Trana Provatra February, 2024-August, 2025



CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS, UEM KOLKATA

Edited By: Smita Halder COORDINATOR, COE IKS, UEM KOLKATA

The newsletter is designed to share our activities, research initiatives, workshops, student involvement, and valuable IKS resources. It serves as a platform to connect, inform, and inspire through the exchange of knowledge and experiences.

To preserve, promote, and integrate Indian Knowledge Systems with contemporary education and research, fostering a holistic understanding of India's intellectual traditions.

A window into the activities, research, and reflections of the Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge Systems, UEM Kolkata























Didarganj *Yakṣī* (Didarganj Chauri Bearer) 5'4" tall, 3rd century BCE



VOL. 1

FEBRUARY 2024 - AUGUST 2025

Jñāna Pravāha

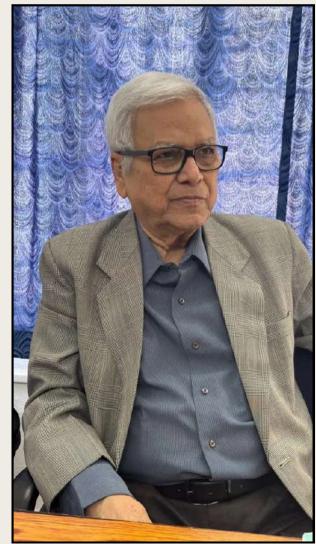
Foreward

It is with great pleasure I pen down this foreword for the first issue of the yearly progress report of the Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge Systems, UEM Kolkata. The Centre is hardly a year and a half old, but the extent of the Centre's activities amazes me, particularly when I compare it with those of other similar centres in the country, some of those being housed in some Institutions of National Importance.

Apart from being very active, the areas of the programmes undertaken by the Centre are also in the right direction, rendering them very welcome to the mainstream academia. This is found to be an issue in the case of many other similar centres.

The main driving force behind such a remarkable journey is undoubtedly the Coordinator's expertise, enthusiasm and the proper understanding of the objectives of such centres. She also has access to a very distinguished and excellent pool of resource persons.

I have little doubt about the Centre becoming a very major player in the field of Indian Knowledge Systems.



Prof. Amitabha GhoshEmeritus scientist,
Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi

Jñāna Pravāha

Message from the Chairman CoE IKS, UEM Kolkata

It gives me immense pleasure to introduce Jñāna Pravāha, the newsletter of the Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), University of Engineering and Management, Kolkata. This publication is conceived as an intellectual platform to document and disseminate the initiatives, research pursuits, workshops, student participation, and resource development undertaken by the Centre.

The establishment of the Centre of Excellence for IKS at UEM Kolkata signifies our institutional commitment to the preservation, promotion, and integration of India's profound intellectual traditions with contemporary education and research. By fostering dialogue between ancient wisdom and modern knowledge frameworks, the Centre aspires to contribute to a holistic academic environment that is both rooted in heritage and responsive to present-day challenges.

Jñāna Pravāha seeks to provide a reflective window into the activities and scholarly engagements of the Centre. It is intended not only as a record of academic endeavours but also as a medium of exchange—connecting stakeholders, inspiring inquiry, and advancing the study and application of Indian Knowledge Systems in diverse domains.

I commend the efforts of the faculty, students, and collaborators associated with this initiative and extend my best wishes for the continued growth of the Centre and its contributions to the wider academic community.



Prof. Sajal Dasgupta Vice Chancellor, UEM Kolkata



Message from the Co-Chairman CoE IKS, UEM Kolkata

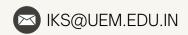
It gives me great joy to be a part of the inaugural edition of our magazine of the Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS). The centre has been functioning since the last one year driven by passion and thirst for knowledge, not celebrated in the mainstream knowledge systems, but has contributed greatly in the development and continuation of the knowledge. Each event we have hosted—whether a lecture, a workshop, or a cultural interaction—has opened new doors to rediscovering the richness of our traditions.

What has stood out the most is the energy and curiosity of our students, researchers, and participants. Their eagerness to connect ancient wisdom with contemporary challenges reminds us that Indian knowledge is not just history, but a living, breathing resource for today and tomorrow. From exploring Indigenous languages, cultural practices, mathematical and astronomical sciences, sustainable ecological practices to celebrating the knowledge system as a whole, our activities have been moments of learning as well as deep realisation.

During this to collaborate with scholars, institutions, and communities who share our vision. These partnerships have made our journey more inclusive and meaningful.

As we look ahead, I hope our Centre continues to explore the timeless wisdom of the past with the aspirations of the future.

My heartfelt thanks to everyone who has been part of this journey.



FROM THE

EDITOR'S DESK

It gives me great pleasure to present *Jñāna Pravāha* the very first newsletter of the Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge Systems, UEM Kolkata documenting our journey from February 2024 to August 2025.

When I took charge, my foremost priority was to make the Centre's presence felt in the mainstream academic world. With that vision, we began by initiating a Monthly Lecture Series, creating a steady platform for dialogue and scholarship. A milestone moment arrived when we had the privilege of hosting the Golden Jubilee Lecture Series of the prestigious Epigraphical Society of India. Welcoming internationally acclaimed scholars such as Prof. Dilip Kumar Chakrabarti, Prof. Osmund Bopearachchi, Prof. Richard Salomon, Prof. Y. Subbarayalu and many others within our very first year was both a proud achievement and an inspiration for our team.

Throughout the year, we have strived to follow rigorous research methodologies, with the ambition of building the Centre into a distinguished research hub of eastern India. Epigraphy and Numismatics; art and culture continue to be our prime focus, keeping alive a rich tradition while opening fresh avenues of study. Today, we are humbled to see that the Centre is being recognised across the academic circles of India and beyond.

