



# NEWSLETTER

No 15, May 2020

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## WELCOME

Dear friends and members of the South Asia Institute,

We are happy to present you a number of activities and events that have taken place in the last months at the SAI. However before coming to regular reporting we have to deliver the sad fact that one of the most eminent professors in the history of the institute namely Prof. Dietmar Rothermund has passed away in early March 2020. His contribution for the SAI is beyond words and we will do our utmost to continue cherishing with fond memories his work as well as his personality. You find the obituary written by his successor at the chair for South Asian History, Prof. Gita Dharampal, at the beginning of this newsletter.

The current newsletter introduces research activities in India and Nepal, highlights Ladakh research at the Department of Geography, opens up our library collections with an exhibition on printing culture in North India and an outstanding book on “Murals of Tibet” on display in the CATS library, includes reports on workshops on a wide range of topics, e.g. South Indian Temples, Ageing in India or Governance and Politics in South Asia and introduces new colleagues and guests. In the section on publications we highlight just a few pieces from the abundant academic writing that the SAI is producing. All together a rich and hopefully interesting to read mirror of our academic work with and on South Asia.

Last not least a word on the current situation. The Corona virus has brought unheard of challenges globally that affect our work in many ways. Academic and intellectual exchange is strongly hampered at a time when international scholarships, exchange programs with South Asia and guest professorships are put to a sudden hold. At the same time challenges to conduct proper teaching were enormous and there was little time of preparation to shift it to online platforms. We have to thank many colleagues who have worked hard (and still do) to overcome many difficulties and make teaching and research possible and continue. We shall consider ourselves lucky to find us in a mode of operation that is functional – that is much more than many parts of public life have to offer these days.

**Dr. Martin Gieselmann**  
Executive Secretary

**Prof. Dr. Marcus Nüsser**  
Executive Director

SOUTH ASIA INSTITUTE

Voßstrasse 2  
Building 4130  
69115 Heidelberg  
T: +49-6221-54 15200  
M: info@sai.uni-heidelberg.de  
[www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de](http://www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de)



## **OBITUARY FOR PROFESSOR DR. DIETMAR ROTHERMUND - A GIANT IN THE DOMAIN OF GERMAN SOUTH ASIAN HISTORY**

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Professor Dr. Gita Dharampal (retired successor to Prof. Rothermund),  
Gandhi Research Foundation, Jalgaon, Maharashtra, India

On the morning of March 9th Professor Dr. Dietmar Rothermund, the eminent historian of South Asia and longstanding Executive Director of the South Asia Institute, passed away peacefully at his residence in Dossenheim near Heidelberg.

Born on 20th January 1933 in Kassel, and thus only a few days before the seizure of power by the German National Socialists, Dietmar Rothermund grew up in a country ravaged by fascism and war. During the early 1950s he studied History and Philosophy at the universities of Marburg and Munich. In 1956 he was awarded a Fulbright-Scholarship to study at the University of Pennsylvania and it was here that he completed his doctorate in 1959 with a dissertation on Pennsylvania in colonial times. What followed must be understood as serendipity: A stipend from the German Research Foundation brought him to India in 1960 and it was during this stay in India that he took the momentous decision to direct his research interest towards South Asia. In 1963 Dietmar Rothermund was offered the job of an academic assistant at Heidelberg University in the newly founded South Asia Institute that was established following the recommendation of Werner Conze. In 1968 he completed his Habilitation with a monograph that became a standard work entitled *Die politische Willensbildung in Indien, 1900–1960*; and shortly afterwards Rothermund was appointed Chair for the History of South Asia. In the subsequent years the foci of his academic work dealt with the history of political ideas in India, the agrarian system during the colonial epoch, the life and achievements of Mahatma Gandhi, and last but not least, Indian economic history.

In 1991 Dietmar Rothermund initiated the Heidelberg South Asian Talks (Heidelberger Südasiengespräche) as a form of exchange between representatives of academia, the economy, politics and public affairs. As an eminent historian, Rothermund functioned for many years as a very influential member of the board of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Asienkunde* and participated for ten years in the Indo-German Consultative Group that had been established by the German Foreign Office. Between 1997 and 2006 Dietmar Rothermund headed the European Association of South Asian Studies.

In view of his exceptional contribution to the South Asia Institute, his successful endeavour towards the advancement and transmission of knowledge on India and South Asia in Germany as well as his impressive academic writings, Dietmar Rothermund was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit in October 2011.

Professor Rothermund has worked in the field of social, political, intellectual and economic history with enormous creativity and an impressive output. Not only his German readership but also international scholars have profited from his magnanimous contribution: roughly 45 monographs, some 30 edited volumes and almost 200 academic articles. The international aspect of his impact is particularly significant since almost half of his writings has been published in English, a language that he mastered superbly, and his most important works (of which, first and foremost, his canonical tome “A History of India” written together with Hermann Kulke ) were translated into more than a dozen foreign (including non-European) languages. Dietmar Rothermund’s fame as an eminent historian of South Asia has therefore a truly global dimension.

Apart from his astonishing productivity as a scholar – since his retirement in 2001 Rothermund almost tripled his annual publication score – he was driven by an ambition to lay an institutional foundation for South Asian Studies in Germany and Europe. This goal he truly achieved as exemplified by milestones such as the European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, (initiated in 1966), the already mentioned Heidelberger Südasiens-Gespräche, the working group for Non-European History, or as editor in chief of *Periplus*, the yearbook of Non-European History, not to mention his leading role in both the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Asienkunde as well as in the Indo-German Consultative Group.

Dietmar Rothermund combined a solid analytical approach of traditional scholarship with a unique blend of creativity and intellectual versatility that attracted younger academics in large numbers. As such he can also be considered as a *spiritus rector* of the most recent research field, namely the field of transcultural studies. As early as the 1990s he had established the German Research Foundation program dealing with the transcultural dimensions of European expansion (named „Transformationen der europäischen Expansion vom 15.-20. Jahrhundert. Untersuchungen zur kognitiven Interaktion von europäischen und außereuropäischen Gesellschaften“). Another example for his outstanding intellectual creativity was the international conference conducted in May 2013 on Memories of Post-Imperial Nations. Here he managed to combine current research on memorial cultures with processes of historical self-reflexivity in the former colonial nations. For me personally, it was an honour to participate in this ground-breaking endeavour. Also as his successor in the SAI-Chair (2002-2018) I constantly benefitted from Dietmar Rothermund’s generosity and his impressive „elder statesmanship“.

It does not come as a surprise that for decades the SAI was known as „Dietmar’s Institute“, and this was the case not only in India but was also a well-known ‘fact’ among Heidelberg’s taxi drivers, for whom the geographical location of the Institute (until 2019 in the campus Neuenheimer Feld) was easy to find, thanks to Professor Rothermund being one of their most frequent customers. Indeed, given his natural affability and congenial personality, he was extraordinarily approachable to and genuinely interested in interacting with persons from all walks of life, despite the fact that he belonged to the elite circle of recipients of the coveted Federal Cross of Merit in 2011.

Our esteemed colleague Dietmar Rothermund can certainly be considered the founding father of the SAI – nobody else has served the SAI as long as he did, and nobody else can claim to have had a greater impact on its development. There is no comparable German academic who has succeeded in presenting South Asia’s past and present to a German as well as to a global readership with a unique combination of passion and precision that he alone possessed. Dietmar Rothermund is truly a giant on whose shoulders we, colleagues, researchers and students at the SAI, stand and continue to harvest the rich fruits of his stimulating and inspirational work. The South Asia Institute will preserve a most cherished memory of Dietmar Rothermund as an outstanding researcher, a charismatic colleague and an incredibly amicable human being.



# NEWS

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- ▶ Ceremonial reopening of the Char Narayan Temple in Patan in January
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## CEREMONIAL REOPENING OF THE CHAR NARAYAN TEMPLE IN PATAN IN JANUARY

On 29 January 2020, the re-inauguration of the Char Narayan Temple in Patan has taken place in presence of the Nepalese Minister of Culture and the American Ambassador. The rebuilding of the temple began after the temple was almost completely destroyed in 2015 by an earthquake. The careful reconstruction was jointly organized by Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) and the Department of Archeology (Government of Nepal) and supported by the fundraising initiative SAI HELP NEPAL. The Char Narayana Temple was built in 1566 and is Patan Darbars oldest multi-tiered shrine.

Detailed information and images on the history and reconstruction of the temple are available by the Digital Archive of Nepalese Arts and Monuments (DANAM) [here](#).

The photos show the temple after the earthquake in 2015 and before the reopening in 2020.





## NEW EXHIBITION “CHAPAKHANA – NEUE TECHNIK, NEUE MÄRKTE, NEUES PUBLIKUM“

The CATS Library is happy to announce the opening of a small exhibition on the history of the printed book in North India “Chapakhana – Neue Technik, neue Märkte, neues Publikum”!

The history of printing on the Indian subcontinent can be traced back to the 8th century, when books were already produced in the Himalayan region using the block-printing technology. The first printing press with movable type was set up by Jesuit missionaries in 1556 in southern Indian Goa. In the following centuries, missionaries in particular proved to be pioneers of printing by using the new technology to spread the Christian message.

The advent of lithography in the 1820s, as well as other technical innovations, led to a rapid growth of book printing and its commercialization. These processes created an appetite for new kinds of writing. New genres such as novels together with short stories and essays of different kind gradually entered the world of Indian literature. For writers it opened up new ways of creativity and expression and for readers – new worlds of experience. At the end of the 19th and beginning of 20th century, book printing had become a powerful political force.

Since October 16, 2019 until September 2020 the CATS Library presents the history of printed book in North India (1800 – 1930) with exhibits from its own collection as well as from the holdings of Heidelberg University Library. The exhibition is displayed in four showcases in the entrance area of Heidelberg University Library.

