenth Century” started its work in 2013. It was coordinated by the German Historical Institute London (GHIL) and generously provided with funding for a five-year period by the Max Weber Stiftung, the umbrella organisation to which the GHIL belongs. The TRG was conceived as a network of colleagues from Germany, India and the UK who were interested in working on the topic of ‘Poverty and Education in India’ (which soon became the short title of its research programme) as well as in jointly supervising a number of PhD students on this topic. After five years, we can proudly say that this was an extremely successful programme. It not only provided excellent academic and material support for 6 PhD students and 7 young postdoctoral researchers, but also resulted in intensive cooperation amongst the principal investigators and a considerable output of academic research overall. As planned, almost all PhD theses have been or will be submitted after four years of funding. Supported by the TRG, our postdoctoral fellows have published numerous articles on their work in academic journals or in our working paper series. The principle investigators have embarked on a joint project which will result in an online edition of and archival guide to sources of Indian educational history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This will be available online in the course of 2018.

Although the five-year funding period of the TRG ended in December 2017, the Executive Board of the Stiftung has kindly agreed to fund the costs for the India Branch Office and administrative staff in Delhi for another fixed term period of three years and to have its academic programme evaluated in autumn 2019. On the basis of the evaluation results a decision will be taken on whether the Delhi office will become a permanent basis for research activities in India funded by the Max Weber Stiftung. In close cooperation with an Academic Advisory Group as well as with the Head Office of the Max Weber Stiftung in Bonn, the German Historical Institute London is in the process of developing new research perspectives for the India Branch Office and has been expanding its research activities considerably beyond the topic of ‘Poverty and Education in India’. One of the main challenges will be to design an organisational framework as well as a research agenda which will allow the India Branch Office to become both an institution in its own right and a hub through which the GHIL and perhaps other Institutes of the Max Weber Stiftung can run their India-related research activities and cooperate with Indian partners. A first step in the direction of a new framework for the India Branch Office in Delhi is that as from 2018 its budget will be independent of the GHIL budget and will be managed by the Head Office of the Max Weber Stiftung in Bonn.

As far as the GHIL is concerned, four main areas of research have emerged which will be the particular focus of its research activities in India over the next three years. First, the work of the TRG will be finished, and individual and collaborative projects and publications will be completed. Secondly, we will continue our interdisciplinary research on education and schooling in India.
with a new project on “Education and the Urban”. Building on the research network developed by the TRG, but also including new partners from various parts of India, this project will analyse specific aspects of urban schooling, for example in the context of the rise of multi-ethnic and multi-faith neighbourhoods in India’s rapidly growing cities. Thirdly, the GHIL and the Head Office of the Max Weber Stiftung in Bonn, together with three German and Indian partners respectively, are involved in the new ‘M.S. Merian-R. Tagore Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences: Metamorphoses of the Political. Comparative Perspectives on the Long Twentieth Century’ (ICAS:MP). The Bonn and Delhi offices of the Max Weber Stiftung act as the administrative consortium coordinator, while the GHIL, together with an Indian partner, is responsible for the Thematic Module ‘History as a Political Category’ and its research project on ‘Selling History: Tourist Guides, Bazaar Histories, and the Politics of the Past’. Fourthly, Jewish migration to India from Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe has emerged as a new and interesting field of inquiry. This interest originated from the preparation of a 2018 conference on Jewish migration to Africa and Asia, which was jointly planned and organized with one of our partner Institutes, the GHI in Washington and our long-standing partner in India, the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS). It became clear that British and Indian archives hold a wealth of material which has so far hardly been touched upon by researchers.

Funding for these projects comes from more than one source. Whereas ICAS:MP was funded for a preparatory phase of three years by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) (and is still awaiting the final decision on the funding of a six-year main phase), the other projects are supported by funds left over from the initial TRG budget of 2013 to 2017. However, these funds are limited and any further expansion of our research activities over the next three years will require additional third party funding. We are in the process of preparing several such applications and hope that by the evaluation in 2019 there will be a substantial range of additional activities in place.

Neither the TRG nor any of these new projects would have been possible without the dedication of the staff at the GHIL, the Head Office in Bonn and the India Branch Office in Delhi. As this is not only the last report of the ‘old’ TRG, but also my final report as Director of the German Historical Institute London, my thanks go to many people, more than I can name here individually. My particular thanks go, first of all, to Dr Indra Sengupta, who has not only successfully coordinated the TRG over five years, but at the same time overseen the not only time-consuming process of setting up the India Branch Office of the Max Weber Stiftung in Delhi. As the Head of the India Research Programme of the Max Weber Stiftung at the GHIL she is now coordinator and principal investigator of two of our main new projects and directs the Branch Office as well as representing the India research interests at the GHIL and its special research area on ‘Colonial and Global History’. Initially our activities in India were based on a close cooperation with the American Institute for Indian Studies (AIIS). Without the generous help of Purnima Mehta, the
Director General of AIIS, and her team, setting up our own Branch Office in Delhi in such a short period of time would hardly have been possible. We are also grateful for their continuing support. The new India Branch Office has not only worked hard to juggle the TRG with all the specific problems arising from organising a multinational PhD group and research network, but has also provided vital support for the establishment of ICAS:MP’s administrative framework. The core administrative team at the Delhi office for the TRG and the subsequent GHIL projects consists of Rohan Seth, Deepanwita Dutta and Sukanti Ekka. Dr Elvira Graner, Dr des Laila Abu-el-Rub and Himanshu Chawla, the ICAS:MP team, are housed at the India Branch Office of the Max Weber Stiftung and support our activities within this new cooperative project. All the members of the Delhi office had an extremely busy year 2017 with many workshops, conferences, fellowships and the evaluation of ICAS:MP to be organised. I would like to thank them very much for their hard work and continuing support. At the European end, my thanks also go to Sue Evans and Katharina Becker and the entire administrative staff at the GHIL, who have supported all our activities both here in London and in India, and Beatrice Rennhack and Abdullah Khaldy at the Head Office of the Max Weber Stiftung in Bonn who oversee the complex finances of ICAS:MP. I would also like to thank Dr Harald Rosenbach, the Chief Executive Director of the Max Weber Stiftung, and all the other members of the team in Bonn who have devoted much of their time to helping us set up the India Branch Office in Delhi. Finally and perhaps most importantly, my thanks go to all the colleagues in India, Germany, the UK and elsewhere, who have cooperated with us over the past years, as well as to the doctoral and postdoctoral fellows and the academic staff working on our projects in India and London. Our aim is and always has been to further Innovative and productive transnational academic cooperation. We are very grateful that so many colleagues and friends have joined and supported us in this endeavour, ensuring it became a success. I am sure that the network we have built up over the past years will continue to generate exciting new ideas and open up rewarding avenues of transnational academic research.
I
General Report
2017 was the final year of the Transnational Research Group (TRG) “Poverty Reduction and Policy for the Poor between the State and Private Actors: Education Policy in India since the Nineteenth century” at GHI London, which has been active since 1 January 2013. However, with the addition of several projects the India research programme of the Max Weber Stiftung at GHI London and the India Branch Office in Delhi grew from a single research group into a substantial research programme.

The TRG had an inter-disciplinary research agenda focusing on seven designated research areas, to be studied by senior scholars and junior researchers from the disciplines of history, education, and educational sociology: 1) Nineteenth and twentieth-century global educational reform movements and their impact on universal schooling in India; 2) The quest for universal elementary/school education, the private sector and edu-business; 3) Caste discrimination and education policy; 4) Industrial restructuring, informalization, and their consequences for access to elementary education; 5) Adult education and the popularisation of practical scientific knowledge; 6) Industrial and technical institutions and the resignification of manual labour; 7) The impact of schooling on life histories.

The period January- December 2017 saw several TRG fellows complete their projects. Of the postdoctoral fellows, Smita Gandotra (Kings College London), who returned to the TRG in July 2016, was given a final extension of 2 months till March 2017. Sumeet Mhaskar (Göttingen), who left the TRG in August 2014 to avail of a fellowship of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, was awarded three months of funding left over from his fellowship to complete his project. Saikat Maitra (Göttingen) was awarded a 4-month grant to prepare an application for a DFG-funded research project on skills training. All postdoctoral fellows completed their research projects and immediately got full-time faculty positions at universities in India. Smita Gandotra returned to her faculty position at St Stephens College - Delhi University, Sumeet Mhaskar was appointed Associate Professor at the OP Jindal Global University, and Saikat Maitra got a faculty position at the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta. This meant that all that almost
all TRG postdoctoral fellows have got a secure academic placements (previous fellows include Sunandan K.N, who has a faculty position at Azim Premji University, Bangalore, Kaustav Mani Sengupta at Bankura University, and Debarati Bagchi received a postdoctoral fellowship at the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, which was followed by a faculty position at Adamas University Kolkata).

Final extensions were awarded to the final batch of PhD scholars of the TRG: this included Vidya K.S (JNU Delhi) and Alva Bonaker (CeMIS Göttingen). Of the 6 full-time PhD grants awarded since 2013, 3 scholars completed their PhD in 2017 (Vidya K.S. and Divya Kannan at JNU, and Arun Kumar at CeMIS Göttingen). The two remaining PhD scholars (Alva Bonaker, in part on maternity leave in 2017 and Malini Ghose) are expected to submit their PhD dissertations in early 2018.

The final phase of the TRG saw a continuation of short-term grants. In the report year grants were specifically limited to two visiting fellowships of two months’ duration each, one each for senior and early-career scholars respectively. The senior fellowship was awarded to Professor AR Venkatachalapathy of the Madras Institute of Development Studies (Chennai) and the junior fellowship to Dr Amit Suman of Kirori Mal College, University of Delhi. Both were integrated into the academic and social life of the institute. Dr Suman gave a talk on “Educating Poor Muslims: Madrasa System of Education in Colonial India, Reforms and Evolution” at the institute’s colloquium on 30 May 2017. Professor Venkatachalapathy gave the special TRG lecture on “From Pulavar to Professor: Policy, Politics and the Professionalization of Tamil Pandits, 1812-1949” on 8 June 2017. Both talks were well attended and led to lively discussions. The summer programme of the TRG in London, consisting of visiting fellowships and short-term travel grants for PhD scholars from India to London, has substantially contributed to the GHI’s research area of colonial and global history.

As part of the visiting fellowship programme, Principal Investigators Geetha B. Nambissan and Neeladri Bhattacharya (both from JNU) spent 3 months and 5 weeks respectively at the German Historical Institute for their TRG research.

Of the other research projects of the TRG, field work and oral interviews of the pilot study of the oral history project Documenting the lives of the urban poor with a specific reference to the links between poverty and education: a set of interviews (Janaki
Nair, JNU) was completed. With the help of a research assistant the collected material was organised and made ready for selective publication on the website. The data has been provisionally stored both electronically and physically at the TRG office in Delhi, pending final archiving. A set of three papers from the project have been published in the TRG Working Paper Series on the website of GHIL and also on www.perspectivia.net. Further TRG projects, such as *Schooling, Disadvantage and Privilege: Choices, strategies and practices of poor and middle class families* (Geetha Nambissan, JNU), have been completed with the results being prepared for publication. A further project consisting of a documentary film on “Industrial Training and the Human Life Cycle” was completed by PI Jahnavi Phalkey (KCL) at the end of 2017.

