

Qualitätssicherung

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**Stellungnahme des Stiftungsrates zum
MWS India Branch Office (IBO)**

Anlage A: Selbstdarstellung des MWS IBO

Anlage B: Bewertungsbericht der Evaluationskommission

Anlage C: Stellungnahme des MWS IBO

ZUM VERFAHREN

Der Stiftungsrat überwacht die Tätigkeit der Einrichtungen der Stiftung und veranlasst externe Evaluationen. Für die Begutachtung setzt er ausschließlich externe Evaluationskommissionen ein, die ihm berichten. Der Stiftungsrat erörtert die Evaluationsberichte und hält seine Schlussfolgerungen in einer Stellungnahme fest.

Am 13. Mai 2016 entschied der Stiftungsrat, das India Branch Office (IBO) der MWS in Delhi mit 150 T€ jährlich zu fördern und nach vier Jahren zu evaluieren. Die Weiterführung und die Aufnahme von Indien als dauerhaftes Gastland der MWS sollten von einem positiven Evaluationsergebnis abhängig gemacht werden.

Das IBO wurde im vergangenen Jahr als erstes Branch Office der MWS evaluiert. Zur Vorbereitung seiner Begehung hat es eine Selbstdarstellung ([Anlage A](#)) verfasst, die der in der Evaluationsordnung für die Branch Offices der Max Weber Stiftung vorgeschriebenen Gliederung folgt. Der Kommission wurden darüber hinaus die Sitzungsprotokolle des informellen Wissenschaftlichen Beirats vorgelegt. Die Kommission hat das IBO am 27. November 2019 unter Leitung von Professor Dr. Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka (Universität Bielefeld) besucht und daraufhin einen Bewertungsbericht erstellt ([Anlage B](#)). Auf der Grundlage des Bewertungsberichts und der vom IBO eingereichten Stellungnahme zum Bewertungsbericht ([Anlage C](#)) hat der Stiftungsrat der Max Weber Stiftung die vorliegende Stellungnahme in seiner Sitzung am 8. Mai 2020 erörtert und verabschiedet. Er dankt den Mitgliedern der Evaluationskommission für ihre Arbeit.

1. BEURTEILUNG UND EMPFEHLUNGEN

Der Stiftungsrat schließt sich der Beurteilung und den Empfehlungen der Evaluationskommission in vollem Umfang an.

2. ZUR STELLUNGNAHME DES MWS IBO

Das IBO hat zum Bewertungsbericht der Evaluationskommission Stellung genommen ([Anlage C](#)). Das Institut hat den Bewertungsbericht mit den angefügten Bemerkungen positiv zur Kenntnis genommen und beabsichtigt, die Empfehlungen und Anregungen aus dem Bewertungsbericht ([Anlage B](#)) bei seiner weiteren Arbeit zu berücksichtigen.

3. BESCHLUSS

Der Stiftungsrat nimmt den Bewertungsbericht aus der Evaluation des IBO zustimmend zur Kenntnis und beschließt, ein weiteres Assessment des IBO für 2024 vorzusehen.

Anlage A: Selbstdarstellung des MWS IBO

**Max Weber
Stiftung**

India Branch Office

**Max Weber Stiftung
India Branch Office**

New Delhi

Evaluation 2019

Status Report

Period ending December 2018

<https://mwsibo.hypotheses.org>

Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office @MWS_IBO

<https://www.facebook.com/GHILIndiaCentreMWS/>

Translation of Key Terms

German – English

Stiftung	Foundation
Stiftungsrat	Advisory Council of the Foundation
Beirat	Advisory Board
Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF)	Federal Ministry of Education and Research
Entsandte	Employees seconded from Germany on German contracts. Salaries and benefits in alignment with German foreign service postings in India
Geschäftsstelle	Central Office (of the MWS)
Graduiertenkolleg	Research Training Group (DFG term)
Nachwuchsgruppe	Young Scholars' Group
Qualifikationsstellen	Fixed-term research positions to enable scholars from the German academic system to write their <i>Habilitation</i> or a second book to qualify for a professorship at a German university

List of Abbreviations with English Translations

AB	Advisory Board
AHRC	Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK)
AIIS	American Institute of Indian Studies (India)
BMBF	Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (Ministry of Education and Research of the Federal Republic of Germany)
CeMIS	Centre for Modern Indian Studies (Göttingen)
CSDS	Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (New Delhi)
CSSSC	Centre for Studies in Social Sciences (Kolkata)
DFG	German Research Council
DIRSP 2020-30	Draft international research strategy paper of the MWS 2020-30
ERC	European Research Council
ETH	(Swiss) Federal Institute of Technology
GHI	German Historical Institute
GHIL	German Historical Institute London
GHIW	German Historical Institute Washington
IBO	India Branch Office
ICAS:MP	International Centre of Advanced Study: Metamorphoses of the Political (Merian Centre)
ICHR	Indian Council of Historical Research
IEG	Institute of Economic Growth (New Delhi)
IRP	India Research Programme
ISWG	International Standing Working Group
MIDA	Modern India in German Archives (DFG-funded project)
MWS	Max Weber Stiftung
NIAS	National Institute of Advanced Studies (Bengaluru)
PI	Principal Investigator
TISS	Tata Institute of Social Sciences (Mumbai)
TM	Thematic Module
TRG	Transnational Research Group

Table of Contents

Translation of Key Terms: German – English	
List of Abbreviations with English Translations	
Introduction	1
1. Structure: Mission, Organisation (Org. Chart) and Advisory Boards	2
2. Positioning of the India Branch Office	3
2.1 Positioning in the overall strategy of MWS. Arguments in favour of continued support in the host country. Added value for other institutes and projects of MWS	3
2.2 National and international academic environment, national and international significance of the institute	4
3. Overall Concept and Profile of the IBO	4
3.1 Development since the establishment of the project	5
3.2 Work Results	6
a) Publications concept, outstanding results	6
b) Additional research-based work results, infrastructure and services for research, knowledge transfer, consultation, exchange and networking	7
c) International forum functionality, events and public image	7
4. Aims and Strategic Work Planning of the Institute for the years to come	8
4.1 Development potential of the research field or area of work	8
4.2 Added value for the MWS and the national and international research environment	9
4.3 Target audiences, publications strategy and international visibility	9
4.4 Suitability of space, material and staff resources, especially with regard to implementation of strategic work planning	9
5. Staff	10
5.1 Recruiting academic staff, staff structure and planned medium-term staff development measures to promote gender equality and work-life balance	10
6. Promoting Young and Early-career Scholars	10
7. Cooperation and Networking	11
7.1 Cooperation with universities and other institutes in Germany	11
7.2 Cooperation with universities and other institutions in the host country	11
7.3 Other important cooperation efforts and networking, especially within MWS	12
8. Quality Assurance	12

Appendices

1. Organisational Structure	13
1.1 Organisational Chart	13
1.2 Rules of Procedure	14
1.3 MWS IBO and the GHIL India Research Programme.....	26
1.3.1 Fellows India Research Programme at the GHIL 2013-19	26
1.3.2 Visiting Fellows from India at GHIL.....	27
1.3.3 Short-term Travel Grants for Archival Research in London	27
1.3.4 Delhi-London Programme	27
1.4 Members of the Informal Advisory Board India Centre/GHIL (since January 2018).....	29
1.5 RBI Permission Letter for MWS IBO.....	30
2. GHIL and IBO: History	31
2.1 Timeline of Development of IBO.....	32
2.2 Transnational Research Group – Poverty Reduction and Policy for the Poor between the State and Private Actors	33
3. Research	34
3.1 Current Projects.....	35
3.1.1 Research Group: Education and the Urban in India since the Nineteenth Century (since October 2017).....	35
3.1.2 From Girangaon to Mini Pakistan: The Precarious Place of Working Muslims in Twentieth Century Bombay.....	39
3.1.3 Third-party Funded Projects	39
3.1.3.1 Selling History: Tourist Guides, Bazaar Histories, and the Politics of the Past in the Late 20 th and early 21 st Century (since August 2017).....	39
3.1.3.2 Migration of Images, Texts, Ideas and Objects from Timurid Central Asia to Mughal India, 16 th – 18 th Centuries (since February 2019)	40
3.1.3.3 Medialization and Empowerment (since July 2019).....	41
3.2 Completed Projects.....	42
3.2.1 Transnational Research Group – Poverty Reduction and Policy for the Poor between the State and Private Actors	42
3.2.1.1 Postdoctoral Projects.....	44
3.2.1.2 PhD Projects	48
3.2.2 Pilot Project: German-Speaking Jewish Refugees and India, 1930s-1950s	52
3.2.3 Preserving India's Past: Law, Bureaucracy and Historical Conservation in Colonial India 1904-1925	53
3.3 List of Research Projects	55
4. IBO Publications	58
4.1 IBO Publications	58
4.1.1 Working Paper Series	58
4.1.1.1 TRG Poverty and Education Working Paper Series.....	58
4.1.1.2 Education and the Urban in India Working Paper Series (papers commissioned 2017-18), published 2019.....	59
4.1.2 Annual Report.....	59