As we look forward, our vision extends beyond academia. Our next steps are to reach out to school children, encourage research-oriented project work, and publish materials that make our knowledge accessible to a wider audience—without ever compromising on scholarly depth. At the same time, we are committed to training the next generation of researchers, giving them the tools and insights needed to engage meaningfully with primary sources and original evidence.



This first newsletter is not only a record of what we have achieved, but also a glimpse of the path we are determined to walk in the coming years.

None of this journey would have been possible without the constant encouragement of our patron, our Hon. Director, the guidance of our mentors, and the generous support of our distinguished resource persons who shared their expertise with us. Last but not least, the participants—their enthusiasm and faith—encouraged us to explore new avenues at this very early stage of the Centre. To each of them, I extend my heartfelt gratitude. Their contributions have not only enriched our programmes but also strengthened the foundation of this Centre for the years to come.

Dr. Smita Halder

Coordinator, CoE IKS, UEM Kolkata Assistant Professor (History) Dept. of General Studies, UEM Kolkata

Tirāna Pravāha Advisory Board

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS, UEM KOLKATA

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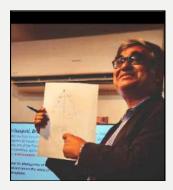












Iñana Pravatra Executive Committee























CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS, UEM KOLKATA

Executive Committee

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Dr Smita Halder Coordinator, COE IKS, UEM Kolkata



Koustov Mondal Head of the Department of Robotics & AI, UEM Kolkata





Glimpse from Brāhmī workshop

Jirāna Prowaha Students' Chapter



CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS, UEM KOLKATA

Students' Chapter

Bidushi Chowdhury, President B.Tech CSE (AI & ML) 2026 Batch Upahar Jana, Secretary B.Tech CSE, 2026 Batch Tushar Anand, Treasurer B.Tech CSE (IOT, CS, BT), 2027 Batch

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Harsh Tiwari
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Ujan Sarkar
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Arghya Paramanik
Tushar Biswas
Anusree Haldar



























February 2024

JÑĀNA PRAVĀHA

Inauguration

- February 16, 2024
- FICCI Auditorium











Pratham Āryabhaṭa: First drama by the students of UEM at CoE IKS, UEM Kolkata

JÑĀNA PRAVĀHA

One-day Symposium

- May 17, 2024
- FICCI Auditorium

Aryan Invasion Theory and Vedic Sarasvatī









Speakers: Professor Amitabha Ghosh, Emeritus Scientist, INSA, Dr. Amal Kar, Retrd. Principal Scientist, CAZRI, Jodhpur and Dr. Subrata Chattopadhyay, Former Assistant Professor, Adamas University, Barasat

Monthly Lecture Series

TALK I: PROF. SUSMITA BASU MAJUMDAR

- July 5, 2024
- FICCI Auditorium

ELOQUENT STONE: DECODING THE DRAMA PĀRIJĀTAMAÑJARĪ

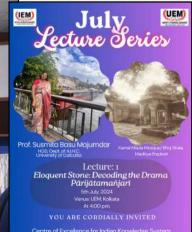
This talk intends to discuss the stone inscription found at Dhar in Madhya Pradesh, which bears a drama. The vast corpus of epigraphic literature that is found from different parts of the Indian subcontinent forms a major source for understanding various aspects of early Indian society, religion, economy, and culture, besides dynastic and political history. Epigraphic sources have been used extensively for reading early Indian history. One of the most interesting and unique genres of records is those which is designated as literary inscription. This category of inscriptions has brought forth some dramas and poems, the texts of which are otherwise unknown. The question is why these dramas were incised on stone? Among dramas on stone, we have the Pārijātamañjarī-nāṭikā or Vijayaśrī-nāṭikā from Dhar. Of these, the Pārijātamañjarī-nāṭikā is also mentioned by the poet as a praśasti of the reigning Paramara king, Arjunavarman (early 13th century CE). Thus, the composer intended to glorify the king in whose court he was adorned as his rājaguru or the royal preceptor. Though this is a praśasti or eulogy of the patron, yet it can be considered essentially as a literary creation, as the composer himself mentions it as a nātikā.

The speaker discussed this eloquent stone bearing the drama, and also the intended audience who had gathered to experience this play when it was first enacted in the 13th century CE. Almost all the dramas engraved on stone have been discovered from mosques.

By: Professor Susmita Basu Majumdar, Professor and Head, Dept. of AIHC, University of Calcutta







Jñāna Pravāha

August 2024

Out-Reach

August 12 to 17, 2024

Dr. Smita Halder was invited as a Visiting Faculty to teach a Weeklong Module on Indian Society and Culture at NID Haryana, Kurukshetra



Research Grant

August 24, 2024

Dr. Smita Halder received Rs. 50000.00 Grant-in-Aid by the University as seed fund for the project on "Knowledge System behind the Selection of Lands for Constructing Ports in Ancient India: Case Study"

Publication on IKS or related subjects:

• Penteado, Ana, et. al. eds., *Traditional Knowledge and Climate Change: An Environmental Impact on Landscape and Communities, Springer Nature, 2024.*

Jñāna Pravāha

August 2024

Coin-Exhibition

By: Numismatic Society of Calcutta













Student Volunteers: Mr. Arka Sengupta, Ms. Aditi Dey, Mr. Aniruddha Paul



The Numismatic Society of Calcutta

Read, under the WB Societies Act 1960



Mr. Smaran Kr. Das, Mr. Ravi Shankar Sharma, Mr. Harbinder Singh Saggu, and Mr. Vinod Jaiswal showcased their coin collections

Monthly Lecture Series

TALK II: MR. SMARAN KR. DAS

- August 23, 2024
- Moot Court

METAMORPHOSIS OF INDIAN COINS

India has experienced the rise and fall of numerous kingdoms within a wide span of about 2700 years of its historic period. Some of them were big enough to span the expanse of an empire, whereas others were so small that their names are not even recorded in the pages of our history. In many instances, their existences have come to light through numismatic evidence; otherwise, they would have been consigned to oblivion. Our country was invaded by several invaders, the Saka, Huna, Mughal, Pathan, etc. But once they have touched the soil of India, irrespective of their earlier identities, they have become Indian. Defying the doctrine of us or them, India weaves cultures, races, and religions in a tapestry that has become more intricate but unique. It is a country of heterogeneous peoples with a homogeneous identity- i.e., India, Bharat. It is a country with many languages, religions, and races. Our currency notes bear as many as twenty languages, which is unique in the world. Keeping all these facts in view, an attempt had been made through a presentation to tell the story of the metamorphosis of coins in India from the ancient to the modern era by the speaker.