The collaborative project *Key Moments of Education Policy towards the Poor*, a series of smaller projects spearheaded by several Principal Investigators of the TRG and coordinated by Jana Tschurenev, TRG postdoctoral fellow at CeMIS Göttingen, concluded in the report year (see separate report, pp.34).

The final TRG workshop took place in Delhi on 2-4 February 2017. Apart from the final presentations of the TRG scholars, one day was reserved for the theme “Alternative Education Experiments in South India in the 1970s and 80s”. The workshop was convened by Janaki Nair (JNU) and it consisted of presentations by five practitioners of alternative education experiments. The presenters narrated and analysed the radical education experiments with children from underprivileged backgrounds with which all of them had been associated since the 1970s. The papers are being prepared for publication in the TRG online Working Paper Series.

The final conference of the TRG, entitled “Poverty and Education from the Nineteenth Century to the Present: India and Comparative Perspectives” took place in London on 27-29 September 2017. The conference was a success. Publications will take place in the form of special issues. (See separate report, pp. 59)

3 TRG PhD scholars who have recently completed their PhD (Preeti, Divya Kannan and Vidya K.S.) were selected by the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung through an open call for papers to present their research in the form of a talk and posters at the prestigious Alexander von Humboldt Colloquium in Bangalore on 23-25 November 2017. Their participation was directed at showcasing the work of the TRG since 2013 but also to
enable them to meet the organisers and get information about funding for postdoctoral research that the Humboldt Stiftung is known for.

Finally, the TRG Working Paper Series, which had a brief pause in publication since late 2015, was rejuvenated as four new papers were published in 2017. Further papers are in the pipeline or publication by the middle of 2018. (See publications, pp. 73)

NEW PROJECTS

Dedicated funding for the TRG Poverty and Education ended in December 2017. Funding on a modest scale continues to be provided by the Max Weber Stiftung to run the branch office in Delhi. However, the rich and productive research programme in India and the academic exchange programme between Indian scholars and the GHI London (research area: colonial and global history) will continue. It will be funded by research funds that are left over from the TRG. Two new projects were put into place in 2017 and preparations were underway to apply for a new, third-party funded research project in 2018.

Following an initial meeting and discussions in March 2017, a new research group, which shares some of the concerns of the TRG Poverty and Education, was set up with a project on “Education and the Urban” for an initial period of two years. The research is funded by monies left over from the TRG Poverty and Education. The work of the group started in October 2017. A new project on “Selling history: tourist guides, bazaar histories, and the politics of the past” was started by Indra Sengupta (GHIL) in cooperation with Neeladri Bhattacharya (JNU) in August 2017. The project is a part of the module “History as a political category” of the MS Merian/R Tagore International Centre of Advanced Studies: Metamorphosis of the Political (ICAS:MP) of the BMBF in New Delhi. Finally, preliminary research on Jewish refugees from Europe to colonial India during the Second World War has been undertaken with a view to starting a third-party funded research project on a history of Jewish refugees and migrants in India from the First World War to the 1950s. A postdoctoral research scholar Joseph John Cronin was employed from August to December 2017 to carry out this research. The project will be a joint research endeavour of GHI London and the MWS Branch Office in India. In February 2018 a conference, organised jointly by GHI Washington and London, the MWS India Branch Office, and the American Institute of Indian Studies, on “In Global
Transit: In Global Transit. Jewish Migrants from Hitler’s Europe in Asia, Africa, and Beyond” will be organised in Kolkata, India. This will be accompanied by an exhibition on “The city as refuge: European Jewish refugees in Calcutta, 1920s-1950s”, curated by Indra Sengupta, with research support from Joseph Cronin in London, Jennifer Lee Anne Wachtel in Washington and in consultation with scholars on the subject in India, Europe and the USA.

For detailed reports on the new projects see pp. 41.

**Staff**

To support the expanded India research programme the Delhi office now has acquired a new position: Deewanwita Dutta joined the office as Deputy Office Manager/Programme Coordinator on 1 May 2017. At GHI London Sue Evans left the Institute after nine years of service, of which the last five were dedicated to the TRG. Sue was succeeded by Katharina Becker, who took over as Secretary of the India Research Programme on 1 May 2017.
II

Project Reports
This PhD research focuses on the Indian Mid-Day Meal Scheme – the largest school feeding programme in the world. Under the official term ‘National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education’, the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS), as it is commonly referred to, was launched in 1995 with the objectives to enhance enrolment, retention and attendance in schools while simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children and encouraging social change in classrooms and beyond. Since 2001 students of all Indian public and aided primary schools (later also upper primary schools) have to be provided with a hot-cooked meal.

In a qualitative case study based in Delhi, I am tracing the question “How do parents, teachers, students and local communities understand the MDMS, and to what extent do they exert control over its effects?”. To approach this question I analyse what means are available for them to do this, and how their understandings of the scheme and definition of its benefits differ from those of policy makers and higher level officials. I aim to examine how this governmental welfare programme is seen by those that are meant to benefit from it, how they define its benefits and to what extent they shape the scheme and its outcomes themselves. Furthermore, I analyse in what role these people see themselves in relation to the scheme and what that reveals about their relation towards each other as well as about their notion of “the state” and how they relate to it.

The case study focuses on children from very poor migrant families (most of them being Pамиriya Muslim families from Bihar and low caste Hindus and Dalits from different places of North India) who live in two adjacent slums, a night shelter home (‘Ren Basera’), under the flyover or on the streets.
in South Delhi. I conduct participant observation and semi-structured interviews at their homes, at an education NGO and an NGO for child welfare which work with them, at the two MCD schools into which many of the children have been enrolled, as well as at the NGO which cooks the food for these schools.

**WORK DONE IN REPORT YEAR**

I started this year with revising my first chapter, which introduces the families of my field research and discusses how the children negotiate childhood and education in the context of urban poverty. My findings show that despite the Right to Education (RTE) Act of 2009 and a general striving for education even among the poorest, their daily lives are shaped by several factors, which often compromise or disrupt school education.

Half of the summer semester I was on parental leave, after which I continued organising and analysing my fieldwork material. This includes translating, transcribing and coding relevant parts of the recordings and the fieldwork diary by the use of software for qualitative data analysis.

In the second chapter, on which I am currently working, I focus on my observations throughout the distribution and eating of the school meal, as well as on conversations and interviews with students, teachers, school principals and distribution helpers. I try to understand how the food of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme matches the cultural and personal food preferences and eating habits of the children and to what extent they are themselves involved in food related work. For this analysis, I combine my daily observations and conversations (inside and outside school) with the information from about 85 short individual semi-structured interviews, which I conducted with students at the two primary schools. Moreover, I engage with the views of the teachers on the meal, as this reveals their commitment for the success of the scheme as well as their understanding of the children’s need for care and (nutritional) support.

**PUBLICATIONS, CONFERENCES ATTENDED, TALKS RELEVANT TO PROJECT**


**Project Synopsis**

In the mid-1980s a ‘new’ generation of education policies and programmes for rural women were introduced in India. Conceptualized and initially implemented by an unlikely collaboration between the state and feminist organisations on one hand, and urban feminists and rural women on the other, these programmes introduced fresh ways of fashioning the rural woman subject through literacy and education.

My research studies the creation of narratives and discourses around educational policies in India from the mid-1980s and subjects of policies, primarily women and girls from marginalised communities.

The take-off point of my research is the 1986 National Education Policy and the Mahila Samakhya programme initiated by the Government of India in 1989, to operationalize what is regarded as an important conceptual shift—from welfare to empowerment—in the new policy’s formulation of the purposes of women’s literacy and education.

By focussing on tracing the life histories of women who were part this programme my research examines the historical, political and lived dynamics that shape – and complicate – the categories, imperatives and assumptions of policy-making. I asked the following questions: What meanings do women assign to education and in what ways has education enabled new subjectivities to evolve? In what ways do Dalit women’s narratives relate to and diverge from the prevailing dominant discourses around education for marginalised and excluded communities? What has educational access meant for the next generations in their families in terms of their educational opportunities and life-chances?

My research was located in Chitrakoot and Banda districts in Uttar Pradesh (U.P), where the Mahila Samakhya Programme was initiated in 1989 and my primary methodological approach entailed gathering ethnographically embedded oral life and family histories of Dalit women who were part of the programmes educational interventions in the early 1990s.

**Work done during the project**

I began as a PhD scholar at the Centre for Modern Indian Studies (CeMIS), Gottingen University, Faculty of Social Sciences in October 2013.

As a TRG Research Fellow I was part of TRGs mentorship programme, which
contributed significantly to making the past four years an exceptionally rich journey of intellectual growth.

My academic research over the past four years has developed in the following manner:

- Literature review and preparation for field work (2013-2014)
- Field work in Chitrakoot and Banda Districts (Uttar Pradesh), Lucknow and New Delhi (between 2014-2016)
- Data analysis and writing (2016-2017)
- Ongoing mentorship through the TRG programme


My initial year in the programme was spent at CeMIS, where the thrust of my work was primarily in two areas: firstly, to further develop my research proposal and develop an understanding of the connected literature; secondly to prepare for the fieldwork phase of my research.

**Preparation for Fieldwork**

To strengthen the methodological aspects of my research, I discussed and attended courses offered by colleagues at CeMIS on fieldwork and ethnography.

I also conducted two months of preliminary fieldwork between February and March 2014 to field-test my research methodology – to ethnographically develop life-history
narratives of Dalit and Kol women who had participated in adult literacy programmes conducted by the Mahila Samakhya Programme in the early 1990s. During the preliminary fieldwork phase I began developing one oral history narrative as a test case. This exercise proved to be very useful as I used the insights from this process to rework my research design and tools and develop preliminary semi-structured interview schedules.


My fieldwork was conducted across three research sites:

- Ethnographic research in Chitrakoot and Banda Districts (Uttar Pradesh).
- Interviews with policy makers and key informants in Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)
- Interviews with policy makers and key informants in Delhi
- Archival research in all the three sites

My ethnographic fieldwork and archival data collection was undertaken in 2015, and my interviews with policy makers and key informants was conducted in 2016.

**ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH IN CHITRAKOOT AND BANDA DISTRICTS**

My field research site (Chitrakoot and Banda Districts of the Northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh) was one of the first districts where the Mahila Samakhya programme was initiated in 1989 to operationalize the Government’s ‘new’ vision of linking women’s literacy and education with empowerment.

My first task was to identify my research subjects. I used whatever records I was able to gather, which mainly depended on interviews with several key local informants to identify women who had participated in literacy and education programmes in the early 1990s and to map the diversity of women’s life courses subsequent to their encounter with literacy and education. This process enabled me to discern three broad pathways in terms of the role of...
education in women’s lives: One group, comprised women who were engaged with (or had recently stopped) agricultural and other wage work; the second were working with non-governmental organisations, many having grown out of MS; and a third group were women who were low-end functionaries of government health and education programmes.

