



Monthly Bulletin

VOLUME XLIX, NO. 2 ■ FEBRUARY 2020



*To The Committee of Papers of the Asiatic Society
Gentlemen /*

THE ASIATIC SOCIETY
(AN INSTITUTION OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE)
1 PARK STREET • KOLKATA-700016

The cover



An Insignia of the Asiatic Society

James Prinsep, the Secretary of the Society from 1833 to 1838 and founding editor of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, was an extra-ordinary indologist and polymath. He was a versatile genius who deciphered the 'Kharosti' and 'Brahmi' scripts of ancient India. He had immense respect for Sir William Jones.

James Prinsep prepared an insignia, being the letter-head for the Asiatic Society in 1838. It represents the Vedas with the backdrop of a Mandir or Temple on one side and the Quran with a setting of a Mosque on the other and with the bust of Sir William Jones in the middle. The bust of Sir William Jones in the motif is surrounded by an oval shaped frame on which is inscribed the words, 'OOI SERVENTUR MEMORIA' in Latin, meaning 'to save your memory' reminiscing the contributions of Sir William Jones. It is beautifully decorated with plants and flowers. At the bottom corner there is an initial 'JW Lowry', possibly the signature of Joseph Wilson Lowry, an engraver and artist of Britain during 1838. It may be imagined that he sketched this at the instruction of Sir James Prinsep.

On the bottom of this decoration, there is an inscription "ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, INSTITUTED, JAN 6 1786". It is interesting to mention that this date of foundation is incorrect. The Society was founded on 15 January 1784 when 30 European members gathered together in a meeting at the Court House and the First Discourse was delivered by Sir William Jones. The name of the Asiatic Society was changed to 'The Asiatic Society of Bengal' in 1832 when James Prinsep was the Secretary.

Dr. Upendra Nath Brahmachary, President of the Asiatic Society, mentioned in his Annual Address in 1931-32, about this 'emblem' while talking about 'Sir William Jones' Medal for *Asiatic Researches*. In this context he remarked, "I consider that there was another object and that was to bring about good relationship between the Europeans, the Hindus, and the Mahomedans, and to strengthen it on an intellectual platform". This insignia is a symbol of community cohesiveness that the Asiatic Society cherishes throughout the 238 years of its history.

Dr. Nibedita Ganguly, Life Member and Research Guide &
Payel Saha and Neeharika Roy, Research Assistants

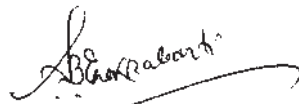


**AN ORDINARY MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY
WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY, 2020 AT 5.00 P.M.
IN THE VIDYASAGAR HALL OF THE SOCIETY**

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO BE PRESENT

Agenda

1. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Ordinary Monthly General Meeting held on 6th January, 2020.
2. Exhibitions of presents made to the Society in January, 2020.
3. Notice of Intended Motion, if any, under Regulation 49(d).
4. Matters of current business and routine matters for disposal under Regulation 49(f).
5. The following paper will be read:
"The Portuguese in Bengal" by Professor Atis Kumar Dasgupta.



(S B Chakrabarti)
General Secretary

The Asiatic Society
1, Park Street
Kolkata 700016

Dated the 22nd day of January 2020

Notifications

Ref. No. : AS/Election/2020/04

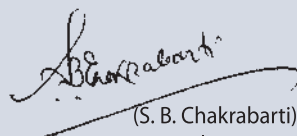
Date : 10.01.2020

NOTIFICATION

The provisional list of members who are entitled to participate in the election of the Office –bearers and other Members of the Council of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata, scheduled to be held sometimes in April, 2020 is hereby published on 10th January, 2020 (Friday) as per Regulation 37(c) (i) of the Asiatic Society.

The list will be made available at the office of the Asiatic Society [3rd Floor of New Building, 1 Park Street, Kolkata 700016] for inspection by the members on working days during the normal office hours. Applications for filing forms for inclusion of names or objection or correction shall be made in Form nos. 1, 2 and 3 respectively. The last date of filing of such application will be 17th February, 2020 (Monday). The date of hearing of objection will be on 21st February, 2020 (Friday). The final list of voters will be published on 28th February, 2020 (Friday).

The form mentioned above shall be available from the office of the Asiatic Society [3rd Floor of New Building, 1 Park Street, Kolkata -700016] on working days during normal office hours.



(S. B. Chakrabarti)
General Secretary

Important Notes:

Date of publication of Provisional List of members	:	10th January, 2020 (Friday)
Last date of filing of Objections/ Claims/ Corrections	:	17th February, 2020 (Monday)
Date of hearing of Objections/ Claims/ Corrections	:	21st February, 2020 (Friday)
Date of publication of Final List of voters	:	28th February, 2020 (Friday)

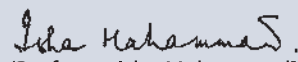
Ref. No. : 01

Date : 02.01.2020

NOTICE

As per Regulation 51, an Extra Ordinary General Meeting of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata will be held on Monday, 3rd February, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. in the Vidyasagar Hall of the Society to adopt the Audited Accounts and Auditors' Report of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata for the year 2018-19.

All members are requested to kindly attend the said meeting.



(Professor Isha Mahammad)
President

Date : 2nd January, 2020

The Portuguese in Bengal

Atis Kumar Dasgupta *

The major objective of the paper would be to explicate the impact of the Portuguese traders, in political, economic, social, and religious aspects of the life of the common people in the Bengal *Subah* in the late medieval and early modern periods, between 1537 and 1539. During this epoch, the Portuguese trade, was perhaps, the most noteworthy feature, in the development of the economic and social life of Bengal. As early as 1539, the Portuguese sailors had founded independent custom houses in Chittagong and Satgaon. Ceaser Federici, the Venetian merchant, who visited Bengal in 1567 gave us an impression of the nature of the Portuguese trade. Every year, the Portuguese ships sailed up the Ganges the bigger ones being Laden at Betor, and the smaller ones at Satgaon. At Satgaon, every year they used thirty-five small ships to purchase rice, cloth, and long pepper and various sorts of merchandise. From Chittagong, the Portuguese sailors, purchased rice, cloth, sugar and corn.

The foundation of Hughli, however, marked the beginning of a fresh development in the Portuguese commercial activities in Bengal. Manrique, the Portuguese sailor gave a detailed account of the waves, which the Portuguese traders at Hughli sold at high prices. The bulk of these commodities consisted of various gift articles, tables, pepper, red and white sandal-wood. The local traders who purchased these commodities were known as 'Saudagor' or the local merchants, who carried the articles, brought by the Portuguese traders, all over Asia and to provinces of Northern India and to the court of Agra, in particular.

The export trade of Bengal, during this period, was largely in the hands of the Portuguese traders, though the Indian merchants, played a noteworthy role in a peaceful manner. Later, the Portuguese sailors, went to Sumatra and Malacca, and came back every year to Hughli to purchase cotton, sugar, long pepper and butter. A period of rapid expansion followed, which enabled the Portuguese traders to



* Former Professor, Indian Statistical Institute and Life Member, The Asiatic Society

Paper to be Read

extend their trading activities to all the important trading centres in Bengal *Subah*, including Dhaka and even captured a part of Bengal's trade with the Northern provinces of India; from these, they traded in goods, manufactured in Bengal and brought back to the parts of the province, and went back to other parts of Asia and purchased from there, some rare carpets of Junapur, and fine silks of Bengal. The author would like to emphasise that the Portuguese traders in Bengal did not indicate any racial prejudice, against the common people of Bengal. It should be recalled that Anthony Firinghee, the Portuguese trader, was perhaps, the only European, who was a modest devotee of Goddess Kali in Kolkata.

At the same time, it should be emphasised that, Dominigo Carvellow, the Portuguese sailor had supported the big Zamindars of Bengal, such as Raja Pratapaditya Ray of Jessore, Isha Khan of Dhaka, Kedar Ray of Vikrampur and Raja Darpanarayan of Bakhargunge, in their significant revolt, against the provincial rulers of Mughal Empire, in the Bengal *Subah*, towards the end of the 17th century.

The author would now emphasise the role of Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, of Portuguese-Indian ancestry where mother was a devoted Bengali Lady. Derozio was educated in a famous English-teaching school, run by the Scotsman Drummond in Calcutta. Drummond was a scholar poet, a free-thinker; Derozio derived from Drummond his taste in literature and philosophy and his faith in the French Revolution, and English Radicalism. After finishing his school days, Derozio wrote a patriotic verse, perhaps the first from the Portuguese community in Bengal. Derozio also composed a poem on his perception of death, at the closing years of his short life.

