

### Chapter-III

## Growth, Prospects and Research Pursuits

Having been elected Sarat Kumar Ray, Akshaya Kumar Maitra and Ramaprasad Chanda as president, director and secretary respectively, the Varendra Research Society had officially come into existence on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1910 with the following vision:

“The chief aim of this research society is to discover the truth and thereby ennourish the knowledge resource of mankind . . . . . Another important motive of the Society is to reveal the cultural ambiance that existed in ancient Bengal. As the clan unless and until we realize the reasons of our prosperity and depravity, how can we decide about the path that will pave way for development? . . . . . It is a well known fact that the Bengalee culture got flourished even outside India and influenced the places like Nepal, Tibet, Java, Bali, and other far off regions. Again one needs to contemplate upon the accounts of the degeneration of the Bengalees. . . . . All these need to be specified only to highlight the importance of the investigation cum research activities in every sphere of life.”<sup>1</sup>

Hence, it is not so difficult to understand that the rediscovery of early history of Bengal as well as that of Bengalees were the main and ultimate vision of the Varendra Research Society. In the Annual Report of 1935-36 of the Society, it has been recorded in this regard that:

“It grew out of a small Research party organized in 1910 by Sarat Kumar Ray of Dighapatiya with the avowed object of promoting and encouraging the study of Archaeology, History, Literature and Art in relation to India and with reference to Bengal.”

So, despite the vision of the Varendra Research Society was to restore the history of Bengal, a few issues of some other places of India were too incorporated in it. For the reason, that the link of the history of Bengal cannot be exactly bounded within the periphery of undivided Bengal. To a certain extent, the history of Bengal was furthermore associated with the other regions of India and outside India.<sup>2</sup> Anyway, in the light of the vision; the Society had fixed up its mission under the following heads:<sup>3</sup>

I) Collection of antiquities through - a) Exploration and b) Excavation

II) Research and

III) Publication

It is to be mentioned that prior to the ceremonial investiture on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1910, the Varendra Research Society had accomplished two explorative tours, first one was in April, 1910 and the next one in the month of June of the same year, and consequently became successful to put together a collection of a quantity of antiquities. At the outset, the Society used to conserve the antiquities by and large on the premises of the abode of Pramadanath Ray, the eldest brother of Sarat Kumar Ray. However a few specimens were as well got accommodation in the residences of Mahendra Kumar Saha Chowdhury and Kalipsanna Acharya.<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, the collections were removed to the two rooms of the Ghoramara Public Library to put on display. Kalipsanna Acharya was chosen as the opening keeper<sup>5</sup> of these collections or museum.

It would be unjust if we will not affix at this point two lists of names on the way to discuss the initial activities of Varendra Research Society. In fact, in addition to Sarat Kumar Ray, Akshaya Kumar Maitra and Ramaprasad Chanda, there were a number of individuals who were the attendants of the Varendra Research Society. The first list is of those who

were directly involved themselves in the initial activities of the Society. The persons of this list were Rajendralal Acharya, Yogendra Nath Gupta, Golam Yazdani, Sreeram Maitra, Vaidyanath Sanyal, Srish Chandra Sastri, Radhagobinda Basak, Debendragoti Ray, Kaliprasanna Acharya, Girish Chandra Vedantatirtha, Satish Chandra Siddhanta Bhusan and painter Anathbandhu Maitra.<sup>6</sup> And the 2<sup>nd</sup> list consists of those people who had a high regard for the Society and encouraged it by providing hospitality, felicitation, opinion, advise, assistance, backing and information of unexplored and the sites under the process of investigation. They were, for example, kshaunish Chandra Roy Bahadur of Nabadwip, Hemendra Kumar Ray of Dighapatiya, Gopal Lal Roy of Rangpur, Chandrakishor Ray of Vardhanakuti, Radhagobinda Roy Bahadur of Dinajpur, Roy Bahadur Kedarprasanna Lahiri( Kashimpur Rajshahi), Roy Bahadur Kumudinikanta Bandopadhaya(Rajshahi), Meeenakumari, Hemlata Choudhurany , Lalit Mohan Maitra , Ramaprasad Mallik (Rajshahi), Surendra Chandra Roy Chowdhury, Narayan Chandra Roy Chowdhury(Mahadebpur , Rajshahi), Yogesh Chandra Bandopadhaya(Manhali, Dinajpur), Rajendra Chandra Sanyal(Balurghat, Dinajpur), Bhuban Mohan Maitra, Kishorimohan Chowdhury, Kalicharan Saha, Harimohan Chowdhury, Seikh Lal Muhammad ( Rajshahi), Seikh Sirajuddin (Bagura), Karuna Kumar Datta Gupta, Jogichandra Chakraborty(Dinajpur), Nalinikanta Adikary, Chintamohan Mukhapadhaya(Balurghat, Dinajpur), Amarendra Nath Chowdhury(Ranaghat, Nadiya), Mahendra Kumar Saha Chowdhury and so on.<sup>7</sup>