4.1.2.1 Annual Reports of the Transnational Research Group Poverty and Education in India	59
4.1.2.2 Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office (MWS IBO) Annual Report 2018	61
4.2 Edited Books (TRG Poverty and Education)	61
4.3 Exhibition Catalogue	62
4.4 Publications of Staff, Fellows and PIs related to IBO projects	62
4.5 Completed Dissertations (TRG Poverty and Education)	66
5. Open Access Digital Repositories	67
5.1 Zotero Group Library on the Sources of the History of Education in India	67
5.2 Looking Back on Education: The Life Stories Project	72
5.3 Archives of Indian Labour – Pilot Study (since August 2018)	72
5.4 Digital Repository for Project on <i>Education and the Urban in India</i> – A Research and Teaching Resource	73
6. Lectures and Presentations by Research Staff, Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellows and Principal Investigators, 2013-2018	75
7. Research Events	85
7.1. Workshops and Conferences	85
7.2 Lectures and Colloquium Presentations by Invited Speakers and Visiting Fellows	91
7.3 Max Weber Lecture Series	94
7.4 Outreach	95
8. Promoting and Supporting Young and Early-Career Scholars	97
8.1 Career Path of TRG and other former Research Fellows	97
8.2 Prizes	98
8.3 Gerald D Feldman Travel Grants of the MWS	99
8.4 GHIL-India Fellowships	99
8.5 Research Training Post-TRG	99
8.5.1 Reading Groups	100
8.5.1.1 Reading Group on Critical Theory and Philosophy of Education	100
8.5.1.2 Reading Group: The Warburg Legacy	101
9. Collaborations of the MWS IBO	103
9.1 Overview	103
9.2 Cooperation with Universities and other Institutions in Germany	104
9.2.1 Conferences, Workshops, Winter/Summer Schools, Lectures	104
9.2.2 Institutional Collaborations	104
9.3 Cooperation with Universities and other Institutions in India	105
9.3.1 Conferences, Workshops, Winter/Summer Schools, Lectures	105
9.3.2 Institutional Collaborations	106
9.4 Cooperation with Universities and other International Institutions (UK and elsewhere)	107
9.4.1 Conferences, Workshops, Winter/Summer Schools, Lectures	107
9.4.2 Institutional Collaborations	107
9.5 Cooperation with MWS Institutes	108

9.5.1 Conferences, Workshops, Winter/Summer Schools, Lectures.....	108
9.5.2 Institutional Collaborations	108
9.6 DFG-ICHR Collaboration.....	108
9.7 ICAS:MP.....	111
10. Plan for Growth, 2021 onwards.....	113

Feedback from Fellows

Introduction

The India Branch Office (IBO) of the Max Weber Stiftung (MWS) stands for German research on modern India and Indo-German research collaboration on subjects of mutual interest in the humanities and social sciences, with a special interest in historical research. It forms an integral part of the MWS's strategy for international research 2020-30 (MWS Draft international research strategy paper 2020-30, henceforth DIRSP 2020-30) and does in India what the MWS Institutes do in other parts of the world: research with rather than on regions of significance to German academia (following from Wolf Lepenies, the BMBF philosophy of "*forschen mit statt forschen über*"). The IBO acts as a space of scholarly exchange between German and Indian academia on topics of common research interest; it collaborates with the other Institutes of the MWS and with German universities and research centres specialising in India and the history of British colonialism, and facilitates access to India's research resources, academic culture and wider institutional/political research contexts. Through its special relationship with the MWS German Historical Institute London (GHIL), the IBO also opens up to Indo-German research on India the research resources, networks and facilities of the UK, which are vital for research on colonial and modern India.

The IBO was established in 2013 to operationalise the five-year Transnational Research Group (henceforth TRG) *Poverty Reduction and Policy for the Poor between the State and Private Actors: Education Policy in India since the Nineteenth Century* (2013-17), which was funded by the MWS and directed by the GHIL. The Branch Office was formally established by permission of the Reserve Bank of India in December 2014 to promote in India "research with a focus on history, culture, economic and social sciences", which remains at the heart of its operations.¹ The IBO has a substantial research programme that consists of its own research, its collaborations with the BMBF-funded M.S.Merian-R.Tagore *International Centre for Advanced Studies: Metamorphoses of the Political* (henceforth ICAS:MP), the India Research Programme (henceforth IRP) of the GHIL and other German universities and research centres/networks. Since its inception, the Office has moved beyond the common Delhi-centredness of international research entities and has built up a wide network of collaborations with respected Indian research institutions outside New Delhi (Bengaluru, Mumbai, Kolkata), often in collaboration with other German and international institutions such as the Goethe Institute-Max Mueller Bhavan and the American Institute of Indian Studies.

The core programme of the IBO consists of **historical research with a strong social science/interdisciplinary component**. The IBO's main research areas are the history and sociology of mass education and its relationship with poverty, the politics of history, the movement of peoples, ideas and images, the history of feminism, and labour history. These are topics that have emerged out of key societal and political concerns in India today, and the IBO has brought together Indian and German scholars working on these themes. Since the inception of the IBO's operations in India, there has been a shift in thematic focus: the original theme of poverty and mass education (2013-17) continues to be a key area of interest, but the addition of subsequent projects (ICAS:MP TM1 *History as a Political Category* in 2015, labour history since 2018, the history of moving images since the end of 2018, and *Medialization and Empowerment* since 2019) has led to a substantial expansion and differentiation of the research programme. The IBO's research is executed in several forms: as long-term group projects with Indian project partners, long-term individual projects of the IBO's own research associates and Head, as well as long-term, third-party projects with universities, research centres and networks in Germany. Three key features are at the heart of the IBO's research policy in India: the publication of its research as a working paper series, the creation of source repositories for the study of Indian history and the training of young scholars from Germany and India, in collaboration with German and Indian universities. Outreach is achieved through a lecture series and activities such as exhibitions.

¹ Letter from the Reserve Bank of India, 18.06.2014 (See Appendix 1.5)

Like its Institutes, the MWS's IBO has been built on long-term relationships of trust with research, government and other public institutions. Such relationships of trust have made it possible for the IBO to play a significant role in the establishment of ICAS:MP and enabled it to function in India. The legal status of the IBO as a foreign entity with permission to do research in India makes it very well placed to take on the responsibility for such projects in India, as it is only through a registered legal research office of an international organisation that international research can be operationalised in India.

Not being a political foundation or a party to an inter-governmental arrangement (such as BMBF-funded projects under an inter-governmental MOU) and not being associated with India's colonial past, the MWS though its IBO offers a **politically neutral space** for academics from India and Germany, as well as international scholars, to collaborate. The sole criterion for research collaborations are the merit of the project and a commitment to producing cutting-edge research free of any political agenda. Especially in difficult times, the IBO offers a unique opportunity for German scholars to do research **on and in** India on the basis of mutual respect.

The IBO is currently in a **transition phase** following the end of the TRG *Poverty and Education* in December 2017 and the resolution of the *Stiftungsrat* in May 2016 that a final decision on the future of the IBO would be taken on the basis of an external evaluation.

1. Structure: Mission, Organisation (Org. chart) and Advisory Boards

The **structure** of the IBO is designed to further the MWS's goal of research excellence in an Indo-German research context. Its **research** is organised around individual projects of 2-3 years' duration which are a part of larger research clusters and collaborative networks (such as the previous TRG *Education and Poverty*, the current *Education and the Urban in India*, ICAS:MP *History as a Political Category*, *Extended Archives of Indian Labour*, *Bilderfahrzeuge – Aby Warburg's Legacy and the Future of Iconology*, henceforth *Bilderfahrzeuge*). The research is produced by the IBO's own research staff and its Head, along with networks of Indian, German and international scholars (see Appendix 3 Research).