I spent considerable time tracing women I had identified, as information was sketchy but the process of key informant interviews and subsequently meeting women, worked usefully as a snowballing technique. From this larger pool of preliminary meetings and interviews I ultimately developed in-depth profiles of 15 women through participant observation in their homes and workplaces, semi-structured interviews with my research subjects and their family members. I also traced the educational trajectories of my research subjects and their family members to ascertain intergenerational trends.

In addition to working with 15 research subjects I also observed events organized by local women’s organisations, and interviewed local functionaries of the Mahila Samakhya programme, former teachers from non-governmental educational initiatives related to my research, as well as other informants on local Dalit politics, development and educational issues.

As my research progressed I realised that a significant story that paralleled and intersected with the lives of women had been the birth and growth of several local women’s organisations, emerging from the initial experience of Mahila Samakhya. As some of my research subjects had been instrumental in establishing, nurturing and providing leadership to these institutions, understanding their histories and trajectories, became an area that I focussed on.

My field site is commonly referred to as the ‘bad lands’ of Bundelkhand – for its difficult physical terrain, endemic poverty, poor social and educational indicators and not least for its feudal social relations shadowed by the prevalence of bandit gangs. My fieldwork was thus challenging (and exciting) particularly since my research subjects were scattered across the two-districts and entailed my travelling between distant villages.

**INTERVIEWS WITH POLICY EXPERTS AND KEY INFORMANTS IN DELHI AND LUCKNOW**

Understanding the policy framework within which to locate
and embed the life histories of my
research subjects was a significant
element of my research project.
Between January and March 2016,
I conducted several interviews with
policy-makers working at the state
level (Uttar Pradesh), nationally and
internationally on issues related
to gender and education in Delhi
and Lucknow. I also interviewed
experts, trainers, practitioners and
civil society representatives who
had been instrumental in shaping
the National Education Policy (1986)
Mahila Samakhya programme.

Across the three research sites I have
conducted over 100 structured and
semi-structured interviews.

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

The third aspect of my fieldwork
was to conduct archival research.

Organised archives, as such were not
readily available and in effect I had
to spend a considerable amount of time
gathering a range of material:

- Reports and documents related to
  the Mahila Samakhya programme
  from their district and state offices.
- Educational material – curricula,
  primers, training manuals,
  samples of women’s writings.
- Material (reports, newspaper
  clipping, training manuals) from
  local women’s organisations.
  An important source of local
  contextual information that I
  collected were copies of a local
  newspaper produced by Dalit
  women.
- Policy documents related to
  gender and education from various
  libraries and institutions in Delhi
  and Lucknow.
- Samples of written material, diaries
  etc. from my research subjects.
ANALYSIS AND WRITING (2016-2017)

Organising field material

In 2016 I began transcribing and coding my interviews and systematising my field material.

I began my dissertation-writing process by developing the chapterisation for my thesis, working on chapter outlines and subsequently draft chapters.

Organising writing group: Between October 2016 and June 2017, I helped organize a writing group under Prof. Rupa Viswanath’s supervision. As part of this group, students pre-circulated papers and draft chapters, which were then commented on in detail. Six writing group sessions were organized and proved extremely helpful in pushing the pace of the writing process.

I am currently in the process of completing the writing process.

ATTENDING ACADEMIC COLLOQUIUMS AND TRG WORKSHOPS

An important part of my academic programme was to participate in the various Colloquiums organized every semester at CeMIS. These provided a productive opportunity to engage with a wide-range of current interdisciplinary research.

The TRG programme organized bi-annual workshops where PhD fellows presented papers based on their research to the TRG community, which comprised of TRG Faculty members, Post-doctoral fellows and PhD fellows. This forum was invaluable for the vibrant exchanges and insightful feedback it provided.

PUBLICATIONS, CONFERENCES ATTENDED, TALKS RELEVANT TO PROJECT

TRG bi-annual Workshops:

What Inclusion leaves out, Presentation of Research Proposal, TRG Workshop, New Delhi, December 2013

The Web of Empowerment: Besaniya’s story, TRG Workshop, New Delhi, November 2015.

Towards a Thesis Outline, TRG Workshop, Göttingen, June 2016

The fragility of upward mobility: The entangled politics of education, TRG Workshop, New Delhi, February 2017

Behna Behna Behna, Nayi Batein Jaan Lena (Sister O sisters Learn new things): Refashioning Rural Women’s Subjectivities through literacy interventions in the Mid 1980s, TRG Workshop, London, September 2017

It’s a complicated story, Didi: Scripting educational journeys, Conference on Gender relations and rising inequalities, University of East Anglia, July 2015.

Literacy and Citizenship, Panel Chair, National Consultation, Current issues related to literacy and Adult Education, New Delhi, 16-17 February 2017.

**Other Workshops, Seminars**


Marketisation, Managerialism and School Reforms: A Study of Public-Private Partnerships in Elementary Education in Delhi

Vidya K.S. (PhD Scholar)

Project Report

I joined the Transnational Research Group in July 2014. The focus of my PhD research study was to examine how global discourses of New Public Management were entering and reorienting education policy discussions surrounding school teaching specifically in the Indian context. Teacher education and training were important focal points of this research study as a number of NGOs have emerged in the urban landscape of the country which focus on school teaching as an important variable in improving learning outcomes.

These NGOs which are important sites for the circulation of these rising discourses of New Public Management have entered into significant PPP arrangements with municipal bodies in important metro cities of Delhi and Mumbai. Through these PPP arrangements, these NGOs are not only instituting new pedagogical regimes within these school spaces but are also using these sites to formulate and validate certain pedagogical approaches that are more aligned to largescale standardised testing. These interventions are in turn influencing larger national education policy debates on reforming teacher education and the aims of school teaching.

Apart from a survey of the range and nature of teacher training PPPs in the urban context of Mumbai and Delhi, the study focused on the ‘Teach for India’ (TFI) intervention in Delhi, one significant PPP in teacher training, that seeks to address educational inequity in teaching-learning transactions in the classroom. As an off-shoot of the ‘Teach for America’ programme, the case-study of TFI seeks to explore its networks within the larger global education policy landscape and its specific nature of intervention within the Indian school education scene.

Theoretical Framework


‘Marketisation’, as Whitty and Power (2000) explained, refers to a process wherein the State no longer
remains central to provisioning and funding in education. Instead there is an increasing outsourcing of services of various kinds – mid-day meals, teaching, assessments, school administration – to private entities creating ‘quasi-markets’ within school sites. The emergence of these ‘quasi-markets’ enforce principles of competition, choice and a reorientation of the student as a ‘consumer’ of education (Whitty and Power 2000).

This process of ‘marketisation’ where private entities enter and institute new regimes within public (government) schools is furthered through new modes of governance where the roles and responsibilities of the State are redefined.

There is a substantial devolving of State authority onto a network of non-governmental organisations and individuals who are not traditionally a part of the formal state apparatus but become “instruments through which strategies for governing populations and communities, and fashioning proper selves, are deployed and legitimized” (Gupta and Sharma 2006: 9).

The strategies through which these non-governmental organisations encode processes of ‘marketisation’ within public institutions such as schools are termed ‘managerialism’. Thus ‘managerialism’ is an important subset of how ‘marketisation’ gets instituted.

‘Managerialism’, as Clarke et al. (2000) explain, is a body of practices emphasising “attention to outputs and performance rather than inputs; separation of purchaser and provider; breaking down of large scale organizations and using competition to enable ‘exit’ or ‘choice’ by service users and decentralization of budgetary and personal authority to line managers” (page 6). In relation to teaching, ‘managerialism’ refers to those practices which seek to re-make the role of the school teacher and the aims of teaching itself. This encompasses a stronger shift for teachers to utilise behaviourist methods of teaching, aligning teaching strongly to standardised testing and continuously showcasing their daily minutiae of tasks in the classroom within parameters of ‘performance’ (Ball 2007, Gewirtz 2002).

Non-state entities such as ‘Teach for America’ and its offshoots through the ‘Teach for All’ network are important conduits towards encouraging and institutionalising the interlinked ideas of ‘marketisation’ and ‘managerialism’ within public school sites. The ‘ideal-typical form’ of school teaching that gets forged through these programmes is one of
'hyper-performativity' (Olmedo et al. 2013: page 497). This is important in the context of school teaching especially as Maguire (2010: 58) notes that it is a "complex, diffuse and differentiated occupation" constructed within “local histories, cultures and politics”. It will thus be interesting to understand how interventions such as ‘Teach for India’, which posit similar ideas of reform such as ‘Teach for America’, engage with and seek to reform local school systems and teachers marked by diverse social, cultural, religious and linguistic characteristics.

Rationale for the study
There have been a number of research studies in the West that have examined the interface of growing privatisation measures drawing from discourses of markets and managerialism in their respective public education systems. These varied research studies have examined domains of policy formulation, forms of institutional practices, classroom processes and intersections between these realms as well. In the context of India, the move towards studying privatisation and its concomitant manifestations in policy and practice is recent. There have been few research studies that have examined its impact on policy formulation and its reflections in programmes and schemes across the country, such as PPPs, teacher training programmes, emergence of low-cost budget schools and voucher schemes.

A key focus of this research study are PPPs in education and specifically the ‘Teach for India’ intervention, its modes of reform and practices within municipal schools and its related corporate financial links and advocacy networks. Over the past few years, a number of research studies have emerged in the US examining the consequences and effects of interventions such as ‘Teach for America’ on the public education system. These studies have been severely critical of the ways in which this programme undermines teacher professionalisation and adopts a pedagogical approach focusing on standards and outcomes. There have been no similar empirically based studies to examine the interface of the ‘Teach for India’ programme with the public education system in India. This research study is one attempt to explore the various manifestations of this intervention in policy forums and sites of reform, most notably the municipal schools in Delhi.

Research Objectives
1: To situate the larger discourse of Public-Private Partnerships
(PPP) in school education reform, teacher education and training. More specifically to focus on:

- The emergence of prominent NGOs engaged in these partnerships around teachers and their training since the 1990s in the urban context of Mumbai and Delhi.
- The plurality of perspectives of these actors on education, school improvement, the teacher and her training.

2: To study the emergence and global connections of a prominent PPP programme in teacher training - the ‘Teach for India’ (TFI) programme. More specifically to understand:

- The origins of the programme in India and its linkages to ‘Teach for America’ and other global networks.
- The social (and educational) backgrounds of TFI Fellows and their programme of training.

3: To examine the ‘Teach for India’ intervention operating in some government schools of Delhi. More specifically to understand:

- The nature of the partnership between TFI and the Delhi government.
- The new administrative and teaching arrangements within some government schools.

4: To focus on how the partnership shapes teaching-learning processes and interpersonal dynamics with government staff in select government schools. More specifically to understand:

- The pedagogical regime within Fellows’ classrooms and Fellows’ engagements with the school principal and the government teachers.
- The Fellows’ reflections on the organisation’s framework of teaching and their professional aspirations after the completion of the two-year fellowship.

