



Creating and Curating Digital Archives

Horizontal and Vertical Structures

Chapter 3 demonstrated that the aspiration to find alternatives to conventional archiving practices does not always match the realities of digital archives' self-portrayal. This chapter turns to the creation of content for and through digital archives. The 1947 Partition Archive presents itself in this close reading as an organization that is both vertically and horizontally structured. It draws on internet optimism when it searches for, trains and communicates with its workforce in online formats and has set up its office in the IT hub Cybercity, a corporate park and one of India's largest hubs of IT activity. It also creates an impression of flat hierarchies and democratizing tendencies when drawing on crowdsourcing and oral histories for archival content.

Cybercity, as the following pages will illustrate, is a fitting environment for a digital archive. It is symbolic for the archive's constitution as a *digital* archive, consisting not of dusty old shelves but of a modern state-of-the-art IT environment. The people hired by the archive, and those who work for it voluntarily, operate in line with this. They are, by and large, young, educated, tech-savvy Indians,¹ who are part of what has been called the new Indian middle class. Crowdsourcing this workforce adds to the notion of a modern institution that co-creates work and works with flat hierarchies.

Working with a digital archive means balancing IT and archival production. It means working in a digital context on history and memory creation. This allows for an investigation of how this generation is dealing with its memory making, and how much they are embedded in what Steven Brown and Andrew Hoskins (2010) call a new memory ecology. This also requires taking the volunteers' and staff's interest in history, social work and partition into account, as these are important motivations for dedicating time and manpower to the archive.

The vertical work structure of the archive to some extent impedes these conditions. That the 1947PA is also very much a vertically structured organization comes to the fore in set guidelines and rules for interviewing, and especially in editing stories prior to dissemination. The following pages demonstrate how the creation of this online archive is an ample curatorial practice, which is working in the realms of cultural production. Editing is done here in several stages, both by default and on purpose. The 1947PA is a community-based digital archive, yet that does not imply an unfiltered publication of individual stories. On the contrary, the online dissemination comprises a finely tuned editing process of several stages.

The 1947PA tries to balance IT and history, vertical and horizontal practices and curating at the fringes of Cyberville. One consequence of this attempt to bridge multiple gaps is that staff stay there for comparatively short periods of time. The high turnover of employees is one symptom of the tensions between the digital and the archive; it relegates to the increasing vicissitude in content created to last.

Crowdsourcing Archival Workers and Other Horizontal Structures

Unlike conventional archives, the 1947PA has an agenda of being inclusive and horizontally structured. As shown in chapter 3, it stresses sharing and access to archival content, which is in this case the collection of individual memories that people from any background can contribute to. A logical consequence is to lower the barriers as much as possible for people to join in. Joining in is done by telling one's own story or by contributing time to the archive as a volunteer. The 1947PA draws heavily on people conducting interviews for the archive who work as 'citizen historians' for free, or as 'story scholars' for three to six months on a small stipend. The 1947PA chooses to recruit this workforce – both volunteers and people working for the stipend – online, in a way that resembles the principles of crowdsourcing. This provides a comparatively novel way of engaging people with the rather dusty topic of archiving and Indian history. It combines the fresh and innovative characteristics of online encounters with work for an archive, portrayed as important work for society.

In general, crowdsourcing is characterized as having an initiator – an individual, a company – calling for support for an issue, problem or task in online form.² The online call is supposed to have a very wide reach, one that goes beyond conventional social networks or printed public calls. It offers the prospect of using crowd wisdom to solve a task

(Brabham 2008), and to bring together disparate and independent people on a shared issue. Crowdsourcing relies on people contributing voluntarily, with the compensation for their contribution being any form of satisfaction. This can come in the form of money, social recognition, self-esteem, development of skills (Estellés-Arolas and González-Ladrón-de-Guevara 2012) or through a medium-term positive effect in the sense of acquiring recognition or skills that will be helpful for future work (Brabham 2008). The crowd itself can be any number of individuals, whose size, heterogeneity and expertise are determined only by the initiative. Overall, crowdsourcing draws on positive associations of giving, sharing, openness and doing something (morally) right.

The 1947PA started in 2011 with online calls for participation and has been successful in reaching its envisioned audience – the Indian new middle class, in the form of urban youth with an academic background. This cohort's affinity for online communication makes them a prime target for crowdsourcing. An important point of contrast with other crowdsourcing platforms such as Mechanical Turk, which are popular in India but are purely monetized,³ is that the 1947PA stresses both its relation to ICT and its situatedness in cultural heritage and history. The 1947PA sits in an academic milieu and explicitly encourages bachelor's and master's students to apply for the story scholar positions. In general, it attracts young academics interested in issues of the past, who are happy to be compensated by gaining skills and/or carrying out acts of moral goodness.

A young male citizen historian states:

It is my profound interest in the anthropological history of South Asia, and particularly the Partition of 1947, that has inspired me to become a Citizen Historian. Oral history gives me the opportunity to encounter historic events from a humane and cultural vantage point. Otherwise, such accounts are presented in a very linear fashion in academia, and neglect the various layers of forces that underlie those watershed moments. ... I feel it is my responsibility toward my society to understand the heritage of Partition.⁴

A female story scholar, who receives a stipend for conducting interviews, puts it this way:

I grew up listening to my grandfather's stories about the times when he was young. When my grandfather passed away in 2014, it dawned on me that the treasure trove of stories and experiences that I had taken for granted all this time was now lost! This made me realize that I needed to

do something to safeguard this human experience before it fades away. ... I wanted to collect and help archive oral traditions of history because, as a student of history, I understand that these stories are fundamental for the discipline, not to mention for future generations of humanity.⁵

All new potential co-workers join the digital archive by partaking in a so-called oral history workshop. The workshop is an online course offered every two to four weeks. Everyone registered logs on at a particular time, and a staff member from the 1947PA conducts the course live. He or she starts by introducing all participants who are present, usually one to three dozen young people. They are both male and female and log on from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and a few other countries. The course conductor then poses a few introductory questions on the history of the subcontinent and subsequently takes the participants through a typical story collection process. Collecting stories essentially involves interviewing people who lived through partition according to set guidelines. These interviews make up the core task for citizen historians and story scholars. The conductor, whom the participants can hear all the time, teaches simple rules of courtesy and video recording, which are important for the interview process. He or she introduces the forms and guidelines required for conducting interviews: the lengthy questionnaire, release and agreement forms, check lists and guidelines for everything from copyright to Twitter use to the submission portal. The webinar includes short tests after each section to check the participants have understood. After two to three hours, people are asked to download the guidelines and are thus ready to conduct their first interview. They are asked to complete and upload it within four weeks.

