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SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE WITH HEINRICH HIMMLER. 1943.

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Global Concepts and the Semantics of Social Spaces: Fascism and National Socialism in the Political Language of Subhas Chandra Bose

BY MIGUEL OHNESORGE

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This paper examines the conceptual incorporation of 'Fascism' and 'National Socialism' into the political language of Indian nationalist icon Subhas Chandra Bose, who influentially cooperated with the Axis powers during the Second World War. The article thereby tries to situate this case study in a wider methodological context shedding light on the relationship(s) between globally circulating concepts and the semantics of the specific social spaces they were articulated in. By reconstructing Bose's political language on the background of his political biography, it offers new insights into the entanglements between Indian political thought and European fascism. His framings of Italian Fascism, German National Socialism and fascist ideology were closely tied to his role in the Indian anticolonial struggle. The paper, thus, highlights the role that the 'social field' of Congress politics and the looser social formations of wartime politics played in structuring the reference semantics. Beyond the case study, it thereby proposes a heuristic framework to further analyse the practical functions that globally circulating concepts may obtain in specific social spaces.

Introduction

On the 3rd of January 1946, Colonel Prem Sahgal, Colonel Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon and General Shah Nawaz were sentenced for high treason at the historically charged Red Fort in Delhi. With this verdict, the preceding trials of functionaries within the Indian National Army ceased to be merely a matter of law or juridical discourse; these three officials became icons of a fundamental transformation in the anticolonial political culture of British India.¹ Despite military failure and dissolution, the armed forces of the *Azad Hind*² counter-government—proclaimed

¹ The "Red Fort Trials" were British military trials for Indian National Army officials. The trials involved more than the three mentioned subjects overall, but they, specifically, became symbolic figures of the post-war independence movement. As Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu, they evoked pan-religious solidarity, even causing a collaboration between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League.

² Translated into English as "Free India."

in October 1943 and led as well as epitomised by Subhas Chandra Bose³—continued to exercise unbroken symbolic power in South Asia. Gandhi’s mantra-like dictum of nonviolence, which had shaped the Indian National Congress’ politics for decades, was now widely replaced by more aggressive forms of political practice⁴ Different symbolic actions like Jawaharlal Nehru’s legal defence of the three military officials or the mutiny of over 20,000 soldiers in the Royal Indian Navy culminated not only in the end of the Raj, but also embedded the political legacy of Subhas Chandra Bose in various South(east)-Asian cultural memories.⁵

These historical developments of Indian political culture are at the core of Indian national history. Nonetheless, they can only be understood thoroughly in a global historical frame. Bose’s *Azad Hind* Government and the Indian National Army were not only nationalist projects rooted in Indian colonial society and culture, but also strategic instruments of the Axis powers, deeply entangled in the geopolitics of the Second World War.⁶ The dynamics, which climaxed in a military organisation, were situated in global networks of communication and interaction. From the mid-1930s, Subhas Chandra Bose had sought political connections with national socialist and fascist officials. Moreover, Italian Fascism and German National Socialism had been functioning as points of reference in wider Indian political discourse for a much longer time.⁷ Recent studies by Maria Framke, Marzia Casolari, and Tobias Delfs have shown how these two states and their political cultures were discursively integrated into Congress and Hindu-nationalist rhetoric during the 1930s.⁸

³ Subhas Chandra Bose, “Proclamation of the Provisional Government of Free India,” in *Chalo Delhi: Writings and Speeches 1943–1945*, Netaji: Collected Works 12, ed. Sisir Kumar Bose and Sugata Bose (Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 2008), 117–120. Subhas Chandra Bose’s leadership of the Indian National Army was institutionalised in this, so called, *Azad Hind* government. It was intended as a political counter project and “revolutionary” follow-up to British rule in India in the long run. The cited declaration was backed by Germany, Italy, and Japan.

⁴ Sugata Bose, *His Majesty’s Opponent: Subhas Chandra Bose and India’s Struggle against Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1; Yasmin Khan, *India at War: The Subcontinent and the Second World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), x.

⁵ *Ibid.*, xi; William F. Kuracina, “Sentiments and Patriotism: The Indian National Army, General Elections and the Congress’s Appropriation of the INA Legacy,” *Modern Asian Studies* 44, no. 4 (2010), 817–856.

⁶ Jan Kuhlmann, *Subhas Chandra Bose und die Indienpolitik der Achsenmächte* (Berlin: Schiller, 2003); Johannes H. Voigt, *Indien im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Studien zur Zeitgeschichte 11 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1978); Romain Hayes, *Subhas Chandra Bose in Nazi Germany: Politics, Intelligence, and Propaganda 1941–43* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

⁷ Kris Manjappa, *Age of Entanglement: German and Indian Intellectuals across Empire* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014), 7; Benjamin Zachariah, “Indian Political Activities in Germany, 1914–1945,” *Transcultural Encounters Between Germany and India: Kindred Spirits in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Joanne Miyang Cho et al. (New York: Routledge, 2013).

⁸ Maria Framke, *Delhi – Rom – Berlin: Die Indische Wahrnehmung von Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus 1922–1939* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2013); Tobias Delfs, *Hindu-Nationalismus und Europäischer Faschismus: Vergleich, Transfer- und Beziehungsgeschichte* (Hamburg: EB-Verlag, 2008); Marzia Casolari, “Hindutva’s Foreign

Such temporally and spatially amplified frameworks not only challenge notions of “the absence of fascism in India”⁹ and recall old questions regarding over-reaching definitions of ‘fascism,’ they also point to methodological possibilities and necessary elaborations of applied global histories of ideas. Maria Framke and Benjamin Zachariah rightfully point out that constructing an Ideal Type of fascism, i.e. a purely theoretical model of what essentially constitutes a fascist ideology, is methodically problematic for such a task.¹⁰ Such a Weberian approach to the conceptual and discursive history of fascism has been widely dismissed in historical research in general.¹¹ Moreover, it is also unable to uncover the processes of semantic transformation and negotiation that are crucial to understanding the global circulation of concepts. Thus, it is of limited use beyond comparative methods.

Recent studies have methodologically replaced fascist Ideal Types in different productive ways. One may avoid narrow definitions by tracing ‘fascism’ in smaller practices and ideas shared by most social groups or formations widely understood as fascist.¹² Another insightful approach was the attempt to empirically reconstruct networks of communication and thematic discourses.¹³ I will try to offer a different, more basic approach by following a modified Cambridge School method of conceptualising the history of ideas.¹⁴ Hence, this paper tries to show what was meant and especially what was done by incorporating references to ‘Fascism’ and ‘National Socialism’ into anti-colonial political communication. Shedding light on the processes of integration, disintegration, and entanglement of political languages and their semantics, such an approach offers a valuable perspective on the history of concepts and idioms that transcended individual political formations and groups.

