International Seminar

The City as a Site of the Political
Themes in Urban History, Infrastructure and Culture

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15 – 17 December 2016

CSSSC
Kolkata, India
Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline of ICAS:MP</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline of Thematic Module 1: History as A Political Category</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept Note for the International Seminar</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstracts for Key Note Addresses</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstracts of Papers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the Calcutta Improvement Trust (CIT) and its Archive</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline of the Exhibition</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Visit</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Participants (&amp; contact details)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio sketches</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Organisers and Logistical Information</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps (Kolkata and Lake Terrace)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Programme

Thursday, 15 December 2016

9.30-10.30  Registration and Tea

10.30-11.00  Welcome Address (Tapati Guha Thakurta, Lakshmi Subramanian, Andreas Gestrich)

11.00-13.00  Panel 1: Imagining the Political: Visual and Literary Representations of European and Colonial/Postcolonial Cities

Chair and Discussant: Rosinka Chaudhuri (CSSSC, Kolkata)

Martin Baumeister (MWS/German Historical Institute Rome):
Literary and Visual Representations of Making and Inhabiting Modern Rome

Beatriz Jaguaribe (University of Rio de Janeiro):
Favelas as Cultural Arenas

Kaiwan Mehta (Architect, Mumbai):
Architecture in History's Terrain: The culture of the metropolis and the architectural ornament (The specific case of 19th century Bombay)

13.00-14.00  Lunch break

14.00-15.30  Panel 2: Infrastructure, Governance and Urban Politics

Chair and Discussant: Priya Sangameswaran (CSSSC)

Clemens Zimmermann (History, Univ. of Saarbrücken, Germany):
Politicisation Processes of Urban Infrastructures at about 1870-1930. Urban public water supply and public housing programmes in France, Great Britain and Germany

Isabella Jackson (Trinity College, Dublin):
Managing Health and Hygiene in a Divided City: Shanghai’s International Settlement, c. 1870-1940

15.30-16.00  Tea Break

16.30-18.30  Key Note Lectures

Chair: Andreas Gestrich (MWS/GHIL, London)

Prashant Kidambi (History, Leicester University):
Crisis and the City in Modern India: A Conjunctural History

Sujata Patel (Sociology, Hyderabad Central University):
The Smart City Project. The New Political?
Friday, 16 December 2016

10.00-11.00  **Panel 3: Metamorphoses of the Political: Rights and Claims to the City**  
Chair and Discussant: Samita Sen (Jadavpur University, Kolkata)

*Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay* (IISER, Mohali):  
Street as Method. Making Sense of the CIT Records in Early Twentieth Century Calcutta

11.00-11.15  Tea break

11.15-13.00  **Panel 4: Metamorphoses of the Political: Archiving the City**  
Chair and Discussant: Shail Mayaram (CSDS, Delhi)

*Lakshmi Subramanian* (CSSSC):  
Figuring the City, Cataloguing the Trust: Some Preliminary Observations

*Sukanya Mitra* (Loreto College, Kolkata):  
From New Town to Smart City: Vision, Conflicts and the Politics of Development in Rajarhat

*Iman Mitra* (ICAS:MP fellow/CSSSC, Kolkata):  
Rental Economy of a City: Calcutta Improvement Trust the Politics of Urbanisation in the Twentieth Century

13.00-14.30  Lunch break

14.30-16.00  **Panel 5: Round Table Discussion: Archives and Archiving Practices: The City as a Site of the Political**  
Moderator: Veena Naregal (IEG, Delhi)

*Ravi Vasudevan* (CSDS, Delhi)  
*Vrunda Pathare* (Godrej Archives, Mumbai)  
*Tapati Guha Thakurta* (CSSSC, Kolkata)

16.00-16.30  Tea break

16.30  **Inauguration of Exhibition and Walk-through by the Curator**
Saturday, 17 December

9.30-12.00  Walking the City: Field Visit to Kolkata
            Sanchita Bhattacharyya (CSSSC)

            Sova Bazar Lal Mandir
            Marble Palace
            Burrabazar
            Dhurramtollah Mosque
            The Hogg Market
Outline of ICAS:MP

The M.S Merian International Centre of Advanced Studies ‘Metamorphoses of the Political’ (ICAS:MP) combines the benefits of an open, interdisciplinary forum for intellectual exchange with the advantages of a cutting-edge research centre. The centre will focus on key political processes that have emerged in parallel in many parts of the world during the twentieth century through to the present day, processes that are entangled yet heterogeneous. Located in the global South where ‘most of the world’ resides, ICAS:MP critically intervenes in debates in the social sciences which, despite relying almost entirely on evidence from North-Atlantic rim societies, claim universal applicability. ICAS:MP is thus not just another initiative to strengthen ‘Area Studies’ nor a base for narrowly bilateral Indo-German comparison. Rather, it will serve as a centre of advanced international research located in India in order to consciously unsettle the methodological nationalism and Eurocentrism that continue to frame research in the humanities and social sciences.

Programme Outline:

The distinction between ‘politics’ and ‘the political’ has become a key precept of modern social science, philosophy, and cultural history. The awareness of the demise of the sovereign nation-state as prime actor and object of political science gave rise to an intensive and interdisciplinary debate on the ‘Metamorphoses of the Political’. Today, ‘the political’ changes its ‘aggregate state’ continually, encompassing new fields of social practice as it withdraws from others, frequently appearing as ‘antipolitics’. In the long 20th century, the Indian subcontinent has been one of the most vigorous sources of distinctive conceptualisations and practices of ‘the political’ beyond the North Atlantic region.

The M.S Merian International Centre of Advanced Studies ‘Metamorphoses of the Political’ (ICAS:MP) combines the benefits of an open, interdisciplinary forum for intellectual exchange with the advantages of a cutting-edge research centre. The centre will focus on key political processes that have emerged in parallel in many parts of the world during the twentieth century through to the present day, processes that are entangled yet heterogeneous. Located in the global South where ‘most of the world’ resides, ICAS:MP critically intervenes in debates in the social sciences which, despite relying almost entirely on evidence from North-Atlantic rim societies, claim universal applicability. ICAS:MP is thus not just another initiative to strengthen ‘Area Studies’ nor a base for narrowly bilateral Indo-German comparison. Rather, it will serve as a centre of advanced international research located in India in order to consciously unsettle the methodological nationalism and Eurocentrism that continue to frame research in the humanities and social sciences.
Through its innovative modular and network structure, ICAS:MP will generate sustainable research cooperation among leading humanities and social science scholars from Germany, India and other countries who investigate similar research problems rather than necessarily the same region. Indeed, a core objective of ICAS:MP consists in connecting scholars whose regional specialisation usually tends to keep them apart. Scholarly exchange and joint exploration within ICAS:MP will be defined by a shared interest in examining the shifting boundaries, historically contingent contents, and intellectual lineages of the twentieth-century ‘political’ and by working comparatively, ICAS:MP will highlight the overlapping yet distinctive trajectories of political processes that have unfolded over the globe.

Outline of Thematic Module 1: History as A Political Category

Over the ‘long twentieth century’ issues of politics and power have inevitably mediated history writing, and the politics of interpretations has been entangled in larger political conflicts. If history helps constitute identities (of nations, races etc.), rethinking and rewriting histories refashions those identities. Analysing how the rethinking of history reconstitutes the political will offer several productive and novel perspectives on the constitution and discursive power of the political.

Such processes can be studied at four levels: First, at the level at which history is linked to the politics of spatialisation and re-territorialisation. While the making of nation-states has required the subordination of regional voices, the political assertion of the regions has often entailed an attack on nationalist master narratives by means of alternative ‘indigenous’ historiographies. Second, in relation to race and ethnic communities. The constitution of race relations through the writing of race into history, the ways race is represented, naturalised and made normative, and the way the anti-racist struggle has been expressed in the attempt to de-racialise history are issues which open up many comparative perspectives on the relationship between historiography and the political. Third, in relation to the political assertion and demands for recognition of oppressed castes and ethnic and religious minorities. Their attempts to be included in the nation often lead to the rewriting of existing dominant narratives, thereby connecting political struggles with histories of representation. Finally, the close relationship between the histories and politics of ‘aboriginals’ (e.g. in Australia/ New Zealand/US) or Adivasis (India) provides a similarly promising area to study the mutual constitution of history and the political: the assertion of their rights and their entry into the political sphere has invariably involved battles over their respective histories.

