

SECOND TWO DAY TEACHERS' WORKSHOP ON

**SYLLABUS MAKING & RESEARCH
METHODS IN MIGRATION &
FORCED MIGRATION STUDIES**

Report

By

Joy Karmakar, Sheikh Rafiq Ullah and Udai Kumar Shaw

ORGANIZED BY

CALCUTTA RESEARCH GROUP

IN COLLABORATION WITH

INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN SCIENCES VIENNA

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Concept Note

Calcutta Research Group

In collaboration with IWM, Vienna

SECOND Two Day Teachers' Workshop on Syllabus Making and Research Methods in Migration and Forced Migration Studies

23-24 January 2022, Kolkata, India

Migration and forced migration studies have emerged as an interdisciplinary field of study, to be reckoned with in most university and school systems, across disciplines and continents. From the study of histories of migration (induced by colonialism, slavery or epidemics) to reading present day population patterns, from analysing the contributions of migrants to a national economy to exploring narratives of refugees and migrants—migration and forced migration are now key components in different established disciplines: History, Demography, Geography, Political Science and International Relations, Anthropology, Literary and Cultural Studies, Economics, and many more. This is both a response to our contemporary history, marked by massive flows and displacements of people and a recognition of the importance of recording, researching and teaching migration.

In December 2021, CRG and IWM organised a *Two-Day Teachers' Workshop on Research Methodology and Syllabus Making*, with participants from all over India and virtual panellists from Europe, Australia and other parts of Asia (see report here:

http://www.mcrg.ac.in/IWM_Migration/Report%20Teachers'%20Workshop.pdf).

This was followed up by *Reading Refugees, Reading Migration: An (Online) Orientation Course for College and University Teachers*, in July-August 2021 where 27 teachers and 16 resource persons from different disciplinary and geographical locations explored the thematic and the problematic of migration studies, questions of methods, and, literary and cultural registers of migrants and refugees (see details

here:http://www.mcrg.ac.in/IWM_Migration_2021/IWM_Migration_Teachers_2021.asp).

The proposed Second Two-Day Teachers' workshop will frame a series of syllabi through world café and other consultative methods, keeping in mind that the syllabi for such an interdisciplinary field must always already be provisional, contingent and speaking to the teachers' and the students' intersectional locations. It will tackle questions of research methods, challenges in educating migrant and refugee students, issues of pedagogy, strategies for navigating bias and prejudice in the classroom, historical ownership of knowledge, etc., drawing upon experts in the field who have introduced and engaged with migration studies within institutional settings.

[The lectures from *Reading Refugees, Reading Migration* have been uploaded to <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBF-WP5vW1kvungtxBRGK4uNtRYQIkuBR>]

This workshop, supported by the Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna, is part of CRG's ongoing programme in migration and forced migration studies, supported by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, South Asia, IWM Vienna and several other universities and institutes in India.

Workshop Schedule

Second Two-Day Teachers' Workshop on Syllabus Making and Research Methods in Migration and Forced Migration Studies

23-24 February 2022

23 February 2022, Wednesday

9.30- 10.00: Registration & Tea

10.00- 11.30: Inaugural Session

Welcome Address: Byasdeb Dasgupta (President, CRG & Kalyani University, Kalyani)

Introduction: Shyamalendu Majumdar (Secretary, CRG & Sivanath Sastri College, Kolkata)

Report: Samata Biswas (Workshop coordinator & The Sanskrit College and University, Kolkata)

11.30-12.00: Tea

12.00- 1.30: Panel Discussion, "Women, Migration and Cultural Production" [Hybrid Session]

Speakers: Aparna Eswaran (JNU, New Delhi), Asha Singh (CSSSC, Kolkata)

Moderator: Francis Adaikalam (Loyola College, Chennai)

Discussant: Rajat Kanti Sur (CRG)

1.30- 2.30: Lunch

2.30- 4.00: Book Release: *Memories of Arrival: A Voice from the Margins*, Adhir Biswas and V. Ramaswamy [Hybrid session]

Introduction: Mandira Sen (Publisher)