It should be pointed out that the ruling class of Portugal in Lisbon, had always supported the trading and other activities of the Portuguese traders in India.

At the end, the author would emphasise his own experience, during his field work, among the Portuguese in West Bengal and Tripura. In 1983, the author would emphasise his own experiences during his field work among the Portuguese in West Bengal and Tripura, he accompanied with Professor Amit Basu of Indian Statistical institute had carried out a field work in Mirpur in Midnapur District of West Bengal where he found that the local Portuguese residents, along with the local Hindu villagers, performed the ceremony of Christmas Eve in the local Portuguese church, solemnly and peacefully. In 1989, the author, on behalf of the Indian Statistical Institute, conducted an appraisal of Total Literacy Campaign in the Sonamura District of Tripura, where the local Bengali learners, both Hindu and Muslim, jointly participated, along with the local Portuguese learners, successfully, in the State.

References:

- 1 Tapan Kumar Ray Chaudhuri, *Bengal under Akbar and Jahangir*, Ananda Publishers Private Limited, pages : 402-410.
- 2 Ashin Dasgupta, *Collected Writings*, pages: 402-410, First published, Kolkata.
- 3 Sushobhan Chandra Sarkar, *Studies in Bengal Renaissance* edited by Atul Chandra Gupta, The National Council of Education, University of Jadavpur, published in December 1959, pages : 16-71.
- 4 Mrinalini Dasgupta, *Derozio: A Leader of Popular Education in Bengal*, pages: 7-78, First published in 1957 by Biplab Das, CAMP, Kolkata.

Report on 237th Foundation Day Celebration



Distinguished Guests, Members and Staffs-members of the Asiatic Society paying homage to Sir William Jones at South Park Street Cemetery

Keeping alive the traditions of excellence, the Asiatic Society celebrated its 237th Foundation Day on Wednesday, 15th January, 2020. The celebration began in the early morning by paying homage to Sir William Jones, the founder of the Asiatic Society. On this occasion, the President, General Secretary, some of the Council members, other members and employees of the Society placed wreath at the tomb of Sir Jones at South Park Street cemetery. Representatives from several academic institutions including National Library, Indian Museum, Geological Survey of India, Botanical Survey of India, Indian National Science Academy, National Council of Science Museum and British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata were present on this occasion to pay homage to Sir William Jones.

Later on, Professor Isha Mohammad, President of the Asiatic Society hoisted the Society's flag at the premises of the Asiatic Society in Park Street, wherein he also unveiled a bronze medallion of Sir William Jones.

The ceremony continued by organising the Foundation Day oration at Society's aesthetically decorated Vidyasagar Hall on and from 11 a.m. This year, Professor Arvind P. Jamkhedkar, Chairman, Indian Council of Historical Research delivered the oration on 'Manuscript Collections as Source of History.' Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal and Patron of the Asiatic Society graced the occasion as Chief Guest of the ceremony. He was accompanied by Smt Sudesh Dhankhar, the First Lady. The guests were felicitated by Professor

Foundation Day Celebration



Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal accompanied by Smt Sudesh Dhankhar, First Lady, visiting the library (top) and viewing the Exhibition on 'Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar as Printer and Publisher' (below)



as enshrined in our Constitution. He observed "... Our Constitution has given us the fundamental right to express



Professor Arvind P. Jamkhedkar, in his foundation day oration



Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal addressing the audience

Isha Mohammad and Dr. Satyabrata Chakrabarti, the President and General Secretary of the Asiatic Society respectively. The programme began with the invocation rendered by the team of the Asiatic Society.

Welcoming the audience, Dr. Satyabrata Chakrabarti, General Secretary of the Asiatic Society paid tribute to its founder President Sir William Jones, the founder members and office bearers since then along with the members and staff members of the Society of yesteryears without whose dedicated and committed services the Society would not have come up to this shape. He emphasised on the continuation of that academic tradition.

Professor Arvind P. Jamkhedkar, in his foundation day oration, focused on the emergence and variation of Hinduism in its all Indian and regional spread and their mutual interactions.

In his presidential address, Professor Isha Mohammad, President of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata assured the gatherings that the utmost efforts will be made to carry forward the glory of this premier institution.

Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, in his address, referring to the Asiatic Society, said, "Not many institutions in the world can rival it. It is the mother of several institutions." Hon'ble Governor called on people to give precedence to rights and duties

ourselves... but let us be more accommodating to the other point of view," He mentioned further that one could always disagree, but it should with dignity and grace.

Dr Sujit Kumar Das, the Treasurer of the Society, thanked all dignitaries, members, employees, scholars and all the resource persons including the media who made this occasion a great success.



Distinguished audience

The ceremony concluded with the National Anthem.

An arrangement was made to exhibit some collections of the Asiatic Society from sixteenth century till date on this auspicious occasion.

A large number of members, scholars and academicians were present in this programme.

Arupratan Bagchi

ਫਾਊਂਡੇਸ਼ਨ ਡੇਅ ਗ੍ਰੇਟਿੰਗਜ਼

Dear Professor Chakrabarti,

It is my pleasure to convey my warm greetings to you and your colleagues at the Asiatic Society on the occasion of Sankranti or Pongal as we say in the southern part.

January 15 has a special place and meaning for the Asiatic Society, which is the mother of all institutions devoted to oriental learning all across the world. It is your proud Foundation Day. It was on this day in 1784 that the redoubtable and venerable Sir William Jones founded the Asiatic Society with the noble goal of investigating, with special reference to the oriental lands, 'MAN and NATURE: whatever is performed by the one or produced by the other' The wonderful seed Sir William had thereby sown on the soil of Kolkata not only germinated and developed into a healthy sapling but in fact grew into a veritable tree spreading its shady branches all across the globe. Surely the Society's leadership and contributions will continue for generations to come.

I wish you all success for the Foundation Day celebrations.

K.Paddayya

**Emeritus Professor and Former Director, Department of Archaeology
Deccan College (Deemed University) Pune – 411006**

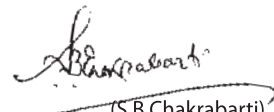


From the Desk of the General Secretary

Dear Members and Well-wishers,

Let me share with you that the 237th Foundation Day was celebrated with pomp and gaiety. It started with placing the wreaths at the tomb of Sir William Jones, the founder President of the Asiatic Society, at the South Park Street Burial Ground. Representatives of many professional organisations attended the programme. It followed the programme of flag hoisting by the President of the Asiatic Society, Professor Isha Mahammad at Society's premises at 1, Park Street, Kolkata 16. The President also unveiled the bronze medallion of Sir William Jones at the same premises which was earlier declared as Sir William Jones Bhavan. Shri Suchand Mukherjee, a staff member of the Society, rendered self-composed opening song remembering the celebrated founder. The main programme started with the arrival of the Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, who is also the Patron of the Asiatic Society along with the First Lady Smt. Sudesh Dhankhar. The Foundation Day Oration was delivered by Professor Arvind P. Jamkhedkar, Chairman, Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi, on 'Manuscript Collections as Source of History'. It was preceded by invocation rendered by the staff members of the Society. The Hon'ble Governor in his speech highly appreciated Professor Jamkhedkar for his erudite speech. The Hon'ble Governor had expressed highly about the achievements of the Asiatic Society in various activities. He also wanted the Society to play a pivotal role in establishing the academic leadership in Indological Studies and to project before the world the cultural excellence of our country.

In the meanwhile a number of academic programmes as scheduled were completed and quite a number of them are also on the agenda. To end up let me assure you that we will try to complete all the committed programmes till the end of the tenure of this Council i.e. up to April, 2020. We seek the kind cooperation of all the members in accomplishing our target.


(S B Chakrabarti)
General Secretary

"I challenge the world to find, through out the whole system of Sanskrit philosophy, any such expression that the Hindu alone will be saved and not others"

Paper on Hinduism, Read at the Parliament of Religions on 19th September 1893
Source : *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Mayavati Memorial Edition, Vol-1, Pg 22

Two Exquisite Portraits and One Animal Figure in our Collection



Portrait of Justice C. C. Ghose

A life-size three quarter portrait (54" x 42")—without frame of C. C. Ghose in oils on canvas, done by renowned portrait-painter Atul Chandra Bose who painted numerous portraits kept in various private and public places in India and abroad, who worked actively during early decades of 20th Century. This imposing portrait done with his usual dexterity and flawless handling of oils, colours and brushing is pride possession of the Society. He placed the figure standing slightly off-centre to avoid symmetrical monotony and arranged the source of studio-light from his left. Mr. Ghose is dressed in a format style of the time and clad in

dark-blue suit, light-blue silk-tie on white shirt. He has put his left hand in his trouser-pocket and holding a pair of hand-gloves with his right hand to become a bit casual and homely.