It may be pointed out that since there was no permissible right of collecting sculptures and antiquities by the non-governmental enterprises till the first decade of the twentieth century, the endurance of Varendra Research Society had to experience of a danger at its very initial phase. In point of fact that the threat came into sight (1911) when the Indian Museum, Calcutta, demanded an inscribed Buddha image which had been collected by the Varendra Research Society from Balurghat. The Indian Museum was not prepared to be pleased by

getting hold of only just that icon and consequently ordered the Society to send out its all rare and exclusive specimens.<sup>8</sup> However, in due course the dispute was resolved with the meddling of F. J. Monahan, the Divisional Commissioner of Rajshahi and the assurance of Sarat Kumar Ray to put up a fitting building intended for the defense and conservation of the archaeological remnants. Yet, the Society had to make arrangement all the way through the intermediary of Monahan for the appointment of the Governor of Bengal to bring him to Rajshahi. This sort of backing of Monahan Saheb<sup>9</sup> afforded during the early phase of the Society was not easily forgettable. The VRS<sup>10</sup> as well even did not try to forget it. Because, the noble vision of VRS would have been died out in the starting point, without the support of Monahan. For that reason, we can notice to cite heartily about that assistance by Sarat Kumar Ray and Akshaya Kumar Maitra in their presidential address and ‘Upakramnika’ (introduction) of Gaudarajamala. Anyhow, the invitation letter of the Governor was possibly imparted by Sarat Kumar Ray according to the arrangement of Monahan, for which the former had to go to Darjeeling (In Darjeeling the Dighapatiya Roy family had a residence), the then summer capital of the Bengal presidency.<sup>11</sup> While Lord Carmichael, the then governor of Bengal landed at Rajshahi, the VRS had to organize a particular exposition of the sculptures to make an impression on him. If, truth to be told, Carmichael was overwhelmed by witnessing the exposition of the sculptures of the VRS.<sup>12</sup> It is to be noted that because of that awe-inspiring exhibition, the administration of Bengal in their Correspondence No. 11 dated 14 February, 1913 guaranteed just the correct liberty to the advocator of local museums in the question of ancient sculptures and antiquities. Consequently the activities of the Varendra Research Society in the area of collection, preservation and exposition got officially recognized. And in the succeeding year (1914) the VRS got registered according to the Indian Society Act (1860).

Additionally, the Society took up the preparation of a well set library in the museum to prop up and egg on the research and study of Indian history and culture. The first round collection of the library was put up principally by means of gifts obtained from the members of the Society. The initiative was taken in this path, no other than, Sarat Kumar Ray, the president of the Society. His remunerated representatives not only rummaged around the interior of Rajshahi district in favour of this cherished purpose, but as well in other districts, such as Pabna, Bogra, Dinajpur, Mymensingh, Jessore, Dacca and Comilla.<sup>13</sup> In addition, at the expense of the Kumar Sarat Kumar Ray, Srish Chandra Chakravarti went to Banaras and Mathura in search of the manuscripts of Jitendra Buddhi's *Nyasa*.<sup>14</sup> To be brief, the first round collection( Old Sanskrit as well as Bengali and few Nepali manuscripts), it comes into view , was collected by Sarat Kumar Ray who presented them to the Society's library. Among the other contributors of the collection at this stage, the most significant name was Maulavi Ahmad Sharif who presented 338 manuscripts which were collected by his uncle Abdul Karim.<sup>15</sup> Gopal Lal Ray, the zamindar of Rangpur presented all works of his personal library to the Society.<sup>16</sup> But owing to the dearth of records the names of each and every preliminary contributor cannot be identified.

In the direction of building a research facilitating rich library the above stated pathway i.e. the collection of old texts and manuscripts was not sufficient. Therefore, the Varendra Research Society took up some alternative means to collect manuscripts, books, reports, Journals and periodicals. They were as follows:

i) By purchasing;

ii) Exchanging with the Society's own publications;

iii) Publications on antiquarians of the government of India and other similar (with VRS) research institutions were acquired as presents.

It is to be recorded that Radhagobinda Basak, the lecturer in Sanskrit at Rajshahi College was assigned as the first honorary librarian of Varendra Research Society.

With the escalation of antiquities step by step the difficulty of accommodation was strongly felt in view of the fact that the Society had no place of abode of its hold. Truly there was an inevitability of the construction of a building for the ideal preservation and exhibition of the collected antiquities or to smooth the progress of the scholars to use those (antiquities) in support of their study and research. Above and beyond, there was the liability to keep up the promise of the president Sarat Kumar Ray.<sup>17</sup> In view of that, the present well-ventilated and roomy building which abodes the museum was put up by Sarat Kumar Ray at an colossal expenses of Rs. 62554/- and the terra firma, nearly two acres, was thoughtfully handed down by his brother Promoda Nath Ray of Dighapatiya and Basanta Kumar Ray, another Kumar of the similar line too made a input of Rs. 11000/- for the same use.<sup>18</sup> The underpinning stone was put down by His Excellency Lord Carmichael, the then Governor of Bengal in November 13, 1916. It is to be pointed out that in consideration of the public nature of the building and the organization, many individuals, laymen as well as engineers delivered copious service in its construction.<sup>19</sup> Interesting to cite that the drawing of the building was prepared by Sarat Kumar Ray himself. Resembling to the match box, the building was erected in ancient Gauda art or Pala style. The construction was completed in 1919. The antiquities that had put aside year after year were able to find permanent building for preservation. On 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1919, His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay, the then Governor of Bengal opened the building with admiring the family unit of Sarat Kumar Ray. In his speech Ronaldshay admired that “ The Society will ever remain under a deep debt of gratitude to the founder president Mr. Sarat Kumar Ray for his princely generosity towards it and its thanks likewise due to Promoda Nath of Dighapatiya for his generous and valued support.”<sup>20</sup> By the by, A. Foucher, the eminent French scholar and buddy of Rolandshay was