**Methodology**

Fieldwork for this research project began with a broad survey of the range of NGOs working in teacher training and school management in the cities of Delhi and Mumbai. Keeping in mind the theoretical framework of ‘managerialism’, NGOs were categorised based on their pedagogical approaches and vision for education reform. Amongst these NGOs, the study decided to focus on the ‘Teach for India’ (TFI) organisation which is the Indian off-shoot of the ‘Teach for America’ programme. This programme was chosen as a case study in order to understand how global ideas of school reform focusing on teacher training travel,
adapt and enter into school systems with differing social and political histories but characterised by similar concerns of poor quality teaching. A range of methodological tools were used to examine the macro and micro particularities of the TFI programme. The first part of research on the TFI involved a survey of various documents, newspapers, websites and online advocacy groups to situate the intervention within the Indian context and locate its programme of action specifically within Delhi. In order to map the programme’s corporate, financial and advocacy networks locally, nationally and globally, Social Network Analysis (SNA) was used. This method of mapping transnational educational networks has been used extensively by several scholars and the study builds on previous research by Ball 2016; Kretchmar et al. 2014; Vellanki 2014; Au and Ferrare 2014; Olmedo et al. 2013; Ball 2012 and Nambissan and Ball 2010.

Social Network Analysis as Au and Ferrare (2014) note is a “family of analytical and theoretical tools used to examine and interpret relations between sets of actors and events” (page 1). The method has been used extensively to map “complex interactions and affiliations across a variety of educational policy contexts” (Ibid). The method allows researchers to locate and map certain important structural aspects of educational policy discourses. It allows the researcher to construct certain ‘translocal assemblages’ and chart policy flows and mobilities between different sets of actors and organisations. However, the method also poses some limitations regarding the spatio-temporal dynamics of educational policy mobilities that are always in flux and are constantly evolving. The method can assume a certain unidirectional flow of discourses from the West (mostly the US and Britain) to the developing world and in some studies also showcase the multi-directions of flows between various entities but it may not capture adequately the differences and negotiations between and within organisations and actors regarding elements of policy. Social Network Analysis can be inexhaustible as connections within connections can be determined and hence the researcher exercises certain choices to present a limited selection that can speak most pointedly on certain aspects of the intermingling of discourses within education policy. Thus in the context of this research study, Social Network Analysis was largely employed to map important nodes of the TFI programme functioning in different cities across the country.
The second part of the research on TFI explored the modes through which the intervention operated in government schools in the city of Delhi. Considering the difficult nature of accessing and studying PPPs within government schools, this study focused exclusively on the narratives of TFI Fellows and TFI organisation members to understand how the intervention functioned within government school sites. A detailed interview schedule was developed focusing on a range of themes such as socio-educational background of the TFI Fellows, organisational training practices, organisational support structures, teaching processes within classrooms, modes of interaction with the government school staff and aspirations after the completion of the fellowship. This interview schedule provided a framework for interviewing TFI Fellows in a focused manner. During the course of the interviews, where new questions and ideas emerged – these were then suitably incorporated and integrated within the interview schedule.

Interview schedules for other groups such as TFI Program Managers, TFI Senior Management Heads and TFI Alumni were developed in a similar manner as well. Close to 40 detailed interviews were conducted over the course of a year (between July 2014 and October 2015). These included Fellows from two cohorts (2013-2015 and 2014-2016) based in Delhi; Program Managers and Administrative team members working with the organisation between 2014 and 2016 in Delhi; Alumni members who were TFI Fellows and were working in the social sector in Delhi and some members from city teams based in Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai and Ahmedabad. Interviews with team members in other cities were conducted over the telephone and the internet except for a member from the Mumbai team who was interviewed in person.

Most respondents in Delhi were interviewed in person over the course of two sessions, where each session lasted up to two hours. Interviews were then transcribed and organised into relevant themes which have been analysed to reconstruct various aspects of the organisation and its modes of functioning in government schools in Delhi.

Apart from in-depth interviews, Right to Information (RTI) applications were also filed at respective Delhi municipal government offices (SDMC, NDMC and EDMC) and the Directorate of Education to procure relevant information on the PPP arrangement between TFI and the Delhi government. Information procured from these RTI applications have been used to situate observations
in the ethnographic chapters in this research study.

REFERENCES


**Publications relevant to the project**

- From Government to Governance: ‘Teach for India’ and new networks of reform in school education’ under review in Contemporary Education Dialogue

**Conferences attended, talks relevant to project**


- ‘Modalities of ‘partnership’: Situating the ‘Teach for India’ intervention within one municipal school in Delhi’, presented at the Max Weber Stiftung Transnational Research Group: Poverty and Education in India workshop, Akademie Waldschlesschen, Gottingen, 1-3 June 2016


- ‘PPPs and new projects of education reform: The ‘Teach for India’ phenomenon’, presented at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, 22 February 2017
Learning to Dream: Education, Aspiration, and Working Lives in Colonial India (1880s-1940s)

Arun Kumar (PhD Fellow)

PROJECT SYNOPSIS

This thesis studies the relationship of the labouring poor with education and schooling in colonial India (1880s-1940s). It places this relationship in a complicated web of desires, intentions, and aspirations held by workers and their employers. Those who performed labour (artisans, agrarian labourers, factory-workers) and those who extracted labour (elites including factory employers, feudal elites, and colonial officials) had different expectations from the education system. The thesis centrally explores workers’ dreams of not wanting to be workers and not behaving as “workers” (the prescribed and expected identity of the labouring castes). My research questions included: How was the labour reproduced through pedagogic schemes? How did working class use education to create their life experiences and how schooling added to their working life experience? What was the effect of skills, technical knowledge, school credentials, and educational qualifications on their work experiences?

I argue that workers’ desires and dreams unfolded, became concrete, and were realized at the site of education, and took the form of aspirations for a non-labouring career. The educational site, however, due to its control by elites, was designed to retain workers as manual labour, while training, disciplining, and educating them to serve under various old and new regimes of labour (railway workshops, factories, missionary industries, artisanal workshops, agrarian farms). I have explored the successes, failures, and transformations of these contradictory desires and visions of workers and of elites, and have shown that various actors such as teachers, elite workers, female workers, the middle classes, and colonial officials often mediated and restructured these desires and visions at various levels.

Childhood and the night, I argue, become the specific moments of working lives through which ideas and elements of these contradictory desires and visions were concretized. They become a site of contestation, with workers asserting their control over these times in order to realise their aspirations, and elites seeking to control these moments with the intention of producing a certain type of worker subjectivity that fit well with the logics of commodity production and labour extraction. Chapter 1 discusses the multiple desires and aspirations of Lucknow artisans, changes in their notions of childhood and night, and their relationship with the Lucknow Industrial School which sought to produce a trained and disciplined
labour force for railway workshops and other modern industries. Chapter 2 narrates the experiences of Dalit agrarian labourers’ demand for education from missionaries, and their struggles to move out of a certain type of labouring regime. It also discusses the politics of Christian missionaries, Arya Samajis, and the Harijan Sevak Sangh, who all sought to keep “untouchables” tied to a labouring life. Chapter 3 describes the changing notions of childhood among factory workers and employers with regard to worker-children. I explore the histories of factory schools and workers’ demand for education as their “political right”. Chapter 4 unfolds the moment of the night as a site for workers to subvert the normative image of the worker. I study their attendance at night schools, night-time reading rooms and libraries, and their employers’ struggles to colonise workers’ nights and other leisure time.

Source material for this thesis has emerged from the analysis of many untapped sources, including letters, diaries, poems and prose written by workers, school inspection reports, school registers, examination results, missionary reports, and private papers. These materials have helped me delve deeper into the social realm of labouring lives – by exploring their childhood and leisure, their day and night cycles of work and life – in which education and the politics of emancipation played an active role.

The thesis hopes to contribute to the history of labour, education, childhood, life-cycle, caste and class, Christian missions, poverty, leisure, and the reproduction of capitalist and conservative socio-economic order. It also opens up the field of proletarian childhood, working class literary culture, and the night as topics of research in the South Asian history.

**WORK DONE IN REPORT YEAR**

I submitted my thesis to the university administration on 1 August, 2017. At the same time, I held the post of a visiting global history fellow at the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam (April-September 2017). During the fellowship tenure, I focussed on PhD writing and viva preparation.

I defended my PhD on 25th September, 2017 at the Goettingen University. The committee was comprised of Prof. Rupa Viswanath (supervisor), Prof. Neeladri Bhattacharya (supervisor), Prof. Ravi Ahuja (Chair,
Examination Committee), and Prof. Bhavani Raman (Examiner). In the defence, I was asked to explain the central argument of thesis, the role of technology in working class education and its effects on them, the implications of my studies on current educational scenario, and Karl Marx’s theory of alienation.

The defence was successful and I passed with magna cum laude grade.

**Publications, conferences attended, talks relevant to project**

Learning to Dream: Education, Aspiration, and Working Lives in Colonial India, CeMIS History Seminar, Goettingen, 12 July 2017

Learning to Dream: Education, Aspiration, and Working Lives in Colonial India, International Institute of Social History Colloquium, Amsterdam, 6 September, 2017
III

Key Moments Report
Key Moments of Education Policy towards the Poor: Rethinking Histories of Education

Summary

How can we write histories of education of the poor, the disadvantaged, and the disprivileged? How can we critically explore the multiple trajectories of the politics 'education for all'? From 2014-2017, the Transnational Research Group “Poverty and Education in India”, funded by the Max-Weber-Foundation conducted a collaborative research project, which explored shifting policies of ‘education for the poor’ in India in the 19th and 20th centuries. Initially framed as “Key Moments of Education Policy for the Poor”, our project aimed to revisit the development of education policies in 19th and 20th century India. In a broader social history context, we looked at policy development in the contested terrain of social reform, in which administrators, voluntary associations, religious groups, and social movements brought forward competing visions of education. We also traced institutionalisation processes, and wider socio-political effects of education policies for the poor, the disadvantaged, and the disprivileged.

Objectives

The history of mass education, or ‘education for all’ in both colonial, and independent India is shaped by a fundamental ambiguity. From the second decade of the 19th century onwards, we can trace processes of educational expansion. There was an increased incorporation of people hitherto unreached by formal schooling – such as peasants, ‘untouchables’, or girls - into various educational institutions. This was, however, not a linear process. Nor does it fit into an easy narrative of democratisation. While tendencies towards inclusion and democratisation are part of the history which led to the Right to Education Act of 2009, our research started from the assumption that every new educational constellation, or educational regime, may have quite contradictory effects on ‘the poor’, or on particular disprivileged groups.

On the one hand, our research addressed the argument that modern education systems feed into mechanisms of social stratification. In formal schooling, we can observe the manifestation of traditional hierarchies, but also – which has been less emphasised – the
production of new social differences and inequalities. The politics of social reform and modernisation, and of educational inequality, are not mutually exclusive. Fee-free, or low-fee public schooling was, often, seen as a means of social discipline and of keeping the poor ‘in their place’. Missionary, colonial governmental, and national projects that promoted ‘female education’, were framed within a restrictive framework of female domesticity. Thus, exclusion, or denial of access is just one of several mechanisms which links education to poverty and social inequality.

