

# Curriculum Vitae of Manas Ray

## **(1. 0) General**

- (1. 1) Full name: MANAS RAY
- (1. 2) Work (and Mailing) Address:  
Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta  
R1, Baishnabghata Patuli Township  
Calcutta 700 094  
e-mail: [manas04@gmail.com](mailto:manas04@gmail.com)  
[ascetic.dandy@gmail.com](mailto:ascetic.dandy@gmail.com)  
Mobile: 09831412704
- (1. 3) Age: 63 + (Date of birth: 4 January, 1954)
- (1. 4) Nationality: Indian

## **(2. 0) Employment**

- (2. 1) Professor in Cultural Studies at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC). Joined CSSSC as a Fellow in Sociology and Social Bases of Culture in 1993, switched to Cultural Studies in 2005.  
Prior to joining the CSSSC, I was a UGC Research Scientist (a Reader grade appointment) with Educational Media Research Centre, Calcutta.
- (2.2) A two year postdoctoral stint between 1996 and 1998 with Australian Key Centre For Cultural And Media Policy, Queensland University of Technology (Brisbane).
- (2.3) Fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla for one year (July 2008 – June 2009).

## **(3. 0) Educational Qualification:**

- (3. 1) PhD (Cultural and Social Theory, Division of Humanities)  
GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY  
Brisbane, Australia 1992

- [Thesis topic: “Towards Re-writing Postmodernism: Marxism and the Challenge of Postmodern Theories”; Thesis supervisors: Prof Colin Mercer]
- (3. 2) M.Phil. (Sociology)  
Centre for the Study of Social Systems  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY, New Delhi  
1984; First Class  
[Thesis Topic: “Culture, the Media and Marxism: Debates, Perspective and Problems”; Thesis Supervisor: Prof Ravindra Jain]
- (3. 3) M.A. (Sociology)  
Centre for the Study of Social Systems  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY, New Delhi  
[1981; First Class]
- (3. 4) B.A. (Honours in English)  
PRESIDENCY COLLEGE  
University of Calcutta  
1975; Second Class
- (4. 0) Fellowships**
- (4. 1) Visiting Research Scholar  
Arbeitsstelle für Semiotik  
Technische Universität Berlin, Berlin (Western), Germany (March – September, 1989)
- (4. 2) Visiting Fellow  
Maison des Sciences de l’homme, Paris (May – June, 1995)
- (4. 3) Postdoctoral Fellow  
Australian Key Centre For Cultural And Media Policy  
Queensland University of Technology  
Brisbane (A two year postdoctoral appointment between June 1996 & May 1998)
- (4. 4) Visiting Fellow  
International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam (August – September, 2003)

- (4. 5) Visiting Fellow  
Institute of Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh (May – June, 2004)
- (4. 6) Fellow, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla (July 2008 – June 2009)
- (4. 7) SEPHIS Visiting Fellow, Department of History, University of Cape Town (November, 2009)
- (4.8) Visiting Professor, Centre for Studies in Social Systems, Jawaharlal Nehru University (October, 2015)

### **(5. 0) Select List of Publications**

#### Work in Progress

A two volume anthology of essays entitled, *State of Democracy in India: Life and Politics in Contemporary Times*. The volumes are expected to be out by the end of 2018 from Primus, Delhi. The collection will include contributions of more than 40 authors.

Following is a list of contributors and the areas they are addressing:

1. Tridip Suhrud: Gandhi
2. Pradip Dutta: Tagore
3. Peter DeSouza: Nehru
4. Saumyabrata Choudhury: Ambedkar
5. Gyan Pandey: Historical Injustice
6. Alf Gunvald Nilsen: Indian State since the turn of the millennium
7. Thomas Blom Hansen: Communalism and Indian Democracy
8. Christophe Jaffrelot: Hindu Nationalism in India and Islamist developments in Pakistan
9. Tanika Sarkar: Uniform Civil Code
10. Gopal Guru: Reservation
11. Sudipta Kaviraj: Populism
12. T S Krishnamurthy: Electoral Reforms
13. Prabhat Patnaik: Economic Liberalization and Indian Democracy
14. Arun Kumar: Black Money
15. Debabrata Bandyopadhyay: Indian Bureaucracy and Police Force: Dimensions of institutional corruption
16. Jawhar Sircar: What ails Indian bureaucracy?
17. Sanjoy Chakravorty: Land for Industry
18. Indraneel Dasgupta: Neoliberalism and contradictions within the CPI(M)

19. Anup Dhar: Identity Politics
20. Ritabrata Bandyopadhyaya: Calcutta Street Hawkers
21. Sanjay Srivastava: Post-national Urbanism: 'Ordinary' People, Capital and the State
22. Madhav Prasad: Democracy and language politics in South India
23. Uday Kumar: Literary public in South India
24. Sumanta Banerjee: What went wrong with the Bengal Left?
25. Kumar Rana: Unveiling the popularity of Mamata Banerjee
26. Edward Rodrigues: Grassroot education
27. Elisa Burtozo: Life and living at the grassroots
28. Partha Muthukaruppan: Assault on Dalits and resistance
29. Ramchandra Bathran: Manual scavenging
30. Laura Brueck: Dalit Literature
31. Prathama Banerjee: Maoist Politics and Tribal Population
32. Aditya Nigam: AAP in power
33. Nivedita Menon: Legal Activism and Feminism
34. Sandhya Devesan Nambiar: Feminist Politics – the new turn
35. Kiran Kesavamurthy: Same-sex politics
36. Lawrence Liang: Law, Social Media and the question of justice
37. Paramita Brahmachari: Contemporary Bollywood
38. Tapati Guha-Thakurta: Destroy and desecrate (on public art)
39. C Rajamohan: India-America relations: Obama to Trump
40. Omar Ali: Indian Democracy: an outsider's view
41. Nalin Mehta: Indian Cricket, electronic media and the new capital (confirmation awaited)
42. Bodhisattva Kar: Democracy and the North East of India (confirmation awaited)
43. Enakshi Mitra: Re-thinking consent
44. Manas Ray: Who is the 'People'?

