

Sarbajit Mitra

Work Address:

St. Xavier's College (Autonomous)
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Education

PhD in History, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2024

MPhil in History, Jadavpur University, 2014

MA in History, Jadavpur University, 2011

BA in History, Jadavpur University, 2009

Academic Employment

Staff, Department of History, St. Xavier's College, Kolkata, India | 2023–Present

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Sarbajit Mitra. "Interrogating 'parriah arrack': Anxieties over health, race and drinking in early colonial Calcutta." *Social History of Medicine*, Oxford University Press, 2024. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/shm/hkae027>

Sarbajit Mitra. "Addiction, Sex and Suicide: The Royal Commission on Opium and Social Anxieties the late Nineteenth Century Bengal." *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, John Hopkins University Press (Recommended for publication pending revisions).

Sarbajit Mitra. "A Contested Cure: Alcohol, Ayurveda and Therapeutic Debates in Colonial Bengal" *Medical History*, Cambridge University Press (forthcoming).

Co-authored Publications

Sarbajit Mitra and Souvik Naha. "Politics and international fandom in a fringe nation: La Albiceleste, Maradona, and Marxist Kolkata." *Sport in Society* 20(5-6) (2017). DOI: 10.1080/17430437.2016.1158482

Manuscript under preparation

Sarbajit Mitra, "The Tropical Gut: Digestive Disorder, Climate, and Medical Knowledge in Colonial India."

Book Reviews

Sarbajit Mitra. "Envision the Indian City: Spaces of Encounter in Goa, Calcutta, Pondicherry, and Chandigarh". *Biblio* 31(1-3) 2026.

Sarbajit Mitra. "Soccernomics: Why Transfers Fail, Why Spain Rule the World and other Curious Football Phenomena Explained." *Soccer and Society* 15(4) 2014.

Research Experience

Research Fellow, Digital Humanities Project on 'Famine and Dearth in India and Britain, 1550-1800', University of Exeter, UK and Jadavpur University, Kolkata | 2014-2017

- **Responsibilities:** Part of a team creating an accessible database of primary documents on famine and food security, funded by the Arts and Humanities Council, UK. Worked with East India Company records and contemporary Bengali literature. Contributed to database development through TEI/XML text encoding and thematic markup.

Research Fellow, Digital Humanities Project on Narratives of Migration and Exchanges: The Scottish Cemetery in Kolkata, Presidency University, Kolkata, India | 2016-2017

- **Responsibilities:** Conducted research for a project that created a public-facing website and database for the Scottish Cemetery in Kolkata. Researched personalities buried in the cemetery and examined their broader historical connections.

Research Assistant, Project on Eugene Sandow's tour of India, St. Thomas University, Fredericton, Kolkata, India | 2016

- **Responsibilities:** Assisted Dr. Carey Watt by identifying and translating Bengali reports from contemporary periodicals, newspapers, and memoirs that documented strongman Eugene Sandow's 1905 India tour.

Team Historian, South Bengal Heritage Survey, West Bengal State Heritage Commission and INTACH, Kolkata, India | 2011

- **Responsibilities:** Appointed by the West Bengal State Heritage Commission to survey and document built heritage structures across 14 districts of West Bengal. Documented 677 structures through archival research and on-site interviews. The final report is a reference for the Commission's conservation assessments.
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Conference Presentations (Selected)

2025

"An exploration of history writings in Bangla Little Magazines (1960–1990) through the lens of Ekshan"

Workshop on Anti-Colonial/Decolonial Text and Print in Cold-War era: Lives and Afterlives
Jadavpur University, Kolkata | March 2025

2022

"Interrogating 'Pariah Arrack': Inquiries on the perils of locally distilled liquor by the Fort William Medical Board in Calcutta in 1817"

Conference on Medical Identities in Global History
Oxford University, UK | March 2022

2019

"Modyopan Bishoyok Bichar: Interrogating Drinking as a ritual practice in 19th Century Bengal"

Visualising Cultures: Media, Religion and Technology

British Association for the Study of Religions, Leeds Trinity University, UK | September 2019

"'Speaking to the Thousands': Popular campaigns against the drink in 19th Century Calcutta"

Sixteenth Annual South Asia Graduate Student Conference

University of Chicago, USA | March 2019

2018

"The Curse of the Bottle': Intemperance and concerns over physical frailty in 19th Century Bengal"

Society of Social History of Medicine Colloquium on The Body in Colonial India
Goldsmith's College, London, UK | July 2018

"Anxiety over the drink: Public petitions against intemperance in late 19th Century Calcutta"

Radical Temperance: Social change and drink, from Teetotalism to Dry January
University of Central Lancashire, Preston, UK | 2018

2016

"Famine in England and India: A database and website"

Workshop on Digital Archiving and Text Computing
Jadavpur University, Kolkata | November 2016

"Exploring the Digital Archives of the Scottish Cemetery in Kolkata"

Workshop on Second Cities of Empire: Calcutta/Glasgow and the Legacy of the Scottish Enlightenment
Presidency University, Kolkata | February 2016

2015

"Amar Muluk Tumi Lutila Bare Bare: Scarcity, Crisis, and the Annual Maratha Raids in Bengal, 1741-1751"

