



e-Newsletter

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President's Message



Dear Colleagues:

We are a few days away from the upcoming 42nd All India Sociological Conference. The preparations for AISC at Tezpur are in full swing and I look forward to welcoming you personally. More than 850 delegates have registered and we expect to touch 1000 plus during the conference. A pre-conference meet has been organized to coincide with the AISC for doctoral students on titled *Challenges of doing Ethnography Today* on 26-27 December, 2016 where 21 doctoral students will present papers. Additionally we have invited about 35 students from various Northeast Universities to participate in the workshop. Professor N. Jayaram will be giving the Inaugural address while Professor V. Xaxa will present the Vaedictory address.

We have received 705 abstracts in various RCs and Adhoc groups which are being presented by 682 scholars. In addition 15 plenary/ symposia speakers will be speaking on different themes at the conference whose theme is *Rethinking Sociological Traditions of India*. Professor Hiren Gohain, literary critic and social scientist of Assam, will be inaugurating the conference and Professor Mrinal Miri, philosopher, former Director, Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, ex-Chairman, Indian Council of Philosophical Research and ex-VC, NEHU will give the keynote speech. We will be awarding the 2016 Lifetime Achievement Awards to Professors Patricia Uberoi and Yogesh Atal and the M.N. Srinivas Prize and this year jointly to Dr. Hoineilhing Sitlhou and Dr. Salah Punathil, both from the University of Hyderabad. We have also organized two new programmes at the conference: publishers will have book release and/or author meets readers' sessions and Sangeet Natak Academy and Indian Council of Cultural Relations have sponsored cultural programmes every evening.

I have been informing you about the changes that the new team at ISS has been initiating. Our attempt has been to upgrade the Society's professional culture, democratize its activities and decrease its financial liabilities. We have a new website, membership and registration is now online, procedures for conducting RCs/ad-hoc groups, Conferences and rules for Lifetime Achievement Awards have been revised. From 2017, the Bulletin is going to be published by Sage Publications. We have revived the E-journal and appointed a new Editor, Professor Chandan Kumar Sharma. We are also in the process of upgrading the E newsletter into a news outlet. In addition, the Society hopes to introduce Writing workshops for doctoral students and disseminating information regarding academic protocols for reviewing and writing papers on the webpage.

The GBM of ISS is scheduled to be held at the Tezpur Conference on 29th December 2016 wherein we are going to discuss the changes that need to be made to the ISS Constitution in order to sync it with the changes in activities mentioned above.

We hope you appreciate these changes. We also hope that these changes will help sociologists in India to engage with contemporary processes that confront the world and allow them to engage with them and to actively intervene in these processes.

Sujata Patel
President

From the Editor's Desk



We are back with another issue of Indian Sociological Society (ISS) E-Newsletter as the year 2016 draws towards an end and also my one year term of being the Secretary of Indian Sociological Society and by virtue of that Editor E-Newsletter. Since the first issue of the E-Newsletter of this year came out, many new and interesting developments have taken place in the working of ISS that need to be reported.

First of all let me welcome you all to the 42nd All India Sociological Conference to be held at Tezpur University, Assam from 27th to 30th December, 2016 on the theme *Rethinking Sociological Traditions of India*. There will also be Young Researchers Workshop on 26th-27th December on the topic *Challenges of doing Ethnography Today*. It is really heartening to note that 700 delegates have registered for the conference so far, and many have sent their abstracts of papers to be presented in different Research Committees (RCs) and Adhoc Groups at the conference. For the preparations of the Workshop and of nearly four days of the Conference, I express my deep sense of gratitude to Prof. Chandan Kumar Sharma, the Organizing Secretary of the Conference and his entire team for working relentlessly. The theme of the conference and the various symposiums, Presidential Address as well as memorial lectures would provide useful academic insights into the issues of great sociological relevance today. I congratulate and feel more than happy to acknowledge the ISS decision of giving of Lifetime Achievement awards to Prof. Patricia Uberoi and Prof. Yogesh Atal for their significant contribution in the discipline of Sociology. I also congratulate the two young scholars, Dr. Salah Punthil and Dr. Hoineilhing Sitlhou for being selected to receive Prof. M.N. Srinivas Prize.

Many initiatives have been taken during this period. An important decision is regarding the handing over of Sociological Bulletin to Sage Publications from 2017 onwards. This will increase the subscription and visibility of the Journal as well as its accessibility to a larger number of people. We expect a similar kind of decision for the ISS Hindi Journal. The updating of website, uploading of all forms, on-line registration and payment of fees are some of the efforts taken to make the functioning of ISS and its constituents like RCs more professional, organized and transparent. It is hoped that all other activities like elections will be on-line subsequently as has been already decided. The formation and working of sub-committees actively has made the working of ISS more effective. One of the sub-committees to suggest amendments to the ISS Constitution did a commendable job as required changes could not be made for many years. I am sure the Life members of ISS would look into these efforts and give us their support during the General Body Meeting.

I know there are differences of opinion among ISS members on certain issues and we take them in our stride as we believe that discussions and debate always lead to better decision making and working of an organization. We need support of all ISS members in making our organization strong and dynamic.

Looking forward to seeing you all at Tezpur...

Abha Chauhan
Editor



Message from the Organizing Secretary, 42 AISC, Tezpur

It is my proud privilege to welcome you to the 42nd All-India Sociological Conference (AISC) of the Indian Sociological Society being hosted by the Department of Sociology, Tezpur University during December 27-30, 2016. We are expecting around a thousand delegates to participate in the scholarly discourses in 24 Research Committees, 4 Adhoc Groups and 5 plenary sessions during the Conference. As the days of the Conference draw near, I am happy to inform you that the preparations for a successful organization of the Conference are going on in full swing. We are indeed inspired by the great enthusiasm shown by the sociological community of the country to participate in the Conference and we have made all efforts to make their experience at Tezpur University a memorable one.