Concept, texts and presentation by:

Nicole Merkel-Hilf  
merkel@ub.uni-heidelberg.de

Elizaveta Ilves  
ilves@ub.uni-heidelberg.de

Dorothee Becker  
Becker\_Dorothee@ub.uni-heidelberg.de



## MURALS OF TIBET

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by Eleonore Schmitt

Finally! After more than one year residing wrapped up on its palette, and after being moved safely from our former SAI abode in Neuenheimer Feld 330 to the CATS library, the gorgeous book “Murals of Tibet” from Taschen-Verlag is now on exhibition in the foyer of the CATS library.

„A World Heritage landmark, this SUMO-sized publication presents the most precious surviving murals of Tibetan Buddhist culture. For the first time, these astonishing and intricate masterpieces can be appreciated in blazing colour and life-size resolution. Signed by his Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, the book is a revelation for scholars, aficionados of Tibet as well as for practitioners of Buddhism, yoga, meditation, and mindfulness.“ ([https://www.taschen.com/pages/en/catalogue/art/all/02617/facts.thomas\\_laird\\_murals\\_of\\_tibet.htm](https://www.taschen.com/pages/en/catalogue/art/all/02617/facts.thomas_laird_murals_of_tibet.htm))

The illustrations - printed in five colours including gold - are bound in a volume 70 centimetres high and 50 centimetres wide, and weighs 23 kilograms. Six fold-outs give impressive panoramas of the paintings. It rests on a foldable bookstand, made from recycled paper and designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect and humanitarian pioneer Shigeru Ban.



© CATS, Heidelberg University, Photo: Susann Henker



## MURALS OF TIBET

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Over a period of ten years, Thomas Laird photographed the murals in twelve Tibetan monasteries, temples and palaces. The presentation in the codex follows a route that might have been taken by pilgrims.

A scholarly companion of more than 500 pages accompanies this book, where „... Thomas Laird contextualizes his journey in realizing this visual archive in a personal essay, Bob Thurman gives an insightful account of the spirituality of Tibetan Buddhism. Heather Stoddard researched all the site descriptions and captions of the murals throughout the book with the assistance of Cameron Bailey, except for those of the Lukhang, which were researched by Jakob Winkler.“ ([https://www.taschen.com/pages/en/catalogue/art/all/02617/facts.thomas\\_laird\\_murals\\_of\\_tibet.htm](https://www.taschen.com/pages/en/catalogue/art/all/02617/facts.thomas_laird_murals_of_tibet.htm)).

Our sincere gratitude for this generous gift goes to the humble donator who wants to remain anonymous.





## FILM FESTIVAL FOR GENERATIONS DELHI MUMBAI

by Pablo Holwitt

The second installment of the Film Festival for Generations in India took place between 29th September and 5th October 2019 in Delhi and Mumbai. Part of the Indo-German academic cooperation project “New Directions in Active Ageing and Age-friendly Culture in India and Germany” between Heidelberg University and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), the Indian Film Festival for Generations went into its second year after its successful initiation in Delhi in 2018. Its concept is based on the European Film Festival for Generations which was started in 2010 and is organized by the Institute of Gerontology at the Heidelberg University as an attempt to use the language of cinema to transfer images of active ageing and to build a bridge between academic research and the general public to discuss age-related topics. It aims at initiating an inter-generational dialogue about the challenges and opportunities resulting from demographic change and increasing life expectancy in Germany and India. While not shying away from discussing problematic and difficult issues of care and illness, the Film Festival is intended to promote an ideal of including elderly people in society and creating an age-friendly culture.

The 2019 Film Festival for Generations travelled to Delhi for the second time and celebrated its premiere in Mumbai. The local venue partners were the India Habitat Center, the Kamala Nehru College and Samvedna Senior Care in Delhi and the Goethe Institute in Mumbai. While the Head of the Science and Technology Section of the German Embassy, Philipp von Ritter, spoke at the opening ceremony of the Film Festival in Delhi, in Mumbai the representative of the Bundesbank, Peter Kern, delivered a welcome address on behalf of Germany’s General Consulate in Mumbai. Martin Gieselmann (South Asia Institute) and Constanze Weigl-Jäger (Institute for Gerontology), as well as Suboor Bakht (Heidelberg Centre South Asia) and Pablo Holwitt (Delhi Branch Office, South Asia Institute) represented Heidelberg University during the various events surrounding the Film Festival in Delhi and Mumbai. Furthermore, in Delhi the German delegation was joined by Matthias Roos of the Public Health Authority Frankfurt am Main and Deputy CEO of the European Film Festival for Generations who shared his personal experiences of establishing the Film Festival for Generations in Europe.

Each film that was screened during the Film Festival was assigned a discussant who provided additional insights about the process of making the film or about the general topics addressed by the film. The discussants included film directors, actors, as well as experts and activists in the fields of gerontology, senior care, film studies and age-related therapy. The selection of films included German, American and Indian films that tackled various topics related to ageing, such as family dynamics, social expectations in regard to ageing, innovative therapy models for elderly people, as well as ways of coping with age-related diseases such as dementia and Alzheimer’s disease. All film screenings were well attended and spurred engaged and sometimes deeply personal and intimate conversations between visitors, discussants and the organizers of the Film Festival.

Based on the positive resonance that the expansion of the Film Festival for Generations to India has garnered so far, visions for the future of the Film Festival in India were also discussed. During a Workshop on “Fifty Ways to organize an Intergenerational Film Festival”, several experts and multipliers met to suggest possibilities of making the Film Festival for Generations a permanent event in India and reaching out to even wider audiences. Another Film Festival for Generations in India is planned for 2020.



# TEACHING

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- ▶ Congratulations to A.S.M. Mostafizur Rahman
- ▶ Student Achievements at the Department of Political Science
- ▶ Workshop "Ageing in the City"

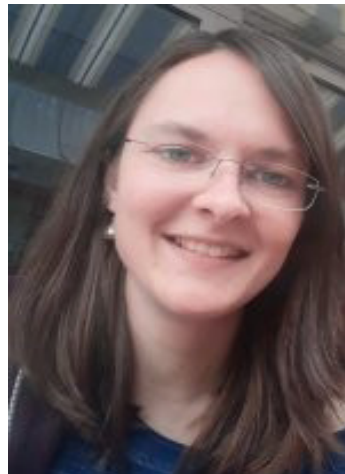
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## WELCOME TO NEW PH.D. STUDENT RONJA GOTTSCHLING

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Ronja Gottschling was admitted as PhD student in the Department. She has completed a B.A. in Political Science from Münster University and Twente University, NL, and holds an M.A. from the South Asian Studies program at SAI.

Ronja will join the department's work on welfare politics and service delivery in India.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO A.S.M. MOSTAFIZUR RAHMAN

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Congratulations to PhD candidate A.S.M. Mostafizur Rahman on being elected as member of PhD student's council as part of the 'Faculty Council' of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, Heidelberg University. The Council advises on the interests of the individual subjects and the associated institutes of the entire Faculty.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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MA student Asad Ahmad presented a paper on „Hijra Neighborhoods in Mohallas of Lahore: Paragons of safe spaces for vulnerable community“ at the Neighborliness in Global Perspective conference organized by the Orient Institute Beirut - Max Weber Stiftung, held in Erfurt, Germany.

Asad Ahmad, MA student in the Department, presented a paper at the 10th Trust for History Art & Architecture of Pakistan - THAAP International Conference 2019 in Lahore, Pakistan. The theme of the conference this year was "Citizen and the City: Urban Dynamics in Pakistan and the Region".

Marina Marri, MA final year student in the Department, received a Degree Completion Grant from Heidelberg University as support in the final phase of her degree in South Asian Studies.

## WORKSHOP “AGEING IN THE CITY“, NEW DELHI

by Constanze Weigl-Jäger

From 27th September to 5th October 2019 the workshop “Ageing in the City” and the Film Festival for Generations have been held in India as part of the DAAD-funded cooperation project “New Directions in ‘Active Ageing’ and ‘Age-friendly Culture’ in India and Germany” between Heidelberg University (HU) and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). The student workshop “Ageing in the City” led by Prof. Christiane Brosius and Prof. Arunava Dasgupta took place at the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA), New Delhi from 27th-30th September. Twenty master and PhD-students from JNU, SPA and HU engaged in questions related to the ‘age-friendly city’ in an inter- and transdisciplinary approach, focusing on how people age in place in the context of rapid urban transformation in India.



Prof. Brosius opened the workshop presenting concepts of and research on “Ageing in the City”, with a focus on her research in Patan/Nepal, Prof. Dasgupta spoke on the challenges in designing an age-friendly city from the Delhi perspective, and Dr. Constanze Weigl-Jäger introduced the “Active Ageing” project’s aims and activities. Students’ presentations of the key readings followed by plenary discussions dealt with topics such as urbanization from an ageing perspective, urban development and ageing populations, and methodology from an urban perspective (e.g. street ethnography). In the afternoon session the fieldwork scheduled for the following two days was designed, discussed and prepared by setting up the teams, the definition of field questions and the discussion of additional texts.

Mixed teams of JNU, HU and SPA students went to four very different sites across the Delhi capital region such as Madanpur Khadar, Dharampura/Old Delhi, Chittaranjan Park and Faridabad. Aim of the fieldwork was to create an intergenerational dialogue and to conduct interviews with elderly residents of these areas to examine how they engage and live at their place of the city. Topics of discussion amongst others were safety and well-being, participation and social interaction, and family care and community support. The fieldwork was supervised by the faculty from the Department of Urban Design at SPA and students from the urban lab on social urbanism.