The module will concentrate primarily on three areas of inquiry: (a) controversial representations of history in textbooks; (b) the use of specific historical master narratives in films (historical documentaries etc.) and public debates on historical films; (c) heritage politics in the
context of colonial rule and postcolonial nation-building. In all these three areas India has been at the centre of recent international debate on ‘history as a political category’. Locating this module in India, therefore, connects it not only to an extremely lively research environment, but also to exciting ongoing public debates on ‘the public life of history’.

https://micasmp.hypotheses.org/moduls/history-as-a-political-category-tm1

**Coordinators:**

- Prof. Andreas Gestrich (MWS/German Historical Institute London)
- Prof. Shail Mayaram (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi)

**Module Committee:**

- Prof. Prathama Banerjee (CSDS, New Delhi)
- Prof. Martin Baumeister (MWS/German Historical Institute Rome)
- Prof. Berber Bevernage (Ghent University, Belgium)
- Prof. Neeladri Bhattacharya (Centre for Historical Studies, JNU, New Delhi)
- Prof. Prachi Deshpande (CSSSC, Kolkata)
- Prof. Rebekka Habermas (Dept. of History, Univ. Göttingen)
- Prof. Veena Naregal (IEG New Delhi)
- Prof. Lutz Raphael (Dept. of History, Univ. Trier)
- Dr. Indra Sengupta (MWS/GHIL)
- Prof. Lakshmi Subramanian (CSSSC, Kolkata)
- Prof. Thapati Guha Thakurta (CSSSC, Kolkata)
- Prof. Ravi Vasudevan (CSDS, New Delhi)

https://micasmp.hypotheses.org/about/TM1-Module-Committee

**ICAS:MP TM 1 Fellows 2016:**


Dr. Iman Kumar Mitra (1.6. – 31.8.2016): Between Historicity and Contextuality. Bangiya Dhanabijnan Parishad and Vernacularisation of Economics in Early Twentieth Century Bengal

https://micasmp.hypotheses.org/team/fellows
Concept Note for the International Seminar

The proposed workshop intends to explore and identify critical themes in the understanding of urbanism. These include the effects of changing notions of the political on the city, as well as the impact of processes of politicisation or de-politicisation on various aspects of everyday urban life and administration. It will also focus on the city as an archive of the political, and on the ‘metamorphoses of the political’ in the city archive – a concern that is drawn from the long standing work the CSSSC has undertaken in archiving domains of urban experience in Kolkata and Eastern India.

The up-coming workshop is a crucial part of the inter-modular activities organised under the broader ICAS project of the ‘Metamorphoses of the Political’. There, the underlying focus is on understanding the political in the context of shifting boundaries, historically contingent contexts and intellectual lineages of the idea of the political. With this perspective on the changing semantics of the political in the urban context, the workshop draws its cue from the more critical interventions that have characterised scholarship in various recent fields of research such as space and place making, on consumption, infrastructure and urban planning, environment politics as well as on archiving urban processes. Its temporal frame is the long twentieth century and after, a choice which helps situate the high colonial context of urbanism and of spatial restructuring and transformation that accompanied colonial policy on the one hand and reflect on urbanism in an increasingly globalising world on the other.

The specific focus on the city as a site of the political derives its rationale from two considerations. One is to do with the processes of (de-) politicisation of certain aspects of urban function and administration and everyday life in the city over the long twentieth century. The other is to reflect on the challenges and limits of archiving such processes that work into and from the metamorphoses of the political.

The workshop will stretch over two days and is intended to invite suggestions and discussions from experts on the field, from India and abroad. It proposes to invite select speakers and to organise two general discussion panels at the end of each day (5-7 p.m.). The first would feature a panel discussion on the CSSSC archives and exhibition, which will be mounted during the workshop and a second one that could feature students of the Centre working on various aspects of urbanism.

The workshop expects discussion on the following themes but this is only provisional. The final programme will be determined by the presentations that scholars are prepared to come up with.

The themes are listed below:
1. Imagining the Political: Visual and Literary Representations of making and inhabiting the Colonial City.
2. Infrastructure, Public Health and Sanitation as contested areas of urban politics.
3. Urban real estate and politics of development
4. The politicisation of consumption
5. Archiving the Metamorphoses of the Political in the city.
6. Walking the City: archives and architecture
Key Note Lectures

The Smart City Project. The New Political?

*Sujata Patel*  
*(Sociology, Hyderabad Central University)*

In 2005 IBM patented the brand ‘Smart City’ and thereby strategised how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) companies can intervene in urban development. Since then, almost all the countries of the world including India are promoting urban development through partial or full incorporation of ‘smart-ness’, that is by using ICT. The first part of the paper will explore the vision behind the model of ‘smart-ness’ and its articulations as a programme of urban planning through E-governance, economic growth in the form of start-ups, innovation parks and incubators, networking citizens through global knowledge systems and environmental sustainability.

Using ICT for urban development is a recent trend in neo-liberal urbanism. Its use has been extensive in North America and Europe, both of which are highly urbanised and where ICTs have been used provide efficient transport systems, communication systems or housing. However the expanding literature on its implications have suggested that its efficiency is conditional on the motivation to use it which in turn is related to talents and skills available to understand it with human beings. Wherever this is not so, such as in towns and cities where a large mass of population is not networked nor understand how to use ICTs, the use of smartness increases social and spatial inequalities and aggregates the problems of those who are already excluded, such as migrants, informal sector workers and women; it creates dual cities.

Urban theorists have suggested that cities are sites of capitalist accumulation. They have shown how accumulation has taken place through investment in the secondary circuit or in consumption. Recent work suggests accumulation occurs with dispossession and/or is part of speculation. The smart city project is a distinctive form of accumulation; it uses technology/ productive forces to make the city an efficient system. Its project is to make the city a production unit and thus the site for capital accumulation.

New technologies generate optimism and exuberance. Belief in technology per se creates a myth of its inevitable benefits. It is almost like a religion. However technology can be a magnifier of human intent and capacity. It is not a substitute. Greater the capacity and motives, greater the technology delivery; lesser the capacity, and motives it has little to no value. In these circumstance how will it work in India? Will it further inequalities and increasing exclusions? Will it break the fragile culture of democracy and civility in the country?
Crisis and the City in Modern India: A Conjunctural History

Prashant Kidambi
(University of Leicester)

A narrative of crisis frames discussion of the urban question in contemporary South Asia. A growing body of scholarship has documented how the transformation of Indian cities since the new millennium has generated problems on a scale never seen before. These include the challenges posed by a rapidly growing urban population, the deepening inequities in wealth and living standards, the contradictions that inform the frantic quest to fashion ‘world class’ cities, and the fractious workings of democratic politics. Significantly, different strands within this burgeoning literature contrast the current turbulence with the supposedly sedate protocols and practices of India’s colonial and immediately post-independence past.

My paper argues that the present urban ‘crisis’, far from constituting an exceptional moment of rupture, is only the latest in a series of cataclysmic conjunctures that have shaped the Indian city since the mid-nineteenth century. By exploring these eventful moments of urban transformation in modern India I seek to show how crisis has been constitutive of the modern Indian city at key junctures in its history.

In locating the contemporary urban moment within a longer history of crisis-driven transformation, this paper seeks to transcend the stark bifurcation that currently besets the burgeoning scholarship on South Asian cities. Anthropologists, geographers and political scientists provide richly textured perspectives on contemporary Indian cities, but their assumptions about the unprecedented nature of present-day developments rest on an impoverished understanding of South Asia’s urban past. Historians, for their part, have restricted their focus to colonial urbanism prior to 1914, and hence failed to highlight the value of the past in addressing the concerns of the present.