May I take this opportunity to briefly introduce Tezpur and Tezpur University before you?

Tezpur:

Situated on the north bank of the mighty Brahmaputra, Tezpur is a beautiful town located in central Assam. It is the headquarters of Sonitpur district located 190 km east of Guwahati, the capital city of Assam. A city steeped in history, mythology and folklore, Tezpur abounds in archaeological sites, ancient relics apart from scenic beauty. The famous 8th century door frame of Da-Parbatia, the ruins of the 9th century sun temple at the Bamuni Hill, the ruins of the ancient temple known as Garh Dou, the early 9th century rock inscription of Harjjar Varma, etc. speak volume of the historical significance of Tezpur. Due to its critical geographical location, the city enjoys critical strategic importance besides being a centre of trade and commerce. It is also a transit for tourists visiting Arunachal Pradesh, especially the famous Buddhist monastery at Tawang. The world famous Kaziranga National Park is located 55 km east of Tezpur while the Nameri National Park is located 40 km north of it.

About Tezpur University

Nestled on a lush green 262- acre campus, Tezpur University was established in 1994. In the two decades of its existence, the University has come of age in attaining certain distinctive heights in the national and international academic firmament. The University was conferred the Visitor's Best University Award 2016 among all the central universities of India. The University was ranked 5th among top 100 universities in India for the year 2016 by National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. Recently, the Times Higher Education of World Universities placed the University between 600-800 among the top universities in the world.

Currently, the university offers 70 academic programmes through 20 departments under 4 different Schools. The university also offers 11 programmes under its Open and Distance mode. With 3800 students, 260 faculty members and 280 administrative and technical personnel, the university today is a hub of quality activities in higher education and research. With students and faculty/staff members from across India, the University campus is a confluence of demographic and cultural diversity as much as it is a blend of natural growth and technological advancement.

Tezpur University feels privileged to host the 42nd AISC which is considered as one of the biggest social science conclaves in South Asia. On behalf of the University and by virtue of being the Organising Secretary of the Conference, I again extend a warm welcome to all the delegates!

Chandan Kumar Sharma
Organizing Secretary

ISS RESEARCH COMMITTEES AND CONVENORS

RC-1: Theory, Concept and Methodology

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RC-2: Family, Kinship and Marriage

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RC-3: Economy, Polity and Society

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RC-4: Migration and Diasporic Studies

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RC-5: Education and Society

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RC-6: Religion and Religious Communities

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RC-7: Rural, Peasant and Tribal Communities

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RC-8: Social Stratification, Professions and Social Mobility

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RC-9: Dalits and Backward Classes

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RC-10: Gender Studies

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RC-11: Environment and Society

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RC-12: Population, Health & Society

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RC-13: Science, Technology & Society

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RC-14: Culture and Communication

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RC-15: Social Change and Development

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RC-16: Urban and Industrial Studies

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RC-17: Social Movements

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RC-18: Sociology of Crime and Deviance

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RC-19: Sociology of Ageing

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RC-20: Leisure and Tourism

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RC-21: Social Problems and Marginalised Groups

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RC-22: Sociology of Armed Forces and Conflict Resolution

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RC-23: Sociology of Law

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RC-24: Sociology of Childhood and Youth

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Adhoc Groups**Sociology of Everyday Life**

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Mother and Motherhood

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ISS-RC10 - Gender Studies
Report of the National Seminar Organized at BHU, Varanasi

The national seminar on “Globalization and Women: Issues and Concerns” jointly organized by the RC 10 Women and Society, of the Indian Sociological Society (ISS) and the Department of Sociology, BHU was inaugurated at Professor KN Udapa Auditorium of the Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi on 14th September, 2016 at 09:30 a.m. by Ms. Lalitha Kumaramangalam, the Hon’ble Chairperson, National Commission for Women. Professor Arvind Kumar Joshi, Head, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi welcomed the guests, highlighting the establishment of the department and its current contributions to the society at large in the field of academics, research and outreach activities. Professor Abha Chauhan, Secretary, Indian Sociological Society welcomed the delegates on behalf of the ISS and informed about activities of the ISS. She also spoke on the issue of gender studies relating her experience to her Convenor of RC 10 for four years (2011-14).

Dr. Shweta Prasad, Convenor, RC 10, ISS and the Organizing Secretary of the Seminar introducing the theme of the seminar. She said that the protestors of globalization can be grouped together in two categories. First category includes the protestors who have deep-seated antipathy to globalization whereas second category of protestors are those whose discontents are well within the parameters of mainstream discourse and the feminist critics belong to this category. She opined that cross-border migration of women, feminization of labour force, increasing violence against women, climate change and its impact on women are some of the issues as well as concerns of women vis-à-vis globalization. She also said that though globalization has created job opportunities for women especially in EPZs and SEZs, these jobs are mainly concentrated at the entry level and are low paid jobs.

The Guest of Honour, Ms. Aparna Kumar (IPS) was felicitated for being the first civil servant to climb the Mt. Everest in May, 2016. Ms. Kumar is credited with scaling four other summits of different continents besides the Mt. Everest and aims to climb highest peaks of all the seven continents. Responding to the honour, Ms. Kumar shared her life journey and her experiences of climbing different mountain peaks during the session. She said that there is “one life, one chance” and that “age is just a number”. She said that she took to mountaineering which, according to her, is true test to limits of mental, physical and emotional challenges.

Prof. Vibhuti Patel of the SNDT Women’s University, Mumbai delivered the keynote address. She focused her talk on making smart cities women friendly, underlining some of the basic issues of public toilets for women, her safety during travel etc. She said that not only these facilities should be created but these should be widely publicized through awareness generation programmes.