On a broader theoretical level, this points to a fundamental methodological issue for global historians, which has been closely linked to ongoing critiques of the approach: How are global concepts integrated in specific social spaces¹⁵ and in their political languages? To do this issue justice, it is necessary to go beyond the mainly textual approach of the classical history of ideas and include social formations and spaces in my analytical framework. Therefore, I will situate political

Tie-up in the 1930s. Archival Evidence,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 35, no. 4 (2000), 218–228.

⁹ Benjamin Zachariah, “Rethinking (the Absence of) Fascism in India, c. 1922–45,” in *Cosmopolitan Thought Zones: South Asia and the Global Circulation of Ideas*, ed. Sugata Bose and Kris Manjappa (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 178–210.

¹⁰ Framke, *Delhi – Rom – Berlin*, 39–40; Zachariah, “Rethinking (the Absence of) Fascism in India,” 178–210.

¹¹ Robert O. Paxton, “Comparisons and Definitions,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Fascism*, ed. R. J. B. Bosworth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 547–565.

¹² Zachariah “Rethinking (the Absence of) Fascism in India,” 185.

¹³ Delfs, *Hindu-Nationalismus und Europäischer Faschismus*, Framke, *Delhi – Rom – Berlin*.

¹⁴ For further theoretical and methodological elaborations, see chapter 2.

¹⁵ When I talk about ‘social spaces’ I do not reference to Bourdieu’s model of social class and distinction, but the spatial localisation of social fields in the geographical sense.

language and speech acts in the broader context of a theory of social practice and social fields, drawing on the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu.

In this article, I will focus on Subhas Chandra Bose as one specific actor. While his actions had global implications, he was at the same time a regionally symbolic figure with a key influence on South-Asian political communication. His political activities, as well as his mostly sympathetic interactions with German and Italian dictatorships have been the subject of ample historical research, which has increasingly pointed to his interest in fascism and national socialism.¹⁶ Besides the geopolitical implications of his actions, the historical impact Bose had on the broader Indian independence movement highlights the value of such an actor-centred approach. In this regard, he was influential in shaping Indian perceptions of World War, fascism and national socialism.

After a chapter outlining the theoretical foundation of this paper, I will reconstruct Bose's political biography to sketch the social fields and spaces his actions were situated in. Afterwards, I turn to his political language in order to examine how he incorporated references to 'Fascism' and 'National Socialism' into his rhetoric. Building on these contextual and conceptual analyses, my conclusion will show how his references were imbedded in the described social formations and their semantics. Not only did Bose reframe 'National Socialism' and 'Fascism' in order to fit the language of Congress politics, they also were conceptual instruments of producing political distinction and power.

Beyond these empirical results, I will end my article with a proposal of some general lessons about the relationship between the semantics of specific social spaces and global political concepts, which can be drawn from this case study for global history in general.

Political Languages in Global History

Historians of ideas have discussed working definitions of their object of enquiry for a long time. Drawing on philosophy of language, the so-called Cambridge School, led by Quentin Skinner and John G.A. Pocock, reassessed the vague notion of the "political idea" by breaking it down to spoken or written forms of language.¹⁷ Ideas, therefore, should be researched in their verbal or scriptural frames, uttered or written down by concrete historical actors in specific political languages. Skinner modified the structuralist approach of "the Language of poli-

¹⁶ Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent*; Kuhlmann, *Subhas Chandra Bose und die Indienpolitik der Achsenmächte*; Johannes H. Voigt, "Hitler und Indien," In *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 19, no. 1 (1971), 33–63; Voigt, *Indien im Zweiten Weltkrieg*; Leonard A. Gordon, *Brothers against the Raj*, 2nd edition (New Delhi: Rupa Publications, 2015); Maria Framke, "Encounters with Fascism and National Socialism in non-European Regions," *Südasiens-Chronik* 2 (2012), 363–365.

¹⁷ Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas" in *Visions of Politics, Vol. 1: Regarding Method*, ed. Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 57–89.

tics” proposed by J.G.A. Pocock¹⁸ by drawing on Austin’s theory of speech acts and Wittgenstein’s assessment of languages as non-systemic grammatical sets (language games) situated in underlying *Lebensformen*, i.e. embedded and utilised in human practices.¹⁹ While pointing to languages of politics and their rules of articulation as necessary contexts for historical research, he stressed the agency of speakers and writers to change the shapes of discourses. Skinner’s agents are still largely discursively determined, but can eclectically and intentionally appropriate concepts and, thus, “logical grammars”²⁰ from different political languages that historically coexisted. Therefore, the intentions of speakers and writers must be traced because they constitute “illocutionary meanings.”²¹ This article follows Skinner’s elaborations, perceiving “political languages” in plural. Global history, i.e. the different methodologies generally associated with the term, is highly skeptical of considering historical spaces in terms of hermetically sealed containers.²² To write global histories of ideas, thus, resonates with the more pragmatic Skinnerian framework. But then, such an approach makes it analytically necessary to identify the circulating concepts and to render political languages.

The expansionist imperial projects of Italian fascism and German national socialism changed the lives of communities around the globe. Furthermore, the concepts ‘Fascism’ and ‘National Socialism’ also structured perceptions of the global and altered the logics of various political discourses on each continent.²³ Marking a process of global discursive integration, they fit into the concept of global history proposed by Sebastian Conrad, which is concerned with “a focus on integration and structural global transformations”—one might also speak of structural globalisation(s).²⁴

It is, nevertheless, a more difficult task to find criteria that at least heuristically determine the boundaries of a specific political language. I want to propose a possible approach drawing on Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of social practice

¹⁸ John G. A. Pocock, “The Concept of a Language and the *metier d’historien*,” in *Political Thought and History. Essays on Theory and Method*, ed. John G. A. Pocock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 87–105.

¹⁹ John L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words. The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975); Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2015), §22, §241.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, §496–497.

²¹ Austin, *How to do Things with Words*, 98–103. The illocutionary meaning describes the intentionally anticipated results of a speech act.

²² Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 4.

²³ Reto Hofmann and Daniel Hedinger, “Axis Empires: Towards a Global History of Fascist Imperialism,” *Journal of Global History* 12 (2017), 161–165; Sven Reichardt, “Globalgeschichte des Faschismus: Neue Forschungen und Perspektiven,” *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 42–43 (2017), 10–16; Framke, “Encounters with Fascism and National Socialism in non-European Regions,” 363–365.