a distinguished guest in the opening ceremony. In the same day Sarat Kumar Ray vested the command of the building in a Board of Trustees, under whom the Varendra Research Society was to subsist in it for the purpose with the condition so that if the Varendra Research Society would get in touch with the danger line of extinction, the building will go back to himself or his successors or heirs.<sup>21</sup> One more clause was appended in the year 1924 through which the authorization to the Society to make use of the room of the main building intended for purposes additional than the shelter of the library and the museum would be terminable on sixth months notice.<sup>22</sup>

It is well-known that on the way to run an organization the most essential item is monetary aspect. Unquestionably, it is not an exception in the case of Varendra Research Society which took up a number of projects concurrently. Hence, it is our sense of duty to give something the once-over this aspect of the VRS. The basis of income of the Varendra Research Society can be divided under following heads:

- I) Income from subscriptions of the members;
- II) Generous donations of Sarat Kumar Ray;

It is to be point out that since the moment in time of the inception of the Varendra Research Society Sarat Kumar Ray started to make available of Rs. 200/- for each month towards it to meet the expenses and upkeep of the collection. Sarat Kumar Ray abridged his donation from Rs. 200 to Rs. 50 in the year 1917 while the Society began to obtain of Rs.100/- from the Government intended for the same cause. Even though the bulk of expenses either in the direction of exploration, excavation, excursion, publication of research works or to send Ramaprasad Chanda, Nanigopal Majumdar and Nirodhbandhu Sanyal for the handy training in excavation have been met from fund openhandedly bestowed by him.

Therefore, it can be said that the funding of Sarat Kumar Ray was the key source of income of the Society despite the fact that there were a number of other devices of income.

III) Onetime donation of different personages;

IV) Income from the sale of publication;

It is to be cited that this source of income came into being from the publication of Gaudarajamala and Gaudalekhamala, the two foremost works of the Varendra Research Society.

V) Government funds:

In the year 1917 the Government of Bengal sanctioned a grant of Rs.100 per month for the operation of the museum and in the year 1925 an additional grant of Rs. 250 per month for the salary of the curator. The latter grant was sanctioned for three years.<sup>23</sup> Hence, the latter grant would have been expired in December, 1927. Yet, within this duration the council of management of the Varendra Research Society made intense appeal to the Government to continue the same. In spite of the earnest representations and even special solicitations to the concerned respectable Minister and the Governor, the Government of Bengal dropped off the grant assigned for the curator from Rs. 250 to 150 per month December, 1927 on the ground of unsatisfactory support as of the public.<sup>24</sup> The Government funding was undesirably reduced 20% for the second occasion with effect from March 1932 on relation of their financial crisis.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, the grant for the curator was dropped down to Rs. 120 per month from March 1932.

VI) Savita Memorial Fund:

President Sarat Kumar Ray brought into being this fund in remembrance of his lamented son Savita Ray, a very amiable and talented boy who had been deceased from this

earth while merely in his fifteenth year (Born on the 4<sup>th</sup> Magha, 1308 B.S. and died on 28<sup>th</sup> Chaitra, 1322 B.S.), to the huge sorrowfulness of each and every one who knew the boy.<sup>26</sup> Actually, the bereaved father was keen to present a sequence of classical and until then unprinted works, such as *Bhasha-Vritti*, *Dhatupradipa* etc. with the lad's funds and in so doing to remember his dear name by connecting with them.<sup>27</sup> The fund was first made use of for the publication of *Bhasha-Vritti* in 1918.

Since the Society had been handling the Savita Memorial Fund free of cost, the donor of the fund agreed to let the Society to draw Rs. 100 per month for running it.<sup>28</sup>

#### VII) Grant of Rajshahi Municipality:

This is neither a copious fund nor it subsists for a long period of time. In point of fact that the Varendra Research Society by exploiting the instances of contemporary Europe and America where the museums were very often enjoyed the benefaction of the local Municipal Body/ Corporation,<sup>29</sup> applied to the Rajshahi Municipality for the financial assistance. The Rajshahi Municipality responded to it and sanctioned a grant of Rs. 100 per annum.<sup>30</sup> But the Municipality reduced this grant from Rs. 100 to Rs. 50 by 1928, while it increased collection of taxes from the Society.<sup>31</sup> And by the year 1931 the allowance was stopped up entirely.

It is to be noted that a suggestion to generate a Board of Trust by means of raising funds in support of management of the Society's museum was talked about in a meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> August, 1926.<sup>32</sup> An unofficial committee was as well employed to report on the conditions of such a scheme. Despite, the fact that the report of the committee scrutinized by the Council of Management of the Society, the plan of such radical change was discarded at that time.