She expressed her deep concerns over artificial and assisted reproduction where the law of jungle is prevailing today due to absence of sufficient provisions. She underlined the misuse of medicines and bio-technology for testing on women in developing countries. She recommended the adoption of gender budgeting provision for quality education for women to meet the challenges of globalization, supporting her professional education and making skill mission gender inclusive. She negated the belief that women are techno-fobs and declared that the tech- savvy metro women drivers made the journey safer reducing the accident rate. She suggested that ICT should also be properly utilized for helping women, laws also needs to be reformed and made women friendly.

Ms. Lalitha Kumaramangalam, the Hon’ble Chairperson, National Commission for women in her address emphasized that today most women do not want to be “just wives” but if they want to do something else to prove themselves they are asked what sort of wife or mother are you going to be? She further said that women are good at multi-tasking and the educated and working women are better managers, they can manage family, kids as well as their work in a much better manner. Talking about women’s security, she said that the workplaces do not provide adequate safety and amenities to women. She further said that this whole gender debate, unfortunately, have become men vs. women which is not right because men and women need to work together. She raised several questions like women are doing much better than men but is our country ready to offer equal opportunity to them? Are they capable of taking advantage of globalization? Further, she said that there is no structure in place for women to take advantage of globalization. More than 72 % of the working women are from the unorganized sector and they don’t have the opportunity or the skill set to take advantage of globalization.

During his presidential address, the Hon’ble Vice Chancellor, Banaras Hindu University Prof. Girish Chandra Tripathi expressed his gratitude to the Chief Guest and other resource persons. He said that globalization has increased the all-round competition and only those who are empowered, will benefit from this competition. Therefore, opportunities should be created for women to take advantage of globalization.

There were four special lectures after the inaugural session by the experts. These lectures were delivered by Prof. Abha Chauhan, Prof. Ashok Kaul, Prof. Manish K. Verma and Dr. Arvinder Ansari. Prof. A. K. Pandey and Prof. J. K. Tiwari chaired the special lecture sessions. During the two-day seminar, more than 100 papers were presented under various sub-themes in 14 parallel sessions. Overall, the presentations made during the seminar were intensely discussed and well received. The feedback from the delegates was highly motivating. Ms. Pooja Singh conducted the programme while the vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. C. D. Adhikari.

Dr. Shweta Prasad
Convenor, RC -10, ISS

**ISS-RC17- Social Movements
Report of the Mid-term Conference
Organized by**

Department of Sociology, Savitribai Phule Pune University

Need for a Paradigm Shift in Movement Studies

Department of Sociology, Savitribai Phule Pune University organized the Mid-term National conference of RC 17 on 'Sociology of Social Movements: Trends and Directions in Contemporary India' on 13th -14th June 2016. Well attended by scholars of Sociology of Social Movements from across India, one of the special features of this conference was active presence of scholars belonging to three generations.

Based on the central premise that social movements are one of the axes of modern social life, Prof. Shruti Tambe, the Coordinator of the Conference, organized sessions which mainly focused on understanding trends and directions with respect to social movements in India. The Conference sub-themes ranged from Epistemological and methodological approaches to social movements to various types of movements including those around gender, those by peasants, Dalits, tribal and labourers.

While more than 125 participants took active part in deliberations, 54 papers were presented during the two day conference in parallel sessions based on various sub-themes. Movements around Environmental issues and gender attracted most papers. Post-graduate and research students of the department strived hard to make the conference a success.

In her welcome Address at the Inaugural Session, Prof. Shruti Tambe stated that though many new movements are emerging through the globe; the disturbing question is, whether all these movements are contributing to democratic restructuring of Indian Society or not. Referring to divisive politics and movements aimed at exclusion, she stressed the need for a serious engagement and reformulation of theoretical, conceptual and methodological tools of sociology of social movements.

The inaugural address was given by Prof. Sujata Patel, President of Indian Sociological Society. Highlighting the need to go beyond description of the obvious empirical details of social movements, she introduced an innovative framework of 'Depreciation of the Social', where one will have to audit social and political futures of not just 'National' societies, but global socialities. She also said that one will have to engage in serious historical assessment of processes related to modernity. The key note address was delivered by Dr. Geoffrey Pleyers, President of RC47 of International Sociological Association. He observed that with growing tendencies of discrimination, dispossession and disenfranchisement in the times of neoliberal political and economic regimes, there is a need for a reconsideration of the established Western model of Democracy. He argued for 'Rethinking democracy' in the context of social movements today by specially bringing in new insights from the South. He stated that the new movements are bringing in new kinds of subjectivities, and hence developing an understanding of these newly emergent subjectivities is important for democratization process.

The second session was a Panel on 'Social Movements: Need for Paradigm Shift' chaired by Prof. Sujata Patel with Prof. D. N. Dhanagare and Prof. Debal SinghaRoy as main speakers. Prof. Dhanagare, based on his recent work on *Shetakari Sanghatana* in Maharashtra, detailed out Alan Touraine's participatory approach in social movement studies. Prof. Debal Singhroy highlighted issues of identity in the studies of social movement. The presentations were followed by a very thought provoking question-answer session.