Speakers: Adhir Biswas (Author), V Ramaswamy (Translator), Samrat Sengupta (Sidho Kanho Birsa

University), Samata Biswas (The Sanskrit College and University & CRG)

Moderator: Ananya Chatterjee (Haldia Govt. College & CRG)

4.00- 4.30: Tea

4.30- 6.00: Plenary Lecture, 'Migration and Sexual Violence', [Hybrid Session]

Speaker: Chris Dolan (Refugee Law Project, Makerere University)

Chair: Paula Banerjee (University of Calcutta, Kolkata & CRG)

24 February 2022, Thursday

9.30- 10.00: Registration & Tea

10.00- 11.30: Discussion with Sahayog, 'Pandemic, Education and Migrant Children'

Speakers: Sabir Ahamed (Pratichi Trust & CRG), Vinay Kr. Ojha (Shri R. P. Institute)
 Discussants: Arup K Sen (Serampore College & CRG), Sudeep Basu (Central University of
 Gujarat, Gandhinagar & CRG)

11.30- 12.00: Tea

12.00- 1.30: World Café: Group Discussions on Syllabi and Submission of Draft Syllabi

Group leaders: Biswajit Mohanty (Deshbandhu College, Delhi), Shreeraj Gudi (Manipal Institute
 of Communication, MAHE, Manipal), Shishir Tiwari (NEHU, Shillong)

1.30- 2.30: Lunch

2.30-4.30: Film Screening and Discussion, The Human Flow (2017), Ai Wei Wei

Moderator: Tapasya Thapa (Srishti Manipal Institute of Design, Bengaluru)
 Discussants: Gurmeet Kaur (Panjab University, Chandigarh), Anindya Sen (Assam University,
 Silchar)

4.30-5.00: Tea

**5.00- 6.30: Valedictory Lecture: Exploring the Education-Development Nexus Through a
 Migration/ (Im)mobility Lens [Hybrid Session]**

Speakers: Elaine Chase (University College London), Amy North (University College London)
 Chair and Moderator: Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury (Honorary Director, CRG & Rabindra
 Bharati University, Kolkata)

Concluding remarks: Nasreen Chowdhury (Vice-President, CRG & Delhi University, Delhi)

6:30-6:45: Certification of Workshop Participants

Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty (Former Professor, Presidency College, Kolkata & CRG) and
 Prasanta Ray (Former Professor, Presidency College, Kolkata & CRG)

Vote of thanks: Ankur Tamuli Phukan, CRG.

Course rapporteurs:

Joy Karmakar (Serampore College, Serampore) and Sheikh Rafiq Ullah (CHSE, Odisha), Udai
 Kumar Shaw (Banarhat Kartik Oraon Hindi Government College, West Bengal)

Report

Day ONE: Inaugural Session



Byasdeb Dasgupta, President, CRG, welcomed all the participants gathered from different parts of the country. He explained the importance of migration studies and emphasized that migration and forced migration studies have emerged as an interdisciplinary study and stressed that it should be studied at school, college, and university level. The purpose of such workshops is to make syllabi and find out the ways to incorporate these as part of the curriculum in school/college. He concluded the welcome address by saying that the workshop will benefit all the participants and provide a new platform to think the different dimension of migration.

Shyamalendu Majumdar (Secretary, CRG) commented that the world of social sciences has responded to almost all the crises. Social scientists have tried to find out the causes of the crisis and at the same time have worked to find solutions of the problems. In this context, CRG has played an important role in South Asia. CRG has been working in the last 3 years on these issues and has organized its first workshop in December 2020. CRG has been working on various projects on migration and forced migration. He stated that CRG organized a two days teacher workshop in December 2020. Thereafter in July and August, 2021 an online course for teachers on the topic of *Reading Refugees: Reading Migration* has also been organized. The purpose of this workshop is to create a syllabus within an interdisciplinary framework. This workshop must investigate issues of pedagogy and the problems of educating migrant people and students. The purpose of this workshop is to introduce the refugee issue systematically to the college and university teachers. Hence framing a proper syllabus is a challenge for the biggest humanitarian crisis.