The treatment of oil paints on his face is masterly and pulse ling quality of the facial anatomy, piercing expression of the eyes of a determined person and the lips under the heavy moustache are all executed very precisely with masterly-ease. Treatment of the background with brown and dark blue and the soft light on the parted-hair above his forehead are quite commendable.

The physical health of the painting is not very good and paint-lair flaked of places, should be renovated immediately for its durability and better visibility it represents a time of Calcutta art-scenario side by side with Abanindranath Tagore and the Society of Oriental Art.

Sir C. C. Ghose (1874-1934) joined the Society as a member with a distinguished career. He joined the Calcutta High Court as a *vakil* in 1919. He was elevated to the bench and became an advocate. On four different occasions he officiated as Chief Justice of Bengal. Early in 1934 he retired from the bench and almost immediately after, he was appointed as a member of the Bengal Executive Council. He held this office till April, when for reasons of health he has to resign. Sir C. C. Ghose took an active part in the affairs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and joined its Council as a member in 1926. In 1929 he became a Vice-President. In 1932 he was elected President and re-elected in 1933. He died in the middle of the year 1934 after long ailment. (Source : *Year Book*, ASB for 1934, pg. 190).

The artist Atul Chandra Bose was born on 22nd February in 1898 in Bengal Presidency. He spent his childhood in Mymansingh Branch. Then he studied in Jubilee Art Academy of Kolkata.

Art Appreciation

Atul Chandra Bose began his training as an artist in this institution where Hemen Majumder who later became the widely acclaimed painter was his fellow student. After Havell's retirement, Percy Brown joined the Government Art School as Principal and allowed the learning of the western style. After a few years at the Jubilee Art Academy, Bose enrolled in the Govt. Art School. Here he proved to be an artist of immense merit.

After finishing his study Bose along with Hemen Majumder and Jamini Roy embarked on his artistic career as a scene painter for theatre and producing the portrait of the deceased from photographs which was a popular Victorian custom. Around this time Bose made a pencil sketch of Sri Asutosh Mookerjee titled 'Bengal Tiger'. The portrait sketch of the educationists reveals the artistic ability to capture his seater's characteristic facial expressions and anatomical peculiarities. This sketch was so appreciated that it was used by the Time Literary Supplementary for Sir Asutosh's obituary. In 1924 he received Guru Prasanna Ghose Scholarship from Calcutta University to study in the Royal Academy of Art. There he learnt his most valuable lessons during his stay in England, when he worked with the English post-impressionist Walter Sickert. Charles Sims, Melton Fisher could be detected in Bose's use of grey and brown in some of his later works. After his return from England, Bose was invited by Percy Brown to teach at the Govt. School of Art. But after Brown's retirement from School within just two years the Orientalist returned to the School this time with Mukul Dey as the first Indian Principal. Even though Dey had a rigorous art training in England under various eminent artists he was a close associate of the Tagores. Bose and Dey had already formed an uneasy relationship in England when Bose refused to work with Dey when the latter was decorating the Indian pavilion at the Empire Festival.

When Mukul Dey began reorganising the syllabus, introducing various reforms in teaching and student discipline and most of all his open hostility towards the associations of Percy Brown including his Deputy Jamini Prakash Gangooly who had to leave Atul Chandra Bose was not entirely comfort-

able in the art school. So even though he was appointed as the successor of Gangooly, he had no other choice but to leave.

Atul Chandra Bose's pedagogic approach was continuously challenged led him to co-found an art society which he hoped would be devoid of any faction politics. Under the aegis of Maharaja Pradyot Coomer Thakur, the Society to form an All India Association in order to promote Indian art with the central government's help. This association, Indian Academy of Fine Arts, however, had its share of problems. Calcutta's hope to organise a nationwide exhibition was rebuffed as the then Bombay artists created tensions over a previously done collaborative project. As a result of this tension the word 'Indian' was dropped from the name, on 23rd December, 1933 Atul Chandra Bose as the joint secretary, organised the Society's first exhibition.

In our conclusive observations, Atul Chandra Bose was an artist whose long artistic life was marked by various important moments of the history of country that had long been colonised by a foreign power and was engaged in a constant struggle for independence. Thus it would be more appropriate to judge the artist against the socio-political context than to judge his formal achievements as an individual artist, for the formal achievements are often subjective but the social and political conditions are operative in the making of an artist and to place him/her in a larger context of the history of humanity. He passed away on 1st January, 1977 after a long ailment.

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar

Portrait of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar done in oil on canvas, almost a life-size image, seated on a wooden chair, clad in *dhuti* and *chadar*, his right hand kept on the arm-rest holding a book putting his fore-finger in between the pages apparently to read further. His left hand is just kept idle on the arm-rest, beside that there is a side table on which two books are kept casually. He is wearing a pair of typical Vidyasagar-sandal named after him. These are all matter of fact and external aspect of a



painting, but I personally expect that Vidyasagar's portrait should be painted with emphasis on his strong character firm determination and motherly compassion for the deprived-humanity as Michael Madhusudan rightly said—"He had a heart like Bengali Mother". Such quality is totally absent in the painting. His skin and complexion painted here like European fair skin which should have been sun burnt and whitish, so in his dress made as if out of refined 'malmal' like drapes instead of coarse short length *dhuti* and *chadar* with clear and sharp confirmation of folds of a coarse drapes instead it has become soft wooly and silky character of his clothes. Moreover the physiognomy is faulty and disproportionate.

It is painful to say that the artist like Ashes Mitra could not do due justice to the work and that it hardly can make any impact on the viewers. The painting is just innocuously and dispassionately

existed on the wall, without any thrust of Vidyasagar's spirit and zeal in his character for which he was revered with highest humility and love till this day.

Yet we cannot ignore this big portrait painting, rather will look at this picture with deep most reverence and fulfil our expectation through our personal contemplation and imagination.

Iswas Chandra Vidyasagar was born on 26th September, 1820 in the village of Birsingha in Midnapore district, West Bengal. He was sent to village 'pathsala' at the age of five. In 1253 B.S. he came to Calcutta with his father for further education.

Iswas Chandra had a brilliant career, both as a student and as a man. In 1841 Vidyasagar entered Government service and worked as the Head Pandit in the college of Fort William. In 1880 Queen Victoria conferred on him the title of C.I.E. In recognition of his outstanding social reforms.

He was a man of liberal outlook and progressive ideas and tried to execute them by reforming the Society. He liked the plain dress of a Bengali pandit, but for that matter, was not a victim of regionalism. He wore a *dhuti* and *chadar* and his 'taltala chati' with a gait of marked individuality.

As a reformer of social evils, particularly the curse of polygamy and the ban on widow marriage and female education, as an educationist a man of literature and learning, a philanthropist, staunch nationalist and a man of honour and fearless independence of character, Iswas Chandra will ever stand out prominently in the galaxy of great men of our country.

The artist Aresh Mitra was born in the village Baliadaha, district Khulna, Bangladesh on November 11th, 1935. His father Narendranath Mitra sent him to Burdwan for betterment of his education. But Ashes Mitra's mind elsewhere searching something in nature. One day he ran away from Burdwan and visit to Santiniketan. By travelling around this area and got inspired him to become an artist. In 1958 he passed diploma examination from Government College of Art & Craft and was placed in the first class. In 1967 he joined in his alma mater as a lecturer in the department of drawing and painting western style.

Art Appreciation

He had participated in different exhibitions in India and abroad. Among his creative works mention may be made the portrait of Rabindranath, Lenin, Cleopatra, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's Gafur Mian and so on. He passed away at the dead on night on 30th December, 2005. (Source—Professor Manoj Sarkar, Former Principal, Government College of Art & Craft, Kolkata).

A Frightened Horse (Artist unknown)

This is an oil painting (size 20" x 23" without frame) on canvas is in the collection of The Asiatic Society. The painting is more or less in good condition but the painter's name is not recorded and no signature or date available, which arouse doubt that the painting is a copy from a famous artist of renowned of the romantic school of painting in Europe of 17th century. Several paintings of

Eugene Delacroix like the one here are in different collections and museums of Europe including luvre in Paris. However the painting 'a frightened horse' done with the inspiration from one of the works of Delacroix which are set on a background of sea and storm, but here the artist has placed the horse on the bank of a river, in the evening and sudden lightning from the sky and eminent storm made the horse bewildered and frightened jumped back. The light of the thunder illuminated the front side of the horse, on the hooves and knees created a dramatic atmosphere in the painting. In the background on the upper right side corner and against the front hooves, there are dark trees and bushes have given a good relief to the whole horse.