Mahiṣāsuramardinī is not Durgā : Decoding an Iconographic Enigma

The journey of Bengal's Mahisāsuramardinī follows an uneven terrain in the course of two thousand years. In this process, the fierce buffalo-slaying deity undergoes a remarkable transformation as she turns into a doting mother and loving daughter, who pays the annual visit to her parents during the autumnal festival from her husband's abode at Kailasa. It is during this time that the entire Bengal celebrates her homecoming with much pomp and grandeur as the Śāradīyā Durgotsava. Înterestingly, Bengal has adopted Mahiṣāsuramardinī as her daughter, and though iconographically Durgā and Mahisāsuramardinī are two distinct deities, this land has blurred their differences, and hence in popular perception they both became the same devī. Through sculptural studies, the lecture will attempt to illustrate, how this amazing metamorphosis occurred over thousands of years.

Dr. Gourav Debnath Research Fellow, The Asiatic Society of Bengal



TALK III & IV: DR. GOURAV DEBNATH DR. ROHINI KAR

- September 20, 2024
- Moot Court



Elixir of Life: Ancient Serpentine Lore and Medical Practices

Serpents since the ancient times have been an important symbol in almost all world cultures . From Atharvaveda to various Buddhist and Jain texts down to the myriad practices of various tribes of this subcontinent, everything makes the serpents conspicuous in its varied roles. Outside India also all antique civilizations make serpents a very important part of their culture and frequently regarded them as the constitution of the control o symbol or cause of life and healing. Among the many attributes of the serpent, longevity is one that led him to become the very symbol of eternity. The serpent's ability to renew his youth with shedding his skin gave him an aura of immortality and quite fittingly so for even today it seems that it is accident alone that can take away his life. Apollo, Asklepios, the healer gods of Greek mythology, and Asklepios's daughter Hygeia are also closely connected to serpents. Asklepios was proficient in healing and could defer withering that came with old age. For this he was given a serpent as an attribute, indicating that those who take the aid of medical science undergo a process similar to the serpent. The belief became so well entrenched that the Rod of Asklepios, which is actually a rod or staff entwined by serpent wielded by the Greek God Asklepios. has been adopted as the Universal medical symbol.. Like her father, Hygeia's connection with snakes was also evident. She is the goddess of health, cleanliness and sanitation who like her father also shares a close bond with serpents. Most deities of India too have prominent serpent connection including Shiva, Vishnu, Balarama and countless others. This paper shall seek to address the connection between ancient serpent lore and medical practices, as to how far and why medical traditions throughout the ages have been influenced by such serpent legends

Dr. Rohini Kar Assistant Professor, Asansol Girls' College

Jñāna Pravāha

September, 2024

Monthly Lecture Series

Multidisciplinary Elective Course

August-November, 2024

Organised and Conducted by CoE IKS

ANCIENT INDIAN ASTRONOMY

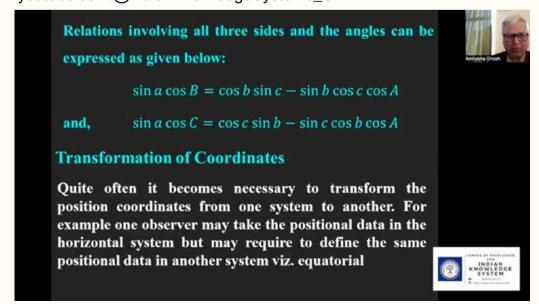


RESOURCE PERSON: PROF. AMITABHA GHOSH, EMERITUS SCIENTIST, INSA

In this enriching value-added course, we delved into the depths of history to explore the celestial wonders that fascinated and guided ancient people. Throughout this course, we tried to trace the evolution of astronomical knowledge in ancient India, blending modern knowledge with ancient ideas. In the ancient past, astronomy and astrology were closely associated, and sometimes it isn't easy to separate one from the other. The contribution of ancient Indian scholars like Āryabhaṭa, Brahmagupta, and Bhāskara in the study of astronomy, secrets of the cosmos, was also a part of the course.

The course was divided into VIII modules. including lab experiments understandable for people like an astronomy enthusiast, a history buff, or simply curious about the intersection of science and culture, this course offers a unique opportunity to embark on a transformative intellectual odyssey.

The classes are available on our YouTube Channel - https://www.youtube.com/@IndianKnowledgeSystems UEMK



Monthly Lecture Series

JÑĀNA PRAVĀHA **November**, **2024**

TALK V & VI:
DR. BANANI
BHATTACHARYYA & PROF.
NUPUR DASGUPTA

- November 23, 2024
- Online

Digging the Past

A new perspective of Kunal, Fatehabad on the basis of Recent Excavation

Dr. Banani Bhattacharyya, the Deputy Director of the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Haryana, presented unknown facts about the archaeological site of Kunal and its excavations.