But the financial condition of the Society was gone down in the succeeding decade. At this juncture of affairs it was felt that a museum resembling the one the Society had put up was of significance to the nation as a whole rather than to a plain private body.<sup>33</sup> It was then considered that the museum's interest would be more safe and sound in the hands of the Government of Bengal than in those of a private Society with very undersupplied funds at its disposal. In view of that an endowment fund was made for the management of the Society's museum. In fact the Trustees of Basanta Kumar Ray's Trust Fund very empathetically came up to Society's support with the face value of Rs. 30000 on certain conditions. It is to be stated that Basanta Kumar Ray through his Will dated 11<sup>th</sup> August, 1920 selected Promoda Nath Ray, Mahendra Kumar Saha Chowdhury and Hemanta Kumar Ray as executors and trustees thereof and whereas the said Basanta Kumar Ray breathed his last on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1920 without having revoked and changed the said Will Probate whereof was properly granted to the said executors by the District Judge of Rajshahi on September of 1921.<sup>34</sup> Under the clauses of the said Will, it was determined that the executors were supposed to be relevant the same to the objects useful to the residents of Rajshahi and it was furthermore directed that the amount must stay behind intact and the interest only ought to be used for the purpose. By way of this basis the Trustees stepped forward for the support of VRS with the condition of –

“The museum and the library of the Varendra Research Society should be transformed to the Government of Bengal for its future development and maintenance in perpetuity as a Provincial Museum and a representative of the Trustees of Basanta Kumar Ray's Trust Fund(TBKRTF) is to be included in the committee of management.”<sup>35</sup>

The stipulations of the Trustees of Basanta Kumar Ray's Trust Fund, was evaluated in the gathering dated 21<sup>th</sup> July, 1935 and finally it came to a decision that the fund (donation)

should be accepted. The decision was authenticated in a Special General meeting dated 28<sup>th</sup> September of the same year. Hence, a representation was put forwarded to the Government of Bengal in which the latter was appealed to get hold of the Museum and Library of the Society as a Provincial Museum under their direct supervision. Initially the Government of Bengal turned down the request on financial grounds.<sup>36</sup> Seeing that the VRS was stuck with, the Government in the end agreed to acknowledge partial liability for the management of the Museum and the Library of the Society in line with the scheme projected by them. Accordingly, the Society's Museum and Library were turned into a charitable institution under the Charitable Endowment Act, 1890 by the notification of the Government of Bengal Education Department, No. 3227 Mis. dated the 6<sup>th</sup> November, 1937.<sup>37</sup>

By the above mentioned notification, the site and building of the Varendra Research Society, its museum, now branded as the Varendra Research Museum, including of archaeological, historical and other bits and pieces and its library with books in print and manuscripts and as well its furniture and other belongings were vested in the Treasurer of Charitable Endowments, Bengal, on conviction for the maintenance and enhancement of the Varendra Research Museum.

### **EXPLORATION:**

“The history of Greenland has been written; even that of Mawri people is on page; however, the land that was constituted of the places like Gour –Tamralipta -Saptagram etc, that land has no documented history in writing” - quoting this statement of Bankim Chandra, Akshaya Kumar Maitra acknowledged in the Upakramnika(Introduction) of *Gaudarajamla* that ‘the reason behind this is not paucity of the elements of writing history, but rather, the lack of any investigation’. In the same Upakramnika(Introduction) he also revealed that the Varendra Research Society was originated to fill up that need of gathering information all the

way through investigation. And it needs no mention that the exploration was the most important mechanism of the VRS in favour of their investigatory projects.

The Account of earliest exploratory expedition of the Varendra Research Society has already been mentioned in Chapter I since the origin and the earliest exploratory expedition of the Society were interconnected with each other. Anyway, in the foremost exploratory trip which was carried out in April 1910 at the areas surrounding Godagari Police Station, there were Rakhaldas Banerjee of Indian Museum and Ramkamal Singha of Bangiya Shahitya Parisad besides Sarat Kumar Ray, Akshaya Kumar Maitra and Ramaprasad Chanda. At their very opening effort they could explore the places like Deopara, Pal para, Chhabbishnagar, Mandoil, Kumarpur, Vijayanagar, Khetur, Jugpur, Gulai, Itahar and so on of Godagari police station.<sup>38</sup> It is to be noted that Harimohan Chowdhury of Mandoil village and Al – haj – Lal Muhammad, the Zamindar of Gulai bigheartedly hosted the explorative team.<sup>39</sup> And it was Al – haj – Lal Muhammad who first presented three pieces of sculptures to the said team.<sup>40</sup> Within the five days of duration the explorative party collected thirty-two precious statuettes, including the life-size image of Chandi. It is to be highlighted that the illustrious Ganga icon, made of black stone and preserves in the Varendra Research Museum, was collected through this trip.<sup>41</sup>