As of 31 December 2018, the IBO consists of 9 locally employed staff, of whom 5 are researchers. It has a Head and a Deputy Head of Office, who is a Senior Research Associate (SRA). In the transitional phase of the IBO (ending in December 2020), the research of the IBO is under the **direction of the GHIL through its India Research Programme** (henceforth IRP) [see Appendix 1.3]. The Head of the IBO is a historian of colonial India, a research fellow at the GHIL and Head of its IRP. In research-related matters, the Head of the IBO reports to the Director of the GHIL (see Appendix 1.1). The research agenda of the GHIL IRP and its work in India is further accountable to an unofficial **Advisory Board** (henceforth AB) which since January 2018 meets annually. The members are senior academics from German, Indian and UK universities, as well as the Director of the European Liaison Office of the German Research Organisations (see Appendix 1.4). Members of the Board are closely associated with the development of the IBO and help shape its research policy and its positioning in India. Thus, for example, Professor Ravi Ahuja (Göttingen) has been central to the development of the focus on labour history at the IBO; Professor Monica Juneja (Heidelberg) has been crucial to the development of research training workshops for young scholars from Germany and India; and Professor Neeladri Bhattacharya (New Delhi) is a joint project leader on the ICAS:MP project on *Selling Histories*.

In addition to its own research programme, the IBO provides a **range of services** to support the MWS's strategy of research internationalisation. These include providing logistical and infrastructural support for third-party projects in India (such as ICAS:MP, *Bilderfahrzeuge*, in which the MWS is involved as collaborative partner, and the research network *Medialization and Empowerment*), and all-round support for visiting fellows and travel grant holders of the GHIL and MWS. The services are delivered with the help of a very competent **administrative team**: one full-time Office Manager, one full-time Deputy Office Manager and Programme Coordinator, one full-time Office Assistant, one part-time cleaner. Since January 2018 the IBO has been under the direct administrative oversight of the MWS's

Central Office in Bonn. The Head of Office has been given delegated administrative authority over the IBO; she reports to the Chief Executive Officer of the MWS in matters of administration.

The governance of the IBO is regulated by its Rules of Procedure (*Geschäftsordnung*) (see Appendix 1.2). There is an elected representative (currently a member of Administration IBO) and an elected deputy representative (currently a member of Administration ICAS:MP) for locally-employed staff.

2. Positioning of the India Branch Office

2.1 Positioning in the overall strategy of MWS. Arguments in favour of continued support in the host country. Added value for other institutes and projects of MWS

India is, in terms of its population, the second largest country in the world. Its political importance in the region is undisputed and it is emerging as an increasingly important and self-confident global player. The significance of India as a hub of research excellence in Asia has long been recognised. It has a well-developed research infrastructure of world-class universities and centres of humanities and social science research and an internationally very highly regarded body of scholars. Yet, until 2013, when the MWS IBO unofficially started its work as the TRG in India, German social science and humanities research in a longstanding, institutional form barely existed. The political foundations were engaged in policy-based research that matched their political agenda, and the liaison offices of German universities acted as facilitators for visiting scholars or events and activities that served all disciplines. Even with ICAS:MP, German humanities and social science research in India still takes the ephemeral form of a project. The MWS Branch Office is a first of its kind, inasmuch as it brings to this landscape of German research in India a long-term strategic and institutional presence.

The IBO plays an important role in the emerging MWS Strategy 2030 which stresses transregional and global research perspectives and a continuing commitment to '*Grundlagen- and Provenienzforschung*' (fundamental research). The Branch Office's activities in India have opened up a new and significant geopolitical region to the humanities and social science research of the MWS and its Institutes. The IBO has been collaborating with other MWS Institutes and branch offices in conferences and research networks on topics of transnational and global history. It supports the new 3-year MWS research group on *Medialization and Empowerment* in India. Through ICAS:MP, the IBO has enabled close cooperation between Indian scholars and the GHI Rome, whose current director is a member of the ICAS:MP's TM1. The Head of Office has given a talk at the China Branch Office (June 2018) and the Director of the GHI Washington will give a lecture in India in November 2020 (see Appendix 9.5) These collaborations will continue and expand in future.

Internationalisation of research within the MWS has also been promoted by means of exchange of visiting scholars between India and the GHI London. Between 2013 and 2018 four project partners and five senior and two junior visiting fellows from India spent 1-3 months each at the GHIL, took part in the intellectual life of the GHIL and gave lectures there (see Appendix 1.3.2 and 7.2). These fellowships will continue in 2019-20. Equally important is the training of young or early career scholars that the IBO has promoted by means of collaboration with the GHIL. In 2015-16 two postdoctoral and four PhD scholars from India spent between 3-6 months each at the GHIL and took part in the GHIL's weekly colloquium (see Appendix 1.3.3 and 7.2). Through the GHIL-India fellowship for early career scholars at the GHIL, instituted in 2018, two GHIL research fellows undertook research and lecture trips to India (see Appendix 8.4). In future, such visiting fellowships to India for young scholars may be opened up to all the MWS Institutes. Further, since 2015, when a stay in India was first offered to prospective applicants, the IBO has supported five recipients of the Gerald D Feldman grants of the MWS in India; three more will take up the fellowship in India in 2019 (see Appendix 8.3).

2.2 National and international academic environment, national and international significance of the institute

Research on India in Germany has traditionally focused on the production of 'orientalist' knowledge or the study of India's ancient languages, literature and religion with much less attention paid to the study of modern India. This kind of scholarship, often linked to colonialism because of the way such 'orientalist' knowledge was used by the British colonial state to control India, has since given way to greater interest in modern India. The South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University, which was set up in 1962, long remained the only major and continuous centre for the study of modern South Asia. Increasingly, over the past decade or so, research on modern India in German-speaking countries has grown with the setting up of the Centre for Modern Indian Studies in Göttingen (2009), the continuation (after an uncertain phase) of the Chair of South Asian Culture and Society at the Humboldt University in Berlin with the appointment of a historian of India (2010) and the Chair of the History of the Modern World at the ETH Zürich going to a historian of modern India (2008). In addition, modern Indian studies are now actively promoted by older departments of ancient Indian studies or Indology, such as at the University of Würzburg or the University of Erfurt: both these universities now have an established network of scholarship on sociology, social anthropology and gender studies. The focus on modern India at centres for the study of non-European societies, such as the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient in Berlin, has been placed on a permanent footing and promoted by centres of humanities and social science research in Germany: thus, the Max Planck Institute for Human Development has appointed a historian of modern India as a Senior Researcher (2008). Further, the recent increased interest in the history of the British Empire and colonialism amongst students and early career scholars at German universities not specialising in South Asian or Indian studies and amongst scholars of global history (in Germany and internationally) has focused greater attention on colonial and postcolonial India as a subject of historical and social studies inquiry. The rise of excellence clusters has also given a fillip to research on non-European cultures. Scholarship on modern India has figured prominently in several such clusters (such as the *Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies* and the Heidelberg excellence cluster *Asia and Europe in a Global Context*, both founded in 2007). Hence, the time is ripe for the MWS to respond to this new and exciting landscape of research interest in modern India in Germany by establishing a strong long-term institutional presence in India. Through this presence, it will support German universities doing research on India in doing research with India. Through its research link with London, the IBO is able to connect these trends in the German research landscape with the research resources of the UK, without being weighed down by a colonial past that often plays a role in UK-India scholarly exchange.

3. Overall Concept and Profile of the IBO

The Institutes of the MWS aim to contribute to strengthening German humanities and social science research in its international competitiveness by focusing on topics of great social relevance in transregional perspective. They train young scholars and promote through their research the awareness of multiple perspectives and critical self-reflexivity in society. The IBO's core research consists of projects with a historical focus, which is in keeping with the research specialisation of the Head of Office and the GHIL. At the same time, its research agenda reflects the tradition of Indian and South Asian studies in Germany as an interdisciplinary field and the MWS's brief as a Foundation that promotes humanities and social science research. This can be seen in the **four research themes** of the IBO, which have emerged from contemporary societal, political and hence research concerns in India: 1) the **history and sociology of education** and its relationship with **poverty**: two research groups since 2013; 2) the **politics of history and heritage**: *ICAS:MP* collaborative project of the Head of Office; 3) **labour history**: one project already operating at the IBO and two applications for further, third-party funded, collaborative projects submitted; 4) **movement of peoples, ideas and images**: this last theme connects the sub-project *Migration of Images, Texts, Ideas and Objects from Timurid Central Asia to Mughal India, 16th–18th centuries* of the international research project *Bilderfahrzeuge* (due to start in

February 2019), aspects of the project *Education and the Urban in India* that deal with the migrant poor in cities, the MWS collaborative conference series *In Global Transit* as well as the research group (International Standing Working Group, henceforth ISWG) on *Medialization and Empowerment* on the circulation of feminist ideas in the twentieth century. The research themes reflect some of the topics that the MWS draft international strategy 2020-30 has highlighted for special attention: cultural heritage, migration and mobility, diversity, inequality and social cohesion, and media and digital transformations in research and society.