With enthusiastic response from all over India, four parallel sessions of paper presentation were conducted. Eminent scholars like Dr. Abha Chauhan, Dr. Biswajit Ghosh, Dr. D.R. Sahu, Dr. Anthony Palackal, Dr. S. M. Patnaik, Dr. Satish Sharma, Dr. S. K. Chaudhary Dr. Arvinder Ansari among others presented papers. In the subtheme on Movements on Environmental issues 17 papers were presented and the issues posed were identity and development, dynamics of sustainable development in the context of globalization, use of mixed methods, and issues related to resource mobilization theory. 12 papers were presented in the sub-theme on movements around gender. Prof. Vidyut Bhagavat and Prof. Hemixa Rao, Dr. Anagha Tambe, and Dr. Anant Giri chaired the sessions. Themes dealt with were property rights of

women in Kashmir, Islamic feminism, multiple identities within women's movements, methodological innovations to challenge binaries and the role of women's movement in nationalist struggle. Chaired by Prof. Jogdand and Dr. Kolekar, sessions on Dalit, Castes and Adivasi movements had 11 papers and themes of discussion included changing pattern of interaction among urban scheduled castes, contemporary forms of Dalit assertion, non-Brahmin movement of Maharashtra, study of Adivasi Mukti Sanghatana, ideology, goals and strategies involved in Tribal Movement in Odisha etc. In the subtheme on Epistemological and methodological aspects of movement studies 7 papers were presented. Prof. Murzban Jal and Prof. Bishwajit Ghosh chaired the sessions. The discussion involved issues of human rights of casual workers, intersection between public and private, various methodological issues with respect to current ongoing protest movements in Brazil, Venezuela as well as anti-immigrant movements in Europe. 7 papers were presented in the subtheme on Peasant and Farmers Movements/Urban and Labour/Ethnicity with Prof. Bhargav as the chair. The papers in this session mainly focused on issues of student movements, major problems in tribal development, reasons for backwardness of tribes, tourism and social movements, various issues related to food movement, role of food in political economy, complexities of anti-dam movement, issue of trade union workers in Mumbai etc.

A panel discussion was organized aiming at Activist- academician interface on the second day on 'Social Movements Scenario in India'. All three were activist scholars associated with various movements. Ulka Mahajan belonging to *Sarvahara Jana-Andolan* established in 1990 spoke about struggles around land rights and displacement. Ashish Kothari emphasized on the notion of 'creative wellbeing' with five components: direct democracy, economic democracy, social justice, ecological resilience, sustainability and diversity in culture and knowledge. Prof. Murzban Jal critiqued Indian Marxists for not being able to link Marxian insights with the writings of Freud and Ambedkar. His major argument was that Indian Marxists have not understood basic social formation of Indian society which is Caste.

Valedictory session was devoted to an open discussion around themes that were discussed during the two days. Prof. Dhanagare, Prof. Debal SinghaRoy, Prof. Jogdand, Prof. Bhargav made some observations on the field of social movement studies.

To sum up, I must state that there was a sense of keen involvement among all the paper presenters. Most of the scholars identified with the themes they were presenting on and the actors as well. However, as noted by many serious movement studies scholars, there is a need to go beyond the empirical details of any movement and move towards theorization and conceptualization.

Session Reports were compiled by Mayuri Samant, Santosh Gangurde, Vandana Palsane, Madhura Sawant, Sneha Gole, and Dr. Megha Deshpande.

Shruti Tambe

FOURTH ANJAN GHOSH PUBLIC SEMINAR*Organized by***Department of Sociology****The University of Burdwan****9th November, 2016****REPORT**

Late Prof. Anjan Ghosh was a great benefactor of the Department of Sociology, The University of Burdwan. After his untimely death in 2010, the Department decided to organize public seminars in his memory. Since the first public lecture held in 2011, four seminar lectures were held. The fourth lecture, entitled 4TH ANJAN GHOSH PUBLIC SEMINAR, was sponsored by The University of Burdwan out of funds granted out of the General Development Assistance Scheme (2016-17).

4TH ANJAN GHOSH PUBLIC SEMINAR was held on 9th November, 2016. It was chaired by Prof. Biswajit Ghosh, Head of the Department of Sociology, who explained the *raison d'être* behind holding the seminar. He introduced the Guest Speaker, Prof. Krityapriya Ghosh, who delivered the lecture, "Tarashankarer gramer cithi". Prof. Krityapriya Ghosh made a sociological analysis of Bengali novelist, Tarashankar Bandyopadhyaya's writings on Bengali villages. Prof. Anirban Banerjee, Convener of the seminar, delivered the Vote of Thanks. Dr. Sourav Madhur Dey compered the event

REPORT

RAJASTHAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

(21-22 October, 2016)

The Rajasthan Sociological Association (RSA) and Department of Sociology, Bhupal Nobles' P.G. Girl's College, Udaipur organized XXIII National Conference on *Social Transformation and Development Processes in India* at Udaipur, Rajasthan on 21-22 October, 2016.

The inaugural programme began with the lightening of the lamp, singing of Saraswati Vandana and garlanding the dignitaries. The Principal of the College, Prof. N.L. Sharma welcomed the delegates and guests. Dr. Paresh Dwivedi, the Convenor of the Conference talked about the theme, and the RSA President, Prof. S.L. Sharma gave the Presidential Address. Prof. Tulsi Patel from University of Delhi delivered the Keynote Address. She spoke about the various issues and problems related to Rajasthan. Prof. Yogesh Atal, an eminent Sociologist and son of the soil was honoured with special award. Prof. Rajeev Gupta from Jaipur and Prof. Pradeep Chundawat from Baroda received Life Time Achievement Awards. Thereafter, the session of the release of Souvenir and the Journal of RSA was held. Some awards were also given during this time. **In the two day conference 150 papers were presented in seven Technical Sessions and two symposiums.**

Technical Sessions: 1. Restructuring of Tribal Society in Rajasthan; 2. Industrialization, Globalization and Urban Development; 3. Social Impact of New Development Schemes; 4. Education, Health and Sanitation in Rural & Tribal Areas; 5. Dynamics of Caste and Dalit Movements; 6. Social Transformation through Media, NGOs, Banks and Online Services; and 7. Changing Trends in Family, Marriage and Everyday life.