Gendered Voices:
Perspectives from the Past

The Sculpted Body: Analysing Representations of Women in Early India

Professor (retd.) Nupur Dasgupta, Department of History, Jadavpur University

This presentation offered a brief review of aspects of the representation of the feminine in early historic sculptures from a social history perspective. The main intent was to trace the presence and absence of the woman as an entity and her transformed iconized form in sculptural art. The main focus was directed on terracotta and stone sculptures from a few important early historic complexes. This art was mostly created around the prevalent religious faiths and throws significant light on multiple dimensions of socio-religious life, including the social context of women or the feminine.

December 2024

DR SMITA HALDER
Coordinator, COE IKS,
UEM Kolkata

Jñāna Pravāha

Publications

in the Field of IKS and related subjects

In 2024

- "Exploring Junnar and its Early Buddhist Rock-cut Caves: Glimpses from Epigraphs and Numismatics", *Journal of The Asiatic Society*, Vol. LXVI, Number 1, 2024, Kolkata, pp. 41-70 (ISSN: 0368-3308)
- "A Prosperous Hub in the Hinterland: Situating Junnar in the Early Historic Context", Sumita Basu Majumdar, ed., *Transcending Boundaries: Premodern Cultural Transactions across Asia, Essays in honour of Professor Osmund Bopearachchi*, Primus Books, 2024. (HB ISBN: 978-93-6177-059-3).
- "An Observation on Matronymics used in Early Historic Phase: An Epigraphical Study", *Studies in Indian Place Names: Journal of the Place Names Society of India*, Vol. XLIII, pp. 27 36, 2024.

Invited Talks	in the Field of IKS and related subjects	In 2024
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- Invited as a resource person in the international conference on **Buddhist Heritage of Maharashtra** by the Savitribai Phule Pune University in collaboration with Dept. of Archaeology and Museum, Govt. of Maharashtra, to deliver a talk on "Understanding the History of the Kumāras with a note on their relationship with Buddhism: A Preliminary Study" in January, 2024.
- Invited as a resource person in the 106th Annual Conference of the Numismatic Society of India, to deliver a talk on "Understanding the Power-Nexus: A Numismatic Study of the Coins from Karhad and Kolhapur" from 3rd to 5th December, 2024.

Papers presented in Seminar/Conference

in the Field of IKS and related subjects

In 2024

- A paper entitled "Struggle for the West Coast: Understanding the Early Historic Coastal Polity" in the **Annual Session of the South Indian History Congress** held in the Department of History, Malabar Christian College, Kozhikode, Kerala, from 8 to 10 November, 2024.
- A paper entitled "Gunji Inscription of Kumāravara Datasiri: A Reappraisal" in the 49th
 Annual Conference of the Epigraphical Society of India from 6th to 8th December 2024 in Warrangal.
- A paper entitled "Kanthakasolapattana of Sihalavatthuprakarana and Kantakasela of the Ghantasala inscriptions: A Note" in the 43rd Annual Conference of the Place Names Society of India from 6th to 8th December 2024 in Warrangal.

Jñāna Pravāha

Golden Jubilee

Epigraphical Society of India

Lecture Series

Date: 02nd January 2025



EPIGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA (REGD.)

Honorary Fellows:

Dr. M.G.S. Narayanan

Dr. Kiran Kumar Thaplyal

Dr. Y. Subbarayalu

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Vice-Chairman & Editor-in-chief:

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To

Dr. Smita Halder

Co-Ordinator

Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge System

University of Engineering and Management Kolkata, West Bengal

Kuikata, west beli

Dear Madam,

Sub: Golden Jubilee Lecture Series of The Epigraphical Society of India – Reg.

As discussed in the Executive Committee Meeting held on 08th December 2024 on the occasion of the Joint Session of the 49th Annual Congress of The Epigraphical Society of India and the 43th Annual Congress of The Place Names Society of India held at the Department of History and Tourism Management, Kakatiya University, Warangal, Telangana, it brings me immense pleasure to accept your proposal to collaborate with your esteemed institution in organizing a series of 10 lectures as part of celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the establishment of the Society. The lectures from the eminent speakers would be compiled and published in the form of a Special Golden Jubilee Volume, edited by Prof. Susmita Basu Majumdar, Professor and HoD, Department of Ancient History and Culture, University of Calcutta and Dr. Subrata Kumar Acharya, Professor (Retd.), Dept. of History, Rawenshaw University, Cuttack, the Chairman & Assistant Editor of the Society.

In this connection I wish to state that your university has to create requisite financial, infrastructural and technical support. I request you to discuss the same with the university authorities.

The Society would be highly thankful to the university for their magnanimous gesture in organizing the Lecture Series and the same would be suitably acknowledged in the Special Golden Jubilee Volume.

Thanking you

Yours faithfully

Mv. C. Vanna (Dr. Meka V. Raghavendra Varma)

(1)1X):

C/o Puratattva Bhawan, Sankranti Circle, Hebbal 2nd Stage, Mysuru – 570 017 Website: <u>www.epigraphicalsociety.com</u> Email: epigraphicalsociety@gmail.com January, 2025 || Jñāna Pravāha

Lecture I: By Prof. Richard G. Salomon

ESI Golden Jubilee Lecture Series

- January 06, 2025
- FICCI Auditorium



"Kharoṣṭhī on the Edges: Recent discoveries of inscriptions and documents outside the usual territories and genres



Prof. Richard G. Salomon Emeritus Professor, University of Washington



JÑĀNA PRAVĀHA

TALK VII & VIII: DR. SHRIKANT GANVIR & DR. DEV KUMAR JHANJH

- January 17, 2025
- Online





VENERATING THE BUDDHIST SANGHA: A STUDY OF THE BUDDHIST MONASTICISM IN THE WESTERN DECCAN

Archaeological evidence, especially epigraphic evidence, provides seminal information to underscore the history of Buddhist monasticism in the western Deccan.

Archaeological investigations, carried out in the Buddhist caves of the region in the last two centuries, also unearthed significant evidence to corroborate the textual and epigraphic information.