At the last workshop day all workshop participants got together and the student teams presented and discussed their findings by combining and applying the reviewed conceptual approaches from readings with data and experiences from their field visits. Based on the diversity of the fieldsites the results related to the workshop’s key question how people age in place were very different. Madanpur Khadar (a low-income neighborhood marked by poverty and a high unemployment rate) and Dharampura (a Jain community residential area in Old Delhi with lots of commercial activities) could in terms of infrastructure and health services barely be described as age-friendly. In contrast, Chittaranjan Park (a neighborhood in South Delhi and home to a large middle-class Bengali community) and Ashok enclave (a gated community in Faridabad) provided good infrastructure for its elderly inhabitants and there was also a strong sense of community amongst them. The workshop closed with an intensive discussion of urbanization in New Delhi and its impact on its ageing population with the result that ageing in place is a highly differential experience for everyone.





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- ▶ DFG project “Exploring Auefs: Relevance of Icing and Ice Reservoirs for Climate Change Adaptation in the Trans-Himalaya of Ladakh, India” approved
- ▶ Workshop “Networks of Temples and Networks of Texts in South India”
- ▶ Lived Sanskrit Cultures in Varanasi, 2020 - Exploring Temples, Texts and Teaching in Varanasi
- ▶ Monica Juneja receives Opus Magnum from the Volkswagen Foundation
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## DAAD GRANTED PROJECT BY PROF. CHRISTIANE BROSIOUS

The DAAD granted Prof. Christiane Brosius four years of funding for the implementation of an exchange programme on the topic of “urban transformations.” The teaching initiative, in partnership with Kathmandu University (Sujan Chitrakar) and the School of Planning and Architecture Delhi (Arunava Dasgupta), will contribute to the MA Transcultural Studies and the new MA Cultural Heritage and Cultural Property Protection at Heidelberg University.

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) has approved a four-year funding that will allow for an inter- and transdisciplinary exchange between German and South Asian institutions on the topic of „Urban transformation and placemaking: Fostering Learning from South Asia and Germany.“ The DAAD will fund the initiative in the framework of the program „Subject-Related Partnerships with Institutions of Higher Education in Developing Countries.“ In Heidelberg, the project will be located at CATS and will run within the „Shaping Asia“ networking initiative coordinated of Prof. Christiane Brosius.

The inter- and transdisciplinary project aims at jointly developing a model of new and interrelated curricula, located beyond national and disciplinary boundaries. The use of collaborative methods of mapping, art production, and curation, as well as ethnographic field-based inquiry, will constitute the basic approach. An open-access archive, the Digital Archive for Comparative Urbanism (DACU), will be implemented for research-based learning. The objective of the partnership will be to train young generations of students to shape socially responsible and sustainable career paths focusing on the challenges of the „Urban Age.“ The programme will be open to all students immatriculated in the MA Transcultural Studies, as well as students from the other Master Curricula at CATS and from the new MA Cultural Heritage and Cultural Property Protection at Heidelberg University.



## **DFG PROJECT “EXPLORING AUFEIS: RELEVANCE OF ICING AND ICE RESERVOIRS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IN THE TRANS-HIMALAYA OF LADAKH, INDIA” APPROVED**

The Department has recently received a DFG-grant for funding the project “Exploring Aufeis: Relevance of Icing and Ice Reservoirs for Climate Change Adaptation in the Trans-Himalaya of Ladakh, India” for the years 2020–2023 (NU 102/15-1). The project aims to establish advanced methods to assess the efficacy and sustainability of ice reservoirs at the interface between local knowledge and global debates.

The new project has been developed in the context of integrated research conducted by the Department of Geography in the Upper Indus Basin of Ladakh since 2007. Research projects in this mountain region focused on food security, glacier dynamics, mountain development and the political context of contested border regions. This long-term research on Ladakh was supported by individual DFG grants and the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context” within the project on Himalayan glaciers. Research also received continuous support by the Heidelberg Center for the Environment (HCE) after Dr. Juliane Dame became Junior Research Group Leader there. Continuous research activities resulted in a number of publications in high ranking journals and several successfully completed and promising ongoing PhD and Master projects. We have continuous cooperation with researchers from Ladakh with two PhD students (Stanzing Passang and Altaf Hussain) and one visiting Post-doctoral researcher (Nasrin Tabassum, PhD).

Latest research activities focus on climate change adaptation strategies and water-related challenges of mountain urbanization, both key topics in climate change research across the Himalayan region. The integrated research concept of socio-hydrology has been developed and adapted for the regional context of the arid high mountains of the Upper Indus Basin to assess environmental dynamics, climatic hazards and socioeconomic development. Particular emphasis was laid on sophisticated ice storage reservoirs, commonly referred to as “artificial glaciers” and their role in irrigated agriculture and climate change adaptation. We have also carried out a comprehensive study of cryosphere related natural hazards, especially glacier lake outburst floods. Our socio-hydrological case studies from Ladakh and from Gilgit-Baltistan are discussed in the context of the latest special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).





A second research strand deals with the rapid and largely uncontrolled urban growth of Leh, the capital of Ladakh. Leh town experienced a shift from agricultural livelihoods towards monetary-based incomes mainly relying on the tourism sector. Its urban development is characteristic for many small and medium-sized towns in the Hindu Kush Himalaya, which are especially vulnerable to socioecological challenges like depleting natural resources and increasing exposure to natural hazards. Based on concepts from urban political ecology, integrated assessments combine socio-economic field surveys and remote sensing to analyse mountain urbanization and water governance. A focus is set on challenges for water quality, quantity, and adequate infrastructures in the context of ecological, political, social, and economic transformations.

In 2013, the Department also hosted the 16th Conference of the International Association for Ladakh Studies (IALS) under the broad theme “Society and Environment in Ladakh: Historical Perspectives and Recent Dynamics”. By the end of 2019, it has been decided that the Department of Geography will also organize the forthcoming 20th IALS conference, hopefully to happen in 2021.

## SPECIAL FOCUS ON LADAKH PUBLICATIONS

**Articles on glacier changes and cryosphere change adaptation as well as on urbanization and water-related challenges have been published by members of the Department of Geography.**

**NÜSSER, M., DAME, J. KRAUS, B., BAGHEL, R., PARVEEN, S. & SCHMIDT, S. (2019):** Cryosphere-Fed Irrigation Networks in the North-Western Himalaya: Precarious Livelihoods and Adaptation Strategies under the Impact of Climate Change. *Mountain Research and Development* 39 (2): doi: 10.1659/MRD-JOURNAL-D-18-00072.1

The article identifies general patterns and site-specific characteristics of irrigated agriculture in the North-Western Himalaya and adaptation strategies in the face of climate change. Based on a comparative case study approach, which includes the Nanga Parbat region, Hunza-Karakoram, and Ladakh, the paper reveals differing responses to water scarcity. Practices depend on local conditions and include the construction of new irrigation channels, installation of pipes, and building of artificial ice reservoirs. In addition, off-farm income opportunities and market integration, affect the sustainability and resilience of land use systems. Overall, outcomes of adaptation strategies depend on the local socio-hydrological settings, ranging from the intensification and extension of irrigated mountain agriculture to the abandonment of irrigated areas.

**NÜSSER, M., DAME, J., KRAUS, B., BAGHEL, R. & SCHMIDT, S. (2019):** Socio-Hydrology of “Artificial Glaciers” in Ladakh, India: Assessing Adaptive Strategies in a Changing Cryosphere. *Regional Environmental Change* 19: 1327–1337. doi: 10.1007/s10113-018-1372-0

The consequences of glacier decrease and changes of seasonal snow cover are critical for the functioning of meltwater-dependent mountain agriculture. In order to deal with recurrent water scarcity, different types of ice reservoirs, commonly called artificial glaciers, have been introduced in Ladakh and promoted as appropriate adaptive strategies to cope with changes in the cryosphere. The seasonal ice reservoirs increase meltwater availability during the critical period of water scarcity in spring. Based on a mixed method approach (remote sensing, close range photogrammetry, field measurements and interviews), the article examines the efficacy of 14 ice reservoirs through a long-term analysis of their functioning within the environmental and socioeconomic context of Ladakh. The paper argues that artificial glaciers are remarkably suited to the physical environment. However, their usefulness as a climate change adaptation strategy is questionable because climatic variability, natural hazards, and an incomplete integration into the local socioeconomic setting significantly reduce their efficacy.



**SCHMIDT, S., NÜSSER, M, BAGHEL, R. & J. DAME** (under review): Cryosphere Hazards in Ladakh: The 2014 Gya Glacial Lake Outburst Flood and its Implications for Risk Assessment. Submitted to Natural Hazards

This paper attempts to reconstruct the causes and consequences of the 2014 glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) event in Gya, Ladakh using a high temporal and high spatial resolution remote sensing approach. In order to frame the case study in a broader picture, we produce a comprehensive inventory for the entire Trans-Himalayan region of Ladakh that incorporates previously overlooked but potentially hazardous glacial lakes. Changes in the extent and number of glacial lakes have been detected for the years 1969, 1993, 2000/02 and 2018 in order to assess the potential risk of future GLOFs in the region. The remote sensing approach was supported by field surveys between 2014 and 2019. The broader analysis of the Ladakh region and in-depth analysis of one GLOF lead us to propose an integrated approach for detecting undocumented GLOFs. In addition, this article demonstrates the necessity for using multiple methods to ensure robustness of risk assessment. The improved understanding can lead to a more accurate evaluation of exposure to cryosphere hazards and identification of alternative patterns of GLOFs in the Himalaya.

