

From the Office Desk

After the first issue of e-newsletter on Poila Boishakh, 1426, CCL, Visva-Bharati is publishing the second issue of the e-newsletter. The whole endeavour is spearheaded by the students and research scholars of the Centre. This issue chronicles the academic and cultural activities of the Centre during the last four months. Over this period, we have bidden adieu to some of our old students who have completed their degree courses and have begun their own journeys of lives. But all of them will be integral part of this Centre as theirs and our academic as well as personal journeys are entwined. On behalf of the Centre, we wish them success. We have also inducted an enthusiastic new batch of M.A students who will be with us for the next two years. We welcome them with the expectation that they will be part of this Centre where ‘studying literatures’ can be life-changing experiences through various ‘contacts’ and ‘exchanges’.

Suggestions and comments may be sent to cclvbu@gmail.com.

Carca: Exercise in Comparativisms (A Monthly Lecture Series)***Carca 4***

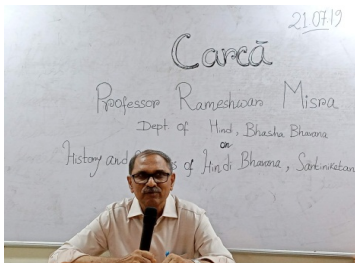
Purbita Garai

Professor Manabendra Mukhopadhyay was the invited speaker for this year’s fourth *Carca* which was held on June 21, 2019. As an alumnus and an eminent faculty member of the Bangla Department at Visva-Bharati, Professor Mukhopadhyay deliberated on the history of the Bangla department department. For him, this history is not only a retrospection of the chronological record of significant dates, events and persons associated with the department but is also the trajectory of generations of knowledge, formation of research-methodology, revision of the syllabus and similar undertakings. After considering the contributions of some stalwarts of the Bangla department, Mukhopadhyay put some light on its existing condition and presented a plan for the future as well. He also shared his concern regarding the crisis of employability in present-day academia. The participation of the students and faculty members of the Centre for Comparative Literature geared the entire session towards an introspective direction.

***Carca 5***

Ishani Dutta

Professor Rameshwar Mishra from Department of Hindi, Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati was the invited speaker for the *Carca* on July 21, 2019. He began his talk by emphasizing on the differences between a *bhavana* and a *sadana* and talked in length about the early stages of the formation of the Hindi Department housed in the Hindi Bhavana. He continued with how the primary aim of the Hindi Department was not only to read and teach Hindi Literature but to also



encourage the practice of reading Indian Literatures and Literatures of the World in Hindi, thus directly underlining the way in which translation came to play a very important role in the development of the Department. In other words, the Hindi Department came into being to understand the flow of Indian Literatures through the help of one common language at Visva-Bharati. During the question-answer session that followed the talk, Professor Mishra also talked about the importance of comparative study.

Carca 6

Purbita Garai

Professor Nilanjan Chakrabarti emphasized fulfilling the lacunae of history with adequate research through his discussion titled “Beginning and Evolution of Modern European Languages and Culture Studies in Visva-Bharati” on August 20, 2019 in the monthly lecture series *Carca: Exercise in*



Comparativisms. Professor Chakrabarti brought the whole trajectory alive by talking about how the learning of European Languages was started as a ‘by-product’ by scholars like Sylvain Levi, Stella Kramrisch or Giuseppe Tucci who actually came to teach other disciplines at Visva-Bharati in its early days till the foundation of DEOMEL (Department of English and Other Modern European languages) that later evolved as CMELLCS (Centre for Modern European Languages, Literatures and Culture Studies) in 2014. He also considered the practical aspects like marketability and

employability of the students and expressed their future plans for introducing more European languages like Spanish. Professor Chakrabarti’s enriching speech was followed by questions and observations by the students and faculty members amongst which the one by Dr. Indrani Das, Professor of Italian, had major significance and was followed by a separate discussion as well.