By contrast, I suggest that there has never been a ‘golden age’ when the modern Indian city was free of the conflicts generated by the interplay of state policies, markets and politics. By focusing on specific conjunctures, I will show how historically specific political rationalities transformed Indian cities over time. Ruling elites mobilised each crisis to remake cities but their attempts at urban transformation, both in the colonial and postcolonial periods, were riven by internal contradictions and countered by diverse subaltern responses. The paper will thus highlight the contingent, contested and conflict-ridden career of the modern Indian city.
Abstracts of Papers  (in alphabetical order of first name)

Favelas as Cultural Arenas
Beatriz Jaguaribe
(Federal University of Rio de Janeiro)

As highly contested terrains, the favelas of Rio de Janeiro have been depicted in the past decades as zones of scarcity and violence; they have been celebrated as the imagined community of popular urban culture, and also targeted for reform by security forces and urban planners. The ongoing toil of the explosive drug trade, the expansion of favelas throughout the city, and the emergence of new political agendas wrought in the wake of the re-democratisation processes of the mid 1980s have made Rio’s favelas overtly visible. Favela hyper visibility presents both novel ingredients and also relies on previously congealed repertoires. But most importantly, favela repertoires wrought from within and outside favela communities cast into perspective the shifting paradigms of the desired city and the possibilities of a diverse future.

In this presentation, I want to selectively explore how Rio de Janeiro’s favelas are culturally inscribed by focusing on three interconnected themes: aesthetics, consumption and authorship. In regards to the aesthetic rendering of the favelas, I return to a theme that I have often discussed which is related to how mainstream realist aesthetics in films, photographs and narratives fashion the apprehension of quotidian life in a disenchanted modernity. Despite their diversity, realist aesthetics in films, photographs and narratives have insisted on the correlation between representation and experience so as to naturalise the fabrication of reality through the rhetoric of realist encoding. Realist aesthetic codes offer a pedagogy of the gaze as they explicate the symbolic dimensions of social life by emphasising verisimilitude and the reality effect. But the reality effect is also paradoxically offered as a spectacle of consumption through favela tours and the buying and selling of favela products. Formerly obliterated from the tourist agendas of Rio, favelas have become the focus of a new type of branding and have also been cast as a trademark of the city. Finally, the demand for authorial veracity conditions the emergence of new forms of favela authorship. In various artistic expressions, the artistic recognition accorded to artists from the favelas is granted not only in relation to their aesthetic contribution but also in regard to the legitimacy of their political and testimonial standpoint.

While exploring these issues, I am addressing very specific questions. Why is realism the prevalent aesthetic code in these productions? What is the appeal of the favela as a fashionable icon sold through tourism and cultural products? Can favela branding sustain itself amid the disastrous economic crisis of the city? Finally, what are the dilemmas of new forms of favela authorship positioned between the empowerment rendered by geographical terrain and cultural belonging and the limitations of identity politics?
The paper deals with the question of how, in the context of urbanisation, (West) European municipal administrations and urban political powers reacted after 1870 to the challenge of urgent supply and health problems. What were the priorities? Which actors initiated direct intervention in living conditions in cities? By the examples of water supply and the ‘housing question’ it will be possible to demonstrate how these fields were politicised to different degrees. Furthermore, it will become obvious that the degree of politicisation was much dependent on the existence of concrete local actors and local conflicts being of national relevance. Finally it will become evident, as is the further thesis, that processes of general politicisation – here: after World War I – affected the local level. Periods of increased politicisation alternated with periods when problems seemed to be less urgent.

Thus, the ‘politicism’ of crucial issues of secured existence (clean water, housing) happened at three levels:

1) In the sphere of experts such as physicians, engineers and legal experts who communicated with each other both at the national and the international level but were also dependent on local constellations.

2) The second level was the national one, where actual reform agendas were discussed. For example the question if there was a ‘housing question’ at all and how the often large projects were to be financed without putting the priority of market regulation.

3) I will primarily discuss the politicisation of housing problems at the local level. It is an indicator of politicisation if such problems are not discussed as ‘technical’ but ‘social’ issues, beyond the level of experts and established institutions, if pressure groups in support of concrete projects are formed in the cities, and if these politicised issues start influencing the results of municipal elections, or if, vice versa, political groups gain power which explicitly support such ‘social’ issues. Not taken into consideration is the role of philanthropic organisations like those, in Great Britain for example, which developed ‘model housing’ projects, furthermore it is not possible here to discuss to which degree trans-local connections had developed.
Altogether, the creation of the ‘sanitary city’ and of sufficient housing proved to be a project which took decades until it was enforced. The former issue was not explicitly politically charged, however questions of funding, of tariffs, of how the network was supposed to be extended, and of the share of private investment in the gigantic infrastructure projects proved to be debated issues which were solved in very different ways in each state and city. Finally, however, water supply proved to be a public task which, if necessary, required public subsidies. The ‘housing issue’, on the other hand, was of an explicitly political nature from the beginning.
Rental Economy of a City:
Calcutta Improvement Trust the Politics of Urbanisation in the Twentieth Century

Iman Kumar Mitra
(ICAS:MP/CSSSC, Kolkata)

This paper looks at the urban question of Kolkata/Calcutta from the conjoined perspectives of an institutional politics of spatial organisation and everyday practices of rent extraction after the Calcutta Improvement Trust (CIT) started its operation in 1912. Founded by the British in the previous year to ‘improve’ and ‘expand’ the city by building new roads, clearing congested neighbourhoods and implementing various sanitisation projects which included demolition of unsavoury establishments like slums and bazaars, the CIT became one of the most influential actors not only in the domain of urban development schemes but also as a stakeholder in the sphere of urban land valuation and speculation.

By restructuring the city and giving it a new look, the CIT effected two sets of urban transformation: it created a new discourse of improvement where the enhanced mobility of traffic (by building new roads and widening the older ones) was connected with reshuffling of the adjoined neighbourhoods – especially their commercialisation and valorisation; secondly, they planned to finance their schemes by acquiring, selling and renting land in these commercialised zones. While the previous studies on the CIT have mentioned these unique features and discussed its autonomous organisational structure and how it invited a range of reactions from the inhabitants of the city in the wake of its establishment, they have not focused on the shifts in the urban land market caused by the schemes initiated by the Trust. With availability of new archival materials, this aspect comes to light and one is able to explain the connections between urban development and everydayness of rent extraction and land speculation in twentieth century Calcutta.

We shall in the paper explore how the schemes under the CIT were geared to produce a more mobile, connected, expanded, sanitised and aestheticised Calcutta and that called for displacement of people perceived as impediments in the way of new order of things, demolition of already existing buildings and establishments, and acquisition of land. All of these also necessitated huge funding which could not be gathered through other elected civic bodies like the Calcutta Corporation. People evicted from the land which was acquired by the CIT for its various improvement projects were resettled in the outskirts of the city, creating the so-called suburban Calcutta. This settlement practice had an important implication. The redistribution of land among the evicted population adhered to a politics of spatial gradation of citizens themselves, where the past inhabitants of hutments were pushed out of the city and the evictees from the pucca households were settled in the space vacated by the bustee dwellers. In effect, this
would perpetuate recycling of land and zoning of the city according to the classes and socio-cultural identities of the citizens. We may argue that, in contradistinction with the zoning practices in the earlier times where the logic of segregation was derived from the sociality of caste, ethnic or racial hierarchies, this new form of zoning had the principle of market and a politics of rent extraction at its heart.

