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Editorial Note

This volume of the *Exploring History* six articles and one book consisting review has focused on diverse subjects of Indian history and culture and put special emphasis on the socio-cultural issues in colonial India. The issue started with Taniya Roy article on the theme entitled Buddha and the idea of tolerance. She argues that Buddha's view on the tolerance can be understood in the light of the socio economic development of the sixth century BCE. The ideological difference of the Buddha to that of the Vedic religion was the moot point that gave rise to the Buddhism in Indian subcontinent. While Buddhism consolidated its support base with significant middle path and populist measures, some of the contemporary heretical sects became a constant threat to its thriving popularity. What becomes noticeable is the Buddha's dealing with such hostile development. Later Buddhism developed with an extremely popular base due to its tolerant and inclusive nature. The textual evidences at our disposal clearly point out a convenient trend of the Buddhism using the metaphor and irony while referring a hostile situation instead of direct accusation. Besides, the existence of the *saGgha* was exemplary and its inclusive nature was notable. Next article has examined the folk culture called Gambhira, which is a unique way of representation of daily life's joy and sorrow of common people. It also represents some national and International matter in a unique way. Many people cherish a notion that Gambhira means song. But it's not right, because Gambhira song is another popular part of Gambhira puja festival. The author explains that the 'Gambhira' folk songs are also very popular in some regions of Bangladesh. According to his essay socio-economically and 'depressed' class peoples are related to Gambhirapuja festival. They are almost illiterate. But these illiterate artists of Gambhira are making awareness about the socioeconomic and political issues to the common people through their Gambhira folksongs. In this study, after independence, the author tries to understand that socioeconomic and political scenario of West Bengal as well as India and Bangladesh through Gambhira folk songs.

The third paper written by M. Waseem Raja deals with the activities of the Christian missionaries' vis-à-vis its confrontation with the local religious

groups in India during nineteenth century. Apart from disregard to Hinduism and other local faiths, Islam was particularly targeted for being the former rulers' faith. It is to highlight the various facets of Colonialism in South Asia during nineteenth century vis-a vis Christianity. Raja also focusses on the social tensions, rebellions emerging out of the religious issues and more particularly the rebellion of 1857 in his essay. The British East India Company had to face local Muslims and Hindus, who were hurt by denigration heaped by Christian missionaries. This would also include the efforts of reproachment, understanding, reconciliation and dialogue with Christianity, almost a new religion penetrating into Indian society. It was none other than Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, that he took the task of bringing the two religions, Islam and Christianity, closer to each other and furthering the bond of closeness and cooperation. The paper put emphasises on the tools Sir Syed used, while dealing with such tantalizing issues of religious confrontations, he delved deep into Christianity and replied various unanswered questions. It was first such efforts in bringing Islam and Christianity together anywhere in the world.

The fourth essay explores the backlash of a section of the Bengali intelligentsia against the portrayal of women's pre-marital and extra-marital love in novels in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. The diatribes against the portrayal of love in novels will be examined in comparison to the criticism of medieval narratives of socially transgressive love that became rampant in the mid nineteenth century. A comparison between the two phases of reaction will bring to focus the shifting discursive positions with regard to women's deviant love. In the initial phase of the backlash, women's deviant love was considered an unsavoury aspect of tradition. Tradition was sought to be reformed and, simultaneously, the supposedly innate corruptibility of women combated through refinement and refashioning. The reaction against the medieval tropes of love was thus symptomatic of an early, reformist phase of nationalism that was geared towards introspective self-criticism. In the reaction against novels, the tendency was to see deviant love as a vice alien to Bengali/Hindu tradition, a malaise or a germ transmitted to Hindu society from the west through novels. Such shift in perceptions signified how women's love had become an element in the cultural critique of colonialism, a symptom of the manner in which patriarchal anxieties of female transgression were incorporated into the discourse of an aggressive Hindu nationalism. Therefore, the author seeks to uncover the hitherto unexplored linkages among love, literature, patriarchy and nationalism and the politics that surrounded the idea of women's love in colonial Bengal.

Rahul Kumar Deb in his essay highlights the anti-Alcoholism Movement as a social reform of the Brahmo community in Cooch Behar. The author narrates this scarcely known hundred years old story to underscore his point that Brahmo Samaj played a pivotal role in Anti-Alcoholism Movement. To write down the complete history of the anti-Alcoholism Movement of

Bengal, it is necessary to give more importance to local incidents because the local issues were one of the crucial components of this Movement. So the principal objective of this article is to illustrate how the Brahmos of Cooch Behar, spread the currents of Anti-Alcoholism Movement in Kolkata, with the support of Maharajas and the administration system of Cooch Behar, and that was exactly what made the change in the social system of then Cooch Behar. Based on the available Brahmo official records, contemporary Brahmo newspapers published in Kolkata and Cooch Behar, autobiography and biography of Brahmo preachers, Cooch Behar annual administration report the essay will help us to rethink about the movement in a refreshing way.

The sixth essay of this issue describes the assumption that institutions shaped the nature of scientific enquiry is becoming more and more pervasive in the lore of history of science. However, the writing of institutional history in India has received scant attention till date. Institution building in India was mainly guided by reasons that were personal, patriotic, and practical and in many respects intellectually plausible according to the author.

The Indian Institute of Science and the Indian Institute of Technology have become the models for professional education in India. Hence, the twentieth century, saw a change in the attitude towards the propagation of technical education that aided the emergence of these exceptional institutes. This paper intends to examine this 'change' and the different phases in the growth of industry based technical/engineering education in India specifically in the twentieth century, beginning with the IISc, Bangalore. The main purpose of this research is to show the different aspects of the progression in engineering education, in order to isolate and identify the exceptional innovations in science and technical education in the first half of the twentieth century.

The issue has been ended with the thought provoking book review by Rahul Kumar Mohanta.

June 2018

Dr. Ashim Kumar Sarkar

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