



International Workshop on

The Politics Of 'Doing Culture'

Entangled India and the German Democratic Republic
during the Cold War

December 21-22.12.2018

Department of South Asian Studies
Institute for Asian and African Studies
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Invalidenstrasse 118, 10115 Berlin
II Floor, Room 217



GEORG-AUGUST-UNIVERSITÄT
GÖTTINGEN



The Politics of ‘Doing Culture’: Entangled India and the German Democratic Republic during the Cold War

The German Democratic Republic (GDR) was officially recognized by the Indian state in 1972. In the absence of official diplomatic relations prior to recognition, however, the Trade Representations, established in 1956, became the ‘official mouthpiece’ of the GDR in India. Almost parallel to the increasing role played by the Trade Representations in furthering political, economic and cultural relations between the two countries was the emergence of numerous Indo-GDR Friendship Societies across different parts of India. In the field of cultural relations especially, entanglements came to be intensified through a myriad of media like theatre, art, film, documentaries, music, radio etc. The diverse activities of the Friendship Societies, university intellectuals, diplomats, theatre playwrights and filmmakers— with actors from both sides of the spectrum— produced a vibrant atmosphere of entanglements which were at the interface of both political and cultural diplomacy.

Though these entanglements have been researched individually from various directions¹, and through the lens of multiple tropes, they have rarely received systematic academic attention within the ambit of an overarching framework. This is especially because historiography on the larger subject of India-GDR relations is also largely scattered and scanty. This workshop seeks to unpack the domain of “doing” cultural politics by actors from India and the German Democratic Republic during the Cold War years.

Whereas the German term *Kulturpolitik* suggests the formalized ambit of state-led entanglements and soft power, the *politics of culture* reflects how such politics of ‘doing’ culture percolates the everyday life of public sphere(s), whereby entanglements acquire their own afterlives beyond the formalised sphere of state politics. It will focus, on the one hand, on how the GDR was represented for an Indian audience and how India came to be projected and consumed as an object of interest in the GDR. On the other, but more importantly so, it aims to trace the life trajectories of individuals, literary works and objects that were at the cusp of intense individual exchanges. Such histories, embedded in complex relationships among actors from both the countries, also call for a reading beyond the limited and limiting vocabulary of “propaganda politics”. The workshop will look at multiple sites of “doing culture” that actively contributed to producing an interface between state-led cultural entanglements, cultural diplomacy, participatory democracy and the politics of resistance. Art, literature, political thought, theatre, film, radio then become pertinent as spaces of collaboration that open a hitherto less explored archive of friendship.

Rather than projecting India as the passive play-field of Cold War “propaganda”, the objective is to elucidate how actors from India, who were at the heart of these entanglements, were active and mutual *co-shapers* of these relations. Papers will contribute to a nuanced reading of the

¹ Attempts to trace the nature of some of these intertwined trajectories come primarily from Theatre Studies, Film Studies, Arts and Aesthetics, Literary Studies, historiography on universities and Cold War Studies, but rarely have they informed a systematic historiography on India-GDR relations beyond the realm of diplomatic history.

compelling Cold War contexts, though without rendering India solely as the “object” and receiver of Cold War block politics.

How did mutual presences get materialised in the eclectic field of “culture”? How can we trace entanglements by diverting our gaze to the content of the medium, but also the materiality of the very medium and the inter-crossing lives of the actors from both the sides? What do these entanglements tell us about the field of cultural politics and the politics of culture in a Cold War context? How do these entanglements open the possibilities of tracing transnational ties? The workshop’s main objective is to bring together diverse sites of entanglements under one overarching theoretical and thematic focus and therein contribute to historiography on India-GDR relations.