On the one hand, the idea of the webinar is to gather people together and familiarize them with the working procedures of the 1947PA. The webinar is not conceptualized as an exam, but rather as a verification of a basic sense of understanding. The online format has several advantages. It is the most feasible technical solution for reaching a crowd that is spread across countries and even continents. In this regard, it is a means of reaching the largest possible number of people, and it is supposedly the best option for a project that has offices in both Asia and the US. Furthermore, a webinar adds to the IT-savviness of the digital archive and anchors it more firmly in the Cybercity context. It puts the ideals of internet positivism into practice, as it is a comparatively open and democratic way of enabling participation in a form of cultural and history production.

On the other hand, a webinar also works to filter the archive's audience or potential workforce. Online access and digital literacy are a

particularity of some of India's younger generation, but not characteristic of society in general. There persists a strong urban–rural digital divide. According to the 2011 Census, just 0.7 per cent of rural Indian households, compared to 8.3 per cent of urban Indian households, had access to a computer connected to the internet.⁶ For mobile phone connection, the numbers are significantly higher, with 59.2 per cent of people owning a mobile in 2011, divided into 51.2 per cent for rural and 76.1 per cent for urban India.⁷ The 'mobile typhoon', a price war between mobile phone companies, made internet-enabled phones more affordable and reduced prices for mobile internet packages to less than US\$2 per month (Kumar 2014). Taken into account, this suggests currently a higher mobile phone penetration and an increase in internet access through mobile phones. More recent numbers suggest an estimated 718 million internet users at the end of 2019 (TRA I 2020), which accounts for 54 per cent of the population and is likely to grow further. The Indian population also joins the worldwide trend towards an increasing use of social media, which finds expression, for example, in growing numbers of Facebook users (200 million by the end of 2018, according to Internet World Stats).⁸ Nonetheless, the entertainment experience of India's rural youth is grounded in conventional media, that is, television, Bollywood films and newspapers. Here, the use of digital media has symbolic value but is far from an everyday experience (Pathak-Shelat and DeShano 2013). For underprivileged urban youth, however, the use of mobile phones is important for SNS and entertainment, as well as gaining internet competency (Kumar 2014).

The (young) urban middle and upper class dominate internet use and communication, having the largest share and arguably also the loudest voice. According to the Internet and Mobile Association of India, in 2015, 246 million of India's internet users came from cities, compared to 129 million in villages. And over 60 per cent of the six million social media users in Mumbai come from higher-income segments (Udupa 2016). Consequently, many people working in IT hubs in general come from this cohort of young, urban, upper-middle-class Indians. Volunteers and staff who work for the 1947PA are recruited mostly from this stratum, because finding out about the 1947PA, initial training, as well as working with the digital archive requires familiarity and intensive use of digital devices and online interaction. The citizen historians, story scholars and staff members all come from similar backgrounds; they include only a few older people and some from small town settings. All are acquainted with digital and online technology, and feel at home in an online environment, which is fittingly also expressed through the physical environment in which the paid staff work.

The Digital Side: Working for an Archive in Cybercity

In 2017, the 1947PA had a large team of about twenty story scholars and employed a handful of staff members: Priyanka, Rajiv and a part-time story editor in Delhi's National Capital Region (NCR). Sarah headed the social media team, Malika was the lead archivist and Guneeta was the head of it all in Berkeley.⁹ In 2017, the archive's India office was in Cybercity, 'the largest business district with commercial office space offered on lease in Delhi/NCR'.¹⁰ Cybercity is located in Gurgaon, south of Delhi, and as the crowded metro indicates, it draws a lot of workers in the morning and evening. Cybercity even has its own metro extension, connecting the 3 km² area on the outskirts of the Indian capital with the centre of the city. Cybercity is a self-labelled futuristic commercial hub. It comprises a central food and bar court and numerous office towers, with names like Innov8, Epitome and Infinity. These glass and steel constructions provide office space for several hundred national and international companies, among them Google, Yahoo, Oracle, IBM, Tata Consultancy Services, LinkedIn and Boston Consulting Group. These companies work in software creation, IT-enabled services, financial services and telecommunications on the outskirts of Delhi and at the centre of modern work infrastructure.

The 1947PA has its office on the fourteenth floor of one of the glass and steel towers. When entering the premises of Cybercity, staff have to show an ID at the main gate and their bags are checked by security personnel at the tower entrance. A key card allows workers through the turnstile and up to the fourteenth floor, where another swipe of the key card lets them into the open-plan, air-conditioned office. This floor is home to a large Indian e-business company. Its entrance is equipped with a big company advertisement screen, front desk personnel and a security officer. The modern design continues beyond the front desk. The open-plan office comprises more than three hundred desks. Its scale appears slightly smaller, as lounge areas, meeting places and coffee and water dispensers break up the scene. In the middle of the floor is the company's canteen, which serves a delicious thali for lunch every day for 45 Rupees, and offers small snacks in between. In the afternoon, two young men push a chai trolley through the office. The lounge and meeting areas are thematically designed, referencing popular Western movies, and motivational memes decorate the walls. Young people sit at their desks, meet in the designated areas or stand in small groups talking. They type on their laptops and PCs, talk on the phone or to each other and are shielded from their counterparts only through a half-height grey screen. A constant buzzing and humming can be heard

in the cool air, which also surrounds the four desks occupied by the 1947PA. They moved here in 2016, when the company decided to sponsor the archive's work by providing the workspace free of charge. Each desk is equipped with a small whiteboard, a mobile file container and, most importantly, a LAN cable.

When I interned with the 1947PA in spring and summer 2017, I worked predominantly with Priyanka; we were later joined by Rajiv as the new programme manager. Priyanka oversaw my internship and was my main contact person, although technically the archive's boss (residing currently in the US) claims that position. In practice, Priyanka forwards me Google documents and access keys, grants me access to files and folders and provides me with necessary online resources to do my work. She sends updates to the US office in Berkeley, and searches online for new funding opportunities. She seems to be always online, even when she takes me along to outside appointments. When we ride the metro or take an autorickshaw, she makes WhatsApp calls to the story scholars. When she needs to check her emails in an environment without Wi-Fi, she connects her laptop to the phone and is online on two devices.

Cybercity hence seems a pretty good environment for Priyanka's work. Working for a digital archive that has offices in India, the US and Pakistan means working predominantly online. Priyanka is constantly making use of online infrastructure to enhance, update and sustain the 1947PA. She, alongside her colleague Rajiv, belongs to a generation that grew up with smartphones as an essential communication device. Creating and storing personal content as potential memories has developed into a common practice, and social media plays an important role in communication. The use of digital devices has become omnipresent. Rajiv and Priyanka are both in their twenties, and come from urban middle-class families. Priyanka grew up in the National Capital Region close to Delhi, and since finishing her studies in history and arts at a Delhi university, she lives with her family in Gurgaon. Rajiv comes from Mumbai and, after studying economics, worked for an insurance company in Singapore. He subsequently turned to social work with Teach India in the slums of Mumbai, and then moved into a shared apartment in Gurgaon to work for the 1947PA. Both live thirty to fifty minutes away from Cybercity and come to work five days a week, using Ola, Uber or a family car with a driver.