The lecture sheds light on the nature of Buddhist monasticism in the western Deccan, as represented by archaeological evidence. The lecture aimed to discuss the pattern of monastic life and the role of the laity in the region.

Dr. Shrikant Ganvir, Assistant Professor, Deccan College, Pune



STATE SOCIETY' IN EASTERN MADHYA PRADESH DURING 'THRESHOLD TIMES' (C.5TH-6TH CENTURIES CE)

The talk attempts to understand the process of state formation under the Parivrājakas and the Uccakalpīyas in eastern Madhya Pradesh (MP) during circa fifth-sixth centuries CE. A total of 14 epigraphic records informs us about the development of the institutional structures under these two local powers. We delved into the process of transformation of the aṭavika-rājya into full-fledged monarchical powers. Besides the internal factors, an attempt has been made to understand the external Gupta and Vākāṭaka influence, in relation to the spread of Sanskrit culture, state society, and pattern of patronage in eastern MP.

Dr. Dev Kumar Jhanjh, Assistant Professor, Azim Premji University, Bhopal

January 2025

Jñāna Pravāha



Special International Talk



The importance of Numismatic Evidence in Reconstructing the History of the Greeks and their Successors in Central Asia and India

BY PROF. OSMUND BOPEARACHCHI

- Member of the French Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres,
- Emeritus Director of Research, CNRS-ENS, Paris;
- Former Visiting Professor and Member of the Doctoral School, Paris-Sorbonne University, Paris;
- Former Numata Visiting Professor, UC Berkeley



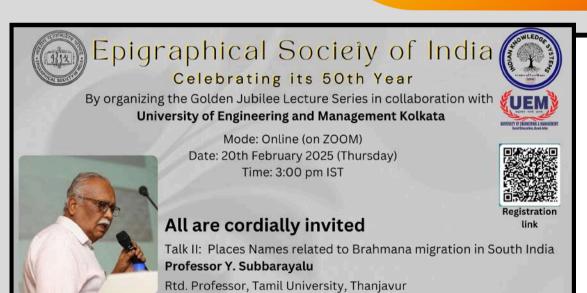
Some Glimpses



6th February, 2025 | Board Room, UEM Kolkata| Hybrid Mode



Formation of Students' Chapter
February 06, 2025
Board Room, UEM Kolkata



Place Names Related to Brāhmaṇa Migration in South India

> ESI Golden Jubilee Lecture Series

Lecture II: By Prof. Y. Subbarayalu

- February 20, 2025
- Online

Monthly Lecture Series

JÑĀNA PRAVĀHA

February, 2025



- February 27, 2025
- Room for CoE IKS
- Hybrid Mode





Kinnara Kinnaris in Early Indian Iconoplastic Tradition: Interpreting its Visual Language in the Light of its Iconography and Regional Variations

(2nd Century BCE - 12th Century CE)

Gandharan repertoire illustrate them as fairies in anthropomorphic form, other examples portray them in therio- anthropomorphic form showing either half man half horse or half man half bird celestial beings. Some depictions represent them as flanking and worshipping the stupas, bodhi trees and dharmachakras with garlands and flower trays in their hands, while others appear with musical instruments. While Indian tradition and aesthetic visualization was at work in shaping these figures, extraneous influences might also have impacted its formations. With the passing ages the literary tradition gave a deeper meaning to these fantastic hybrid creatures resulting in icono-stylistic modifications and elaborations of kinnara kinnaris visible in the various art centres of India.

> By: Dr Sreyashi Ray Chowdhuri Assistant Professor and Head, Department of History, Mahitosh Nandy Mahavidyalaya

Art demonstrates a rich panorama of the entire visual world. It is not simply the representation of the visual reality but also the manifestation of the abstract imaginative world impulsed by the diverse strands of metaphysical and aesthetic expressions. This is explicitly showcased in the mythical or hybrid variety of figural forms. In the hybrid category the depiction of kinnara kinnari forms an interesting genre and is an oft repeated subject in the fabric of visual art of South and South East Asia. In this paper an attempt has been made to explore the various iconoplastic representations of the kinnara kinnaris in the early Indian art from the 2nd century BCE to 12th century CE and investigate its iconographic and stylistic specificities with passing ages and changing geographical scenary.

The kinnara (male) and kinnari (female counterpart) are considered as the celestial musicians characterized by a hybrid physiognomy of half man half horse or half man half bird. They are engaged in the service of Kuvera. The literary traditions (Buddhist, Jaina and Brahmanical) have ample textual references to the kinnara kinnaris, besides art historical documents.

Considering the Indian context it can be stated that the Kinnara kinnari is a popular pan Indian concept that displays remarkable variations. While the specimen from the

JÑĀNA PRAVĀHA

SITE VISIT IN ANDHRA PRADESH

A PART OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

The Grant-in-Aid project aims to explore coastal Andhra and coastal Gujarat in order to understand the nature of the ports of Ghantasala and Bhrgukaccha. In March 2025, the Principal Investigator, Dr. Smita Halder, conducted a field visit to coastal Andhra. Based at Repalle, she visited a number of early historic sites, including Ghantasala, Vennampadu Dibba, Majeru (old), Kota Dibba, Chebrolu, Motupalle, Chinna Ganjam, Bhattiprolu, and others.

MARCH 2025



The visit to Ghantasala Archaeological Museum by Dr. Halder was reported in a Telugu Newspaper



At Ghantasala Archaeological Museum

I am Indebted to Dr. Ramachandra Reddy, Dr. B. Ramesh Chandra, and Dr. Konda Srinivasulu for all their support for a fruitful site visit in the eastern parts of Andhra Pradesh.