²⁴ Conrad, *What is Global History?* For a discussion of the relations between globalisation(s) and global history, see also: Niels P. Petersson et al., “Globalisierung und Globalgeschichte,” in *Globalgeschichten: Bestandsaufnahme und Perspektiven*, ed. Niels P. Petersson et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2014), 9–18.

and social fields. Alongside Skinner, his work follows Wittgenstein and Austin in stressing speaking and writing as “structured-structuring practices” that shape and are shaped by the structuring rules of symbolic communities.²⁵ Additionally, he clearly situates these “symbolic structures” in social fields of individual or collective power competition, which are the “market places” for the “symbolic capital” produced through verbal and scriptural performance.²⁶ Such social fields are stable formations of interaction and communication with specific correlations of different capital types.

Such a theoretical framework allows for a new assessment of globally circulating concepts which takes account of the semantics of the social fields in which they are mobilised as symbolic capital. Only afterwards can they be spatialised. I will, therefore, try to historically sketch the social fields in which Bose operated. Only subsequently, I will analyse the semantics of appropriation and their spatial dimensions.

Politics between British-India and the World of Global Warfare

Born into a *Bhadralok*²⁷ family attracted to the Hindu-reformist ideas of the *Brahmo-Samaj* and *Vedanta* Philosophy in 1897, Subhas Chandra Bose was already genealogically situated near transformative processes in colonial society.²⁸ The economic, technological and epistemic dynamics of European imperialism and a converging world market deeply affected South-Asian cultural and social realities. As a consequence and driving force of change, the *Bhadralok*, with increasing frequency, created new narratives of belonging by making use of colonial infrastructure and printing press media.²⁹ In what was later amalgamated into the long-durée idea of a “Bengal Renaissance” or “Indian Renaissance”, various sets of Hindu-revivalist, pan-religious, radical, and liberal ideas merged into new visions of national identity.³⁰ Articulating idealised ideas of a precolonial Indian

²⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *Sozialer Sinn: Kritik der theoretischen Vernunft*, 9th edition (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2015), 61, 98; “Symbolic capital” can in short be defined as power actualized through specific intersubjectively understood symbolic artefacts or actions. These function as displays of the position of its actualiser in the power relations of a social field. It is the most basic type of power in which all more specifically constituted ones, e.g. economic capital (institutionalized through currencies), cultural capital (institutionalised though educational systems), are transformed, when they are actualized.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 205–212.

²⁷ *Bhadraloks* were a new predominantly Hindu Bengal middle class that mainly consisted of Indian officials in the colonial state and college apparatus; Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India, 1885–1947*, 23rd edition (Delhi: Macmillan, 2012), 65–67.

²⁸ Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent*, 19; Subhas Chandra Bose, *An Indian Pilgrim: An Unfinished Autobiography*, Netaji: Collected Works 1 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 6–13.

²⁹ Joya Chatterji, “Nationalism in India. 1857–1947,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism*, ed. John Breuilly (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2013), 264.

³⁰ See prominently: Aurobindo Ghosh, “The Renaissance in India,” in *The Renaissance in India and Other Essays on Indian Culture*, ed. Sri Aurobindo (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1997), 3–42.

history and a particular Indian spiritual consciousness, such increasingly anti-colonial discourses were at least partially institutionalised in the Indian National Congress in 1885.³¹ The radicalisation of political practices caused by the Russo-Japanese-War and the partition of Bengal and the Swadeshi boycott movement took place in the nexus of this emerging social field of politics and its nationalist political languages. The births of radical revolutionary organisations and Bengal anti-colonial terror, thus, went hand in hand with the development of a new political field.³²

As early as in his school and college years, Bose was inspired by Swami Vivekananda, a major protagonist and icon of nationalised and reformist Hinduism, whose “profound religious authenticity” he admired.³³ He also early on sympathised with revolutionary nationalism and its iconic political advocate Aurobindo Ghose. Bose regarded Aurobindo as fulfilling an urgent need for nationalist and anti-colonial agitation in a country “[which] was politically still dead.”³⁴ Furthermore, Bose was influenced by a political reading of German Idealist philosophy, especially Hegelian dialectics.³⁵ After leaving India to study at Cambridge, he developed a profound interest in the roots of the troubled post-war political culture of Europe. In particular, 19th century nationalist icons like Bismarck, Metternich or Cavour, the Bolshevik revolution, and socialist and communist movements in Britain and continental Europe influenced his thought.³⁶

Already before returning to India in the summer of 1921, Bose exchanged multiple letters with Chittaranjan Das, the leading radical in contemporary Congress politics. This correspondence and—at least if one believes his only literal accounts—the influences of Aurobindo Ghose and Mohandas Gandhi motivated him to dismiss a post in the Indian Civil Service in favour of a political career.³⁷ Bose became organised in Das’s radical wing of the Congress, while morally appreciating but politically dismissing Gandhi for his non-violence ideas and an alleged lack of strategic policy plans.³⁸

Mainly due to the agitative praxis of Gandhism, the Congress gained popularity and influence in the 1920s. At the same time, expanding religious communalism

³¹ Aurobindo Ghose, “New Lamps for the Old,” in *Bande Mataram, Political Writings and Speeches 1890–1908*, ed. Sri Aurobindo (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 2002), 11.

³² Peter Heehs, *The Bomb in Bengal: The Rise of Revolutionary Terrorism in India 1900–1910* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993); Shukla Sanyal, *Revolutionary Pamphlets, Propaganda and Political Culture in Colonial Bengal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

³³ Bose, *An Indian Pilgrim*, 19.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 124.

³⁶ Bose, *His Majesty’s Opponent*, 35–38.

³⁷ Subhas Chandra Bose, *The Indian Struggle, 1920–1942*, 3rd edition (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 57–58; Subhas Chandra Bose, “Letter to Sarat Chandra Bose from the 23 February 1921,” in: *Indian Pilgrim*, ed. Bose, 222.