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Day 1 (21.12.2018)

09:30 – 09:45

Welcome and Introduction

Michael Mann
(Department for South Asian Studies, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Heike Liebau
(Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin)

Anandita Bajpai
(Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin)

09:45 – 11:30

Chair: Joachim Oesterheld

Travel Writing on India in the GDR: Between Cultural Diplomacy and Popular Education
Anushka Gokhale

Brecht in Marathi: Cold War and the emergence of Culture as ‘Problem’
Vaibhav Dilip Abnave

11:30 – 11:45

Coffee/Tea Break

11:45 – 13:30

Chair: Anandita Bajpai

Critical Pedagogy in the Theatre Studio: The Practice of Fritz Bennewitz

Anuradha Kapur

Collaborative Dialogues across the Theatrical Public Spheres: 'Invincible Vietnam' in Calcutta and Rostock, 1967
Bishnupriya Dutt

13:30 –14:30

Lunch

14.30 –16:15

Chair: Heike Liebau (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient)

Socialist Germany and India: Entanglements in Cartography and Architecture 1949-1989
Christoph Bernhardt

The Sound of Friendship: Warm Wavelengths of Radio Berlin International in India during the Cold War Years
Anandita Bajpai

16:15 –16:30

Coffee/Tea Break

16:30 –18.15

Chair: Michael Mann

India at The Leipzig Documentary Film Festival
Veena Hariharan

A Witness to History: Production of Images of India in GDR Newsreels
Reyazul Haque

18:30

Conference Dinner

Day 2 (22.12.2018)

10:00 –11:45

Chair: Anandita Bajpai

The Notion of 'Expressivity' in the Art Collectives of India: The Realists and The Radical Painters and Sculptors' Association
Rahul Dev

Matrices of Exchange: Politics of Cultural Exchange and Modernist Printmaking in India.

Jyothidas KV

11:45 –12:00

Coffee Break

12:00 –13:00

Wrap Up/Final Discussion

CONTRIBUTORS AND CHAIRS

Vaibhav Dilip Abnave

Independent Filmmaker and PhD candidate, Centre for International Politics, Organization and Disarmament Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Anandita Bajpai

Assistant Professor, Department for South Asian Studies, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin– MIDA Project

Christoph Bernhardt

Professor, Leibniz Institute für Raumbezogene Sozialforschung, Erkner and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Rahul Dev

Independent Researcher and Visiting Faculty, Dept. of Art History, Conservation and Museology, National Museum Institute, New Delhi

Bishnupriya Dutt

Professor, School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
Visiting Guest Researcher at Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin, Research Group Trajectories of Lives and Knowledge, December 2018.

Anushka Gokhale

Assistant Professor, Centre for German Studies, Central University Gujarat

Veena Hariharan

Professor, School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Reyazul Haque

PhD candidate, Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin– MIDA Project

Anuradha Kapur

Professor, National School of Drama, New Delhi

Jyothidas KV

PhD candidate, Freie Universität, Berlin/ Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Heike Liebau

Senior Researcher, Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin and Principal Investigator MIDA Project

Michael Mann

Director Department for South Asian Studies, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Principal Investigator MIDA Project

Joachim Oesterheld

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin

ABSTRACTS (In order of presentation)

Travel Writing on India in the GDR: Between Cultural Diplomacy and Popular Education

Anushka Gokhale (Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar)

Travel writing was the most widely consumed form of literature in the former German Democratic Republic. While in the liberal democracies of the capitalist bloc like the Federal Republic of Germany tourism became synonymous with freedom, in the GDR travel writing was both a compensation for the lack of freedom of movement and a tool for ‘enlightening’ about the Other, for demystifying it, so as to contain the desire to travel. But it was also a site where the cultural identity of the GDR was defined and projected on the Other, which consisted of both, the capitalist and the non-aligned nations. My paper will examine the travel writing on India by three GDR authors, Inge von Wangenheim, Willi Meinck and Richard Christ through a close-reading of some of the key passages which are reflective of the several functions that travel writing served in the GDR society.

Wangenheim and Meinck travelled to India in the 60s, i.e. in the time between the building of the Berlin Wall (1961) and the diplomatic recognition of GDR by India (1972). This period was marked by severe rivalry between the FRG and the GDR. The historian Johannes H. Voigt claims that during the period from 1949 to 1972 in no other field of their foreign policy did the GDR and the Federal Republic clash with each other as massively as in India. As cultural representatives of the GDR the East German travellers had to make up for the lack of aid in ‘material’ terms. While Wangenheim’s and Meinck’s texts are illustrative of the struggle for establishing ideological and cultural supremacy of the GDR in spite of the economic weakness, the travelogue by Richard Christ, who travelled in the time after the establishment of diplomatic relations with India, is not ideologically rigid and is marked by a self-critical tone.