The paper uses the newly digitised archive of the Calcutta Improvement Trust (CIT) to explore this process of creation of a rental economy in the history of urbanisation in the twentieth century. At the same time it studies how the category of rent makes its appearance – the structures, modes, actors and relationships – in an archive of urban planning and how the politics of organisation of this archive may influence the politics of categorisation itself.
Managing Health and Hygiene in a Divided City:
Shanghai’s International Settlement, c. 1870-1940

Isabella Jackson
(Trinity College Dublin)

Shanghai’s International Settlement (1863-1943) was administered by the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC), a transnational body dominated by the British but independent of any outside power. The SMC’s members, drawn from the local business community, identified their main responsibility as maintaining an environment conducive to the conduct of business. After security and basic infrastructure, the most important aspect of this role was overseeing public health for the Settlement’s dense and varied population.

By the early twentieth century the International Settlement enjoyed a rudimentary public health infrastructure that included a clean water supply and plague prevention measures. But by the 1920s pressures were growing for the SMC to take on a greater role in providing access to healthcare for the Settlement’s majority Chinese population. The Council’s Public Health Department oversaw food supplies, the collection of night soil, and major public health drives such as a small pox immunisation programme. It was responsible for managing the Settlement’s cemeteries and ensuring dead bodies were cleared from its streets, a role which carried added significance as the presence of abandoned human corpses in the open air contributed to Shanghai’s notoriety as a centre of human decay and uncaring colonial governance. The SMC extended its public health activities through the period, both within and without the limits of the Settlement, which brought it into closer contact with the neighbouring French and Chinese administered parts of Shanghai. This in turn created new areas of tension between colonial rivals and the anti-imperial Chinese municipal government.

This paper examines the evolution of the SMC’s public health policy and its impact on the life of the Settlement. Understanding the nature of the Council’s public health policy enables a more nuanced assessment of the relationship between colonial authorities and the transformation of Chinese cities. The paper will also explore the interplay of local pressures, such as growing Chinese nationalism, and international factors, in the form of the International Health Organisation, the British Empire, and other transnational institutions and networks, in bringing about a change in culture and expectations of the SMC’s public health work. The inter-war period was one of fundamental changes in these areas and the example of Shanghai, subject to so many influences as a transnational colonial city on Chinese soil, helps us understand the forces that brought about these changes.
Architecture in History's Terrain: The culture of the metropolis and the architectural ornament (The specific case of 19th century Bombay)

Kaiwan Mehta
(Mumbai)

The presentation will explore the city as set of urban neighbourhoods and built environments, primarily through the visual landscapes they present and are composed of as well as the lives of people occupying these spatial geographies. Architecture is the act and art of making buildings, shaping the built environment and the physical fabric that makes a world the human being and societies occupy, be inside, and constantly engage with exchanging relationships between everyday life, the world of bricks, mortar, steel and glass, as well as the civilisation of symbols and meanings the built world holds within and is shaped by. Architecture is a complex object, entity, organism, system and weave of civilisation and human culture. Architecture grows cumulatively always, whether it draws from history or stands in rigid criticism of it. And this architecture has to be always explained and understood; as architecture changes even after it is built. To read architecture through its spatial and visual registers is a complex process of unearthing the nature of a constructed geography that contributes to the cultural life of human societies as well as the processes of civilisation and everyday politics.

The visual landscape in its strongest avatar is expressed as the ornaments on buildings - the architectural flourish, the surface and skin of buildings - these ornaments are symbols and images, pictures and stories - narrative formations that emerge out of cultural expressions and inevitably accrue newer meanings over time. Newer meanings sometimes may sit over older ones, as layers of sedimentation, and the presentation explores ways of reading through these layers of plaster and dust, meaning and biographies of motifs. These motifs engage with spaces and materials and are not mute decorations; they enrich the life on the street and quietly note the lives of people and spaces inside buildings; they are visual space-register.

Detailing the lives of few building typologies in the history of Bombay/Mumbai over the last 100-odd years, this presentation will ask questions of the biographies of everyday life and the production of space - as urban and the political-everyday. Spatial atmospheres are physical realities that are the scenarios and contexts within which civilisation and human action unfolds. These atmospheres are heterogeneous compositions that shape their layers differently in differing contexts and histories as they continue to network across histories. What is also part of these constructed geographies are many individual lives; individual lives composed of actions and thoughts leave traces, residues as well as become the ingredients of spatial geometries and geographies, co-producing as well as reviewing the history and poetics of spatial atmospheres.
Figuring the City, Cataloguing the Trust: Some Preliminary Observations

Lakshmi Subramanian

(CSSSC, Kolkata)

This is not strictly speaking a research paper, rather it is an attempt to provide a very brief guide to a section of the CIT/KIT collections that the CSSSC has digitised, to reflect on the organizing principles we adopted and to indicate some potential areas of research that seem to emerge and speak thereby to the larger mandate of the project on the political and specifically on the site of the city as the political. The idea of providing a descriptive catalogue was really to stimulate research on aspects of the city’s development/improvement/spatial changes and configurations by identifying some of the issues that cropped up persistently in the proceedings of both the Board as well as of the various committees it set up to discuss execution of public works and to deal with disputes that arose in relation to land acquisition and building schemes.

The history of land acquisition under the CIT also saw very divergent discourses on the idea of good urban development and on the desirable kind of property city dwellers who would inhabit the city. Bompas, the first Chairman himself in a very early note on the improvement and progress undertaken by the Trust observed how the Trust selected Ward 8 for a general improvement scheme as it was both densely populated and unhealthy and unfit for human habitation, the majority of the residents were temporary migrants the displacement of which would therefore not cause much hardship. He also observed how after the improvement the area was able to command high prices. In fact one of the most interesting and persistent issues to crop up in the proceedings is the issue of a market in land, of the new categories of property owners and tenancy that the Trust introduced and the contested process of developing the city space. Also given that the process of land acquisition for the improvement of the city infrastructure involved layered negotiations with the property owners and rate payers of the city who had already started gaining a distinct civic voice thanks to the introduction of limited democracy in all the three important civic bodies of Calcutta in the early 20th century: the Calcutta Municipal Corporation, the Calcutta Improvement Trust and the Calcutta Port Trust, the material that the CIT holds becomes doubly important to track the processes of negotiations.
Literary and Visual Representations of Making and Inhabiting Modern Rome

Martin Baumeister  
(MWS/German Historical Institute Rome)

In the Western imagination Rome plays a unique role as "navel of the world" and "Eternal City". This "idea of Rome" unfolds and varies throughout the centuries in manifold cultural representations in different media and contexts, from poetry and literature, art and cinema, up to the economic and political sphere. This paper deals with the interrelationship between these urban images and myths and the city's crisis ridden development after the Second World War. Mass immigration, rapid demographic growth, accelerated urban expansion and the formation of a new "amorphous" periphery around the historic city center, as well as factors such as an increasing mass tourism changed cityscapes and city life radically and challenged traditional ideas about the "Eternal City".

The paper discusses on the one hand how urban representations persist and change at the same time under the influence of these transformations. On the other, it analyzes how the urban imagery influences urban debates and politics, the discourses of experts such as city planners and architects, politicians and journalists. The traditional "idea of Rome" is used in order to criticise and scandalise urban change, to raise the awareness among a broad public at the local and national level regarding the Italian capital's deep "urban crisis" and to influence politics of urban development. Simultaneously, it serves to "sell" the city in an increasingly globalised market, to transform it into a brand image for the international real estate business and city tourism. The case of Rome shows clearly that the urban imaginary is not a detached self-referential, short-lived cultural product. It is strongly rooted in a historical past, and it is - more than ever in a predominantly urban age, characterised, among other things, by the competition between so called global cities - deeply intertwined with economics and politics.
Street as Method
Making Sense of the CIT Records in Early Twentieth Century Calcutta

Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay
(IISER, Mohali)

The paper has two objectives: First, it studies how street emerged as a pivotal planning apparatus to assemble and disaggregate the city in modern times. The standardisation of the physical parameters of the street took place along with an expansion of its polysemic character. The standardised street came to execute a number of concurrent functions of circulation, sanitation, demarcation and territorialisation of bodies and things, and generated a diverse range of aspirations and experience. The paper argues that the opposition between the planned (and therefore standardised) and the polysemic constitutes each other, and exists inherently within urbanism. It is expected that such a framework will enable us to overcome a clichéd binary between the “planned” and the “spontaneous” in urban historiography. In what follows, the paper describes a set of institutional and popular practices in early twentieth century Calcutta that circumscribed a regime of street in reality.