### Peer-reviewed articles on urbanization, water-related challenges and food security

**DAME, J., SCHMIDT, S., MÜLLER, J. & NÜSSER, M. (2019)**: Urbanisation and Socio-Ecological Challenges in High Mountain Towns: Insights from Leh (Ladakh), India. *Landscape and Urban Planning* 189: 189–199. doi: 10.1016/j.landurbplan.2019.04.017

Rapid urbanisation increasingly affects small and medium-sized towns adversely in high mountain regions, which are especially vulnerable to socioecological challenges. Based on an integrated methodological approach, the case study of Leh town reveals an array of diverse patterns, drivers, and challenges that characterise the process of mountain urbanisation. The study depicts a rapid spatial expansion of settlements on both, former agricultural and barren land along with a densification of built-up areas. Urban growth is driven by administrative and infrastructure development, a booming tourism sector, the diffusion of urban lifestyles, and the region's geopolitical importance. The article discusses socio-ecological challenges and raises questions on environmental governance, especially with regard to water resources and natural hazards.

**MÜLLER, J., DAME, J. & NÜSSER, M. (2020)**: Urban Mountain Waterscapes: The Transformation of Hydro-social Relations in the Trans-Himalayan Town Leh, Ladakh, India. *Water*, resubmitted after minor revision

Socio-economic processes impact the socio-hydrology of Leh in Ladakh. Limited water resources, essential to the everyday life of urban citizens, become increasingly important for the tourism sector and the urbanisation process. This study aims to understand the transformation of the urban mountain waterscape and the role of different actors involved. The waterscape approach is used to frame hydro-social relations within a specific local context and additionally capture diverging hydromentalities within local actor constellations. Related discourses are materialised as water governance impacting the everyday life of urban citizens. A combination of qualitative and quantitative social science methods with participatory research allows for a differentiated picture of current developments. Based on 96 semi-structured interviews and 312 household questionnaires, this study provides evidence that urban restructuring induced by development imaginaries produces uneven water citizenships in Leh. Along with socio-economic shifts, the community managed water regulation system is replaced by a technocratic scheme, centralising water supply and sanitation. While some of Leh's citizens benefit from urban restructurings, others are confronted with environmental and social costs, such as a deterioration of water quality and a further reduction of quantity.

## WORKSHOP “NETWORKS OF TEMPLES AND NETWORKS OF TEXTS IN SOUTH INDIA”

by Malini Ambach

From January 20th to 26th, 2020 the Workshop “Networks of Temples and Networks of Texts in South India”, organized by the DFG-funded project “Temple Networks in Early Modern South India” (Prof. Dr. Ute Hüsken, Jonas Buchholz) took place in Pondicherry and Kāñcīpuram, bringing together researchers from different South-Asia-related disciplines (Indology, Tamil Studies, Art History) to present and discuss their current research questions.



The workshop dealt with temple networks in South India through their representation in Sanskrit and Tamil texts and in iconography and architecture. The concept of temple networks is employed to describe the fluid relationships between various Hindu temples in a given locality or across different places. While existing studies have tended to concentrate on individual temples, temples in networks, in fact, do not exist in isolation, but share the sacred space in which they are located with other temples and shrines. Such a situation means that the hierarchies between these temples are constantly open for negotiation. This is particularly true for cities like Kāñcīpuram, where different Hindu traditions – Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism, and Śāktism – have not only coexisted, but also interacted and competed for centuries. At the same time, temples can also form part of transregional temple networks, connecting themselves with, or distinguishing themselves from, other sacred places. The main part of the workshop took place at the École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO) in Pondicherry. It comprised of presentations and cooperative work on the material presented, which led to lively discussions and exchange of ideas on the various contributions pertaining to networks of temples and texts in South India.

After a warm welcome by Dominic Goodall, Head of the EFEO in Pondicherry, and the workshop organizers, contributions started, which included talks on the god Viṣṇu's Kanchipuram and in particular the Attivaradar festival taking place every 40 years (the last time in 2019) in the largest Viṣṇu temple there (Ute Hüsken, South Asia Institute, Heidelberg), on Kāñcīpuram's urban logic and its extensions in different art-historical periods (Emma Natalya Stein, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.), on temple networks in architecture (Crispin Branfoot, SOAS University of London), on Sanskrit and Tamil Sources on Śaiva Temple Networks in Kāñcīpuram (Jonas Buchholz, South Asia Institute, Heidelberg), on Kāñcīpuram's sacred topography as presented in different Sanskrit glorifying texts (māhātmya) about the city (Malini Ambach, South Asia Institute, Heidelberg), on the importance of water bodies in Sanskrit māhātmyas about the Kāverī region (Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, Jagiellonian University, Cracow and R. Sathyanarayanan, EFEO Pondicherry), on the links between the sites of Ahobilam and Śrīśailam found in the Sanskrit māhātmyas about these places, (Ewa Dębicka-Borek, Jagiellonian University, Cracow), on the relationship of Sanskrit and Tamil texts glorifying sacred places (T. Ganesan (Institut Français de Pondicherry, Pondicherry), on the Sanskrit māhātmyas about the Vaiṣṇava Padmanābhasvāmi Temple in Trivandrum (S.A.S. Sarma, EFEO Pondicherry), on the Tamil literary work written on cave walls of the Rock Fort in Tiruchirappalli (Indra Manuel, EFEO Pondicherry) and on the Tamil puranic compendium about the sacred site of Tiruttani (K. Nachimuthu, EFEO Pondicherry).

The last two days were spent in Kanchipuram on an excursion to explore several of the city's temples and the sacred and architectural geography on-site.





## LIVED SANSKRIT CULTURES IN VARANASI, 2020 - EXPLORING TEMPLES, TEXTS AND TEACHING IN VARANASI

by Kush Depala and Shefali More

As the semester came to an end and most students and staff breathed a crisp, cool sigh of relief in the Heidelberg winter, some of the staff and students in the Cultural and Religious History of South Asia department descended upon the river Ganges, to explore living traditions and their interactions with the Sanskrit language in Varanasi, India.

The class consisted of a mixture of students studying in Germany (Heidelberg, Würzburg and Bonn) as well as from India (BHU, IIT-BHU and Nalanda). We, along with other participants, agreed that the combination was a great success: it allowed us who were from different places and disciplines to share thoughts from our diverse perspectives and understanding, leading to fruitful and provoking discussions. Furthermore, the course was guided by teachers from across these institutions, which gave us access to specialist knowledge in a wide range of subjects. The course was kindly hosted by the Alice Boner institute, which is located on the edge of Assi Ghat, and we also interacted with the resident artists and scholars there.

The start of the course coincided with the festival of Mahāśivarātri, so we were able to observe the city of Śiva at one of its busiest periods. Since the course was focussed on lived cultures, we interviewed and observed participants of the Mahaśivarātri celebrations. One more advantage of being present in Varanasi on this occasion was that we could witness the Pañcakrośī yātrā. The following modules were taught during the course: Pāṭhaśālās in Varanasi, Goddess temples in Varanasi, Processions in Varanasi, Performing rituals (upanayana), Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, Indian calendrical system, each day was concluded with an hour-long spoken Sanskrit session.

Throughout the course, we also engaged in the problematic aspects connected with the contemporary Sanskrit teaching and learning such as religious affiliation of Sanskrit teaching Institutions (the controversy surrounding the appointment of Dr. Firoz as Sanskrit teacher in BHU), caste and gender (Pāṇini Kanyā Mahāvidyālaya, where girls are trained in Veda irrespective of their caste), and economic factors (poor financial background of almost all students in Veda-pāṭhaśālās, Government's aid to these pāṭhaśālās, money involved in the rituals etc.) etc.

Abhishek Tripathi, a participant from Nalanda University, said:

“This program and many such programs are required for experiential learning in small groups to imbibe and learn Culture, Philosophy, and or any other related fields in Humanities and Social Sciences, South Asian Studies, and Indology. The program has helped me to experience the city, i.e., Varanasi, which I have never experienced before, even if I have visited and traveled inside the city on numerous occasions. The city is much more than that I would have envisaged in my limited understanding, thanks again in helping me in the expansion of my horizon to see things from different perspectives.”

The three weeks ended with presentations from each student, who each had during the course investigated a topic in their off time. These ranged from understandings of astrology, to language politics, to the exploration of the origins of particular liṅgams (representations of Śiva) in Varanasi.

The course was concluded with a celebratory dinner held on the rooftop of the Alice Boner institute, where the students, teachers, invited guest lecturers and friends of the institute gathered for a sumptuous meal and a chance to relax after the intensive program.



## MONICA JUNEJA RECEIVES OPUS MAGNUM FROM THE VOLKSWAGEN FOUNDATION

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In March 2020, the Volkswagen Foundation/VK Stiftung announced the conferral of an Opus Magnum to Monica Juneja, the professor of Global Art History at the HCTS, to support her research in the area of Transculturality in the arts. The Opus Magnum will provide funding for the research and publication of a monographic volume titled „Can Art History be made Global? A Discipline in Transition“ (forthcoming De Gruyter, 2021), which intends to conceptualize the ‘global’ as a critical perspective informed by the methodological principle of transculturation. In particular, it will address the challenges of the ‘global turn’ in the humanities from the perspective of art history.

The six chapters composing the volume, all based on case studies taken from South Asia, will seek to translate intellectual resources and insights of regional experiences into globally intelligible analyses. In doing so, they will engage with themes relevant to the project of a global art history, such as the dynamics of image-making and viewing in the context of the encounter between travelling objects and visual regimes; the relevance of artisanal practice as a form of mobile knowledge; modernism as a practice reconfiguration that transcends the colonizer-colony divide; the migrant avant-garde and its implications; and the contemporary exhibition form for writing an art history from multiple archives. Each chapter will attempt to link the ‘region’ to the ‘mainstream’ discipline, so as to rethink the latter’s premises and point the way to a non-hierarchical, critical, and capacious art history that can serve as a potential tool for unravelling connections, differences and frictions among regions across the globe.

