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Modern India in German Archives, 1706-1989. Inaugural Project Workshop. Research project 'Modern India in German Archives, 1706-1989' (MIDA), 30.01.2015—31.01.2015.

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Modern India in German Archives, 1706-1989. Inaugural Project Workshop

The DFG-funded long-term research project 'Modern India in German Archives, 1706-1989' (MIDA) organized its opening conference at the Seminar für Asien-Studien, Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin on the 30th and the 31st of January, 2015. The project officially commenced on the 1st of November 2014 with research being simultaneously conducted at three partner institutions based in Göttingen and Berlin.

The Workshop was attended by 21 participants, with varied institutional affiliations, and consisted of 16 presentations. It was structured into 8 panels with two presentations each. These consisted of 12 papers presented by scholars and 4 expert reports. While the individual papers dealt with specific subjects through which scholars presented their engagement with holdings on India in different German archives, two of the expert reports, those by JOACHIM OESTERHELD (Berlin) and DIETHELM WEIDEMANN (Berlin), presented an overview of the relevant holdings in German archives and the prospective areas of research which are relatively unexplored. The other two consisted of expertise shared by ADAM JONES (Leipzig) on archival research and documenting material on Africa in selected German mission archives and a presentation offered by FRANK DRAUSCHKE (Berlin), one of the founders of 'Facts and Files', an independent research organization which specializes in archival research and documentation for databases. Whereas the former two reports gave the audience an overarching / overall / compre-

hensive perception of India-related holdings in German archives, based on the lifelong developed expertise of two historians of South Asia, the latter presented expertise on methodological considerations when working on an elaborate project like MIDA. This format enabled a promising blend of knowledge shared on specific projects engaging with very specific German archives and proficiency in methodological issues involved when attempting to systemize the wide range of source materials on the Indian subcontinent in the archives of the German speaking areas of Europe.

Day one started with the official opening of the workshop by Michael Mann in his capacity as the director of the Department of South Asian Studies at the Humboldt University and one of the three project leaders of MIDA. This was followed by an elaborate presentation by Ravi Ahuja, the second MIDA project leader, on the key objectives of the research project, which include, among others, creating a database of the pertinent archival materials and making it available for international researchers as a growing / sustainable open resource database. This was followed by an overview of the structure of the project that incorporates two teams based in two cities and three institutions, engaging with four research areas: mission history, political history, intellectual history and the socio-economic history of modern India in German archives. The project extends over a period of 12 years, with the time from the second project year up to the tenth year (November 2015- 2024) being divided into three phases of 3 years each. Each of these three-year

phases will incorporate tandem projects whereby teams of researchers from South Asia and Germany, working on South Asian history utilizing holdings of German archives, will work in collaboration. As explained in the presentation, one of the awaited benefits of this endeavour is to ensure cooperation between South Asian and German historians of India and also to create necessary skills (also of the German language, in the case of South Asian historians) through concerted team research and pilot projects.

Panel 1 comprised presentations by LYDIA HAUTH (Leipzig) and JAHNAVI PHALKEY (London), the former titled 'A German Researcher in India - Egon von Eickstedt's Collection at the State Ethnographic Collections of Saxony' and the latter 'Science, Technology and India in German Archives.' Whereas Hauth's paper discussed the relatively recently discovered photographic collection and the diaries of a twentieth century physical anthropologist in India, Phalkey's presentation offered insights into the interlinked trajectories of South Asian and German scientists, with the attempt to 'interpret India and Germany in a global context', specifically through a history of aeronautics, aspects of military history and engineering education. Panel two consisted of ARMIN GRÄNBACHER's (Birmingham) 'German Conservatives, India and the Hallstein Doctrine. A Document from the Chancellery' and an expert report by Adam Jones. The former discussed the question of India's considerations to recognize the GDR and its consequences for Bonn's foreign policy based on files (1960s) in the Federal Chancellery. The latter brought methodological issues involved in systemizing archival information to the forefront, based on Adam Jones's experience with mission archives for some African countries.