An anthology of my essays, *Displaced: lives on the move*, is nearing completion. It will be published by Primus, Delhi, in 2018. The collection focuses on the subjective dimension of displacement by blending academic writing with memoirs and fictional accounts based on true life experiences. Here is a list of the essays:

1. Displaced: lives on the move / 20
2. Chalo Jahaji: from indenture to metropolis in global times /35
3. Violence, Memory, Pain: cultural turn of partition studies / 30
4. Growing Up Refugee: memory and locality /35
5. Orality of Silence: an afterword /7
6. Life of the Past: Indian Bengali Diaspora and the politics of nostalgia / 14
7. Uttam Kumar Salon: life story of a slum barber /60
8. To the land of Silica /13
9. Story of the Wide Mouth / 15

10. 'My Life to Tell' / 20
11. Cosmopolitanism today: a note / 15

### Edited Volumes

1. Editor, Seminar, March, 2017 issue of *Seminar* entitled, CONTAINING VIOLENCE: A SYMPOSIUM ON WHY STRATEGIES OF PACIFICATION ARE FAILING (March, 2017).
2. Editor, Seminar, October 2015 issue on STATE OF DEMOCRACY: LIFE AND POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA
3. Editor, *Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences*, the journal of Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, Combined Issue of 2011, published in March 2013, p. 236
4. Editor, *Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences* (combined issue: 2009), published July 2011, 303 pages.
5. Editor, *History, Memory and Nostalgia* (Margins, Calcutta, 2001)
6. Editor, *Space, Sexuality and Postcolonial Space* (A joint publication of the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta and ENRECA, Denmark, 2004)

### Articles and Book Chapters (in English)

#### *Published Papers*

1. "Goddess in the City: Durga Pujas of Contemporary Kolkata" (a review article of Tapati Guha-Thakurta's book, *In the name of the Goddess: Durga Pujas of Contemporary Kolkata*), *Modern Asian Studies*, 5:4, July-August, 2017.
2. "The Orality of Silence" in *Looking Back: The 1947 Partition of India 70 years on* edited by Rakhshanda Jalil, Tarun K. Saint and Debjani Sengupta, Orient Blackswan, Delhi, 2017. (A shorter version was previously published as "Out of Silence" in Kirsty Gunn and Gail Low edited, *The Voyage Out, An international*

- anthology of Writing, Art and Science*, University of Dundee, 2016. (A 6000 word sketch on the impact of the partition of Bengal in 1947 on one's own family).
3. "The Challenge of Violence", *Seminar* issue on *Containing Violence*, March, 2017, pp. 81—91.
  4. "Who is 'the People'?", *Seminar* issue on *State of Democracy*, October 2015, pp. 68 – 76
  5. "Against Negation: Suicide, Self-consciousness and Jibanananda Das' poem, *One Day Eight Years Ago*" (*Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, vol 2, no. 2, September 2015 – February 2016).
  6. "The Cartoon Controversy: Crafty Politicos, Impatient Pedagogues" in Rina Ramdev and Sandhya Devesan Nambiar edited, *The State of Hurt: Sentiment, Politics, Censorship* (Sage: New Delhi, 2015). This article was originally published in *Seminar*, July 2012 as a special essay.
  7. "Fractured City Votes for Civic State", *Seminar*, April 2015.
  8. "The Many Bodies of History: the Cinema of Alexander Kluge", *Journal of the Moving Image*; special issue: *Luminous Celluloid*, January – June 2015, pp. 76 – 96.
  9. "The Unruly Spiral: Dialectics in the light of contemporary debates" in *Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences* (Combined Issue of 2008, published in 2014), pp. 143 – 171.
  10. "Life, Law and Abandonment: Political Philosophy of Giorgio Agamben" in *Sanglap: Journal of Literary and Cultural Inquiry*, Vol 1, No. 1, 2014 (This is an updated version of my essay, "Biopolitics of Giorgio Agamben" in Pradip Bose edited, *Modern Social Thinkers*, SETU Publishers, Kolkata, 2012)
  11. "Identity in Diaspora" in Renuka Singh and K K Sharma edited, *Indian Diaspora and Other Essays*, Orient Blackswan, 2013.
  12. "Diasporic Bollywood" in Anjali Gera Roy and Chua Beng Huat ed. *Travels of Bollywood Cinema from Bombay to LA*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2012.
  13. "Between Determination and Responsiveness: A Third Space in Foucault?", *Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences*, Combined Issue 2009, published 2011, pp. 269 – 280 (Review Article)
  14. "Life of the Past: Indian Bengali Diaspora and the politics of nostalgia" in Amit Sewal edited *Bridging Imaginations: South Asian Diaspora in Australia*. Readworthy Publication, New Delhi, 2012.