The Volkswagen Foundation/VK Stiftung is an independent, non-profit German organization for the promotion of research projects in all disciplines. Within the framework of changing funding initiatives, the foundation provides impetus for the development of research and higher education. The Opus Magnum initiative is aimed at providing more freedom in the production of a larger scholarly treatise to professors from the humanities and social sciences who have already achieved a degree of renown by virtue of a previous outstanding research performances.

Monica Juneja is the professor of Global Art History at the Heidelberg Center for Transcultural Studies (HCTS) since 2009. She has also been director of the former Cluster „Asia and Europe“ at the HCTS.





## LECTURE SERIES ON GOVERNANCE AND POLITICS IN SOUTH ASIA & GLOBAL INDIA



Prof. Dr. Pralay  
Kanungo

As part of the Lecture Series on Governance and Politics in South Asia & Global India, the Department organized a vibrant series of lectures by the following world-renowned scholars: Prof. Thomas Risse of Freie Universität Berlin delivered a talk on „Contestations of the Liberal International Order“. Prof. Aurel Croissant chaired the talk and Prof. Rahul Mukherji gave the vote of thanks. Dr. Suresh C. Chalise delivered a lecture on „Nepal’s Peace Process and Involvement of the United Nations“. Prof. Rahul Mukherji chaired the talk. Prof. Ali Riaz delivered a lecture on „Voting in Hybrid Regime: Explaining the 2018 Bangladeshi Election“.



Prof. Ali Riaz

Prof. Rahul Mukherji chaired the talk. Prof. Jakub Zajączkowski, of Warsaw, presented his research work on ,‘Quad in India’s Regional Policy in the Indo-Pacific Region” and Dr. Dorota Heidrich, presented her research on “Analyzing external pressures and endogenous conditions in designing transitional justice mechanisms: case study of Kosovo.” Dr. Kanchana Ruwanpura delivered a talk on „Belt and Road Blocks: Exploring Potential Ruptures within China’s Belt and Road Initiative – The Case of Sri Lanka.“ Prof. Dr. Pralay Kanungo delivered a Lecture on „Hindu Nationalist Upsurge in America.“



Prof. Thomas Risse

## SEMINARS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Prof. Rahul Mukherji delivered a lecture at the University of Warsaw on "Governing India: Welfare Politics in India in the Period of Globalization".

Prof. Dr. Rahul Mukherji and Dr. Himanshu Jha delivered a talk on "India and Bangladesh in the Climate Finance Regime – From Structural Conflict to Embedded Liberalism". This talk was part of the Public Lecture Series called 'Heidelberg Bridge' organized by the Heidelberg Center for the Environment.

Ronja Gottschling PhD candidate in the Department gave a lecture on India-Pakistan relations and the situation in Kashmir at a teachers’ training at the Baden-Württemberg state center for political education (Ladeszentrale für politische Bildung) in Freiburg.

Tanvi Deshpande PhD candidate and the Marie Curie fellow in the Department delivered a talk on "Urban water governance in India in the face of climate change", in the open discussion entitled "Right to food and nutrition in India and water policies: current challenges and climate change." The discussion was organized by the "Students for Future" in Heidelberg and moderated by Dr. Dieter Reinhardt.



# PEOPLE

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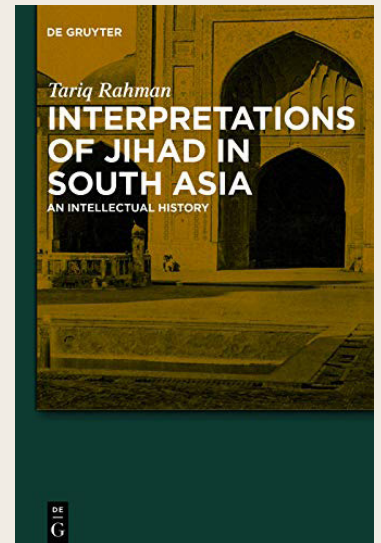
## CONGRATULATIONS TO TARIQ RAHMAN



We cordially congratulate Dr. Tariq Rahman (former member of the Department of Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures) for winning the prize “The Habib bank Metropolitan Award for the Best Book of Non-fiction in 2019-2020 “ for his book “Interpretations of Jihad in South Asia: An Intellectual History”. The prize was awarded during the Karachi Literary Festival organized by Oxford University Press in Karachi on 28 February 2020.

### Abstract

In the wake of radical Islamist terrorist attacks described as jihad worldwide and in South Asia, it is imperative that there should be a book-length study of this idea in this part of the world. The focus of the study is the idea of jihad with its changing interpretations mostly those available in exegetical literature of key figures in South Asia. The hermeneutic devices used to understand the meaning of the Quranic verses and the Prophetic traditions relating to jihad will be the focus of this study. The main thrust of the study is to understand how interpretations of jihad vary. It is seen as being both defensive and aggressive by traditionalists; only defensive and mainly about moral improvement by progressive Muslims; and being insurrectionist, aggressive, eternal and justifying violence against civilians by radical Islamists. One purpose of the book is to understand how the radical interpretation came to South Asia. The book also explains how theories about jihad are influenced by the political and social circumstances of the period and how these insights feed into practice legitimizing militant movements called jihad for that period.





## OBITUARY FOR DR. MICHAEL LIEBIG

by Prof. Dr. Rahul Mukherji

Head of Department of Political Science, South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University



It is with the deepest sense of regret and remorse that we have to come to terms with the passing away of a very dear colleague and friend –Dr. Michael Liebig on 15 April 2020. Michael's contribution as a scholar and friend of the SAI is difficult to gauge. He was a passionate believer in the power of an indigenous tradition at the root of Indian modernity. This was not an easy project because the material and intellectual resources that support the diffusion model of Western modernity argue for a linear and almost stage-like progression from the primitive to the modern. Michael would contest this with all his intellectual and physical powers. To add to this, Michael was not only a dear personal friend, he was equally a supporter of the SAI's mission to marry the richness of area studies with the rigor of social sciences. And, there was an equally passionate teacher in Michael filled with missionary zeal.

Michael came to the scholarly world after studying Political Science at the Otto-Suhr-Institute, Freie Universität, Berlin, and a doctorate in Political Science from the Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt. In

between, he lived in the real world of the journalist, a life that convinced him of his passion for intellectual pursuits.

That passion gave birth to his doctoral dissertation titled: Endogenous Politico-Cultural Resources: The Relevance of Kautilya's Arthashastra for Modern India, and later the book co-authored with Subrata Mitra, Kautilya's Arthashastra (Baden Baden, Nomos 2016; New Delhi, Rupa 2017). He also co-authored with Danny Shoham an important piece in the Journal of Intelligence History (2016), among many other papers that sought to convince the world that ancient Indian strategic thought was not only a part and parcel of India's strategic culture, it also made an impact on other parts of the globe. Out of respect for his services the United Services Institution (India) nominated him as Honorary Distinguished Fellow. Michael was a passionate teacher. He would work these ideas with his students and colleagues to educate us that what we see as Political Science today is a rather "political" science. We need to remove many cob webs from our minds before we really begin to understand how we think and play the game of governance.

Dr. Michael Liebig leaves behind not only his dear immediate family in Ingelheim, he is also dearly missed by his colleagues and friends at the South Asia Institute, and many friends in India at the United Services Institution (New Delhi), the 'Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses' (New Delhi) and the Policy Perspectives Foundation (New Delhi).

## DOCTORAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR MALINI AMBACH

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We cordially congratulate Malini Ambach, doctoral candidate at the Department of Cultural and Religious History of South Asia for being granted a doctoral scholarship by the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes (German Academic Scholarship Foundation). Since the winter term 2019/20 Ambach researches on her doctoral thesis entitled Śiva's two eyes: The sacred topography of the South Indian temple town Kāñcīpuram and its connections to the North Indian pilgrimage centre Vārāṇasī under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Ute Hüsken.

The project seeks to answer questions about the inter- and transsectarian negotiation of the sacred space in the South Indian temple town Kāñcīpuram as described in the town's glorifying Sanskrit texts (Māhātmya, Sthalapurāṇa). It also asks for historical parallels to the interrelations found in these mythological narratives, and for manifestations of transregional religious networks in local texts with regard to Kāñcīpuram in relation to the North Indian pilgrimage centre Vārāṇasī.



## WELCOME TO PALLABI ROY

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We cordially welcomed Pallabi Roy at the Department of Anthropology. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in Journalism from Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Delhi University in 2009. Her Bachelor dissertation based on secondary literature was titled 'Sexuality of the Modern Indian woman: A Look at Aparna Sen's Cinema'. In 2011, she was awarded a Master's degree in Sociology from Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University. She was then awarded an MPhil degree in Sociology from Jawaharlal Nehru University in 2014 and she was also awarded the Junior Research Fellowship by the University Grants Commission in India while pursuing her MPhil. Her MPhil thesis was titled 'Through Menopause: A Sociological Study of the Midlives of Women'. Since 2014, she has been a part of the 'Advances in Research on Globally Accessible Medicine' (AROGYAM) network which is a collaboration between Heidelberg University, Edinburgh University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, and the Achuta Menon Centre for Health Science Studies in India. During her membership in this network, Pallabi was a visiting fellow at the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University and Edinburgh India Institute, Edinburgh University in 2014. In 2015, she was awarded a full DAAD scholarship to pursue her doctoral research in Anthropology at Tübingen university. She conducted long-term anthropological fieldwork in three infertility clinics in Kolkata, West Bengal in two stages between 2016 and 2018. In December 2019, she submitted her dissertation under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Gabriele Alex and Prof. Dr. Karin Polit. Her doctoral dissertation titled "'You drowned me in tears, where did you go?': An Ethnographic Study of Reproductive Loss and Grief in Middle-Class Kolkata, India' has been awarded with a Magna cum Laude (1.0). With her regional focus as India and broadly South Asia, Pallabi's main academic interests lie in medical anthropology, specifically, pregnancy, childbirth, and childlessness, anthropology of assisted and selective reproductive technologies, anthropology of gender and sexuality, anthropology of grief, death and dying, and masculinity studies.