Even though all the three travellers were commissioned to undertake and write about their journey through India, it would be limiting to define their texts as mere propaganda. In spite of the conscious efforts of the authors to create a positive image for the state there are several slippages in the text that seem to have passed through the strict censorship mechanism and seem to undermine the didactic purpose of the text. The paper will attempt to understand these texts in the light of some of the recent scholarship on the historiography and memorialization

of the GDR in the post-reunification period, which complicates the image of the GDR as a totalitarian state and of its people as either victims or collaborators of its repressive structures.

“*Amhi Brecht sodun kaahi karu!* (We will do anything else but Brecht!)”

Brecht on Marathi Stage during the Cold War: From Culture to Conjuncture

Vaibhav Dilip Abnave (Independent Filmmaker/Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi)

One could undoubtedly take the ‘official’, ‘inter-governmental’ collaboration between Fritz Bennewitz, a theatre director from the erstwhile German Democratic Republic (GDR) and Vijaya Mehta, a theatre director from Maharashtra to be an important moment in the dispersion of Bertolt Brecht’s works and ideas on Marathi stage. Yet, the present paper proceeds with a claim that, unlike the existing historiography, one need not presume this collaboration to be ‘inter-cultural’ in any self-evident or pre-given sense. Instead, through a close reading of Bennewitz’s recently published writings and editorial commentary on it, the first part of the paper proposes to investigate how ‘culture’ gets discursively constituted vis-a-vis ‘politics’ in the context of the Cold War.

The second part of the paper shall turn its focus upon how during 1970s Bennewitz-Mehta collaboration became an important reference point informing an emerging amateur theatre group from Pune, Theatre Academy’s engagement with Brecht. Departing from the ‘(inter-)culturalist’ frame, the second part shall propose a ‘conjunctural’ frame to read various responses (captured through extensive personal interviews and other published sources) to Brecht from within and outside Theatre Academy during 1970s-80s, a group which went on to acquire national and international recognition during this period. This conjunctural frame seeks to build upon Alain Badiou’s formulation of ‘didactic schema’, a specific triangulation of art, philosophy and education, which could help us situate Brecht’s theatrical inventions outside culturalist framing. Building upon Badiou’s observation concerning the saturation of ‘didactic schema’ in the second half of the twentieth century, the conjunctural frame shall attempt to think two disparate sequences- post-Brechtian theatre in GDR (especially Heiner Müller’s) and engagement with Brecht’s works, ideas on Marathi stage from late 1960s to late 1980s- *together* than putting them into separate ‘cultural’ brackets. Mapping these two otherwise distinct yet converging trajectories onto a wider global conjuncture opened since mid-1960s (marked by the crisis of the Party-State model of the Left), the attempt would be to trace how increasingly unsettled relationship between ideology and political action, theory and practice, aesthetics and politics shaped heterogeneous yet interconnected responses to Brecht in GDR and Maharashtra, the responses which exceeded actual ‘inter-cultural’ exchanges.

Extending the conjunctural frame, the third and the last part of the paper shall attempt to reconstruct a narrative (recorded through personal interviews) of Theatre Academy’s tour of GDR (and the East Bloc countries) during October 1989, when the East bloc was already crumbling. Unlike the Bennewitz-Mehta collaboration, Theatre Academy’s GDR tour was not an ‘inter-governmental’ affair to begin with but a culmination of the collaboration between Theatre Academy and Max Müller Bhawan (a cultural-educational agency of Federal Republic of Germany) since late 1970s.

Critical Pedagogy in the Theatre Studio: The Practice of Fritz Bennewitz

Anuradha Kapur (National School of Drama, New Delhi)

This paper explores how the practice and pedagogy of Fritz Bennewitz, an artist-teacher from the German Democratic Republic, who worked extensively in India, across languages and regions in the 1970s and 1980s, has shaped the languages of theatre making in contemporary India.

It will delve into how Bennewitz's idea of translation as action, gesture as discourse, and spectatorship as a cultural construct destabilized genealogies of theatre making as they had been shaped and narrativized for the Indian classroom in the decades of the 1950s and 1960s. This narrative often melded together ideas of defamiliarization, as practiced in Indian folk theatre, and those developed for instance by Brecht. Bennewitz placed the technologies of spectatorship at the centre of the debates on tradition and modernity and detached, via his pedagogy, defamiliarization techniques of traditional Indian theatre from those that had been developed for instance by Brecht. He asked how each of these dramaturgies shaped the audience critically and politically. These new dramaturgies, in conversation with practices across the world, modelled and remodelled in the rehearsal space, produced, I suggest an ever more contested modernism.

