

Fellows

Philipp Sperner

IFK_Junior Fellow

Duration of fellowship

01. October 2021 bis 30. June 2022

Philipp Sperner

PROJECT TITLE

»Never A-part«. Narratives of Friendship and the Political Imaginary of Postcolonial Democracy

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Provided democracy is not just a form of government but primarily »a mode of associated living,« as B. R. Ambedkar argued, the task is to inquire how this concept relates to cultural artistic representation and production. Both in India and Europe, the idea of *friendship* helped elucidate the democratic idea of universal equality as an articulation of individual and singular intimacy. What does the narrative of friendship say about our notion of democracy? This question lies at the heart of my research project on the »Politics of Friendship« in twentieth-century India. Next to recounting a culturally specific history of (democratic) ideas in and through literary texts, the project also explores the possibilities for new democratic narratives beyond Eurocentric limitations and with a global outlook.

CV

Philipp Sperner studied comparative literature and South Asian studies in Innsbruck and London (SOAS). He is a doctoral student at the DFG-funded research training group »Literature and Globalisation« at LMU Munich. His dissertation explores the political imaginary of democracy under the conditions of postcoloniality, particularly in modern India. More broadly, Philipp Sperner's research interests include global intellectual history, postcolonial and political theory, deconstruction and 20th-century Hindi literature.

Publications

»A Perpetuity of Lesser Emptiness: The Social Space of the Post-Colonial Small Town and Vinod Kumar Shukla's *Naukar k? kam?z*«, in: *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 2021 (in Druck); »Harmful Speech and the Politics of Hurt Sentiments: Censorship as a Biopolitical Project in India«, in: *Economic and Political Weekly (EPW)* 51:44–45, 2016, S. 109–116; »Literarische Solidarität im globalen Kontext«, in: Martin Mader (Hg.), *Arbeiter(kultur) in Literatur, bildender Kunst und Film*, Innsbruck 2014, S. 119–149.