The amazing success of the foremost explorative tour helped out Sarat Kumar Ray, Akshaya Kumar Maitra and Ramaprasad Chanda, the three pillars of Varendra Research Society to become aware of the truth that it would not be an impractical task to accumulate colossal archaeological evidences of the history of ancient Bengal if this sort of exploration could be persistent on a regular basis.<sup>42</sup> In view of that, the plan was made up to carry on regular exploration in and around Varendra region. According to this plan, the Khanjanpur of Bagura district was selected as the first site of regular exploration which was accomplished in the month of June of the same year (1910). In addition to Sarat Kumar Ray, Akshaya Kumar

Maitra and Ramaprasad Chanda, Sriram Maitra, an apprehensive personage in the archaeology of Varendra involved himself in this expedition. The first regular exploration of Khanjanpur proved to be a booming one and the party became successful to assemble a number of antiques in consequence of the keenness of said Sriram Maitra. Mentionable that even though Khanjanpur was the selected site of this expedition, the explorative party not only restricted their exploration within the same, but incorporated to the adjacent places like, Paharpur, Shivpur, Manglabari, Jogi-Ghupa, Amair and Gurni.

Owing to the success of the initial two attempts, the VRS set in motion to carry out programmes in this direction in a regular basis. Consequently, within 1912 the VRS succeeded to explore the places like Deopara, Palpara, Chhabbishnagar, Mandoil, Malancha, Kumarpur, Vijayanagara, Khetur, Jugpur, Gulai, Itahar, Paharpur and Haludbihar in Rajshahi; Khanjanpur, Mahasthan, Khetlal, Mahipur, Chhatingram and Satoil in Bagura; Birat and Satgarh in Rangpur; Dinajpur, Bangarh, Manohali, Basor, Tapan Dighi, Balurghat, Mahisantosh, Aagardwigan, Jagaddal, Aamoir, Dhuroil, Jogighopa, Hargouri and Ghoraghat in Dinajpur district; Kashi and Sarnath in Benaras; Vikrampur in Dacca and came off with nearly 150 stone and metal sculptures and over 500 manuscripts and a few stone and copperplate inscriptions in their disposal.<sup>43</sup>

Subsequent to the year 1912 the VRS organized their explorative operations regularly. But, ahead of the year 1926 there was a fall down in this course. In other words, the regular explorative tour of the VRS was stopped up eve of the year 1926. Nevertheless, there were some short term tours conducted by the members of the Society during the slack time. And in the month of February – March of the year 1926, the Society, yet again set out the regular explorative tour. It was organized and personally under taken by the president Sarat Kumar Ray and he was escorted by Nirodbandhu Sanyal, Bijay Nath Sarkar, Prafulla Chandra Gosh and Prabhash Chandra Sen.

At some stage in the early part of this expedition which set in motion at Paharpur, the party explored the northern part of Bagura district and a small number of places in the vicinity of it lying in the districts of Rajshahi, Dinajpur and Rangpur. All through the later part, the party visited a quantity of places in the South of the Bagura opening with Bagura town. According to the documentation of Bijay Nath Sarkar, the secretary of the VRS, the party explored following places: <sup>44</sup>

i) Paharpur (Rajshahi District), three miles west of Jamalganj, E.B.R. excavations which were in progress there, had exposed a titanic Buddhist temple bedecked with dados of Terra-cotta plaques bearing an assortment of interesting figures;

ii) Manglabari or Hara-Gauri(Dinajpur District), 8 miles north-west of Paharpur. The party noticed the inscribed pillar of Gurava Mishra, minister of the emperor Narayana Pala and the dilapidated temple on the top of small mound close to it. The pillar is well-known locally as '*Bhimer Panthi*';

iii) Khetal- (Bogura District), 8 miles east of Jamalganj. A Vishnu icon and a portion of an Uma- Mahesvara image were collected from there;

iv) Kalai, 4 miles north- east of Khetal. A giant icon of Vishnu was recovered;

v) Poonatta- 3 miles east of Kalai. A fragment of a 'mother and child' image and a few Siva Lingas were lying in the neighborhood of the bazaar;

vi) Basila- 3 miles south of Khetal. A section of a Vishnu figure and a broken Siva Linga were collected;

vii) Baratra- 4 miles north-east of Khetal;

Viii) Matrai- 8 miles north-east of Khetal. A monolith weighing over a ton bearing an inscription of Prahasita Sharma was dug out and removed to the museum;

ix) Biala- 3 miles north of Matrai. Three Vishnu images and the fragment of a fourth one were collected;

x) Silimpur- 1 mile west of Biala. From this place came the inscription of Prahasa Sharma;

xi) Bolgram- 1 mile west of Silimpur. Many of the images in the adjoining villages of Biala, Gurni etc appear to have come from Bolgram. A few fragments of Vishnu image were lying beneath a Banyan tree. There were a number of mounds surrounded by a moat which is famous as the 'Bali Rajar Bari'. Possibly this village is indistinguishable with 'Balagrama' of the Silimpur inscription;

xii) Birat-(Rampur District), 6 miles west of Matrai. It had a mound well-known as 'Birat Rajar Bari'. The Kumar of Vardhankuthi excavated this mound and had exposed a brick structure adjacent to a stone sanctum. The plain was comparable to that of the temple revealed at Paharpur but was on a much smaller scale;

xiii) Madhainagar- (Bogura District)- 4 miles west of Matrai. Some fragments of Vishnu and Surya images were recovered;

xiv) Kendul- 2miles west of Madhainagar. A fragment of Vishnu and a Siva Linga were removed to the museum;

xv) Gurni- 4 miles north-west of Matrai. An inscribed stone image of Tara and a fragment of Vishnu were picked up;

xvi) Briddhigram- 8 miles north-west of Gurni. Image of Vishnu, some fragments of Surya were lifted from this place;