With Cybercity as their workplace and their everyday tasks involving intense digital engagement, Priyanka and Rajiv blend in with the IT workforce that surrounds them. The IT workforce is part of India's 'new-rich middle class' (Fuller and Narasimhan 2007); comparatively

young and well educated, most people working in Indian IT come from high or middle castes, have their roots in the middle class, and generally have urban backgrounds (Upadhyaya and Vasavi 2008a). Their comparatively high income affords new spending habits, often seen in their choice of housing and children's education (Fuller and Narasimhan 2007), and they expect high levels of cultural capital, mobility and flexibility (Upadhyaya and Vasavi 2008b). The IT sector has created a comparatively rich class of entrepreneurs and professionals in the private sector, and a labour force for whom technology is central to their work. The use of digital technology is a prerequisite in these jobs, whether as software engineers or globally embedded customer service professionals. Using smartphones in their professional and private lives is for this segment of the new-rich middle class a matter of course.

The 1947PA's staff share characteristics with such IT professionals, not on the financial side,¹¹ but on the technological side. Working for the digital archive requires taking their own devices to Cybercity and site visits, although company-owned devices are planned for. Digital recording, communication, archiving hardware and software and internet dissemination are the basis of digital archives.

Being situated at Cybercity is in this sense emblematic of the space the digital archive occupies in contemporary society. Its location at the heart of one of the country's largest IT hubs reflects the fact that it is a *digital* archive, which can only exist because staff, volunteers and citizens are making more extensive use of digital devices. Digital technology is the basis for distance working and digital memory creation. The staff are not programming or creating software, but use ICT for their work and are almost constantly online through their laptops and smartphones. Content is produced, stored and disseminated in digital form, and communication through WhatsApp is a self-evident necessity at the 1947PA. Online interaction provides the most convenient way to stay in touch with colleagues at the Berkeley office and with contributors in Delhi and elsewhere. Priyanka can receive twenty to fifty messages an hour and often joins late-night WhatsApp conference calls with the team overseas.

The Archival Side: At the Fringes of Digital Work

As we have seen, much of the work conducted by the 1947PA functions only through and on the basis of ICT. Recruiting workers, spreading information, raising funds and keeping track of what everyone is doing needs an online environment. The basis of the archival work –

conducting interviews with people who lived through Partition – is technically only feasible because most story scholars and citizen historians can use their own smartphone cameras to record interviews of sufficient quality. The 1947PA owns only a few semi-professional video cameras, so the utilization of individually owned digital recording devices is key. Priyanka and Rajiv, the two staff members working out of Cybercity, have themselves conducted such interviews, even though their work today focuses on other tasks. Priyanka interviewed about sixty people before becoming a full-time staff member, and Rajiv started his job by recording a handful of interviews too. It is predominantly story scholars and citizen historians who interview. The interviewing work is based on ICT, yet goes far beyond it. I joined Priyanka and the story scholar Sahar in the aftermath of one of these interviews, to get a better idea of this part of the archive's work.

Priyanka and I meet Sahar and Anand Chopra in Mr Chopra's office in Noida, an industrial town southeast of Delhi. The outside looks rather residential, but the inside houses the control centre of a very successful Indian trading company. We are offered chai and sit down in front of the large desk from which Mr Chopra leads his international business. He is a man in his early seventies. With his warm, expressive voice and his enthusiastic performance, he is a charming and engaging storyteller. He told Sahar his migration story in this room a few weeks ago. Sahar asked him questions about his life before, during and after Partition, about his individual memories. Parts of it he shares again with us today, which we listen to carefully, intrigued by the wit of the protagonist and the dramaturgy of the events as he tells them. He manages to bring optimism to the fore without denying the hardships and horrors of partition:

We had to flee at night. I only remember that my father was standing at the door, urging us all to get up, leave personal belongings behind and make it to the car outside as fast as we can. He stayed behind, and we only saw him a few weeks later. He later told me that in a cloak and dagger operation he managed to get a few lorries to our warehouses in the eastern parts of Lahore. He convinced a few bystanders to load everything they could on the lorries within half an hour. Everything else had to be left behind, and he handed the key to the bystanders saying that what remained would be theirs – as the reward for their help.¹²

Sahar has been interviewing Mr Chopra about his migration story from Lahore to Delhi in more detail. The interview lasted more than two days. Sahar confirms that listening to Mr Chopra was intriguing, sometimes

so much so that they lost track of time. Other interviews, both Priyanka and Sahar explain, are more challenging, as they involve very painful, deeply moving and even traumatic memories. Every interview is different, they say, but individual stories always touch you: ‘You always learn and you always feel with the people sharing their memories’.

This part of the 1947PA’s work needs technical equipment to video record the interviews, which are later digitally stored in the archive’s database, but goes far beyond digital work. It is the elicitation of individual stories, a diving into the past through personal interaction, an active listening to personal memories. The interviews follow guidelines – and an extensive information pack needs to be downloaded before interviews are conducted – but are still always unique encounters.

The 1947PA works with digital technology, but in the realm of memory production and archival work. It requires ICT, but does not develop it. Guneeta Bhalla developed the online platform, from the original idea, to its implementation, to its permanent expansion. It is web based but also essentially a space to collect, store and possibly revive documents of the past. Hence, in public, people draw on the digital *archive* aspect when explaining their motivation to work with the 1947PA, rather than the digital characteristics (see the story scholar and citizen historian quotes above). Priyanka and Rajiv affirm a fascination and interest in history as a motive for working with the 1947PA. They do not have or do not foreground a family history of migration to or from Pakistan or India. Rather Priyanka, who studied history and arts before joining the 1947PA, was involved in studying South Asian history from an academic perspective at university. She also worked as an assistant researcher to an author writing a book on partition. Working with the 1947PA is for her a way to employ her interest in history in a professional setting. Rajiv tells me that he is considering a master’s degree in history in the future, and understands his work here as both personal training and a service to society.

It is this stated interest in history that the 1947PA extensively draws on, alongside its active online performance. Portraying itself as an archive with an intention to create history (see chapter 3), its workforce builds upon this idea and engages with aspects of the past. Interviewing elderly people about their experiences from several decades ago, and on a topic as important as the partition of India and Pakistan, is indeed a way of pursuing an interest in history. According to the citizen historians and story scholars, the reasons to do so are to further the cause of justice and to be informed about the past in order to understand the present. This corresponds to a general understanding of historical responsibility (Rüsen 2003; Tillmanns 2009), and implies notions of gratitude, acceptance and dignity (De Baets 2004). History as a discipline also draws on the idea of enabling succeeding generations to analyse

the past. Remembering historical injustice is a precondition for historical justice to take place (Tillmanns 2009).

In India, thinking about the past in relation to partition is also connected to a desire to understand contemporary social identities that are shaken by historical trauma. Asking and answering questions about the past ('Where do I come from?', 'What did my forefathers and foremothers do?') is important in terms of accepting your present identity and developing a perspective for the future.