I ask why the plural, multi-vocal, and internationalist aspects of Indian modernist theatre practice, which was critically shaped by Bennewitz's pedagogy, is being overwritten by a more indeginist story of theatre making. The paper addresses why this aspect of Indian modernism needs to be erased in favour of readings that produce less agonistic debates and a more regulated art practice.

Collaborative Dialogues across theatrical Public Spheres: Invincible Vietnam in Calcutta and Rostock, 1967.

Bishnupriya Dutt (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi)

The cultural collaborations, between the German Democratic Republic and India, amidst the cold war and the increasing bipolar world, were not uni-linear, but connected to different people at different times. I would like to through the play, *Invincible Vietnam*, written and directed by Utpal Dutt in Calcutta in 1966, which was then translated and directed at the Rostock theatre by the then intendant, Kurt Barthel (1967), try to understand the critical phase of the 1960s both in terms of a post-colonial India and a GDR, which was consolidating its post-war socialist system which prioritized socio-cultural initiatives. Collaborations framed under what was a significant socialist collective imagination and an idealistic internationalism (beyond a simple critique of universalism) based on Marxist ideologies, it was by the 1970s replaced by State run collaborative projects which were based on the larger global network and loyalties and alliances for more military, political and economic gains, rather than socio-cultural or ideological dialogues.

Etienne Balibar's notion that Eastern Europe did have a civil society and culture, which recent histories tend to avoid- I would like to read these exchanges as a dialogue across theatre

practices which were still located in an active public sphere and civil societies, before in both these countries it would lapse into what Balibar sees as the 'Phantom public sphere' and attributes to national state frameworks dominating the dialogical exchanges.

The essay will try to frame it within two critical frames; the notion of public spheres and possible alternatives to state based cultural exchange² (Balibar) and the problems of the archives, which fails to record such exchanges and cultural exchanges based on micro events. While trying to look at the archives in India and Germany, I would like to use some of the critical concepts in Performance studies on why archives need to see some of these dialogues as 'disappearance'³ (Schneider) rather than creating a historical mapping which is more heterogeneous than is seen as cold war exchanges.

Socialist Germany and India: Entanglements in Cartography and Architecture 1949-1989

Christoph Bernhardt (Leibniz Institut für Raumbezogene Sozialforschung, Erkner and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

The years after World War II represent a period of fundamental political change on a global scale. The end of traditional colonialism in most parts of the world and the turn towards socialism in many East European states marked a re-arrangement of global political order and the beginning of the Cold War period. India and the socialist German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the Eastern part of Germany were established as new states, which in the Cold War, developed complex political and cultural relations.

The paper addresses entanglements in the fields of cartography and architecture. It highlights cultural perceptions, political tensions as well as patterns of socialist export of knowledge to the Global South. It starts by exploring from two perspectives a key work of East German socialist cartography on India which was published in 1958⁴. On the one hand the publication will be analysed within the more general framework of diplomatic and economic relations between India and the GDR in order to better understand the cultural context of cartographic production. Furthermore the serious diplomatic conflict that arose in the 1960's between the two states on cartographic issues is addressed. On the other hand an analysis of the biography of geographer and chief editor Edgar Lehmann and his institutional context as well as a close reading of some of the maps will provide insights into the traditions of cartography from colonial to socialist and postcolonial thinking. In the second part of the paper questions of transfer of knowledge and economic interests are discussed along the export of architecture and urban design form the GDR to India.

The paper is based on contemporary publications and archival sources from the Collections on the architectural and planning history of the GDR at the archive of IRS Erkner.

² Balibar E., *We, The People of Europe*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004.

³ Schneider R., *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactments*, New York: Routledge, 2011.

⁴ Historisch-geographisches Kartenwerk Indiens. Entwicklung seiner Wirtschaft und Kultur, ed. by Edgar Lehmann and Hildegard Weiße, Leipzig 1958.

