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## Ravenshaw to host SPIC MACAY Natcon-2011



Ravenshaw University is going to host the 26th National Convention (Natcon) of SPIC MACAY (Society for Promotion of Classical Music And Culture Amongst Youth) from May 23-29. This is the very first time that this prestigious event is being held in Orissa. The last convention was held at IIT, Kanpur and was attended by about 1200 student delegates. Natcon is the annual meet of SPIC MACAY, which brings youth from the entire country on a common platform where they exchange ideas, share experiences and provide a way forward for SPIC MACAY for realizing its objectives.

## Reflections on sociological research

The Department of Sociology, Ravenshaw University organized a two-day national workshop on "Reflections on Research in Sociology" in collaboration with Indian Sociological Society (ISS) on March 12 and 13.

Professor Partha Nath Mukherjee, former Director of Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai inaugurated the workshop and delivered the keynote address.

There were three sessions in the workshop in which eminent sociologists across the country including twenty-three research committee convenors of the Indian Sociological Society participated. President of ISS, Professor Jacob John Kattakayam, Thiruvananthapuram and Secretary of ISS Professor Tulsi Patel from Delhi School of Economics attended the workshop.

The main objective of the workshop was to have a stock



**National Workshop on Reflections on Research in Sociology**

taking of various researches conducted by sociologists and to spell out the future of research in sociology. The national workshop was first of this kind organized by the Department of Sociology as a succeeding event of the 36th All India Sociological Conference (AISC) - 2010 held at Ravenshaw Uni-

versity last year, said Prof. Dipri Ranjan Sahu, HOD Sociology, Ravenshaw University and convenor of the workshop.

There was also a post-lunch session on "Teaching and Research in Sociology in Orissa", which was conducted in collaboration with Orissa Sociological Society. The proceed-

ings of the workshop and its recommendations have been submitted to UGC and ICSSR to bring out in a volume. More than 100 sociologists participated in the two-day national workshop.

*(Report by Ankita Das and Shaswati Mohanty of the Department of Sociology)*

## Retelling history through plays Students stage Chakhi Khuntia on Utkal Divas

The Drama Society staged an epic drama based on the heroic life of Chakhi Khuntia on the occasion of Utkal Divas on April 1. Written by Ananta Charan Sukla and directed by Narayan Singh, the drama was hugely appreciated by the audience, which also included the great grandson of Chakhi Khuntia. The scintillating performance by the artistes, with Trilochan Jena playing the role of the protagonist, infused patriotic fervour, courage and the spirit of selfless sacrifice among the students. The other performers in the play were Santosh Pathak as Kunwar



Singh, Amit Mohanty as General Bernard, Amita Acharya as Laxmi Bai, Afghan student

Zabihullah as Robert Clive, Sasmita Nayak as Mani, Dhagyadhar Sethi as Sabala Singh, Rakesh Behera as Tamiya Tope and Manoj Panda as Nana Sahab.

Chakhi Khuntia (1827-1870), popularly known as Chandan Hajuri, inspired a large number of soldiers with profound patriotic fervour who sacrificed their lives fearlessly during the first freedom struggle. He was arrested many times and kept behind the bars. He was an immortal poet, a national hero, a great patriot and a renowned devotee of Lord Jagannath,

## Fourth Convocation ceremony on April 16

The Fourth Convocation of Ravenshaw University will be held on April 16 at the open-air auditorium in the campus to celebrate its academic accomplishment while recognizing the continual search for knowledge. Chancellor and Orissa Governor MC Bhandare will preside over the function and Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Govt of India, Montek Singh Ahluwalia

will grace the occasion as chief guest. Hundreds of students will be receiving their degrees during the ceremony out of which 45 students including 22 postgraduates and 23 undergraduates will be receiving gold medals in ceremonial gowns for topping their batches, to foster academic inquiry and honor the intellectual achievement of the University.



## Reviews

# Researching the society and culture of rural Orissa

The final year post-graduate students of the Sociology Department recently conducted two days of fieldwork in Maniabandha village under Badamba block of Cuttack district as part of their dissertation writing. Pioneering the field work tradition in the department at the Masters level, they travelled 72 km from Cuttack city and successfully carried out an ethnographic study. The 32 students including two from abroad not only explored the life discourse of the largest Buddhist village of Odisha, but also observed closely their social vis-a-vis personal trajectories. Despite the short visit, they could cover research topics ranged from religion, education, health, handloom, development, media, technology, caste, family, marriage system to gender aspects of rural life.

The students with a prior arrangement with the Sarpanch and local NGO activists stayed in the village upper primary school. They were accompanied and supervised by faculty members Dr. Bikram Keshari Mishra, Dr. Shilapragnya Ray and HOD Prof. Dipti Ranjan Sahu. Apart from the faculty



Pic: Amir Sharif

members, research associate Dr. Sharmila Chhotaray and Sanjukta Behera of the department were present during the fieldwork. Covering around 450 households, each student interviewed at least 25-30 villagers to understand largely the social structure of the internationally known village. The support of local volunteers and villagers was overwhelming.

Despite its high potential of research, the village could only attract outsiders for its hand-woven textiles, especially sarees. However, the initiative of Prof. Sahu is commendable as he suggested that village study of this kind would build

up the praxis—the blend of sociological theory in the books with the practice outside the classroom—among the students. Eventually the department would adopt the village as its sociological laboratory for a thicker description of social life of this Buddhist village. Similarly, an academic exchange program with an American university will be taken up in future, Prof. Sahu informed. Such field-based study would not only contribute to the sociological knowledge of Orissa but also focus on the recommendations on the declining handloom tradition and the poor economic condition of the

weavers for policy making.