- xvii) Patharghata – 2 miles west of Briddhigram. A stand stone capital decorated with Lion heads, broken image of dancing Ganesha, a Boddhisattva were collected from there;
- xviii) Hili- (Bagura District)- About four miles to the east of the Ghoraghat road. A image of Vishnu was picked up;
- xix) Jangai-(Dinajpur District), 8 miles north-east of Hili. A fragment of Mahisha-Mardini was collected;
- xx) Bogura- A number of images of Surya, Vishnu and Chandi were collected;
- xxi) Sherpur- 12 miles south of Bagura. A miniature bronge image of Sadasiva was collected;
- xxii) Mhasthangarh- 8 miles north of Bogra. It is identified with the ancient city of Pundravardhana. A stone inscription from Mahasthan was removed to the museum;
- xxiii) Bihar- on the bank of the Nagar River and 4 miles north-west of Mahasthangarh. The ruins at Bhasu-Bihar about a mile off were identified by Cunningham with those of the Po-Shi-Vihara described by Hiuen Tsang.

It is to be brought up that there was no single well thought-out regular exploration later than the year 1926. Yet, it is not accurate to pronounce that there were no explorations by any means. The Society, evidently, executed a quantity of alternative short tour or excursion instead of organized regular explorative expedition. In addition, the entire short tours were not restricted within the periphery of Varendra, to a certain extent; they were carried out in further parts of Bengal as well as other provinces of India. On or after the year 1926 to 1937 the short excursions acted upon by the Society were as follows:

- i) 1926-27- Minuscule trips were exercised by certain members of the Society, one of them being to the excavation site of Paharpur;<sup>45</sup>

ii) 1927-28- Mr. Nirodbandhu Sanyal, the then curator of the Society's museum completed a few diminutive excursions to Paharpur in course of which he assembled quite a few archeological finds. He also visited Mahasthan. Likewise, Mr. Sanyal and Mr. Kshitish Chandra Sarkar, the then assistant Secretary of the Society, while on a trip to Malda to gather some relics, visited Gaur and Ramkeli;<sup>46</sup>

iii) 1928-29- This year the Sarat Kumar Ray made small trips to Balurghat and Ghoraghat in Dinajpur; Dubalhati in Rajshahi and Sherpur in Bagura in course of which he brought together a few stone images and other antiquities;<sup>47</sup>

iv) 1929-30- Curator Nirodbandhu Sanyal made short tours to Bangarh and Tapan, Dinajpur Palace in Dinajpur and Rangpur to examine the collection of the Rangpur Shahitya Parishad in favour of the study of the antiquities of this part of North Bengal;<sup>48</sup>

v) 1930-31- Some excursions were carried out by Sarat Kumar Ray, Kumar Amitabha Ray and Kalidas Duatt in Katwa and Garh Mandaran and by Bijay Nath Sarkar and Kalidas Dutt in Sundarbans, where in the major sites were visited were Jatal Deul, Dalbari, Kankandighi, Raidighi, Govindpur and Banshamnagar;<sup>49</sup>

vi) 1931-32- Members like Sarat Kumar Ray, Sarasi Kumar Saraswati , Kshitish Chandra Sarkar and Vijay Nath Sarkar undertook tours for exploration but at their individual expenses.<sup>50</sup> A small amount of relics were appended to the museum;

vii) 1932-33- This is a significant year subsequent to 1926 in the direction of exploration. This year, no less than 47 part of a set of antiquities were added to the museum, nearly every one of which was collected all the way through exploration. Despite the fact that there was no regular organized exploration, three imperative tours were undertaken by the research scholar Sarasi Kumar Saraswati. He explored large segments of the districts of Malda, Dinajpur and

Bagura. The expenditure of his exploration was provided by Sarat Kumar Ray. Moreover, Professor S. Saraf-ud-din undertook a trip to Gaur, Pandua and contiguous places on his personal operating cost. And President Sarat Kumar Ray engaged himself on an additional tour to Gaya, Rajgir, Nalanda, Bihar, Patna and Pawapuri ;<sup>51</sup>

viii) 1933-34- Sarasi Kumar Saraswati took a diminutive trip to Simla for the study of an image of a twenty-armed goddess which he identified with Mahalakxmi;<sup>52</sup>

ix) 1934-35- Sarasi Kumar Saraswati and Dwijendra Kumar Chakravarty , the office assistant made a tour within the Dinajpur district at the outlay of the Society and visited Dinajpur, Raiganj, Chhota Pandua, Mohoso, Kamalabari, Itahar, Khamarora, Bhadrasila, Bankur, Sonapur, Baigunbari, Shadea, Surohor, Mahendra and Piyalipara.<sup>53</sup> They collected a few sculptures which were made over to the museum;

x) 1935-36-<sup>54</sup> – This year president Sarat Kumar Ray travelled around Puri, Bhubaneswar, Khandagiri, Udaygiri, Dhabalgiri, and Jaipur in Orissa. Besides the president, curator Nirodbandhu Sanyal toured to Allahabad, Delhi, Mathura, Agra, and Fatepur- Sikri as well as Puri and Bhubaneswar.