15. "To the Land of Silica", *Indian Literature* (the journal of Sahitya Akademi, Delhi), August-September issue, 2010, pp. 62 – 83
16. "Chalo Jahaji: Bollywood in Diaspora – in the tracks of indenture to globalization" in *City Flicks*, edited by Preben Kaarsholm, Seagull (Calcutta, 2004 and London, 2006)
17. "Bollywood Down Under: Fiji Indian Cultural History and Popular Assertion" in *Floating Lives: the Media and Asian Diasporas* (edited by Stuart Cunningham and John Sinclair, Rowman and Littlefield, USA, 2001, pp. 136 – 184) (This essay is nearly of 25,000 words.)
18. "Nation, nostalgia and Bollywood" in Karim H Karim edited, *The Media of Diaspora*, Transnationalism Series, Routledge, London and New York, 2003 pp. 21 – 39. (The collection opens with this essay.)
19. "Growing Up Refugee: on memory and locality" *History Workshop Journal*, Number 53, 2002, pp. 149 – 179  
[Reprinted in 7 publications, including *Memory's Gold: Writings on Calcutta* (edited by Amit Chaudhuri, Penguin Viking, 2008)]
20. "From Holocaust to Partition: on History and Memory" in *Margins*, Calcutta, January – June, 2001
21. "India: 50 years on" in *Fifty Years of Indian Development* (edited by P. K. Basu and C. A. Tisdell, University of Queensland Press, Queensland 1998, 123 - 146)
22. "Indian Television: an emerging regional power" (co-author: Liz Jacka) in *New Patterns in Global Television* (edited by John Sinclair, Stuart Cunningham and Liz Jacka; Oxford University Press, London, 1995)
23. "Marxism: The Dilemma of Critique" *Economic and Political Weekly*, June 12, 1993
24. "Ethics and Government: setting limits to critique" *Economic and Political Weekly*, September 26, 1992

#### Articles in Bengali:

1. "Cinema o Pratyahikata: Mrinal Sen–er Ekdin Protidin and Ekdin Achanak" (Cinema and the Everyday: Mrinal Sen's Ekdin Protidin and Ekdin Achanak), Chitrabhash, Mrinal Sen Special Issue, 2017.

2. “Paschimi Rajnoitik Adhunikata: ekti twattik khasra” (Western Political Modernity: a theoretical approach), *Charcha*, January-June issue, 2013, pp. 59-77.
3. Aponkatha: Mithya-Satyir Kaboya [Life Story: the poetics of falsehood and truth] in Anirban Mukhopadhyay edited, *Nibondher Teen Dashak* (Essays from three decades), Charchapad Publication, Calcutta (It initially came in *Abobhash*, May – August, 2007).
4. *Uttam Kumar Saloon: Bastuchyuta Sanglap* (“Uttam Kumar Saloon: Displaced Narrative”) [A life-story of approximately 27000 words], *Abobhash*, May – August, 2007.

[This is the result of a series of ethnographic interviews taken over 4 months early in 2007. It details an amazingly variegated life of a local barber: beginning from picking cow dung as a small boy for livelihood in a remote village in the South 24 Parganas to supplying drinking water to bus drivers to transporting sacks of salt from the boat to the nearby warehouse (always wary of the timings of tide, which would inevitably increase the weight of the sacks), to carrying twenty bricks at a time to the top of a construction site and finally settling down to his ancestral profession, i.e., a barber. All through, what marks the narrative is the respondent’s native anxieties about the erotic which, he presumed, might go against his vigor and thus reduce his laboring abilities. The interviews also capture the influence of Bengali popular cinema on his ideas of what constitutes the right mode of conduct for a male.

An English version of this life-story (shortened to 19000 words) is coming in my forthcoming collection of essays: *Displaced: Lives on the Move*]

5. “Chalo Jahaji: Chukti Sharom theke Golokayan – Jatisatta Nirmane Bollywood” (“Chalo Jahaji: from indenture to llobalization – Bollywood in the making of national identity”) *Anustup*, October-December, 2003
6. “Uttaradhunikatar phatal theke: Alexander Kluge-r cinema” (“In the cracks of postmodernism: the cinema of Alexander Kluge”) *Alochana Chakra*, July-December, 2002, pp. 16 – 25.
7. “Kata Deshe Gharer Khonj” (“In search of a severed land”) *Baromash*, 2001
8. “Vivan Sunderam-er Installation” (“Vivan Sundaram’s Installation”) *Nandimuk*, January, 1999

9. “Aakash Kusumer Rajniti: Cultural Studies proshanghe du char katha” (on the history of a local pond, how it ceased to exit), *Jogsutra*, September, 1995
10. “Adhipatya: Gramsci theke Foucault” (“Hegemony: from Gramsci to Foucault”) *Samaj Bikshan*, January – April, 1994

#### Select Book Reviews

- “Law as Resistance” (review), *Law, Culture and the Humanities*, vol 6, number 2, 2010, pp. 311 - 315
- “Foucault’s Law” (review), *Law, Culture and the Humanities*, vol 6, number 3, 2010, pp. 465-469
- “Middle of the road is a very dead end: Review of Ranabir Samaddar’s book, *The Marginal Nation: transborder migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal*” *Refugee Watch*, September 1999.