The research group on *Education and the Urban in India* is interdisciplinary. It has a strong contemporary, sociological component, while retaining a historical perspective on the subject. The projects of the Head of Office, the Deputy Head of Office/SRA and a JRA are historical. The other PIs, who are eminent education sociologists from Indian research centres and universities, work both historically and with a sociological perspective (see Appendices 3.1.1. and 3.3).

As a member of ICAS:MP TM1 *History as a Political Category*, the Head of Office works on a collaborative research project on locally produced travel guides as history and their relationship with political change. She is also in the process of revising a book manuscript on *Preserving India's Past: Law, Bureaucracy and Historical Conservation in Colonial India 1904-1925* (see Appendices 3.1.3.1 and 3.2.3).

Transregional comparisons are explored in all the above research themes in the form of international conferences and workshops, and lectures by international scholars. The **Max Weber Lectures Series** aims to reflect on international comparisons (see Appendix 7.3).

A key feature of the IBO's research is the **training of young scholars** through regular group meetings, workshops and masterclasses, winter/summer schools, reading groups and travel grants and visiting fellowships especially directed at them (see Appendix 8).

3.1 Development since the establishment of the project (see Appendix 2.1)

The TRG Poverty and Education (2013-17): The IBO started out as a TRG on *Education and Poverty* in January 2013 after a successful bid by the GHIL to access a new MWS funding scheme. The scheme was designed to encourage the Institutes of the Foundation to set up a research group with a country where the MWS had no presence. The TRG consisted of principal investigators from India (CSDS and JNU New Delhi), Germany (CeMIS Göttingen), the UK (King's College London) and the GHIL. The focus was primarily historical but projects on contemporary India were also included (see Appendix 2.2). At the core of the TRG was a young and early career scholars' group (*Nachwuchsgruppe*) with six PhD fellows, who were given funding for up to four years, and eight postdoctoral fellows who were appointed on the basis of an open advertisement in Germany and India, and funded for up to two years. The fellows were registered either in India (JNU), Germany (Göttingen) or the UK (King's College) but were required to spend at least one year at the other two partner institutions. Their research was jointly supervised by the PIs in the form of regular, twice-yearly meetings. The PIs also conducted their own smaller projects with TRG funding (see Appendix 3.2.1).

The TRG was exceptionally successful establishing research networks in India, gaining the goodwill of project partners, and opening up a new field of research in Indian studies, thus substantially raising the profile and visibility of the MWS in India. Almost all its fellows got excellent job placements at well-known Indian universities (see Appendix 8.1)

IBO registration: Parallel to the development of the TRG, the IBO was set up in New Delhi. It was decided to pursue the long, complicated and time-consuming route of registering the IBO, as required, with the Reserve Bank of India and subsequently under the relevant Indian Companies Act. In view of the complicated nature of the registration process and the possibility of incorporating India into the

MWS's research internationalisation strategy, it was decided to establish the IBO officially as a Branch Office of the MWS. The IBO received permission to operate in June 2014 and the process of registration was completed in December 2014 (see Appendix 1.5)

Merian Centre ICAS:MP (July 2015): The success of the flagship TRG *Poverty and Education* in gaining the trust of established and younger Indian scholars was the basis of the GHIL and MWS's subsequent research collaborations with Indian academia. Thus, when on 28 August 2013 the new BMBF funding programme of International Centres for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences (Merian Centres) was announced specifically for South or South East Asia, the GHIL and the Central Office of the MWS together with three partner institutions each from Germany and India applied for the first of these new centres, the M.S.Merian-R.Tagore *International Centre for Advanced Studies: Metamorphoses of the Political (ICAS:MP)*. Their bid was successful and ICAS:MP was established in India in July 2015 under the administrative oversight of the MWS. The director of the GHIL also served as the first director of ICAS:MP during most of its preparatory phase. The current Head of IBO is a member of the Joint Committee, and the Executive Director of the MWS is the consortium coordinator of ICAS:MP. The IBO continues to support and facilitate the smooth operation of ICAS:MP in India (see 3.2 b) below, and Appendix 9.7).

From project to research hub: By 31 December 2018 the IBO had become a hub of long-term research conducted by its own researchers and research groups (such as *Education and the Urban in India*, a successor to the TRG *Poverty and Education*), a collaborative projects such as ICAS:MP (TM1) and *Extended Archives of Indian Labour*. At the same time, it served as a platform to provide operational and logistical support for third-party research projects of the MWS and other German universities - such as ICAS:MP, the BMBF-funded international research project *Bilderfahrzeuge*, and planned, third-party funded collaborative projects on labour history in which the MWS is a joint applicant along with the CeMIS Göttingen (see Appendix 3.1).

3.2 Work Results

a) Publications concept, outstanding results

To make its quality research easily available to German, Indian and international academia, the IBO has adopted a publishing concept based on the principles of **rigorous external peer review** and **open access**. The concept consists of four layers: 1) for reasons related to career growth, young scholars (PhD and postdoctoral) are encouraged to publish articles and monographs with academic/university presses; 2) the output of the IBO's conferences is published in the form of edited volumes with internationally well-known academic publishing houses; 3) open access working papers (online): these papers are published individually as a part of two thematic series consisting of single articles intended to reach a wide audience in India and internationally; 4) open access (digital) source repositories (see 3.2.b) below).

PhD, early career scholars and the principal investigators of the TRG *Poverty and Education* have published widely from their research in internationally recognised journals (see Appendix 4.4). Further, an edited volume of papers on the history of mass education in India, edited by PIs Sarada Balagopalan and Neeladri Bhattacharya, is in preparation and has attracted the interest of several international publishing houses in India. A second volume on the lives and experiences of teachers in the non-state, non-elite schooling experiments in Southern India in the 1970s is planned for publication as a volume edited by PI Janaki Nair.

The research of the IBO is published in two online, open access working paper series devoted to one of its major thematic foci: the history and sociology of non-elite education in India. Both series include articles from the IBO's research fellows and associates as well as commissioned papers from external scholars. TRG *Poverty and Education* brought out a set of 11 papers, 2014-18, and the research group *Education and the Urban* has commissioned a set of 12 working papers, of which two have already

appeared, with around six expected by the end of 2019 and the rest by the end of 2020 (see Appendices 4.1.1.1. and 4.1.1.2).

b) Additional research-based work results, infrastructure and services for research, knowledge transfer, consultation, exchange and networking

The IBO offers a range of research-related services, of which the most important are: 1) logistical support for third-party collaborative projects such as ICAS:MP; 2) providing infrastructure for research-related digitisation projects and 3) academic refereeing and advising in research infrastructure matters.

The IBO played a key role in the setting up of ICAS:MP. ICAS:MP is not an independent legal entity in India but operates through the IBO. Hence, the IBO is legally responsible for ICAS:MP and its staff in all matters related to taxation, accounts, employment and company law, filing audit reports, reporting to the police and general operation in India. In addition, the IBO supported ICAS:MP in its preparatory phase (2015-18) by providing office space and support staff for ICAS:MP events and activities. Further, since the coordination of the ICAS module TM1 is through the MWS/GHIL, the IBO provides administrative support to the research assistants in the module. Digital repositories of the module receive financial and storage support from the IBO.

A particularly acute problem of research on India is the state of archival sources. Despite large collections of sources of Indian history being available in British archives, researchers working on the precolonial period and from the twentieth century onwards are heavily reliant on sources in India. However, a historic lack of investment in public archives and a general neglect of archival records in India has made it essential for scholars to create their own digital repositories. The IBO has always been sensitive to this need and from the outset collaborated with scholars in creating digital repositories that can be accessed worldwide.

The TRG *Poverty and Education* produced the following open access digital resources: 1) a detailed guide to digital archival holdings on the history of mass education in India with links, edited by Jana Tschurenkov, and published on the digital group library www.zotero.org; https://www.zotero.org/groups/1885307/sources_on_the_history_of_education_in_india (see Appendix 5.1) and 2) a digital repository of 48 oral history interviews in five Indian languages from a project on *Looking Back on Education: The Life Stories Project (Life Stories of the Experience of 'Alternative' Education in the 1970s)*, led by Janaki Nair (see Appendix 5.2). The repository is made accessible to interested users by request to the IBO. This resource has been intensively used by scholars for research, and three papers in the Working Paper Series on *Poverty and Education* have been written on the basis of these interviews. 3) Further, a research resource for young scholars working in the field of education and the urban has been created in the form of a bibliography which is used regularly by 26 scholars (Appendix 5.4).