Amir Sharif, the only male student of the course who speaks Persian and practices Islam, was indulged in the dialogue of objective-subjective dichotomy in the village. In relation to the language, the gender and the religion of his respondents—Oriya, women and Buddhism—he managed to interact in Hindi along with language interpreters. Sharif reflects in his field diary: 'For the first time I had an opportunity to examine my theoretical understandings of sociology in a field organized by the department. Despite the challenges through my first-ever field work, I found this as a fertile one in

getting rich amount of field experiences. The problems I faced during the field work because of being a foreigner, being a man and having female respondents who were under the influence of their husbands, I diagnosed them and now I attempt to find solutions for them in my dissertation'. Similar experiences are also combined with the young women researchers who found equally tough while talking to their male interviewees.

For students, such kind of village study and the exposure to the 'real world' have provided a window to interpret the social and cultural behaviour. Participation in the cultural life, especially the students studying religious practice, marriage and family have equipped them the craft of sociological research for higher academic endeavour.

They returned to the University with a thoughtful attitude for research analysis. Thanks to the newly emerging interest in the academic rigour in the University in general and in the department in particular, the present study has opened up the tradition of fieldwork for first hand sociological research.

(Report by

Sharmila Chhotaray)

The Ravenshaw Times is the monthly newsletter of Ravenshaw University.

Your comments and contributions are always welcome. Please send them to the Editor at [ravenshawtimes@gmail.com](mailto:ravenshawtimes@gmail.com).

The Ravenshaw Times

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## From the Editor's Desk

Whether we realize this or not, we are going through a time of great crisis. One of the reasons for this crisis could be the process of globalization that has been thrust upon us. Mankind is witness to such critical periods in history whenever a new system is imposed on it. Those who are not aware of this lesson of history are croaking in their loudest voices in order to prove that they are the largest frogs in the small well of ours. They are exacerbating the corporate suffering. They are bound to live a life of enslavement in the new knowledge society. Those who are shrewd are creating a safe haven for themselves in the Swiss bank accounts. A great gulf has been created between the local and the global due to the activities of the utterly foolish and extremely shrewd people. This gulf can be bridged by a heightened consciousness. Sometimes literature can perform this task of expanding the consciousness of people. In this context we are reminded of Fakir Mohan Senapati who had performed such a role in his writings when British colonial forms of power, knowledge and economy were imposed on us. We need adequate interpretative ability in order to learn from the message given by contemporary literature.

--Prof. Dipti Ranjan Pattanaik

## Call for Media Executives

The Ravenshaw University invites its students to work voluntarily as Media Executives in the following capacities:

### 1. Radio Representatives

They will work for our community radio station, Ravenshaw Radio 90.4 MHz. They will form peer groups of radio enthusiasts within their departments and motivate them to participate in various programmes on our campus community radio. They will be given a platform to display their talent and creative abilities.

### 2. Newsletter Correspondents

They will work for our monthly newsletter, The Ravenshaw Times. They will write regularly for the newsletter besides motivating their friends and classmates to send contributions for publication. They will also work as campus reporters, who would report various events, activities and achievements of the University. The write-ups would go under their bylines.

Interested students can contact Dr. Netajan Abhinandan, Assistant Professor of Political Science or call the Media Officer at 9040885258 for more details. The student volunteers would be awarded a certificate of appreciation at the end.

Please send in contributions, ideas for the content, and ways we can improve this publication to [ravenshawtimes@gmail.com](mailto:ravenshawtimes@gmail.com)

## Quote Unquote

“Education is a rational system of studies and exercises, which leads to good physical constitution and a knowledgeable mind, and makes man free from idleness, superstition and indulgences to pleasures.

Its basis is reason, practice and experience.

It helps man in search of truth, pursuit of virtue and the good, and to know himself.

It enables man in self-analysis, to know and realize his mistakes and to rectify them.”

--Socrates

(Classical Greek Athenian philosopher)

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## A REFLECTIVE EXERCISE

The Sociology Congress brought Ravenshaw much publicity and glory. It gave our students and faculty very valuable exposure for knowing many distinguished sociologists of great repute from close proximity. Organizing the Sociology Congress was also a test of our competence and capability as a young university with limited infrastructure. While I count our blessings for doing so, I also count our failings and mismanagements at various points during the Congress.

Sociological research in itself is a reflective exercise in understanding society. Conducting research in social sciences is in itself an uphill task. One would realize the ecstasy and anguish, more anguish perhaps than ecstasy, researching brings to young practitioners. The distress becomes hurting when the outcome of such research does not find a place in public fora, and does not attract judgments in the political debates of the country.

It is important to know that the universities are gradually losing their monopoly of knowledge production. Therefore, the sociology research cannot remain any more within the confines of universities alone. New actors and networks are emerging at both local and global levels. There is an entirely new category of NGO sponsored research. These entities will not only complement research in universities but may also offer stiff competition and wear away social scientists from the higher education system.

We are all aware how the social sciences as a genre have been gradually losing human and public appeal. On the top of it, in the universities, there is a clear dichotomy between teaching and research, and also the perennial search for funding and government attention, both of which are equally elusive, and always inadequate.

—Excerpts from Vice-Chancellor's speech delivered in the National Workshop on 'Reflections on Research in Sociology'

## Women's Day: Some thoughts

Sonia Sarkar



International Women's Day and quest for women empowerment is a very narrow perspective.

After attending the All India Sociological Conference (AISC-2010) at Ravenshaw University from December 25-29, 2010, I never knew that I was going to attend another conference and that too on such a great day, International Women's Day on March 8.

On March 8, 1917, there was a huge demonstration by women at St. Petersburg to ascertain their rights. I congratulate all women of the world for being women. But at the same time, I am also sad over the unfortunate gruesome murder of a Delhi college student.