³⁸ Bose, *Indian Struggle*, 59–60.

challenged its political power in various regions.³⁹ Furthermore, the Congress became further discursively and often practically entangled with asianist, socialist, and global anti-imperialist ideas.⁴⁰

Although imprisoned by colonial jurisdiction multiple times, and continuously for two years from 1925 to 1927, Bose became the editor of the *Forward Journal* and took over political offices for the radical *Swaraj Party* in Calcutta. He advocated for a doctrine of *purna swaraj*, or unconditioned independence, and extending the political struggle across boundaries of class, religion, and caste. Additionally, he openly distanced himself from Gandhi's *satyagraha* ideas in order to stress the importance of the radical Bengal tradition and the importance of a socialist political economy.⁴¹

The crisis of global capitalism severely affected the 1930s in India. The resulting power struggle between old rural elites, aspiring capitalists, and starving agrarian workers resulted in new political interest groups and were a major cause of the Gandhian mass uprisings since 1929.⁴² Frustrated by these waves of political mobilization only culminating in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931, Bose reinforced the necessity of a socialist industrialisation in a planned economy and unconditional independence. He iconised Bhagat Singh, executed in 1931, thereby trying to integrate radical and violent organisations into the political corpus of the Congress.⁴³ Bose replied to Gandhi's notion of *satyagraha* by developing the concept of *samyavada*, an idea of "Indian Socialism" that stressed planned industrialisation and sharply opposed nonviolence. In doing so, he took part in a larger oppositional reframing of the paternalistic colonial discourses of development. With reference to the political economies of Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union, he situated economic advances in the larger context of an abstract theory of national development, resistance and strength.⁴⁴

Having left India for Austria due to health reasons in 1933, Bose spent the following three years in various European countries, amongst them Germany, Italy, and the Irish Free State meeting people, speaking, and writing. He was invited to

³⁹ Sarkar, *Modern India, 1885–1947*, 73–74.

⁴⁰ Harald Fischer-Tiné and Carolien Stolte, "Imagining Asia in India: Nationalism and Internationalism, ca. 1905–1940," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 54, no. 1 (2012), 65; Emily S. Rosenberg, "Transnational Currents in a Shrinking World," in *A World Connecting, 1870–1945: A History of the World*, ed. Emily S. Rosenberg (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012), 860–864.

⁴¹ Bose, *The Indian Struggle*, 39–194; Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent*, 45–84.

⁴² Brian Roger Tomlinson and Gordon Johnson, *The Economy of Modern India: From 1860 to the Twenty-first Century*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 53–57.

⁴³ Subhas Chandra Bose, "India Freed Means Humanity Saved: Naujawan Bharat Sabha Conference Speech from the 26th May 1933," in *Netaji: Collected Works 6*, ed. Sisir Kumar Bose (Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 1987), 176–186.

⁴⁴ Benjamin Zachariah, *Developing India: An Intellectual and Social History, c.1930–50* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012), 25–59; Framke, *Delhi – Rom – Berlin*, 179–187; Subhas Chandra Bose, "The Anti-Imperialist Struggle and Samyavada: Indian Politics Conference Speech from the 10th June 1933," in *Netaji: Collected Works 6*, ed. Sisir Kumar Bose, 176–186.

the opening of the *Instituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente* (IsMEO) in Rome and met Eamon de Valera as well as the Sinn Féin leader Cathal Ó Murchada. In addition, Bose gave a speech about “The Indian Situation and World Opinion” at the conference of the League against Imperialism in Paris.⁴⁵ He published reflections on his journeys in Indian newspapers, positively commenting on the “national awakenings” of Italy, Ireland, and Turkey.⁴⁶ As late as 1934, Bose praised Germany’s national development in his writings, including his monograph *The Indian Struggle*. By 1936 he had begun to criticise the dictatorship for its anti-Indian racism, as can be seen in a speech delivered to a group of Indian students in Berlin, which was published in India as well.⁴⁷ His criticisms, however, did not hinder his attempts to establish diplomatic contacts to the German *Auswärtiges Amt* and the *Außenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP*, which proved to be unsuccessful.⁴⁸

After returning to India in April 1936, Bose ultimately became an iconic figure of the ‘Congress Left,’ i.e. a loose set of political groups distancing themselves from Gandhi, as well as the Communist movements, while advocating anti-imperialist politics and planned industrialisation. He was imprisoned again until 1937, only to be elected the new President of the Congress in 1938.⁴⁹ Gandhi and his ‘moderate’ followers in the Congress expected to gain increased influence on Bose following his integration into leadership circles. However, Bose stayed on his radical political course, which led to his re-election in 1939. When these conflicts culminated in an open Gandhian campaign against him, he ultimately resigned from the presidency. After leaving the congress as a result of this struggle, Bose founded the *Forward Bloc* party and political journal.⁵⁰

In his constant commenting on world politics from Europe and India, Bose, by now an oppositional leader, had ongoingly criticised the Italian, German and Japanese “imperialist expeditions,”⁵¹ only to blame the allegedly British global paradigm of imperialist politics for them afterwards.⁵² He kept praising their national

⁴⁵ Bose, *His Majesty’s Opponent*, 93–95, 104–107; Subhas Chandra Bose, “The Indian Situation and World Opinion: League Against Imperialism Speech in Paris from the 17th March 1936,” in *Letters, Articles, Speeches and Statements, 1933–1937*, Netaji: Collected Works 8, ed. Sisir Kumar Bose (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), 347–350.

⁴⁶ Subhas Chandra Bose, “Impressions of Ireland. Statement in Lausanne from the 30th March 1936,” in *ibid.*, 350–352; Subhas Chandra Bose, “Italy: Amrita Bazar Patrika from the 9th March 1935,” in *ibid.*, 289–291.

⁴⁷ Subhas Chandra Bose, “Indians in Germany: Speech Excerpt from the 4th February 1936,” in *ibid.*, 342–343.

⁴⁸ Hayes, *Subhas Chandra Bose in Nazi Germany*, 11–13.

⁴⁹ Bose, *His Majesty’s Opponent*, 123–127.

⁵⁰ Barun Mukherji, *Subhas Chandra Bose and his Political Weekly Forward Bloc* (Delhi: Roman Books Academic, 2012).

⁵¹ Subhas Chandra Bose, “On Congress and the Constitution, Fascism and Communism: Daily Worker from the 24th January 1938,” in *Congress President: Speeches, Articles and Letters, January 1938–May 1939*, Netaji: Collected Works 9, ed. Sisir Kumar Bose (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 2.