Historical references are key in Indian identity politics. This plays out in South Asian colonial history, but reaches back to reinterpreting scriptures, and the settlement of the subcontinent. Hindu elites have been generating new interpretations of Vedic heritage for ages, thereby redefining themselves and strengthening their collective identity (White 2006). Likewise, the year 1947 is subject to interpretation and marks an event that is extremely important for contemporary South Asian identity and politics alike. As Urvashi Butalia (2003), Veena Das (2007) and others have shown, partition accounted not only for about fourteen million displacements and at least several hundred thousand deaths, but an unequalled level of violence that continues to influence society. Individual experiences and suffering, often buried away in silence but mapped onto female bodies especially, cannot easily be put aside in history books, but remain present in the lives of Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshi men and women. The wars between Pakistan and India and the continuous conflict in Kashmir are only the most visible consequences of partition. It continues to influence perception, identity making and politics even today (Ben-Ari and Jassal 2007).

Working with the 1947PA is thus a way of engaging with the past, albeit on the basis of digital technology rather than paper files or material records. By placing young people's statements of interest in history online, the 1947PA found another expression for its combination of modern forms of communication and historical topics. ICT is a natural environment for thinking about and remembering partition. It merges a young tech-savvy workforce with a generation of first-hand narrators sharing their memories, allowing young people to engage with this part of their history. ICT provides the backbone for this, without being the core or the sole reason.

Balancing IT and Cultural Production: A New Memory Ecology?

Regarding memory production, it can also be argued that people turning to digital technologies and online environments to store and communicate the events of the past are intrinsically element of the 1947PA's

work – become acquainted with digital memory. New modes, expectations and circumstances of memory creation facilitate this trend, which, as José van Dijck (2007) convincingly argued, brings a shift from the memory function of media towards identity formation and experience. Digital recordings, due to their immateriality, become entities of sharing, communicating and experiencing, rather than of preserving, albeit without losing the latter capacity completely. Brown and Hoskins (2010) even speak of a new memory ecology that develops through digital media, where memory making is no longer in the foreground when content is stored, but every piece of digital content bears reconstitutive potential. They also note a new memory boom initiated through digital devices, when everything is ‘archived’ in post-scarcity societies: ‘As our digital media translate more and more into data the digital distribution and malleability of memory (individual, social, cultural) appears infinite’ (ibid.: 97).

For the people working at the 1947PA, this would mean that growing up or living in an environment where ICT is ubiquitous creates an environment in which digital storage of potential memory as data is an everyday task performed habitually. At first sight, this is correct. As Chinara Shah and Aileen Blaney (2018) illustrate in their compilation on Indian photography, there is a tendency among parts of Indian society to record, collect and store digital media abundantly. Priyanka and the others working for the 1947PA are always online for work purposes, but also record and share private experiences. These have the potential to develop into memories as they are automatically stored on digital devices or carefully arranged in customized folders.

However, engaging with the past through personal involvement in interview situations adds another facet to what a new memory ecology can comprise. When the story scholars and citizen historians conduct and record interviews, they do so consciously as a task of creating historical documents. These documents are video recordings of individual stories, and while oral history has had its contestations, individual testimonies are by now acknowledged as historical resources (Ritchie 2011). That these recordings are conducted in a digital format is self-evident for volunteers and staff, since a digital archive is a way of granting access to the material and makes the whole undertaking meaningful as a way of coming to terms with the past. Individual stories of the past acquire new significance through digital media, are able to travel and communicate across distances and bear the potential to produce empathy at a distance (Garde-Hansen et al. 2009).

As a consequence, the groundwork of the 1947PA resembles a sociality of online and offline encounters. This allows for a refinement of

the new memory ecology as Hoskins understands it. He sounds a warning when analysing memory making in digital contexts, and stresses the negative or disputable aspects of a changing memory ecology (Hoskins 2011). Memory, according to him, is no longer an individual or collective process of personally making sense of the past as a process of the mind, but is outsourced. We are giving away memories to machines, which influence what and how memory is created and blur the distinction between human memory and artificial memory (regarding devices, storage and material) (*ibid.*). It would no longer be experience that conditions remembering, but ubiquitous technology. As a result, Hoskins (2018a: 105) argues, there is less capacity to remember, attention spans become fragmented and we can even observe a ‘diminishment of the active human capacity of memory in the face of the distractions: the capacity to select, discern, as overconsumers of a post-scarcity culture’. In other words, we no longer have memory, but access to the past: ‘Memory has been lost to the hyperconnective illusion of an open access world of the availability, accessibility, and reproduceability of the past’ (Hoskins 2018b: 5).

The 1947PA’s work on the ground tells a different story. The middle-class individuals who make up the crowd for the 1947PA are certainly individually familiar with digital technology and attuned to the internet. Some document their lives without a precise agenda, or create a somewhat arbitrary shadow repository of potential memories, which they share, blog about or communicate in other online formats.¹³ At the same time, they also participate in a more coordinated means of making memories, which the 1947PA choreographs. Memory making for the digital archive is not outsourced to machines, but saved with their support and re-evoked in a common effort. The crowd joins in with a common effort to record and collect memories and thereby contributes to the common vision of creating the archive and influencing history making. The 1947PA as a charitable trust is the nodal point around which an interest in history and doing something for the common good is organized. Being part of the digital archive’s workforce creates a feeling of working conjointly with a common interest in gathering cultural heritage. The digital archive not least stipulates the frame for personal interactions and provides an argument for why this work is necessary. It offers an impetus for approaching people and asking for their stories (at a time when telling stories is not an everyday practice). The emerging encounters, fostered by an interest in the shared past, demonstrate that memory making is anything but lost.

However, the work for and within the 1947PA constitutes a balancing act between digital work and offline encounters for producing

narratives of the past. Priyanka's and Rajiv's work also comprises tasks that go beyond pure online or digital work to increase the number of archived stories and to keep the archive running. The webinar, for example, is an online encounter, but it is at the same time probably the first instance that co-workers actually meet. They meet here only in list form and through a brief introduction, as well as the Q and A session at the end, but it is a chance to acknowledge that other individuals share their interest in the project. It is a first step to establishing a bond between the otherwise mostly anonymous people attracted to the same initiative.