All over the world, there was some kind of celebration on this occasion. In Utkal University, a UGC sponsored two-day national workshop on Capacity Building for Empowerment of Women was held on March 7-8 by the departments of sociology, law, women's studies and some NGOs like CYSO, NISWASS, VISWASS and UNNAYAN. In the inaugural session, we had Mr. Arbind Kumar Behera of the Department of Forests, Government of Orissa as our chief guest. Mr. Rajendra Singh, better known as waterman of India, renowned Gandhian activist Tulasi Munda, Jyoti Panigrahi of Orissa State Human Rights Commission and Vice-Chancellor, Utkal University Prof. Binayak Rath were the other guests who graced the occasion. We had also some renowned social activists sociologists and civil servants on the panel like Snigdha Panigrahi of State Council for Women, Dr. Samswati Swain of National Institute for Rehabilitation and Human Development, Prof. Nirlipta Pattnaik of the Department of Psychology, renowned journalist Manipadma Jena, Usha Padhee, director and additional secretary of water resources, social activist Chandrika Mohapatra, Prof. Bijayini Mohapatra, Prof. Kamala Rao of Osmania University, Prof. Samarendra Mohanty and many other dignitaries also attended the workshop as chairpersons. The workshop was a grand success as it had

some renowned speakers who addressed on the issue of women empowerment from different dimensions.

Rajendra Singh said that women have to be empowered through participatory activities and that too through eco-feminist approach. He said that if we want to empower women and secure them their rights, then we must allow them what they want to do. Tulasi Munda expressed that neither law nor court is needed to give justice to women. Rather local community courts should be held by Gandhian activists to try their cases, she opined. Dr. Saraswati Swain expressed deep concern over the health status and social status of women in Orissa. Usha Padhee said that women can be empowered if opportunities and facilities are given to them. Chandrika Mohapatra of Puri-based NGO Swadhaar presented some burning examples of exploitation of women. She highlighted a case of women trafficking and unwed motherhood. N.A. Shah Ansari of Konark-based NGO Young India and Radio Namaskar described how they empower rural women to do social audit in the region. Manipadma Jena explained how through SHG movement women have become self-reliant not only in Odisha but also in other parts of the country as well as Sri Lanka. Besides delegates from all over the country, around 24 international delegates from 15 countries participated in the workshop. However, though a

majority of the speakers were women, we missed the voices of tribal and underprivileged women who have been really facing the ground realities. If we could know their direct experiences, the solution would have been easier and nearer, besides accomplishing our ethno-methodological approach. Well, the fault is not with the workshop organising committee but with our parochial Indian perspective.

However, I had a rare experience in the workshop as I got an opportunity to meet some renowned scholars and activists in the field. But the workshop was more a lecture shop where the speakers deliberated for very long time before a passive audience. I believe workshops should be abuzz with activities as the term signifies.

In my opinion, the workshop participants should be divided into groups and each group should be asked to do street plays on the women-related issues followed by a group discussion and extempore competition among them. Perhaps in this way the issue of women empowerment could be well understood by all and we could also be able to assess how much the participants understood the topic themselves. So workshops should be like this allowing everyone to participate, and not just a series of one-sided lectures making the issue further hopeless.

Furthermore, I would like to point out that the much-hyped International Women's Day and quest for women empowerment is a very narrow perspective. If we need to do something, then we must expand its scope and rechristen the day as International Disadvantaged Gender's Day where both women as well as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender) groups should be included. The underprivileged and suppressed LGBT group is nothing but radical feminists in some form. Hence they should also be included so that together they can build a better future for themselves.

—The writer is 2010 batch topper of MA (Sociology)

## Faculty Page

Generally, disasters alter the usual patterns of social interactions and they provide opportunities to examine reactions to extreme situational stress.

It's very difficult to read a newspaper, watch television or listen to the radio without hearing of a disaster somewhere in the world. Tsunami in Japan is the most recent one. The cyclone, earthquake, tornado, famine and industrial explosion all generate curiosity and interest. Generally, disasters alter the usual patterns of social interactions and they provide opportunities to examine reactions to extreme situational stress. Disasters can be conceptualized on a time continuation.

The events we choose to call disaster differ in their origin, predictability, destructiveness, frequency of occurrence, speed of onset, controllability and other variables. Social scientists have defined disaster as "a sponge concept". It can refer to the event itself physical damage in the community and social disruption associated with the event. Some social scientists have viewed a disaster as a particular type of stress situation, situations of collective stress are those in which many members of a social system fail to receive expected conditions of life from the system. Snelser called this kind of situation as "structured ambiguity" and considered it as a part of the social system involving those aspects of life in which it is expected that there will be irregularity, ambiguity and unpredictability.

The disaster can be explained with four factors: pre-condition of disaster i.e. the period of threat and warning prior to the impact; different kinds of communication from authorities; impact of disaster; and recovery from the disaster.

Various studies reveal that warning is a system for avoiding disaster. It includes evaluation, dissemination and re-

# Sociology of Disaster

D. R. Sahu

sponse. The evaluation system involves the detection and measurement about a potential disaster. Dissemination refers to the actual issuing of some kind of warning and includes decision about who should be warned and about what dangers in what way.

In the case of

Orissa, the decision had been made to warn a certain population through many channels of communication. However, communication difficulty prevailed. The content of message which combines enough threatening information to generate optional anxiety without causing defensive repression and the assurance that preventive action will be effective but the preparation of such a warning is not a simple task. In Orissa, there was little feedback from the recipients of the message to the warning sources unlike Andhra Pradesh. Apart from this formal warning, informal system of warning communication plays a very important role. People had more confidence over informal communication system. From the beginning of the cyclone until it struck the coastal district of Orissa, the people were warned by formal communication system. Instead there was confusion and lack of co-ordination in various agencies which might have issued such warnings in an effective manner. The warning also depends upon the reaction that is supposed to receive it. This involves variables such as the recipients, past experience and their social situation in relation to the communication they are getting. In the case of Orissa, people listen to the same warning and everyday every body hears different things. People responded on the basis of what they heard stimulated them to behave. The possible behaviors

of the people were identified as denial of threats and warnings, effective adaptations to threats and warnings and extreme emotions like terror, panic, etc.