It is an interesting work done with much passion and love for the most noble animal and that should be preserved with due care.



Somnath Mukherjee
Somnath Mukherjee

Isha Mahammad S.
Isha Mahammad

An Unnoticed Copperplate Inscription from Rangibasan (East Medinipur, West Bengal)

Rajat Sanyal

Ever since the discovery of a copperplate charter of the Pāla king Mahendrapāla from the Tulabhita mound of the Jagjivanpur village of Malda, a plethora of epigraphic records dating to Bengal's early medieval history are continuously surfacing from different parts of the globe—preserved in private collections, hiding in reserve collection of well-known museums and also appearing from archaeological sites. Thus, records belonging to all the three major genres of text—copperplate charters, stone panegyrics and dedicatory records on stone and metal—have strengthened the current corpus of Bengal inscriptions. With regular discovery or re-discovery of new evidence, this epigraphic gamut is expected to grow steadily in the coming years.

Post-Gupta copperplate inscriptions of Bengal are geographically divided broadly into three clusters: a group of records of the sixth century hailing from eastern, southwestern and central 'subregions' of the Bengal delta, a second group dating to the seventh-eighth centuries and coming from the Comilla-Noakhali sectors of southeastern Bengal and finally, a set of only four copperplates, known from the [present East and West] Medinipur districts of southwestern Bengal and Murshidabad district around the Bhagirathi basin area. A recent publication of a sixth/seventh century charter of a king named Pradyumnabandhu, recording land transfer in the Puṇḍravardhana province, would now include north Bengal to this geographical scheme of classification.

Of the aforementioned sets of epigraphic databases, the third group consisted, apart

from the copperplate of the time of Jayanāga from Maliadanga in Murshidabad district (named earlier as the 'Mallia' copperplate), the three inscriptions dated in the reign of Śāśāṅka are well known. Two of them were reported in 1938 from the village of Antla in West Medinipur (more popular as the 'Midnapore' copperplate) and one from the village Panchrol in East Medinipur (earlier named as the 'Egra' plate) reported in 1974 and published later by different authorities from 1983, are well-known and extensively used in understanding rural settlement networks in Bengal in the seventh century. These three are the only epigraphic sources dating to the reign of Śāśāṅka from the present geographical boundary of West Bengal. This note is meant to put on record the (re)discovery of another seventh century copperplate, probably dating again to the reign of Śāśāṅka, that never caught the attention of wider academia in spite of its discovery sometimes in the 1980s.

The major archaeological repertoire discovered from time to time from Tamluk and its adjoining villages started getting preserved under the zeal of local enthusiast in what came to be known as the 'Tamralipta Museum and Research Centre' (*Tamralipta Sangrahashala-O-Gabeshana Kendra*) around the late 1970s. According to Kamal Kumar Kundu (one of the founding members of this organisation), who was kind enough in supplying me with a carefully prepared ink impression of the inscription (Pl. 1), this broken copperplate came to be accessed in this Museum sometimes in the mid-1980s. The plate was discovered by

labourers while digging earth at a place not far from Mahisadal, for construction of a flyover along the Mahisadal-Geonkhali metal road. This information on the 'find-situation' of the plate was later corroborated to me by Kaushik Gangopadhyay who, during one of his field numerous trips in the region, gathered precisely that it was found from the village called Rangibasan (22°11'12.80"N/ 87°58'49.47"E) near Mahisadal. This information was supplied to him by the two eyewitnesses of the discovery, viz. Lakshman Pradhan and Asotosh Maity, local historians of Tamluk.

The erstwhile 'Tamralipta Museum and Research Centre' was subsequently taken over by the Archaeological Survey of India in 2001 under the name of 'Archaeological Museum, Tamluk' and the copperplate initially formed part of the display of the Museum and was later shifted to its reserve collections. The two most widely read reports of archaeological discoveries from (the then undivided) Medinipur

district were written, primary information from fieldwork, were published in vernacular by Pranab Roy and Tarapada Santra in 1986 and 1987. While Roy made no reference to the existence of this plate in the Museum, Santra made a passing reference to it: in his description of the 'archaeological objects' preserved in the Museum, he included an 'old copperplate' along with other notable artefacts like stone and metal images.

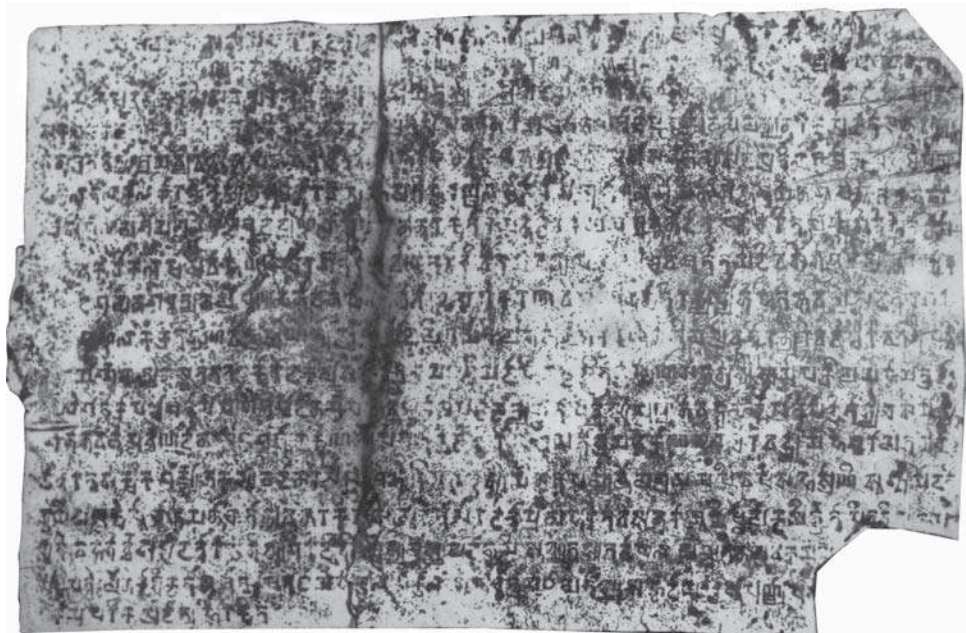
According to the information kindly supplied by Shubha Majumder, the Superintending Archaeologist of the Kolkata Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India, the classified details of the plate are as follows.

Dimension: 31.8/20.3 cm

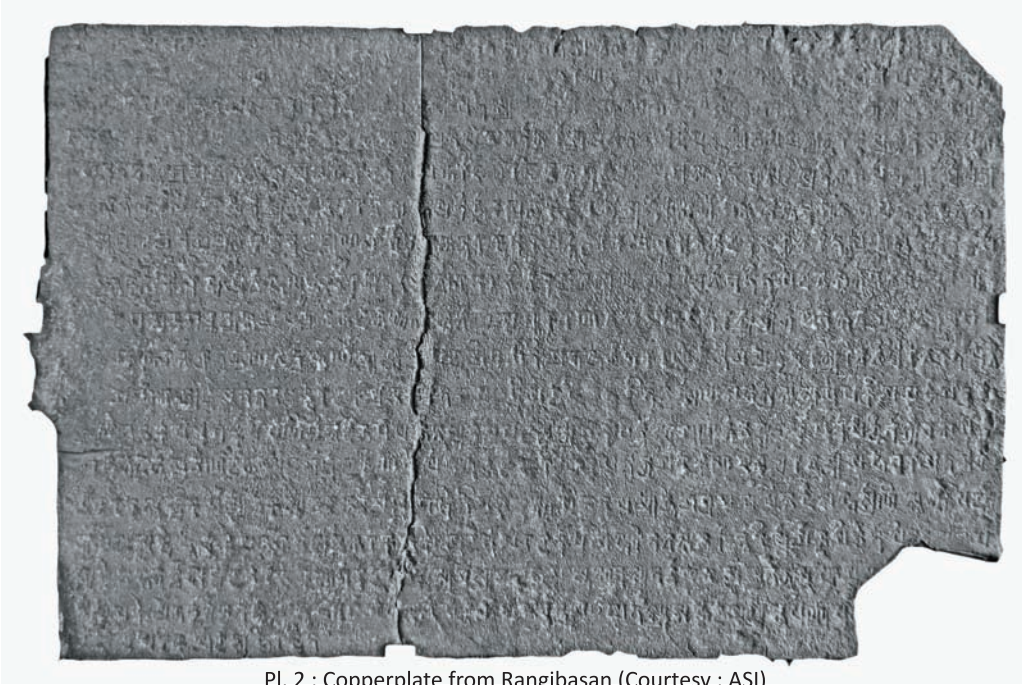
Acc. No. 6284

Description: Copper plate with inscription (probably of post-Gupta period), broken into two pieces and fixed in a wooden frame.