Symposiums: I : Social Transformation of Society in Rajasthan; and **II :** Spiritual Movements for Social Change

The Valedictory session was held on 22nd October 2016. It began similarly with the lighting of the lamp and garlanding of guests. The welcome address was delivered by the Vice Principal of the college Dr. Renu Rathore. The presentation of reports was made by Dr. N.K. Patel, Udaipur. Prof. Abha Chauhan from the Department of Sociology, University of Jammu and the Secretary, Indian Sociological Society (ISS) delivered the Valedictory Address. She highlighted the role of ISS and strengthening its links with the regional organizations like RSA besides focussing on the theme of the conference. Some of the participants shared their experiences. Thereafter, Prof. S.S. Sarangdeot, Vice Chancellor, JRVN University, Udaipur delivered his Chief Guest Address. Prof. S.L. Sharma (Jaipur) gave the Presidential remarks and Dr. N.N. Singh, the Chairperson of the session and the Managing Director, B.N. Institute delivered his address. Dr. Paresh Dwivedi offered the Vote of Thanks. This was followed by the song of the organization and distribution of certificates.

Photo Galary

ISS-RC10 - Gender Studies National Seminar Organized at BHU, Varanasi



Dignitaries Releasing the Souvenir



Chief Guest Ms. Lalitha Kumaramangalam, Hon'ble Chairperson, ISS, lighting the lamp & others



Prof. G.C. Tripathi, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, B.H.U. Prof. Abha Chauhan, Secretary ISS, lighting the lamp & others.



Dignitaries and Delegates

ISS-RC17- Social Movements: Mid-term Conference Department of Sociology, Savitribai Phule Pune University



Photo Galary

ISS-RC17- Social Movements: Mid-term Conference
Department of Sociology, Savitribai Phule Pune University



RAJASTHAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE (21-22 OCTOBER, 2016)



Photo Galary

Third ISA Forum of Sociology, Vienna, July 10-14, 2016



Ramkrishna Mukherjee

In Memoriam

T N Madan

EPW, Vol. 51, Issue No. 10, 05 Mar, 2016

A tribute to Ramkrishna Mukherjee, the eminent sociologist, who made a significant contribution to making sociology a field of research in India in the second half of the 20th century.

The death of Ramkrishna Mukherjee on 15 December 2015 in Kolkata marks the close of what one may call the second chapter of the history of academic sociology in India. If we go by the substantive scope, methodological sophistication, and volume of his published work, Mukherjee made a significant contribution to the making of sociology as a field of research in the second half of the 20th century. If one brings in the criterion of influence on others, a negative judgment is inescapable: he stood outside the mainstream. The reasons for this mixed assessment are personal, institutional, and professional. I can barely do more here than provide a few intimations about how to understand the paradox.

Ramkrishna Mukherjee (henceforth RM) was born in 1919 in an affluent, zamindar, Brahmin family of Uttar Para (West Bengal). He wanted to study natural sciences or engineering but poor eyesight led him to choose anthropology in which he graduated from University of Calcutta with distinction in 1941. Under the guidance of his teacher Communist Party of India intellectual, P C Joshi, that RM undertook the study of social and economic life in rural East Bengal through a survey. Later, he participated in a study of the socio-economic impact of the Bengal Famine of 1943 under the supervision of the distinguished statistician P C Mahalanobis (1893–1972). RM's first publications were jointly authored with him (1946, 1947). Meanwhile, the first results of his village surveys were also ready for publication. Two papers were published in 1948 and 1949 in the *American Sociological Review*. Later, RM went to Cambridge (UK) in 1946 for further studies, and was awarded the doctoral degree in biometry in 1948 and became interested in the use of statistical techniques. He honed his statistical techniques when he accepted appointment as Chief Research Officer in a government-sponsored social survey in London (1948–49). After a brief interlude as statistical consultant to the Government of Turkey in Ankara (1949), RM returned to India to work at the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) but immediately left again for England joined a research team engaged in the study of social mobility in Britain. He later went to East Berlin as a guest professor of Indian Studies at Humboldt University and wrote his critical text on the East India Company (1955b) in which he analysed the role of monopolistic merchant capital in India under the auspices of colonialism. While abroad, RM continued to work on the data generated through his study of the agrarian society of Bengal. The complete report on this pioneering study came out in the form of two books (1957, 1958). However these studies did not have an impact of the kind that S C Dube's fieldwork-based monographs on an Andhra village and M N Srinivas's early seminal papers resulting from his fieldwork in a Karnataka village. RM deeply resented the marginalisation of his work but he did not openly speak or write about it. Unlike Dube and Srinivas, he never became a university professor, and did not have any students; actually he was not even in India in the early 1950s.

RM returned to India in 1957 and joined the ISI as professor of sociology, and organised a Sociological Research Unit there. RM delivered the sectional president's address to the social anthropology section at the Fifth All-India Sociological Conference convened by R N Saksena and hosted by D N Majumdar at the University of Lucknow. From then onwards, RM remained continuously engaged with professional bodies. In 1972–74 he was a member of executive council of the International Sociological Association, and in 1974–78, president of the Indian Sociological Society.

Intellectual Interests

During a six-decade-long research career, RM pursued several interrelated intellectual interests. Notably, the concern with the identification of significant problems for empirical investigation, clarification of conceptual frameworks for their study, and fashioning of appropriate methodologies for observation and explanation.

Central to RM's work was the issue of scientific method. Observations, measurement, classification, comparison and inductive inference stand out in his conception of it. Besides, there was the commitment to the historical and value dimensions of social reality. He remained rooted in the Marxian approach but not uncritically; he questioned various dichotomies associated with it, such as material base–ideological superstructure and objectivity–subjectivity. He placed at the centre of social inquiry a fivefold framework of questions: (i) identification (what is it?); (ii) historical development (how is it?); (iii) causality (why is it?); (iv) prognosis (what will it be?); (v) evaluation (what should it be?) (1979).