The second objective of the paper closely follows the first. Here, I propose to use street as a way to follow a particular aspect of the urban “land question”. We know, street is the vehicle of land market. It calibrates proximities, demarcates property lines, creates an aesthetic order, and hence produces asymmetric geographies of access. It leads to the death of the lanes and by-lanes, and it diverts civic infrastructural investments to new zones of concentration. Further, the making of the street is often associated with the involuntary processes of the reorganisation of the existing urban populations. For instance, it was estimated that between 1912 and 1919 the CIT generated about 468 bighas of surplus land (primarily by demolishing kutcha structures and slums) in central and north Calcutta alone. It was further found in 1927 that the CIT in its first fifteen years of operation de-housed as many as 50000 persons (Bompas 1927, also, see Datta 2015).

A number of literary works of the time carry the traces of this moment. Only a minority of the evicted slum-dwellers could shift to the compensatory arrangements. Indeed, an Indian member of the Board of Trustee of the CIT observed in 1921 that many of the re-housed households eventually lost/sold those arrangements, and re-grouped in hundreds of subterranean pockets of the city. Gradually, these dispossessed groups produced new dissonances between the geographic logics of re-grouping and the “administrative logic of policing” (Samaddar 2016). They resurfaced in the archives of the Government as “crowds” in extraordinary moments of popular agitations, strikes and riots.
In sum, the two objectives of the paper enable us to think of two modes of street politics—namely, the “politics of the street” and the “politics on the street”. In existing urban studies frameworks, the former pertains to a referential frame of the “everyday”, the latter invariably becomes the site of the spectacular and increasingly mediatised forms of public protest in various urban centres. If the paper yields any lessons, it is really one that points towards the necessity of connecting politics on and of the street. I think, nuancing and breaking the street as apparatus has a present occasioning in the context of the growing surveillance, informatisation and corporatisation of public spaces leading to the emergence of a very different kind of archive of the street.
From New Town to Smart City:
Vision, Conflicts and the Politics of Development in Rajarhat

Sukanya Mitra
(Loreto College, Kolkata)

This paper talks about the evolution of Rajarhat from a semi-rural site on the north-eastern fringes of Calcutta to a ‘smart city’ being projected as a ‘new town’, bypassing the ills of the mother city and as being a part of the narrative of globalisation and development, the two prisms through which contemporary cities are often visualised. It narrates the way in which the new town in Rajarhat was visualised, the motivations behind the building of the township and how the process unfolded on the ground. Drawing on David Harvey’s theory of ‘accumulation by dispossession’, the paper discusses the cyclical process of how capital shapes the built environment via constant dispossession and accumulation across time and space. A section of the paper will talk about the planning of the township and how an understanding was reached between the several stakeholders cutting across party lines thus ensuring that there was an agreement about building the township and no party actually opposed it at the initial stage. This process known as the ‘Chennai Model’ was greatly praised by sections of the media.

However, conflicts began to surface once the process of building the township actually took off on the ground. The second section of the paper seeks to understand why the movement spearheaded by the local farmers and landholders of Rajarhat known as the Rajarhat Jomi Banchao Andolan (Save Rajarhat Land Movement) against the building of the township failed to transform itself into a successful and popular agitation such as the ones in Singur and Nandigram. In so doing it reads New Town-Rajarhat as a site in which contemporary social and political relations are played out---not only as a passive backdrop to them but as an active space shaping the processes and outcomes of these complex relationships. The next section of the paper discusses the sources which helped to build this narrative, their availability outside traditional archival institutions and their strengths and limitations. One such archive was the personal collection of the Rajarhat Jami Banchao Andolan Committee which grew out of the personal initiative of Nilotpal Dutta who spearheaded the protest movement in the township. Reading the archive threw up a number of questions which are dealt with in this paper. It discusses how the archive shaped the author’s understanding of the new township and how the archive itself was instituted in the process. Through such a discussion, the paper tries to initiate a dialogue between the concept of archiving the city and that of the city-as-archive.
**ROUND TABLE**

*Archives and Archiving Practices: The City AS a Site of the Political*

*The City in the Archives: Calcutta’s Visual Histories*

*Tapati Guha Thakurta (CSSSC)*

My comments in this panel will introduce the exhibition accompanying the conference, by looking at the way the city of Calcutta over the course of the 20th century has featured as a site of collecting and as site of cultural productions. I will consider the imperative of documenting and archiving these disappearing collections and the material they housed. And I will introduce my curatorial project of using the digitised images in the CSSSC's archives to think of a visual history of the 20th century city.

*The City in the Archives: Mumbai*

*Vrunda Pathare*

*(Godrej Archives, Mumbai)*

Geographies play an important role in shaping not only the character of business but also in providing insights for strategy planners of business. At the same time, business has an enduring influence on the geographical landscape they are part of. This constant interaction between the business and the landscape around –offers an interesting insight into process of urbanisation and the role of business in such territorial transformation. By drawing on the work done at Godrej Archives, I will explore how business archives are an important site to understand this intimate relationship.
Description of the Calcutta Improvement Trust (CIT) and its Archive

(*CSSSC team*)

The Calcutta Improvement Trust was officially set up in 1912. The initial impetus for the Trust was to enable and oversee road improvements and additionally to clear out insanitary areas and to develop low cost housing schemes. It was envisaged as an autonomous body enjoying government support and worked independently of the Calcutta Municipality. It worked through a Board of Trustees, of eleven members comprising of the Chairman, six elected by the Calcutta Municipal Corporation and four others appointed by the administration. In its final form, the Board of Trustees consisted of a Chairman, appointed by the Government, the Chairman of the Calcutta Corporation, ex officio, three members elected by the Corporation, one member elected by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, had four members appointed by the Government.

As the official body entrusted with improvement, the CIT represented the vision and priorities of the ruling colonial state. The composition of the body reflected the power equations in the city. Manned by a handful of British administrators, it was theoretically in a position to determine and define what improvement meant. It was supported in its vision by commercial bodies and associations and this indicated the nature of priorities that would determine future development. Not surprisingly, therefore, local opinion was cautious about the Trust from the very beginning. Subsequently there was protest against the Calcutta Improvement Bill of 1911, the complaints ranging from the over-inflated powers of the Trust in relation to the Corporation, to the excessive powers the Trust enjoyed on the tricky issue of land acquisition. As it happened these protests did not stop the Trust from coming into being but not without serious concessions that included a 15% solatium on all acquired property.

How did the Trust function? Its mandate was fairly specific as set out in the detailed Calcutta Improvement Act of 1911. It was entrusted with improvement Schemes that could be both general as well as specific housing and street related schemes. As such implementing these schemes involved discussions on land acquisition and also on rates and taxes. For the Improvement Trust had to purchase land outside the built up areas and to supervise its orderly development. The profits made on the resale of the plots of land to builders and developers constituted the income of the Trust. This inevitably produced land speculation and even while the government hoped somewhat naively that under the CIT, depoliticised development was possible, the situation on the ground showed up fissures and contradictions. At the same time, the Trust did not enjoy sufficient authority to push forward its plans and had to often submit them to the Municipality which had the final say since it controlled the financing of schemes. The Act under which the CIT operated was largely based on the English Housing Act of 1890 that had outlined the problems of housing for the poor and slums but had not been able to identify remedial solutions.
The CIT, located on 5 Clive Street, started functioning in 1912. Forty-eight meetings took place in the first year. It met every week, maintained an index of the meetings that were numbered not just for a single year but for the entire series. The Index is crucial for accessing the proceedings of the Board of members of the CIT. The Index carries an alphabetically arranged list of the subjects taken up for discussion in the meeting and allows the user to cross reference them with the meeting numbers under which these subjects were discussed. All Proceedings usually maintain an Index either in the beginning or at the end of the document. Several documents are brittle and consequently the quality of the scanned material is uneven.