I have not yet been able to study the plate in original. However, the ink impression and



Pl. 1 : Ink-impression of the copperplate (Courtesy : Kamal Kumar Kundu)



Pl. 2 : Copperplate from Rangibasan (Courtesy : ASI)

a photograph supplied by the Archaeological Survey of India (Pl. 2), clearly show that it is inscribed on one side with eighteen (18) lines of writing in landscape format. It is broken vertically into two pieces along one-third from the left. A small piece at the lower right corner is also chipped off, taking away some letters from the fifteenth to the seventeenth lines. Unfortunately, the seal is lost, though its outline along the base is still visible. The writing on the plate is not in a good state of preservation, due to initial mishandling. Of the eighteen lines, the initial three lines have suffered the most, presumably due to careless rubbing with some metal nail.

The language of the inscription is Sanskrit. The script shows characteristics of what may be called Early Siddhamāṭṛkā of eastern Indian variety, datable to the seventh century. On the whole, the script is almost identical with the script of the known copperplates of

Śaśāṅka, so far discovered from this region. I have not been able to read successfully, with the help of available photographs, the name of the ruling king. Some of the fragments of phrases, however, indicate that it belongs to the reign of Śaśāṅka. Closer examination of the original plate is certainly expected to yield meaningful data on regional polity and the nature of rural settlements of the early medieval period in the southwestern part of Bengal.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Drs. Kaushik Gangopadhyay and Shubha Majumder for their spontaneous help in recovering the information on the plate and its provenance. A special word of thanks is due to Sri Kamal Kumar Kundu for kindly allowing me to see and use the ink impression of the plate.

Seminar on Mental Health and Human Rights

In association with the Asiatic Society and National Human Rights Commission a seminar on 'Mental Health and Human Rights' was organised by SEVAC on 20th December, 2019 at the Conference hall of the Asiatic Society (Salt Lake Campus).

In the year 1996, SEVAC (an NGO) first raised voice for the promotion and protection of the human rights of the mental patients through a national seminar which was held in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission.

Since then SEVAC has been continually organising varied programmes from grassroot level to national level on this issues. In the year 2013, Delhi Declaration on Mental Health and Human Rights was made and published from a national seminar held by SEVAC in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission and European Union.

Professor Isha Mohammad, President, The Asiatic Society delivered the Welcome Address. In his address he expressed his concern regarding the magnitude of the mental health problem and appreciated the endeavour for raising voice for the human rights promotion of the persons with mental illness.

Justice Shri Chittatosh Mookerjee , first Chairperson



Professor Isha Mohammad and Justice Chittatosh Mookerjee

of the West Bengal Human Rights Commission and former Chief Justice of the Calcutta and Bombay High Court delivered the keynote address and called upon NHRC for playing a proactive role to protect and promote the rights of the vulnerable people including the persons with mental illness.

During theme paper presentation, Dr. Tapas Kumar Ray, Founder Secretary of SEVAC highlighted the areas and issues of gross human rights violation in the life situations of the persons with mental illness. He also mentioned the name of some shrines, Mehandipur Balaji Temple of the Dausa District of Rajasthan in particular, where the mental patients are still inhumanly



Shri Surajit Dey



Dr. Arnab Banerjee

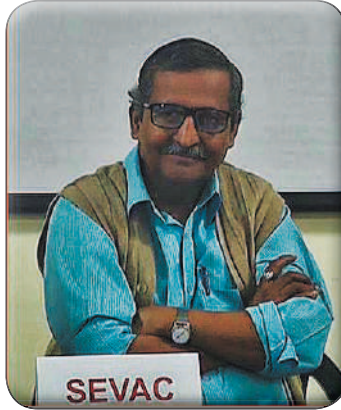


Dr. Amar Nath Mallick

Events at the Rajendralala Mitra Bhavan



Tapati Ghosh



Dr. Tapas Kumar Ray



Dr. Prativa Sengupta

restrained and tortured. The alarming consequences of undiagnosed and untreated mental illnesses were also highlighted in his deliberation .

In his address Shri Surajit Dey, Registrar of the National Human Rights Commission also mentioned about the long working relationship of NHRC with SEVAC and explained in detail the concern and different actions of the NHRC for protecting the rights of the mental patients.

Dr. Amar Nath Mallick made a presentation on the existing Mental Health Act and highlighted its salient features.

Other speakers of the seminar were, Dr. Arnab Banerjee and Dr. Prativa Sengupta.

Academicians, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Social

Activists and esteemed members of the Asiatic Society including Professor Basudeb Barman, Dr. Ramkrishna Chatterjee, Professor Krishna Bhattacharya, Shri Shyam Sundar Bhattacharya and Tapati Ghosh, President , Autism Society West Bengal graced the seminar. Some recovered mental patients and some family members of the mental patients also attended the seminar and shared their experience in the participatory session.

It is noteworthy that the Asiatic Society has been associated with an endeavour for sensitizing the greater section of the society on the burning issues of mental health and human rights for the first time. Hence this seminar will be considered as a milestone initiative for promoting the human rights of the persons with mental illness.



Distinguished Participants



বিদ্যাসাগর স্মরণে

রেখা-রঙের চিত্র প্রদর্শনী ও অঙ্কন প্রতিযোগিতা

গত 25শে ডিসেম্বর 2019, Rekhachitram ও এশিয়াটিক সোসাইটি কলকাতা সহযোগে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়ে গেল রেখাচিত্রম এর বার্ষিক শিল্পকলা প্রদর্শনী, যেটি পণ্ডিত ঈশ্বরচন্দ্র বিদ্যাসাগরের 200 বছরের জন্মতিথিকে স্মরণ করে। অনুষ্ঠানে উপস্থিত ছিলেন এশিয়াটিক সোসাইটির সভাপতি অধ্যাপক ইশা মোহাম্মদ, বিধাননগর মিউনিসিপ্যাল কর্পোরেশনের মেয়র শ্রীমতি কৃষ্ণা চক্রবর্তী, বিদ্যাসাগর ইউনিভার্সিটির প্রাক্তন উপাচার্য অমিয় কুমার দেব, বারাসাত ইউনিভার্সিটির উপাচার্য অধ্যাপক বাসব চৌধুরী, প্রখ্যাত ভাস্কর নিরঞ্জন প্রধান, বাংলাদেশের প্রখ্যাত সাংবাদিক ও

চিত্র পরিচালক শাহরিয়ার কবির, প্রখ্যাত কবি কৃষ্ণ চট্টোপাধ্যায়, জলসাঘর সংস্থার সম্পাদক রবিন পাল প্রমুখ। প্রায় 400 জন ছাত্র-ছাত্রী তাদের শিল্পকলা নিয়ে উপস্থিত ছিল এই শিল্প প্রদর্শনীতে। সেখানে অয়েল পেস্টেল, ওয়াটার কালার, পেন্সিল স্কেচ, অয়েল পেইন্টিং এবং প্রয়াত শিল্পী রেখা চক্রবর্তী ও শিল্পী অরুণ কুমার চক্রবর্তীর



Events at the Rajendralala Mitra Bhavan



সূচি শিল্প প্রদর্শিত হয়। সঙ্গে পণ্ডিত ঈশ্বরচন্দ্র বিদ্যাসাগর মহাশয়-এর মুদ্রণ প্রণালী ও প্রকাশনার উপর একটি চিত্র প্রদর্শনী ছিল। সমগ্র অনুষ্ঠানটি সংগঠিত হয় এশিয়াটিক সোসাইটির নতুন ভবনে (সল্ট লেক ক্যাম্পাস) যেটি রাজেন্দ্রলাল মিত্র ভবন নামে পরিচিত।



“এমন উদ্যোগ আরও অনেক বেশি করে পেতে চাই, দেখতে চাই, উপভোগ করতে চাই”