In Orissa, the cyclone victims were used to cyclones, storms but not of this intensity. This immensity which led them to disbelief to the threats and warnings, sociologically, the community which had been staying there for generations



normally have different levels of knowledge. There are people who rely entirely on others rather than the mass media and others who lack motivation to seek any kind of information. It is a fact that any kind of disaster is extremely stressful and can place a system or community under severe strain.

It is also not proper to say that the impact of disaster can always be accommodated by the affected community. The cyclonic devastation in Orissa may lead to intense pressure from its victims for radical changes in the existing social arrangement. This calamity can also be viewed as a primary source of social change. Social scientists are of the opinion that the calamity provides a favorable situation for rapid transformation of social institution and emergence of radically different social forms.

was not prepared to evacuate or leave their native land. Emotional attachment to their birth place resulted in them to become the victims of the cyclone.

The decision making progress leading to departure from the threatened area involved two contradicting factors. One included the protection of family property, local responsibilities, pride and their ability to take it. The other had to do with fear of physical safety and strong damage warning from authorities. However the consequences of many disasters can be reduced, avoided or controlled through adequate warning and prepara-

tion. Prior planning for disasters can serve to reduce organizational stress and make it

possible to issue more effective warning. In the case of Andhra Pradesh, the repetition of disaster reduced the danger and loss and they have in fact developed a disaster culture.

In the entire situation, the victims nor-

mally have different levels of knowledge. There are people who rely entirely on others rather than the mass media and others who lack motivation to seek any kind of information. It is a fact that any kind of disaster is extremely stressful and can place a system or community under severe strain.

It is also not proper to say that the impact of disaster can always be accommodated by the affected community. The cyclonic devastation in Orissa may lead to intense pressure from its victims for radical changes in the existing social arrangement. This calamity can also be viewed as a primary source of social change. Social scientists are of the opinion that the calamity provides a favorable situation for rapid transformation of social institution and the emergence of radically different social forms. The impact of this disaster led to sharp increase in the death rate and people started migrating from the affected areas which led to depopulation.

It is a fact that there is still much to learn about the behavior during the impact of disaster whatever is ascertained from the reports was all tentative and speculative. Several disaster studies have shown the importance of informal mass assault in providing disaster services quickly and on a large scale.

The mass assault consists of primary group activities to help their own members and community-oriented behavior of individual and small groups.

The disaster event of Orissa can be explained phase by phase. First is search and rescue, second is preliminary damage assessment. Third is debris removal. Then dead and missing account, medical aid, distribution of foods and clothes, infrastructure repair, temporary housing, loan to the victims, land reclamation, construction of schools and shelter homes, permanent housing. This is called emergency social system. Highest priority among these is preservation of life followed closely by the provision of basic necessities of life—food, clothing and shelter. Then comes the restoration of essential services and finally comes the maintenance and preservation of public order and community morale. Socialization activities such as schools are reduced to a minimum and many of the usual social activity are suspended. It had been observed in the cyclone of Orissa that normal social control procedures were not at all effective and looting was a common feature of the affected area.

In disaster, the affected individual's role may be in conflict. From the reports, it is observed that there were conflicting and contradictory roles in the affected areas. Many persons are faced with the problems of making a choice between conflicting group loyalties. A bureaucrat and police officer for example were likely to be expected to work in rescue and other disaster related activities while in reality they had powerful urge to find out how their family, kith and kin had survived the situation and to look after them if they need help. In this situation majority of such conflicts were resolved in the favor of family than the organization. Altruism is a part of the emergency social system. Persons from every walk of life normally provide help generously. Many people sent their clothing and food to the disaster-stricken community but sometimes continuous exposure to the disaster reduce the feeling of "live for others" and it helps in creating the dehumanization process.

—The writer is Professor and HOD, Sociology. He can be reached at [sahu\\_dr@gmail.com](mailto:sahu_dr@gmail.com).

# Zoology: An extension of the Indian way of life

For any lay person, Zoology may merely be a branch of biology which relates to the animal kingdom. However, in the context of Indian culture and Hindu religion, it transcends this narrow definition.

Let alone to an avid student of Zoology, animals fascinate all human beings in general. Each individual feels connected with at least one animal, be it in the form of religious reverence or deep-seated fear. Although animal worship is not exclusive to Hinduism, the symbolism and significance attached to it is essentially unique. Admittedly, in the context of our country, animals are impetuses for growth, conduits of unity and love, and undeniable symbols of our culture. Even the diversity of animals in a way reflects the immense diversity of India itself.

Hinduism is replete with examples of animals as vehicles

of our myriad gods and goddesses, and at times as deities themselves. The one-tusked elephant-headed Ganesh is not a mere veneration of the elephant, but an undeniable symbol of the nation itself. The Matsya or fish, the Kurma or turtle, the Varaha or bear, the Narasimha or half-lion and half-human are bright examples of our religious tryst with animals.

It is beyond the realm of debate that animals occupy a very significant position in India, be it as incarnations of deities, myths and legends or otherwise. Animals also embellish religious art and architecture.

The cow is treated as a mother to Hindus, possibly because it gives milk and hence akin to a mother. It gives a lot selflessly as a mother, which naturally makes us feel very close to it. Besides, the cow's milk is used for religious rituals and rites.