RM had other related interests too, notably disciplinary history (1977b) and futures (2009). He did not, however, look at his work as an enterprise divided chronologically into stages or substantively into discrete problem areas. It follows that the large body of publications that RM bequeathed to us needs to be studied systematically (holistically), and would require considerable methodological skills, qualitative as well as quantitative. Fortunately, much of his published work is extant; many of his books have been reprinted and he took care to bring together select papers. There is work to do, and it is doable. In a 2014 interview, RM observed rather ruefully that he “never had a follower” (2014: 134). I doubt he would have wanted any after his death. “Appraisal” (a favourite word of his)? Yes.

Reasons for Limited Recognition

Why did RM, despite the wide scope and sophistication of his large body of published work, not receive the recognition which, I believe, he deserved? Srinivas's *Collected Papers* (2002) contains but one fleeting reference to RM's “use of advanced statistical techniques” (p 504) without any work being cited. But the American sociologist Immanuel Walterstein who had RM over yearly for about 10 years to lecture to and engage with students at the State University of New York, Binghamton. RM also was a regular visitor at the Maison de Sciences de l'Homme, Paris, for many years.

First, RM managed over the years to cultivate the image of a stand-apart, even difficult, colleague. He could be blunt in academic discussions, and was seen by many as self-opinionated and even haughty. Second, his writing style was rather inaccessible, not only because of the use of complicated statistical formulae, but also because of the terseness of his prose. Third, his institutional base in India for four decades, ISI, had no teaching or doctoral programmes in sociology, although there was a research programme, and there were sociologists working on individual and collective projects. Fourth, during his most productive years, it was the social anthropological method that prevailed over other styles of doing sociology in India.

Last Book

In short, RM's idiosyncrasies, his specialist methodological skills and institutional constraints contributed to the general lack of interest in his work among his contemporaries. He did not, however, give up and pursued his scholarly interests until the very end of his life: he completed his last book at the age of 89. *Why Unitary Social Science?* (2009) is his testament to the profession. It is a clearly constructed argument for the imperative of overcoming the

compartmentalisation of knowledge among what he calls “discrete (human) social sciences.” In a pre-publication comment, Immanuel Wallerstein wrote: “This is a book to be taken seriously by the world’s social scientists.” We may yet see a revival of interest in RM’s work.

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- See more at: <http://www.epw.in/journal/2016/10/commentary/ramkrishna-mukherjee.html#sthash.oQfOegI8.dpuf>

Sharit Bhowmik, 1948–2016

Farewell to a Trusty Crusader*

Virginus Xaxa

Sharit Bhowmik, “Shyamal” to his family and “Sharit” to his friends, passed away on 8 September at 10 pm in Bangkok. A little over a month, and he would have completed 68 years. He had gone there for a workshop on street vendors, fell ill and was diagnosed with pneumonia.

He is part of much that I am today, and this is one of the ways of paying my tribute to a dear friend and co-traveller in life, although words fail me as I write about him and his enormous contribution to academics, as well as to the innumerable lives that he made a difference to, through his work and writings.

Early Education and Career: Bhowmik was born in Mumbai, did his junior schooling in Sherwood, Nainital and high school and college in Mumbai. While in college at St Xavier’s Mumbai, and later at the Mumbai University’s sociology department, he was a part of the left-leaning student circle. The values and ideology that he imbibed during his student life had been the guiding principle of his life and work, not just in letter but in ethos and spirit, all through his life. He adapted his ideas with the changing social and economic circumstances without compromising with the core value of empowering the people on the margins. This was most evident in his writings, research interests and his association with organisations and institutions that worked with marginalised sections of society such as plantation workers, small tea growers, street vendors, self-employed women workers, slum dwellers, etc. Bhowmik combined many things, a feature intrinsic to his persona.

Bhowmik completed his PhD from the the Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University under the supervision of André Béteille. Béteille always considered him as one of his ûnest students. Bhowmik joined the sociology and anthropology department of North Bengal University soon after. One of the prime reasons for his leaving Delhi was his attraction to north Bengal, which was not only the site of his doctoral ûeldwork but also the site of praxis of organising the workers. Along with Chinmoy Ghosh, an All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) trade unionist, he helped tribal plantation workers of the Sonali tea estate set up a workers’ cooperative after the owner had abandoned the tea estate and deserted the workers. After six years of teaching at North Bengal University, he joined the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Calcutta in 1985 and soon after moved to the Delhi School of Economics as associate professor in 1987. Bhowmik eventually moved to his hometown, Mumbai, in 1994 and joined the sociology department of Mumbai University when it was going through a transition. He gave new impetus to and stabilised the department. Although he taught a wide range of courses such as social theory, research methods, population and society, urban sociology, and Indian society, the areas that were close to his heart were economic sociology, industrial sociology, sociology of organisations, sociology of labour, sociology of work, and economic development and social change. These areas were intricately linked to his praxis. He taught these courses with great passion, drawing heavily from his actual experience of working in the ûeld.

A little over a decade after he had joined Mumbai University, Bhowmik was invited by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) to set up a new centre for the study of labour. Labour was very dear to him and he took this opportunity and challenge and moved to TISS in 2007. While he was there, he gave new direction to the study of labour. He developed and headed the Master’s Programme in Globalisation and Labour which has become part of the Global Labour University funded by the International Labour Organization (ILO). He was also a founding member of the International Centre for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) at the University of Kassel, Germany. The key focus area of the centre has been labour and political economy. In 2011 and 2013, he held the Ela Bhatt visiting professorship at the University of Kassel. His teaching provided students there with valuable insights into Indian society and guided them in their ûeld research on labour.

Teacher and Person Bhowmik was a very amiable person and extremely generous with his time, ideas and resources towards students, colleagues and visitors who came to him for consultation, discussion and advice. He was a wonderful teacher and taught in universities at different places and across social locations. Students at the North Bengal University

came pre- dominantly from rural areas. While other universities/institutes he taught in were located in metropolitan cities, where the social background of the students was far from uniform. Whereas Mumbai University and TISS represented one end of the spectrum, the IIM and Delhi School of Economics represented another. Many of whom he taught are today in high positions, either in academic institutions, the government, or civil society organisations.