On the other hand, we focused on the question of how public schooling could function and came to be understood as a motor of social change. From the mid-19th century onwards, anti-caste, and other subaltern reformers promoted the pursuit of education, learning, and knowledge, as core strategies of social transformation and the creation of individual opportunity. Our project thus explored important moments of educational change in their conflictive – reproductive and transformative, disciplinary and emancipatory – implications.

**Research Angles**

The contributing principal investigators pursued different routes to analyse these complex ambiguities. One approach was to identify major fields of debate and intervention within the wider politics of mass schooling, such as rural, indigenous and vernacular education in the 1850s to 1870s (Neeladri Bhattacharya), or technical, vocational, and industrial education in the 1920s to 1950s (Ravi Ahuja). Another angle was to study the educational politics of social movements, particularly the Western Indian anti-caste movement, and the national women’s movement from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries (Geetha B. Nambissan, Jana Tschurenev). A third approach was to take a long-term perspective on the politics of mass education, particularly the complex histories of compulsory education (Sarada Balagopalan), and on technology, poverty and education of the masses (Jahnavi Phalkey / Sumadro Chattapadhyay). Juxtaposing these different lines of inquiry, several periods of intensive
debate and policy change were identified. We explored, how new political constellations emerged, which shaped the development of mass education. The emergence of these new constellations only partially overlaps with the established chronology of colonial education policy development, which is structured according to events such as the ‘Wood’s despatch’ (1854), the ‘Hunter Commission’ (1882), or, the shifting of educational control to the provincial level, and partially into Indian hands (1919).

The 1850s to 1870s, for instance, can be seen as the moment rural education. It was first and foremost the peasantry, which the colonial government perceived to be in need of schooling. In the very same time period, however, as research on Bombay and Poona showed, also the first Indian civil society efforts in girls’ and Dalit education were started.

The moment of labour was the 1920s-1950s. Now, the urban industrial labouring population became a core concern in the politics of mass schooling. The politics of labour and education had a double angle: skill formation and industrial development, and social welfare. Social welfare was, at the same time, an important framework for the development of a public policy of early childhood care and education, which women’s organisations promoted. Moreover, the inter-war period saw intense debates over compulsory primary education, the question of its implementation, and efficiency as a means to democratise access to education. During the 1950s, also rural education became crucial again, with the Gandhian politics of rural reconstruction. Again, this converged with women’s organisations’ child welfare policies. Other aspects of educational development, such as debates on science and professionalisation appeared time and again across the various sub-projects.

**IDENTIFYING AND DIGITIZING SOURCES**

An important part of our research was the identification and collection of various source materials, on the basis of which new questions could be posed. For this, different strategies were pursued.

1. Identifying relevant digital collections: In the preparation of the project, we located a wide range of relevant materials which were already available in an open-access electronic form. Moreover, the identification and systematic collection of digitized sources became a relevant
aspect of the whole research process. The Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE) in Pune contained the single most important collection for our purposes. Other relevant archives included are the Internet Archive, and the Yale Digital Library. Some materials were also digitized by the project’s partner institutions, such as the ILO India Office records made available by CeMIS.

(2) Promoting digitization of relevant materials: From April to November 2017, we collaborated with the GIPE to promote further digitization of relevant materials on the history of education. Together with Librarian Dr Nanaji Shewale, we selected a range of serial sources, and rare individual pamphlets and reports from the archival collection of the Dhananjayrao Gadgil Library. A special focus thereby was on the history of mass education, vocational and industrial education, and various efforts to democratise access to quality education. Those digitized records did not only facilitate our research. Where possible, they will be made publicly accessible by the GIPE digital library.

(3) Indexing archival collections: Indexes were prepared for several major archival holdings, so as to provide guides to sources for future research.

(4) Tracing institutional archives: Many small institutional collections have been located and accessed, so as to supplement a picture of policy development emerging from official archives.

**Outcomes**

There are two major outcomes of the joint research project. Firstly,
we are publishing an electronic book on the platform perspectivia.net (forthcoming, 2018). Individual chapters, authored by the principal investigators, explore different aspects of the history of mass education in India:

1. Rural, Indigenous, and Vernacular Education
2. Industrial, Vocational, and Technical Education
3. Caste and the Politics of Education Policy
4. Women’s Organisations, Education Policy, and Social Welfare
5. Compulsory Education
6. Technology, Poverty, and Education of the Masses

The chapters are supplemented by a several annexes: finding aids compiled within the project, as well excerpts from serial sources which could not be made publicly available in a digital form.

The other outcome of our joint labour is an extensive Zotero Group Library ‘Sources on the History of Education in India’¹. The library contains a collection of core sources on the history of education in India in the 19th and 20th centuries, with a special focus on the history of mass education, vocational and industrial education, and various efforts to democratise access to quality education. The library aims to facilitate research on the historical struggles over ‘Education for All’ in colonial, and early independent India. It will be made publicly accessible in 2018 in a suitable format.

The group library represents a selection of currently available materials. Some regions (Maharashtra, West Bengal) are over-represented, others, such as UP, are under-represented. While we included some records written in Hindi, the overwhelming majority are government records, and records of formal non-state organisations and institutions written in English. This allows for mapping the broad and contested field of mass education. In order to write nuanced cultural and social histories of education, however, local and vernacular archives are still of major importance. Such issues of research orientation and source availability are discussed in the electronic book, published soon on the platform perspectivia.net.

Next to this, other joint and individual publication projects are being pursued. A journal article on the basis of a short-term grant has just been published: Mhaskar, Sumeet; Tschurenev, Jana (2017): Bildung und politische Mobilisierung im kolonialen Indien. Die Anti-Kasten-

¹ www.zotero.org/groups/1885307/sources_on_the_history_of_education_in_india
Bewegung in Maharashtra, 1848-1882. In: *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik* (5), S. 561–581. The online journal “South Asia Chronicle” (edoc.hu-berlin.de/handle/18452/153) will publish a thematic issue (2018) on “Inequality, Diversity, and the Politics of Education in Modern India”, guest-edited by Jana Tschurenev. The thematic issue will present research which discusses the politics and development of education in modern India (18th-21st centuries) in relation to categories of social difference and inequality, such as caste, gender, sexuality, class, religion, or the rural. How is diversity recognised, institutionalised and managed within the education system? How do colonial politics of racial difference play out against the complexity of social power relations? How does education manifest, reaffirm, or challenge social inequalities? These are pertinent issues to think about the “Right to Education” (2009), and the politics of “Education for All” in modern India.

**CONTRIBUTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The joint research project “Rethinking Histories of Education” was part of the transnational research group “Poverty and Education in India” (2013-2017), which was funded by the Max-Weber-Foundation. It was led by a team of Principal Investigators based at the JNU Delhi (Prof. Geetha Nambissan, Prof. Neeladri Bhattacharya), King’s College, London (Dr. Jahnavi Phalkey), Rutgers University (Prof. Sarada Balagopalan), and CeMIS, Göttingen (Prof. Ravi Ahuja, Dr. Jana Tschurenev). Jana Tschurenev functioned as the coordinator of the project’s activities.

We would like to particularly acknowledge the work done by research associates Dr. Bhaswati Bhattacharya, Shweta Shetty, Paulami Biswas Guha, Harsh Kapoor, Virat Markandeya and Sumandro Chattopadhyay and research assistants Maria-Daniela Pomohaci, Sarah McKeever and Arpine Papikyan. The development of the project has profited from the fruitful and productive exchange within the wider TRG framework. The TRG’s doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows have in many ways contributed to our debate.

We are grateful for the support from the German Historical Institute, London, the TRG’s host institution, particularly Dr. Indra Sengupta and Prof. Andreas Gestrich. We are also grateful for the technical and conceptual advise we received from Fabian Cremer (MWF, Bonn), and the administrative support from the MWF’s Delhi Office, particularly Rohan Seth.
IV

NEW PROJECTS REPORTS
The project started in August 2017 as a part of the module History as a Political category of the recently established MS Merian/R Tagore International Centre of Advanced Studies: Metamorphosis of the Political. It is a joint project of Neeladri Bhattacharya (JNU Delhi), Indra Sengupta (GHI London), and a research assistant, Paulami Guha Biswas.

Research question: How do we understand popular historical consciousness and the ways in which it constitutes political subjectivities? To grasp this we need to move beyond the politics of academic history writing. It is clear from events that have unfolded over the decades that the sense of history that mediates political action is not always shaped by academic histories. The collective common sense is constituted by a sense of history that we need to explore. We need to track the processes that go into the making of such shared notions of the past, identify the heterogeneity within this seemingly collective historical conscience, and unpack the worlds they open up. We need to move away from framing historical narratives in the context of nation-states alone, and look at the political uses of history for the assertion of identities – common or competitive – that may not have engaged with the nation-state or did so in various, complicated ways that defy the framework of national or larger regional narratives of the past. This requires that we identify what people read, and the historical narratives they hear on smaller, local levels and at sites where the nation, the region and other larger entities were reconfigured in ways specific to a place. We need to see how these genres of popular historical narratives come to frame notions of historical truth, and visions of the past, shaping everyday action.

One way of entering this world of the popular is to explore the power that tourist guides and popular tracts or chap books have in shaping ideas of the past. Tourist guidebooks constitute the visitor as a tourist, a consumer in search of a product: information about a place. They seek to transform the visitor who does not know into one who knows, they make the unfamiliar familiar. They narrate the past of the place, track its long history, identify the historical places in the region and tell stories about them. The reader is persuaded to believe what is narrated as truth, repressing the politics of the production of that truth. What is told is not always believed by the visitors. Information is filtered, reworked, and transformed into individual knowledge. But not all is rejected or dismissed. The stories that circulate through tourist books often find their way into the collective conscience, fashioning minds, forming social and
political attitudes, and shaping action. In addition, the project will focus on popular tracts and chap books sold on the streets and bazaars all over the country. These are rarely written by academic historians but are widely read widely, including by those who also read academic history. We would like to explore who publishes these books, how they are financed, who reads them, and what are the different types of stories of the past that are circulated in these chapbooks, and thereby try to understand how the political constitutes and in turn is constituted by these popular histories.

The project will collect popular tourist books from different parts of India that were published over the last 60 years (often - though not always - around a historical structure of local, regional, even national, importance), analyse the stories that are circulated through these, and unpack the histories narrated.

The fieldwork for the project started in August 2017. The project has so far focused on collecting and analysing such histories from two types of sites:

- Sites where religion and politics have been entangled in complicated ways (Ayodhya, Benaras, Mathura, Somnath)
- Places with important historical structures and historical legacies (Murshidabad, Bishnupur, Gwalior, Mandu)

A few preliminary observations can be made from the research in progress:

**Shifting politics, changing histories:** Local, popular histories gain and lose relevance with changing politics, as is the case in Ayodhya. Street histories collected at Ayodhya, which narrate the histories of Muslim villainy and temple destruction and which played a part in the constitution of an aggressive Hindu identity in the build-up to the destruction of the historic Babari mosque in 1992, reveal they were...
all produced in the 1980s. Since the destruction of the Masjid on 6 December 1992, no new chap books on such themes have been produced. Political interests have changed: the story of Muslim villainy is no longer as politically and strategically important in the locality. Our fieldwork seems to indicate that this led to a fall in interest in producing local histories of a strongly sectarian character.