Photographs@Smita Halder

March, 2024

Jñāna Pravāha

ESI Golden Jubilee Lecture Series

Unlike the majority of stone inscriptions. copper plate charters, a very common epigraphic medium of premodern South Asia, are usually portable and were also meant to be transported from their place of production to their destination. Publications on copper-plate inscriptions regularly contain data on their provenance if these were available to the editors. Apparently, hundreds of such copper plates have been held in private hands for many decades or perhaps even centuries, without any information on their original places of preservation. But reports on the circumstances of discovery also reveal that copper-plate charters are very often accidental finds from the soil. made while ploughing a field or digging the foundation for a building. We also know of some prominent hoard finds of copper plates. However, only comparatively few copper plates have been discovered in archaeological excavations. This lecture will focus on a selection of such copper-plate charters which were unearthed from the soil, either as chance discoveries or during archaeological excavations.

The epigraphic findspots very often provide important external evidence, supplementary to a complex spatial and topographical reference system recorded in the texts of the inscriptions. The majority of Indian copper-plate charters constitute royal title deeds on endowments of villages and land

in favour of religious recipients. They contain information on the permanent or temporary residence of the donor king and of the beneficiary of the grant as well as on the location of founded and fostered religious institutions and of donated assets. Frequently, the knowledge about the modern places of discovery of copper-plate charters facilitates the identification of premodern toponyms mentioned in the endowment records.

Whereas, strictly speaking, copper-plate charters usually only record the intention of the royal donor, or the initiation of a foundation or endowment, we are very often lacking documentary evidence for the implementation and further development of these grants. Therefore, this presentation seeks to highlight that the information on the circumstances of discovery could contribute substantially to our understanding of the history of individual endowments.

By: Padmashree Prof. Annette Schmiedchen Professor at the Humbolt University of Berlin, Germany



Lecture III: By Prof. Annette Schmiedchen

- March 25, 2025
- Online



JÑĀNA PRAVĀHA

APRIL, 2024

Five-Day National FDP

Organised by Dept. of Management, IEM in association with CoE IKS, UEM Kolkata, NIT Calicut, and IEM-UEM HRDC Cell



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF FDP:

Survey of IKS domains: Exploring various aspects of IKS, including Mathematics, Science, Technology, Management, medicine, Astronomy, architecture, philosophy, arts, languages, literature, and cultural practices.

Sources of Knowledge: Examining the origins and foundations of IKS, including the Vedas and other ancient texts.

Classification of Texts and Vocabulary: Understanding the organization and language used in IKS literature.

Philosophical Foundations and Methods: Delving into the philosophical underpinnings and methodologies of IKS.

Special Topics: Addressing specific areas like ancient mathematics, Management lessons and traditional habitats.

Supporting Decision–Making: KMS provide data and insights that can inform strategic decision–making within academic institutions, leading to better resource allocation and improved institutional performance.

Al-Driven Automation and Data Cleaning: In 2025, machine learning and Al will continue to influence knowledge management with advanced automation and smarter data cleaning tools.

CONCEPT NOTE

Knowledge Management Systems (KMS) are transitioning in academia, moving beyond simple information storage to facilitate knowledge creation, sharing, and application, crucial for modern learning and research.

The FDP aims to help educators integrate IKS into their teaching practices and curriculum development. It will help in incorporating collaborative, experiential, and outcome-based teaching and learning methods.

The FDP will further by utilizing case studies, research journals, and articles help to enhance understanding. Finally this FDP will assist in providing comprehensive faculty training in specific subjects, curriculum development, and pedagogy.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge System (IKS), UEM

National Institute of Technology, Calicut

IEM- UEM HRDC Cell







काञ्चलको कुर्बालीतुई हाज्यँ बड्ट्रकुछ्छी काशीकर्र् राष्ट्रीय प्रोयोगिकी संस्थान कालिकट NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY CALICUT



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April, 2024 |

Jñāna Pravāha

ESI Golden Jubilee Lecture Series

Lecture IV: By Dr. S. Swaminathan

- April 09, 2025
- Online



Talk X: By Prof. Y. S. Alone

- April 09, 2025
- Online

Amnesia, Paranoia, Historical Consciousness and Protected Ignorance

Righteousness is a criterion or a phenomenon is something that always dwells in the historical consciousness and governs our thoughts. There have been various frameworks through which historical consciousness is analysed. At one level, the agency that produces historical consciousness is equally governed by those presuppositions, and hence

Customs, Faiths, Beliefs, and Ceremonies in Medieval South Indian Society as gleaned from Epigraphs

Inscriptions contain may details about rituals and customs of the bygone era.

They record many customers and religious activities right from the beginning of his life till his end. These activities are recorded in the inscriptions of South India . They refer to both auspicious and inauspicious activities. These are based on Dharmassastras but their actual performance are

reflected in the inscriptions engraved on the walls of the temples.

There is a similarity between the two. These ceremonies are performed even today. They form an important phase in the religious activities of the past and present and they cover throughout South India.

By: Dr. S. Swaminathan

Retrd. Epigraphist, Archaeological Survey of India

divine and sacred become the mainstay of interpretation. The lecture aims to analyse the role of historical tradition not only from the corpus of textual traditions but also through the role of consciousness that produced hegemonic thinking and how protected ignorance becomes objective formulations through the historical narrations. It seeks an inquiry into the practices or phenomena that produce paranoia and amnesia



By: Prof. Y. Alone Professor, School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi



ESI Golden Jubilee Lecture Series

Lecture V: By Prof. Vincent Tournier

- May 16, 2025
- Online



Sannati and Kanaganahalli: New Insights from a Revised Epigraphic Corpus

The 2014 publication of Kanaganahalli Inscriptions by Maiko Nakanishi and Oskar von Hinüber marked a major step towards the study of one of the largest known epigraphic troves related to a single Buddhist site in the Deccan. Their research considerably improved upon preliminary editions published a year before, in the volume of the Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India dedicated to the stūpa site, edited by K.P. Poonacha. However, Nakanishi and von Hinüber relied on a partial and, in several

respects, unsatisfactory documentation of the epigraphic corpus under consideration. More recent documentation campaigns have improved the available data, which allows now not only to revise the edition of the 229 inscriptions published in 2014, but also to provide new editions and translations of a further 97 epigraphs from the Kanaganahalli stūpa. Furthermore, to better understand the Buddhist site in its immediate context, a revised epigraphic corpus must include all other coeval inscriptions stemming from the territory of ancient Sannati. This corpus of over 440 inscriptions from Sannati/Kanaganahalli—including nearly a hundred inscriptions found on memorial stones at non-Buddhist sites—is forthcoming as an online publication. In this paper, I will present this revised and more comprehensive corpus, and show how it sheds new light on key issues, such as the chronology and patronage of the major stūpa site, the agency of other religious milieux in the region, the memorialisation of the dead, and the importance of Sannati as a seat of Sātavāhana power.

By: Prof. Vincent Tournier, Professor of Classical Indology, Ludwig Maximilian University Munich

ESI Golden Jubilee Lecture Series

Lecture VI: By Prof. Subrata Kumar Acharya

- June 24, 2025
- Online



Subrata Kumar Acharya is a former Professor and Head in the Department of History, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha. He was a Fellow (1996-98) at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla. At present he is working as a Senior Fellow (2023-35) of ICSSR, New Delhi. He is also the Chairman of the Epigraphical Society of India, Mysore. He was the General President of Place Names Society of India (2010), of Epigraphical Society of India (2023) and of Odisha History Congress (2025). His area of research is epigraphy and palaeography. He has published seven books and more than one hundred articles in journals of national and international repute. His works include Numerals in Orissan Inscriptions (Shimla, 2002), Palaeography of Orissa (Delhi, 2005), Copper Plate Inscriptions of Orissa, A Descriptive Catalogue (Delhi, 2014), Inscriptions of the Minor Ruling Dynasties of Odisha (Delhi, 2022) and A Corpus of Oriya Inscriptions (Delhi, 2024).

Pilgrims and Patrons in Simhachalam Temple Inscriptions

The temple inscriptions of Simhachalam bear ample scope to study the flow of pilgrims to Simhachalam from different parts of eastern India. In the present analysis we have identified more than eighty-three inscriptions of the temple which record the donations made over to the temple by various categories of pilgrims who visited the place from time to time. Many of these cases inform about the pilgrimage undertaken by the kings and their families, the ministers of the court circle, the military generals, the subordinate chiefs, the wealthy merchants, the religious teachers, and occasionally by the ordinary people. In the present article we prefer to investigate the pilgrims from medieval Odisha during the Ganga period. The socio-economic profile of the patrons, the objects of donations and purpose for which they donated will be examined. It will also focus the rituals and occasions on which the donations were made and how the medieval temple emerged as a major centre of resource mobilization and distribution.

BY: Subrata Kumar Acharya
Former Professor and Head,
Department of History,
Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha

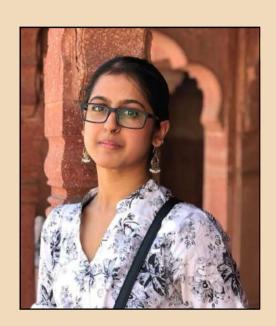
JUNE, 2025

JÑĀNA PRAVĀHA

TALK XI: DR. KANIKA GUPTA & DR. GOURAV DEBNATH

- June 30, 2025
- Online

Monthly Lecture Series



INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM: AN INTRODUCTION

What is the Indian Knowledge System? Is it a singular entity? How is it to be understood in our times, and what gave rise to this discipline? These are some of the questions that this talk will attempt to answer. Dr Kanika Gupta talked on these issues in her search through history, art, and culture for knowledge claimed to be lost and knowledge abandoned.

Dr. Kanika Gupta Visiting Faculty, NID Ahmedabad, Jorhat, Kurukshetra, Gandhinagar, IIT Bhubaneshwar,



ECHOES OF ETERNITY: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE VEDAS

Research Fellow, The Asiatic Society, Kolkata

The Vedas, are the foundational scriptures of Indian civilization, embodying both spiritual knowledge and the lived experiences of ancient society. This talk explores the historical, geographical, and intellectual dimensions of the Vedic corpus, beginning with their classification into four texts: the Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda, and Atharva Veda. Each Veda has a distinct focus from hymns and chants to sacrificial formulas and everyday rituals offering insight into early religion, cosmology, society, and healing traditions.

Further, the lecture will introduce the internal structure of the Vedas: the Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads, illustrating the evolution from ritual practice to philosophical theories. Particular attention will be given to the core values and messages embedded in Vedic teachings which remain relevant in contemporary society. The auxiliary sciences, or Vedāṅgas, such as phonetics, grammar, and astronomy, will also be discussed to highlight how Vedic knowledge was systematically preserved and transmitted.

Through this session, students will gain a foundational understanding of the Vedas as not merely ancient texts, but as a vibrant, multidimensional tradition that continues to shape Indian thought, ethics, and cultural identity.