Panel three comprised CHEN TZOREF-ASHKENAZI's (Berlin) 'Archival Sources on the Hanoverian Regiments in India: the Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv in Hannover,' and VANDANA JOSHI's (Berlin / New Delhi) 'Between Erasure and Remembrance: Shreds from the Kriegsalldag of South Asian Faujis (Sipahis) in Stammlagers, Arbeitskommandos, Lazarett and Graves (1939-45)'. The first paper discussed the presence of German troops in eighteenth century India, who were sent to assist the British East India Company in the Second Anglo Mysore War and remained in India until 1791, long after the war was over. The second paper, based on the holdings of the International Tracing Service Archive, shed light on the presence of South Asians in Germany during WWII with a specific focus on processes of counting, registration

and, at times, the exhumation of graves of South Asian civilians and prisoners of war in Nazi Germany.

Panel four consisted of an expert report by Joachim Oesterheld, which raised numerous questions and suggestions in terms of possible fields of exploration and methodological concerns when researching modern India in German-speaking Europe's archives. Among the numerous issues raised were: the question of records on Germans, who went to India and died while there, thus causing a gap in information in the German holdings; history of trade relations (illustrations being Faber Castell, porcelain and ceramic trade, printing of matchboxes for the Indian market in Germany, locomotives etc.) and the relatively underexplored period of India's relations with the two German states during 1945-89. GREGOR METZIG (Regensburg) presented a paper titled 'Alltag und Mission. Deutschsprachige Jesuiten im portugiesischen Weltreich (1616-1773)' focussing on a history of the everyday life of German speaking Jesuits, aptly illustrating the decentralised nature of the documents related to the subject which are also distributed in numerous German archives.

MRINALINI SEBASTIAN's (Philadelphia) 'The Other Story of Indology: European Missionaries and the global Journeys of Vernacular Knowledge,' traced the global flow of indigenous botanical knowledge from southern India to Europe and back through the 'specific means of missionary mediated intellectual interventions in the field of Botany.'

Panel five on day two of the workshop began with an expert report by Diethelm Weidemann, presenting an extensive overview of the history of German-Asian relations. Some of the points raised included: the need to ensure a dialogue between the holdings in the German archives and National Archives of India, to locate the continuity and change in German policies on India, especially in the face of a changing international context, the historical evolution of the German perception of India, histories of German travellers to India, discussions within the Nazi party on how to deal with the 'brown Aryans', that is, Indians etc.

BRIGITTE KLOSTERBERG (Halle) presented a paper titled 'Die Quellen zur Dänisch-Halleschen Mission im Archiv der Franckeschen Stiftungen' that provided an overview of the holdings on the mission available in the archive of the Francke Foundation. This incorporated an interactive presentation of how one may access the titles and descriptions of the digitalized holdings related to India from the foundation's website. KEYVAN DJA-

HANGIRI's (Berlin) presentation was based on the holdings of the Francke Foundation and titled "Centres of Calculation or Dead End? Early Modern Material on India in German Archives." It raised the question of whether we are witnessing the creation of German "Centres of Calculation" whereby information is accumulated, circulated and managed on India? Or are we rather confronted with standardization procedures of information that led to a static and instructive dead end of knowledge?

Panel six consisted of AJAY BHARADWAJ, ANNE MURPHY and RAGHAVENDRA R.V. KARKALA's (Vancouver) paper on "Early Films / Images in and about India: The German Lens," and DEBJANI BHATTACHARYA's (Philadelphia) "The Influence of German Town Planning in British India: Tracing the heritage of Lex Adikes." The former focussed on the need to view these films not only as texts but also as histories in construction and the question of what German filmic representations of / in / about India can offer in terms of widening the perspective from which Europe's engagement with India can be viewed outside the lens of British knowledge on India. The latter focussed on how Lex Adikes, a law developed by the mayor of Frankfurt (1890-1912), was, for the first time, translated into English by a British civil servant in Bombay, E.G. Turner, a necessary exercise for the future ventures in suburban planning. The paper brought the relatively unexplored zone of the transfer of bureaucratic knowledge between India and Germany (via Britain) to the forefront.