#### Translation

“The Heterotopia of Calcutta’s Durga Puja” (essay by Pradip Bose in Amit Chaudhuri edited, *Memory’s Gold: Writings on Calcutta*, Penguin Viking, 2008)

#### Interviews:

I have taken several interviews. Here I mention two which are relatively longer:

- ““Mine is the cinema of strong survivors”: A conversation with Gautam Ghosh”, *East West Film Journal*, East-West Centre, Hawaii, Vol.8, No.2, 1994, pp 105 - 121
- “Indian Television: today and tomorrow – a conversation with Dileep Padgaonkar” *Deep Focus: a film quarterly*, Vol VI, 1996, pp 15 – 22

#### Newspaper Features, Op-edit, Short Essays, etc.

1. “Remembrance of an Unknown Land”, *Telegraph*, 17 August, 2000.
2. “Yesterday no more” (on Indian Bengali diaspora), *Statesman*, 22 January, 2003.
3. “Rastra Manei: proshanga Agamben” *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 21 January, 2007.
4. “Saurav: stretches beyond cricket”, *Mainstream*, June 22 – 28, 2007.

5. "Tarkapriya Bangali" ("Argumentative Bengali"), *India Today Bangla*, August 2007.
6. "Trail Room e Asto Sahar" (on the changing cityscape of Calcutta), *India Today Bangla*, October 2007.
7. "Balibar: Bastaber Bhasyakar" (Balibar: spokesperson of reality), *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 17 September 2007.
8. "Nijeke Notun Kore Sajanor Shiksha" (The lesson to organize oneself anew: an edit page article on Saurav Ganguly), *Ananda Bazaar Patrika*, 11 December 2007.
9. "Asanto Pakistan Bharater Pakshe Sukhabor Noi" (A turbulent Pakistan is no good news for India), *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 27 February 2008.
10. "Benazir Nei, Musharaf ke charte naraj America" (With Benazir not there, America is unwilling to leave Musharaf") *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 28 February 2008.
11. "Paramanu Chukti: prosongo rajnitir" (Nuclear Deal: the question is political), *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 20 March, 2008.
12. "Thanda larai kintu theme geche, eta bodh hoi kheyal nei" ("That the Cold War is over perhaps escapes us"), *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 21 March, 2008.
13. "This London Dream has parts missing: For Kolkata to improve, the greater part of the city must be involved", *The Hindu*, 18 February, 2012.
14. "Sahaj Dekha tatota Sahaj Noi" ["Ordinary 'seeing' is not all that simple"], *Ei Samay*, 23 June, 2013.
15. "Adhar Bhalo" [On Evil], *Ei Samay*, 21 July, 2013.
16. "Dharmik na hoye kintu secular hawa jai na" (Can one be secular without being religious?), *Ei Samay*, 7 November 2013
17. "First Draft" (A personal discussion of Roland Barthes' A Lover's Discourse), *Ei Samay*, 14 February 2014
18. "Sunetra", *Ei Samay*, 23 May 2014
19. "Net Escape" (on cyber sex), *Ei Samay*, 29 June, 2014
20. "Manush 'Babu Rajniti'ke barjon korechen" ("People have rejected 'babu rajniti'": on CPI(M)'s politics, *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, 19 March, 2015.
21. "Manush Notun Rajnitir Jonya Toiri, Rajnoitik Daal gulo toiri ki?", 1 April, 2015.
22. Ganatantrar Halhakikat, *Aar Ek Rakam* April, 2015
23. Spectacle er Adhikar, *Aar Ek Rakam*, July, 2015.

**(6) Select list of different presentations:**

- Delivered the M Bhaskaran Nair Memorial Lecture entitled, “Democracy Contra Democracy: Reflections on Values, Violence and the People”, on 29th March, 2017 at a UGC National Conference on *State, Development and Citizenship: Perspectives on Contemporary India* organized by the Department of Political Science, University of Kerala, Trivandrum.
- Seminar entitled, *Enlightenment, Crisis and the Making of the Self: Reading Kant beyond Koselleck*, first at the CSSSC and then at the JNU Philosophy Colloquium, 2016.
- Conducted a three day workshop on the cinema of Alexander Kluge at the India Habitat Centre, Delhi, organized by the Max Mueller Bhavan, Delhi, 2016.
- Give a paper on “Bengal Partition: how the third generation remembers it” at a conference organized by University of Heidelberg, 2016.
- Seminar on the ways of the new media at Jadavpur University, 2016.
- Seminar on the history of German cinema in India at a national conference hosted by the Department of Film Studies, “Encountering World Cinema in India”, Jadavpur University, 2016.
- An hour presentation on the cinema of Mrinal Sen at the JBMRC, Kolkata (January,2017).
- Keynote lecture on Gandhi at an international colloquium (*Inner Ecology*) organized by the Tarab Ling Foundation, Dehradun, 26th March, 2017.
- “Gandhi: A departure within liberalism?” Sociology Colloquium, JNU, October, 2015.
- “Democracy, Values and the People”, Philosophy Colloquium, JNU, October, 2015
- “Partition as History of the Present: on the politics of memory” (talk given at Goethe Institute, Dhaka on 27 August, 2015.)
- Paper: “Gandhi: Liberal or a Departure within Liberalism? (Reflections of Self-Making as Political Technology)” at the Colloquium on *Philosophy, Language and the Political: Reevaluating Poststructuralism* at Jawaharlal Nehru University, December, 2014. (I have given a faculty seminar at CSSSC on the same topic and at a conference organized to felicitate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Department of Sociology at Presidency University. December, 2014.)
- Paper: “Body-Mind Unity” at International Conference on *Interrelated Nature of Reality (Tendrel) with special regard to Subject-Object, Body-Mind and Energy-Matter* at

the Tarab Ling centre in Dehradun and organized by Tarab Ling Institutes of Sweden and Germany, November, 2014.