Samata Biswas: (Workshop coordinator) highlighted the point that it's been 25 years of CRG in the field of research and solidarity. It started as a collective of peace activists and in 1996 it had no formal structure. By now CRG has carved out its niche areas and migration has been one of them. It has collaborated with various funding institutions and agencies. It has wide ranging collaboration on the issues of migration like the Europe Asia Research Platform on Forced Migration. Then she talked about different kinds of internal displacement in India and the 'notion of statelessness'. Different disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, demography etc have all been concerned with migration. Post-colonial and post-modern understanding of

refugees/migration and the local conditions are very important, she added. Consequently, it was quite difficult to frame a syllabus for the online course that would cater to everyone. She touched upon some critical issues like mainstreaming gender, methodological issues, and specific issues (Rohingyas) and urban space. She said that urban space both produces and gives shelter to the refugees. She stressed the idea that migration or migration studies should be recognized as an interdisciplinary field of study and not as a discipline. One should recognize the specific area of research and education in migration studies. Syllabus should take into consideration the interdisciplinary aspects. She further pointed out that cultural production, vocabulary and language as important dimensions that impact the migrants. She gave an example of cultural production that is the film the Human Flow. The challenge is how to provide education to the students who are migrants and the ways of handling all the challenges. She concluded that syllabus must be all inclusive and should take into account all disciplines and different dimensions that directly or indirectly impacts migrants.

Group Discussion:



After the inaugural session the participants introduced themselves. Thereafter, Samata Biswas briefly introduced the idea of migration for preparing syllabus. To discuss the various aspects of the syllabus, a group discussion was arranged, following the world café method. Three groups were given slots of fifteen minutes each with each group leader to discuss themes, methods and texts. Dr. Shyamalendu Majumdar, Dr. Arup Sen and Prof. Byasdeb Dasgupta acted as the group leaders. Group 1 prepared their syllabus focusing on the broad concepts of ‘Development and Politics of Identity’. Group 2 focused on the study of the City as a site of migration with a special focus on Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Siliguri. The Group 3 emphasized on the interrelationship between political emergencies, public reason, and forced migration theoretically and practically, from a media perspective.

Second Session: 12.00 - 1.30

Panel Discussion, “Women, Migration and Cultural Production” [Hybrid Session]

Speakers: Aparna Eswaran (JNU, New Delhi), Asha Singh (CSSSC, Kolkata)

Discussant: Rajat Kanti Sur (CRG)

Aparna Eswaran talked about her doctoral research on the civil war in the Jaffna peninsula of Sri Lanka and its expression through text written by Tamil women. She identified the transformation of textual narratives (through poetry/songs) for Tamil women fighters in Sri Lanka. She highlighted the significance of poetry as a medium of cultural production. Her main area of focus was those poems through which people expressed their experience of migration during the civil war in Sri Lanka, and invoking Agamben she explored the notion of poetry as testimony. Through poetry we can get a glimpse of the civil war in Sri Lanka, she added. Poetry can also be instrumental in understanding the transition of Tamil nationalism in the post war period. The poetry addressed issues like disappearance of combatants and the problems of the absorption of the ex-combatants, particularly women in the society. During discussion participants asked about masculine nature of the poetry and its acceptance to the women. How does she visualize moral questioning in a poetry which confronts war-like situations?



The second presentation was about *Bhojpuri* folk song and migration in Bihar by Asha Singh. She represented the Folk song as a form of cultural production. Folk songs are one of the literary sources which provide valuable data for sociological research in terms of the incidence and situations of migrants. The specific focus of her presentation was about the depiction of male migrants in Bhojpuri folk song in the second half of the 20th century. She explored the diverse socio-economic condition that inspires to create such folk songs. She identified the Bhojpuri folk songs broadly in two types namely songs which focused on male migration for economic upliftment and songs which focus on marriage migration of women. However she challenges the categories of male migration as economic domain and marriage migration as female domain. She also said that the problem with folklore is that we do not have any information about the writer. It

is also very difficult to memorize so many songs and passed to the next generations. During the discussion questions are asked about the transformation of poetry and the creation of new *Bhojpuri* folk songs on pandemic situations.

