



INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES KOLKATA

(A Centre of Excellence in Social Sciences funded by the Government of West Bengal)

SALT LAKE CAMPUS • DD 27/D, SECTOR 1, SALT LAKE, KOLKATA 700 064

Seminar Notice

Dr. Akash Bhattacharya

Research Associate
Max Weber Stiftung
India Branch Office
will present a paper on

Indigenous Elementary Schools and Colonial Educational Reforms

Abstract

In this talk, drawing upon the case of *pathshala* reforms in nineteenth century Bengal, I shall challenge the state-centric linear transition narrative which continues to structure the history of colonial education. There seems to exist a scholarly consensus that modern education was transposed to the colonies from the West at the behest of the colonial state and local elites, and that indigenous institutional forms such as the *pathshalas* of Bengal disappeared in the process. In reality, the process of emergence of the colonial education system was far more complex. It was marked by anxieties, uncertainties and subsequent discontinuities in the policies of the state, and by creative adjustments to the new educational milieu by local elites and non-elites. Few episodes demonstrate these complexities as clearly as the history of *pathshala* reforms. Far from succumbing to the might of the colonial state, these institutions, and their (non-elite) clientele, sharply contested government policy throughout the nineteenth century. The cut and thrust left a deep imprint on the education system as it continuously forced the government to alter its policies with regard to school education.

Date: July 19 (Friday), 2019

Time: 3.15 pm

Venue: IDSK Seminar Room, 5th Floor

All are Welcome

Subhanil Chowdhury
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Convenor, Seminar Committee, IDSK
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