The Sound of Friendship: Warm Wavelengths of Radio Berlin International during the Cold War years in India

Anandita Bajpai (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin)

Radio Berlin International (RBI) began its journey of bringing the “voice of the German Democratic Republic” on the 20th of May, 1959. Until the last broadcast aired on the 2nd of October, 1990, it had been a radio station for thirty one years, four months and twelve days that presented the GDR in five continents across the world, with the Hindi section established in 1967. The section aired an eclectic range of shows which were, among others, responsible for informing Indians about ‘life in the GDR’ and establishing transnational bonds of friendship. The station had numerous listener clubs spread across the country and two of the programmes, *YAWA–You Ask, We Answer* and *Thank You for Writing*, show the popularity that the station enjoyed in different parts of India. Based on written sources (lengthy reports on the programmes, instructions (confidential) given to the presenters, type-written and hand written transcripts of programmes, release permits that authorized the transmission of each programme) in German and English, audio sources (tapes of programmes aired by the station) in Hindi, and in-depth interviews with the presenters and journalists working for the Hindi section at the station as well as members of listeners’ clubs in India, this paper will focus on the following questions–

1. How did the radio become a means for sonically presenting the GDR in India?
2. How did the Hindi section re-orient its content after 1989?
3. What do the sources tell us about histories of India-GDR entanglements as well as the entangled life trajectories of the presenters, both in the GDR and later in a re-unified Germany?

Cold War Entanglements: India at the Leipzig Documentary Film Festival

Veena Hariharan ((Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi)

Since its establishment in 1955, the Leipzig Documentary Film Festival (Dok-Leipzig) has been one of the most important film festival networks dedicated to the documentary film. Emerging out of the former GDR, it continues to be a prestigious “event” for documentarians the world over to this day. Significantly, it has also been a charged venue for East-West relations amid Cold war geopolitics, providing filmmakers with an opportunity to interact with each other, from both sides of the Iron Curtain, as well as with filmmakers from the global south. In her recent book-length study of the Leipzig Documentary Film Festival, Caroline Moine describes the festival as a unique vantage point from which to study the cold war years as they shift between “history, memory and oblivion”. The Festival held a special retrospective of Indian documentaries in 1988, a significant year for many reasons, not least being that it was the eve of the cold war thaw. Several Indian documentarians, including S. Sukhdev (director of the controversial “India 67” (1967) and “Nine Months to Freedom: The Bangladesh Story” (1972)), have been jury members, and have showcased their films at the festival. Following the traces of India in GDR and vice-versa in the holdings of the Bundesarchiv/Filmarchiv (BArch-FArch),

as well as the DokArchiv (digital archive of the Leipzig Festival), and the Films Division Archives, Mumbai, and NFAI, Pune, India, this paper explores the Leipzig festival as a node of cultural exchange between India and GDR during the period, and as a productive site of enquiry about the transnational entanglements of image and ideology.

A Witness to History: Production of Images of India in GDR Newsreels

Reyazul Haque (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin)

Newsreels played a vital role in the historical as well as cultural reconstruction of both the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Screened in the cinema houses during the interludes of screenings of main feature films, they were the only source of audio-visual news until the introduction of television news, and were thus entangled in the world of entertainment and cultural politics. While they aimed at evoking interest and nonetheless being entertaining, they also carried the political-cultural perspective of the state they were being produced in.

This paper will focus on newsreels (*Augenzeuge*) produced in the German Democratic Republic that dealt with topics related to India and will try to locate their historical and aesthetic positionality vis-à-vis the contemporary political and cultural scenario. It will study how the newsreels produced in the GDR worked as an agent of history and helped to construct a cultural self-identity of the GDR by producing images of India. While providing an account of programs that focused on India, the paper will especially focus on the 1976 newsreel that centred on the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's official visit to the GDR and will discuss how these cultural identities provided the country its sense of political importance in the Cold War period.

The Notion of 'Expressivity' in the Art Collectives of India: The Realists and The Radical Painters and Sculptors Association

Rahul Dev (Visiting Faculty, National Museum Institute, New Delhi)

In the early twentieth century, artists in Europe began an art of subversion which developed into the influential movement of Expressionism. Although historical significance of Expressionism within Western modernism has been extensively researched, the question of Expressionism's influence on the art of Indian modern artists is not adequately studied. Thus, this paper explores the emergence of two distinct art collectives from Santiniketan, Bengal and Kerala—*The Realists* (1985-2000) and *The Radical Painters and Sculptors Association* (1985-1989)—that almost ran parallel to each other during the period of 1980s, and both were influenced by Expressionism in their art practice. Further, it investigates how these two art collectives saw a convergence, at first, in their understanding of society through Marxist perspectives (the idea of proletariat was critical) and secondly, in terms of their choice of representing the life world of everyday more specifically peasant, worker, common man, etc.