⁵² Subhas Chandra Bose, “Japans Role in the Far East: Modern Review Article from October 1937,” in *Letters, Articles, Speeches and Statements, 1933–1937*, ed. Bose, 411–429; Subhas Chandra Bose, “The Secret of Abyssinia and its Lessons,” in *ibid.*, 309–326.

developments, while neither supporting nor opposing the Congress's critiques and international relief action plans.⁵³ In addition to this, Bose's critiques have to be situated in the context of the dominant contemporary anti-colonial discourses that evoked an implicit political coercion to solidarity with China and Abyssinia.⁵⁴ After the beginning of global warfare, he interpreted the conflict as a disintegration of global imperialism, which presented a unique possibility for independence. He thus openly advocated violent resistance akin to that used by the Irish left-wing party, Sinn Féin.⁵⁵

After being imprisoned again in January 1940, Bose escaped to Berlin by the Eurasian overland route, thus becoming a major actor of world war diplomacy. While mainly working with the *Auswärtiges Amt* under Joachim von Ribbentrop, he also maintained regular contact with Italian officials or even Mussolini himself.⁵⁶ While Bose requested a formal declaration by the Axis powers to provide an institutional framework for his anti-colonial struggle, the imperialist dictatorships planned to destabilise British colonial rule and drain Allied human resources.⁵⁷ Hitler, nevertheless, still hoped for peace opportunities with Great Britain. He, furthermore, believed in a "racial inferiority of these so called 'supressed nations,'"⁵⁸ and was afraid of a sheer symbolic declaration that bore the possibility of a geopolitical humiliation.⁵⁹ Although Bose managed to arrange a personal meeting with the German dictator and gained Mussolini's support for his cause, the *Auswärtiges Amt* and Hitler effectively prevented such a measure.⁶⁰ Beyond these diplomatic activities, Bose founded the Free India Center in Berlin and the *Legion Freies Indien*, a military unit consisting of Indian prisoners of war under the high command of the *Wehrmacht*.⁶¹

On the 19th of February 1942, Bose openly re-entered the global stages of world war and anti-colonial nationalism. Five days after the Japanese overthrow of Singapore, he broadcasted his first speech on the *Azad Hind Radio*. Via a transmitter

⁵³ Bose, "Japans Role in the Far East"; Bose, "The Secret of Abyssinia and its Lessons," 309–326. After the Japanese expansion in 1938, the Congress sent a group of doctors as a relief project to China. Already in the context of the Italian conquest of Abyssinia, sending a Congress medical unit was widely discussed and there were multiple boycott calls articulated. For more details, see. Framke, *Delhi – Rom – Berlin*, 249–256.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 256.

⁵⁵ Subhas Chandra Bose, "Heart Searching," in *The Alternative Leadership: Speeches, Articles, Statements and Letters June 1939–January 1941*, Netaji: Collected Works 10, ed. Sisir Kumar Bose (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 20; Subhas Chandra Bose, "The Ramgarh Adress at the All-India Anti-Compromise Conference from the 19th March 1940," in *ibid.*, 83–88; Subhas Chandra Bose, "Danger Ahead: Article from the Forward Bloc of the 6th January 1940," in *ibid.*, 64–68.

⁵⁶ Hayes, *Subhas Chandra Bose in Nazi Germany*, 73–90.

⁵⁷ Kuhlmann, *Subhas Chandra Bose und die Indienpolitik der Achsenmächte*, 354.

⁵⁸ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 855th edition, (Munich: Zentralverlag der NSDAP Franz Eher, 1943), 747.

⁵⁹ Johannes H. Voigt, "Hitler und Indien."

⁶⁰ Hayes, *Subhas Chandra Bose in Nazi Germany*, 153–155.

⁶¹ Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent*, 213–225.

operating from the Dutch town Hurizen, his address reached South(east)-Asia in English, Hindustani, Bengali, Tamil, Telegu, Gujarati, Persian, and Pashtu. The transmission was widely received and contributed to transformative dynamics in anti-colonial political language leading to Gandhi's first approval of political violence, the "Quit India" resolution, and, ultimately, the biggest anti-colonial uprisings during the World War. This prompted instantaneous positive responses from Gandhi and the Congress leadership circles. The broadcasts of 250 minutes a day, which streamed on *Azad Hind Radio*, started to play a key role in anti-colonial daily politics. Bose even provided day-to-day strategic advice to the "Quit-India" protest movement. Although it is impossible to definitively reconstruct its influence on a quantitative scale, one might get a glimpse of its factual importance by considering that *Azad Hind Radio*'s role as a "favourite clandestine activity," must be embedded in the context of eight available broadcasting languages and an estimated 120,000 radio sets spread over British India.⁶²

In the following three years, Bose not only constantly increased his influence on Indian political imagination, but also became more practically engaged in the war in Asia. Due to the internment of the Congress leaders after the mass uprisings, his radio broadcasts, backed by the *Reichsministerium für Propaganda*, continued to increase in importance.⁶³ He then reacted to the Japanese advances in Southeast-Asia by travelling to Tokyo with the help of the German and Japanese naval forces. After diplomatic engagements in the imperial capital, Bose continued his journey to Singapore to become the leader of the Axis-Power backed Indian National Army.⁶⁴ The INA developed into a military mass organisation, which conducted a 40,000-strong Japanese-backed offensive on Imphal in 1944. By this time, the army had long been subordinated under a rival government endorsed by the Axis powers and lead by Bose.⁶⁵ Now a military leader, he believed that the symbolic impact of an attack by an official nationalist military power would be overwhelming and lead to the disintegration of the British-Indian military and colonial rule in general.⁶⁶ Contrary to these hopes, not only did the Raj survive alive and well, but early advancements of the INA also soon turned into a military debacle of constant retreat and defeat.⁶⁷

⁶² Ibid., 225; Hayes, *Subhas Chandra Bose in Nazi Germany*, 86–88. The estimates are also borrowed from Sugata Bose. Although not of quantitative nature, Yasmin Khan, *India at War*, x also offers a 'history from below' insight into the incorporation of anti-colonial broadcasts into wartime daily life.

⁶³ Hayes, *Subhas Chandra Bose in Nazi Germany*, 135–137.

⁶⁴ Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent*, 240–251.

⁶⁵ Bose, "Proclamation of the Provisional Government of Free India," 117–120.

⁶⁶ For the theory of symbolic officialisation, i.e. the monopolisation of symbolic capital through the bureaucratic apparatus, legislative, and the corresponding construction of standardised official truths in state-building processes, see: Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 35–64; Pierre Bourdieu, *Über den Staat. Vorlesungen am Collège de France 1989–1992* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2017), 75.

⁶⁷ Christopher Bayly and T. N. Harper, *Forgotten Armies: The Fall of British Asia, 1914–1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 372–380.