Forming these bonds continues throughout the time people participate in the 1947PA, albeit with erratic intensity. Since Priyanka took over the coordination of the volunteers, she has been the Indian contact person for both citizen historians and story scholars. Citizen historians are free to contribute interviews whenever conducted (but they are expected to start soon after the webinar). Story scholars, applying for this position and receiving a small stipend, are obliged to fulfil a quota of eight to twenty-two interviews per month. Priyanka's and later Rajiv's role is to be available for questions, but also to monitor and ensure that the quota of interviews is fulfilled. While Priyanka regularly communicates with all story scholars via WhatsApp, phone and email, Rajiv – being solely responsible for managing the volunteers – enhances the quality of the established social relationships in the offline world.¹⁴ He schedules face-to-face meetings for all Delhi story scholars and later also for all Indian members at a 'mandatory retreat in Delhi'. During these meetings, held in cafés and other public venues in Delhi, people can converse about their experiences, exchange interesting, curious and common stories and get a feeling for who else is on board in this endeavour. These meetings give social groups established on the basis of the digital archive a new quality, allowing people to establish contacts and share their thoughts not only through the coordinator at the office, but also peer to peer.¹⁵

A final area in which the 1947PA's work shows clearly how it functions at the fringes of IT is its self-conception as an archive. It decidedly claims not only to have individuals tell their stories, but to assemble these and make them public as accounts of oral history. It perceives itself as contributing in its entirety to the way partition is constructed as a part of South Asian history. In this we find another point to expand on Brown and Hoskins' new memory ecology. Hoskins (2018a: 88) makes a point that digital technology leads to memory being all over the place. It is connected, networked and searchable, yet that implies that it is scattered, that 'the archive has run riot'. Digital archives like the 1947PA,

which have a marked agenda of creating content for memory and history making (moreover, in an ordered form; see below), can instead be understood as using digital media to make access to material easier, albeit in a regulated and ordered/ing way. Instead of eroding the term archive (everything is an archive; the whole internet is an archive [Kimpton and Ubois 2006]) and talking of shadow archives that are created when data is stored in abundance (Hoskins 2018b), the 1947PA constitutes the continuity of archives in the narrow sense in the digital realm. Widening the term due to the potential memory ability of storage devices and capacities is not very helpful (see chapter 1). The potential for using stored data for archival purposes is certainly extended with the increased use of recording equipment. But ‘archiving’ is more than collecting or randomly storing using automatic digital processes. It is a conscious process of creating and/or collecting and ordering data for memory and history making. What human beings create along the way through digital means are shadow repositories instead of shadow archives. Shadow repositories may have an insinuated past and a dormant digital memory, and come with unlimited ‘sharing’ and reviving options. But they lack the intentionality of digital archives and ignore the crowd with its common interests and its sociality as a factor in digital memory making.

Editing Stories and Other Vertical Structures

The intentionality of the archive not only stresses the ordering and preserving side of the 1947PA as a digital archive, but stands in contrast to the ideal of low hierarchies and horizontal structuring of creating the archive online. The more horizontally structured, collective work of on-line training and interview conduction is followed by a vertically structured process of editing. Editing is partially determined by the technical framing of storage and dissemination. The 1947PA has two main outlets, one being its own website, with about eight thousand stories in 2019, the other its Facebook page. On the website, an interactive map is the main feature and retrieval instrument, serving as the database ordering the interviews. A user can click on the dots on the map to see where people migrated from and to. When retrieving and opening individual datasets, these do not comprise the video interviews, but name, age and migration route of the person in note form, one or several photographs and a written summary of about five hundred words. The summary features the person’s biography as he or she told it in the interview, with a

focus on partition. Similarly, the Facebook page – which does not come as a database with a retrieval system, but lists entries chronologically – features a recent or historical photograph of the interviewed person followed by a written summary of her or his biography.¹⁶

It is the needs of Facebook and the practicability of the website that codetermines the form of dissemination. Full interviews, lasting between one hour and several days, cannot be uploaded in their entirety. The sheer size of these video files forbids it; server capacity would need to be several times higher. With the aim of ‘bringing knowledge of Partition into widespread public consciousness’,¹⁷ the data packages of many users would be insufficient to stream or download entire files. While downscaling and/or cutting the film would be an option, the 1947PA decided to edit based on written summaries of the interviews.¹⁸ This has the advantage of taking up less storage space and being theoretically easier to retrieve. The chosen design of the website and its database structure, as well as the logics, rules and aesthetics of Facebook, where the 1947PA sees most traffic and has more than nine hundred thousand followers, sets one frame for editing and publishing. The second determining factor are the benefits such editing can bring in applying internally set rules of quality control and political neutrality.

To reach quality control and political neutrality, as a first step every interviewer is obliged to write a summary of his/her interview and upload it along with the video file. The guidelines for writing a summary are as follows:

Each summary aims to tell a complete story of the interviewee’s life, so including many details helps to create an accurate, fully-formed life story. Of course, you don’t need to write-up the interview word-for-word – rather, include the major details (at least 3) from each part of life – childhood, Partition, after Partition, and current life. In all, the summary should be 1 to 2 pages in length.

This document justifies the stories of these Partition witnesses, and will be read by thousands, possibly millions, in the future, so please write carefully! ... In all, the interview summary is meant to create a full picture of the interviewee’s life story and aims to be report-like.¹⁹

The second step is the editing process. Sarah headed the 1947PA’s social media team in spring and summer 2017. She works at the Berkeley office and communicates with me via WhatsApp when I join her team to edit stories. When I asked her about the process of editing work, she responded as follows:

Sarah: The Archive Team receives the summaries, files the information in our database, and sends summaries to us. They also talk with the story collectors about corrections in the summaries, things like that. ...

Katja: Is it only you and me working on [the summaries], or more people?

There is another person editing 20/week, but I know that the Archive Team is a bit behind on stories. Apparently we are getting a lot sent in and we (the Social Media Team) have to wait for the Archivists to catch up. I really appreciate all the work you're doing!

As Sarah explained, the archival team receives the summaries electronically, files them and sends them through a few rounds of copy-editing and approval, aimed at language correction, changes in style and diction. The summaries are published only in English, while many interviews are conducted in Hindi, Urdu or regional languages:

And still some of the summaries – sorry to be so open – are really bad!

Yes, I know that some of the summaries suffer from bad translations, but we have to work with what we get. It's a long process! We used to publish stories at a faster rate but I think the editors realized that the stories needed more work and that it would take longer.

Language was not the only thing that needed to be corrected in editing, and was certainly not the most time-consuming factor. The second area that editors at the 1947PA are asked to look into is sensitivity and impartiality. The archive developed guidelines for editors that aim to guarantee the protection of informants and named individuals as well as assuring non-biased reporting. Associations with political parties, religions or judgemental statements are to be avoided as much as possible:

Ask yourself: How would this post look to a person with a background from India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh? How would this post look to a person from a non-South Asian background? How would this post look to

a person who identifies as Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Zoroastrian, Christian, Jewish, or another group? How would this post look to a person who is extremely wealthy or one who struggles financially. How about the the interviewee's family and friends? How will they feel about this post? Will anyone belonging to any one of these groups be rubbed the wrong way or be offended or off-put by statements in this post? Will anyone feel misrepresented?

When in doubt: Take the more conservative route.²⁰

As an editor, the task is to filter out all political statements and associations that might be insensitive, disturbing or offensive.

By far the biggest challenge and most time-consuming aspect of editing was making changes for the reason of coherence or logic:

Hello Katja ... How have you found the editing process so far? Do you have any questions?