## WELCOMES & CONGRATULATIONS

### WELCOME TO PRALAY KANUNGO

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We cordially welcomed DAAD Guest Professor Pralay Kanungo at the Department of Political Science. He is Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, Fellow at Max-Weber-Kolleg, Erfurt University and Guest Professor at Sichuan University, Chengdu (2015-2020). Kanungo was previously ICCR Chair of Contemporary India Studies at Leiden University (2013-2018).



### WELCOME TO DR. SURESH C. CHALISE

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We cordially welcomed Dr. Suresh C. Chalise at the Department of Political Science. He holds a research scholarship by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) and stayed at SAI from January 7th – April 7th at the SAI. Suresh C. Chalise earned his Ph.D. from Banaras Hindu University, India and has served as ambassador of Nepal to the United States (2007-2008) and to the United Kingdom (2010-2014). He was also the foreign affairs adviser to the prime minister of Nepal (2006-2007).

### WELCOME TO QURRA TUL AIN

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Qurra Tul Ain has joined the South Asia Institute as a visiting scholar in March 2020. She is currently pursuing a PhD at the National College of Business Administration and Economics, Lahore, Pakistan. In her thesis she assesses poverty and economic vulnerability in the context of Pakistan with a focus on women and children based on the proposition that women and children are comparatively less privileged than men in Pakistan. Her thesis also examines the importance of different forms of capital, namely physical, natural, social, human and financial capital for economic vulnerability by using a Sustainable Livelihoods Framework. Finally, she investigates the impact of ex ante and ex post coping strategies adopted by vulnerable households. Her methodological approach relies on the measurement of multidimensional poverty. In her analyses, she employs statistical methods, using secondary cross-sectional and panel data. Initial results show that the incidence of gender and child poverty is higher than household-level poverty in Pakistan. Her six-month visit is funded by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan.



### CONGRATULATIONS TO MAX STILLE

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Max Stille, former doctoral student at the department for Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures of the South Asia Institute and now executive director of NETZ e.V., was awarded the Walter Witzenmann Prize for the year 2020. The award was conferred on his work on “Islamic Sermons and Public Piety in Bangladesh: The Poetics of Popular Preaching”, which came out of his dissertation at the department, and is the result of a project in the Cluster “Asia and Europe”. The Walter Witzenmann Prize is sponsored by the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and honors the work of young researchers in the field of humanities and cultural studies.

## WELCOME TO DR. MUKESH KUMAR

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The South Asia Institute cordially welcomed Dr. Mukesh Kumar at the Department of Anthropology. Kumar is holder of a Humboldt post-doctoral fellowship from 01.01.2020 to 31.12.2021. He has B.A., M.A., and M.Phil. degrees from Delhi University, and a PhD degree (2019) from the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). His research interests lie at the intersection of history and anthropology; he employs and combines methods of ethnographic fieldwork and archival work to examine the changing forms of religious culture, and the issue of Hindu-Muslim cultural encounter in north India from a *longue durée* perspective. During his stay, he will work on his project "In Search of an Identity: Religious Conversion and Community Formation in North India".



## CONGRATULATIONS TO NADINE PLACHTA

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Nadine Plachta, former Resident Representative of Heidelberg University's South Asia Institute in Kathmandu and Visiting Lecturer at the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies, received a six-months DAAD postdoctoral research grant to work at the University of Colorado Boulder. In her research, she examines the increased Chinese commitment to infrastructural expansion in Nepal and how this has led to the emergence of development zones across the country's northern borderlands, some branded as special economic zones and others considered informal spaces of production. In particular, she asks how new political and economic policies to discipline the margins change social institutions and reframe agency, power, and future possibilities of borderland communities.

The DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) is a central agency of the institutions of higher education in Germany that organizes and supports academic exchange programs. Scholarship recipients have been chosen by a selection committee consisting of prominent German professors in their respective disciplines.



## MARIE CURIE MEETINGS AND PRESENTATION

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Marie Curie fellow Tanvi Deshpande and Jai Shankar Prasad (Department of Political Science) attended the fifth Global India Network meeting in November (13-15) 2019 in New Delhi, India. The fellows made policy presentations during the network meeting.

## A.S.M. MOSTAFIZUR RAHMAN CONDUCTED FIELD RESEARCH

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A.S.M. Mostafizur Rahman, PhD candidate at the Department of Political Science conducted a field research in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in August and September, on a travel grant from the graduate academy of Heidelberg University. In this fieldwork, Mr. Mostafiz conducted archival research, took elite interviews and examine primary government documents to understand the political economy of the rise of Garment industry in Bangladesh.



# PUBLICATIONS

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- ▶ Relaunch of Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics
- ▶ New Publication by Anand Mishra
- ▶ New Publication by Brosius and Mandoki
- ▶ New Publication by Kira Schmidt-Stiedenroth
- ▶ New Publication by Pablo Holwitt
- ▶ New Publication by Klonner & Oldiges
- ▶ New Publication by Klonner, Pal and Schwieren
- ▶ Publications by the Department of Political Science

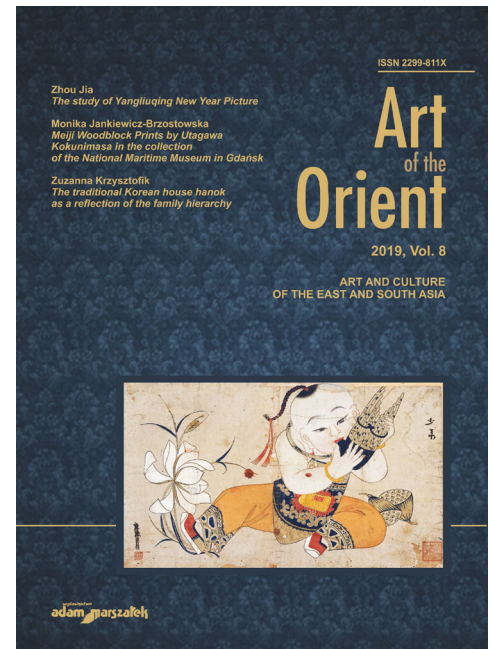
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## NEW VOLUMES OF THE JOURNAL ART OF THE ORIENT

Two new volumes of the journal Art of the Orient are online. The 8th volume of Art of the Orient (2019) is devoted to various issues in the art and culture of East and South Asia. The collected texts concern research fields, in which art combines with connoisseurship, anthropology, ethnography, design and architecture. The 7th Volume (2018) is the result of the conference “Art and Religions in pre-Islamic Central Asia” organised by the Polish Institute of World Art Studies on 24–26 October 2016 at the Manggha Museum of Japanese Art and Technology in Krakow. It includes texts from a broad range of topics broached at the conference. Some of the papers are devoted to intercultural relations between Central Asian countries and Greece, Rome and Iran, while other texts are related to the interpretation of rituals and rock art, as well as Gandharan art.

Art of the Orient is an annual devoted to the study of Asian and African art and artistic culture, prepared by the Polish Institute of World Art Studies. As part of a cooperation between the Polish Institute of World Art Studies and the FID Asien, all issues of the journal published so far are accessible via Open Access on the CrossAsia eJournal platform.



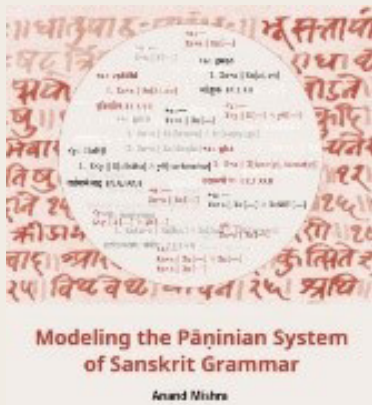
## RELAUNCH OF HEIDELBERG PAPERS IN SOUTH ASIAN AND COMPARATIVE POLITICS

The Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics (HPSACP) was re-launched. The inaugural paper of the new series is by Prof. Pranab Bardhan on “Governance Issues in Economic Development: A China-India Comparative perspective”. HPSACP is available online on Xasia.

# Heidelberg Papers

in South Asian and Comparative Politics

## NEW PUBLICATION BY ANAND MISHRA



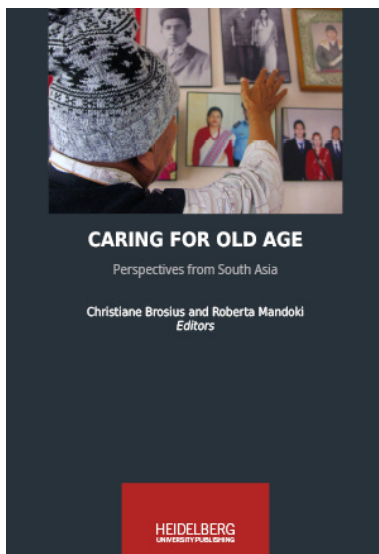
Heidelberg University Publishing published the book “Modeling the Pāṇinian System of Sanskrit Grammar”, which is the dissertation written by Dr. Anand Mishra (Department of Cultural and Religious History of South Asia, SAI).

The present work is a study of the Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini from a new perspective and is an adapted version of my doctoral dissertation with the same title. It attempts to explore the Pāṇinian grammar from a formal point of view and investigate the possibilities of representing it in a logical, explicit and consistent manner. Such a representation requires an appropriate framework. A formal framework would facilitate adequate tools for postulating and evaluating hypotheses about the grammatical system. Moreover, it would furnish the basis for a computer implementation of the grammar. Both aspects, namely a formal representation and computer implementation of the Aṣṭādhyāyī, are objects of enquiry in the field of theoretical studies on Pāṇini as well as the emerging discipline of Sanskrit

computational linguistics. This book takes on the ground-work in these areas.