Outside of the classroom, he was more of a friend than a teacher. He was the same with his research students, who came from very different social and demographic backgrounds and were differently capable. He has nurtured and moulded them into teachers and scholars of recognition and repute.

Bhowmik's concern with empowering workers with unionisation and cooperatives led him to work with workers outside of the formal and organised sector. In fact, over the last one decade or so he had been primarily concerned with workers in the informal/unorganised sector. Bhowmik's work on street vendors, and his involvement in the various negotiations and discussions of street vendors' organisations with the government eventually led to passing of the Street Vending Act in 2014.

Not an armchair Scholar Bhowmik's extensive fieldwork illustrates that he was not an armchair scholar. This feature is best captured in the condolence resolution of the Department of Sociology, Central University of Hyderabad. It says, Prof Bhowmik was in many ways an uncommon sociologist. He was not for sitting in the ivory-tower but took to the streets, to the factories, workshops and plantations where working people lived, worked and died. He had neither the time nor the inclination for 'outsider/insider' dilemmas and doubts. He took the concerns of the working people to heart, as simple as that. His scholarship sprang from his heart. He was one of the foremost interventional sociologists in India and also in the world. Generations of trade union leaders and activists sat with him and listened to him, from the tea plantations in Bengal to the workers and unions of multi- national firms in Mumbai as well as those with the workers' cooperative movement with which he was intimately associated. In his demise social scientists have lost a scholar and researcher, trade unions and other civil society organisations an ally, and workers (formal and informal) a trusted crusader. However, he continues to live through his research and writings that he leaves behind as a rich repository and an inimitable legacy.

*(*This is a shorter version of the commentary featured in Economic and Political Weekly, October 15, 2016. Vol. LI No. 42)*

ISA XXXIX World Congress of Sociology

Toronto, Canada
July 15-21, 2018

Theme

Power, Violence and Justice: Reflections, Responses and Responsibilities

<http://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/world-congress/toronto-2018/>

First RC 33 Regional Conference on Social Science Methodology: Asia Taipei, Taiwan (Sept. 11-14, 2017).

Abstract Submission: JANUARY 31, 2017

For details:

please see : <http://survey.sinica.edu.tw/rc33-taipei/>

The 2017 ISA- TG04 Mid-term conference

will be hosted by The University of Liverpool in Singapore and will be held from 10th April to 12 April 2017. The theme of the Conference is Critical Approaches to Risk and Security: East, South, North and West

For more information regarding the conference theme, keynotes and registration please visit our website: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/law-and-social-justice/conferences-and-events/critical-approaches-to-risk-and-security/>

Abstract submission deadline: 12th January 2017.

The Indian Social Science association (ISSA) in collaboration with the Department of Sociology, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi announces All India Golden Jubilee Year Conference on 'Rethinking Development Today' from 10th -11th February, 2017. Contact: Prof. Arvind K. Joshi. E.mail: arvindns@outlook.com; Shri Abhinav Prasad. E.mial: abhinavprasad@gmail.com

International Conference on *Environmental Impact on Biodiversity, Sustainability and Quality of Life* (EIBSQL-2017)

organized under the aegis of UPE "Study of Ecology and Economy" during February 16-18, 2017.

The Conference deliberations will be on the following themes:

1. Globalization and Environmental Concerns
2. Global Warming and Biodiversity
3. Climate Smart Agriculture
4. Environmental Sustainability and Human Health
5. Climate Change and Food Security
6. Alternate Energy and Climate Resilience
7. Green Technology and Sustainability
8. Carbon Crediting
9. Sustainability: Environmental Challenges and Economic Growth

The abstract-submission date is: December 24, 2016.

Details about the conference are also available on the website: <http://ic2017eibsql.wixsite.com/eibsql>;

Contact: Prof. Alpna Kateja, Convener, UPE "Study of Ecology and Economy" and Professor, Department of Economics, UOR

Obituries

1. **Dr. S.D. Joshi LMI- 0238**
"Nishat", Near Rajesh Tower, Gotri Road, Baroda -390021
2. **Dr. Mrs. U. C. Patel LMI - 596** (passed on 21 April 2016)
Sardar Vallabhbhai Arts College, Relief Road, Ahmedabad, Gujarat 380001.
3. **Prof. Sharit Bhowmik LMI -1086** (passed on 8th September 2016)
202 Sankalp CHS, Plot No. 55, Sector 2 A, Koparkhairane, Navi Mumbai, 400709
4. **Dr. Debendra Panigrahi, Ph.D. JNU , LMI -3047** passed away on 7 December, 2016 at Bhubaneswar.
5. **Prof. Indera P. Singh (20.01.1928-27.09.2016) was an anthropologist.**

***Communication from ISA President to:
National, Regional, Linguistic and Thematic Associations, collective members of the
ISA***

Greetings! As you may already know, the XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology will take place in Toronto, Canada, on July 15-21, 2018. Congress main theme is: Power, Violence and Justice: Reflections, Responses and Responsibilities. <http://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/world-congress/toronto-2018/>. Rules for applying for Congress sessions to be organized by National, Regional, Linguistic and Thematic Sociological Associations. These sessions will be held at 15:30-17:30 during 5 days, Monday through Friday, July 16-20, 2018 and they are intended as a forum at which National, Regional, Linguistic and Thematic Sociological Associations, collective members of ISA in good standing, can present: The research results dealing with particularly important problems and challenges facing their regions/fields; Particularly influential, specific traditions in sociology. The format of the sessions may vary and include: presentation of papers, panel discussions, round table debates, poster or slide presentations, and book exhibits, etc. No more than two submissions should be made by the same Association. There is a limited number of slots for Associations' sessions in the Congress programme, and therefore applications will be evaluated on their strength on the competitive basis. The deadline for submitting proposals is January 15, 2017.