Third Session: 2.30 – 4.00

Book Release: *Memories of Arrival: A Voice from the Margins*, Adhir Biswas and V. Ramaswamy

Introduction: Mandira Sen (Publisher)

Speakers: Adhir Biswas (Author), V. Ramaswamy (Translator), Samrat Sengupta (Sidho Kanho Birsa University), Samata Biswas (The Sanskrit College and University & CRG)

Moderator: Ananya Chatterjee (Haldia Govt. College & CRG)



The author Adhir Biswas read a passage ‘Kolkata 71’ in Bengali from his book. He came to Calcutta as a refugee from East Pakistan in 1967 at the age of 12. Biswas explains the situation of Calcutta in 1971 and what unfolds thereafter in his life in the city. He also highlighted the depiction of the contemporary times in Mrinal Sen’s movies and his personal experience. He found that the situation of the refugees was particularly challenging. The book is about deep humanism, sorrow of struggles and survival amidst dislocation. The same passage was read in English by V. Ramaswamy, the translator. Ramaswamy also read out sections from his introduction to the volume. Ananya Chatterjee shared her experiences with Adhir Biswas as a colleague and later a friend. Samrat Sengupta situated the context of the book in a wider perspective of the post partition situation in South Asia, while Samata Biswas discussed the book as a narrative about childhood.

Fourth Session: 4.00 – 6.00PM

Plenary Lecture, 'Sexual Violence and Migration', [Hybrid Session]

Speaker: Chris Dolan (Refugee Law Project, Makerere University)

Chair: Paula Banerjee (University of Calcutta, Kolkata & CRG)

Chris Dolan analyzed instances and proliferation of sexual violence in conflict and displacement situations. Most of data on sexual violence are either unrecognized or inaccurate. Sexual violence intersects with other factors such as race, gender, religion and class etc. He also raised question about the 'continuity and discontinuity' of the sexual violence and pointed out the causes of discontinuities. Impact of sexual violence was categorised into five types including physical and medical, psychological, psycho-sexual, psycho-social and political.



He highlighted that sexual violence is omnipresent in conflict settings and scenarios of displacement. Sexual violence is mostly hidden, under recognized and lacks in adequate response. Academic and policy discourses largely characterized by silences, erasures and an unwillingness to acknowledge the issues of sexual violence against men. Survivors of sexual violence keep quiet due to inadequate spaces and fears related with disclosure of identity which include high risk of stigma and exclusion. Data available on sexual violence is inaccurate and reflect an undercount of actual incidents. Anybody can be target of sexual violence: male and female, old and young, gay and trans-man, intersex and trans-woman. Sexual violence against men sometime disappears

under other (gendered) umbrella headings. In this light rape of men can be considered as a subset of sexual violence and it should not be equated with simple term like sexual harassment. Sexual violence is a weapon of war. It also leads to intra-family and trans-generational trauma. He dismissed the idea of hierarchy of harm and described that traditional idea of hierarchy of harm as false in nature. So he presented an umbrella concept of violence and harm rather than hierarchy of harm.

SECOND DAY

First Session: 10.00 - 11.30AM



Discussion with Sahayog, 'Pandemic, Education and Migrant Children'

Speakers: Sabir Ahmed (Pratichi Trust & CRG) and Vinay Kr. Ojha (Shri R.P. Institute):

Discussants: Arup K. Sen (Serampore College & CRG) and Sudeep Basu (Central University of Gujarat & CRG)