Senior academic staff of the IBO and the GHIL have continuously acted as referees and reviewers on many platforms. They have also acted in advisory and consultative capacities in setting up the MWS's collaborative operations in India.

c) International forum functionality, events and public image

The IBO organises workshops and conferences on its research areas, on the MWS's collaborative themes, and has long supported ICAS:MP in the organisation of its events. It organises the twice-yearly Max Weber Lecture Series and outreach activities such as exhibitions (see Appendix 7.3 and 7.4). To publicise its work, the IBO produces a detailed, printed annual report. It has a blog and a twitter account. Its activities are also publicised by the Facebook page of the GHIL IRP.

4. Aims and Strategic Work Planning of the Institute for the years to come

The long-term goal of the MWS is for the IBO to become a full-fledged, permanent research Institute in India with an adequate budget for its requirements. This will happen in a phased manner from 2021 onwards, as the IBO's research develops independently of the GHIL. Like the other MWS Institutes, it will open itself up to collaborative research initiatives with German universities and research networks working on India or themes related to India as well as with other MWS Institutes. Such collaborations, such as with the Universities of Göttingen and Heidelberg and with UK-based research projects, have already begun (see 4.2), as have joint events with the MWS Institutes (see 2.1.), which will continue in 2019-20 and beyond.

In tandem with the gradual downscaling of ICAS:MP pending its end, the research of the IBO will incrementally increase in volume and step in to fill the void left by the end of ICAS projects. The end of the ICAS Module *Labour as a Political Category* in 2021 and the MWS-CeMIS Göttingen joint application for DFG-funding for a project *Divisions of Labour - Histories of formalisation and informalisation in postcolonial India* (2018, outcome awaited) is an example of how the IBO can support ICAS themes which require a longer life and a different research model than that of a time-limited project. Thus, the IBO will build on the relatively short-term research opportunities provided by ICAS:MP and other entities such as the DFG or DAAD to facilitate medium and long-term research projects. The ERC's synergy grants in the humanities and seed funding options of the DFG-EU framework programme will be explored in this regard. The IBO, at present guided by the advisory boards of the GHIL and its IRP, will acquire its own advisory board. The current advisory board of the IRP at the GHIL would be very well suited to take over the function of a dedicated advisory board for the Office.

In addition to its core research programme, the two central features of its research in India, the creation of (digital) source repositories and the training of young scholars (see 4.2) will expand. The highly successful, thematic working paper series will continue. So will the well-received, twice-yearly Max Weber Lecture Series: at present, lectures for the series have been planned up to the end of 2020. The series has enabled the IBO to work with other Indian universities and the Goethe Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan to host these (see Appendix 7.3)

In order to put into effect a rational staircasing of the research scope of the IBO 2021-27, the IBO will require a minimum annual budget of 600,000 Euros from 2021 onwards, which should be increased annually at the prevailing inflation and exchange rates until the full budget of an independent Institute is realised by the time ICAS:MP is phased out.

4.1 Development potential of the research field or area of work

The research programme and services of the IBO will continue to grow in the direction set out in the MWS draft international research strategy 2020-30 (research in and on new regions with comparative, transregional, global and interdisciplinary approaches). New projects (such as the ISWG *Medialization and Empowerment*, July 2019) will start work in India, project grants applied for will hopefully go through, and the IBO will be given a permanent budget within the MWS. The **four research fields** described above (see 3.) will continue until the end of the transition period in December 2020 but in the long term may partly be replaced by new research topics in response to changing societal and political contexts. If the joint application for the DFG-funded project on *Divisions of Labour: Histories of Formalisation and Informalisation in Postcolonial India* succeeds, the labour history focus of the IBO will be substantially enhanced (see Appendix 3). From **2021** onwards, as a new Head of Office takes charge, the research of the IBO will be developed further.

4.2 Added value for the MWS and the national and international research environment

The IBO will provide a research base and support structures for German humanities and social science research in a new and important geographical region for the MWS on a long-term basis. For the training of young scholars, the IBO will open up the format of the GHIL-India fellowships to all MWS Institutes and German universities. In collaboration with German universities, annual winter schools for young scholars from India and Germany will be offered in collaboration with the GHIL's India Research Programme (see Appendices 1.3 and 8.4). Other collaborative endeavours with the MWS Institutes, such as conferences or exhibitions, will continue and grow (see Appendix 9.5).

The special research relationship between the GHIL/ India Research Programme and the IBO will be maintained by means of a **dedicated Delhi-London Programme** principally consisting of visiting fellowships between the GHIL and the IBO and summer and winter schools in India and London (see Appendix 1.3). It will be a new model of collaboration within the MWS and will take the IBO to a new level of international research excellence. The Evaluation Committee of the GHIL (March 2019) has highly commended the work of the GHIL India Research Programme and explicitly recommended that the programme continue with dedicated funding.

Finally, the IBO will continue to provide ICAS:MP and third-party projects of the MWS with the necessary administrative, legal and logistical support, without which no third-party project can operate in India.

4.3 Target audiences, publications strategy and international visibility

The target group will remain academics, especially early career or postdoctoral scholars. The Indo-German-UK research links will continue and grow. The publication strategy will continue to be based on the principles of peer review and open access. The social media and blog presence of the IBO will expand, as will its research activities. Outreach programmes will continue: future plans include a collaborative exhibition and lecture on German-speaking civilian internees in detention camps in India during the First World War (in collaboration with Aston University Birmingham) in late 2020 and an exhibition on women's protest movements and the media in the UK, Germany and India (ISWG *Medialization*) in early 2021 (see Appendix 7.4).

4.4 Suitability of space, material and staff resources, especially with regard to implementation of strategic work planning

At present, the IBO is housed in a 185 sq. metre rented flat in Defence Colony in New Delhi. The planned expansion of the IBO as described above will necessitate more space for administrative and research staff, which should be tailored to the needs of a research hub (such as a conference room, a project-sized library, an IT station). Recent Indian Government interpretations of the permission given to the IBO to operate in India have made it necessary to consider re-merging the offices of the IBO and ICAS. Hence, from 2021 onwards, the IBO will require at least **3 times its current space (around 600 sq. metres), of which 400 sq. metres will be required by the IBO alone**. This space will accommodate additional projects of the IBO and also ICAS. As the ICAS project is phased out, the entire space will be utilised by the IBO's own operations as an Institute with a conference room, library etc.

As of 31 December 2018, staff at the IBO consists of nine locally employed staff and the Head of Office, which must increase to realise the long-term potential of the IBO. The challenges of operating under German law in a very different and complex environment require adequate numbers of staff with relevant experience. From **2021** onwards, key positions in research and administration will have to be filled by German-employed, seconded staff (*Entsandte*) as Head of the IBO and Head of Administration respectively. While this is expensive, it is essential to give the IBO its future research direction in line

with the landscape of German research on India and in alignment with research structures in Germany. The Head should be at least a postdoctoral researcher from a German university with a specialisation in modern Indian studies and with the scholarly authority to give the IBO its research vision and direction. To establish and develop links with research institutions in India, Indian scholars need to be employed with their own research projects. The position of the current Deputy Head, who is locally employed, ought to be made permanent in order to ensure continuity.

To develop the research of the IBO, at least 2-3 locally employed SRAs on fixed-term contracts as Qualifikationsstellen should be employed in 2021. With increased funding thereafter, these Qualifikationsstellen will be filled by postdoctoral scholars from Germany. The IBO has two competent and committed staff in **administration** (one Office Manager and one Deputy Office Manager-Programme Coordinator). However, expansion will need the following staff from 2021: 1) one further, locally employed position in administration below the Office Manager and Deputy Office Manager to assist with events organisation and act as office clerk; 2) one locally-employed publications, PR and social media officer; 3) one qualified IT staff (see Appendix 10).

5. Staff

5.1 Recruiting academic staff, staff structure and planned medium-term staff development, measures to promote gender equality and work-life balance

The IBO's administrative staff are selected through open advertisement. Research staff are chosen on the basis of suitability for the project. All research staff at the IBO have been employed on contracts of 6 months to 2 years. The research group *Education and the Urban in India* consists of one Senior Research Associate (SRA, 80% position) and 3 Junior Research Associates (JRA, 50% positions); a further JRA (50% position) is employed to work on the project *Extended Archives of Indian Labour*. One full-time JRA has been appointed to work on the BMBF-funded international research project *Bilderfahrzeuge*. She took up her position on 1 February 2019 (see Appendix 1.1).

