

The Sanskrit College and University, Kolkata
Call for Proposals for the National Seminar on
“Rethinking Indian Traditional Knowledge System(s)”

The Sanskrit College and University, Kolkata (www.sanskritcollegeanduniversity.ac.in) invites abstracts to its interdisciplinary national seminar “Rethinking Indian Traditional Knowledge System(s)”, to be held on 27- 28 September, 2022, commemorating the birth anniversary of Pt. Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar.

One of the major features of Indian civilization has been diverse systems of learning. Coming out of the colonial notion of looking at early Indian civilization as an otherworldly culture that was only concerned about spiritual exercise directed at liberation, scholars have pointed at different aspects of early Indian knowledge systems. Thus, alongside the rich corpus of texts dealing with spirituality and philosophy, there were traditions dealing with various facets of human life, including *dharma* (social mores), *artha* (power and wealth), and *kama* (pleasure). While there were practical treatises dealing with each of these three – the ones associated with Manu, Kautilya, and Vatsyayana, respectively, being the most authoritative ones – there is a vast amount of creative literature to compare and contrast with them and understand if the prescriptions matched social reality. There were also specialized works on various branches of learning from grammar to literature, from traditional accounts of the past to medicine and astronomy. The limitations of these knowledge systems, for instance their confinement to certain caste and gender groups, have been discussed, while various alternatives to the Brahmanical Sanskritic knowledge system, including the Buddhist and Jaina traditions, and the traditions in different languages like Pali, Prakrit, Tamil, etc, have also come into discussion. This seminar invites papers dealing with various aspects of these multiple knowledge systems – their nature, history, philosophy, limitations, evolution, and contemporary relevance. The place of traditional Indian knowledge systems in modern pedagogy can also be discussed, keeping in mind the debate between the Traditionalist and Modernist educationists in defining the curriculum, in which this institution and its former Principal, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, had a pivotal role as a scholar of Sanskrit traditional learning, who strongly advocated in favour of modern, scientific pedagogy.

Abstracts may be related (but not limited) to the following subthemes:

1. Traditional Oriental Learning and Systems of Knowledge
2. Languages and Indian Traditions: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern
3. Knowledge Systems in India’s Past and Present
4. Revisiting Indian Literary Traditions: Texts and Contexts
5. Indian Traditional Knowledge Systems, ‘Bengal Renaissance’ and Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar
6. Indian Traditional Knowledge and Culture: Translations and Modern Adaptations
7. Philosophy and Knowledge in Indian Traditions
8. Religions and Society in Indian Traditions

Applicants are requested to send their 300 word abstracts with title, key words and a short bio note to seminar.scuwb@gmail.com. Papers may be presented in English, Bengali, or Sanskrit.

Last date for submission of abstracts: 15.09.2022

Notification to selected candidates: 18.09.2022

Date of presentation: 28.09.2022

Registration fee: INR 700 (faculty), INR 500 (others). Registration link will be made available upon selection of abstract.