Pallavi Patnaik



**Animals are impetuses for growth, conduits of unity and love, and undeniable symbols of our culture.**

Especially in the context of Hinduism, animals are believed to be manifestations of divinity itself which is closely intertwined with the cycle of Karma,

wherein it is stressed that human beings have progressed from animals due to good Karma in the past life and will be reborn as animals for their bad Karma in the present life.

The Hindu belief of the sacredness of animals is a dominant and beautiful aspect of Indian culture. Hinduism has many animal deities, modelled after the animals which one sees in one's everyday life. We worship the monkey as Hanuman and we respect even the tiny mouse as the vehicle of Ganesh. Shiva's bull or snake, Saraswati's swan, Laxmi's owl, Kartik's peacock, Durga's lion, Yama's buffalo are only a few of an array of examples which can be given. Dattatreya, who personifies Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar, has four dogs accompanying him.

Even in our social milieu, animals are considered to bring good luck in different ways. For

instance parrots are considered as a sign of fertility. Therefore, when people get married, walls are painted with depictions of parrots, with the hope that the bride and groom will have children. Alternately, when a cat crosses our path or we sight a single mynah, we consider it to be inauspicious.

Besides Hinduism, even Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Islam all intrinsically connect with animals in one way or the other. It is a fact that only by comprehending the role that animals play in all aspects of Indian life one can truly understand the universal essence of the Indian spirit. Our culture is extremely spiritual and hence respects and cherishes life in all its forms, animals, birds, reptiles and insects included.

—The writer is a student of M.Phil (Zoology). She can be reached at [pallavipatnaik@gmail.com](mailto:pallavipatnaik@gmail.com).

Cuttack-born Vishvanatha Kaviraja, one of the greatest Sanskrit scholars and literary critics of medieval India, finds place in Kendriya Sahitya Akademi's 'Makers of Indian Literature' series.

## Orissa's greatest scholar

Vishvanatha established himself as a great linguist, poet, critic and politician having mastered over 18 languages. But unfortunately many of his works are lost to us, says Sukla, the author.

Vishvanatha's popularity has been unquestionable in both the history and practice of Sanskrit poetics over centuries that followed him despite some adverse remarks on the originality of his theoretical exercise, he says.

My book attempts at offering a comprehensive account of his treatment of poetry, presents the historical data in its theoretical perspectives, surveys the development of Sanskrit poetics from the earlier times till his entry, and discusses different topics he considered relevant for a complete examination and assessment of the subject matter he deals with such as the definition, structure and end of poetry, describes Sukla, whose book on *Seidhara Swami*, eminent medieval philosopher of religion born in Orissa, was published by Kendriya Sahitya Akademi last

Ashok Parida



year. It is highly unfortunate that only some five of his invaluable works are available today. Out of these, two works are published and have received wide acclaim. They are *Sahityadarpana*, a complete critique of all the forms of Sanskrit literature and the only book of its kind, and *Chandrakala*, a classic play. Sukla explains further.

The *Sahityadarpana* (Mirror of Composition),

Vishvanatha's most famous work and arguably one of the most comprehensive works in Indian aesthetics, shows his wide range of reading, philosophical depth, masterly control over a comprehensive style and, above all, a daring spirit in analyzing the works of the well-reputed authorities with arguments as original as reasonable, he explores. *Sahityadarpana* has been accepted as almost a first book of Sanskrit criticism and is a common name for students of Sanskrit literature, he adds. The book has two long chapters with an elaborate introduction to the life and works of Vishvanatha providing all historical data. While the first chapter deals with Sanskrit poetics in the making, the second one discusses Vishvanatha's theory of poetry explaining the intricate structure of his poetics.

Vishvanatha was not just prolific he was equally versatile. Apart from studying and researching aesthetics, he created a number of literary works, in all the branches of literature — poetry, prose, criticism, and drama. He wrote equally easily in Sanskrit and Prakrit. Some of

his major works include *Chandrakala Natika* (playlet), *Prabhavati Parinaya* (drama), *Raghava Vilasa* (long poem), *Raghava Vilapa* (poem), *Kuvaliyasva Charita* (poem in Prakrit), *Prasasti Ratnavali* (poem in sixteen languages), *Narasimha Vijaya* (poem), *Sahityadarpana* (study in aesthetics), *Kavyaprakasha darpana* (criticism), *Kamsavadha* (poem), and *Lakshministava* (verses).

Sukla is a former professor of English at Sunhalpur University. He is the founder editor of the international *Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics* (JCLA), the official organ of Vishvanatha Kaviraja Institute established by him in 1977. Sukla's numerous publications include "The Concept of Imitation in Greek and Indian Aesthetics (1977)", "Estetica Indiana Contemporanea (1996)", "Art and Representation (2001)", "Art and Experience (2003)" and "Art and Essence (2003)", the latter three published by US-based Greenwood Publishing Group's Praeger Publishers. His forthcoming publication 'Art and Expression' by the same publisher awaits release this year.

—The writer is a post graduate student of English.

Vishvanatha Kaviraja, one of the greatest Sanskrit scholars and literary critics of medieval India and inarguably the greatest scholar of Orissa, finds place in Sahitya Akademi's prestigious 'Makers of Indian Literature' series.

The 172-page book on the medieval Sanskrit poet, poetician, rhetorician and grammarian has been written by Dr Arunima Charan Sukla, an eminent writer and philosopher of art, religion and language, now based in Cuttack.