অধ্যাপক বাসব চৌধুরী, উপাচার্য, পশ্চিমবঙ্গ রাষ্ট্রীয় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, বারাসত

Two Lectures on Environment



Dr. Kalyan Rudra

As part of an Awareness Programme, Swachhata Hi Seva, The Asiatic Society organised one lecture held at the Rajendralala Mitra Bhavan of The Asiatic Society at Salt Lake, delivered by Dr. Kalyan Rudra, Chairman, West Bengal Pollution Control Board on 27th December, 2019 at 3 p.m. Dr. Rudra dealt at length on the different sources and kinds of pollution, its detrimental effects on the environment and the living beings and also some ways in which the Pollution Control Board has been trying to control the various types of pollution. On



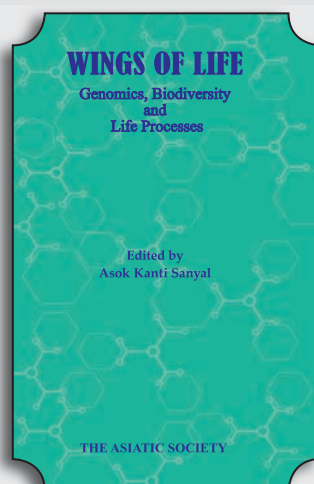
Shri Subhas Datta

31st December 2019 Sri Subhas Datta, eminent environmentalist spoke on the problem of Air and Water Pollution. Sri Datta shared his experiences regarding the air and water pollution and the problems created by these. He also discussed about Solid Waste Management and how to minimize our waste in daily life. In sharing his experiences he has mentioned his initiative in cleaning up the river Ganges. In all he has conveyed a message that we should aware to make our environment clean for our good health and our future generation.



Dr. Kalyan Rudra releasing the book *Wings of Life : Genomics, Biodiversity and Life Processes* edited by Dr. Asok Kanti Sanyal, Biological Science Secretary, The Asiatic Society and published by The Asiatic Society.

The book is a collection of papers presented at a one-day seminar on "Genomics: Molecular to Ecosystem Level" held at the Asiatic Society on 9th December, 2016.





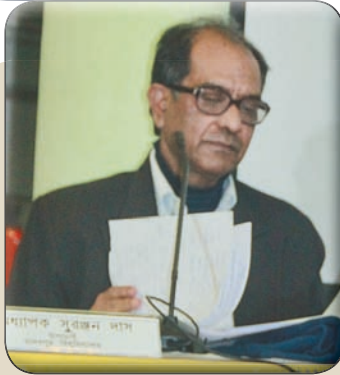
Professor Asok Kumar Das(inset), Visva Bharati, Santiniketan delivering Professor Aniruddha Roy Memorial lecture on 14th December 2019 at the Asiatic Society, jointly organised with Paschim Banga Itihas Samsad

'THE OUTSIDER FROM WITHIN : INDIAN ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE BIRTH OF THE NATION'



Professor Crispin Bates, The University of Edinburgh, addressing the colloquium on 'The Outside from within....' on 20 December, 2019 organised by the Asiatic Society with University of Leed-Manchester Edinburgh.

Special Lectures



Professor Suranjan Das, Vice-Chancellor, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, delivering Professor Sabyasachi Bhattacharya lecture on 3rd January 2020 at the Asiatic Society, jointly organised with Paschim Banga Itihās Samsad



Professor Sambhu Nath, Director, Bharatiya Bhasa Parishad (4th from the left) delivering the Key-note address at the Annual Commemorative Birth Anniversary Lecture in collaboration with Rajasthani Pracharini Sabha and The Asiatic Society, Kolkata, on Dr. L. P. Tessitori at Vidyasagar Hall on 4th January, 2020.



Professor Radhavallabh Tripathi, Former Vice-Chancellor, Rastriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi, delivering Dr. Bimanbehari Mazumdar Memorial Lecture 2018 on 10th January, 2020

A Linguistic Discussion of Number System in the Gītagovinda

The earliest linguistic evidence of Sanskrit, the language of Vedic literature is typically different from the Classical era for its unique linguistic features. Vedic literature turned on its journey since 1500 BCE. The OIA period since then continued till 600 CE. But the cultivation of Sanskrit continued along even after this era of flourishing. Jayadeva came of more than six hundred years after the era of Sanskrit when it was used in literature as a living medium.

In the history of Indo-Aryan Languages, Jayadeva was born in the transitional period when the MIA (Middle Indo-Aryan Language) was taking a new turn better to say going to touch the destination and NIA (New Indo-Aryan) era has already started the journey.

The poet Jayadeva was the royal poet in the court of Laksmanasena of the Sena Dynasty. Jayadeva quoted the names of other four poets, who were famous together as 'Pañcarātna', in the 4th śloka from the 1st canto of his master piece, the Gītagovindam. Historians suspect that Laksmanasena started his ruling in 1169 CE. So it might be that Jayadeva existed in between 1169 and 1202/3 CE in the court of the Sen Empire as being the royal poet.

The ancient evidence of New Indo-Aryan language is considered the language of the Caryāpada. After that next Bangla Literature evidence is Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana by Baḍu Caṇḍīdāsa in about 1350 CE. Therefore since 1000 CE to 1350 CE, the 350 years there was no important literary evidence of Bangla or other regional languages.

Gītagovinda was composed during the

period when the Late MIA finishes its journey and Early NIA has already begun. Caryāpada (1000 CE) is the oldest written complete evidence of early New Indo-Aryan Language. Belonging to this transitional period Gītagovinda is the only text which goes on with several influences of Eastern Indian regional languages.

From both Sanskrit and linguistics none but Professor Suniti Kumar Chatterji was the only who discussed about the unique features of Jayadeva's language. Chatterji in his 'The Origin and the Development of the Bengali Language' and the essay 'Jayadeva Kavi' published in the magazine 'Bhāratavarṣa' in vaṅgāvda 1350 wrote about him.



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He discussed there “গীতগোবিন্দের কতগুলি পদের দুই চারিটি করিয়া ছত্র যদি সংস্কৃত হইতে অপভ্রংশ রূপান্তরিত করিয়া পাঠ করা যায়, তাহা হইলে সেগুলির ছন্দের গতি আরও সাবলীল হয়। অপভ্রংশ বা পুরাতন বাঙ্গালা রূপে ভাঙ্গিয়া লইয়া পাঠ করিলে, প্রাচীন বাঙ্গালার সহিত ছন্দ বিষয়ে চমৎকার মিল দেখা যায়।”¹ Even he suspected that the gītas were actually in any regional Prākṛta form.

Sanskritised.

We must remember that there are two types of morphemes according to modern linguistics. First is the bound morpheme and another is free morpheme. Bound morpheme generally can be named as pratyaya (Derivational morpheme) and vibhakti (Inflectional morpheme). Bound morphemes cannot be used independently in a language. Surprisingly a point to be noted, in the śloka portions of this piece, there have been used various plural suffixes rather than the usage in the pada portions.



Now here the examples of reduplications are given next. An interesting matter to observe, Jayadeva never used reduplication to sense the plurality in his ślokas. They have been used only in the gītas.

Example	Extract from the text	(serial no. of gīta) (serial no. of pada)
diśi diśi	paśyati diśi diśi	12.2
haririti haririti	haririti haririti japati sakāmam	9.17

The greatest uniqueness of pluralism in Gītāgovinda is the various applications of nouns of multitude. Jayadeva applied a lot of nominal forms which explore the sense of plurality. Point must be observed; Jayadeva used them generally in the gītas rather than the ślokas. Some of them are shown-

Nouns of Multitude	Examples from Gītāgovinda	(serial no. of gīta) (serial no. of pada)
nikara	madhukara-nikara- karamvita-kokila...	3.28
gaṇa	nakhamaṇigaṇapūjite	15.27
sabhā	yuvati-sabhā	18.5

Surprisingly a unique similarity to express the plurality is found in ‘Śrīkrṣṇakīrtana’, the

¹ জয়দেব কবি, ভারতবর্ষ (শ্রাবণ, ১৩৫০)

text belongs to the only complete literary evidence of Early Medieval Bangla Language. A tendency of NIA languages is not to use plural suffixes very much to make the sense of plurality. Reduplication of a same nominal entity or using of nouns of multitude is used more instead of using bound plural morphemes.

Bound morpheme of pluralism is rarely used in this piece, better to say no bound morpheme for plural is used here. Baḍu Caṇḍīdāsa, the author of Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana, has taken the way to express pluralism by two ways— 1. Using nouns of multitude, 2. Applying reduplications.