The CIT (now called the Kolkata Improvement Trust or KIT) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC) on 24 December 2014, wherein it was agreed that the two institutions would work closely in the digitisation project of select series of proceedings. The copyright of the digitised material was to remain with the KIT. The use of the documents could only be for academic purposes and any reproduction of the material would require permission of both the CSSSC as well as of the KIT.

The CSSSC initiated the project of digitisation with funds made available from the JBMRC and finalised the decision to digitise in entirety the Proceedings of the Board of the Calcutta Improvement Trust from 1912 to 1975. The proceedings were scanned by a Research assistant who underwent training in the use of the scanner (Bookeye 2.0 model) and related software training to do with editing files. Subsequently the material was converted into pdf files for easy use.

The digitised material has retained the structure of arrangement followed in the CIT (and later KIT). There has been one additional input, namely of adding to the Board’s proceedings material generated by and sent to the various departments that worked under it, like for example the Valuation and Land Records Department. These are indicated in the detailed catalogue of the archive.
The exhibition explores the rich potential of the city’s visual histories through an institutional project of archiving and documentation. It conceives of the Calcutta of the 19th and 20th centuries through the prism of the diverse visual genres that are housed in the cultural history archives of the CSSSC.

Presented here are different ways of visualizing the nature of the modern city - its public spaces and life-styles; its changing forms of middle-class sociability, leisure and consumption, its cultural productions and practices, its peoples and personalities. Calcutta features in this exhibition, not just as a subject of representations, but equally as a site from which issued the range of cultural products that has come into the institution’s archives - illustrated books and journals; popular paintings and print-pictures; maps and posters; labels and hoardings; cover designs, advertisements and commercial art; modern art, cinema and theatre; not least of all, changing forms of photography, amateur and professional, art and documentary. A primary purpose of this exhibition is to also foreground the city as a locus of collecting and draw attention to many unusual private and institutional collections from which this archive has grown. Like the objects they gathered, such collections themselves are fast disappearing or depleting, making this project of archival documentation and display ever more urgent.

The exhibition moves through four thematic sections - (i) Print Productions and Graphic Design (ii) Leisure, Consumption, Entertainment (iii) Portraits and Personalities (iv) Urban Sites and Spaces – each of which evolve though different time frames, stretching from the middle years of the 19th century to the end of the 20th. With its material restricted to what has come into this archive from different private and institutional collections in the city, the exhibition makes no claims to a comprehensive coverage of these fields. Rather, it shows how the themes themselves may be conceptualised out of a mix of the visual genres and image pools that constitute an archive of this kind. All along, the name of the city has been consciously kept as Calcutta, as it was called in the English language for the entire period covered in this exhibition, until Calcutta’s official renaming as Kolkata in 2001.
Outline of Field Visit

(Sanchita Bhattacharyya, CSSSC)

The objective of the field trip is to introduce the participants to some of the landmarks of Kolkata (Calcutta before 2001) which are significant to the history of the city.

The landmarks are chosen keeping in mind the location of the Calcutta Improvement Trust (CIT) in the development of Calcutta as one of the important sites of architecture and infrastructure, commercial interests, and various contentions over urban improvement. The five sites are as follows:

Sova Bazar Lal Mandir: This temple which is now positioned in the middle of the road was a kutccha structure along the CIT Improvement Scheme of VII (Central Avenue–from Beadon Street to Grey Street to Shambazar). The CIT proposed to make it pucca if it could be shifted but the temple trustees objected to such efforts of moving the temple to the square. Thus the Trust was divided on the opinion of whether the Trust should spend money on the construction of the temple. Despite the objection of members like Khan Bahadur Mohhamed Ali Momin, Hari Shankar Paul, Mr Cohen, the majority of the Trustees decided on the retention of the temple within the new road.

Marble Palace: Built in 1835 by Raja Rajendra Mullick, a Bengali merchant with a passion for art collection, the Marble Palace is located at the Muktaram Babu Street, on the right hand side of the Central avenue. This palace gives a sense of the prevalent architectural style of old mansions in colonial Calcutta and the penchant of the contemporary nouveau riche for collecting western art objects (including paintings of Rubens and Titian). The Marble Palace also had one of the earliest zoos in India.

Burrabazar: Burrabazar, the commercial district of the city and the largest commercial market in Asia, was one of the biggest projects that CIT tried to undertake as an improvement scheme. The CIT initiated the project Burrabazar Improvement Scheme I in 1918. This attracted objections from the Marwari Association who were concerned about the effect this development would have on the small retailers.

Dhurramtollah Mosque: The Dharmatalla Mosque founded by Prince Ghulam Muhammad is located at a corner of Dharmatalla Street and Central Avenue was yet another property that went through modification for the construction of Central Avenue. The Waqf Property agreed to gift the land required for construction of road line as long as the mosque is not acquired. The Trust altered the plan of Central Avenue to accommodate the mosque by shifting the road scheme so that they could avoid disputes.
The Hogg Market: Designed by the noted architect Richard Roskell Bayne and built by the Mackintosh Burn in the 1870s, the Market at the Lindsay Street (in the vicinity of the Esplanade area) was meant to cater to the British residents of the city with support from the Calcutta Corporation and its the then Chairman Sir Stuart Hogg. In 1903 the market was named after him. The CIT was in charge of expansion and maintenance of the streets in the neighbourhoods.
List of participants (and contact details)

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MCs: Module Coordinators, MMs  Module Members
Bio notes of the Organisers and Participants

Lakshmi Subramanian is Professor of History at the Centre for Studies in Social History Calcutta (CSSSC). Her research interests include the history of networks in the Indian Ocean and social history of music in southern India. She has taught and researched for more than three decades in major universities in India and overseas and has been the recipient of several prestigious fellowships, Recently she has been elected as Associate Fellow for three years at the Institute of Advanced Studies, Nantes (France). Her publications include ‘The sovereign and the Pirate: ordering maritime subjects in the western Indian littoral’ (OUP 2016), ‘Three merchants of Bombay’ (Penguin 2014), ‘A history of India 1707-1857’ (Delhi: Orient Blackswan 2010) as well as ‘Veena Dhanammal The making of a legend’ (London: Routledge 2009).

Andreas Gestrich has been the Director of the German Historical Institute London (MWS/GHIL) since September 2006. He studied History and Latin in Berlin (Frei Universität, FU) and Tübingen, and received his PhD from Tübingen University (1983). He completed his post-doctoral degree (Habilitation) at Stuttgart University where he was a lecturer from 1983 to 1997. He was appointed professor of Modern History at Trier University in 1997. His main research interests are the history of family, childhood and youth, the history of poverty and poor relief, media history and the social history of religious groups. He was instrumental in setting up the Transnational Research Group (TRG) of Max Weber Stiftung (MWS) on ‘Poverty and Education in India’ and the India Branch Office of the MWS in 2014. The TRG later on was to become the parent module for the Thematic Modules of ICAS:MP, and the ICAS:MP project, as a whole.
Beatriz Jaguaribe is a professor at the School of Communications of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. She has been a Visiting Professor at Stanford University, Dartmouth College, The New School of Social Research, Princeton University, and New York University. Her research interests explore the inventions of the self in literature and modern visual culture; the construction of modernist/contemporary urban imaginaries in artistic expressions and the media; and theories of modernity and national invention in Latin America. Her books include, ‘Mapa do Maravilhoso do Rio de Janeiro’ (2001), ‘O choque do real’ (2007) and ‘Rio de Janeiro: Urban Life through the Eyes of the City’ (2014), among others.