Coming of a family, rich in learning and culture and serving as the prime minister to the erstwhile king of Ganga dynasty which ruled Orissa in the fourteenth century with Cuttack as its capital,

## Achievements

## Girls sweep Borasambar-Senapati debate competition

Swayamshree Mishra wins for the third consecutive time

Pic: Durga Prasad



FIRST PRIZE : Swayamshree Mishra ● SECOND PRIZE : Swayamshrestha Kar ● THIRD PRIZE : Devmitra Sen

Girl students of Ravenshaw University swept the first, second and third prizes of the prestigious Borasambar-Senapati annual English debate competition held here on March 11. The University held the 35th edition of the debate competition on March 11 in the Heritage Hall and fifteen students participated in the event. **Swayamshree Mishra**, **Swayamshrestha Kar** and **Devmitra Sen** bagged the first, second and third prizes and won cash prizes of of Rs. 5,000, Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 2,000 respectively. Swayamshree Mishra won the first prize for the third consecutive time.

The topic for this year's debate competition was "Cyber connectivity has actually made us alien to one another". The judges for this year were Mr. Vivekananda Pattanai, IAS, Mr. Binay Kumar Behera, IPS and Dr. John Cussen, Associate Professor, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, US, currently a Fulbright grantee in India.

Fifteen students participated in this year's competition. They are **Swayamshree Mishra**, BA III Yr (Sociology), **Swayamshrestha Kar**, BA I Yr

(English), **Tanaya Mohanty**, BA II Yr (Economics), **Sutyannarayan Parida**, MA I Yr (Sociology), **Dehleena Biswas**, MA I Yr (Sociology), **Rishipal Singh**, BSc III Yr (IST), **Parinita Mishra**, BSc I Yr, **Sonali Nayak**, BSc II Yr (Physics), **Pallavi Pattanai**, M.Phil (Zoology), **Devmitra Sen**, MSc II Yr (Mathematics), **Krishna Kasturika**, BCom III Yr, **Shreeman Prusti**, BCom I Yr, **Sourav Satyadarshi Roy**, BBA II Yr, **Ashutosh Prayas Dash**, MCom I Yr and **Smruti Ranjan Sahoo**, MBA II Yr.

The origin of this prestigious debate can be traced back to the year 1934, two years before Orissa became a separate province, when Mr. Nilamani Senapati, one of the few Oriya officers of the ICS was the Deputy Commissioner of Sambalpur district. Borasambar was then a small principality of about 1,000 square miles, situated within Sambalpur, and it housed within itself more than 3,000 foot high Gandhamardan hills, and the sacred temple of Lord Nrusingharath. Presently it is a part of the Padampur Sub-division of Baragarh district.

Consequent upon Mr. Senapati's transfer to Cuttack, a farewell was organized by the Raja of Borasambar estate, Sri Rajendra Singh Bariah (1899-1935) in his honour. During the farewell Mr. Senapati was presented with six hundred rupees as a parting gift from the people of Borasambar. The magnanimous Deputy Commissioner donated this amount to Ravenshaw College to create an endowment for awarding a prize to the best debater in En-

glish, effective since 1937. Since the credit for the endowment goes conjointly to the Borasambar estate and Mr. Nilamani Senapati, the event bears the nomenclature of Borasambar-Senapati debate.

After creation of the Ravenshaw University in 2006, it was found that there is no record of this debate being held since 1970, and hence no winners were listed. The debate was then revived presumably after a lapse of 36 years with an

increased prize money of Rs. 5,000 for the best debater. It was decided that the winner of the Borasambar Debate will also be awarded the Chancellor's Cup and no separate debate will be held for the Chancellor's prizes, said Vice Chancellor of the University, Devdas Chhotray, who had himself won the Borasambar-Senapati debate competition way back in 1963 when he was a student.

(Report by Zabihullah, MIMC)

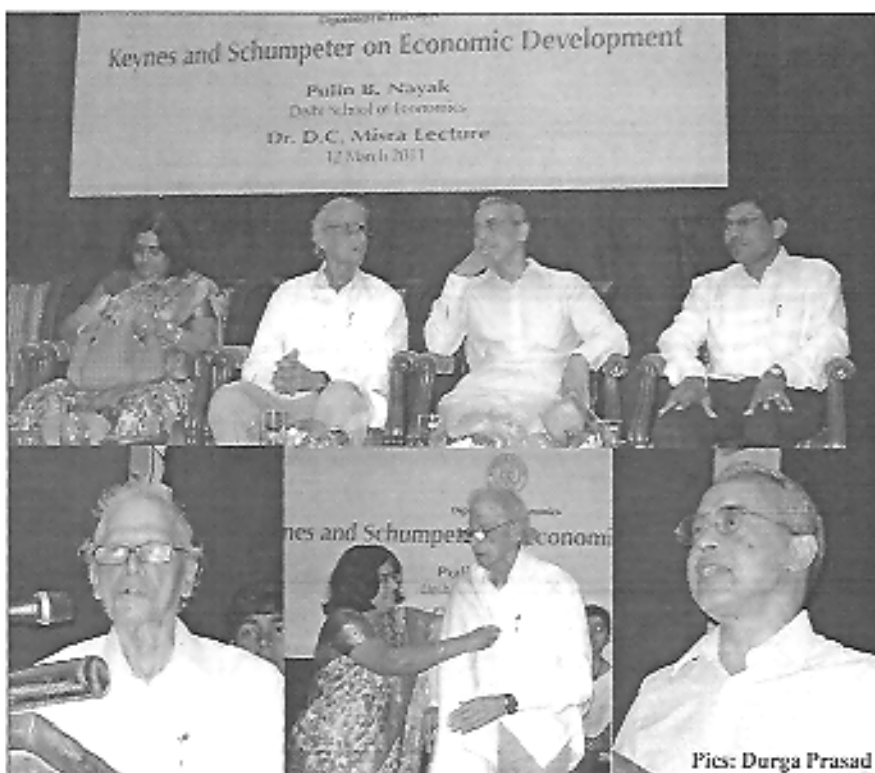
## Industrial Motivational Campaign

A one-day Industrial Motivational Campaign was organised by the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Institute (MSMEDI), Ministry of MSME, Government of India in association with Industries Department, Government of Orissa, Directorate of Industries, Cuttack and School of Commerce and Management Studies, Ravenshaw University on March 22 in PLT of the University. The secretary, director and higher officials of the concerned departments graced the occasion. Reader and HOD