The IBO maintains a policy of equal opportunity and promotes work-life balance amongst its employees. The job selection process, as a rule, involves the MWS Equal Opportunities Officer. At December 2018, the IBO's staff has a total gender ratio of seven women to two men, with three women and one man in administration and four women and one man in research. The current Head of Office and Deputy Head of Office are women. The two top positions in Administration are held by one man and one woman respectively. The Head of Office is alert to the needs of employees with young children and, as a rule, they are not expected to work late in the evenings. The IBO adheres to a flexi-time policy.

6. Promoting Young and Early-career Scholars

The promotion and training of young scholars has been a central concern of the IBO from its inception. One of the most significant achievements of the IBO has been the almost immediate career placements for four of the six PhD scholars who completed their degrees on time and five of the postdoctoral fellows of the TRG *Poverty and Education* at major universities and research Institutes in India and the UK (see Appendix 8.1). Some have received prestigious academic prizes (see Appendix 8.2). These scholars present a ready network for collaborative research with German academia, particularly at institutions outside Delhi. Thus, Bengaluru has emerged as a potential hub of cooperation on the subject of mass education.

The plan for the IBO from 2021 onwards envisages the employment of SRAs on fixed-term contracts as postdoctoral researchers. As ICAS:MP comes to an end, these positions will gradually become

postdoctoral *Entsandte* fellow positions to enable early career scholars from German universities to qualify for an academic career in Germany.

7. Cooperation and Networking

7.1 Cooperation with universities and other institutions in Germany

The IBO's policy is to maintain a fundamental openness to collaboration with all German universities working on or interested in working on and in India. The IBO has worked closely with CeMIS Göttingen as a partner in the TRG, ICAS:MP and its research area on labour history; it collaborates with the Universities of Erfurt and Würzburg as ICAS:MP partners. Also, through ICAS, the IBO has research collaborations with the Georg-Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, Brunswick, and with the Chair of Modern History (Lutz Raphael), University of Trier. It has collaborated with the Forum for Transregional Studies Berlin. A winter school on global history is being planned with Heidelberg for February 2020 and two funding applications for projects are being planned with Göttingen. The IBO is in discussion with the DFG-funded MIDA (*Modern India in German Archives*) project in Germany to discuss a three-way collaboration on an exhibition and lecture on German-speaking civilian internees in detainment camps in India during the First World War (AHRC project), which the IBO is jointly organising with Aston University Birmingham in late 2020. The IBO has also signed up to a collaboration with a *Graduiertenkolleg* (research training group) on interdisciplinary empire research at the University of Freiburg, for which a funding application with the DFG is being prepared. The collaboration is expected to start in October 2021 (see Appendix 9.2).

7.2 Cooperation with universities and other institutions in the host country

The IBO's presence in India has been built on the back of longstanding and cordial collaborations with universities and research centres in India. The TRG *Poverty and Education* was based on collaborations with project partners from the highly-regarded Jawaharlal Nehru University and the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi. These collaborations have continued both in the research group *Education and the Urban* and in the work of the module TM1 of ICAS:MP. Through ICAS:MP collaborations have developed with new partners such as the Institute of Economic Growth, the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Kolkata and, through the principal investigators of *Education and the Urban*, with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai and the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru (see Appendix 9.3).

The IBO's longstanding policy is to reach out to research institutions beyond New Delhi. Given the size of the subcontinent and the limited nature of the IBO's resources, joint convenorship of academic events with institutions in important research hubs such as Kolkata, Mumbai and Bengaluru as well as smaller but important centres such as Manipal has proved to be an effective way of realising this goal. In the spirit of '*forschen mit*' or research with India, collaborations with Indian partners have often taken the form of jointly funded activities. The principle of research on equal terms was manifest in the role of the former Director of the GHIL and IBO in facilitating the collaborative academic exchange network of historians, which is jointly funded by the German Research Council (DFG) and the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) (see Appendix 9.6).

A further important collaboration of the IBO is with the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) in New Delhi. The IBO is a tenant of the AIIS and in the early years, the MWS and the AIIS signed an MOU, from which the IBO greatly profited especially in relation to setting up office in India, but also organising international conferences. Further, the IBO collaborates with German organisations such as the Goethe-Institut on specific events (see Appendices 9.2 and 9.3).

7.3 Other important cooperation efforts and networking, especially within MWS

Collaborations within the MWS are an important feature of the IBO. The IBO organises and hosts joint conferences and activities with other MWS Institutes and branch offices, such as the three-part conference series on migration *In Global Transit*, organised jointly with the GHI Washington/GHI West in Berkeley and the China Branch Office of the MWS in Beijing, to explore knowledge production and the experience of lives in 'transit' between worlds when groups are forcibly moved (see Appendix 9.5). Through ICAS, the IBO works closely with the GHI Rome. The IBO is also a part of the BMBF-funded project of the MWS „Wissen entgrenzen: Internationalisierung, Vernetzung, Innovation in der und durch die Max Weber Stiftung“ ("Knowledge without borders – internationalisation, networking and innovation in and through the MWS") that will begin in early 2019 and will support the 3-year ISWG of the project on *Medialization and Empowerment* in India. The ISWG is a research network of scholars from Germany, India and the UK and MWS scholars on the global history of feminist activism and mass media in the twentieth century (see Appendix 9.5). Almost every year the IBO hosts and supports the recipients of the MWS's Gerald D. Feldman travel grants and the GHIL fellowships in India (see Appendices 8.3 and 8.4).

Collaborations with UK-based institutions have also been a part of the IBO's networks. The King's College London (India Institute) was a partner in the TRG *Education and Poverty*, and the network of the ISWG includes the London School of Economics. Beyond the UK, through ICAS, the IBO has a research collaboration with *TAPAS/Thinking About the PAST*, an interdisciplinary research forum of the University of Ghent (See Appendix 9.4).

8. Quality Assurance

Quality assurance is ensured on various levels. On a central level, quality assurance of the IBO's research is ensured by the Director of the GHIL, who has the oversight over the IBO's research, and two advisory boards: 1) the GHIL's advisory board (*Beirat*), which since 2011 includes one historian of India and 2) the informal advisory body of the GHIL's India Research Programme, consisting of four historians of India (two from Germany, one from India and one from the UK) and one member from an EU social science research funding agency (see Appendix 1.4). The final administrative oversight rests with the Executive Director of the MWS. In India, quality assurance is ensured by means of regular meetings of the research groups and interventions by the principal investigators. The Head of Office has the oversight over the research and administration of the IBO by means of lengthy visits (around two weeks at a time) 4-5 times a year, during which meetings are held with researchers and administrative staff. She also holds weekly video conferences with the administrative team and the Deputy Head of Office and conducts the annual performance review of all staff.

Anlage B: Bewertungsbericht der Evaluierungskommission

Qualitätssicherung

BW xx(2) 2019

Anlage B: Bewertungsbericht

Max Weber Stiftung India Branch Office (MWS IBO)

Content

Structure and positioning, overall concept and profile.....	3
Aims and strategic work planning for the years to come	3
Work results	4
Research and publication achievements, outstanding results, publication concept.....	4
Additional research-based work results.....	5
International forum functionality, events and public image	5
Adequacy of facilities	5
Staff	6
Promotion of young and early-career scholars.....	6
Cooperation and networking	7
Quality assurance	7
Conclusion	8
Appendix.....	9
Members and guests of the evaluation commission	9

Structure and positioning, overall concept and profile

Aims and strategic work planning for the years to come

The MWS India Branch Office (IBO) in New Delhi was officially established in 2014. It provided an institutional platform for the Transnational Research Group (TRG) of the Deutsches Historisches Institut (DHI) London on *Poverty Reduction and Policy for the Poor between the State and Private Actors: Education Policy in India since the Nineteenth Century* and enabled the TRG to conduct social sciences and humanities (SSH) research in India. The TRG was funded by the MWS from 2013-2017. Since 2018 the IBO has developed its own research agenda by continuing TRG themes and adding new fields of interest.

In 2015 the TRG played a significant role in the conception and implementation of the M. S. Merian-R. Tagore International Centre for Advanced Studies: Metamorphoses of the Political (ICAS:MP), which is also based in Delhi and is being funded by the Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF) for a duration of up to 12 years. As consortium coordinator for ICAS:MP, the MWS is responsible for the center's legal representation in India, a large part of its financial administration and – together with the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in New Delhi – for the thematic module *History as a Political Category*.