Clemens Zimmermann holds a chair of Media- and Cultural History, Historisches Institut, at the University Saarland, Saarbrücken since 2000. Prior to that he was an Associate Professor of History at the University of Heidelberg (1990 – 2000), where he had also been a lecturer from 1981 to 1990. After completing his Ph.D. on Reform in Agrarian Societies (published in 1983) his habilitation thesis concentrated on ‘Housing and Housing Policies’ (1991). His recently (co-) edited publications include Industrial Cities. History and Future (Frankfurt/ New York 2013) and Creative Urban Milieus. Historical Perspectives on Culture, Economy, and the City (with M. Hessler 2008). One of his earlier monographs Zeit der Metropolen (The era of metropolis, 1996) has been translated into several languages, including Italian (L’era delle metropoli in 2003) and Spanish (La época de las metrópolis, 2012).

Elvira Graner holds the position of Deputy Director of ICAS:MP in New Delhi. She has been a teaching faculty at Heidelberg University’s South Asia Institute (SAI) from 1995 onwards, where she obtained her habilitation in 2008. She was the Resident Representative of Heidelberg University’s Branch Offices in Nepal (2003-05) and in New Delhi (2013-14). From 2009 to 2012 she was based as a Research Fellow at the Institute of Governance Studies (IGS) of BRAC Univ. in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Her research interests include political and economic geography and development policies in the fields of environment, education, labour markets, and youth in South Asia. Her empirical research was based in Nepal (1992-2009) and Bangladesh (2009-2013).

Indra Sengupta (DPhil, Heidelberg University) is a research fellow at the German Historical Institute London (GHIL) and in charge of its India research projects. Her research interests include the history of knowledge, especially knowledge in colonial India and Europe, German Orientalism, and preservation practices in colonial India. Her current research is on law, bureaucracy and historical preservation in late colonial India from local, colonial and metropolitan perspectives. She has held a visiting fellowship at the Excellence Cluster Asia and Europe in a Global Context of Heidelberg University and taught at the South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University and the Centre for Modern Indian Studies of the University of Göttingen. Her recent publications include ‘Culture-keeping as State Action: Bureaucrats, Administrators, and Monuments in Colonial India’ (2015), and she is presently completing a book project on ‘Preserving India’s Past: Law, Bureaucracy and Historical Conservation in Colonial India 1904-1925’, to be published by Routledge.
Isabella Jackson is Assistant Professor in Chinese History in the Department of History and the Trinity Centre for Asian Studies at Trinity College Dublin, and has worked previously at the Universities of Oxford and Aberdeen. Her research focuses on the history of foreign colonialism and social reform movements in modern Chinese History. Her co-edited volume (with Robert Bickers), ‘Treaty Ports in Modern China: Law, Land and Power’, was published in 2016, and her other publications include an article in Modern Asian Studies on Sikh policemen in Shanghai. Her forthcoming monograph ‘Shaping Shanghai: Colonialism in China’s Global City’ explores how transnational colonialism worked on the ground in China.

Born in Mumbai, Kaiwan Mehta, is a theorist and critic in the fields of visual culture, architecture, and city studies. He has recently submitted his Ph.D. thesis at the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bengaluru, under the aegis of Manipal University, on ‘Architectural ornaments and its relationship to the city and metropolitan experience, with a specific focus on Mumbai’. He has published as well as exhibited his research work internationally. He authored ‘Alice in Bhuleshwar: Navigating a Mumbai Neighbourhood’ (New Delhi 2009). Since March 2012 he has been the Managing Editor of Domus India (Spenta Multi-media) and writes prolifically on architecture, aesthetics, and cities. He has set up courses in Architecture Theory as well as Art, Criticism and Theory, the politics around Craft as well as Aesthetics, and teaches across various undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Mumbai including setting up the Parsons - The New School for Design in Mumbai, India.

Martin Baumeister is Chair of Contemporary European History at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) of Munich. Since 2012 he holds the post of Director of the MWS/German Historical Institute in Rome. His main research interests include the history of fascism and the era of the two world wars, urban history, and the Mediterranean and Southern Europe as imagined spaces and historical regions. Among his recent publications are ‘Southern Europe? Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece from the 1950s until the present day’ (co-ed. with R. Sala 2015); ‘16 ottobre 1943. La deportazione degli ebrei romani tra storia e memoria’ (co-ed.
with Osti Guerrazzi and Procaccia 2016) and ‘Cities Contested. Urban Politics, Heritage, and Social Movements in Italy and West Germany in the 1970s’ (co-ed. with B. Bonomo and D. Schott, forthcoming 2017).

Prachi Deshpande is Associate Professor of History at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta (CSSSC). Her book ‘Creative Pasts: Historical Memory and Identity in Western India, 1700-1960’ was published in 2007 by Columbia University Press/Permanent Black. Her research interests are broadly in social and cultural history, and include practices of historiography, memory and language. Her current research explores the cultural history of the Marathi language in the early modern and colonial eras, through a focus on literacy practices, scribal culture, multilingual networks, and processes of linguistic modernisation. She writes in Marathi and English, and is interested in the possibilities and challenges presented by bilingual scholarship in knowledge production in and about South Asia.

Prashant Kidambi is Associate Professor in Colonial Urban History at the Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester. An historian of modern South Asia, his research explores the making of cities, colonial and postcolonial governance, the politics of class, and urban public culture. In addition to a number of journal articles and book chapters, he is the author of ‘The Making of an Indian Metropolis: Colonial Governance and Public Culture in Bombay, 1890-1920’.

Priya Sangameswaran is Associate Professor in Development Studies at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC). Priya works broadly at the intersection of development studies and environment studies, drawing on heterodox economic theory, post-development and anthropological approaches to development, as well as political ecology. Her PhD research focused on the links between different kinds of equities in community-based water projects in western Maharashtra. Later work linked the ‘reforms’ in the water sector in Maharashtra to larger debates about neoliberalism, commodification, and rights and citizenship. She is currently involved in a research project tracing the trajectory of two industrial spaces in the suburban city of Thane near Mumbai as part of a larger story of the development of the city.
Ravi Vasudevan works in the area of film and media history at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), and at Sarai, the Centre's urban and media research programme. His work on cinema explores issues in film, social history, politics, and contemporary media transformation. He is visiting faculty at Jadavpur University, Kolkata, and JNU, New Delhi. His publications include ‘Making Meaning in Indian Cinema’ (ed. 2000) and ‘The Melodramatic Public: Film Form and Spectator-ship in Indian Cinema’ (2010). Vasudevan is also co-founder and editor of the journal Bioscope: South Asian Screen Studies (Sage 2010 onwards). His current research tracks the way film use was dispersed from the site of the cinema into a variety of practical functions that constitute a crucial archive of mediatised life and material cultures in the 20th century. He is also coordinating a Sarai project with Ravi Sundaram on media infrastructures and information, involving research into film and documentary infrastructures, video and sound cultures, and contemporary social media, data analytics and legal research.

Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay teaches History and Political Economy at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Mohali (Chandigarh). He has studied, taught, and held fellowships at Jadavpur University, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta (CSSSC), El Colegio de Mexico, University of California (Berkeley), the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) Bangalore and at the University of Göttingen (CeMIS). He is currently finalising the draft of his first book titled ‘The Rule of the Street: Calcutta in the Long-Twentieth Century’. He now prepares to start a new project on the war and urban tenancy question in South Asia in the last century. This paper marks the transition from the old to the new project.

Rosinka Chaudhuri is a professor in Cultural Studies at CSSSC. She holds a D.Phil. from Oxford University and has been a visiting fellow at the Southern Asian Institute, Columbia University, and Charles Wallace Fellow at Cambridge University. Her research interests include Poetry, Criticism, Literary History, Nineteenth-Century Bengal, Postcolonial Theory. She teaches Cultures of Postcoloniality, Introduction to modern social thought. She has published ‘The Literary Thing: History, Poetry and the Making of a Modern Literary Culture’ (OUP 2013), ‘Gentlemen Poets in Colonial Bengal: Emergent Nationalism and the Orientalist
Project’ (New Delhi: Seagull 2002), and with Boehmer ‘The Indian Post-colonial’ (London: Routledge 2010).