Sabir Ahamed's lecture dealt with the impact of pandemic on the school education sector. He said that 75 years of independence has led us to only 75% of literacy rate, as per 2011 census report. Thus, 25 percent are still not literate. There is a huge gap around gender and social groups in terms of literacy. Female literacy is an area of concern. Everything opened but the schools remain closed. Schools were missing for the children. Around 1.5 million schools were shut down and around 2.47 million children enrolled in elementary and secondary schools were badly affected by the pandemic. He discussed the flaws in the education system in India: underfunding, over

crowdedness, digital divide, high dropout, disparity along gender and social groups. During the pandemic it has been reported that child marriages were quite high particularly in rural areas. Various groups of people across gender, class, caste and creed have been affected by the pandemic. He highlighted that unequal access to the internet is the main hindrance in facilitating online education. A good number of students in the private schools are finding it difficult to clear the fees after the two years of school closure. Inadequate teachers in rural areas exposed the limitation of school education. Digital divide affected the educational attainment among the children. He focussed on three broad points, affordability, accessibility and computational abilities. Sporadic efforts were made by civil society organisations, like *Porar-Anononde* (Reading Festival), Open Air School, providing smart phones etc during pandemic. Recycling of the old devices, digital materials have been distributed. He suggested that there is a need to invest more on digital infrastructure by the government.

Vinay Kr. Ojha is the teacher in charge of Shri R. P. Institute. He highlighted the point that 85% of schools are government funded. So, the poor condition of government schools affects a large part of the population. In the city of Calcutta, the government schools played a vital role in the education sector. Due to the closure of schools in the pandemic many migrant families went back to their villages. As a result, the schools saw a high number of dropouts. It was difficult to contact students because their phone numbers stopped working due to non-recharge of mobile. The girls were married early at age after the closure of schools amid the pandemic. The digital revolution in India was for the very few people and those who were deprived they could not learn digitally. Particularly in the primary schools the children suffered multi-dimensional problems. Many students lost reading and writing skills. Due to forced migration in the shadow of the pandemic a huge number of students lost touch with the studies. Some students altogether stopped coming to the schools. After the unlocking, parents came back in the city while the students remained in the villages and did not attend any school. It was impossible for a teacher to visit each student's house.

Due to the pandemic, there have been behavior changes which have affected their mental health. Instead of going to school and studying, students were involved in learning slang and other bad habits. Pandemic has also affected the mental health of teachers as well as migrant students. Capacity building measures towards learning has been taken by some of the NGOs but it was inadequate. He suggested a common syllabus for migrant children belonging to different states should be made and implemented at the school level so that they can connect the subject at any place be it city or in their native place.

Second Session: 12.00 - 1.30PM

World Café II: Group Discussion on Syllabi and Submission of Draft Syllabi

Group Leaders:

Biswajit Mohanty (Deshbandhu College, Delhi): Group 1

Shishir Tiwari (NEHU, Shillong): Group 2

Sheeraj Gudi (Manipal Institute of Communication, MAHE, Manipal): Group 3

In this session the participants went back to the group formations of the previous day to discuss the syllabus they had already drafted, based on three components. including challenges, extension activity and motivation for taking the course. Discussion on each of the components was limited to 15 minutes.

Group 1 considered that there can be many challenges that include the interdisciplinary background of the students and their position in the society, as well as prior knowledge about the subject. Extension can be done in two stages. At the beginning of the course there can be activities like organizing awareness programs on migration and the plight of migrants. It will develop a motivation among students. In the second stage i.e. during course students should be given a task to create an online open access data bank where local stories and other information related to migration and migrants will be recorded. Apart from these, legal aid services, community monitoring as extension can be developed. Digital media can be used as a virtual platform to create motivation among the students. Reading groups can also be formed for this purpose. Various pressing issues can be incorporated to motivate students including climate change, disaster management and migration. Field visits as an exercise can be taken to motivate the students.

Group 2 members developed their syllabus focusing on the broad topic city as a site of migration. Like group 21 they also highlighted the methodological challenges for syllabus making. It was pointed out that cinema can be a good method to overcome the challenges at the beginning, where migrant students can locate themselves through the movies. They can also look around the different migrant characters including vendors, Hawker etc. Extension services include field visits in various parts of the city as well as creation of digital libraries and NSS of college/ educational institutes can be part of extension service. Cultivation of empathy among the students and telling successful stories of migrants to the student can motivate the students. They concluded by saying that use of local language in the curriculum will be useful to motivate the students

Group 3 focused their syllabus on the broad topic of Media and migration. They identified three major challenges inclusive of methodological challenge, infrastructural challenge and administrative challenge. They emphasized that resource persons can be involved to motivate the students because the person can share rich experiences with students. Apart from this Action Research and citizen journalism can be two major extension services they added.

