

# **The Nazi Study of India and Indian Anti-Colonialism: Knowledge Providers and Propagandists in the ‘Third Reich’**

**Book Discussion by the author Dr. Baijayanti Roy, Lecturer & Researcher,  
Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main**

- **Wednesday, 19 February 2025, 03:30 PM,**
- **A. K. Basak Auditorium, Presidency University, 86/1 College Street,  
Kolkata – 700073.**

## **Bio:**

Dr. Baijayanti Roy is a lecturer and researcher at Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main. An alumna of the erstwhile Presidency College, Kolkata, she earned her PhD from the Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main in 2014 on Albert Speer. From 2018 to 2021, she was a post-doctoral researcher in the DFG Project 'Indology in National Socialist Germany' under Prof. D. Moritz Epple. Before her doctoral and postdoctoral studies, she worked in various English language newspapers in India as senior editor and features writer from 1996 to 2000. Her numerous publications include a couple of monographs, *The Making of a Gentleman Nazi: Albert Speer's Politics of History in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2016) and *The Nazi Study of India and Indian Anti-Colonialism: Knowledge Providers and Propagandists in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024).

## **Abstract:**

Dr. Roy will be here to discuss her just released book *The Nazi Study of India and Indian Anti-Colonialism: Knowledge Providers and Propagandists in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024), whose review can be read [here](#). It is the first detailed and critical study of the intellectual and political connections between German scholars specializing on India, non-academic ‘India experts’, Indian anti-colonialist intellectuals, and various organs of the Nazi state. It explores the ways in which different kinds of knowledge pertaining to India’s history and contemporary politics were used by this diverse group of men to fulfil certain political goals of Nazi Germany. The book presents four organizations as case studies to demonstrate the ways in which discourses on India were employed to pursue Nazi Germany’s primary objective, which was to engage in pro-German and, as the war approached, anti-British propaganda in India. The four organizations under review, presented as four chapters, are the India Institute of the Deutsche Akademie; the Special Department India of the German Foreign Ministry; the Seminar for Oriental languages and its successor organizations affiliated to the University of Berlin; and the Indian Legion of the German Armed Forces or Wehrmacht. The chapters illuminate the complex entanglements between individuals, specialized academic and non-academic knowledge, demands of Germany’s cultural politics, and Indian anti-colonialist aspirations. This study often desists from using the term Indology in the context of the four organizations, preferring the more generic ‘knowledge of India’ instead. This is because Indology is generally associated with the

academic study of India's ancient past, while the Nazi authorities concerned found insights into contemporary India to be more 'usable'.