- **Heroism/betrayal narratives and identities in a place:** Chapbooks and oral histories collected from Murshidabad in Bengal show that the identity of the region is still being constructed around the heroic figure of the last independent local ruler of Bengal, Nawab Siraj-ud-daula, and the British conquest of Bengal in the mid-eighteenth century. At the tourist attraction of the Hazarduari palace of the Nawabs of Bengal stories of the confrontations with the British and narratives of betrayal (betrayal of the Nawab by the local moneylending class, but also betrayal of a Nawab by his own uncle to the British forces) are told in many different and politically important forms to constitute the identity of the place.

- **Difference and harmony in the locality:** Chapbooks and oral narration of local histories often reveal the way *difference* is both marked and transcended, culturally and politically. For instance: in Murshidabad the two banks of the Bhagirathi river accommodated two different cultures, rearticulated in the narrative of people there. On one side the elaborate palaces of the Nawabs and the nobility flourished, with their narrative of their local histories, while on the other side the Hindu terracotta temples built and patronized by the Rani and other Hindu landlords, prospered, with their stories and cultural politics. In the local narratives today, we have a recognition of the difference as well as a picture of communal harmony and rhythm. Tolerance and difference are thus constituted through local stories and histories.

Following the preliminary phase, the project will focus on 3 or 4 specific kinds of sites (e.g. sites of religious conflicts, or caste and tribal conflicts, and sites of tourist importance that have gone into defining a sense of political identity that is not national or regional, but may include elements of both) and ideally a second round of fieldwork will follow. Fieldwork will be followed by archival research tracing the earlier, colonial histories of such locally produced and circulated popular histories and travel guides.
The research group on “Education and the Urban” started in October 2017. From a predominantly rural society at the time of her independence in 1947 India has witnessed rapid and complex processes of urbanisation in the last seven decades. Seen since colonial times as the path to progress and modernity, to economic and social mobility, the urban has held the promise of a life free from the traditional allegiances of caste and hereditary occupation. As the key pathway to economic and social mobility, schools and colleges have increasingly become the main sites of competition for mobility and positional advantage. However educational institutions in urban India have their own histories given the multicultural nature of Indian society where language is a key dimension of identity, the politics around education and nation building, changing educational policy (keeping in mind the federal polity), and the diverse players (state and non-state) that participate in the funding and provision of education. More recently in the post 1990s, education (at different levels) has been buffeted by globalisation, privatisation and neoliberal ideology. These processes have played out in different ways given the diversity of urban contexts and the fact that cities are increasingly becoming aspirational spaces for much of rural India. Thus, metropolitan cities, state capitals, middle and small towns, planned and unplanned townships and so on present a diverse range of urban contexts and changing educational landscapes.

This research group takes a multisited approach to understanding the way in which education was configured in the urban space, and thereby tries to conceptualise and problematise the category of the urban in education. It engages with the problem both in its historical and contemporary contexts. Its core group consists of four principal investigators (Nandini Manjrekar, TISS Mumbai; Geetha B. Nambissan, JNU Delhi; Indra Sengupta, GHI London; and Shivali Tukdeo NIAS Bengaluru) who investigate specific aspects of education in four different cities of India; postdoctoral researchers who will conduct their own projects on the topic; and a network of scholars working on the theme, who in the first place will contribute to a new Online Working Paper Series. A research assistant Yamini Agarwal has been employed to assist with the collection and documentation of research resources.

The project has started with a focus on India. It is expected that transnational, comparative
perspectives will be brought in in the form of at least one international conference/workshop.

The following activities are planned for an initial period of 2 years: an online working paper series on the theme; 4 research projects by the PIs on specific themes; 1-2 small workshops and winter schools; 1 final conference; an extensive bibliography on the topic; a network of scholars working on the theme. Of these, the first set of ten papers has already been commissioned. By the end of 2018 we expect to publish substantial working papers and organise a workshop on the theme.
3

European Jewish Refugees in India, 1930s–1950s

JOSEPH CRONIN

OUTLINE OF EXISTING RESEARCH

Austrian scholar Margit Franz’s 2015 monograph Gateway India was the first major study of German-speaking exiles in India in the 1930s and 1940s, of which Jews were a large component. This book provides a comprehensive account of the features surrounding their emigration to, sojourn in and return from India. However, Franz’s broad canvas also raises many questions for future research, for instance, with regard to the actual number of emigres, which Franz estimates to be much higher than the approximately 1000 persons recorded by the Jewish Relief Association (JRA) in Bombay.2

Anil Bhatti and Johannes H. Voigt’s edited collection from 1999 was the first English-language publication on this topic. Standout essays include Joachim Oesterheld’s on British policy towards Jewish emigrants to India and Shalva Weil’s on the reception of the refugees by Jewish communities in India. It also features contributions about some of the notable personalities of this refugee cohort, including Walter Kaufmann, Willy Haas, Alex Aronson and Margarete Spiegel.3 Other notable studies include Kaustav Chakrabarti’s 2008 dissertation on European Jewish immigrants in India in the 1920s and 1930s and a 2016 article focusing more specifically on Calcutta. These works utilise a wide range of previously untapped archive material in Jerusalem and the West Bengal State Archives.4

RECORDS AT THE BRITISH LIBRARY

The objective of this research project was to explore a range of documents held at the British Library (BL) in their India Office Records (IOR). While this is not newly discovered material, having been used by both Franz and Oesterheld, their studies refer only to a handful of documents, and it quickly became clear that there were potentially many more relevant documents contained in these records. We began by searching the physical catalogues


4 See: Kaustav Chakrabarti, *European Jewish Immigrants in India between the Two World Wars* (Kolkata: Priyashilpa Prakashan, 2008); Kaustav Chakrabarti, ‘The Calcutta Jewish Community and the Jewish Diaspora during the Inter-war Years’, *Contemporary Review of the Middle East*, 3:2 (2016), 179-200. The Jerusalem archives consulted include the Central Zionist Archives, the Israel State Archives, the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (CAHIP) and the archives of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJDJC).
of IOR in the Asian & African Studies reading room at the BL. There were around 35 documents whose indexed titles referred to the word ‘Jew’ or ‘Jewish’ in relation to emigration to India during the time period under investigation (c. 1930-1950). These were the first documents we looked at. However we also realised that, in many cases, Jewish refugees were not - or had not - been referred to as such but rather were grouped together with their co-nationals (mostly German and Austrian). Thus it became necessary to examine a much wider range of documents - primary lists of refugees and internees, as well as individual visa applications - which referred only to a nationality.

Almost all of the relevant records came from the ‘Public & Judicial’ branch of the India Office, which concern ‘constitutional, political and administrative structures and reforms, the administration of justice (especially courts and jails), and law and order (particularly the control of political opposition groups regarded as seditious)’. As such, the focus of the material is British authority-centric, and therefore mostly only provides one perspective on the migration. The folders’ contents also make it clear that this material was collected in London (for example, the existence of draft copies of outbound letters and telegrams from London to New Delhi). However, it is not an exclusively one-sided perspective due to the collected copies of correspondence sent by prospective emigres (enquiries about visa applications, for example) along with a virtually complete record of the correspondence from the Government of India in New Delhi. This proved to be especially interesting due to the frequent disagreements between these two branches of the British-Indian administration, particularly concerning policy towards internment Jewish refugees upon the outbreak of war.

CATEGORIZATION OF MATERIAL

In the main, documents at the BL on the subject of Jewish refugees in India can be divided into two categories: administrative regulations for the immigration and individual visa applications or enquiries relating to visa applications. Each will now be dealt with in turn.


6 See, for example, correspondence contained in IOR: L/P/8/308.
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

Unsurprisingly, given that establishing an administrative framework for the migration of refugees to India was partly the Public & Judicial department’s responsibility, documents pertaining to this forms the bulk of the relevant material. Although this had begun as early as 1933, serious discussion about establishing some sort of regulatory framework for the migrants did not begin until mid-1938, following Germany’s annexation of Austria and a corresponding rise in the number of applications from concerned Jews in both countries. The Anschluss also created a serious administrative difficulty, since one of the requirements for a visa was that prospective refugees had to be in possession of a valid passport. In April 1938, T. Kendrick, Britain’s passport control officer in Vienna, wrote the following to the India Office in London:

As you are doubtless aware, the German Government intends to cancel all Austrian passports and to issue German passports in their stead. In this connection I should like to call your attention to the very serious position created for the Jews resident in this country. According to information received Jews desirous of leaving Austria may receive permission to leave the country but will automatically become de-nationalised, so that a Jew leaving Austria will not be permitted to return.7

This legal situation automatically invalidated Austrian Jews from applying for an immigration visa to India under the existing regulations. While this provision was relaxed in May 1938, two new criteria were added by the Viceroy of India which became crucial to any prospective emigrant’s chances of success. The Viceroy wrote in a telegram:

While recognising the desirability on humanitarian grounds of helping Jewish refugees I feel that, in view of the difficulties in the way of foreigners from Western European countries finding employment in India, it would be prudent to admit only such Jewish refugees as are found, after careful investigation, to be not politically undesirable and to have friends in India responsible for finding them employment.8

The BL documentation also covers a significant development which occurred with the outbreak of war. On 3 September 1939 the Government of India issued the ‘Enemy Foreigners

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7 IOR: M/3/460.
8 IOR: L/PJ/8/750.
Order’ which mandated the arrest and internment of all ‘enemy aliens’ resident in India. This included Jews, who were interned alongside their co-nationals in various internment camps across British India. A series of folders contain lists (‘nominal rolls’) of internees. These do not always provide an indication as to which internees were Jewish; however, a telling bureaucratic procedure to record ‘willing’ (i.e. willing to have their names communicated to their respective governments) and ‘unwilling’ internees separately provides some clue.9

From early 1940, following pressure from the India Office in London and various Jewish aid organizations, the Government of India began to release Jewish internees. By 1943, the tone of the documentation surrounding internees shifts to their repatriation.10 Much of the administrative groundwork for this appears to have been made in 1946, and the decisive role of the Bombay-based JRA in securing the refugees’ safe passage to their countries of destination is noteworthy in this respect. However, due to the overbooking of vessels departing from India in 1946 and 1947 (owing to the departure of British officials from the country) this issue dragged on into 1948, ultimately falling into the hands of the newly independent Indian administration.11 However, the correspondence becomes much patchier from 1947, relating mostly to cases of individual Jews still waiting to be repatriated.12

**INDIVIDUAL VISA APPLICATIONS**

The record of visa applications at the BL is clearly incomplete and only represents a small sample of the total number of applications – usually those which entailed some difficulty or required additional correspondence in order to complete. For instance, Austrian Jew Moses Lorber’s application for a visa was declined in December 1939 due to the ‘absence of a guarantee that [he] will not become destitute’.13 Leopold Weiss (a.k.a. Muhammad Asad), whose visa was initially granted in April 1939, wrote to ask for it to be extended from its original 90 days until the end of the year due to