The IBO's main research areas are the history and sociology of mass education and its relationship to poverty, the politics of history, the movement of peoples, ideas and images, the history of feminism, and labor history. The commission finds this research program to be interconnected, convincing and innovative. It is contemporary, original and combines a number of interesting methodological and theoretical approaches. By integrating the expertise of Indian and German scholars and by crossing disciplinary boundaries, the IBO has created new fields of research, e. g. the history of interrelations between poverty and education as well as the conceptual combination of research on education with urban studies.

The commission recommends that the research program continue with a strong historical core while also forging significant connections to other SSH disciplines, as this interdisciplinarity has proven to be especially fruitful. In the future, the IBO should continue to choose research topics that enable comparative and conceptual approaches and engage in transregional perspectives.

The commission has found that the IBO and ICAS:MP have complementary research agendas. In order to strengthen this complementarity, the IBO should work towards developing a coherent common strategy of synergistic cooperation in the years to come.

The IBO provides an open environment for academic discussions at a time when the SSH in India have come under political pressure. It attracts very promising emerging scholars, who take advantage of the collaborative atmosphere at the IBO. The commission appreciates that the IBO has brought current German SSH research to the attention of Indian academia. For German SSH, the IBO highlights what India brings to the table in terms of scholarly traditions and theoretical concepts. It provides services not only for German academics working on India, but also for researchers who are not India specialists, but who want to include India in their respective transnational or transregional research.

The IBO has created a collaborative space where Indian and German scholars can come together with colleagues from other parts of the world to explore common research interests on equal footing and develop new approaches that evolve from their discussions. The agenda of the IBO goes far beyond area studies by integrating empirical studies on India into SSH disciplines and vice versa.

The IBO strikes a good balance between the competing demands of administrative duties, time for research, the provision of services and the promotion of young scholars, despite the fact that the administration of a bilateral research endeavor is very time-consuming. The Head of Office devotes sufficient attention to these key elements and is guided by the desire to make them work together harmoniously.

Outreach efforts in the form of an exhibition, a lecture series and other public events have been successful, but given the current political climate in India, the commission supports a cautious communication strategy. The foundations for more publicly visible activities have been laid and can be expanded as soon as the political climate and financial resources allow it.

In just six years in Delhi, the IBO has built up an impressive infrastructure and is well positioned in the national and international research environment, but much more could and should be done with more resources in the future.

Work results

[Research and publication achievements, outstanding results, publication concept](#)

The IBO's achievements in research and publication are of impressive academic quality. Discussions between Indian and Western scholars have led to theory building that would not otherwise have been possible. Researchers funded by or associated with the TRG have published their findings in renowned international journals and in edited volumes. At the same time, the publication strategy is not yet entirely convincing. **The peer-reviewed working paper series on *Poverty and Education* and *Education and the Urban in India* have been successful in terms of immediate, open access research output. They ensure that research findings can quickly be made available to relevant experts.** However, for the sake of the academic careers of IBO fellows, individual papers should be developed into articles or chapters in high-profile journals and books. As one of the IBO's principal aims is to promote early-career scholars, senior research staff needs to advise them on a realistic personal publication strategy. The commission welcomes plans to establish an English-language book series for monographs and edited volumes in the near future.

IBO fellows have organized a number of academic activities. Conferences and workshops have been well attended and well received by researchers from India, Germany and other countries. Some fellows have also won prestigious academic awards during the reporting period. Since 2018 considerable efforts have been made by the IBO to attract third-party funding from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and the Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. The proposed projects promise to be an excellent means to raise the existing profile of the office and make it even more visible.

Additional research-based work results

Archival studies are a central feature of the research carried out at the IBO as well as interview-based data collections. The digital source repositories that have been and will be created are a great scholarly achievement and a service to future research in the field of Modern Indian History. **Going forward, hosting and accessibility strategies will be of key importance in order to promote the repositories and make them sustainable and available to a wider circle of researchers. The commission therefore welcomes the integration of Indian sources into the new project “Sozialdaten als Quellen der Zeitgeschichte”, funded by the DFG and carried out in partnership with the director of the DHI London. The commission also supports the close cooperation between the IBO and the MWS Central Office in Bonn regarding digital humanities and data management.**

International forum functionality, events and public image

The IBO addresses both the scientific community and the interested public with its twice-yearly Max Weber lecture series, which brings distinguished international scholars to India to share their expertise with project partners and other researchers in Delhi. The series also travels to at least one other major city in India. The Max Weber lecture series is an excellent format for highlighting the IBO's research focus, especially when it is carried out in collaboration with partners such as the Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan. As the IBO does not yet have event facilities of its own, it has to rely on partners, which also helps to expand its network and audiences. Given its limited budget, the office uses digital tools like blogs and social media as a very successful means of dissemination. There is certainly more potential to expand public relations efforts, but under the present political conditions in India, it is wise not to become too conspicuous in the public domain. **The commission recommends the development of a public relations strategy that takes into account the different target audiences in India, Germany and around the globe.**

The senior academic staff of the IBO are represented in relevant committees and pertinent research groups. The former director of the DHI London served as the head of the DHI London's new research activities in India and was also a member of the Steering Committee for collaborative activities appointed by the Indian Council of Historical Research and the DFG. Activities included lecture trips by German and Indian historians to India and Germany respectively, the participation of Indian historians in the events of the 51st Convention of German Historians in Hamburg and a summer school for early-career scholars from India and Germany on *Cultures of Archival Research in India and Germany*, held in Marburg and Berlin.

Adequacy of facilities

The premises of the IBO encompass one office floor in the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) in Defence Colony, New Delhi. While the premises meet the present needs of the office, especially with regard to the shared usage of the AIIS' seminar room and other resources, this very favorable arrangement will come up against its limits should the IBO seek to grow. Larger premises will be needed in the very near future and should allow for the IBO to share space with ICAS:MP.

Until 2017 the IBO's activities were adequately funded by means the MWS provided for the TRG on Poverty and Education in India. The current annual budget of the IBO is only sufficient to pay rent, utilities, maintenance and salaries of locally employed administrative staff. Research expenses are met by the India Research Programme at the DHI London. In order to put the IBO's research activities on a permanent footing, the MWS' institutional funding needs to increase significantly.

Pending applications for third-party funding bode well for the future. The commission recommends the development of a proper third-party funding strategy in order to achieve a targeted balance of institutional and external funds.

Staff

The Head of Office has put together an excellent team of administrative and research staff with very lean resources. The commission appreciates the employees' impressive level of dedication, despite the uncertain future of the activities in Delhi after the evaluation. A sense of cooperation is prevalent and creates a conducive working atmosphere. The administrative staff is very capable but also overburdened with a growing range of duties. Additional staff is needed to relieve their workload and to allow them to attend training courses. While the administrative staff accepts the temporary limitation of the current contracts, staff members would greatly benefit from more permanency in the future. **The commission recommends that financial resources be made available to ensure the necessary quality for all administrative positions.**

The IBO has been extremely successful in recruiting female researchers, including for management positions; both the Head of Office and the Deputy Head of Office are women. Gender equality has largely been achieved on both the research and administration team. Family and work can be reconciled with the working hours, as the IBO adheres to a flexi-time policy.

Promotion of young and early-career scholars

One of the IBO's main goals is the promotion of junior researchers, which has been very successful during the reporting period. IBO fellows emphasize that they are well integrated into local and international research networks. There appears to be general agreement that the IBO provides an excellent working space where junior researchers can have conceptual discussions and take on responsibility. Meetings and reading groups are held on an almost weekly basis, and six-monthly regular workshops provide opportunities for feedback in addition to the supervision fellows receive from their universities. An impressive number of dissertations have been completed during the reporting period, and fellows have also been very successful in getting jobs at Indian universities. Former fellows comprise a close-knit network of IBO alumni, which will benefit the visibility of the office in the future. For fellows from India, basic training in German and knowledge of German academia are particular benefits of an IBO fellowship.

For the next phase, the commission recommends working to attract more fellows from Germany. More funding should also be made available for bottom-up activities by

junior researchers, for example in the form of travel or workshop money. Researchers should be supported and advised according to the needs of their career stage as well as with respect to the countries and disciplines in which they are planning their careers. The commission also recommends the establishment of guidelines for career development and the support of doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers in accordance with the MWS action paper for career development.