While Bose subsequently acknowledged the end of the campaign in August 1945 and allegedly died on a plane crash afterwards, the INA's inscription into the South(east)-Asian cultural memories had only just begun. The cause of his death has been at the root of dozens of nationalist conspiracy theories until today.⁶⁸ Nearly instantaneously, the INA's legacy was interwoven within enfolding political dynamics. Not only did the "Red Forth trials" of three leading functionaries develop into a nodal point of decolonisation dynamics, widely discussed not just in London and Delhi, but in thousands of India's "remotest villages."⁶⁹ But in consent with the self-ascribed "antifascist" Nehru,⁷⁰ the Congress reclaimed Bose's legacy to generate "a popular consensus in support of Indian independence."⁷¹

Bose's Political Language

To reconstruct the referential and illocutionary meanings of 'National Socialism' and 'Fascism' in Bose's political language, one must first sketch the conceptual framework in which his references took place. This does not mean giving up the pragmatic nature of speaking and the agency of speakers in favour of deductions from hypothesised discursive principles. I simply heuristically point to the conceptual schemes that played on a configurative role in Bose's political texts and speeches.

The first constitutive political idea in Bose's political language was his conception of nationalism that largely drew on Bengali radical nationalist thought. Like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee or Aurobindo Ghose, he depicted India as a pre-colonial and meta-institutional community with a collective historical agency. As such, her alleged inherent national character should have produced sociocultural coherence over centuries. Already at its conceptual core, this national identity was defined through its distinction from British rule:

In order to understand India [...] it is essential to bear in mind at the outset two important facts. Firstly, the history of India has to be reckoned not in decades or in centuries, but in thousands of years. Secondly, it is only under British rule that India for the first time in her history has begun to feel that she has been conquered.⁷²

This 'pre- and meta-colonial v. colonial' distinction, exemplified in this quote, which opens Bose's book titled *The Indian Struggle*, framed his vision of na-

⁶⁸ Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent*, 309–320.

⁶⁹ Jawarharlal Nehru, "Speech in Patna from the 24 December 1945," in *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru 14*, ed. Sarvepalli Gopal (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1981), 279.

⁷⁰ Jawarharlal Nehru, "Spain, China and India: Rude Pravo Interview from the 31st July 1938," in *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru Vol. 9*, ed. Sarvepalli Gopal (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1981), 92.

⁷¹ William F. Kuracina, "Sentiments and Patriotism," 856.

⁷² Bose, *The Indian Struggle*, 1.

tional ideals, and thus nationalist politics. India, described as historically having been “able to absorb different races and impose on them one common culture and tradition,” was portrayed as inherently pan-religious, inclusive and democratic “self-contained unit,” which until British conquest culturally united Muslims and Hindus, invaders and invaded, peasants and landlords.⁷³

Although this “imagined community” seemed somewhat metaphysical, it was also directly intertwined in Bose’s conceptualisation of political practice.⁷⁴ Nationalism always meant struggling for *purna swaraj*, and was thus a teleological project. Correspondingly, building on a dialectical conception of political ideas,⁷⁵ Bose demanded a constantly developing “national struggle” for independence, based on physical, tactical, and ideological strength. The Indian Rebellion of 1857, the Bengal radical tradition or the “martyrdom” of Bhagat Singh could thus be used as fuel for the political imagination. Such frames of a revolutionary independence and dialectical development tightly bound Bose’s concept of “national struggle” to bodily discipline and youth mobilisation.⁷⁶

Ultimately, his vision of nationalist politics was also an internationalised one. Bose spoke of national development, i.e. “national struggle”, as a universal historical process with different spatial manifestations. By this, he was able to “asianise” and internationalise his political projects. National strength “physically as well as militarily” provided an explanation for political developments from Ireland to China, situating Bose’s politics on an international stage and producing nationalist visions of globality.⁷⁷

The “struggle” rhetoric and the international framing of nationalism were at the core of his critiques of Gandhi. Bose mobilised such concepts to point to an alleged backwardness of Gandhian politics in front of the assumed universal, but indeed national, dialectics of international politics. Additionally, the traditional revolutionary visions of national community and “struggle” enabled Bose to easily gain influence in Congress politics and later provided nationalist visions of discipline and martyrdom rooted at the heart of the INA’s self-legitimation.

The discursive capacity of his nationalism was widened further by stressing the importance of socialist theory against vast parts of the Congress. With the *samyavada* concept he deeply nationalised socialist theory. As highlighted in various

⁷³ Ibid., 2–10.

⁷⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 5.

⁷⁵ Bose, *An Indian Pilgrim*, 124; Subhas Chandra Bose, “My Political Testament: Letter to the Government of Bengal from the 26th November 1940,” in *The Alternative Leadership*, ed. Bose and Bose, 197; Subhas Chandra Bose, “Why Forward Bloc. Editorial of the Party Journal from the 5 August 1939,” in *ibid.*, 1.

⁷⁶ Subhas Chandra Bose, “Lecture at the Opera House on the Mission of Young India from the 22nd May 1928,” *Netaji: Collected Works 5*, ed. Sisir Kumar Bose (Calcutta: Netaji Research Bureau, 1985), 255–257; Subhas Chandra Bose, “Bengals Message of Universalism and Socialism, Speech at the Politics Conference in Rangur from the 30 March 1929,” in *Netaji: Collected Works 6*, ed. Bose, Bose, “India Freed Means Humanity Saved,” 176–186.

⁷⁷ Bose, “The Indian Situation and World Opinion.”

speeches and articles, this “new Indian socialism” implied a creative appropriation of socialist political economy:

New ideas of socialism are nowadays travelling to India from the West, and they are revolutionizing the thoughts of many. [...] We have therefore to shape society and politics according to our own national ideals and according to our needs.⁷⁸

Additionally, Bose’s visions of planned industrialisation went far beyond economic connotations, as they were interwoven in his larger ideas of national development. He stressed the precolonial history of the national community by interchangeable uses of the terms “reconstruction” and “development.” This was exemplified in his first speech as Congress president:

A comprehensive scheme of industrial development under state-ownerships and state-control will be indispensable. A new industrial system will have to be built [...] [together with] schemes of reconstruction in the spheres of education, health, prohibition, prison reforms, irrigation, industry, land reform, workers’ welfare etc.⁷⁹

Beyond nationalism and *samyavada*, Bose’s political language was also characterised by a dominant concept of (anti-)imperialism. If his vision of the global was based on the idea of national communities as collective actors, it was also structured by a systemic idea of imperialism. Inherently fragile and thus bound to end through “an overthrow by an anti-imperialist agency or through an interne-cine struggle among imperialists themselves,”⁸⁰ the imperialist world system was, in Bose’s eyes, at its core British and, of course, demanded resolute resistance: “Ours is a struggle not only against British Imperialism but against world imperialism as well, of which the former is the keystone.”⁸¹ This further strengthened ideas of international anti-colonial solidarity while also pointing to an archetypal role of India in overthrowing British imperial rule. As Bose put it: “We are, therefore, fighting not for the cause of India alone but of humanity as well. India freed means humanity saved.”⁸²

This further reinforced his critiques of the Congress’s politics as showing “no interest in International affairs.”⁸³ He thereby emphasised the uniqueness of his own political endeavour. Building on this logic, Bose saw “[t]he age of imperialism [...] drawing to an end” with the beginning of the World War, making

⁷⁸ Bose, “Bengals Message of Universalism and Socialism,” 2–3.