Panel seven comprised an expert report by Frank Drauschke with illustrative examples from the experiences of "Facts and Files", as a research organization dealing with creating databases and conducting archival research, for example the history of Oman's presence in Zanzibar, as found in German archives. The report raised discussion on certain crucial aspects like the choice of database, the structure of the database, the choice of archives and relevant holdings, finding aids, the topic of India being a much wider administrative category, displaying the data in different ways, etc.

The workshop ended with a round table discussion "Where do we go from here", moderated by Heike Liebau, the third MIDA project leader. This became a platform for discussing numerous overarching issues. Among these were: technical aspects of the project, the question of conducting instructive workshops for engaging researchers, the link between the individual doctoral and post-doctoral projects and participation in the cre-

ation of the database, the level of description that the resulting database would offer and conform to, so as to give a balanced overview and neither just a sheer listing of the collections nor descriptions that are too in-depth making it an ordeal to cover as much as possible and the type of research monographs at the end of twelve years. The format of the workshop - being a combination of papers presented and the experts' experiences from different archives - was praised. The workshop was an enriching and necessary step in announcing MIDA's formal commencement and for mobilising pre-existing expertise on the research subject. But also it acted as a platform for engaging in discussions and gaining suggestions on how to proceed in the upcoming years.

Conference Overview:

Michael Mann (Berlin), Workshop Opening

Ravi Ahuja (Göttingen), Introducing MIDA

Panel 1 - Moderation: Ravi Ahuja

Lydia Hauth (Leipzig), A German Researcher in India - Egon von Eickstedt's Collection at the State Ethnographic Collections of Saxony

Jahnavi Phalkey (London), Science, Technology and India in German Archives

Panel 2 - Moderation: Martin Christof-Fuchsle

Adam Jones (Leipzig), Expert Report

Armin Grönbacher (Birmingham), German Conservatives, India and the Hallstein Doctrine. A document from the Chancellery

Panel 3 - Moderation: Anandita Bajpai

Chen Tzoref-Ashkenazi (Berlin), Archival Sources on the Hanoverian Regiments in India: The Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv in Hanover

Vandana Joshi (Berlin / New Delhi) Between Erasure and Remembrance: Shreds from the Kriegsalltag of South Asian Faujis (Sipahis) in Stammlagern, Arbeitskommandos, Lazaretten and Graves (1939-45)

Panel 4 - Moderation: Anandita Bajpai

Joachim Oesterheld (Berlin), Expert Report

Gregor Metzger (Regensburg), Alltag und Mission. Deutschsprachige Jesuiten im portugiesischen Weltreich (1616-1773)

Mrinalini Sebastian (Philadelphia), The Other Story

of Indology: European Missionaries and the Global Journeys of Vernacular Knowledge

Panel 5- Moderation: Anna Sailer

Diethelm Weidemann (Berlin), Expert Report

Panel 6 - Moderation: Heike Liebau

Keyvan Djahangiri (Berlin), "Centres of Calculation or Dead End? Early Modern Material on India in German Archives"

Brigitte Klosterberg (Halle), Die Quellen zur Dänisch-Halleschen Mission im Archiv der Franckeschen Stiftungen

Panel 7 - Moderation: Michael Mann

Ajay Bharadwaj / Anne Murphy / Raghavendra R.V. Karkala (Vancouver), Early films / images in and about India: The German Lens

Debjani Bhattacharyya (Philadelphia), The Influence of German Town Planning in British India: Tracing the Heritage of Lex Adikes

Panel 8 - Moderation Heike Liebau

Frank Drauschke (Berlin), Expert Report

Heike Liebau (Berlin), Round table discussion: Where do we go from here?

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at:

<http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/>

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