It takes time, especially if you want to bring some chronology into it. But no, no further questions as of now.

I'll let you know. And I'd appreciate if you have a look at one or two of the edits and let me know if something goes severely wrong.

...

Looking over the edits now, looks really good so far. I'm emailing you a few corrections/suggestions. Thank you for your hard work! I know that editing can be challenging and it is very time consuming. ...

I started as an intern and was promoted to editor when the previous editor left a few months ago. When I was an intern they expected 3 stories an hour, but the policy has been relaxed to 1 story an hour, I think Guneeta may have realized that some of the stories needed extra work.

Oh, there are expectations in numbers. I better get going then ;)

So far everything is working great, don't worry!

The corrections Sarah sent were mostly changing a passive voice to an active voice to make the reading experience more immersive. Preceding this were sometimes severe corrections from my side, when summaries provided hardly any information about a person's biography. We received summaries such as this one:

Mr. Arif Mohammed started the interview by giving family names. He then told that he was in grade 1 when partition happened, and how he escaped from school when riots happened. He moved further to his professional career. He talked about his family members and their professions. His favorite game was Gulli Danda.

He told about the great Muslims at that time, and how their wishes got fulfilled and the difference in now days Muslims. According to him, the life before partition was great, he considers that life much more simple than this was. The only thing he remembers about the British was the introduction of tea by them. He also told a story he remembered from his childhood. According to him, in India there was respect for elders. According to him Muslims are in misery in present India because of the Hindus that migrated from Pakistan. ...

The summary continues to talk about issues and topics that the interviewee touched upon, without providing content. The interviewer did not write down how Mr Mohammed escaped from school, or his childhood story, nor did they name the profession that 'he was delighted to talk about'. While smoothing out any sentiments the interviewee might have against Hindus, the major task for the editor here is to trace the little information provided and rearrange it into a short but coherent biographical story. This issue arose time and again, and eventually reached almost all staff working for the archive:

Hej Sarah, I uploaded a few more edits. Several times I this week as well as last week I got very frustrated about Kabir Saleem's summaries. Someone needs to tell him urgently how to write a summary that actually tells content!

Hi Katja - I finished assigning stories for this week and I emailed the Stories Team to let them know that we might need to reiterate the standards we are looking for in the summaries.

Malika, who is also editing stories, made a similar comment. We have several new story collectors so it might just be because they are new.

Hi Sarah. Regarding the summaries: some are really good and most are okay. I don't think the standards need to be changed and I know that English is quite hard for some scholars. ... Are there any mechanisms for feedback? Can Priyanka, or now Rajiv use the information, say if we are dropping a line? That would improve things a lot, I guess.

... (Oh, and I'm confident that I'll finish the remaining edits today ;)

Hi Katja - I was just about to message you! So I spoke with the Story Team here today about your concerns about the quality of the summaries. We are having a similar problem with the story collectors that are sending us small snippets of interviews that we immediately post to Twitter. I've been in touch with both Rajiv and Guneeta about this as well and we're going over our editing standards and brainstorming ways we can reach out to the story collectors and remind them of the quality we expect. It's difficult because we don't want to discourage them from sharing with us, but I agree, many of the summaries could be of better quality. ...

Well, definitely don't discourage them. But I'm sure there are ways of 'sitting down with them' and going (pedagogically) through their summaries, pointing out strengths but also weaknesses and rooms for improvement.

The standards for the summaries and the quality in which they are submitted determine how quickly new stories are published online. If language, style and coherence are acceptable, the task of the editorial team comes down to erasing potentially offensive statements for

the sake of balancing an account, and anonymizing the interview as needed. Identifiers such as the name of the interviewee and the cities of origin or residence are retained. Affiliations, street names and names of relatives are erased.

After copyediting, the summaries are returned to the central outreach coordinator for social media, who checks them once again. Together with the archival team, s/he ensures that all necessary approvals are at hand and clears the summary for social media and website upload:

And another question (out of interest):
what happens to the edits once I uploaded
them? They go back to the archival team?
How long does it usually take them to get to
fb and the story map?

Your stories are scheduled to start appearing
on Facebook next week. In fact I think a few
have already gone up, but I'll send you a mes-
sage next week when they start getting posted.
It's also difficult because I'm discovering that
sometimes we're missing important material
from the story collectors and then we can't
post anything until the story collectors get
around to sending us the missing information.
It can get very frustrating

Missing information in the sense of...?
Images? Forms of agreement?

Missing release permissions from interviewees

Ya.

There's a detailed list of things that the story
collectors need to provide and apparently in
the past people have submitted incomplete sto-
ries and then the Archive hasn't been able to
get in touch with them again. So essentially the
stories were lost.

... Ui. That's rather bad
But the focus is in fb, and story map is only
a second step
Is that right?

Yes, we have so many stories coming in, I think that we need to post more frequently on Facebook. I'm going to discuss that with Guneeta as well. When the story goes up on Facebook it is concurrently posted to Story Map.

All in all, the editing process is an intricate way of actively intervening with the content that is to be published. Writing the summaries, rewording, corrections and adjustments according to the archive's guidelines are extra layers placed on top of the first-hand accounts. Volunteers and staff modify and alter the stories to make sure they adhere to the digital archive's dissemination format. The interview process is the first step in this direction – setting up the interview, guiding it with the manual, and the questionnaire. The second step is writing the summaries as the archive demands from the interviewers when uploading their files. The in-house editing process is an amplified modification. The social media team edits and exhibits according to internally set formal and moral guidelines. There is the option of checking with the interviewees if the final summary is to their liking, but this is not always applicable. After multiple layers of intervention, it is the envisioned public appearance of digital archives that determines the final outcome of the summary. The published entries consequently turn out to be quite strongly depended devices, with the initiators of the project as regulators. What the online audience can eventually see and read online on the story map and on Facebook are carefully curated accounts of the past.

Curating historical material is not a new phenomenon, but it is essentially a practice of museum or gallery politics. The localized arrangement of artefacts for public view has developed from an early modern form of collecting, ordering and sense making, and modern forms of serving the creation of nation states, to a recent trend of more inclusive ways of curating a display (Macdonald 1998). In many of today's museums, exhibitions take the public and its interests into view, accepting visitors as consumers who are to be included in interactive ways. The content mediated in displays is carefully conceptualized. Especially in science and history museums – in contrast to galleries and art museums – the exhibition includes contexts of displayed objects. Objects are set in scene and explained, people are guided through the museum – all with a notion of scientific fact that objects and museum production imply. The process of reaching a particular form of display, the selection of content and the way accompanying and explanatory texts have been written is carefully hidden from the viewer (*ibid.*). The same goes for the political and social intentions of curating and exhibiting. The

reasons for communicating a topic in a particular way are at most implicitly understood. But curating is never neutral. It comprises value judgements when stakeholders select, within the realms of their power, what and how ‘facts’ are communicated. They thereby create knowledge that is culturally and politically informed and has at the same time cultural, social and political implications.