- 5<sup>th</sup> Kalpanirjhar annual public lecture at Max Muller Bhavan (Goethe Institute), Calcutta on “Countering Violence? Towards an ethics of belonging” (April, 2013).
- “Securing the State, Monitoring the Self: Kant and the Modern Concept of the Border” paper presented the international conference, *Prisms of Displacement: Across the Indian Subcontinent and US – Mexico Borders*, Organized by the Centre for Studies in Latin American Literatures and Cultures (CSLALC), Dept. of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University, Calcutta (February, 2013).
- Inaugural talk at the conference on “Singularities” organized by the School of Language, Literature and Cultural Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (January, 2012).
- “Against Negation: Suicide, Existentialism and Jibanananda Das’s poem, “Aat Bachor Aager Ek Din” (One Day Eight Years Back), Faculty Seminar, June, 2011.
- Presented a paper on “The Caring, Terminating State: A Biopolitical Perspective” at a conference entitled, “The Biopolitics of Development: Life, Welfare and Unruly Populations” organized by the Mahanirbhan Calcutta Research Group in collaboration with University of Lapland and the Finnish Academy, Calcutta (September, 2010).
- As a SEPHIS fellow of the Department of History, University of Cape Town, I gave five seminars and three class lectures at different universities of South Africa. These universities are: University of Cape Town (one seminar in History department and one in English department), University of Western Cape, University of Witwatersrand (WITTS) and one in University of Stellenbosch. This was in November, 2009.
- “Talal Asad and the critique of liberal secularism”, seminar at Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla. June 2009.
- “‘My Life To Tell’: life-stories and the poetics of secrecy, falsehood and truth” seminar at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla (June, 2009)
- Spoke on “Spaces of Habitation” as part of a panel in the conference on *Migration, Diaspora and the City: mobility and dwelling in Calcutta* organized jointly by The City Centre, Queen Mary, University of London & CSSSC and held at the CSSSC on 12 – 13 December, 2008.
- “May 68: crisscrossed cartographies”, a talk at Max Mueller Bhavan, Kolkata, May 2008.

- “The Cinema of Alexander Kluge: Postmodernism beyond obituaries and panegyrics”, Faculty Seminar, CSSSC, May, 2008.
- Talk: “Partition as History of the Present” at a symposium on *Partition and Displacement: Construction of Memory and the Shaping of History* at the Max Mueller Haven, Calcutta (November, 2008).
- “Reconciliation in the Era of Security: Critique of secularism and the religious political”, Faculty Seminar, CSSSC, December, 2007.
- Spoke on “Racism and Postcolonial Europe” at a workshop organized by Mahanirbhan Calcutta Research Society in September 2007 to facilitate Balibar’s visit to Calcutta.
- Four Seminars at the University of Hyderabad, November, 2007 (organized by the Dept of Sociology and the Centre for Comparative Literature).  
Topics:
  1. Biopolitical Sovereignty: Agamben and the politics of exception
  2. Reading Foucault, post-September 11
  3. The Language of *Crisis*: Kant beyond Koselleck
  4. On Reconciliation: critique of liberal secularism and the religious political
- “The Language of *Crisis*: Reading Kant beyond Koselleck”, Faculty Seminar at the CSSSC, October, 2007.
- “Foucault Contra Agamben: on the political”, Faculty Seminar at the CSSSC, July 2007.
- Kamal Kumar Majumdar Memorial Lecture. Topic: “Rajnitir Byakaron: Khamatar Adhunik Kritkaushal Proshonghe” (“The Grammar of Politics”) at Jadunath Sarkar Bhavan, CSSSC (November, 2006).
- Chaired and spoke at “via Mumbai: Multiple Cultures in a Globalizing World” organized by Mehile Parikh Centre for the Visual Arts, National Performing Arts Gallery (NCPA), Mumbai (February, 2006).
- “On the ambulatory spaces of the postcolonial: three scenarios”, plenary talk at the National Seminar on *Theorizing ‘Region’: Configurations, Alliances, Contestations*, organized by the Centre for Comparative Literature, University of Hyderabad, (February, 2006).

- Paper: “The New Media: A Post-9/11 Study” at a conference on *The New Media and ‘Cultural Exception’ in an Era of Globalization* organized by Maison des Sciences de l’homme, Paris and Indian Council of Social Science Research and held in New Delhi (September 2005).
- Paper: “Reading Foucault’s Discipline and Punish after Abu Gharib” in a discussion organized by the Alliance Francaise, Kolkata at Oxford Book Store as part of Kolkata Book Fair, January 2005.
- Presented a paper entitled “Studying Partition of India: on the cultural turn” in a workshop on “After the Theoretical Revolution: teaching and research in literature now”, organized by La Trobe University and Lady Shri Ram College, New Delhi. (September, 2004).
- “On memory and locality: writing the history of post-partition Calcutta”, seminar at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh (June, 2004)
- “On the Cosmopolitan Persona and European Enlightenment,” First National Lecture organized by the Centre for Excellence, Indian Institute of Management, Kerala (February, 2004).
- Keynote lecture on “Cultures of Globalization” at the Centre for Excellence, Indian Institute of Management, Kerala (February, 2004).
- “A Difficult Decoupling: Religion and Politics in the making of Western cosmopolitanism” Faculty Seminar, CSSSC, August, 2003
- “Kant and the making of the European *secular*”, Max Mueller Bhavan (Goethe Institute), New Delhi (April, 2003).
- “Indian Diasporas: two journeys”, ‘Metropolitan Modernities’ seminar series, Ralph Samuel Centre for Metropolitan Studies, University of East London, UK (April, 2002).
- “Racism and Asian Diasporas”, Annual conference of the American Association for Asian Studies (AAAS), Washington DC (April, 2002).
- Lectured in the Cultural Studies Workshop organized by the Centre of Basic Research in Kampala, Uganda on August 20 – 24, 2002.