Workshop on Food Security and the Environment in India and Britain: Historical and Cultural Perspectives
Oxford University, UK | 2015

"European Clubs of the Maidan: A forgotten phase of Calcutta Football"

Conference on Socio-Political Cultures of Football: Home and Away
Presidency University, Kolkata | January 2015

2014

"La Albiceleste, Maradona and Kolkata: The Politics of International Fandom in a Fringe Nation"

International Conference on the FIFA World Cup and the Nation
Organized by Taylor and Francis Group, Oxford University, UK | July 2014

"Bengali Babus on the Flying Trapeze: Circus and Cultures of the Body in Colonial Bengal"

Physical Cultures and Beyond
School of Cultural Texts and Records, Jadavpur University, Kolkata | February 2014

2011

"Divinity within Domesticity: Chala Temples of Birbhum District"
1st International Seminar of International Association of Asian Heritage
Sri Lanka Foundation, Colombo, Sri Lanka | April 2011

Invited Talks

2023

"'Indeed, a great evil': Opium and the anxieties within Bengali society in the late nineteenth-century"
SOAS, University of London | 2023

2018

"Bornibare Gulikhor Basona Hoyeche More: The case of Opium consumption in Colonial Bengal"
SYLFF Lecture Series, Jadavpur University, Kolkata | 2018

Publications (Non-Peer Reviewed)

Publications in English

Sarbajit Mitra. "A Cricket Match in Bengal's Chinsurah and its Fascinating Connection to the 1857 Revolt." *thewire.in*, October 2023.

Sarbajit Mitra. "Satyajit Ray's visit to the India Office Library to conduct archival research for Shatranj ke Khilari or 'The Chess Players' in 1976." *British Library South Asia Blog*, June 2022.

Sarbajit Mitra. "How Satyajit Ray achieved historical accuracy in his first Hindi film 'Shatranj ke Khilari.'" *scroll.in*, June 2022.

Sarbajit Mitra. "Madame Tussaud's Early Indian Connections." *Live History India*, October 2019.

Sarbajit Mitra. "How the hot-air balloon transformed Bengali character in the 19th century." *scroll.in*, April 2015.

Publications in Bengali

Sarbajit Mitra. "Bilete Purono Boi-er Bajar," (A Brief History of the Second-Hand Book Trade in Britain) *Bodhsabdo*, 2026 (forthcoming).

Sarbajit Mitra. "Unish shotoker bigyapone Bangla chikitsabigyan prokasonar jogot," (The World of Bengali Medical Publications in Nineteenth Century Advertisements) *Harappa*, September 2025.

Sarbajit Mitra. "School of Oriental and African Studies O London Missionary Society-r Songroho," (The Origins and Extent of the London Missionary Society Collections at SOAS) *Harappa*, September 2023.

Sarbajit Mitra. "Chutir Sulabh: Prothom Bangla Sharadpatra," (Chutir Sulabh: Pioneering the Bengali Festival Issue Tradition) *Harappa*, October 2022.

Sarbajit Mitra. "Unish Shotoker Mudran Sanskriti O Bangalir Nesha," (The Intoxication Debate: Print Culture and Social Reform in Nineteenth-Century Bengal) *Harappa*, February 2022.

Sarbajit Mitra. "Onyo Boimela," (The 1978 Bicentenary Exhibition: Celebrating Bengali Print Culture's Two-Century Journey) *Daakbangla.com*, March 2022.

Sarbajit Mitra. "Chobir Bhetore Chobi," (Painting the Past: How Victoria Memorial Hall's Collection of Colonial Paintings Shaped Satyajit Ray's Shatranj ke Khilari) *Daakbangla.com*, December 2021.

Editorial & Review Activities

Peer Reviewer for:

- *Sport in Society*, Taylor and Francis Journals
- *Presidency History Review*, Presidency University History Department

Co-curricular activities (Selected)

Criciq National Champion 2014, Cricket Quiz organized by Espncricinfo

National Champion, Inter University National Youth Festival, Ministry of Youth Affairs, Government of India, 2013

National Finalist, Espn-Star Sports Champions of the World quiz on World Cup Cricket, 2009

National Finalist, Espn School Quiz on Sports, 2004

Public Engagement & Outreach

Invited Public Presentation: "Mappa theke Manchitra- a journey through 18th and 19th century maps of Calcutta" for Delhi Art Gallery (DAG) at PM Bagchi & Co., Kolkata | November 2024

Invited Public Presentation: "Historical evolution of print and book illustrations in Bengal" for Delhi Art Gallery (DAG) at Uttarpara Joykrishna Library | November 2022

Heritage Walk: Designed and led walk on "Colonial Pasts of the Dalhousie Square in Kolkata" For Seek Sherpa

Heritage Walk: Designed and led walk on "Print culture and social reform in 19th Century in Kolkata" for Immersive Trails Kolkata.

Heritage Walk: Designed and led walk on "Sports heritage of Kolkata" for Immersive Trails Kolkata

Technical Skills

Languages: Bengali (native), English (fluent), Hindi (fluent)

Digital Humanities: TEI/XML text encoding, database development, thematic markup