Ongoing Research Work at Centre for Comparative Literature

Presentation by Researcher: Ishani Dutta

Ankana Bag

Ishani Dutta, a second year PhD student gave a presentation on an aspect of her research titled “Of



Recitals and Performances: Reading New Literary Trends and Genres in Contemporary Indian Nepali Poetry in the Darjeeling Hills and Sikkim (1980-Present)” on August 27, 2019 at CCL. She began her discussion by explicating ideas of the identities that are usually put under the category ‘Nepali’ making it a blanket term, thereby implying a kind of standardization. The geo-political boundaries, its denial and affirmation also build up the identity politics that was brought to the forefront. She gave an outline of the historical context pertaining to the Darjeeling Hills and Sikkim in order to explain the geo-political boundaries and the various conflicts

(such as the politics of language, homeland and nationality) that it entails. The Indian Nepali community calls itself Gorkha or Gorkhali to distinguish themselves from their brethren and sistren in Nepal. She also mentioned some key figures of Indian Nepali Literature and their ideas on the category Indian Nepali or Gorkha. She then talked about the primary concern of her research that deals with new literary trends and genres within Indian Nepali Poetry and how those continue to pertain to questions of identity, identity crises, condition of women and children within the Indian Nepali community, etc. Her presentation was interspersed with videos of literary texts being performed.

Current Researchers at CCL

PhD

Supriya Banerjee	Devi to Superwoman: A Feminist Reading of Select Graphic Novels of India from 2000-2014
Anita Gua Hembrom	Contemporary Santhali Literature: A Historiography from “Below”
Ishani Dutta	Of Recitals and Performances: Reading New Literary Trends and Genres in Contemporary Indian Nepali Poetry in the Darjeeling Hills and Sikkim (1980-Present)
Purbita Garai	Rabindranath Tagore’s <i>Byangakoutuk</i> : An Annotated Translation and Critical Introduction
Rakesh Kaibartya	ভারতীয় লোকনাট্য: লিঙ্গ পরিচয়ের নির্মাণ-বিনির্মাণ

MPhil

Ankana Bag	Negotiating <i>Meiji</i> (1868-1912) and <i>Taisho</i> (1912-26) Japan in Dominant Discourse through the Travel Writings of Isabella Bird, Hariprabha Takeda, AbalaBasu and Sarojnalini Dutta
Deeya Bandyopadhyay	The Politics of Identity, Family and Nation in 19 th Century Bangla Prahasanas

Cine-Carca (Monthly Film Screening)

Cine-Carca 4

Anita Gua Hembrom



The fourth *Cine-Carca* on *The World Before Her* (2012), a documentary written and produced by Nisha Pahuja was moderated by Deeya

Bandyopadhyay, an MPhil student at the Centre for Comparative Literature was held on 8th July 2019. Through the narratives of two young women participating in two very different kinds of training camps – Ruhi Singh who aspires to become Miss India, and Prachi Trivedi who works for a Hindu nationalist organization called Durga Vahini – the film explores the complex and conflicting environment that exists for young girls in India. The film can be looked at through the lens of the nationalist feeling which it attempts to question throughout its running time of ninety minutes, by presenting two different Indias to the viewers who are made to wonder which India do they relate to. Through the long discussion held after the film where every viewer present discussed their respective understanding of it, it was also realized that the film presents two separate cases of escaping female infanticide and how different they are in their own contexts. The film poses a pertinent question – what are the rights of Indian women and how do the two different Indias affect each other.

Cine-Carca 5

Rakesh Kaibartya



Anita Gua Hembrom moderated the fifth *Cine-Carca* which was held on 25th August 2019 in which three short documentaries titled *Olok Me Babu*, *Edpa Kana* and *Rengey* were screened. *Olok Me Babu* directed by Somnath Gua Hembrom was based on the life of a rural ‘tribal’ family, struggling with poverty. The viewer immediately felt the dilapidated condition of the family’s decaying home and the problems of institutionalized education, land grabbing, exploitation and corruption came into the forefront. *Edpa Kana*, an award-winning documentary concentrated on the helpless situation of an Oraon man in a live-in relationship with a Santhali Christian woman who are bound up with religious problems. Finally, *Rengey* contained great moments of sorrow, struggle, poverty and hunger and showed the life of a tribal man who was beaten to death by goons from a restaurant for stealing a single roti. The documentary was based on a real incident that occurred in Kerala.