- Visiting Faculty, Researcher Training Course, theme: “Beyond Home and Exile”, Copenhagen. Organizer: Centre for Development Research, Copenhagen and Roskilde University, Denmark (December 1 – 5, 2001).
- “Nation beyond nation: media and identity politics among Indian diasporas in Australia” at a national seminar organized by the Department of Film Studies, Jadavpur University, November, 1998.
- “Politics of Space”, Refresher Course lecture, Department of English, Calcutta University, January, 1999.
- “An approach to history of space: new ways of looking at icons” at Icons Instead of Ideas, organized by the Max Mueller Bhavan, Calcutta in February 1999.
- “Peace as a value: Reflections on the New German Cinema” seminar organized by Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Darjeeling, May, 1999.
- Besides these, between 1993 and 1996, I have conducted Workshops on the cinema of Alexander Kluge at Calcutta, Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore centres of Max Mueller Bhavan. The workshop in Bangalore lasted for three days.
- Script Advisor of a Training Program for young directors of EU-India Film Co-Production Project. 1999.
- I have lectured at different Refresher Courses organized by Depts of Film Studies, Comparative Literature and Bengali at Jadavpur University and Depts of English and Political Science at Calcutta University (not all of which are mentioned in the list above).

### **Inherited Memories**

The coordinator of a joint project between Max Mueller Bhavan (Calcutta) and the CSSSC. The project also involves MMB (Dhaka) and University of Heidelberg. It's called, *Inherited Memories* and is an investigation on how the third generation remembers the partition in West Bengal as well as in Bangladesh.

### **(7) Cultural Studies Workshop**

Except between 2005 and 2009, I have functioned as the coordinator of the Cultural Studies Workshop (CSW) right from its inception in the mid-1990s and continue to do so. I am responsible for generating the topic for the year, writing the text for flyers and EPW

advertisement, selection of venue, selection of participants, deciding on morning readings and virtually every other thing related to the workshop. All this I do in active consultation with the Cultural Studies Workshop Committee.

Over the years, CSW has emerged as one of the most prominent and productive annual meetings for doctoral students in the social sciences and humanities in India. It is the most high profile activity of the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC). Framed as an annual pedagogic event spreading, it has been running uninterrupted for nineteen years – since 1995, save in 1996 and 2012. The objective of the workshop has been to provide young scholars with an opportunity to discuss their research topics with a group of senior researchers in the field of Cultural Studies as well as the broader issues of social sciences and humanities today as viewed from a Cultural Studies perspective. In the course of its by now long career, the workshop has played a key institutional role in the emergence of Cultural Studies as a discipline and a specialized area of scholarship in India.

The next workshop will be held for the first time in Calcutta in March 2016. The theme is Cultures of Violence.

## **(8) Teaching**

Since 2010, I am teaching MPhil and PhD students. At present, I convene and co-teach two MPhil/PhD courses at CSSSC. These are:

- *Modernity and the Making of the Social*
- *Biopolitics, Ethics and Subjectivation*

Between 2001 and 2004, I convened and taught *Cultures of Postcoloniality*, a predoctoral course in the Research Training Programme (RTP).

In 2013, I convened and taught another course: *Contemporary Sociological Theory*.

I regularly participated in teaching of two courses at the Department of Film Studies, Jadavpur University between 1993 and 1996 & again from 1998 to 2002.

## **(9.0) Research Supervision**

### MPhil Supervision:

The following students are enrolled under my supervision:

Bijuri Dutta: *Naxalbari Memoirs*

Sanchari Naskar: *Netaji Nagar: A study of a post-colony.*

The following have completed their MPhil dissertations under my supervision:

Piya Srinivasan: *Rites of Passage: Law, agency and struggles for space in the lives of 'street children' in Central Delhi* (completed, 2012)

Sourit Bhattacharya: *The Animal in Kafka and Coetzee: A Note on the Threshold* (completed, 2012)

Sreenanti Banerjee: *Rethinking 'Universal Sisterhood': Towards a Theorization of the Post-Globalization Construction of the 'New Indian Woman', Sexual Violence and Feminist Ethico-Politics* (completed, 2013)

Senjuti Chakraborti: *Racism, Law, and Literature: Observations on Liberal Law and 20<sup>th</sup> century African American Fiction* (completed, 2013)

Karma Sherap Bhutia: *Political Transition of Sikkim, Change in History and its Effects in the Everyday Life*

### PhD Supervision:

The following are enrolled under my supervision:

1. Abdullah Al Mamun: *Memory, Real and Virtual of a Nation: an investigation into Shahbag movement in Bangladesh* (since 2012)

2. Soumi Chatterjee: *Jibanananda paraborti Bangla kobitai nirshangata: Bhaskar Chakraborty o Tushar Roy er proti bishesh gurutwasaha ekti bishelashan (Solitude in post-Jibanananda Bengali poetry: An analysis with special focus on Bhaskar Chakraborty and Tushar Roy)* (since 2012)
3. Richa Gupta: *Heterotopia and the Novel: A Study of the novels of W J Sebald* (since 2013)
4. Debajyoti Mondal: *Singularity and Modern Bengali Literature with special reference to the writings of Syed Waliullah* (since 2014)
5. Kaustub Roy: *Animation and Indian Cinema: analysis of a changing trajectory* (since 2014)
6. Senjuti Chakraborty: *On the Normalisation of Racism in Law and Literature: A Study of Liberal Law and Toni Morrison's African American slave narratives* (since 2014)