Here a few examples of nouns of multitude in Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana are given—

Example	Examples from Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana	Serial no. of the Gīta
saba	ār saba sabhāsada jana	1st
āneka	āneka prakāre	28th
nānā	nānā taru latā vana ghora andhakāra	313th

Baḍu Caṇḍīdāsa used reduplications also to make the sense of plural in his text. Examples from them are given now—

Example	Examples from Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana	Serial no. of the Gīta
dine dine	dine dine bāḍhe tanu līlā	8th
thāne thāne	baḍāyi bule thāne thāne	11th
sabhā	yuvati-sabhā	18.5

A few points can be observed in brief

- i. Jayadeva had the tendency to avoid the plural numbers in the Gīta portion of his text. Wherever he had used the plural suffixes, he politely avoided the suffixes with visarga or halanta vyañjana in the word finishing position. In the other hand Baḍu Caṇḍīdāsa had not used any plural suffixes in the gīta segment of his text Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana.
- ii. Another interesting point that Jayadeva used the system of reduplication to make the sense of plural. In the typical classical text this type of application is rare, whether Śrīkṛṣṇakīrtana has a lot of reduplications to make the sense of plural. Probably

the tendency to apply reduplication of Jayadeva had been flourished properly in Baḍu's compositions.

- iii. The most important point is here the various applications of nouns of multitude. The nominal entity to explain the plurality as much Jayadeva applied in his own text, perhaps no Sanskrit poet before or after him had not applied. As discussed earlier, both of the texts are combined with gīta and śloka. Jayadeva applied these nouns generally in his gītas, seldom in the ślokas. But Baḍu only used them in his gītas.

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শ্রীরসিকমোহন, (শ্রী, ২০০৯), (সম্পাদনা) শ্রীশ্রীগীতগোবিন্দম্, সদেশ, কলিকাতা, চট্টোপাধ্যায়, ডঃ সুনীতিকুমার, (শ্রাবণ, ১৩৫০), জয়দেব কবি, ভারতবর্ষ পত্রিকা, কলিকাতা
ভট্টাচার্য্য, অমিত্রসূদন (জ্যৈষ্ঠ, ১৪২০), (সম্পাদনা) বড়ু চণ্ডীদাসের শ্রীকৃষ্ণকীর্তন সমগ্র, দে'জ পাবলিশিং, কলিকাতা
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Sir William Jones on Gītagovinda

The loves of CRISHNA and RÁDHÁ, or the reciprocal attraction between the divine goodness and the human soul, are told at large in the tenth book of the *Bhágavat*, and are the subject of a little *Pastoral Drama*, entitled *Gītagóvinda* : it was the work of JAYADE'VA, who flourished, it is said, before CÁLIDÁS, and was born, as he tells us himself, in CENDULI, which many believe to be in *Calinga* : but, since there is a town of a similar name in *Berdwan*, the natives of it insist that the finest lyric poet of *India* was their countryman, and celebrate in honour of him an annual jubilee, passing a whole night in representing his drama, and in singing his beautiful songs. After having translated the *Gītagóvinda* word for word, I reduced my translation to the form, in which it is now exhibited; omitting only those passages, which are too luxuriant and too bold for an *European* taste, and the prefatory ode on the ten incarnations of VISHNU, with which you have been presented on another occasion : the phrases in *Italicks*, are the *burdens* of the several songs; and you may be assured, that not a single image or idea has been added by the translator.

(From : *On The Mystical Poetry of the Persians and Hindus* □ Asiatick Researches, Vol. III, 1792)

Very Fascinating Monograph on Russian Revolution and Indian Politics



**Satabarshe Fire Dekha—
Russ-Biplab O Bharater Rajniti
by Susnata Das, Nakshatra Prakashan, Kolkata. Price : ₹300**

Notwithstanding the decline of Soviet Socialism almost three decades back, the Russian Revolution was arguably the most important event in the history of world civilization. This revolution had liberated one fourth of the world's population from political bondage. The ideas of anti-imperialism and national reconstruction that had surfaced because of this Revolution had greatly shaken a section of the educated Bengali middle class. Shortly after this, a group of

revolutionaries laid foundation to the Communist Party of India in foreign land. Several volumes had been published on the occasion of the centenary of the Russian Revolution.

Susnata Das's book had a similar analytical purpose. Two important aspects have been accentuated in this book. Firstly, the intellectual milieu of the Russian Socialist Revolution and secondly, the revolutionary praxis on Russian land. Throughout the first five chapters, he has discussed with great dedication, how under the leadership of Lenin, the Socialist Programme had been implemented throughout post-Tsarist Russia. Among these, 'Public Education in Post-Revolution Soviet Russia and Tagorean Philosophy' deserves special mention. In the last few chapters, the impact of Russian Revolution in the anti-colonial movement in India and the role of the Communist Party of India therein has been discussed. All the chapters are well-written. However, the tenth and the eleventh chapters are very analytical and have an added significance in the present political climate. The author has elaborated in how the Indian Communists had chosen the platform of Congress for their political activities notwithstanding the apparent contradictions between nationalist politics and the doctrine of class struggle. It was during this phase that an

influential left-wing emerged within the Congress which had a very significant role to play from 1930 till 1947. The author has discussed how, in spite of being banned from 1934-1942, the Communist Party had been able to develop its various mass organisations. He has also analysed how, in the backdrop of the Second World War, the Communist Party had adopted the People's War Line against the Axis Powers and had played an influential role of reaching out to the masses, especially those affected by the Bengal Famine, through its various politico-cultural programmes.

In the twelfth chapter, 'The Delayed Impact of the Soviet Socialist Revolution on Bengali Progressive Literature' has been discussed brilliantly. According to the author, the impact was hardly delayed. From the time of the Russian Revolution itself, several contemporary Bengali periodicals had been influenced by socialist thought. However, the clear impact was visible from 1935 till the 1970s. In 1936, the Anti-Fascist All India Progressive Writers' Association had emerged from the Anti-Fascist Platform that had been formed at London. Several Communist as well as non-Communist intellectuals had been a part of this organisation, whose branch had also come up in Bengal. In 1942, the Anti-Fascist Writers' and Artists' Association had been established. The author

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has discussed the attitude of the British Government towards this association on the basis of police reports and has elaborated on the way in which this Association had contributed to the development of consciousness regarding mass-struggle among the middle and the labouring classes.

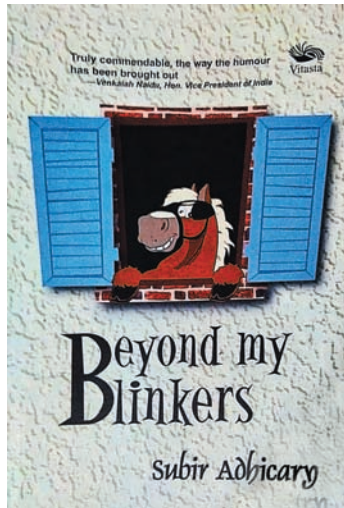
The different chapters of this book had been variously published as articles before. Consequently, in some cases, overlapping of content couldn't be averted. This book will surely be well appreciated amongst researchers, students, and enthusiastic readers alike. The usage of a Soviet poster and a leftist mass gathering in Kolkata on the cover has been rather innovative.

Dr. Subhas Ch. Sen
Former Principal,

Sarat Centenary College, Hooghli

Professor Kaberi Chakraborty, Department of Political Science, University of Calcutta was the reviewer of the book *World Politics since 1945* published in pp. 44-45 of the Monthly Bulletin, January 2020.

Inadvertent omission is regretted.



