



**University of
Zurich** ^{UZH}

**Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies – Indian Studies
Department of Political Science
University Research Priority Program (URPP) Asia and Europe**

NREGA workers digging out a silted water reservoir



Welfare Schemes, the State and Corruption in South Asia

Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches

**International Workshop
Zurich, June 19–20, 2017**

Overview

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In recent years, scholars from within a broad range of social science disciplines have drawn their attention to the issue of public service delivery in India. Partly as a result of deepening electoral competition both provincial and national governments have been providing citizens with a growing range of welfare schemes—ranging from pensions, housing plots, free midday meals and employment guarantees through the NREGA scheme to subsidised rations. However the extent to which these entitlements have reached their intended beneficiaries has varied across states, and across regions within states. Scholars have identified corruption and insufficient state capacity as major causes behind failures in implementation. Some studies suggest that the successful implementation of government programmes is contingent upon societal factors such as the presence or absence of stark social inequalities and of an active civil society—in the form of rights based social movements for example. In this view, severe class- and caste-based social inequalities allow powerful individuals and groups to appropriate people's entitlements, and work to prevent subordinate individuals and communities from claiming them. Other studies have tended to emphasise how the state is under-staffed, under-resourced, and paralysed by bureaucratic red tape, and therefore unable to respond to the huge demands placed upon it. And yet other studies have emphasised particular forms of political leadership and how it can make the state either more or less responsive to popular demands.

None of these explanations are mutually exclusive, but scholars have tended to emphasise one or the other depending on their theoretical perspective and on their research methods and research focus. In this conference we will gather scholars who are researching the implementation of particular government schemes in different localities and/or at different scales (e.g. at national, provincial or village level). We want to bring different disciplines and approaches together in order to see what we can learn from each other, and to explore ways in which we might collaborate either in the form of research and/or publications. We are particularly interested in examining the ways in which qualitative and quantitative research methods might

further inform each other, and we wish to encourage participants to discuss how alternative conceptual and methodological approaches might help inform their own work.

The intention of the conference is to promote joint work across disciplines, possibly resulting in further work towards a special edition of a journal like World Development or the Journal of Development Studies (if there is sufficient interest and commonalities found between participants).

Programme

Welcome Sunday, 18 June 2017

- 17.00 *Zurich sightseeing (Tourist information, Zurich main station)*
19.00 *Informal dinner (Restaurant Terrasse)*

Day 1 Monday, 19 June 2017

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- 9.00–9.30 Welcome and introductory remarks
Nicolas Martin and Katharina Michaelowa (UZH)
- 9.30–10.30 Keynote lecture by John Harriss (Simon Fraser University)**
- 10.30–11.00 *Coffee break (RAA Atrium)*
- 11.00–13.00 Thematic panel I: Caste, Class, Gender and Welfare Schemes**
Chair: Nicolas Martin
Grace Carswell and Geert De Neve (Sussex University)
Cards and Queues: Caste, Gender and Access to Social Welfare in
Tamil Nadu, India
(Discussion openers: Jeffrey Witsoe, Aditya Dasgupta)
Sourabh Paul (IIT-Delhi)
Caste Discrimination in Public Service Delivery
(Discussion openers: Rahul Mukherji, Bill Pritchard)

Satendra Kumar (CSDS)

Social Life of Welfare Schemes: Caste, Class and Democracy in
Uttar Pradesh, North India

(Discussion openers: Nicolas Martin, Viola Asri)

13.00–14.30

Lunch (ETH faculty restaurant)

14.30–16.30

Thematic panel II: The Indian State and Welfare

Chair: Katharina Michaelowa

Bill Pritchard (University of Sydney)

Inclusive Reform? Evidence-based Assessment of the Changing
Landscape of India's Social Safety Nets

(Discussion openers: John Harriss, Grace Carswell)

David Picherit (University Paris Nanterre)

Indiramma Housing Scheme: Corruption and Violence in
Development Schemes

(Discussion openers: Geert De Neve, Christelle Dumas)

Rahul Mukherji (University of Heidelberg)

The State, Ideas and Welfare in India: Reflections on Andhra
Pradesh and West Bengal

(Discussion openers: Amelie Bernzen, Sohini Paul)

16.30–17.30

Coffee break + poster session (RAA Atrium)

Viola Asri (UZH)

Monetary Support versus Informal Support – Social Pension
Receipt and Coresidence Revisited

(Discussants: Stefan Klonner, David Picherit)

Amelie Bernzen and Shantonu Abe (University of Cologne)

Policy Frameworks, Welfare Schemes and Sustainable Farming
Practices in West Bengal

(Discussants: Urs Geiser, Sourabh Paul)

Marion Krämer (University of Goettingen)

School Feeding, Iron-fortified Salt and Child Cognitive Ability – Evidence from a Randomized Control Trial in Rural India

(Discussants: Christelle Dumas, Chandreyee Bagchi)

Rahul Lahoti (University of Goettingen)

Are Educated Leaders Good for Education? Evidence from India

(Discussants: Paula von Haaren, Rahul Mukherji)

17.30–18.50

Thematic panel III: Civic Engagement and Welfare Schemes

Chair: Jeffrey Witsoe

Nicolas Martin (UZH)

NREGA Activism Subverted? A Case Study from the Punjab

(Discussion openers: Geert De Neve, Stefan Klonner)

Aditya Dasgupta (Stanford University)

Civic Engagement and Service Delivery across Indian Villages

(Discussion openers: Jeffrey Witsoe, Katharina Michaelowa)

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19.00

Conference dinner (Restaurant Sento, Plattenhof)

Day 2 Tuesday, 20 June 2017

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9.00–10.20

Thematic panel IV: Leakages in the Public Distribution System

Chair: Sourabh Paul

Sohini Paul (Carleton University)

Public Distribution System in India: A Critical Assessment

(Discussion openers: Paula von Haaren, Faisal Abbas)

Stefan Klonner and Paula von Haaren (University of Heidelberg)
Leakage in India's Public Distribution System: Evidence from Panel Data
(Discussion openers: Sourabh Paul, Grace Carswell)

10.20–10.50 *Coffee break (RAA E30)*

10.50–12.50 Thematic panel V: Transparency and Welfare Schemes

Chair: Grace Carswell

Viola Asri, Katharina Michaelowa (UZH), Sitakanta Panda and Sourabh Paul (IIT Delhi)

Does Transparency Improve Public Program Targeting? Evidence from India's Old Age Social Pension Reforms

(Discussion openers: Bill Pritchard, Martin Webb)

Martin Webb (Goldsmiths)

In the Margins of Anti-corruption and Rights Activism – Trust, Brokers and Social Protection in Delhi

(Discussion openers: David Picherit, Sitakanta Panda)

Jeffrey Witsoe (Union College)

Collective Action and the Right to Work in Rural Bihar

(Discussion openers: Urs Geiser, Satendra Kumar)

12.50–14.15 *Lunch (ETH faculty restaurant)*

14.15–16.00 Working group meetings (RAA E21, E27, E29, E30)

16.00–16.30 *Coffee break (RAA E30)*

16.30–18.00 Reports from parallel sessions and planning of future activities

18.00–18.15 Concluding remarks

19.00 *Informal dinner (Restaurant Rigihof)*

General Information

- Location** Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies (RAA)
Rämistrasse 59
CH-8001 Zurich
- Monday, June 19 Room RAA E-08 9:00–19:00
Tuesday, June 20 Room RAA E-30 9:00–19:00
- Convenors** Prof. Dr. Katharina Michaelowa
(Department of Political Science)
Prof. Dr. Nicolas Martin
(Department of Indian Studies)
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