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9 See, for eg, IOR: L/PJ/8/32. Another folder (L/PJ/8/31) provides a ‘security note’ next to each internee’s name, from ‘X’ (‘anti-Nazi’) to ‘XXXX’ (‘strong and still convinced Nazis’).
10 See IOR: L/PJ/8/69, which spans January 1940 through February 1943.
11 IOR: L/PJ/8/12081.
12 See IOR: L/PJ/8/39. The name of the sending institution also changes from the India Office to the Commonwealth Relations Office.
13 IOR: L/PJ/7/3371.
difficulties in securing transport.14 Vienna-based dentist Ernst Schubert and his wife Lucie’s visa application was declined in October 1938 on the grounds that they were ‘apparently Austrian’. The return note stated that they should try to obtain German passports as their Austrian ones would expire at the end of the year.15 There are at least twenty such ‘problem’ applications, which, while highly selective, are nonetheless valuable because they contain the complete application correspondence – including, in many cases, photos and CVs (which at the time took the form of short biographies).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The BL records on the subject of Jewish refugees in India can best be described as one, or perhaps several, vital pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, which, to become the basis for a complete research project would also have to encompass records at the National Archives of India in New Delhi, other regional archives in India such as the West Bengal State Archives, archives in Jerusalem, Jewish newspapers in India, 16 memoirs written by refugees, private collections and interviews with descendants of refugees. Thus far, Margit Franz’s book has come closest to piecing this puzzle together although, as she herself acknowledges, many questions remain to be answered. The unique contribution of the BL records is to provide a fairly comprehensive picture of the British authorities’ perspective on this issue (though it is likely that more of the Government of India’s internal memoranda are contained in the National Archives of India), and some important fragments from the perspective of Jewish aid agencies (including the Indian JRA, the London Jewish Refugees Committee and the World Jewish Congress) and from the refugees themselves in the form of their visa applications. No comprehensive study on the subject of European Jewish refugees in India could be written without reference to these documents, but likewise, it would be difficult to write with conviction on this topic without referring to other primary source evidence.

14 IOR: L/PI/7/2678.
15 IOR: L/PI/7/2138.
16 The Wiener Library in London houses microfilm copies of the Jewish Tribune, a Bombay-based newspaper, from the 1930s and early 1940s, which contain numerous references to the issue of Jewish refugees. These reports and letters provide a fascinating insight into the Indian-Jewish perspective on the subject, including, for instance, methods used to raise funds to support the refugees.
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TRG Workshops and Conferences

2–4 February 2017
7th TRG Poverty and Education in India Workshop, India International Centre Delhi

The final TRG workshop before the final conference of the TRG planned for September 2017 in London took place in Delhi on 2-4 February 2017.

Thursday, 2 February 2017
Project Presentations

Arun Kumar: Primed to Labour. ‘Education’ in Industrial and Artisan Schools of Colonial India (1860s-1940s)


Friday, 3 February 2017
Alternative Education Project

Introduction: Janaki Nair

Margaret KT (Tilanagar Children’s Centre, Bengaluru/ Pampanagar Children’s Centre, Tawaragera, KARNATAKA), Jane Sahi (SITA School, Bengaluru, KARNATAKA)

Discussant: Geetha Nambisan

Rashmi Paliwal (Eklavya Foundation, Hoshangabad, MADHYA PRADESH)

Malathi (Viksana, Bengaluru, KARNATAKA)

Shirly Mary Joseph (Kanavu, KERALA)

Discussant: Farida Khan

Saturday, 4 February 2017
State of Collection of Digitalized Materials

State of Projects and Exploratory Essays (I)
Neeladri Bhattacharya, Jana Tschurenev

State of Projects and Exploratory Essays (II)
Geetha Nambissan, Ravi Ahuja

State of Projects and Exploratory Essays (III)
Jahnavi Phalkey

General Discussion on the State of Projects

Further Steps
27-29 September 2017

Final TRG Poverty and Education from the Nineteenth Century to the Present: India and Comparative Perspectives Conference, German Historical Institute London

The 3-day, final conference of the Transnational Research Group “Poverty Reduction and Policy for the Poor between the State and Private Actors: Education Policy in India since the Nineteenth century” took place on 27-29 September 2017 at GHI and the King’s College London. The aim of the conference was to open up the discussions on the research questions studied by the group on India to a wider comparative and interdisciplinary perspective. It focused on certain specific themes, which cut across the specific research areas addressed the TRG, and which lent themselves to international comparisons. Some of these were: Poverty and education in nineteenth- and twentieth-century intellectual and scholarly debates; actors ‘from above’ and actors ‘from below’; education of the poor and the professionalisation of jobs, formalisation of vocational training for professional careers. Most panels were conceptualised keeping the comparative perspective in mind.

After the welcome and introduction (Indra Sengupta/Andreas Gestrich, GHI London) the conference began with a panel on “Democratising Schooling”, which was both convened and chaired by TRG Principal Investigator Sarada Balagopalan (CSDS Delhi/Rutgers University New Jersey). The panel consisted of 3 papers that focused on the problem of inequality in schooling: Elaine Unterhalter’s (UCL) talk was on “Poverty, marginalisation and the ambiguous positioning of girls’ schooling: Multipolarity and dispersal”; Rhiannon Moore (Oxford University) reported on observations made by the Young Lives Secondary School Survey in her paper which looked at inequality in secondary education by comparing the cases of India, Vietnam and Ethiopia. Sarada Balagopalan’s paper “Mass education and the naturalization of children’s labour: ‘Compulsory education’ in the Bombay Presidency, 1923-26” focused on the debates on child labour in a specific historical context.

The following panel TRG Young Scholars Panel: Literacy and the transformation of the self, chaired by Jahnavi Phalkey (King’s College London) was designed to showcase the research of TRG scholars in the form of brief
The presentations, by Sunandan K N (Azim Premji University Bangalore), Debarati Bagchi (IIT Guwahati) and Malini Ghose (CeMIS Göttingen), focused on the themes of literacy, changing perceptions of selfhood through education and education in the school, family and community.

The afternoon session was devoted to skills training in India and in Europe (Germany and the UK) in historical and contemporary perspectives. There were three panels on the theme, chaired respectively by Andreas Gestrich (GHIL), Ravi Ahuja (CeMIS Göttingen) and Geetha B. Nambissan (JNU). In the first panel “A pedagogy for industrialization? Ideologies of skill-training and mass education of workers” Philipp Gonon (Institut für Erziehungswissenschaft, UZH Zürich) spoke about Georg Kerschensteiners’ ideas of industrial education, which was followed by Arun Kumar’s (CeMIS Göttingen) presentation on technology and skills amongst the industrial working classes of the cotton mills and railways workshops in colonial India. The following panel focused on occupational training and the creation of an industrial work force in colonial North India from the middle of the nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth centuries. Nitin Sinha (ZMO Berlin) and Shahana Bhattacharya (University of Delhi) spoke respectively of the locomotive and leather industries. The last panel on the theme, entitled “Contemporary vocational training and the possibilities for a new politics of production”, focused on the politics of skills training in the contemporary context. Linda Clarke’s (University of Westminster) talk analysed the differences in the training of the workforce in the construction section in Germany and Britain while Saikat Maitra (IIM Calcutta), presenting on behalf of himself and Srabani Maitra, addressed the problem of skills training in the retail sector of beauty in contemporary Kolkata and the consequent social and cultural implications.

The sessions on 28 September were mainly historical and they addressed the relationship between social factors and education. On the panel “Education and inherited inequality”, convened and chaired by Rupa Viswanath (CeMIS Göttingen) Shailaja Paik (University of Cincinnati) and Sumeet Mhaskar (Jindal Global University Sonipat) spoke about the politics of
caste in education, especially in the context of BR Ambedkar’s pedagogical thought and Dalit mobilization. Sheine Peart’s (Nottingham Trent University) paper “Education’s blackspot” engaged with the subject of Black men’s access to further education in the UK. The late morning session (convenor Neeladri Bhattacharya, JNU) focused on an under researched area of education for the poor: rural education in colonial India. While Akash Bhattacharya (JNU) analysed the education provided by rural pathshalas in Bengal in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Pradip K Datta’s (JNU) paper engaged with the radical ideas of rural education cutting across class and caste divides that Rabindranath Tagore introduced at Sriniketan. Neeladri Bhattacharya addressed colonial ideas of education for peasants.

The afternoon session was devoted to the pedagogy of early childhood in a transnational perspective. The panel was convened by Jana Tschurenev (CeMIS Göttingen). The four papers in the session presented studies from colonial India and drew in transnational actors - American, British and German actors - as well as a gender perspective. Ann Taylor Allen’s (Professor Emerita, University of Louisville) paper was on “The international Kindergarten union and its connections to India”; Avril Powell (Emeritus Reader) spoke of early Kindergarten experiments in colonial Madras; Jana Tschurenev’s and Elija Horn’s papers (“Gender, care-work, and nation-building: Trajectories of ‘childhood education’ in India, 1920s-1950s”and “German-speaking new educationists in India around 1930: Glimpses on female biographies at the interface of pedagogy, feminism, and religion”) brought in a strong gender perspective.

The sessions for the day were followed by a keynote lecture on teacher education in a global perspective, “Education quality and equity in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: Teachers and Teacher Education,” by Yusuf Sayed (University of Sussex).

The two sessions that took place on the final day of the conference at the King’s College addressed the concerns of contemporary education by looking at the role of the state, public/private education, and the imagination of an ‘alternative’ education for the poor. The three speakers on the panel “The changing ‘public’ and ‘private’ in the schooling of the poor” (chaired by Christopher Winch, UCL) spoke respectively on “School differentiation: Pluralism or separatism in India’s schooling system?” (AR Vasavi, Bengaluru), private enterprise and social responsibility in an elite school (Arathi Sriprakash, Cambridge University), and low cost private schools and the edu-business in India (Geetha B. Nambissan).

The focus shifted from the state and big players to the final three papers that were based on actual social experiments in schooling. On this panel, “Imagining alternatives in education” (Chair: Indra Sengupta), Rashmi Paliwal spoke on the work of the NGO on the education of poor children, Eklavya; Janaki Nair (JNU) gave an overview of alternative learning experiments undertaken in south India in the 1970s; and Henry Readhead (Summerhill School) in his talk “A.S.Neill’s Summerhill School - 100 years on” gave an account of the pedagogy of democracy that is practised at Summerhill School.
The conference largely succeeded in its objective of opening up the discussions within the TRG to international comparisons, while at the same time showcasing the richness and diversity of the work of the group as well as research on the subject in India. Publications in the form of special issues and volumes are planned.