***Beyond my Blinkers* by Subir Adhichary, Vitasta Publishing Pvt. Ltd., ISBN 978-93-86473-40-0, First Edition 2019, ₹ 395.00.**

Mr. Subir Adhichary's book *Beyond my Blinkers* is a collection of fifty nine 'sketches' based on his gleanings of experience about, to use the author's own words, 'mundane matters of life which we miss and mess'. The oft-quoted Horatian dictum that the function of poetry (here read literary creation) is to delight as well as to instruct, is adhered to in all good and great works of art. Literature being the mirror of society, the present author has successfully held his honest and transparent mirror to the readers nay society to look for itself, feel ashamed and guilty, if at all it has retained the capacity to do so, shake off delicious indolence and not to indulge in mere reaction but spring into action. The anecdotes and incidents

veer round Dwarka, the largest sub-city of New Delhi, the author's Malgudi, as per his own candid confession, with occasional trips to Lucknow, Pune, Mumbai, Chandigarh and Durgapur of his salad days. Different aspects of our smothered existence— the grim picture of so-called civic amenities like the nightmarish roads, acute scarcity of drinking water, pitiable dearth of public lavatory facility, ludicrous fad for western style fashion, notorious craze for so-called social media which 'struts and frets' our heavily encumbered lives, thousand other nagging problems like open defecation, pooping of pets and fast food -centric gastronomical delights. Some of the recent governmental moves like demonetisation, the too much ado about Swaccha Bharat Abhiyan, renaming of roads and places and the adulterated meat scandal in Kolkata— all have come under his blitzkrieg. The author seems to tear away the veil of shams that shroud the dubious reputation of the Baba -Ma infested India, the putrefied political system which beguiles the easily gullible common people with false promises, the mindless commercialisation of education and health care, the ever flourishing unscientifically scientific planet propitiating trade, the whimsical decision of the New Delhi government regarding the vehicular traffic as well as the sorry state of affairs in the real estate business.

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There is a tinge of sadness in 'Snakes and Ladders', 'The Race', 'Article 377' marked by rainbow humour, where the readers get the test of, to use Charlie Chaplin's magnificent phrase 'playful pain'. The author's superb portrayal of a retired person, with commendable economy of words, 'time sans money' or the unweildy businessman wallowing on his gaddi like 'a white hippopotamus enjoying the afternoon sun on the banks of the Nile' are really exhilarating. Laughter is described by Thomas Carlyle as the cipher - key wherewith we decipher the whole man. Almost all the pieces in the book are soaked in a spirit of benign humour which like warm sunshine in a wintry day scintillates and soothes but never scorches. There is no rapier thrust

or no vitriolic anger, the mark of a consummate humourist. He has lashed vices, follies and foibles of life but spared the persons. There may seem occasional touches of a satirist's raft but they are absolutely free from malice. The duty of a satirist is half way between the preacher and wit, it is said. But except for one or two passing instances nowhere has the 'didactic, dry, declamatory and dull' spirit has got the better of the smooth flowing fluid of fun and frolic. The writings like 'The Motivation', and 'The Education Minister' display the author's abiding faith in the innate goodness of man. The style of the book is lucid, tone conversational and devoid of unnecessary starch. Pallas Athena was said to have sprung fully armed from the

head of Jove, comic laughter emerges instantaneous and complete from the human heart, and this is a great deal true in case of Subirbabu's book. Use of Bengali, Sanskrit and maxims from other languages as well as his own coinages like NGO (noise generating organisation), mission caution, constipated face and ego massage, are hopefully happy. Barring a few printing errors and one or two attempts to mount the pulpit, the otherwise splendidly illustrated book offers a delectable dish of mirth and merriment, the things which are fast dwindling from our lives.

Buddhadeb Bandyopadhyay
Former Principal,
Nabadwip Vidyasagar College

OUR BOOK STALL AT NEW DELHI WORLD BOOK FAIR 2020



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*Remembering
Mahatma
Gandhi*



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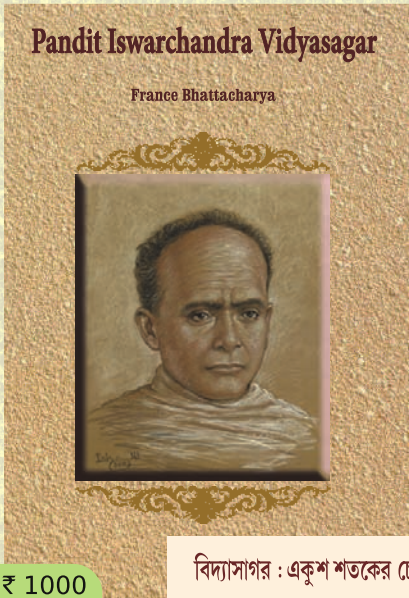
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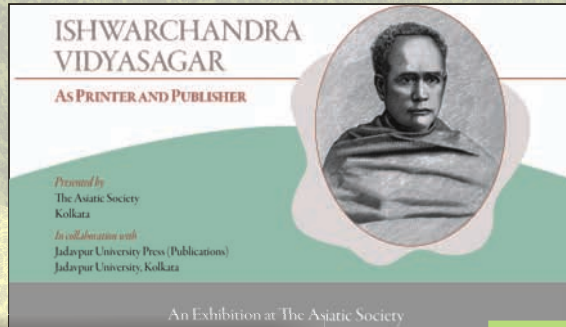


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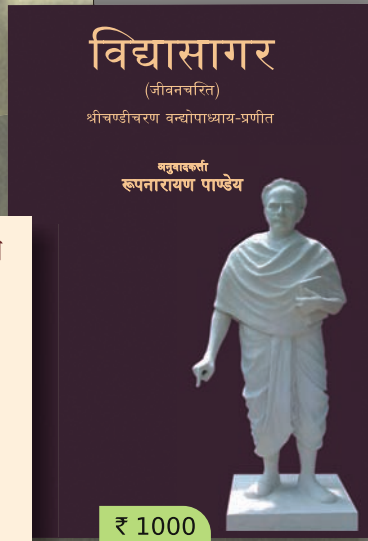
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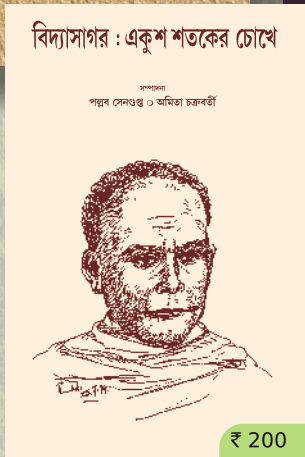
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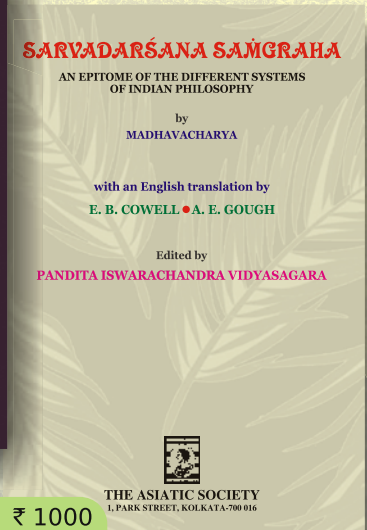
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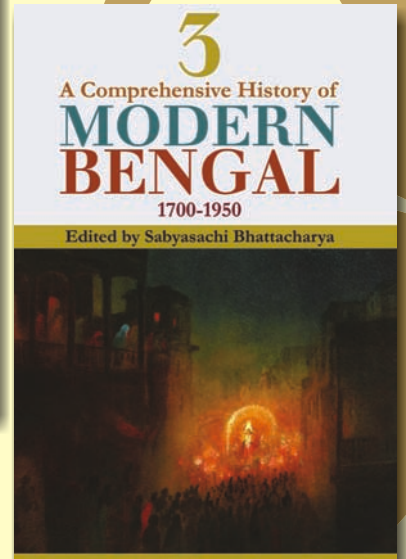
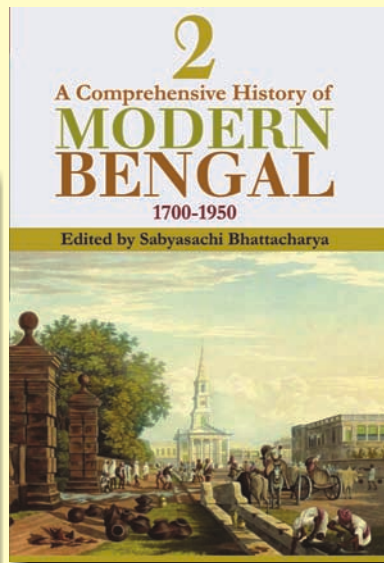
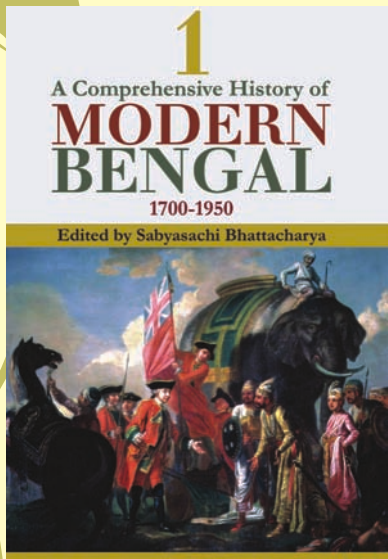
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