### **Excavation:**

Exhilarating by the sensation of the success of exploration, the Varendra Research Society made an effort to put its exertion in a number of perceptive excavation. In actual fact, there was a prerequisite of excavation in some sites to ascertain the genuine and flourishing history of pre-Islamic Bengal. In this regard, President Sarat Kumar Ray put down in black and white in one of his speech for a session (Calcutta) of Bangiya Shahitya Parishad:

“It needs to kick off excavation on the way to expose the archaeological chattels of these archaeological sites of Bengal. History would be revealed only with the

discovery of archeological chattels. On the contrary, it would be unfeasible to depict the genuine history by means of the evidences collected till date. It would be incapable to bring about the genuine history in any point of time if it remains satisfy with those limited evidences. History of Bengalees should be revealed by the Bengalees themselves and they are supposed to be engaged into digging the earth with shovel.”<sup>55</sup> Every single student of history is acquainted with that this statement is not merely a catchphrase of aphorism. This is integrated with the scientific method of finding the past evidences.

### **Kumarpur:**

The Varendra Research Society opted first Kumarpur of Godagari police station in Rajshahi district as its site in this direction. In his presidential address Sarat Kumar Ray brought up that the Society dug out a little segment of Kumarpur mound by 1912 and the outcome would be made public in a certain time. But it was not publicized, in all probability, in view of the fact that there was no such significant outcome of this initial endeavor.

The excavation of Kumarpur, yet again, got a fresh start. It is to be pointed out that there were more than a few mounds at Kumarpur within the one and the same neighborhood. However, one of them, footing next to the side of the main street from Rajshahi to Godagari was erected a Mausoleum over the grave of Ali Kuli, a Muslim nobleman.<sup>56</sup> In fact, the sighting of three inscriptions of Mughol period (17<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) from the zenith of this Mausoleum shoved the Society to point up the notice of the local authorities as well as the Archaeological department in 1923 to take actions under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act.<sup>57</sup> Following a succession of communications, Mokarma and Uparbari, the two significant archaeological mounds were brought under the provisions of the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act and affirmed to be looked after by the Government.

By means of their passion of venture of excavation the VRS unveiled the hidden foundations of brick wall of atypical width (more than 9 feet) at Uparbari and a Saivate / Hindu temple at Mokarma. At Mokarma lower ingredient of a pillar from a Hindu temple has been unearthed and this had been afterward made use of as a lamp post by the Mahamedans.<sup>58</sup> The heap on which the Mausoleum situated, stone relics indicative of Hindu derivation were seen lying on. The location is supposed to have shaped part of Vijaynagar; the first capital of the Sena Kings of Bengal and Deopara or Padumeswar from where the copper inscription of Vijayasena was lifted up is not very far-off from the vicinity.

### **Mahisantosh:**

Yet, not the Kumarpur, it was Mahisantosh, the earliest thriving excavation of the VRS as well as the Bengalees of their own enterprise. For the reason that it was accomplished in the year 1916 where as successful excavation of Kumarpur was carried out after 1923.

The site is located three miles faraway from Balurghat in Dinajpur district. The members of the VRS inspected the place in 1911. At that point in time there was an old Darga of the 15<sup>th</sup> century of the Cristian era encircled by a brick built fence<sup>59</sup> and a heap exclusively crammed with brick, stone and jungles. And there were two inscriptions affixed with the fence of the Darga. Even, several British writers referred to the ruins of Mahisantosh in their writings. But none of them, talked about the ruins of Mahisantosh. During the occasion of their first visit the members of the Society desired to transport one significant stone of the said heap to Rajshahi. However, owing to the dearth of time and being observant of the verity that the porters could refuse to touch the consecrated stone, they had to return with empty hands. In the succeeding years one of the two inscriptions were omitted and there was every risk of missing the pillars of the heap. Hence, the VRS came to a decision to excavate the site in the year 1916. The digging was initiated in the month of December under

the supervision of Debendragoti Ray, the member of the Society from Balurghat. And sponsor Sarat Kumar Ray in company with Akshaya Kumar Maitra, Ramaprasad Chanda, Upendra Nath Ghosal, and Bimalcharan Maitra joined with him in the Christmas recess.<sup>60</sup>

The VRS was successful to divulge the piece of information that the heap was derived as a consequence of the segregation of the brick-stones of the Mausoleum. But the most expensive outcome of this excavation was the detection of the striking presence of Brahminical and Buddhist art in the stones and pillars of the Mausoleum. Actually, a number of icons of Hindu deities like Mahishamardini, Vishnu, Surya etc and Buddha images were exposed from the debris of stones of the remains of Mausoleum. Since the stones are not fit in to the same era and same school of art, Akshaya Kumar corroborated that the brick and stones of the Mausoleum were brought from various Hindu and Buddhist temples of varied periods which were most likely not far-flung from the Mausoleum.<sup>61</sup>

#### **Deopara-Padyumeswar:**

Another significant attainment in this direction of the Society was the excavation of Padyumeswar tank (pool) in Deopara village. Deopara is a village of Godagari police station in Rajshahi district. It is to be pointed out that the inscription of Vijay Sena, the Sena king was discovered from the eastern part of this pool. The excavation was begun in the month of April in 1919. The total expenditure of the work was Rs. 200, half of which was put in by the Rajshahi District Board and the further paid by the Kumar Sarat Kumar Ray.<sup>62</sup> The operation of the Society turn out to be booming to find out 64 valued sculpture and three terracotta Manasa- ghtatas from the bed of the pool.