The editing process that the 1947PA conducts before online dissemination bears strong similarities to museum curation. Volunteers and staff choose and select content, which they edit according to internally formed political motivations and external stipulations. Like a museum that is determined by the building’s space, the digital archive adheres to the limits of Facebook and to conventions of internet usage. Many of the archive’s working principles and guidelines are only available to insiders. As in museums, the curatorial process in the digital archive, the editing and altering of interview summaries is not made public but executed behind the scenes. Language editing might come to mind naturally, but only the person who recorded the interview is publicly named in the 1947PA. The political intention behind the archive is to some extent declared in the website’s ‘about’ section. This intention informs decision making for detailed processes within archive creation and dissemination. It leads to an extensive editing of content, including cutting political statements, religious sentiments and hateful statements. Personal opinions are smoothed out for the sake of reconciliation, and confused write-ups are cleaned and straightened out. The subsequent online impression is of an extensive collection of well-written, English interview summaries, all roughly the same style, neatly formulated and informative. They tell of the hardships and troubles people had to go through during partition, without blaming or incriminating each other.

In this way, curating and publicizing archival content blurs the distinct line once drawn between museums and archives. As digital archives thrive on online engagement (whether to generate funds, attract a workforce or gain attention and recognition), they have to exhibit their content and make it known. Digital archives combine this need to publicize, communicate and exhibit with an ample curatorial practice, and hence adopt practices that museums have been conversant in for a long time.

Curating with thorough editing rules guarantees consistent quality for the archive, justifying this top-down decision-making structure. Vertical structures in the archive also play out in the training of new volunteers and the extensive questionnaire and approval form, as well as in the staff workflows in and between offices. A few weeks into my

internship, Priyanka (private conversation, 2017) tells me how challenging the work is for her:

I quit. No seriously, I quit. It is just too much. I'm working day and night. When I get home from the office there are still calls to make and messages to answer. After dinner tonight I will have another WhatsApp call with the staff from Berkeley. Yesterday the same, I did not get to bed before 3am. It is just too demanding to work in two different time zones.

She put into words what I had already been observing. In my view, it is not only the time difference that makes things so difficult, but the fact that she is managing fundraising, the volunteers and paid interns, and is in charge of an upcoming exhibition. Being the mediator or buffer between the head in the US and locals in Delhi and India does not seem to be an easy task. Transmitting debates, needs and concerns across distances demands tact, intuition, improvisational skills and a thick skin. The working environment is hierarchical, despite, or precisely because of, the use of the internet. It is a challenge to maintain such a workflow over a longer period of time, especially given the idealism needed for this kind of work at the fringes of IT. As shown, the digital archive combines important work on history and society with modern IT-related work, and it attracts a particularly suitable cohort of Indian society that feels at home in both worlds. Yet balancing internet positivism and its ideal of flat hierarchies with producing an archive is difficult within an IT world where high wages and job changes are the norm. In consequence, for the 1947PA, catering to both its social and IT dimensions comes at the cost of sustainability. Being a charitable trust, the 1947PA works with IT professionals, but is not able to pay comparable salaries. Being a community-based archive and drawing on crowdsourcing recruitment implies that (high) monetary compensation is not a necessity when the workers identify with the cause or expect a moral or time-shifted indemnification. Being satisfied with the processes and outcome of the work significantly increases the length of time people stay with a company. In Priyanka's case, circumstances did not permit her to stay with the archive for much longer than eighteen months.

Moreover, Priyanka aimed for something beyond working at the fringes of Cyberville. With her master's in arts and history, she started to look for individual funding to continue her studies at PhD level. In spring 2017, she requested leave for three days to attend an interview in Mumbai, where she partook in an assessment for an international stipend programme. She had already secured a place at an overseas university a year ago; a professor had accepted her as a PhD student.

However, paying tuition fees and maintenance abroad was not possible for her and her family. Nonetheless, despite not having a funded PhD position, Priyanka quit the demanding work with the 1947PA in late 2017.

Rajiv took over the management of the Indian story scholars and citizen historians. He was able to devote more time to it than Priyanka, as he did not have to raise funds or organize exhibitions. A few weeks into his job he was very enthusiastic about the insights he was gaining into the past, and into partition in particular. He was also highly motivated by the volunteers' potential and the possibilities of advancing the story scholars' commitment to the 1947PA. He set up several peer group meetings for the Indian citizen historians and story scholars and was committed to improving workflow, submission rates and summary quality. However, in 2018, Rajiv also left the 1947PA after a little more than a year in the job. He tells me that the reason for quitting what started as a very positive role was his need for time off to study for the Civil Service Examinations. Concentrating on these required all his time and made working for the archive at the same time impossible. Difficulties in communication at work, across the offices and in the hierarchical work structure led him to take the step to leave.

Like Priyanka and Rajiv, other staff members' employment at the 1947PA was also rather short-term. Sarah was no longer part of the digital archive in mid-2018, neither was the head of the archival team. The scholarships are scheduled to be temporary only, lasting between three and six months. Employees, however, receive open-ended contracts or one-year contracts with the prospect of extension. The company has a good reputation as an employer in the social sector that does important work and pays decent salaries. Its Indian location in Cybercity adds to its reputation as a progressive organization, being part of one of India's fastest growing business segments. But as digital archives remain at the fringes of the IT business, so also does the 1947PA linger at the periphery of Cybercity, both in regard to being social sector archival work and in its finances. The desks are only temporary; it depends on financial aid and funds coming in. The archive operates here on an insecure basis. In line with this, the staff only stay for short periods of time. The employees carry out work at the 1947PA on a temporary basis. It is a career step, one that sits between IT business, sociopolitical ambitions and professional involvement with the past. A digital archive is attributed with novelty, creativity, opportunities to develop and space for innovation, and comes with an increased fluidity. Balancing this with inherently vertical decision-making structures comes at the cost of short-term commitments only. Changes and vicissitude rather than continuity and

sustainability define the on-the-ground archival work. Priyanka secured a place and full funding for her PhD at an overseas university. Rajiv failed his entrance exams in 2019 and began work with an EdTech company.

Archive / Cybercity

To create a consistent digital archive, makers have to find ways to engage a larger cohort of co-workers and to display the created content in an appropriate way. This means that digital archives outside established institutions must consist of both vertical and horizontal decision-making structures. Digital technology restores an agency that goes beyond archival conventions of top-down decision making. A digital archive such as the 1947PA embodies this idea of equality and low hierarchies in multiple ways. Large parts of its work are crowdsourced, and staff are recruited through online calls and online training. The people working for the archive as employed staff and volunteers maintain contact across large distances through ICT and use digital devices for most of their tasks. The location of the Delhi office in Cybercity, with desks in an open-plan office, emphasizes its close relation to online business. It symbolizes the digital side of digital archives, and caters to an image of novelty and innovation.