My interest in the emergence of these two collectives is from the point of view of their harnessing of expressionist idioms to convey their critique, and register protest through their

art. Also rendering of expressionist vocabulary would deal with the conscious conveying of emotions explored by the artists who draw upon expressionist impulses and reconfigured as 'Expressivity' (also called 'Expressionist staging').

Ulrike Goeschen, a Berlin based art historian, formulates the notion of 'Expressivity' in the context of German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the period of Cold War. She sheds light upon nature and the problems of historical Expressionism and how the problem was discussed amongst the artists, art critics and art historians of GDR in which the term 'Socialist Realism' was eventually replaced by the phrase 'Art in Socialism'. This proposition alludes to my enquiry of aforementioned Indian art collectives who critically rendered 'Expressivity' or 'Expressionist Staging' in their art. Fundamental to their critique was the idea that the narrative underlying the various stages of so-called modern art movements in India, beginning from Revivalism to the Baroda Neo-narrative School, the elite and brahmanical notions remained a vital signifier thereby precluding any historical discussion entering into their art.

As part of my exploration of the discourses of Expressionism, my research turns to primary materials such as interviews with artists and art historians, rare exhibition catalogs, regional art reviews, newspaper clips, (Bangla and Malayalam), access to original artwork in the museums and galleries. A research grant at *Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz* (SPK) Berlin allowed me to access the original works of art pertaining to Expressionism, Neue-Sachlichkeit, Neo-Expressionism, Neue-wilden, etc. Through this fellowship I was able to access the collections of modern and contemporary art at various European museums such as *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, *Brücke Museum*, *Berlinische Galerie* (Berlin), *Pinakothek* (Munich), *Centre Pompidou* (Paris), and *MUMOK* (Vienna). Also, the SPK grant helped me to access the primary and secondary materials including specialized books, journals and magazines on Expressionism which was not available anywhere in India. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles was also helpful in accessing materials related to the art of Cold War in Germany.

Matrices of exchange: Politics of Cultural Exchange and Modernist Printmaking in India.

Jyothidas K V (Freie Universität Berlin and Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi)

One of the key developments in the history of modern Indian art is the establishment of printmaking as an autonomous medium. The institutional recognition as well as the resurgence of artistic interest in the medium was fuelled by increased international exchanges in the post World War II era, where the newly formed nations and the old powers were invested in extending cultural networks and high modernist visual art was an important tool in the cultural arsenal of many countries. Printmaking as a medium and original prints as modern cultural artifacts found patronage among various cultural agencies responsible for the exchange. For some the appeal was the aesthetics and thematic affiliations of the prints and for some, the ease of transporting 'originals' of well established names of visual art that made them opt for 'fine prints'.

Based on this long and complex history of exchange between India and Germany in the context of printmaking, I intend to focus on exhibition history to investigate aesthetic and technical exchanges. The period of 1950s and 60s is important to the discussion because of an international resurgence in the field of printmaking owing, to political and other conditions. The emergence of Pop Art and the usage of image reproduction techniques by artists has had a significant impact on the history of printmaking all over the world. Inherent to this economy of exchange was print's portability and reproducibility. A close look at the works of many of the exhibitions of the period would highlight the possibilities offered by printmaking's multiplicity, to the artist. All these factors make 'fine prints' privileged sites to study to artistic transfers and exchanges.

A number of exhibitions that brought the aesthetics of socialist realism and expressionism to India came from the German Democratic Republic. I intend to examine one such significant exhibition from the erstwhile East and West Germany to contextualize exhibitions as sites of aesthetic exchanges. A remarkable exhibition of around 150 prints was hosted by AIFACS, New Delhi in March 1960 which came from the German Democratic Republic. This exhibition featured prints by Käthe Kollwitz, among others and the aesthetic underpinning of the exhibition was socialist realism. Given the complex political conditions of the time, the contrast in aesthetics propagated by various countries through traveling exhibitions calls for a critical enquiry. How printmaking features in these cultural exchanges, is a critical yet understudied area that I intend to focus on. The Käthe Kollwitz Museum in Berlin and Cologne are important sites of research in this regard.