Proposals must be submitted to the ISA Secretariat isa@isa-sociology.org with copies to Vice-President for National Associations, Sari Hanafi sh41@aub.edu.lb and Vice-President for Research, Markus Schulz markus.s.schulz@gmail.com

The selection of a maximum of 10 proposals will be done by a sub-committee composed of the four members of the Executive Committee who sit on the Research Coordinating Committee as well as on the National Associations Liaison Committee, plus the Vice President, National Associations and the Vice President, Research.

I want to take this opportunity to say how much I am looking forward to working together with you towards a successful Nineteenth ISA World Congress of Sociology

Margaret Abraham

ISA President and Chair of the Congress Program Committee

International Sociological Association

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e-mail: isa@isa-sociology.org <http://www.isa-sociology.org>

ISA RC 14 - Sociology of Knowledge, Communication and Culture

&

ISS RC 14- Culture and Communication

Interim Conference

on

**Globalization, New Communication Technologies and Social Transformation:
Strategies for the Future**

Venue: Vivekanand Institute of Professional Studies, GGSIP University, New Delhi

The last date for submission of the abstract was December 12th 2016.

For details Please contact to:

etdrvps@gmail.com; parvezabbasi@yahoo.co.in; sarveshdt@gmail.com;

Registration for the conference will open in January 2017. Necessary documents for Visa will also be made available from December 15th 2016 onwards. A preliminary program will be available in the beginning of February 2017.

Interim Conference of the International Sociological Association

Research Committee 52-Sociology of Professional Groups

“Change in Professions and Professionalism – Signs and Directions”

Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, Oslo, Norway,

8 – 10 June 2017

Call for abstract

Professionalism has been considered to be the main way of institutionalizing expertise in modern societies. There are several signs of change in professions and professionalism, however. Major challenges are arising from the global economic crisis, migration and technological development as well as the ways in which governments are restructuring their public sectors and the concept of citizenship. On the other hand, challenges also foster professionalism in new domains and organisational contexts nationally as well as globally and pave the way for further development. Studies of professionalism, professional groups, professional services, cultures, training and identities is a way to explore the changing dynamics and contexts of professions and professionalism as well as the future of professionalism. Examinations of change and the various limits and benefits of the professions call for new theoretical and methodological approaches. Analysis at the micro and macro level across professional groups and countries are especially helpful in this respect.

We invite papers which address professions and professionalism focusing on either a single professional group and country or based on a comparative perspective. The proposal should include preferable session (see below) a title, an abstract of no more than 250 words and your contact details. Please submit your proposal by email to the conference organizer Jens-Christian Smeby (Jens-Christian.Smeby@hioa.no) and cc to Helena Serra (helena.serra@fch.unl.pt). The deadline is 15 January 2017.

Session 13: Globalization of Professions and Professional Role Performance: Conceptual Frameworks and Empirical Reality

Session Organizers: **Virendra P. Singh and Parvez A. Abbasi:** email: etdrvps@gmail.com

Professions and professionalism have been important parameters to measure the growth and development in modern societies. In last few decades these societies are passing through a process of social transformation affecting their institutional structure and processes. Professions in both the developed and developing societies have also affected in various ways. The dynamic multidimensional process of globalization has repercussions for the professional groups and maintaining professionalism as well as in performing their role. Information and communication technology play an important role in the task of updating professional knowledge and skills and in day to day performance of professional activities. It is important from sociological point of view the conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues related to globalization of professions and professional role performance of different professionals both in the developed and developing societies. The proposed session would be focused on these issues.

Email IDs

The ISS Members who have not yet provided their Email IDs are requested to provide the same to the Office of the Society at "Krishnan" <society@issin.org> urgently so that the ISS E-Newsletter may be forwarded to them.

ISS Website

The ISS Members are requested to visit the ISS Website : <http://www.insoso.org/> as frequently as possible for latest updates on the activities of the Society.

Hindi version of "Global Dialogue",

The ISS Members are invited to view the Hindi version of "Global Dialogue", the Newsletter of the International Sociological Association, currently published in 14 languages by visiting at the link : <http://www.isa-sociology.org/global-dialogue/>

ISS Newsletter

The ISS Members, the ISS Research Committee Conveners and the Regional Associations of

Sociology affiliated to ISS are welcome to communicate the news, information and reports etc. about their academic activities for consideration of publication in the ISS Newsletter to:

Prof. Abha Chauhan
<abhasecretaryiss@gmail.com>;
and to
Prof. V. P. Singh
<etdrvps@gmail.com> .

Information

List of New Life Members/ Ordinary Members has been uploaded on the website of the Indian Sociological Society:
www.insoso.org

International Conference on
The Representation of the Relationship between Center and Periphery in the Contemporary Novel
(University of Haifa, 22nd -23rd May, 2017)

Proposals, in the form of a half-page summary (in French or English) should be submitted to the organizers of the symposium: Ruth Amar : ramar@research.haifa.ac.il, Françoise Saquer-Sabin : fsaquersabin@nordnet.fr before 15 July 2016.

The answer of the scientific committee will be communicated to the authors on October 1, 2016. Presentations should not exceed 20 minutes
Presentation languages: English (preferably) or French.

Organizers: Ruth Amar, University of Haifa (Israel). Department of Hebrew and Comparative Literature; Françoise Saquer-Sabin, University of Lille, Humanities and Social Sciences (France)

**National Seminar on
Role of New Media in Social Change in
the Era of Globalization**
(January 12-13, 2017)

organized by
Maharana Pratap Govt. Degree College
Bilsi, Budaun (UP)

For details contact:

Dr. Pankaj Kumar Singh
Organising Secretary
9415563355
E-mail: pankajsociohdi@rediffmail.com