Convenor Dr. Sarjay Sampathy, and Dr. Kishore Kumar Das coordinated the event. Lecturers Dr. Tushar Kanti Pany

## 12<sup>th</sup> Dr. D.C. Misra Lecture



Pics: Durga Prasad

Delhi School of Economics (DSE) Professor Pulin Nayak delivered the 12<sup>th</sup> Dr. D.C. Misra Lecture on 'Keynes and Schumpeter on Economic Development' on March 12 in the Heritage Hall of the University. This lecture series had been instituted in the erstwhile Ravenshaw College in 1985 in honour of Dr. D.C. Misra, an eminent economist and education administrator of the state, who headed the Department of Economics for more than a decade.

Prof. Nayak spoke on the theory of economic development as propounded by two towering economists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Keynes is considered as the father of modern macroeconomic theory that has influenced the economic policy in the post-depression period. Keynesian economics advocates the public sector to step in to assist the economy. It is a significant departure

from the popular *laissez-fair* capitalism that preceded it. While Keynes was concerned with the short term problems of economic development, Schumpeter put forth the evolutionary theory of economic development. He predicted that the very success of capitalism will cause its demise through a process of creative destruction. Schumpeter identified innovation as the critical dimension of economic change.

At the outset of the function, HOD Economics Prof. Mamata Swain welcomed the guests. Chief Guest Dr. D.C. Misra addressed the audience and shared his experiences in Harvard University while he was pursuing his doctoral degree in that university. At the end, seminar advisor Dr. Sudhakar Patra extended the vote of thanks.

(Report by Prof. Mamata Swain)

## Annual Function

The Department of English celebrated its Annual Function on March 27. The function was graced by the presence of many dignitaries including the Guest of Honour Prof. Jatinmurali Mishra, Chief Speaker Prof. Soubhagya Kumar Mishra and President of English Alumni Association Mr. Pradish Mohanty. Among others, eminent academicians like Prof. D. K. Roy, Prof. Basant Kumar Tripathy, Prof. Sridhar Mohapatra, Prof. Kalyani Samantaray and Prof. Rajanikanta Nayak were also present.

HOD English, Prof. Diptiranjana Pattanaik presided over the meeting and introduced the guests. He informed them about the milestones achieved by the Department and its faculty in this academic year. A warm farewell was given to Dr. John Cussen for his love and support to the Department in the last three months. Finally, awards and trophies were distributed to the winners of various literary competitions held in the Department. The ceremony came to an end after Dr. Madhusmita Pati offered a formal vote of thanks. (Report by Dr. Sambit Panigrahi)

## Placement

As many as 150 final year students have been recently recruited by reputed companies like TCS, Infosys, Wipro, IBM, HCL and Tech Mahindra, through campus recruitment drives. The salary package offered to the students ranges from Rs. 18,000 to Rs. 30,000 per month. Dean, Students' Welfare (DSW) Dr. Partha Sarathi Mishra has made the placement drive enormously successful in recent days through his ardent efforts and able guidance. The selected students have thanked the DSW for his kind efforts.

## International Women's Day



The departments of Political Science and Women's Studies of the School of Social Sciences celebrated International Women's Day on March 8 by organizing a lecture. Professor, International Studies, Centre for Comparative Politics & Political Theory, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Dr. Nivedita Menon delivered the lecture on the topic "Feminist Politics in India Today". She expressed concern on the rise in the atrocities against women and advocated greater participation of women in the society. She said that women were treated as commodities and there was a need for a change in the mindset of individuals, groups and society at large. Despite liberalisation of women, influential groups still determine role of the women in the society, while awareness programmes have not been able to arrest atrocities against them, she lamented. Menon advocated for the "quota within quota" formula to provide greater opportunities for women.

## Paper presentation



Dr. Soumendhra K. Naik (left) and Dr. Durga P. Barik (right) flanking Prof. AK Kulkreja, Principal Scientist, CIMAP, Lucknow.

Dr. Soumendhra K. Naik, Reader in Botany and Dr. Durga P. Barik, Lecturer in Botany participated and presented their paper entitled "Tissue Culture of Pomegranate: Present Scenario and Prospects for Future Research" and "Synseeds for Conservation and Exchange of Germplasm of Butterfly Pea" respectively during the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meet of Plant Tissue Culture Association, India (PTCAI) organized by the M.N. Institute of Applied Sciences, Bikaner, Rajasthan from February 4-6 recently.

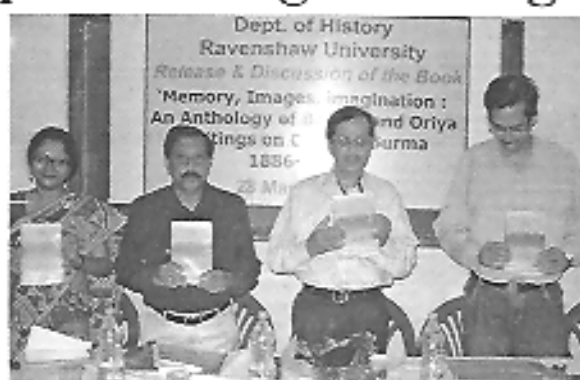
Dr. Madhusmita Pati, Lecturer in English has been invited to present a paper at the International Conference for Academic Studies organized by International Journal of Art And Science, Harvard University, Boston, US from May 29 to June 2, 2011. Her paper is titled "Can Human Beings Co-exist with Hungry Tigers? A Lyotardian Reading of Hungry Tide's Sundarban."

