

Curriculum Vitae

Suvobrata Sarkar

Department of History • Rabindra Bharati University

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Education:

- **PhD**, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2014 for the thesis on 'Technical Education and Industrialization Interface in Bengal during 1880-1945'.
- **M.Phil.**, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, 2010 for the dissertation on 'Quest for Technical Knowledge: A Study of Nineteenth Century Bengali Journals'. (FGPA 6.75)
- **MA in History**, Visva-Bharati (a central university), Santiniketan, West Bengal, 2006 with First Class. (63.1 %)
- **BA (Hons.) in History**, Visva-Bharati (a central university), Santiniketan, West Bengal, 2004 with First Class. (61.6 %)

Academic Appointments:

- ❖ Assistant Professor, Department of History, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata – 27 June 2019 to Present
- ❖ Assistant Professor, Department of History, The University of Burdwan, Bardhaman, West Bengal – 22 July 2014 to 26 June 2019

Peer-reviewed Publications:

Books-

- *Let there be Light: Engineering, Entrepreneurship and Electricity in Colonial Bengal, 1880-1945*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.
(Reviewed in *LSE Review of Books*, *Anandabazar Patrika*, *Studies in People's History*, *Bulletin of the Pacific Circle*, *South Asian History and Culture*, *Science, Technology and Society*, *South Asia Research*, *Studies in History*, *The Book Review*, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, *H-Soz-Kult*, *Economic & Political Weekly*, *Technology and Culture*, *History and Sociology of South Asia*, *Indian Journal of History of Science*, *Isis: A Journal of the History of Science Society*)

- *The Quest for Technical Knowledge: Bengal in the Nineteenth Century*, New Delhi: Manohar, 2012.
(Reviewed in *Technology and Culture*, *The Statesman*, *The Quarterly Review of Historical Studies*, *The Journal of Transport History*)

Edited Books-

- *History of Science, Technology, Environment and Medicine in India*, London and New York: Routledge, 2022.
(Reviewed in *Anandabazar Patrika*, *Economic & Political Weekly*, *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*, *Indian Journal of History of Science*)
- Co-edited *Contextualizing the Body: An Indian Experience*, New Delhi: Manohar, 2021.
(Reviewed in *Pacific Circle Newsletter*, *Studies in People's History*, *Indian Historical Review*)

Articles in Referred Journals-

- Co-author, 'On the need for an anticolonial perspective in engineering education and practice', *Nature Communications*, 14, 8453 (2023), published on 20 December 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-023-43952-2>
- 'An Alternative History of Technology in South Asia: The Unknown Viśvakarmās of Colonial Bengal', *Indian Journal of History of Science*, Vol. 55, No. 1, 2020, pp. 49-59.
- 'Electrification of Colonial Calcutta: Role of the Innovators, Bureaucrats and Foreign Business Organization, 1880-1940', *Studies in History*, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2018, pp. 48-76. (Sage)
- 'Domesticating electric power: Growth of industry, utilities and research in colonial Calcutta', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 52, No. 3, 2015, pp. 357-89. (Sage)
- 'In Pursuit of *Laxmi*: Entrepreneurship, Industry and Technology in Colonial Bengal', *Archiv Orientalni/ Oriental Archive: Journal of African and Asian Studies*, Vol. 82, No.2, 2014, pp. 263-95.
- 'Colonization, Technical Education and the Bengali *Bhadralok*: Studies on the Politics of Knowledge, 1856-1905', *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 3, Fall 2012, pp. 17-24.
- 'Technological Momentum: Bengal in the Nineteenth Century', *The Indian Historical Review*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2010, pp. 89-109. (Sage)
- 'Technical Content and Colonial Context: Situating Technical Knowledge in Nineteenth Century Bengal', *Social Scientist*, Vol. 38, Nos. 1-2, 2010, pp. 37-52.