The propositions that Mishra put forward in this book are a result of experimentations with the Aṣṭādhyāyī. Over the last few years, he tried a number of models to comprehend the content and processes of the Pāṇinian system. Beginning with the initial aim to automatize Aṣṭādhyāyī, he examined the various challenges and issues accompanying this and in the process graduated to work on the development of a formal framework for the grammar. The outcome of this ongoing process is summarized in the present work.

## NEW PUBLICATION BY BROSIUS AND MANDOKI



Heidelberg University Publishing published the book “Caring for Old Age - Perspectives from South Asia” by Prof. Dr. Christiane Brosius and Roberta Mandoki. Christiane Brosius is professor of Visual and Media Anthropology at the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS). Her research is strongly related to urban, media, and visual cultures in South Asia (India and Nepal), in particular on urban transformation, art production, and cultural heritage. Roberta Mandoki is a doctoral candidate at the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (HCTS). Her research focusses on ageing, care, and family and urban anthropology in the Global South, in particular in South Asia.

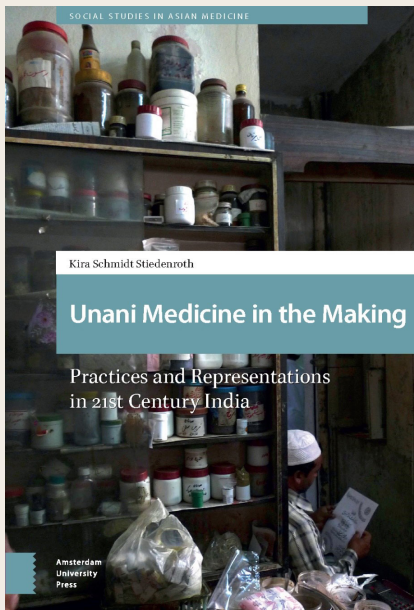
### Abstract

Many societies are experiencing growing longevity and population ageing simultaneously with increasing urbanization and mobilities. Such fundamental demographic and structural shifts have been reflected in a multitude

of narratives and strategies how to “age well” in view of rapidly transforming environments, mobilities of people and changing social relations. This volume explores the transcultural dimensions of ageing and care through close-up ethnographic and literary case studies in South Asia, as well as one European case study from a South Asian researcher’s view. By critically engaging with Eurocentric aspects in ageing studies, the eleven contributions of this volume highlight how perspectives from the Global South shed light on transcultural entanglements and connectivities of experiences of care and ageing.



## NEW PUBLICATION BY KIRA SCHMIDT-STIEDENROTH



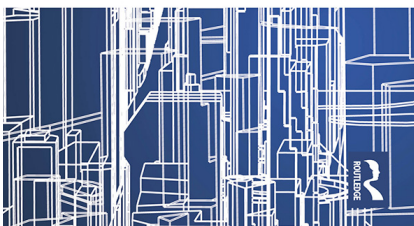
Dr. Kira Schmidt Stiedenroth's study of Unani Medicine is about to be published by Amsterdam University Press. Unani Medicine in the Making examines the contemporary institutions and practices of Graeco-Islamic healing in India. Drawing on interviews with practitioners, clinical observations, and Urdu sources, the book entitled "Unani Medicine in the Making – Practices and Representations in 21st Century India" focuses on Unani's multiplicity, scrutinizing apparent tensions between the understanding of Unani as a system of medicine and its multiple enactments as Islamic medicine, medical science, or alternative medicine. Ethnographic details provide vivid descriptions of the current practices of Unani in India and invite readers to rethink the idea that humoral medicine is incommensurable with modern science. Ultimately, the book also discusses the relationship of Unani with Muslim communities, examining the growing practice of Prophetic Medicine in Urban India and the increasing representation of Unani as Islamic Medicine. The publication is expected for May 2020.

## NEW PUBLICATION BY PABLO HOLWITT



### URBAN RENEWAL IN INDIA ACCOMMODATING PEOPLE, IDEAS AND LIFEWORLDS IN MUMBAI'S REDEVELOPING CHAWLS

Pablo Holwitt



Routledge published a new book by Pablo Holwitt (Resident Representative of the New Delhi Branch Office, SAI) on „Urban Renewal in India - Accommodating People, Ideas and Lifeworlds in Mumbai's Redeveloping Chawls“ within its Series on Urban South Asia. The book interrogates contemporary processes of neoliberal urban renewal in the Global South by studying the model of chawl redevelopment in Mumbai, India. Further information is available [here](#).

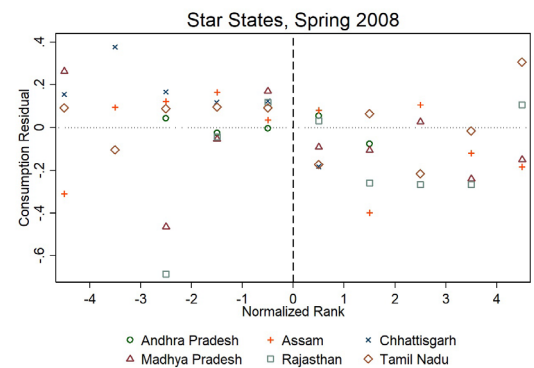
### Abstract

The model of chawl redevelopment is used to address questions surrounding contemporary urban renewal. Focusing on attempts to redevelop Mumbai's central middle-class neighbourhoods, popularly known as Girgaum, into a modern downtown of a global metropolis, the author sheds light on the impact this development model has on the everyday lives of people inhabiting transformed urban environments. He examines, from an ethnographic perspective, apparently contradictory intentions of planners, investors, residents, activists and politicians. A combination of detailed and vivid ethnographic accounts and incisive theoretical arguments, the book shows that the highly contested and controversial approach of chawl redevelopment serves as an example of the manifold ideological tendencies in India today, and how they combine, clash and continuously shape each other in surprising and unpredictable ways.

Offering new insights in the topics of class dynamics in the era of globalization and neoliberalism, urban gating, sense studies, and urban politics in South Asia, this book will be of interest to academics working on South Asian Studies, Anthropology, Sociology, as well as Urban and Global Studies.

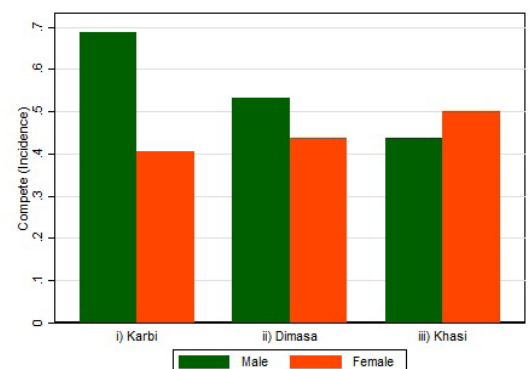
## NEW PUBLICATION BY KLONNER & OLDIGES

In „The Welfare Effects of India’s Rural Employment Guarantee“, Prof. Stefan Klonner (Head of Department of Development Economics) and Christian Oldiges assess the welfare effects of India’s workfare program NREGA using a regression discontinuity design. They find large seasonal consumption increases in states implementing the program intensely, which are a multiple of the direct income gains. They also find increases in adolescents’ school attendance. Their results imply substantial local spillover effects of this large welfare program. They conclude that public employment programs hold significant potential for reducing poverty and insuring households against various adverse implications of seasonal income shortfalls - when properly implemented.



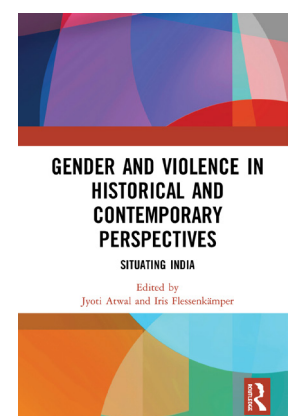
## NEW PUBLICATION BY KLONNER, PAL AND SCHWIEREN

„Equality of the Sexes and Gender Differences in Competition: Evidence from Three Traditional Societies“ explores if gender-balanced social norms can mitigate the gender differences in competitiveness that are observed in traditional patriarchal as well as in modern societies? The authors Prof Stefan Klonner (Head of Department of Development Economics), Sumantra Pal (Department of Development Economics) and Christiane Schwiiren experimentally assess men’s and women’s preferences to compete in a traditional society where women and men have similar rights and entitlements, the Dimasa of Assam, alongside a patriarchal and a matrilineal society, the Karbi of Assam and the Khasi of Meghalaya. They find that, unlike among the patriarchal Karbi, there is no significant gender difference in the inclination to compete in the gender-balanced Dimasa society. They also find that women’s decisions in our experiment are optimal more often than men’s among the Dimasa - opposite to the pattern encountered in the patriarchal society. Their results highlight the importance of culture and socialization for gender differences in competitiveness and suggest that the large gender-differences in competitiveness documented for modern societies are a long-term consequence of a patriarchal heritage.



## CONTRIBUTION TO EDITED VOLUME BY MANJU LUDWIG

Manju Ludwig (Department of History of South Asia) has contributed an article entitled „Bodies in Pain: Violence and Sexually ‘Deviant’ Male and Transgender Bodies in Colonial India, 1862-1922“ to the edited volume Gender and Violence in Historical and Contemporary Perspectives. Situating India by Jyoti Atwal and Iris Flessenkämper, published by Routledge in 2020. The volume stems from an interdisciplinary Indo-German Conference on the topic of gender and violence which was held at JNU in New Delhi, India in 2015. The article explores the manifold relationships between colonialism and violence towards male queer bodies in 19th and 20th century South Asia.