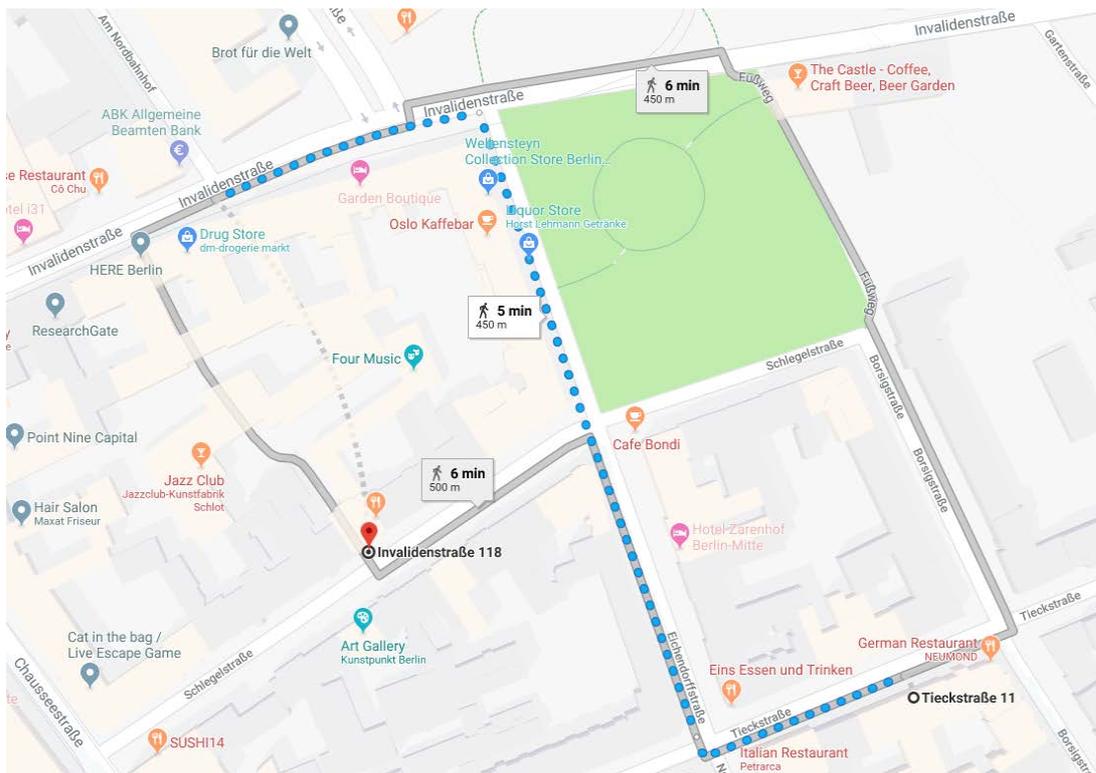
Information - Addresses

1) Venue of the Workshop

Seminar für Südasiens-Studien
Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
II Floor, Room 217
Invalidenstr a e 118
10115 Berlin

2) Hotel HONIGMOND

Tieckstra e 11
10115 Berlin
The Conference venue is just 5-6 minutes away (on foot) from the hotel.



Please Note: Breakfast is NOT included in the hotel reservations!

Directions to Workshop Venue:

1) from Airport Tegel

Bus 128 in the direction of *U Osloer Str.* to **U Kurt-Schumacher-Platz**, then **U6** in the direction of *Alt-Mariendorf* to **U Naturkundemuseum** (followed by a walk of 7 minutes) *(24 min)*

or

Bus TXL in the direction S+U Alexanderplatz via Hauptbahnhof to the stop **Invalidenpark** (followed by a walk of 12 minutes) *(38 minutes)*

2) from Airport Schönefeld

Bus X7 in the direction Rudow to **U Rudow**, then **U7** in the direction of *S+U Rathaus Spandau* to **U Mehringdamm**, then **U6** in the direction *U Alt-Tegel* to **U Oranienburger Tor** (followed by a walk of 12 minutes) *(50 min)*

For the conference days 21-22.12.2018 we will reimburse any tickets for local transportation. **Kindly note that any taxi fares cannot be reimbursed.**

Notes