⁷⁹ Subhas Chandra Bose, “The Haripura Address at the INC February meeting of 1938,” in *Congress President*, ed. Bose and Bose, 3–30.

⁸⁰ “The Secret of Abyssinia and its Lessons,” 326.

⁸¹ Bose, “The Haripura Address,” 30.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 30.

⁸³ Bose, “The Secret of Abyssinia,” 326.

political responses—Forward Bloc, *Azad Hind* and the INA—necessary.⁸⁴ This conceptual setting developed even further during the World War, when Bose mobilised its inherent binarity to depict the warfare as conflict between imperialists and anti-imperialists.⁸⁵

Speaking about National Socialism and Fascism

In the context of the political concepts sketched above, Bose used the term “Fascism” to refer to a “European” political ideology as well as a concrete historical phenomenon—Italian Fascism. Although he never conceptualised clear delineations between ideology and concrete regime, the latter might be best understood as a specific form and manifestation of the first. While ‘fascism’ as an ideology, thus, was never clearly elaborated in its semantic extension, Bose did not use the term as a category to describe any political movement outside of Europe.⁸⁶ Already in 1928, he depicted the Italian dictatorship as an inspiring example for the Indian youth.⁸⁷ In 1934, Bose talked about “Fascism” as part of a world-historical dialectic:

Whether one believes in the Hegelian or in the Bergsonian or any other theory of evolution—in no case need we think that creation is at an end. Considering everything, one is inclined to hold that the next phase in world history will produce a synthesis between Communism and Fascism. And will it be a surprise if that synthesis will be produced in India? [...] The Indian awakening is organically connected to awakenings in other parts of the world.⁸⁸

He had already invoked such notions of a “synthesis of what Modern Europe calls Socialism and Fascism in 1930,” and thus repeatedly situated fascism next to the roots of his political rhetoric by directly linking it to a dialectical nationalism and nationalist internationalism.⁸⁹ This conceptual bridge between “Communism” and “Fascism” later culminated in the idea of *samyavada* that connected nationalism with state-planned industrialisation.⁹⁰ Building on this scheme of inherent national developments after visiting Rome, Bose praised the example of Italian

⁸⁴ Subhas Chandra Bose, “The Ramgarth Address at the All-India Anti-Compromise Conference from the 19 March 1940,” in *The Alternative Leadership*, ed. Bose and Bose, 83–88.

⁸⁵ Subhas Chandra Bose, “This War and its Significance: Broadcast of the 24th June 1943,” in *Chalo Delhi*, ed. Bose and Bose, 29–33.

⁸⁶ Subhas Chandra Bose, “The Mayoral Address, Calcutta Corporation meeting, 27th November 1930,” in *Netaji: Collected Works 6*, ed. Bose, 128.

⁸⁷ Subhas Chandra Bose, “Speech at the third Session of the All-India Youth Congress from the 25 December 1928,” in *Netaji: Collected Works 5*, ed. Bose and Bose, 271–272.

⁸⁸ Bose, *The Indian Struggle*, 351.

⁸⁹ Bose, “The Mayoral Address,” 128.

⁹⁰ Bose, *Indian Struggle*, 352.

youth mobilisation and the party apparatus of the Fascist dictatorship for building the core of an “uplift of the nation.”⁹¹

His ambivalent relationship to ‘National Socialism,’ whose explicit representations were quite rare compared with that of fascism, manifested itself in critiques of Anti-Indian racism and a pro-British foreign policy. While he still searched for diplomatic cooperation with the *Auswärtiges Amt* and the *Außenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP* during the 1930s, his critiques culminated in a statement published in 1936.

During the last weeks my mind has been greatly disturbed by the insulting remarks made by the German Fuhrer [sic] about the Indian people [...] It is quite clear that Germany determined to curry favour with England by insulting India. I have no objection if Germans desire to lick the boots of the Britishers, but if they think that in the year 1936 this insult will be quietly pocketed by us, they are hardly mistaken.⁹²

Two years later, in his first presidential address in 1938, Bose on the contrary highlighted the *Reichsarbeitsdienst* as institutional example for forging national unity and discipline, thus linking it to his notions of national development and discipline:

There is a bigger problem of mobilizing this phenomenal mass energy and enthusiasm and direct them along proper lines. But have we got a well-disciplined Volunteer corps for this purpose? Have we got a cadre of officers for our national service? Do we provide any training for our budding leaders, for our promising young workers? [...] An institution like the Labour Service Corps of the Nazis deserves careful study and [...] may prove beneficial to India.⁹³

The representational logics first changed during the Italian attack on Abyssinia and were fundamentally altered during the World War. The Fascist offensive was widely discussed and sharply condemned in India as it evoked anti-colonial solidarity. The imperialist motives of the Italian advance could hardly be ignored, making it a discursive impossibility for Congress politicians to defend it.⁹⁴ Bose’s commentary on the conflict, which was published in the *Modern Review* in 1935, depicted the “Italian penetration of Abyssinia” as imperialist politics, while at the same time pointing to a purely British responsibility at the conflict’s roots. He described the geopolitical pressure exercised by the British Government as perverting Italy’s national development, i.e. causing the expansion. Furthermore,

⁹¹ Bose, “Italy,” 290.

⁹² Subhas Chandra Bose, “Meeting the Press: Situation in India, India and Germany, League of Nations, March 1936,” in *Netaji: Collected Works* 8, ed. Sisir Kumar Bose, 345.

⁹³ Bose, “Haripura Adress,” 24.

⁹⁴ Framke, *Delhi – Rom – Berlin*, 249–256.

British influence was made responsible for the failure of the Italian-Abyssinian peace treaty of 1928. The Italian foreign policy, therefore, would not point to a Fascist responsibility—which was not even mentioned at all—but to the flaws of the systemic European imperialism and British interests.⁹⁵

Bose thus stopped idealising Italy, yet spared the dictatorship any direct critique. He, moreover, only once distanced himself from his idea of a fascist-communist synthesis in India in an interview in 1938, clarifying that he had talked about ‘Fascism’ before “its imperialist expedition”.⁹⁶ The source value of this often cited comment is highly questionable, as it originates from an interview with the party journal of the Communist Party of Great Britain, the *Daily Worker*. Bose did not participate in discourses of the Independence Movement, but addressed a British, genuinely antifascist readership.

