



BONN CENTER  
FOR DEPENDENCY  
AND SLAVERY  
STUDIES

Max Weber  
Stiftung

India Branch Office

## Call for Papers

Winter School  
Max Weber Stiftung (India Branch Office)  
Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies  
17-21 January 2022

### Making and Un-Making Worlds of Coercion and Confinement

The Max Weber Stiftung (MWS), India Branch Office serves as a bridge between German, Indian, and international scholarship in the humanities and social sciences. One of its main emphases is on the study of South Asian and transregional histories. The winter schools of the India Branch Office bring together graduate students and experienced scholars within an informal and lively environment aimed at exploring the worlds of South Asian societies and cultures in history and in the present, and using the experience of this exploration as a starting point for new ventures and departures in scholarly discourse.

The Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) is a research cluster within the framework of the Excellence Strategy of the federal and state governments of Germany. It aims to overcome the binary opposition of "slavery versus freedom" by means of inter-disciplinary research focused on the concept of "asymmetrical dependency."

The Winter School "Making and Un-Making Worlds of Coercion and Confinement", organized by the Max Weber Stiftung – India Branch Office and the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, seeks to investigate how, across historical contexts, various forms of coercion and confinement were shaped and contested by multiple actors. In particular, it addresses three main themes:

**Theme 1 – The spatiality of coercion** – looks at the ways coercion was created at the crossroads of (forced or voluntary) spatial mobility and immobilization. The goal is to assess the interactions between coercion in specific sites (including worksites and sites of confinement) and dynamics of coercion in the social context at large. At the same time, we seek to understand the dialectics between mobility and immobilization as strategies of coercing, or as practices and strategies to enhance autonomy.

**Theme 2 – Navigating coercion, constructing autonomy** – takes the perspective of the coerced and looks into the practices and strategies by which they– individually and collectively – tried to minimize the impact of coercion, and expand their spaces of autonomy within and outside the specific sites of coercion.



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**Theme 3 – Intermediaries and labour coercion** – foregrounds the role of intermediaries who were themselves coerced, in the production and reproduction of labour coercion. The concept of “intermediaries” is understood here in a broader sense, comprising all subjected people who acted as intermediaries in the process of recruitment, extraction of labour, or as enforcers of discipline; for example as overseers of work, guards in specific settings (plantations, manufactures, prisons, camps amongst others), being part of an inmate or labouring population.

The Winter School is open to graduate students in history, sociology, anthropology, and archaeology, based in any part the world. We welcome paper proposals focusing on any geographical and chronological context.

Please submit your paper proposal (title, approx. 500-words abstract, current affiliation and short bio-note) by 30 April 2021 to: Ms Deepanwita Dutta – India Branch Office – Max Weber Stiftung: [dutta@mwsindia.org](mailto:dutta@mwsindia.org) Subject: Winter school: Making and Un-Making Worlds of Coercion and Confinement.

In the proposal, please mention explicitly the theme your paper is primarily connected to.

The Max Weber Stiftung’s India Branch Office will cover the accommodation costs (double occupancy) and will reimburse the participants’ travel costs (to New Delhi) up to the amount of 700 EUR for international travel and up to INR 12000 for travel by India-based participants. Participants who are members of the BCDSS will receive equivalent funding from BCDSS.

You will be informed about the outcome of your application by 31 May 2021. Successful applicants will be expected to pre-circulate their papers among the participants by 30 November 2021.

For further information and clarifications, please contact the Winter School organizers: Michaela Dimmers, M.A., Centre for Modern Indian Studies, Göttingen, Germany, [michaela.dimmers@cemis.uni-goettingen.de](mailto:michaela.dimmers@cemis.uni-goettingen.de)  
Dr. Christian G. De Vito, Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, Bonn, Germany, [cdevito@uni-bonn.de](mailto:cdevito@uni-bonn.de)

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which could result in travel and assembly restrictions, the dates are subject to change. We strongly recommend Covid-19 vaccinations and other vaccinations necessary for all accepted participants.