
ISSN 2229-676X

International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities



THE
RESEARCH
POST

Summer (January-July) 2022, Volume 5, Number 1

A Joint Publication of Bharati College, University of Delhi, New Delhi
&
Jan Kalyan Sansthan, Jaipur, Rajasthan

About the Journal

The Research Post (ISSN 2229-676X) is a publication endeavour jointly taken up by the Jan Kalyan Sansthan, Jaipur and Bharati College, University of Delhi. The Research Post is a biannual, double-blind peer-reviewed journal. The objective of the journal is to encourage interdisciplinary research in Social Sciences and Humanities. The journal attempts to provide a forum for exploration of ideas, practice and criticism. We welcome original research articles, commentaries, surveys, review articles and book reviews.

The articles published in the journal are measured on their academic content and contemporary relevance. The journal aims at encouraging inter/multi disciplinary research as it includes a range of areas in Social Sciences like Political Science, Economics, International Relations, History, Sociology, Psychology, Media and Communication Studies, Development Studies, Public Policy and Governance, and English Literature and Language. We invite research dealing with theoretical perspectives as well as empirical investigations.

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Publishers' name

Cinnamon Teal Print and Publishing, Goa, India

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The Inter Disciplinary Research Network is a research unit of the society which works for promotion of quality research in Social Sciences in India. Through its various publications the society is trying to encourage relevant and good quality research. Besides the unit also includes large number of scholars who are ready to assist the upcoming scholars in the academic work especially publication related difficulties.

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Bharati College, one of the top women's college in West Delhi, is a constituent college of the University of Delhi. It started functioning from the premises of a Government Senior Secondary School for Boys located on the Link Road in Karol Bagh. A modest number of two hundred and forty-one students and a team of thirteen teaching staff spread over six disciplines formed the building bloc. Though, the college did not possess its own building, classes took place after 12.00 noon when the school time got over. However, in its third year, the building was taken over entirely by the College and started operating full time. Bharati College aims to provide the highest-quality liberal arts and sciences education to exceptional young women through academic programs recognized for their excellence and range. Since its establishment in 1971, the College has succeeded in providing a transformative and holistic experience to the diverse set of learners who join the institution.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editor's Note	1-2
Research Articles	
<i>The August Proclamation of 1917 and Inception of Liberal Party in Indian Politics</i> By Rakhi Yadav	3-9
<i>Women Losing Jobs: A Perspective on Gender Pay Gap</i> By Prajakta Pradip Shukla And Lokesh Swami	10-20
<i>The Gendering of Genre: Vignettes From Bengali Women's Travel Writing in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century</i> By Meenakshi Malhotra	21-36
Book Review	
<i>Namita Gokhale and Malashri Lal, Betrayed by Hope: A Play on the life of Michael Madhusudan Dutt</i> By Anavisha Banerjee	37-41
<i>Prakash Thosre: The Malghat Trail: Walking the Wilds with a Forester-A Memoir for the Contemporary World</i> By Mukti Sanyal	42-45

Book Review

Namita Gokhale and Malashri Lal, Betrayed by Hope: A Play on the life of Michael Madhusudan Dutt (Noida, HarperCollins Publishers, 2020)

The title of the book is a word play on the English translation of the biography of Michael Madhusudan Dutt by Ghulam Murshid, which was titled *Lured by Hope* (2003). In this context, *Betrayed by Hope* is a play on the life of Madhusudan Dutt (1824-1873) based on his letters to his friends and focuses on the identity crisis, anxiety, hopes and betrayals of this nineteenth century revolutionary Bengali poet and playwright. He was recognized as a polyglot, rebel and also a Christian convert. The script of the play is based on the letters of Madhusudan Dutt.

Betrayed by Hope won the "Fiction Book of the Year Award 2020-21" in the Kalinga Literature Festival held in Bhubaneswar, 10-12 December, 2020. It marked a path breaker for the great achievement of Bhasha writers and translators like Malashri Lal and Namita Gokhale. It also has its rendition on YouTube.

The play begins with an epigraph written in Bengali by Madhusudan Dutt and its English translation by Amit Chaudhuri. The main characters of the play are Madhusudan Dutt and the Sutradhar (generally considered as a narrator originating from Sanskrit drama). In this play, the Sutradhar, Rubina Rahman, is a young researcher from Dhaka (Bangladesh) who wants to work on Madhusudan Dutt because both have their roots in Bangladesh. Although, it was the undivided Bengal for the poet in the nineteenth century, the cultural anxiety of pre and post colonial India (including partition) resonates in the narration. The dual time frame of the play becomes important since it is based on a historical character. Throughout the script, Michael Madhusudan Dutt is referred as MMD (hence, sometimes even I might use MMD for the sake of convenience).

The play is divided into Five Acts. The First Act is set in Calcutta (presently Kolkata). The screen displays the image of nineteenth century Calcutta and gradually shifts to Sagardarai, MMD's birthplace and its famous Kapotaksha river in Bangladesh. The Sutradhar, Rubina Rahman wears a sari and looks scholarly while she introduces the poet and her research mission. Her Asian- English accent and later her informal tone in discussing MMD's English education and western lifestyle (including dressing) reflects the difficulty of balancing a hybrid cultural identity. Moreover, the offstage recitation of the poem on Kapotaksha River

Temple Barrister-at-Law!..”(65). Here, the journey from “kobi” or poet to a lawyer is emphasized.

The Fourth Act is set in London and shows the success of Madhusudaan Dutt in finally becoming a Barrister and enjoying the “acceptance he craved from the white masters,” as Rubina stated . The scene exemplified it with Dutt dressed in “suitable London clothes.” However, Dutt did not have any time to celebrate as he looked distraught with papers in hand and the sudden arrival of his wife Henrietta accompanied by two children since she was unable to pay the expenses in Calcutta. Even in London they faced the same problem and finally they moved to Versailles, France since the rent was cheaper. As the despair and financial difficulty increases, the Sutradhar also shows her disappointment with MMD since he abandoned his wives and children in the fulfillment of his own ambition. The scene ends with MMD’s desire to come back to his homeland and his mother tongue. He changes his surname to “Datta” rather than “Dutt,” since the latter sounded more Anglicized. “Datta” sounded more Bengali for him now.

The Fifth Act also reflects the anxiety of home and identity as the Sutradhar , Rubina comes on the stage wearing a “black and white dhakai saree,” Bangladesh being the original homeland of both the characters across the historical time frame. The formal tone of the Sutradhar accesses the success and failure of her research topic (Michael Madhusudan Dutt). As the Act moves towards the end, we see his health decline and he is admitted in Alipore Hospital in Calcutta in 1873, where he ultimately breathes his last. He is finally buried beside his wife (his life partner for the last fifteen years), Henrietta White. However, since he was a Christian convert, there was a controversy regarding his last rites too. He was always a controversial figure and he had anticipated this end, therefore maybe he wrote his own epitaph. The Sutradhar gives the details of the epitaph being erected in 1888, fifteen years after the poet died. The scene ends on an emotional note with the resonating voice of MMD reading the epitaph (in English translation) dedicated to his memories of Bengal, its beauty and his parentage. It is a journey back to his roots and this essence is highlighted as the Bengali poem is projected on the screen in the background as all the characters on the stage bow their heads in reverence.

By Anavisha Banerjee, Assistant Professor, Bharati College (University of Delhi)