Book Chapters-

- 'Academic engineering and India's colonial encounter: Bengal Engineering College, Sibpur, a historical perspective', in Suvabrata Sarkar (ed.), *History of Science, Technology, Environment and Medicine in India*, London and New York: Routledge, 2022, pp. 121-138.
- 'The small voices of history: Subaltern technologists of colonial Bengal', in Kaustubh Mani Sengupta and Tista Das (eds.), *Rethinking the Local in Indian History*, London and New York: Routledge, 2022, pp. 89-105.
- 'Writing the history of the relations between technology, medicine and the body: Advent of 'X-Ray' in colonial Bengal', in Sudit Krishna Kumar and Suvabrata Sarkar (eds.), *Contextualizing the Body: An Indian Experience*, New Delhi: Manohar, 2021, pp. 229-244.
- 'Bhadralok Aspirations and the Quest for Technical Knowledge, 1830-1900', in Deepak Kumar, Joseph Bara, Nandita Khadria and Ch. Radha Gayathri (eds.), *Education in Colonial India: Historical Insights*, New Delhi: Manohar, 2013, pp. 99-124.

Research Project:

Principal Investigator (PI) of a major research project titled *Techno-Social History of Electrification in Colonial Eastern India, 1880s-1940s* generously funded by the Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi (2021-23)

Awards, Fellowships and Honors:

- ❖ Recipient of the **Charles Wallace India Trust** short research grant for archival research in the UK, 2023
- ❖ Recipient of **Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Travel Grant for Data Collection Abroad** in 2023
- ❖ Recipient of the **Maurice Daumas Prize 2019**, International Committee for the History of Technology (ICOHTEC).
- ❖ Recipient of **Dr I G Khan Memorial Prize** for the best paper in the section on *History of Science & Technology*, **Indian History Congress**, 78th Session, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, 28 – 30 December, 2017
- ❖ Recipient of the **Charles Wallace India Trust** short research grant for archival research in the UK, 2017.
- ❖ Recipient of the **Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR), Foreign Travel & Maintenance Grant (FTG)** for data collection abroad in 2017.
- ❖ Nominated an International Scholar of the **Society for the History of Technology (SHOT)** for a two-year term, 2016 and 2017

Select Lectures/Seminars/Talks Given at:

In 2024-

- Delivered an Invited Lecture at the STS Seminar 2024: Globalization from Below, Centre Population et Développement, University Paris Cité, 17 April, 2024 (Virtually via Zoom)

In 2023-

- Delivered an Invited Lecture at the Department of History, Kazi Nazrul University, Asansol, West Bengal, 18th July, 2023
- International Conference on Science, Humanism and the Making of Modern India, jointly organized by University of Sussex and Botanical Survey of India, Ashutosh Birth Centenary Hall, Indian Museum, Kolkata, 9 – 10 January, 2023 (Invited Speaker)

In 2022-

- Inaugural Workshop on Transdisciplinary Research Cluster of Frugality Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and International Centre for Frugal Innovation, Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Universities, Teri Retreat, Gwal Pahari, Faridabad-Gurgaon Road, Haryana, 23 – 24 April, 2022 (Invited Speaker).

In 2021-

- Symposium Empire of Knowledge: South Asia, 1850-1971 (Science and Empire Commission), 26th International Congress of History of Science and Technology, Prague, 25 – 31 July, 2021 (Virtually via Zoom).

In 2020-

- “Rethinking South Asia: Alternative Paradigms, Practices and Discourses”, Annual Conference of Indian Association for South Asian Studies, Delhi, 7 – 8 November, 2020 (Virtually via Zoom).
- Virtual Workshop on History Resources for Teachers in Higher Education, National Resource Centre for Education, National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi, 8 – 9 October, 2020 (Invited Speaker).

In 2018-

- Silver Jubilee National Seminar on *Contemporary Debates on Science, Technology and Nationalism in India*, IIT Guwahati, 31 October – 2 November, 2018 (Invited Speaker and Chaired a Technical Session).
- National Seminar on *Historiography of Science in India*, Indian National Science Academy (INSA), New Delhi, 24 September, 2018 (Invited Speaker).

- International Workshop on *The role of the users in global technological history*, organized by the Bern University, Switzerland, 14 – 15 June, 2018 (Invited Speaker and Funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and the Bern University Fund for the Promotion of Young Researchers).
- International Seminar on *Emergence of Science in Colonial India*, Indian National Science Academy (INSA), New Delhi, 14 –16 March, 2018.