## PUBLICATIONS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

# IPP

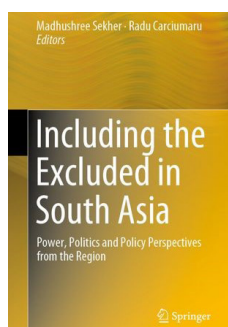
INDIAN POLITICS  
& POLICY

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Prof. Rahul Mukherji, Dr. Himanshu Jha and Dr. M.N. Roy have co-authored an article on “Ideas and Policy Paradigms: Explaining the Fall of Welfare Politics in West Bengal” in the latest issue of Indian Politics & Policy Journal.

Dr. Himanshu Jha published a review article on “Explaining Institutional Change in India’s Welfare Regime” in the Indian Politics & Policy Journal. This review article critically engages with four relevant books and offers fresh insights to explain institutional change.

Prof. Rahul Mukherji and Ronja Gottschling co-authored an article on “Will India’s economic downturn spur course correction, or will Hindu nationalism enable the decline to perpetuate itself?” in the Firstpost. In this article the authors argue that Hindutva can become more dangerous with a declining economy. Access the article here.



Dr. Himanshu Jha published a chapter titled “Emerging Politics of Accountability: Sub-national Reflections from Bihar” in a recently published edited book on “Including the Excluded in South Asia” by Springer, Singapore.

Prof. Rahul Mukherji published an article titled “The monk who shaped India’s secularism” in The Hindu. In the article, he discusses the question ‘What is the kind of nationalism that one can associate with Hindu tradition?’



Jai Shankar Prasad and Prof. Sumit Ganguly co-authored an article on “India Faces a Looming Disaster”. The article published in the Foreign Policy argues that Narendra Modi’s ruling Bharatiya Janata Party is an election-winning machine; but also that its ideology is sharply at odds with economic or social common sense.



Dr. Himanshu Jha co-authored an article with Prof. Sumit Ganguly in the fall issue of the Washington Quarterly. This article explains BJP’s resounding victory and its ramifications for India’s foreign policy.

Prof. Rahul Mukherji and Dr. Himanshu Jha and Prof. Sumit Ganguly jointly published an article in Foreign Policy on “The Modi Mystery”. In the article, they argue that while poor economic performance should have hurt the prime minister in India’s general elections in 2019, appeals to nationalism won him the vote.

Prof. Rahul Mukherji’s article on “The monk who shaped India’s secularism”, which originally published in the Hindu, was translated and published by Meine Welt – Zeitschrift des Deutsch-Indischen Dialogs (A German Magazine).

Prof. Rahul Mukherji was interviewed in the leading Indian newspaper- Business Standard on the contemporary political and economic issues in India. Aditi Phadnis, a leading political writer, took the interview.



Prof. Pralay Kanungo DAAD visiting professor in the Department of Political Science published an article on “‘Ephemeral vs Eternal’: Modi’s Comments Cross the Belur Math’s Laxman Rekha” was published in the Wire. This article discusses Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s recent speech at Ramakrishna Paramahansa’s Belur Math in West Bengal especially in the context of Math’s apparent discomfort to the speech.

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## WINTER SCHOOL GLOBAL HISTORY

by Pablo Holwitt

The Winter School consisted of three thematic modules that addressed different areas of study, including the history of pedagogic practice, the history of peripatetic objects and the history of labor. Each of these topics was introduced by an expert and then discussed with the participants of the Winter School. While Parimala V Rao (Jawaharlal Nehru University) conducted the module on the history of pedagogic practice, Monica Juneja (HCTS) and Prabhu Mohapatra (Delhi University) took over the modules on the history of peripatetic objects and the history of labor respectively. Participants were encouraged to think about the possibilities offered by the concept of global history and the ways in which their various research topics could benefit from this particular approach that aims at overcoming the dominant framing of research topics in the discipline of history within regional and national boundaries.

Another element of the Winter School was a panel discussion about the languages of global history during which various scholars discussed their work in relation to the topic of the Winter School. Felix Brahm (GHIL), Monica Juneja (HCTS), Joachim Kurtz (HCTS), Dhruv Raina (Jawaharlal Nehru University) and Rekha Vaidya Rajan (Jawaharlal Nehru University) outlined the ways in which they apply the languages of global history in their work. Neeladri Bhattacharya (Jawaharlal Nehru University) acted as chair and provided insightful comments on all presentations, identifying their common themes and perspectives in light of the concept of global history. The panel discussion demonstrated how works that address a variety of different topics such as the concept of art, firearms trade in the nineteenth century and the history of scientific knowledge can speak to each other when looked at through the conceptual lens of global history.

The Winter School also included a heritage walk through the neighborhood of Mehrauli guided by academician, historian and filmmaker Sohail Hashmi. During the final two days of the Winter School, participants presented their own research projects, their research methodology and the ways in which they engage with global history approaches in their work. In addition, posters summarizing their respective research projects which they had prepared in advance of the Winter School were exhibited at the event venue.



## WORKSHOP SMART CITIES AND SUSTAINABLE URBANISM IN KOCHI

by Pablo Holwitt

A workshop on “Smart cities and sustainable urbanism” was held in Kochi on September 20, 2019. It was organized by the South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University (Branch Office New Delhi), Observer Research Foundation (ORF), School of Planning and Architecture (SPA), and Impact and Policy Research Institute (IMPRI), in collaboration with Centre for Public Policy Research (CPPR). The event was financed by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) and assembled prominent local and external experts on the topic of smart cities and sustainable urbanism. The Workshop consisted of 4 sessions that were moderated by experts and addressed various topics, including smart governance, inclusive cities, built environment, planning and design, mobility and natural resource management. During these sessions, 25 experts presented talks and engaged in discussions with the audience. The participants of the workshop included urban planners, architects, engineers, environmental and civil society leaders, students, research scholars, representatives from government organizations and media. In a working knowledge transfer- oriented environment that bridges science, policy and practice, the participants presented their work, initiatives and ideas, exchanged their views and approaches, and jointly sought for commonalities and innovative solutions.



The workshop was the latest in a series of workshops on smart cities that have been conducted by the Delhi Branch Office of the South Asia Institute and its partners since 2016. Earlier events in this workshop series have taken place in various other Indian cities, including Aizawl, Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Coimbatore, New Delhi, New Town (Kolkata), Pune, Ranchi, Shimla and Kolkata. These workshops interrogate the concept of smart cities that informs the Smart Cities Mission which has been launched by the Indian government in 2015 to tackle various infrastructural problems and improve living conditions in 100 cities across the country. Since their inception, the workshops in the series have critically looked at the ways in which the concept of smart cities has guided governmental interventions in various urban locales in India.

The workshop in Kochi highlighted local initiatives such as the setting up of a smart flood management system in Kerala, the development of zero carbon buildings in Kochi and the creation of an integrated multi-modal public transport system in Kochi, as well as experiences from experts in other Indian cities, including ways to improve waste management, initiatives aimed at mitigating the impact of climate change on cities and technology-based approaches to make Indian cities safer and more inclusive. Several speakers cautioned that smart cities need to take into account the needs of the urban poor, encourage active participation of citizens and respond to concerns raised by the larger populace. The engaged discussions between members of the audience and the speakers invited to the workshop reflected both the great opportunities offered by the Smart Cities Mission, as well as the manifold difficulties that emerge in the implementation of this initiative. The workshop provided participants with the opportunity to get first-hand accounts of concrete projects undertaken within the smart cities paradigm and learn about the ways in which they shape urban life in the country. A report of the event summarizing the individual contributions was written and published online by the organizers. It is planned to continue the workshop series in other Indian cities in the near future.



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## IMPRESSUM

### Contributors of this edition:

Malini Ambach  
Gita Dharampal  
Martin Gieselmann  
Ronja Gottschling  
Susann Henker  
Pablo Holwitt  
Stefan Klonner  
Depala Kush  
Jennifer Landes  
Manju Ludwig  
Rahul Mukherji  
Nadine Plachta  
Mostafizur Rahman  
Susanne Schmidt  
Eleonore Schmitt  
Alexander Smit  
Sonja Stark-Wild  
Constanze Weigl-Jäger

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## SOUTH ASIA INSTITUTE

Voßstrasse 2  
69115 Heidelberg  
Germany

P: +49 (0) 62 21/54 -15200

E: [info@sai.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:info@sai.uni-heidelberg.de)  
[www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de](http://www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de)

## ORGANISATION

---

Executive Director:  
Prof. Dr. Marcus Nüsser  
Deputy Executive Director:  
Prof. Rahul Mukherji, Ph.D. (Columbia)

### Departments

#### Anthropology

Head: Prof. William Sax, Ph. D.

#### Cultural and Religious History of South Asia (Classical Indology)

Head: Prof. Dr. Ute Hüsken

#### Development Economics

Head: Prof. Dr. Stefan Klöner

#### Geography

Head: Prof. Dr. Marcus Nüsser

#### History

#### Modern South Asian Languages and Literatures (Modern Indology)

Head: Prof. Dr. Hans Harder

#### Political Science

Head: Prof. Rahul Mukherji, Ph.D.  
(Columbia)

### Branch Offices

#### New Delhi/ Indien

Dr. Pablo Holwitt  
pablo.holwitt@sai.uni-heidelberg.de

#### Kathmandu/ Nepal

Frederic Link  
kathmandu@sai.uni-heidelberg.de

#### Colombo/ Sri Lanka

Belinda Cassandra Wise  
belinda.wise@sai.uni-heidelberg.de

### Central Institutions

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Dr. Martin Gieselmann

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## **SOUTH ASIA INSTITUTE**

Voßstrasse 2  
69115 Heidelberg  
Germany

P: +49 (0) 62 21/54 -15200

E: [info@sai.uni-heidelberg.de](mailto:info@sai.uni-heidelberg.de)  
[www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de](http://www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de)