## Renaissance

## Revisiting past through writings

The Department of History, Ravenshaw University held a book release function on March 28 here. Vice Chancellor, Ravenshaw University Devdas Chhotray released the book "Memory, Images, Imagination: An Anthology of Bangla and Oriya Writings on Colonial Burma, 1886-1948". The anthology has been edited by Dr. Jatin Nayak of Utkal University and Dr. Parthasarathi Bhaumik of Jadavpur University, and published by Jadavpur University, Kolkata.

HOD History Prof. Chandri Prasad Nanda delivered the welcome address and described how the book focuses on the relations between Orissa, Bengal and Burma. He recalled how Burma was an important destination for Oriyas, who went to improve their lot, during colonial rule. He explained how some of them settled there prospered and created a little Orissa there by publishing books and maga-



zines in Oriya. In their editorial address, Dr. Nayak and Dr. Bhaumik explained how the experiences of these people, happy as well as bitter, found expression in autobiographical accounts, travelogues, stories, poems and novels, which not only present us with a vivid and memorable portrait of a period in history, but also enable us to explore human experience in all its fascinating complexity.

I am sure this book will encourage us to explore many more neglected dimensions of our recent past and bring them

to the excited attention of the generations to come, said Devdas Chhotray while inaugurating the book. Memories and images of Burma remain a valuable part of our imaginative heritage. Perception of the past obtained through imaginative literature and hard documentary evidence culled for historical narrativisation can significantly supplement and enrich each other, he explained. A deeper understanding of this will enable us to build bridges of understanding between Myanmar and India, he added.

## BOOK REVIEW

## Colonial construct

Chandri Prasad Nanda

"Memory, Images, Imagination: An Anthology of Bangla and Oriya Writings on Colonial Burma, 1886-1948"

Eds. Dr. Jatin Nayak, Dr. Parthasarathi Bhaumik

The present book seeks to draw our attention to a scarcely imagined and an utterly under-explored aspect of our recent colonial history. The varieties of experiences of people of Bengal and Orissa emigrating to Burma which found expressions in stories, poems, novels, travelogues, letters, journalistic writings and autobiographical accounts offer powerful yet critical epistemological spaces to renegotiate our overall understanding on the nature and character of colonialism and the collective mentality underlying both the middle and subaltern class in the context of colonial societies.

Though the editors of the volume have been cautiously modest in declaring that the texts may not qualify as sources yielding hard historical facts and rather what one can discern in the texts are the images, memories and varied ways of imagination of a new and alien world, what needs equally to be stressed is that a sensitive historian can see through the texts the process and the epistemological basis of construction of such images. The historian's gaze on ways of these imaginations may also help to retrieve powerful voices from the subaltern world while locating the nature of the colo-

nial middle class.

In fact, some of the texts in the volume can be seen as authentic celebration of subaltern historiographic discourse, while in many of the texts, the typical 'colonial voice' get audibly echoed. The volume can be seen as pioneering attempt to construct uprooted Oriya diaspora in the colonial context of 19th century.

As editors of the volume, both Prof. Nayak and Dr. Bhaumik, have thrown light on the thematic texture of the volume and the multiple ways through which they imagined Orissa, Bengal and Burma with all their conceptual implications. Even though both of them belong to the world of language and literature, their engagement with history and imaginative heritage seem to have taken top priority in this volume.

Any historian would surely be able to locate the historical import of the texts in the volume in terms of reorienting our existing understanding colonial time and space, exploring non-conventional historical sources like literature of this genre and several such other issues which could be really important for the understanding of the post-colonial societies with typical colonial pasts.

perennial flow of water, having duct connections with Mahanadi. This will primarily relieve the water-logging, apart from making an infrastructure for water sports, and study of marine biology. It shall also enhance environment aesthetics by providing the entire campus an open look and total visibility. Ravenshaw should be assured that the knowledge city in campus shall promote

avant garde disciplines in applied sciences and technology as well as new management practices. The campus should be committed to high-end research with industry interface and the research output should be harnessed for creation of community wealth.

- Abstracts from a presentation made before the State Government for building a knowledge city.

## R2 = Knowledge City



Ravenshaw has a heritage of 140 years, and its history is synonymous with the history of modern Orissa. The old Ravenshaw campus has about 100 acres of land and more than 11,00,000 sq. ft. of constructed space. Construction of a University with new programmes requires expansion of infrastructure. Ravenshaw is currently constructing new administrative block, amphitheatre,

convention centre and renovating the century-old structures like the Kanika Library, on a massive scale. The old campus is choked and exhausted. Recognizing the needs of Ravenshaw for expansion, the State Government has allocated 150 acres of prime land on the bank of river Mahanadi, in the city of Cuttack for the second campus. Ravenshaw envisions residence of 15,000

students in both campuses by 2020. It is proposed to retain pure science and humanities in campus 1 and develop campus 2 for applied science and technology and management infrastructure. The synergy can help to make campus 2, affectionately called R2, the home for Innovation University, and develop it as a Knowledge City, and a hub of learning and research for south-east Asia.

Ravenshaw second campus has many advantages. It shall continue to have the Ravenshaw brand name. It can draw upon the intellectual strength of more than 100 new faculty, many with international exposure, recently recruited in the old campus. It shall have all greenfield advantages of building new, state-of-the-art infrastructure to cope with contemporary needs. It is proposed to demarcate the second campus of 150 acres by creating a moat of water body with

Editor

Prof. Dipti Ranjan Pattanaik

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