Wednesday, 27 September 2017

German Historical Institute London

Panel 1:
Democratising schooling, Chair: Sarada Balagopalan
Elaine Unterhalter: Poverty, marginalisation and the ambiguous positioning of girls’ schooling: Multipolarity and dispersal
Rhiannon Moore: Unequal opportunities: Inequalities in secondary education in India, Vietnam and Ethiopia

Panel 2:
TRG Young Scholars Panel: Literacy and the transformation of the self, Chair: Jahnavi Phalkey
Sunandan K N: Locating Education: School, family and community and the practice of care
Debarati Bagchi: Letters of the ‘Illiterate’: Revisiting ideas of literacy and the world of Sylhet Nagri
Malini Ghose: Changing perceptions of selfhood through education

Panel 3:
A pedagogy for industrialization? Ideologies of skill-training and mass education of workers,
Chair: Andreas Gestrich
Philipp Gonon: Georg Kerschensteiner’s industrial education – a model for poverty reduction?
Arun Kumar: Modern technology, skill-knowledge formation, and labour: Evidence from cotton mills and railway workshops (1870s-1950s)

Panel 4:
Modernizing impulses? Occupational training and the creation of the industrial work-force in India, Chair: Ravi Ahuja
Nitin Sinha: Work and skill in Jamalpur, 1860s-1940s
Shahana Bhattacharya: Transforming skin, changing caste: Technical education in leather production in India, circa 1900-1950
Panel 5:
Contemporary vocational training and the possibilities for a new politics of production, Chair: Geetha B. Nambissan
Linda Clarke: Divergent historical developments in vocational education and training and their implications: The examples of the construction sectors in Germany and Britain
Saikat Maitra & Srabani Maitra: Producing the aesthetic self: An analysis of workplace training in the organized retail industry in India

Neeladri Bhattacharya: What is worth knowing?: Some notes on rural education in colonial India

Panel 8:
Early childhood education in comparative and transnational perspectives, Chair: Sarada Balagopalan

Ann Taylor Allen: The international Kindergarten union and its connections to India

Avril Powell: Challenging the 3Rs: some early Kindergarten experiments in colonial Madras

Elija Horn: German-speaking new educationists in India around 1930: Glimpses on female biographies at the interface of pedagogy, feminism, and religion

Jana Tschurenev: Gender, care-work, and nation-building: Trajectories of ‘childhood education’ in India, 1920s-1950s

Keynote Lecture: Education quality and equity in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: Teachers and Teacher Education, Yusuf Sayed, University of Sussex

THURSDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2017

GERMAN HISTORICAL INSTITUTE LONDON

Panel 6:
Education and inherited inequality, Chair: Rupa Viswanath

Shailaja Paik: Educate, agitate, organize: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and the modern Dalit technologies of education

Sumeet Mhaskar: Education and anti-caste mobilisation in the 19th century Bombay presidency

Sheine Peart: Education’s blackspot

Panel 7:
Educating the rural, Chair: Janaki Nair

Akash Bhattacharya: Rural pathshalas in the age of liberal reform (Bengal, c.1817 - c.1913)

Pradip K Dutta: Rabindranath Tagore and the remaking of ‘rurality’
Friday, 29 September 2017

King’s College London

Panel 9: The changing ‘public’ and ‘private’ in the schooling of the poor, Chair: Christopher Winch

A R Vasavi: School differentiation: Pluralism or separatism in India’s schooling system?

Arathi Sriprakash: Contemporary benefaction and private enterprise in an elite school

Geetha B. Nambissan: In the name of the ‘poor’: Low cost private schooling and edu-business in India

Panel 10: Imagining alternatives in education, Chair: Carol Packham/ Indra Sengupta

Rashmi Paliwal: From curriculum to community: Eklavya’s work with alternative education in India

Janaki Nair: Where there was no textbook: Alternative learning experiments in south India

Henry Readhead: A.S.Neill’s Summerhill School - 100 years on
TRG Lectures

08 JUNE 2017

SEMINAR LECTURE

A.R. Venkatachalapathy (Madras Institute of Development Studies)

From Pulavar to Professor: Policy, politics and professionalization of Tamil Pandits, 1812-1949

This lecture traces the changing status of Tamil pulavars, or pandits, in colonial Tamilnadu. Pulavars encountered colonial modernity through the College of Fort St George established in 1812 to train civil servants in Indian languages. Following Macaulay’s minute of 1835, the policy of imparting western education undermined the status of language teachers. Hierarchizing languages as ‘classical’ and ‘vernacular’ further impacted the professionalization of Tamil teachers. Pulavars received substantially lower salaries, and could not hold administrative posts. Seen as symbols of a lost world, the carriers of a hidebound tradition, and therefore impediments to modernity they were objects of ridicule. However, Orientalist scholarship – exemplified by Caldwell’s A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages (1856) – empowered the Tamil language, contributing to the formation of a new identity based on language, ‘race’, and caste: Tamil, Dravidian, and Non-Brahmin. Tamil teachers were mobilized by this movement for a new identity – a key moment being the anti-Hindu agitation (1937-39) – which enhanced their social status.

Venue: German Historical Institute London

Photograph courtesy of Katharina Becker
Other events

30 May 2017

**STUDENT COLLOQUIUM**

Amit Suman (Centre for Modern Indian Studies, University of Göttingen): Educating Poor Muslims: Madrasa System of Education in Colonial India, Reforms and Evolution

Venue: German Historical Institute London

23–25 November 2017

**HUMBOLDT COLLOQUIUM**

“Germany and India – Partners in Education and Research”, Bengaluru, India

Divya Kannan (Jawaharlal Nehru University): Recasting the Self: Missionaries and the Education of the Poor in Kerala, 1854-1956

Vidya K.S. Zakir (Jawaharlal Nehru University): Marketisation, Managerialism and School Reforms: A Study of Public-Private Partnerships in Elementary Education in Delhi

Preeti (Jawaharlal Nehru University): Schooling Women: Debates on Education in the United Provinces (1854-1930)

TRG at the Humboldt Colloquium in Bangalore, November 2017

Photograph courtesy of Indra Sengupta
VI
Publications and Presentations since 2013
Publications


Beate Althammer / Andreas Gestrich / Jens Gründler (Hg.), The Welfare State and the ,Deviant Poor’ in Europe 1870-1933, Basingstoke 2014.


Maitra, Saikat. ‘Valuing Immaterial Production: Contemporary Retail Work, Urban Youth, and the Re-signification of Inequality in Kolkata’ under review in *Cultural Anthropology*.

Maitra, Saikat. ‘Uneasy Atmospheres: Work-place Training, Urbanity and the *New Woman Question* Revisited in Kolkata’ under review in *American Anthropologist*.


Sumandro Chattapadhyay and Jahnavi Phalkey, ‘Buying into the Aakash Dream: A Tablet’s Tale of Mass Education’ (with S. Chattapadhyay) in Economic and Political Weekly vol. 51, Issue No. 17, 23 April 2016. (ESSAY)


Jahnavi Phalkey (director) ‘This is my machine...’ (tentative title), a documentary short on laboratory technicians and technical training’(2018).

Jahnavi Phalkey and Sumandro Chattapadhyay, “Technology, Poverty and Education for the Masses in Contemporary India” History and Technology (2015); pp. 452-481. (PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL PAPER)

Sumandro Chattapadhyay and Jahnavi Phalkey, “Buying into the Aakash Dream: A Tablet’s Tale of Mass Education” (with S. Chattapadhyay) in Economic and Political Weekly vol. 51, Issue No. 17, 23 April 2016. (ESSAY)


Tschurenev, Jana (2018, forthcoming): Women and Education Reform in Colonial India: Trans-regional and Intersectional Perspectives. In: Dörte Lerp und Ulrike Lindner (Hg.): New Perspectives on Gender and Empire. London: Bloomsbury. [Contract signed, final manuscript with the publisher]


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Presentations


Balagopan, Sarada, Nineteenth Century to the Present: India and Comparative Perspectives German Historical Institute/ Kings India Institute London, 27-29 September 2017

Balagopan, Sarada, Organized panel on “Landscapes of Learning: Educational Imaginaries in Early Twentieth Century India” at the Society for the History of Childhood and Youth (SHCY) Conference held at Rutgers University, Camden, June 21-23, 2017


Balagopan, Sarada, Keynote Speaker, ‘On Labor and Schooling in the Postcolony’ Children’s Geographies lecture at the Association for American Geographers (AAG) meeting, April 4-7th, 2017


Balagopan, Sarada, ‘On Ethnography, Childhood Studies and ‘Multiple Childhoods” Paper presented at a symposium on ‘Childhoods in India’ held at the Azim Premji University, Bangalore, November 19-21, 2015

Balagopan, Sarada, “Now we know how these schools are being run’: Children, Education and the Legal Form, 1997-2007” Paper presented at conference on “Inequality, Education and Social Power: Transregional Perspectives” held at the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung, Berlin, November 24-25, 2014

Gestrich, Andreas, Poverty and Equality in Education: Transnational Survey of Historical Trajectories and Neoliberal Challenge. Modern Transformations and the Challenges of Inequalities in Education in India, Delhi University, Nov.27-29, 2014


Nair, Janaki, ‘Workshop on Alternative Education’, New Delhi, February 3, 2017

Nambissan, Geetha B., ‘Private Schools for the Poor and Children’s Right to Education in India: Some reflections’ Göttingen University , June 3, 2013

Nambissan, Geetha B., In the name of the ‘poor’: Low cost private schooling and edu-business in India, London, 2017


Tschurenev, Jana: Imperial Experiments in Education. The Beginnings of Monitorial Schooling in India, 1789-1835. Manish Jain, School of Education, Ambedkar University. Delhi, 04.11.2015

Tschurenev, Jana: Popular Education and Imperial Civilising Mission in the 19th century India. Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, JNU. Delhi, 18.11.2015


Tschurenev, Jana: Women’s Organisations, ‘Childhood Education’, and the Professionalisation of Care (1930s-1950s). Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, JNU. Delhi, 23.02.2017


Films

Jahnavi Phalkey (director) “This is my machine...” (tentative title, a documentary short 2018) on laboratory technicians and technical training
VII
People
**Principal Investigators**

Ravi Ahuja  
Sarada Balagopalan  
Neeladri Bhattacharya  
Andreas Gestrich  
Indra Sengupta  
Janaki Nair  
Geetha B. Nambissan  
Jahnavi Phalkey  
Jana Tschurenev  
Rupa Viswanath  

**PhD Research Fellows**

Alva Bonaker  
Malini Ghose  
Arun Kumar  
Vidya K.S.  

**Previous Fellows**

Divya Kannan  
Preeti  

**Associate Fellows**

Debarati Bagchi  
Sunandan K.N.  
Saikat Maitra  
Sumeet Mhaskar  
Kaustubh Mani Sengupta  

**New Projects**

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Geetha B. Nambissan  
Nandini Manjrekar  
Shivali Tukdeo  

**Support**

Indra Sengupta  
Katharina Becker  
Sue Evans  
Rohan Seth  
Deeanwita Dutta  
Sukanti Ekka  

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**People 2017**
Cover photo: Hazi Abdul Latif is one of the oldest surviving persons who can still read the Sylhet Nagri script. He is pictured reading from the text “Halatunnabi”. This picture was taken during field work at a village in Cachar, Assam on 12 March 2016. Photograph courtesy of Debarati Bagchi