### **Critical Appreciation:**

I quote below some of the responses I received to my essay: “Growing Up Refugee” (HWJ, 2002)

- I read your "Growing Up Refugee." It strikes me that, across the world, there is a growing convergence between history-writing and the kinds of narrative we associate with fiction. On the basis of considerably less evidence (but I would include your essay among such evidence), it also occurs to me that India may be leading the world in this respect. John Coetzee, Nobel Laureate, email, June 14, 2004
- In the arena of history-writing, talk about theoretic awareness is very common today. But what is central to all theorizing – the question of habitation or belonging in the world (‘samsara’) one lives, the moot issue of facticity of existence – is rarely addressed. Your essay is an exception. The trajectory of childhood to youth that you delineate is fundamental to any discussion of historicity. The way you have gone about doing it –

blending memory with social insights and philosophy – has enlightened me and offered me food for thought.

Another aspect that comes out very clearly from your writing is that the history of partition does not end with partition, the course of rehabilitation is very much an integral part of that history. This is a well known fact. But you haven't stated this in dry theoretical mode but narrated as autobiography which reaches much closer to the complex and painful experience of this truth than what professional historical writings can do. I have honestly gained a lot from your writing. Ranajit Guha, email sent on 11 June, 2002. [Prof Guha wrote this email in Bengali; my translation]

Comments on my chapter, "Bollywood Down Under: Fiji Indian Cultural History and Popular Assertion" in *Floating Lives: the Media and Asian Diasporas* (edited by Stuart Cunningham and John Sinclair):

- "Manas Ray's discussion of contemporary Bollywood's diasporic spectatorship, the new troping of the home and the world in *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*, the re-working of the traditional patriarchal moral scheme in *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*, is most insightful and will definitely open up new avenues of understanding the post-Zee Bombay cinema. Ray's piece is a must read for all those interested in Bollywood and also in the question of formation of Indian cultural identity outside the shores of India." *Biblio* September – October 2000, pp. 30-31
- "Dr Ray's work has been regarded as the best contribution in the volume." Stuart Cunningham, *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 131-147 (2001). [Stuart Cunningham is one of the two editors of the volume]

#### Areas of Interest

- Biopolitics, postcolonialism and the liberal project
- Indenture, diaspora and displacement
- Politics of Memory in the context of post-partition Calcutta

- Gandhi and the Self-Making as Political Technology
- Democracy
- Film Theory

About the book, *Displaced: Lives on the move*

(theoretical underpinnings and the main thrust of the chapters)

Colonialism, points out Edward Said, brings in two kinds of displacement: displacing one geographical clustering – sovereign or otherwise – by an imperial order and then regaining of the (imperial) space by the people of the land. Understandably, space as a matter of cultural struggle, a special mix of geography and history – with all the overlapping memories, narratives and physical structures – is both more poignant and aleatory in postcolonies. The case of the subcontinent is even more complex since the independence from British rule that came after a long, popular and difficult nationalist movement also meant for a vast number of people banishment from their homeland. The anthology of my essays tries to bring within two covers memories and experiences of displacement in its three primary forms that India witnessed with the rise of colonial capitalism and subsequently after independence, namely, indenture, diaspora and internal displacement. If the idea behind putting together these different registers of human movements across colonial and postcolonial space-time at one place is to add comprehensiveness to the human saga of struggle, survival and renewal, it also by the same measure problematises any linear narrative of progress. To cite an instance, if diasporas show how national identities are re-codified from beyond the narrow geographical boundaries of south Asia, subaltern life stories give us an entry into how national histories are re-appropriated by subaltern histories.

The aim of the book is not to give a historically comprehensive account of human movements in India since colonialism. Neither does it try to dwell on the big questions of history – the big actors, the big story, the big picture of the big nation. As against all this, the thrust of the essays is on the subjective and the phenomenological: what it means to be uprooted – as a group, as a family, as an individual. What is it to witness suffering? What did it mean to go through Partition, to be raped and violated, and to live with secret memories which cannot be shared with even very intimate people? What is the afterlife of

pain and trauma? The book, by drawing on the subjective and cultural, tries to throw light on the complex politics of memory, nationalism and identity. It joins the new kind of scholarship that emerged in the 90s with the rise of cultural studies that placed the everyday at the centre stage of inquiry and drew intellectual sustenance from the emergence of a self-conscious discourse of memory in history writing, made possible by the discourse of poststructuralism.

Call them narratives or 'sites' or theatres of displacements, the essays of the volume consciously transgress the strict academic/fictional divide, not in a uniform manner but differently, each story finding its own unique interface and language of representation. "Life of the Past: Indian Bengali Diaspora and the Cultural Politics of Nostalgia" argues that the Indian Bengali diasporic community's relation to the home country is marked by a past which is lost and a present which is a lack. The community justifies its rupture from the 'motherland' by attempting to become *better* Bengalis – to invoke a past when Bengal's 'today' was India's 'tomorrow' is what frames Indian Bengali diasporic cultural life. This has meant the framing of its cultural lives on the high aesthetic products of the past, a classy and fossilized 'taste culture'. As a result, the second generation Indian Bengali diaspora, unlike the Fiji Indians in Sydney or Punjabis in London, has very little in terms of a popular home-country cultural platform. This has serious implications for its politics of identity.