Dr. Gourav Debnath Research Fellow, The Asiatic Society Kolkata

ESI Golden Jubilee Lecture Series

Lecture VII: By Prof. Stefan Baums

- July 22, 2025
- Online



Kharoṣṭhī Inscriptions and Manuscripts: New Discoveries and Insights from a Comprehensive Digital Corpus

The ancient region of Gandhāra was the cradle of one of the most ancient writing traditions of South Asia (as well as an early seat of Sanskrit learning). The oldest inscriptions from Gandhāra are two sets of Aśoka's rock edicts at Shahbazgarhi and Mansehra, in the local Kharoṣṭhī script and Gāndhārī language, together with related Aśokan inscriptions in Aramaic and Greek language. In the succeeding centuries, other Kharoṣṭhī epigraphic genres emerged, many connected to Buddhism – such as the relic inscriptions of the

Indo-Greek rulers and their successors, and other donative and ownership inscriptions from monastic contexts – but also royal inscriptions and a large body of coin legends. From the first century BCE onwards, these are joined by a large and growing body of Buddhist manuscripts on birch bark, which provide many intertextual connections with the Kharoṣṭhī epigraphic corpus on stone. Starting from the third century CE until the demise of the Kharosthī tradition around the fifth century, large number of Buddhist manuscripts and administrative documents were also produced in Bamiyan, and in kingdoms along the Silk Road all the way into China. The Kharosthī corpus as a whole thus documents the export and transformation of Buddhism and other early Indian knowledge systems throughout Asia, and the different genres and geographically widely spread findspots of the corpus demonstrate a remarkable cohesion of the Kharosthī tradition, each supporting the interpretation of the whole. - This lecture will introduce the Kharoṣṭhī epigraphic and manuscript corpus, and highlight this feature of cohesion using several examples of different sources shedding essential light on the interpretation of each other and leading to new discoveries. It will then describe the work of the speaker together with his colleague Andrew Glass, beginning in 2002, to compile and maintain a comprehensive digital text-image corpus of the entire Kharoṣṭhī documentary tradition on the website gandhari.org, currently numbering 2,858 items and continually updated. In addition to presenting the documents in both their material and textual aspects, they are there cataloged and analyzed in various ways, including the first comprehensive Dictionary of Gāndhārī, currently numbering 10,125 articles, and firmly establishing Gāndhārī as one of the major epigraphic and literary traditions of ancient South Asia and beyond.

> **By: Prof. Stefan Baums**, Lead Researcher, Buddhist Manuscripts from Gandhāra, Ludwig Maximilian University Munich

Resource Persons: Dr. Rajat Sanyal, Associate Professor and Head, Dept. of Archaeology, University of

Calcutta

Dr. Smita Halder, Assistant Professor, Dept. of General Studies (History), UEM Kolkata























Total Participants: 31

Date: 9th & 10th August, 2025

Venue: UEM Kolkata

Mode: Offline

Some glimpses from Two-Day Workshop on Early Brāhmī COE IKS, UEM KOLKATA

JÑĀNA PRAVĀHA



ESI Golden Jubilee Lecture Series



Lecture VIII: By Dr. K. Munirathnam Reddy

- August 27, 2025
- Online

Newly discovered Hoard of Eastern Chālukya copper plates (9 Sets) from Kodada in Telangana

These recently discovered hoard of 9 copper plate grants from Kodāda, Telangana, issued by the rulers of Eastern Chālukya dynasty, gives new insights into an array of events which led to the uprising of Eastern Chālukya dynasty, and especially throw a flood of light on the members of Kākatīya family, who played a prominent role in their emergence. religious activities. Most importantly it reveals the regnal period of individual kings of the dynasty, which is a rarity in Indian Epigraphical records. Further the donations and temple construction activities made through the charters by the kings reveal the prominent position of Saivisim, especially the Kalamukhas, in the region ruled by the Eastern Chālukyas. These newly discovered copper plate charters give ample scope for further research in socio-cultural, religious political and economic aspects.

By: Dr. K. Munirathnam Reddy, Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological Survey of India, Mysuru

DR SMITA HALDER Coordinator, COE IKS, UEM Kolkata

Jñāna Pravāha

Invited Talks

in the Field of IKS and related subjects

In 2025

- "Situating the Kumāravaras in the Early Historic Deccan: An Epigraphic Study" in the One-day International Seminar on 'Indian Epigraphy in the Twenty-first century: Discoveries, Issues and Interpretations' at the Department of AIHC, University of Calcutta on the 7th of January 2025.
- Junnar: An Early Historic Hinterland Logistics-Hub in the Deccan in One-day Seminar on Cultural Transactions across South Asia" organised by The Asiatic Society, Kolkata on 7th February, 2025.
- "An Introduction to Epigraphy & Numismatics in Indian History" in the Seminar Lecture organised by the Dept. of History, Fakir Mohan Autonomous College, Balasore on 18th August, 2025.





Glimpses from FM A College, Balasore Photographs courtesy: Mr. Akash Kumar Sahu

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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ONE-DAY SYMPOSIUM

From Daśarājña to Kurukṣetra Mode - Offline

OCTOBER 28, 2025

MODEL MAKING

An event by the IKS Students' Chapter

Mode - Offline

TO BE DECLARED

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

An Event in Collaboration with the Department of General Studies

Mode - Hybrid

TO BE DECLARED

WORKSHOP ON ANCEINT INDIAN SCRIPTS

An Event in Collaboration with the Centre of IKS, IIT Kharagpur

TO BE DECLARED

WORKSHOP ON COIN-MINTING TECHNIQUES AND COIN-EXHIBITION

An Event in Collaboration with the IKS STudents' Chapter, UEM Kolkata

TO BE DECLARED



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Smt. Banani Chakrabarti
Honourable Chancellor,
University of Engineering and
Management, Kolkata



Prof. Satyajit Chakrabarti
Honourable Pro-Vice Chancellor,
University of Engineering and
Management, Kolkata

Timelines

1st December, 2023

First advisory board meeting and formation of the Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge Systems, UEM Kolkata

16th February, 2024

Inauguration of the Centre of Excellence for Indian Knowledge Systems, UEM Kolkata, graced by Padmashree Prof. D.K. Chakraborty,

10 February, 2025

First Executive Committee Meeting

14th February, 2025

Second Advisory Board Meeting



Excavated site at Kunal, Haryana Photograph © Dr. Banani Bhattacharyya