In 2017-

- Indian History Congress, 78th Session, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, 28 – 30 December, 2017.
- International Conference on 'Localities and Linkages: South Bengal in the Colonial Period', organized by the Dept. of History, Bankura University, West Bengal in collaboration with the ICHR, New Delhi, 18 – 19 April, 2017 (Invited Speaker).

In 2016-

- 2016 Annual Meeting of the Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) at the National University of Singapore, Singapore, 22 – 26 June 2016 (Travel Grant from the Society for the History of Technology).
- The 12th International Conference of History & Heritage 2016 organized by Itihas Academy Dhaka, Bangladesh, 19 February 2016

In 2015-

- Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT Madras, Chennai, 22 August, 2015(Invited Speaker).

Conference/ Seminar Organized:

- Joint-Coordinator, UGC Sponsored National Seminar organized by the Department of History, Rabindra Bharati University- *Revisiting the Struggle for Indian Independence and Its Historiography* (2 –3 March, 2023)
- Coordinator, National Level Web-lecture, presented by Professor Deepak Kumar on 'Relevance of Contemporary History', organized by Department of History, Rabindra Bharati University (22 September 2020)
- Joint-Convener, Research Scholars' Seminar, Department of History, University of Burdwan (16 April, 2019)
- Joint-Convener of the UGC Sponsored National Seminar organized by the Department of History, University of Burdwan- *Contextualizing Body: The Indian Experience* (12 – 13 February, 2015)

Research Supervision:

Ph.D.

- Sanjib Ghosh awarded his **Ph.D.** degree for the thesis on 'From Electric Telegraph to Telephone: Evolution of Communication Technology in Bengal, c. 1857-1943', at the University of Burdwan (17/03/2023)
- Shelly Saha awarded her **Ph.D.** degree for the thesis on 'Municipal Engineering and the Calcutta Municipal Corporation: A Study of Urban Planning, 1858-1947' at the University of Burdwan (10/05/2023)

M.Phil.

- Shravasti Pathak received her **M.Phil.** degree for the dissertation on 'Medical Nationalism in Bengal: Dr. R. G. Kar (1852-1918) in Perspective' from the University of Burdwan (2018)
- Abhijit Neogi received his **M.Phil.** degree for the dissertation on 'A study of some less known self-made technologists of colonial Bengal' from the University of Burdwan (2020)
- Nirmalya Mandal received his **M.Phil.** degree on 'Scientific and Economic Ideas of Swami Vivekananda' from the University of Burdwan (2022)
- Laboni Kundu received her **M.Phil.** degree on 'Bangiya Bijnan Parishad and Gyan Bijnan Patrika: A Study in Science Popularization and Communication' from Rabindra Bharati University (2024)

Personal Profile:

Date of Birth: 14 August, 1982

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Personal Email: - suvobrata.jnu@gmail.com

Personal Webpage: - <https://rbu.academia.edu/SuvobrataSarkar>

ORCID iD: - <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5828-3232>

VIDWAN Profile: - <https://vidwan.inflibnet.ac.in/profile/506593>

Affiliation to Professional Bodies:

Society for the History of Science Kolkata, Society for the History of Technology, Association for South Asian Studies, Indian History Congress, Itihas Academy Dhaka, Indian Association for Asian & Pacific Studies, Institutes of Historical Studies Kolkata

Referees:

- **Prof. Deepak Kumar**, Former Professor of History of Science & Education, Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067, India. E-mail: deepakjnu2008@gmail.com
- **Prof. Suranjan Das**, Former Vice-Chancellor, Jadavpur University, 188, Raja S. C. Mallick Road, Kolkata-700032, WB, India. E-mail: suranjandas2000@yahoo.co.in
- **Prof. Ross Bassett**, Department of History, North Carolina State University, 350 Withers Hall, Campus Box 8108, Raleigh, NC 27695-8108. E-mail: ross@ncsu.edu
- **Prof. Tirthankar Roy**, Department of Economic History, The London School of Economics & Political Science, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE, UK. E-mail: t.roy@lse.ac.uk
- **Prof. Prakash Kumar**, Associate Professor, Department of Asian Studies, Pennsylvania State University, 102 Old Botany Building, University Park, PA 16802. E-mail: puk15@psu.edu



(SUVOBRATA SARKAR)

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