*ChaloJahaji* discusses the process of the imagining into existence of a sense of nationhood by a specific diaspora of Indian origin – namely, the Fiji Indians – and the role that Bollywood, in its different manifestations over the years, plays in this. It seeks to show how negotiation with the 'culture of the motherland' became for the Fiji Indians part of a much broader question of negotiation with the (post)indentured definition of the self. The Indian epic, Ramayana, served a new semiotics for the indentured Indo-fijians. With time, as the memory of one's 'roots' – the *real* India – was fading away among Fiji Indians, films took over the responsibility of constructing an empty, many-coloured space through its never-ending web of images, songs, 'dialogues' and stars. The coup in Fiji (1987) occasioned an overnight exodus of Indo-fijians to the West. The situation was unenviably complex, since the India the Fiji Indians met in those locations was unwilling to give up its historical memory of unquestioned superiority vis-à-vis those who, even if

now westernized and fairly prosperous, were once nothing but ‘coolies’. In the new context, the empty space of Bollywood would be shorn of even the pretense of a referent – it is space unto itself, a *pure* space, so to say. Bollywood reciprocates this gesture by placing the diasporic *imaginaire* at the very heart of its new aesthetics and music.

Both these essays are anecdotal and genealogical in orientation. Both make a gesture against the overly abstract celebration of travel and hybridity so common in diaspora literature. For Bhabha, for instance, the true people are the luminal people. There is nothing new to suggest that factors like language, region or religion play a decisive role in the shaping of Indian selfhood. By bringing in the very different experiences of two Indian diasporas – Indian Bengalis and Fiji Indians – we try to treat the differences of language, region and religion as different positions in the locus of India’s (post)colonial modernity. Inter-implicated as they are, they are not so many cards in a game or so many notes to orchestrate a coherent score as is often hoped. They are deeply fractured processes of history whose understanding too needs to foreground the sense of contradictory modes of existence that only get heightened in diasporic locations due to new factors like host country attitudes (which include racism as well as formal endorsement of political equality), changed economic and cultural environs, and new scope for solidarity among different diasporas of the same ethnic and/or religious background spread across the globe.

“Growing Up Refugee” is, as Veena Das has characterized it, an “autobiographical ethnography” that tries to capture the larger history of post-Partition Calcutta as it moved from the early turbulent years of Partition through the phase of Naxalite violence to governmentalized polity administered by the Left Front. The essay tries to view this long stretch of time through the history of one family, my family, as seen through the eyes of the first person narrator, that is, me. There is something indeterminate about home. It can mean both the place I have left and the place I am going to but never have reached fully. Home is where the lived and the imagined mingle, where longing and belonging inevitably complicate each other. And ‘home’ comes out most starkly in displacement, in memories of uprooting and a desperate clinging to the provisional. “Growing Up Refugee” as a narrative of displaced home quite often crisscrosses, even transgresses,

narrow disciplinary borders; quite often in the narrative, memory, fact and fiction blend to illuminate the facticity of living in a post-Partition refugee colony.

As against this, the style of “Partition as history of the present: on the cultural turn” is unambiguously academic and theoretical. But its concerns are not very different from “Growing Up Refugee” since it analyses the new writings on Partition – like those of Urvashi Butalia, GyanPandey and Veena Das – as part of the emergence of a self-conscious discourse of memory in history writing, where memory is not so much the fullness of the original but the sign of an unincorporated remainder, an excess, a certain alterity to the unifying mode of history. The analeptic and proleptic shapings of shattered memories of displacement and violation (and their public use) construct a devastating archive of pain and anguish, far beyond the pale of the cause and effect time of psychological accounts. In the current posturing, the more memory becomes crystallized into a self-conscious discourse, separated from mainstream history writing, only pointing to what it does not address, the more is the risk of history being reduced to an unproblematic practice while memory itself attains an invulnerable position. To avoid this, we need a different posturing of history. Not something that happened decades back and wounds of which people preserve in the dark vaults of time that need to be retrieved and thus redeemed but what Benjamin called history of the present: the crises of the past and the crises of the present get conjoined in a momentary constellation to throw an unfamiliar light. The past looks at the present, the present at the past, the two tied in a speculative bonding. Not surprising the new history of Partition germinated in the riots of Delhi in 1984.

The essays are a kaleidoscopic constellation of different scenarios of displacement and journeys. “To the Land of Silica” is a real life account of the possible trafficking of a young woman in a long train journey from Calcutta to Bangalore as she herself moves between sanity and moments of insanity (drug induced?). The train compartment is framed like a proscenium arch with the fellow travelers as the audience, witnessing a young woman being consoled and finally bashed by her, perhaps fake, husband, as the voices of protestation and conscience die out. The narrative marks out a journey that is as much historical and social as personal and terrifying.

“Uttam Kumar Saloon” is the product of a series of interviews taken over four months early in 2007. It details the variegated life of a local barber: beginning from picking cow dung as a small boy for livelihood in a remote village in the South 24 Parganas to supplying drinking water to bus drivers to transporting sacks of salt from the boat to the nearby warehouse (always wary of the timings of the tide, which inevitably would increase the weight of the sacks) to carrying twenty bricks at a time to the top of a construction site and finally settling down to his ancestral profession, i.e., a barber. All through, what marks the narrative is the respondent’s native anxieties about the erotic which, he presumed, might go against his vigor and thus his laboring self. The interviews also capture the influence of Bengali popular cinema. His saloon is called Uttam Kumar Saloon, after the name of the Bengali matinee hero who remains his fountainhead regarding what constitutes the right mode of conduct for a male. At the saloon, the playback songs of the films starring Uttam Kumar have not stopped for a minute for the last twenty years during the hours of the day it remains open.