Other Departmental Activities

MPhil OpenViva: Sounak Dutta

Ishani Dutta



Sounak Dutta, now a former MPhil student of the Centre for Comparative Literature, Bhasha Bhavana, Visva-Bharati was awarded the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degree in June 2019 for his thesis

titled “Narrative Continuity of a Transient Movement: Contact between Political History and Literary History in the Tebhaga Movement (1946-1949) of Bengal”. The viva, which was attended by both teachers and students, was conducted on 25th May 2019 wherein Mr Dutta presented the final findings of his study. This was followed by an interactive session where he was suggested further studies on the subject.

MA Induction Programme

Deeya Bandyopadhyay



The Centre for Comparative Literature welcomed new members to their family. An orientation programme was held for the newly admitted MA students where the students were told about the different committees formed by the University to prevent and take action against any kind of harassment that they might face in the campus. They were also told about how they could ask for help from their seniors in such situations. The students also got to know about the various cultural events where their participation was expected within the Centre as well as in the University.

Awards and Achievements

- Ankana Bag, second-year MPhil student at CCL was awarded Assistant Professorship in English in UGC-NET June 2019 conducted by the National testing Agency (NTA).
- Ishani Dutta, second-year PhD student at CCL was awarded Assistant Professorship in Comparative Literature in UGC-NET June 2019 conducted by NTA.
- Nabil Jahangir, who got his MA degree from CCL in July 2019, has already secured a job in *Bangladesh Times*, Dhaka.

Recent Publications

- A PhD Student at CCL, Anita Gua Hembrom’s article titled ““I want to explore and understand the problems of Santal identity in modern society” – *Becoming Me* by Rejina Marandi’ was published in a book titled *Situating Tribals of India (Culture, language and Self)*, edited by Santosh Kumar Sonker, Yash Publishers & Distributor, Delhi in January 2019.

Departmental Participation in University Activities

Halakarshana 2019

Deeya Bandyopadhyay



On 23 *Srabon* (i.e., 9th August), in keeping with an age-old tradition, Siksha Satra observed *Halakarsana*. This was introduced by Rabindranath Thakur with an aim to emphasize the significance of planned agriculture for a sustainable development of rural India. On the day of its inception, Rabindranath had, himself, drawn the plough and the much-revered Kshitimohan Sen had recited the chants. In memory of that day, Sriniketan still observes *Halakarsana*. Students from Siksha Satra perform and bulls plough a bit of land symbolically. Professor Bidyut Chakraborty, the Vice Chancellor of Visva-Bharati, presided over the celebrations. (Photo credit: Samiran Nandy)

Briksharopan 2019

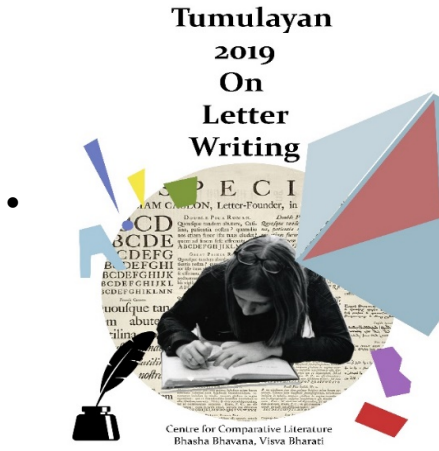
Ankana Bag



The annual ceremony of 22 *Srabon* or the date of the death-anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore fell on August 08, 2019 this year. The day was commemorated with events from early in the morning throughout the day. The ceremony of *Briksharopan* took place in the afternoon. This year a sapling of a rare variety of *Rudraksha* was ceremonially planted in the Santoshalay premises in the presence of Professor Bidyut Chakraborty, the Vice Chancellor of Visva-Bharati, Bibek Debroy, the Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi who is also the Chancellor of Visva-Bharati, and Goutam Deb, the Tourism Minister of the Government of West Bengal. The ceremony was observed fully according to the long-standing tradition and a large number of residents of Santiniketan and tourists were present in spite of the dark rain clouds covering the sky overhead. The Centre for Comparative Literature also celebrated *Briksharopan* in their own way by planting saplings in pots in the office as well as in the classrooms allotted to the Centre.



Upcoming Events



- Launch of the fifth issue of *Tumulayan* in Anandabajar 2019. Theme: On letter Writing
- A symposium on Comparative Literature in November 2019

Editorial Assistance:

Ishani Dutta
Rakesh Kaibartya

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