The staff working for digital archives feel comfortable in such an environment, and use digital devices and techniques as a matter of course. The methods of recruitment and communication are in line with this, and foster the habits of the young new Indian middle class who operate the archive. Their work on the ground is nurtured by the proximity to IT, yet also nourished by an interest in history and dedication to social work. Their multiple engagements with memory, history and the digital mean not only dedicating time to a charitable trust, but allowing for the emergence of a more nuanced memory ecology. People working for the digital archive belong to an IT-savvy generation, yet their immersion in this form of dealing with the past allows them to reflect on archival work, memory making and digital storage. Their work is a joint undertaking to record and collect memories, which will enter a digital archive, with the stories available to everyone. The combination of volunteering, crowdsourcing, online communication and IT creates the perception of a horizontal structure.

However, the archive's public online availability actually entails a strong vertical structure. Disseminating content involves the curation of the same. Content is structured and aligned to the external requirements of an internet user's habits, resulting in dissemination on SNS,

and avoiding large data files. The editing of the 1947PA goes beyond this as it comprises quality control and adjustments on moral grounds. The politics of display comprise moral judgements about what should be stated publicly and what should remain unsaid or unrepeated to contribute to a process of reconciliation. In conventional archives, curation was not intrinsic. Archives were instead understood as undertaking preserving and ordering, as more or less professional bodies with ordering systems that allowed for retrieval of information (see chapter 1). The special feature of digital archives, in contrast, is the accessibility of their material – they cannot avoid exhibiting and curating. This does, in the case of the 1947PA, lend a strong verticality to archival work. The curatorial interventions of editing are considerable. This is not comparable to holistically digitizing according to previously set digitizing strategies. It is a conscious selection of how to display content, taking the liberty of formulating rules on moral grounds. The leadership set these rules, and staff and volunteers comply with them. Selecting, decision making and curating have become intrinsic elements of digital archival work.

Digital archives hence oscillate between vertical decision making and horizontally structured practices of archival work. Their content creation and intense editing demonstrates that digital archives do not *per se* abrogate hierarchies. Digital media, crowdsourcing and community-created content allow structures to shift, but the editing processes (re) establish ties with political processes of displaying and communicating. This crystallizes in the archive's everyday work, exemplified by the editing process, which is part of a choreographed curatorial practice. There is a distinct moral and political agenda behind the work, which makes it anything but a neutral assembling of statements. What the questionnaire for each interview indicates is amplified by the editing process of the interviewer, the copyeditor and the outreach coordinator.

Digital archives control the circulation of information. They do so not in accordance with government guidelines or long-established hierarchies, but in line with the moral ideals of the initiative and the rules and regulations of digital media. They make the best use of social media to keep the archive running, and financial and human capital flowing. In other words, they mediate information in accordance with the acceleration of the digital era. Digital archives adhere to the implicit and explicit rules of SNS in order to be successful, which includes a continuous communication on the topic and hence an active crowd remembering the past, based on an archive they have created. Moral judgements are the guiding forces behind arranging and publishing the past, and the actors deciding what to collect and how to make it accessible have become diversified. Volunteers, interested in the history of the

subcontinent and perceiving themselves as contributing at a grassroots level to the important process of national or subcontinental identity making, now create and edit content, yet they do so on the basis of set guidelines and manuals. The IT environment allows a levelled form of communication and an increased potential for novelty and innovation. It also provides for politics of display, where the digital archive's staff create knowledge about Partition on the basis of carefully curated summaries of individual memories.

Notes

1. I, too, was working for the 1947PA, as an intern, but I was the exception to the rule when it comes to tech-savviness. While my colleagues were online in multiple ways, I at first was busy figuring out the best data package for my smartphone. I tried to convince the phone company that they shouldn't disconnect me automatically after three months, because I did not have an Aadhaar card, which every average Indian needs these days for a sim card, among other things. At the office I was pestering the IT guy for weeks to make him give me an individual Wi-Fi account. I also had issues accessing the Google services that the 1947PA uses.
2. Predecessors of crowdsourcing in the offline world, using the dispersed knowledge of the crowd, are manifold, but the term 'crowdsourcing' is in a narrow sense applied to online versions only. Jeff Howe coined the term in *Wired* in 2006 (<https://www.wired.com/2006/06/crowds/>; accessed 16 May 2020).
3. In a segment on paid crowdsourced work, with Amazon Mechanical Turk as an example, Ross et al. (2009) already observed a shift from white, female, well-educated, young, US-based crowdworkers to male, highly educated, low-income Indian crowdworkers. Being a minority of 5% on the platform in 2008, their share increased to 36% in 2009. It is problematic not only that the Indian crowdworkers earned less for their work (less than US\$2 per hour), but that some relied on crowdsourced work to make ends meet (*ibid.*).
4. www.facebook.com/1947partitionarchive, 11 July 2018.
5. *Ibid.*, 19 July 2018.
6. <http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/Hlo-series/Hl-data/DDW-HH4012-0000.xls> (accessed 23 September 2019).
7. *Ibid.*
8. <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats3.htm> (accessed 16 May 2020). These numbers should be treated with care and can provide a rough estimate only.
9. All names have been changed, except for the name of the archive's leader, who frequently appears in public.
10. <http://www.dlfcybercity.com/> (accessed 16 May 2020).
11. Staff at the Delhi office earned approximately 40–50,000 Rs. per month.
12. Private communication, June 2017, formulated on the basis of field notes.
13. See, for example, <https://nooranandchawla.com/an-evening-swapping-partition-stories-with-the-1947-partition-archive/> (accessed 23 September 2019).
14. Priyanka also met some story scholars and citizen historians offline.

15. It is arguable whether this or the previously established form of indirect online connection suffices to label the people working for the archive a community. While Kozinets (2010: 10) would argue that membership of a community is subject to 'self-identification as a member, repeat contact, reciprocal familiarity, shared knowledge of some rituals and customs, some sense of obligation, and participation', Postill and Pink (2012) stress the transient encounters and the qualities of digital socialities.
16. The raw audiovisual material, as mediated through the interviewer's questions and recording, is preserved in a digital cloud. Forty-seven of these recordings are now available online (at least in parts) through Stanford University Libraries. ('Due to privacy restrictions, portions of The 1947 Partition Archive interview are not accessible via online streaming video but can be viewed at the Stanford University Libraries as well as the following partner institutions'; <https://exhibits.stanford.edu/1947-partition/about/partner-institutions>; last accessed 16 May 2020). It is also possible to view these video recordings in person in India at Ashoka University, Sonipat, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, and the University of Delhi, as well as in Pakistan at Habib University, Karachi, and Lahore University of Management Sciences.
17. <https://www.1947partitionarchive.org/mission> (accessed 16 May 2020).
18. Additionally, some video compilations of single interviews are available on Facebook.
19. From the 'Interview Summary', provided after completing the 1947PA oral history workshop.
20. From the 'Interview Summary', provided after completing the 1947PA oral history workshop.

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