



## Workshop

on

*Research Methodologies in History & Social Sciences in the Light of New Sources*

&

Research Scholars' Seminar

Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2018

Venue: Priyaranjan Dasmunshi Memorial Hall, Raiganj University

Organised by

Department of History, Raiganj University

Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal, India, PIN-733134

### Theme

With the evolving time, methodologies in Social Sciences have also evolved. The need to discover latent and unexplored dynamics, that shape time, redefine society and determine international power structures, is at its apex. This quest has urged researchers to delve into newer genres and with such traverse, newer historiographies have evolved and for that newer methodologies. Though the basic periodizations of History remain cemented in temporal categorizations; studies in History have moved beyond the realm of Ancient, Medieval, Modern & Contemporary Histories. From Social History to New Social History, from Cultural to Intellectual History, Gender History, Environmental History, newer and newer genres have evolved. Sources that were once discarded as 'unofficial' hence 'unauthentic' have gained acceptance due to emergence of new

methodologies. However, there are few of them that remain elemental to researchers within the framework of Social Sciences.

The writing of History and any subject for that matter, within the corpus of Social Sciences, of whichever genre it might be, necessitates collection of source materials and an imaginative mind with a realistic and interpretive edge, honesty and authenticity. The basic is always the same. For any research work, especially, in History, determining the definite period and area of study are absolute primary factors. Source is necessary to validate, interpretation is necessary to assign a definite viewpoint and save it from being a 'mere catalogue of events and dates', imagination is necessary to fill in the silence of the available official data. Next comes in the dilemma of objectivity and subjectivity of history writing. In this context, one should remember that too much of objectivity makes history writing a 'dry and lifeless cataloguing of events' and too much of subjectivity makes it a highly biased piece, miles away from reality. Newer methodologies like listening to the informants, sample survey, historicizing memorabilia from private collections and in some cases even observing the behaviour of the society and target groups have been cited as a new methodology by eminent scholars. Though there are many who advocate against literature as a site of fact finding; there are many who find it quite useful if handled with caution; as literature they argue, is where one can face human and in turn social complexities at its best. Then there are times when silences of sources hinder the research and it is then that alternative methodologies come to operation. At times, the archives that are not regulated by the State offer help in this regard. These have different *modus operandi* viz. an unofficial archive can depend on the household (of a period) as an archive itself; the memorabilia within shouts a thousand metonymies; the researcher has to use these with utmost care to create the required testimony amongst these. There are other methodologies in light of newer sources and sub-genres of History and Social Sciences that have come in vogue and the upcoming

Workshop will explore those. The Research Scholars' Seminar is set to open a platform to younger researchers to explore the possibilities of their researches.

To sum up, this Workshop intends to help the researchers of Social Sciences to grasp the ever-changing canvas of methodologies in the light of new sources. In the context of history writing, the need to do so, now, is essential more than ever as we stand at a cross-road where the very relevance of history is being questioned by many across the globe; especially at a time when some have already marked this century as the 'end of history'. The Workshop and the Research Scholars' Seminar aim to create awareness as to the indispensability of History as without a 'dialogue with the past', the present will be nothing but a tree without roots.

### **Call for Papers:**

Research Scholars, *preferably registered candidates*, are requested to email their abstract/s and full paper/s (in .docx file, Times New Roman, Font 12, double spaced) to [seminarhistoryrgu@gmail.com](mailto:seminarhistoryrgu@gmail.com) **on and before 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2018**. The abstract should not exceed 300 words and the full paper should be written within 3000 words.

In case of any queries, feel free to write to [seminarhistoryrgu@gmail.com](mailto:seminarhistoryrgu@gmail.com)

### **Registration:**

The registration fees for participating in the seminar will be Rs. 500/- (Rupees five hundred only).

## **Advisory Committee**

Professor Anil Bhumali, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, RGU, Chief Patron

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