Third Session: 2.30 - 4.00PM



Film Screening and Discussion, *The Human Flow* (2017), Ai Wei Wei
 The Moderator: Tapasya Thapa (Srishti Manipal Institute of Design, Bengaluru)
 Discussants: Gurmeet Kaur (Punjab University, Chandigarh)
 Anindya Sen (Assam University, Silchar)

The moderator initiated the discussion on the movie by giving a short introduction of its maker Ai Wei Wei, a Chinese migrant who visited 23 countries to make the film.

Gurmeet Kaur started her talk by reading a Punjabi poem written by Pash called *Khatarnak*.

She highlighted that more than 65 million people have been displaced from their homes around the world as a result of war, starvation and conflict since World War II. She then briefly introduced the work of Ai Wei Wei to the participants. She said that Wei Wei himself is a Chinese Refugee and investigates refugee crises and personal human consequences in countries like Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Jordan, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Mexico, USA and Bangladesh. The film showed human beings' desperate search for peace, security and shelter. She pointed out even though Ai Wei Wei is a refugee he did not try to impose his own personality rather the documentary depicts human search for peace. In this film migration is portrayed not as fanciful desire. Within this broad context the film is fit for workshop.

She noted that the film highlighted the displaced women's health, child's health and their rights in the camps and while moving towards different countries. Potential health crisis for children is also a major concern in the film. She also described the trans-cultural feminist perspectives in the context of the film and highlighted space not only material landscape but also linguistic and

symbolic one, repeats with concepts of memory and historical legacy. Women experience forced migration in the context of linguistic and symbolic space therefore cultural engagement is necessary. We should look at the film from feminist perspective as well as third world countries point of view.

Aindya Sen offered a very critical analysis of the movie. Wei Weitried to depict the situation of the migration crisis as a global problem. Thus, his attempt is epic in nature as he tried to universalise the phenomenon of migration crisis. There's a tension that runs throughout film and manages to carry through. He wanted to explore some of the tension that constantly flagged in the film. With the disagreement of the first speaker, he mentioned that it is the film maker's 'personal attempt' to visualize the crisis through this way. The film has tried to cover all the refugees, their movement, crisis and camps across the countries and continents. The epic perspective can be seen in the visualization of the film. Every profile shot has been followed by a long shot in the film then again it goes back to close shot. He highlighted that the maker loves drone shot and noted that through this long shot human beings are like ants.

Makers himself in the film appears so many times and pretends to be a refugee himself. Although Sen noted that he does not know whether he does have a position of privilege despite being a refugee. Sen also pointed out that the images are not original but rather cliché in the sense such images have been shown in several films like this. But the director plays around with them like showing the ocean in long shots as a bird eye view having no borders and then a helicopter flying in the sky which has multiple connotations as rescue helicopter, surveillance helicopter or military helicopter.

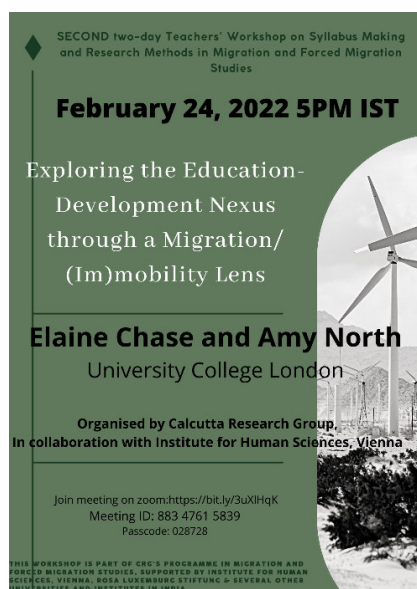
Fourth Session: 5.00 – 6.30PM

Valedictory Lecture: *Exploring the Education-Development Nexus Through a Migration/ (Im)mobility Lens*

