

2nd International Conference

Servants' Pasts



Date: 11—13 April 2018

Venue: Senatssaal, Humboldt University, Berlin

Organisers: Nitin Varma (Re: work, Humboldt University, Berlin)
Nitin Sinha (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin).

Contact: erc.servants@googlemail.com

11.04.18

9.00—9.20 **Registration and Tea**

9.20—9.30 **Introduction**

9.30—10.40 **Servants, Slaves, Merchants & Royalty I**

Chair: Pankaj K. Jha (Lady Sri Ram College, University of Delhi)

Sweta Singh (Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, India)

*The Unique Case of Master-Servant Relationships among Jews
from Mediterranean to Malabar: 1000-1300 C.E.*

Neha Vermani (Royal Holloway, University of London, U.K.)

*From the Cauldrons of History: Hidden Labours of Kitchen Work in
the Mughal Empire.*

10.40—10.50 **Tea Break**

10.50—12.40 **Servants, Slaves, Merchants & Royalty II**

Chair: Pankaj K. Jha (Lady Sri Ram College, University of Delhi)

Lubna Irfan (Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, India)

*Unearthing the History of the Servants in Mughal India: The
Ambiguous Life of the Servile Public within the Larger Socio-Political
Structure of Royalty and Nobility.*

Nicholas J. Abbott (Department of History, Old Dominion University, Norfolk,
U.S.A.)

*Cracked Backs and Broken Waists: Eunuchs, Gender, and Verbal
Abuse in Early Modern Awadh.*

Rochisha Narayan (History Department, University of Cincinnati, U.S.A)

*In the Service of Empire: Widows, Dependents and Intermediary
Households in Colonial India.*

12.40—13.40 **Lunch**

13.40—15.30 Regulation & Domestic Work

Chair: David Mayer (Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (IISG), Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

Akanksha Singh (Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Delhi University, India)

Domesticating the Discourse on Servitude: Slavery vs. Service.

Prinisha Badassy (University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa)

A Tissue of Lies: Crimes of Unlawful Carnal Knowledge and Indecent Assault by Indian Domestic Servants, Colonial Natal.

Fae Dussart (Department of Geography, University of Sussex, Brighton, U.K.)

'Keep Them in the Path of Duty': The 'Regulation' of Indian Servants on the Colonial Domestic Frontier 1870-1900.

15.30—15.50 Tea Break

15.50—17.00 Castes of Food

Chair: Heike Liebau (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin)

Vidhya Raveendranathan (CeMIS, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany)

Writing Histories of Pariah Domestic Servants and Butlers in Nineteenth Century Madras.

Salma Wasi (Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, India)

Indian Cook Servants in the Imperial Army, 1914-1946.

17.00—18.00 Keynote:

Carolyn Steedman (Professor Emeritus, University of Warwick, Coventry, U.K.)

Domestic Servants, Domestic Law: What the Servants Knew (in England and elsewhere, in the long, long 18th century).

Chair: Nitin Varma & Nitin Sinha

Conference Dinner for participants.

12.04.18

9.30—11.20 Male Domesticity

Chair: Charu Gupta (Department of History, University of Delhi)

Swapna Banerjee (Brooklyn College, City University of New York, U.S.A.)

Servants as Social Imaginaries: The Intimate Labour of Male Domestic Workers in Colonial Bengal, India.

Nassima Mekaoui-Chebout (EHESS Paris, France / IRMC Tunis, Tunisia)

Introduction to a Case Study – Abdallah Benameur’s Case: The “Indigenous” Valet, A Racialized and Masculinized Domestic Servant in Colonial Algeria (1910s).

Ritam Sengupta (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, India)

Historicising the Slow Death of the Punkah Wallah.

11.20—11.30 **Tea Break**

11.30—13.20 **Bungalows & Jungle**

Chair: Nitin Sinha (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin, Germany)

John Basy Paul (Centre for Women’s Studies, University of Hyderabad, India)

Servant, Servitude and Salvation: Domestic Workers of Missionary Bungalows – A Case Study.

Tresa Abraham (Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Bombay, India)

The ‘Griffin’ and the ‘Nouker’ in the Colonial Domestic Space: A Study of E.H. Aitken’s ‘Behind the Bungalow’.

Ezra D. Rashkow (Department of History, Montclair State University, U.S.A.)

Jungle, Home: Camp Servants and Glamping in British India.

13.20—14.30 **Lunch**

14.30—16.10 **Intimate Labour**

Chair: Charu Gupta (Department of History, University of Delhi, India)

Ruchika Sharma (Gargi College, University of Delhi, India)

Engendering Śringara, Procuring Love: Sakhi, Duti, and Go-Between in Riti Poetry.

Satyasikha Chakraborty (History Department, Rutgers University, New Brunswick,
U.S.A.)

*Racialized Nursemaids in Early 20th Century Picture-Postcards: A
Comparative Study of the Ayah, the Mammy, and the Baboe.*

Raffaella Sarti (Department of Communication Sciences, Humanities and
International Studies, University of Urbino Carlo Bo, Italy)

*European Governesses in Asia: Power Relations, Cultural Exchanges,
Intimacies, 19th to 20th Centuries.*

16.10—16.20 **Tea Break**

16.20—17.00 Conversations: Themes, openings, challenges

Conference dinner for participants.

13.04.18

10.00—11.20 Narratives, Imaginaries & Servants

Chair: Jana Tschurennev (CeMIS, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen,
Germany)

Dele Maxwell Ugwanyi (General Studies Department, Enugu State University of
Science and Technology, Nigeria)

*Migrants Metaphor and Postcolonial (Dis)Engagements: Rethinking
the African Domestic Narratives in the African Literary Imaginaries
in the Present Past*

Charu Gupta (Department of History, University of Delhi, India)

*Mistresses & Servants: Literary and Legal Sketches in Early 20th
Century Uttar Pradesh.*

11.20—11.30 **Tea Break**

11.30—12.40 Urdu Literature & Servants

Chair: Pankaj K. Jha (Lady Sri Ram College, University of
Delhi, India)

Ufaque Paiker (Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi,

India)

Fault lines of familiarity: Hearing silences in representation of domestic servants.

Christina Oesterheld (South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg, Germany)

Between Trust and Mistrust: Master-Servant Relationships in Urdu Narratives of the 1860s-1880s.

12.40—13.40 **Lunch**

13.40—15.30 **City & Servants**

Chair: Raffaella Sarti (Department of Communication Sciences, Humanities and International Studies, University of Urbino Carlo Bo, Italy)

Lauren Wilks (Department of Sociology, University of Edinburgh, U.K.)

Contestation and Constraint: Commuting Domestic Workers and their Employers in Contemporary Kolkata.

Nargis Vasundhara (Department of Sociology, Delhi University, India)

Rethinking Female Servers: Negotiating Urban Domesticity.

Müge Telci Özbek (Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History, Bogazici University, Turkey)

Behind the Gloss of Paternal Protection: Negotiating the Labour and Sexuality of Female Domestic Servants in Istanbul, during the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries.

15.30—15.40 **Tea break**

15.40—16.50 **Politics & Power**

Chair: Franziska Roy (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin, Germany)

Lokesh (Department of Sociology, University of Delhi, India)

“From the Home to the World”: Ethnography of a Contemporary Domestic Workers' “Riot”.

Sonal Sharma (Department of Sociology, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore,

U.S.A.)

Class and Classification: Rethinking the History and Politics of Paid Domestic Labour in India.

16.50

Final Session:

Chair: tbc

Raffaella Sarti (Department of Communication Sciences, Humanities and International Studies, University of Urbino Carlo Bo, Italy)

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