After the beginning of the World War, which he interpreted as a disintegration of imperialism, the grammar of systemic anti-imperialism with its binary scheme of ‘imperialism v. anti-imperialism’ took over in his political language. In his broadcast from Berlin in 1941 he framed the Japanese conquest of Singapore as a sign of the “end of the iniquitous regime which it has symbolised and the dawn of a new era of Indian history.” As such, the supposed collapse of the British Empire, “the most diabolical enemy of freedom and the most formidable obstacle to progress,”⁹⁷ signalled the death struggle of world imperialism, which defended itself against a global progressive front:

In the present Armageddon, there is desperate attempt, on the one side, to maintain the status quo that has sprung out of the Treaty of Versailles, and similar treaties of the past—while on the other, there is the determination to destroy the old order and usher in a new one. [...] Let us, therefore, rejoice that under the simultaneous blow of the Tripartite Powers, our eternal foe is fast crumbling down. Let us rejoice over the rapid victorious advance of the Japanese forces in the Far East. Let us rejoice that the old order was set up at Versailles is crashing before our very eyes.⁹⁸

Italian ‘Fascism’ and German ‘National Socialism’ were no longer represented by their individual names, but from then onwards dissolved in Bose’s binary grammar of anti-imperialism. Japan’s political characteristics were, thereby, not only absent, but also logically irrelevant for Bose’s binary description, as its rhetorical importance derived only from an allegedly adversary position towards the imagined global imperialist paradigm. While Bose had never linked Japanese

⁹⁵ Bose, “The Secret of Abyssinia and its Lessons.”

⁹⁶ Bose, “On Congress and the Constitution, Fascism and Communism,” 2.

⁹⁷ Subhas Chandra Bose, “The Fall of Singapore: Broadcast from the 19th February 1941,” in *Azad Hind*, ed. Bose and Bose, 67.

⁹⁸ Subhas Chandra Bose, “India has no Enemy Outside Her Own Frontiers: Broadcast from the 19th March 1942,” in *ibid.*, 78.

politics to Germany or Japan before the war, the three Axis powers were now conceptually amalgamated and represented by a general notion of “the Tripartite Powers” as claimed enemies of imperialism. The Axis powers thus would be “the best friends and greatest allies that the Indian people now have for her struggle for freedom,”⁹⁹ carrying “for India freedom and justice, happiness and prosperity” as they would destroy the imperialist historical paradigm.¹⁰⁰ Although he again advocated the idea of a communist-fascist synthesis as late as 1944 in a speech in Tokyo,¹⁰¹ the old reference frames of national development and discipline were in general integrated into the binary grammar of systemic anti-imperialism.

Conclusion

Despite his critiques of Nazi foreign policy and Anti-Indian racism, Bose re-framed developments in Germany and Italy—as well as an abstract dialectical notion of fascism—in the nationalist patterns of his pre-existing political language. He thereby made use of the semantics of Congress politics and his dialectical understanding of history to depict ‘Fascism’ and ‘National Socialism’ as examples of universal (nationalist) developments. Bose, thus, could generate symbolic capital by using allegedly universal criteria of national comparison such as youth mobilisation and national discipline that merged into a vague concept of national development or “national struggle.” He creatively connected these to his visions of political economy and depicted planned industrialisation as a deeply nationalist endeavour. He thus eclectically integrated ‘Fascism’ and ‘National Socialism’ in the pre-existent political languages of the Independence movement. In a Skinnerian sense, this sheds lights on the foundations of his symbolic capital in the eclectic illocutionary modifications of multiple political languages, while it also points to the structuring importance of the social field of Congress politics.

In the wake of the Italian expansion and the beginning of the World War, he made use of another pre-existent discursive pattern, (anti-)imperialism, to provide a systemically conceptualised analysis of world politics to fit into his political strategies. Bose thus created a systemic and binary vision of international relations and, later, global warfare. ‘Fascism’'s and ‘National Socialism’'s historical agencies, therefore, culminated in an anti-imperialist concept of “the Tripartite Powers.”

The illocutionary dimensions of these appropriation processes, and thus the production of symbolic capital in political communication, point to interesting conclusions. Not only did Bose’s references from early on enable him to generate political power because they allowed him to set his political projects apart from

⁹⁹ Bose, “This War and its Significance,” in *Netaji: Collected Works* 12, ed. Bose and Bose, 32.

¹⁰⁰ Bose, “India has no Enemy Outside Her Own Frontiers,” 79.

¹⁰¹ “Bose’s speech at Tokio University,” *The Oracle* 1 (1983), 3–14, quoted in Hayes, *Subhas Chandra Bose in Nazi Germany*, 146.

Gandhi and the Congress “moderates,” even providing institutional legitimations for the Forward Bloc, INA and *Azad Hind* government. They did so by being means of producing structured visions of the global and globality. In particular, the references to fascism provided a global frame to Bose’s political language, which was strengthened by his endorsement of teleological historical dialectics. With these rhetorical practices that highlighted the global and historical necessity of his actions, he could provide legitimacy for his radical stance towards the World War and, later on, even his open collaboration with the Axis powers in front of his Indian audience. While doing so, Bose’s mobilisations of these concepts were always connected to the geographic space of South-Asian politics, because he discursively operated in the social field of Congress politics, the more fluid social structures of wartime anti-colonial resistance, and the semantic rules that governed them. These, of course, were at their roots intertwined with the space(s) of British colonial rule.

Regarding wider questions of global historical methodology, it thus proves insightful to point to the role that social fields play by providing the semantic framework for appropriations of global concepts. To first uncover social fields might conclusively prove to be a methodical key for reconstructing the semantics and audiences of verbal appropriation and, ultimately, the circulation of ideas in general.¹⁰²

Finally, this small case study highlights a peculiarity of globalising processes of political languages. Once concepts develop to widely accepted configurative points in imagining political globality, as ‘Fascism’ and ‘National Socialism’ did, they hold the potential to produce a specific form of symbolic capital. As they embody semantics of globality, they might be utilised by actors in local spaces to construct supposedly global ideological frames for their political ideas and practices.

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¹⁰² See also: Andrew Satori, “Global Intellectual History and the History of Political Economy,” in *Global Intellectual History*, ed. Andrew Satori and Samuel Moyn, 110–133. Andrew Satori argued for a similar, more stable social framework for analysing the circulation of ideas. My point might also be read as a similar endeavour, without the classical Marxist stressing of the primacy of the relations of production. Rather historians may productively use social fields, their capital types, and semantics as a framework.