Cooperation and networking

The IBO is well established within Indian and German academia. In Delhi, its closest partners are the Jawaharlal Nehru University and the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. In Germany, cooperation with the Centre for Modern Indian Studies (CeMIS) of Göttingen University is of key importance. Cooperation with other selected German and Indian universities and research centers as well as with the DHI London and its partners is well established. International research collaborations are successfully conducted within the framework of the MWS. Thanks to funding from the Gerald D. Feldman travel grants of the MWS and GHIL-India fellowships, the IBO regularly hosts scholars who need to consult archives in Delhi and beyond.

Nonetheless, there is room to expand cooperation at an institutional level in India and also with other German universities. Academic networking on a personal level should also be intensified. This will become easier once a permanent Head of Office is in place in Delhi. The commission recommends increasing networking efforts within Asia, especially with scholars engaged in Indian and Indo-German research, but also with researchers from other countries – whether in the ‘West’ or in the ‘South’, in order to strengthen multi-perspective research approaches. This networking should be driven by conceptual and topical preoccupations rather than regional approaches in order to avoid being shoehorned into area studies.

Quality assurance

From its inception in 2013 until the end of 2019, the IBO has been led and managed very successfully. This is all the more remarkable as the set-up phase was characterized by labor-intensive coordination between the parent institute in London, the central office of the MWS in Bonn and the staff in Delhi. Different institutional and cross-cultural expectations had to be aligned, which required distinctive language and communication skills on the part of the Head of Office. In the past, decisions concerning the research program and management have largely been made by the director of the DHI London and the Head of the IBO. They are advised by the Advisory Board of the DHI London and the informal Advisory Board of the IBO. Once a permanent Head of Office is established in Delhi, the umbilical cord to the DHI will be cut and a new governance structure will be needed. **The commission recommends specifying the proposed governance model for the Steering Committee and Advisory Board and clarifying the responsibilities of the two bodies as well as of the future Head of Office.**

The IBO enjoys excellent informal institutional communication, since it is a relatively small entity where employees regularly meet over lunch and coffee. **In the future, coaching priorities for young and early-career researchers and measures of internal quality assurance need to be codified and put into practice.**

The commission also recommends another external assessment of the IBO in 2024, in order to critically accompany the new program and administrative setting.

Conclusion

The commission was very impressed by the high quality and quantity of the IBO's research and research output. An excellent infrastructure has been put in place, especially in light of the very limited amount of institutional funding. The IBO's unique selling point is that it provides a space for the production of new research in the SSH by integrating interdisciplinary, comparative and transregional approaches to topics of regional but also of common global interest. The IBO is open to researchers from all over the world, but makes special efforts to put German and Indian SSH scholarship into fruitful dialogue. This is especially commendable since social sciences and humanities research in India looks more towards developments in England and the United States. German SSH research was not generally on their radar. This is an important change brought about by the IBO. India is the second-most populous country in the world and an emergent major global economic player. In addition, it has a very rich, world-class academic tradition that has made significant contributions to humanities theory building and the advancement of knowledge in recent years. Bringing Indian and German humanities traditions into conversation with one another and the larger academic world is an endeavor that should enjoy permanent status.

Based on the thorough-going evaluation, the commission recommends the inclusion of India as a host country in the MWS statutes. The commission is also in favor of significantly increasing the IBO's resources in order to allow it to grow in a sustainable and closely monitored way.

Appendix

Members and guests of the evaluation commission

1. Members of the evaluation commission

Chair

Prof. Dr. Joanna **Pfaff-Czarnecka** Professor of Social Anthropology, Universität Bielefeld

Members

Prof. Dr. Elizabeth A. **Büttner** Professor of Modern History, Universiteit van Amsterdam

Dr. Heike **Liebau** Head of the research unit „Representations of the Past as a Mobilising Force“”, Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient

Prof. Dr. Rekha Vaidya **Rajan** Professor (em.) of Modern German Literature, Jawaharlal Nehru University of New Delhi

2. Guests of the evaluation commission

Nominated by MWS India Branch Office

Prof. Dr. Monica **Juneja** Professor of Global Art History, Cluster of Excellence "Asia and Europe in a Global Context", Universität Heidelberg

Nominated by the Board of Trustees of the MWS

Prof. Dr. Barbara **Potthast** Professor of Iberian and Latin American History, Universität zu Köln

Nominated by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Michael **Sondermann** Referat 426, Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Nominated by the MWS Central Office

Dr. Tina **Rudersdorf** Head of Quality Assessment, Public Relations, Support Opportunities, Max Weber Stiftung

3. Cooperation partners

Prof. Dr. Neeladri **Bhattacharya**

Professor of Modern History (em.), Jawaharlal Nehru University of New Delhi

Prof. Dr. Martin **Fuchs**

Professor of Indian Religious History,
Universität Erfurt
Director, M. S. Merian-R. Tagore International
Centre for Advanced Studies: Metamorphoses
of the Political (ICAS:MP), New Delhi

Dr. Divya **Kannan**

Department of History, Shiv Nadar University,
Dadri, Uttar Pradesh

Dr. Razak **Khan**

Centre of Modern Indian Studies, Universität
Göttingen

Prof. Dr. Ravi **Vasudevan**

Professor, Centre for the Study of Developing
Societies (CSDS), New Delhi

Anlage C: Stellungnahme des MWS IBO

Qualitätssicherung

24 February 2020

Anlage C: Stellungnahme des MWS India Branch Office

The MWS IBO would like to thank the Evaluation Commission for its meticulous engagement with our work and the extremely constructive suggestions for the future development of the Office. As a fledgling branch of the MWS in a new geographical region (South Asia) and country (India), we are delighted that the Commission has shown such sensitivity to our situation. It has recognised our research, our networks in India and Germany, our training of young scholars, our publications and digital source repositories, our outreach programmes and our administrative support structure as significant steps on the road to becoming a full-fledged Institute of the MWS in future. We acknowledge with gratitude the Commission's recommendation that India be incorporated in the MWS statutes as a new host country and that sufficient funds be made available for the IBO's sustainable growth from 2021 onwards.

We greatly appreciate the Commission's acknowledgement of the centrality of historical research to our programme and gratefully accept the recommendation that, in future, we should forge even greater interdisciplinary connections and include more transregional perspectives. We have already begun to work more closely with ICAS:MP. The current Head of Office is involved in ICAS's research and on its executive committee. The IBO has also started two collaborative endeavours with ICAS: a joint colloquium of ICAS and IBO researchers with the speakers of the Max Weber lectures, and a collaborative transregional conference with the Orient Institute (MWS) Beirut in 2020/21.

The Commission's extremely positive remarks on the existing structure and operations, in particular the balance between research and administration, the dedication of the staff under uncertain employment conditions and the congenial work atmosphere have given us much confidence and moral support.

We have taken note of the Commission's remarks on the future governance structure of the IBO, specifically the need to clarify the position of the future Head of Office and the Steering Committee. We are currently in discussion with the President, the Chief Executive Director of the MWS and the informal advisory board of the GHIL's India Research Programme to define the specific role and position of these offices. These suggestions will be offered to the MWS Board of Trustees when it meets in May 2020 to take a decision on the future of the IBO.

The Commission has shown great recognition of our current achievements on meagre resources and urged that much more can and should be done to build on these in the subsequent phases of the IBO's growth. As the report notes, the provision of adequate core funding for both research and staff development is necessary in order to implement many of the recommendations. Secure funding is particularly important for attracting young German scholars to India, for research travel and workshops engaging fellows from Germany, and for training and supporting our administrative staff.

We gratefully acknowledge the recommendation for a personal publications strategy for our young scholars and an English-language book series. The latter has so far proved to be a contentious issue related to the status of the IBO under Indian law, but we will seek legal opinion in this regard.

We are delighted that our digitisation strategy, including incorporating Indian sources in the project Sozialdaten als Quellen der Zeitgeschichte and our cooperation with the Central Office on digital humanities and data management, has been appreciated.

The Commission has also shown appreciation for our current third-party funding applications and recommended developing written guidelines for third-party funding. We agree that such

Stellungnahme des MWS IBO zum Bewertungsbericht

guidelines will be useful and that they should aim at a targeted balance of institutional and external funds.

Finally, we have taken note of the Commission's recommendation that in 2024 another external assessment of the IBO's achievements should take place, not to decide on the IBO's continued existence but rather as a means to engage critically with its work and guide its development. We are confident that, with the recommended policies in place and with adequate funding, we will be able to show a further evolution of the IBO in 2024.

Christina von Hodenberg and Indra Sengupta (London/ New Delhi)