**Samita Sen** is professor, and at present Director, at the School of Women’s Studies at Jadavpur University, Kolkata. She served as the First Vice Chancellor, Diamond Harbour Women’s University (2013-2015). Her monograph on women’s employment in the jute industry in colonial Bengal was published in 1999 and won the Trevor Reese Prize in Commonwealth History. She is at present working on women’s migration in relation to tea and overseas plantations. Her various research publications include issues such as education, the women’s movement, marriage, domestic violence, domestic workers, women in governance and women’s land rights. Her recent publications are: jointly written ‘Domestic Days’ (with N. Sengupta, OUP 2016); and an edited volume, ‘Passage to Bondage’ (Kolkata: Stree 2016). She is a member of a Calcutta-based voluntary women’s association, Sachetana and of the Governing Body of the Mahanirvan Calcutta Research Group.

**Sanchita Bhattacharyya** is the Librarian at CSSSC. Being a fourth generation resident of northern Kolkata, she has a natural interest towards the old and heritage buildings and architecture of the city. Apart from her usual job related to library management and information service her interest in photography has given her appreciation of the scholastic community. On a regular basis, she goes ‘photo-walking’ in and around the city with groups of renowned photographers. Her pictorial documentation for the ‘Inherited Memories Project’ of the Goethe Institute, Kolkata has given her acclamation as a photographer. Her work based on her Bangladesh trip has recently been presented at the South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg.

**Shail Mayaram** is Professor at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi. Her publications include ‘Against History, Against State: Counterperspectives from the Margins’ (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan 2004); ‘Resisting Regimes: Myth, Memory and the Shaping of a Muslim Identity’ (OUP 1997); she co-authored, ‘Creating a Nationality: The Ramjanmabhumi Movement and the Fear of Self’. Edited volumes are ‘The Other Global City and Philosophy as Samvada and Svaraj: Dialogical Meditations on Daya Krishna and Ram-chandra
Gandhi’ (2009) and coedited, ‘Subaltern Studies: Muslims, Dalits and the fabrications of history’ (2005). She has worked on subaltern pasts and moral imaginations of peasant, pastoral and forest-based communities, living together in the city and on decolonising knowledge. ‘Israel as the gift of the Arabs: Letters from Tel Aviv’ is her most recent book; ‘Transitions in Indian nationalism’ is forthcoming and Non/Political Islam is in the making.

Sujata Patel teaches sociology at the University of Hyderabad. An historical sensibility and a combination of four perspectives - Marxism, feminism, spatial studies and post structuralism/ post colonialism influences her work. This covers diverse areas such as modernity and social theory, history of sociology/social sciences, city-formation, social movements, gender construction, reservation, quota politics and caste and class formations in India. She is also an active interlocutor of teaching and learning practices, and has written on the challenges that organise its reconstitution within classrooms, university structures. She is the author of more than sixty papers/book chapters and is the Series Editor of Sage Studies in International Sociology (including Current Sociology Monographs, Oxford India Studies in Contemporary Society, and Cities and the Urban Imperative. She has authored many books, and co-edited several books on Mumbai (including ‘Bombay: Metaphor of Modern India’ 1995; ‘Bombay: Mosaic of Modern Culture’ 1995; and ‘Bombay and Mumbai: The City in Transition’ 2003).

Sukanya Mitra is currently holding the position of Assistant Professor in the Department of History in Loreto College, Kolkata. She received her PhD. from the Centre for Historical Studies (CHS) at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi in 2013. Her latest publication is the chapter ‘Visually Imagining the City: Urban Planning in 1950s Calcutta and Surjyatoran’ (2015). Her forthcoming publications include ‘From para shops to malls: The ecology of retail in contemporary Calcutta’, a chapter in a forthcoming book eds. by Melitta Waligora and Anuradha Roy, a joint collaboration between the Dept. of History, Jadavpur University and the Dept. of South Asian Studies, Humboldt University Berlin. She has presented papers in various prestigious conferences and workshops, including Yale University (2015) and Hong Kong University (2014).

Veena Naregal is Associate Professor at the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi. Her current research interests include language and Indian democracy; disciplinary agendas and institutional histories 1920-1960, framing the 'regional' 1905-1960. She is co-editing with Madhav Prasad a volume of essays, Language Movements, Federalism and the Democratic Imagination in India, to be published by OBS in 2017. She is also editing a series of volumes of translated primary materials pertaining to regional theatre histories in Kannada, Marathi and Tamil. Her first book, ‘Language Politics, Elites and the Public Sphere in Colonial Western India’ was published by Permanent Black/Anthem Press in 2001.

Vrunda Pathare is presently heading the Godrej Archives – a Business Archives of Godrej Group (India). She is also currently a Secretary of Section of Business Archives (SBA) of International Council of Archives (ICA) and Vice President of the Oral History Association of India (OHAI). In the past, she had served as a member of the Advisory Board of Rajbhavan Archives of Government of Maharashtra. Vrunda has been trained in Records Management from National Archives of India and holds a postgraduate degree in History from University of Mumbai. She has been presented papers on aspects of archiving and on business archives, both nationally and internationally. She started her career as a Research Assistant to Sadashiv Gorakshkar (Former Director, CSMVS, Mumbai; Past President, Commonwealth Association of Museums)
The CIT Research Team at CSSSC

**Ujaan Ghosh** completed his graduation from Presidency College Kolkata and his Post Graduation from Presidency University Kolkata. He completed his MPhil. from CSSSC in May 2015. Amongst other things his Thesis focused on the urbanisation of Puri. His PhD concentrates on the urbanisation of nineteenth century Odisha focusing on the towns of Cuttack, Balasore and Puri. While working at the archives of the Calcutta Improvement Trust (2015) he was engaged in cataloguing the primary records.

**Satarupa Lahiri** did her graduation and MA in history from Jadavpur University, Kolkata in 2012 and 2014, respectively. She then pursued her MPhil. from CSSSC, titled ‘Lives and Experiences of Indian Soldiers during the First World War 1914-1918’. Her dissertation (completed in 2016) focussed on the various tropes of every-day life and how they were determined and influenced by a prevalent multi-layered racism. She has recently joined CSSSC as one of the research assistants working for the ICAS:MP (CIT) project.

**Siddhartha Chandra Mukherjee** completed his graduation in history from Presidency College in 2012, and his MA. from JNU in 2014. His MPhil graduation from CSSSC was in June 2016, based on a thesis on ‘From Spectacle to Crisis: A History of Electrification in Delhi 1903-1947’, and explored the history of electrical infrastructure in Delhi. His interest in urban history and its infrastructure has been reflected in his MPhil thesis and in the work he did for the Calcutta Improvement Trust. In August-September 2016 he was associated with this project.

**Shinjini Sircar-Sengupta** completed her graduation in philosophy from Presidency College, Kolkata in 2009 and her post-graduation from Delhi University in 2011. She completed her MPhil. from CSSSC in May 2015. Her MPhil dissertation was titled ‘Cooks, Kitchen and Colony: Food, Identity and Domesticity in Late Nineteenth Century India’. Her effort was to understand how food effected the identities in the late 19th and early 20th century India, based on cooking books and journals. She has been associated with the project of archiving CIT documents since November 2015.
Logistical Info and Organisers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Hotel</th>
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</table>
| Jadunath Bhavan Museum and Resource Centre (JBMRC)  
10 Lake Terrace,  
Kolkata - 700 029  
**Phone:** +91 (0)33 2466 6472 | Hotel Metropole  
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www.metropole.co.in |

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[www.cssscal.org/faculty.html](http://www.cssscal.org/faculty.html)  
[www.cssscal.org/director.html](http://www.cssscal.org/director.html) |
Map 2:  Airport to Hotel Metropole

Map 3:  Hotel Metropole to CSSSC (Lake Terrace)