Speakers: Elaine Chase (University College London),

Amy North (University College London)

Chair and Moderator: Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury (Honorary Director, CRG & Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata)



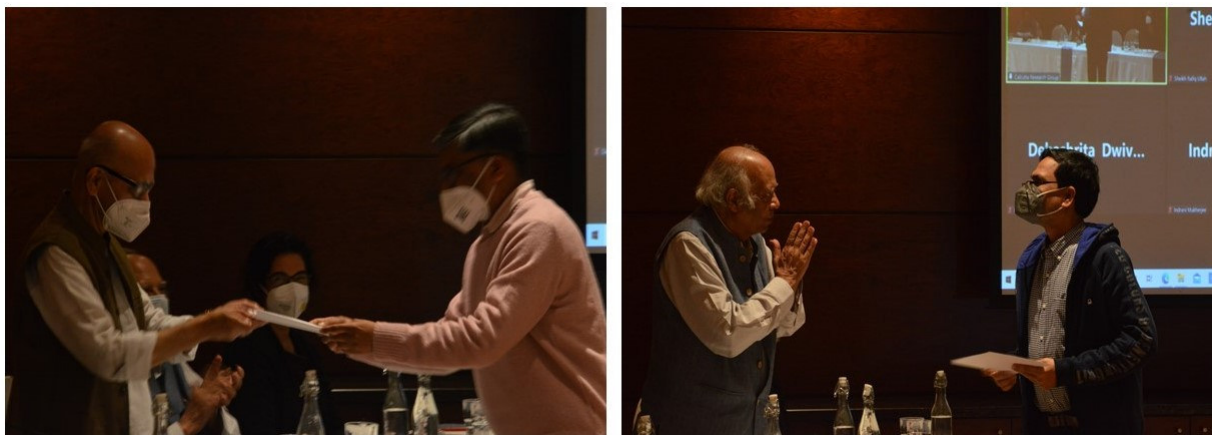
In this session both Chase and North tried to explore the Education- development nexus through migration. Their objective was to see how the gendered and other inequalities intersect with possibilities and emerging challenges and constraints. They highlighted that by their edited book they try to find the policies, practices and research that promote justice in education. They also noted that the role of education in different contexts like syllabus framing for different nationals have been explored in some of the research papers in their book. Educational biases and hierarchical concepts and discourse have been looked at in different research papers in

the books.

They also described the different frameworks used in the different research papers including postcolonial, modernism etc.

In her concluding remarks to the workshop, NasreenChowdhory (Vice-President, CRG & Delhi University, Delhi) talked about the about the relevance of the workshop with respect to knowledge dissemination about migration and refugee crisis. She also applauded the exercise of group discussion on syllabus making. She also expressed that many more such workshop should be organized to familiarize the issue of migration to the different people. The lectures from Reading Refugees, Reading Migration: An (Online) Orientation Course for College and University Teachers was also released for educational use. They are available at <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBF-WP5vW1kvungtxBRGK4uNtRYQIkuBR>

Senior CRG members and eminent teachers, Prof. Subhas Ranjan Chakraborty and Prof. Prasanta Ray awarded the certificates to the participants, which was followed by vote of thanks by AnkurTamuliPhukan, CRG researcher.



Course rapporteurs:

Dr. Joy Karmakar (Serampore College, Serampore)

Dr. Udai Kumar Shaw (Banarhat KartikOraon Hindi Government)

Sheikh Rafiq Ullah (CHSE, Odisha),

Organizing committee:Samata Biswas (Course Co-ordinator), Ankur Tamuli Phukan, RajatKanti Sur.

CRG Office Staff:Samaresh Guchhait, Subhashree Raut, Partha Protim Sarkar, Ashok Kumar Giri, Binayak Mallick (Librarian)

Technical support: Rituparna Dutta & Shatabdi Das (CRG researchers)

Course poster: Kusumika Ghosh

Documentation: Priyankar De, Utsa Sarmin