The fabulous success of Deopara- Padyumeswar stirred the Society and indisputably multiplied the guts of the members of the Society. Consequently, the Society took up schemes in favour of further operations in the similar line. But, till date the Society had no

trained scholar of its own in the technique of excavation. For that reason the VRS had to go through a number of difficulties. And so the Society deputed Ramaprasad Chanda in the Department of Archaeology in the year 1917 with the recommendation and arrangement of Sir John Marshall, the director of the Archaeological Survey of India. Ramaprasad had gained the practical knowledge of the method of excavation as a trainee in the archaeological sites of Taxila, Mathura and Sarnath and returned back to Rajshahi in the year 1919.<sup>63</sup> But the Society became unsuccessful to get a hold of this knowledge of Ramaprasad. Because the consort of Chanda breathed her last immediately after the conclusion of the training and the bereaved man left Rajshahi for Calcutta.<sup>64</sup> And there he got the employment of lecturership in Calcutta University in the department of History and Culture with the support of Ashutosh Mukherjee.

### **Paharpur:**

The most gallant step in this line was taken by the VRS in the year 1922-1923 when the president Sarat Kumar Ray consigned funds in the hands of Calcutta University intended for the excavation at Paharpur. The Government endorsed some funds in this plan as well. Being pleased about the sense of duty of Kumar Sarat Kumar Ray, the Archaeological Survey of India stated in its annual report of the year 1921-22 that:

“The scheme is to be financed partly by the Government of India and partly by Sarat Kumar Ray of Dighapatia, who by his magnificent donations and active interest in the cause of Archaeology has set a rare example to his countrymen.”

Paharpur is a mauza of Badalgachi police station of Rajshahi district. The village has achieved its name on or after a high mound (Pahar). The location had been inspected previously by Buchanan Hamilton, Westmaccot and Alexander Cunningham. Whereas Buchanan and Westmaccot illustrated the site of a Buddhist temple, the supposition of the

third person(Cunningham) was that it was of a Brahminical composition.<sup>65</sup> However, Akshaya Kumar in his discourse in Calcutta University decisively propped up the opinion of Buchanan and Westmaccot taking into account the loftiness( 80 feet) and the collective characteristics of the mound. And one month later, following the Calcutta University lecture of Akshaya Kumar Maitra, one inscription was uncovered from Paharpur by Sriram Maitra, one of the moffosil members of VRS. The inscription consists of a stanza of four lines in Sanskrit which bears witness to the Buddhistic derivation of this remains.<sup>66</sup>

It is to be highlighted that a little section of the heap was dug up by one Ghanesyam in 1876, who laid bare a large boulder which merely made certain the fact that the heap was composed of solid bricks. Therefore, taking into consideration the fundamental nature of Paharpur mound the VRS formulated prospective grounding to excavate it. But ahead of implementing the plan there was a requisite of its safeguard from reckless vandalism. In view of that, the Society submitted an application to the District Magistrate of Rajshahi as well as the Superintendent of the Archaeological Survey of India, Eastern Circle in support of the consent of the work and safeguard of the mound. The Archaeological Survey of India took action positively. The corollary was that the Paharpur mound was avowed by the Government of Bengal as protected mound under the Ancient Monuments Act of 1904. After receiving permission, the VRS set up the excavation in the year 1923 in collaboration with Calcutta University. D.R. Bhandarkar of Calcutta University supervised the project. Unfortunately the Calcutta University put an end to the excavation after some momentous progress of the work.

However, the task of excavation at Paharpur was taken up again by the Archeological Department in the year 1925. It is interesting to note that even on this Government scheme the Government and Kumar equally shared the financial contribution.<sup>67</sup> For this reason the Society was given a quantity of priceless antiquities (sculptures and terracotta plaques) subsequent to the completion of the excavation in 1934.<sup>68</sup> It is astonishing to note that the

systematic excavation of the Archaeological Department unearthed the remains of a Buddhist structure, i.e. the Sompuri Vihara decorated with dados of terra-cotta plaques bearing various eye-catching figures.<sup>69</sup>

It was with a view to carry out such big projects i.e. excavations by itself, the Society made a decision to send its curator at the eminent site of Mahenjodaro in Sind for handy training in excavation. As a result, Nanigopal Majumdar, the curator of the Society's museum took a course of training in excavation at Mahenjodaro under the direct supervision of Sir John Marshall. As regards the work of Nanigopal at Mahenjodaro Sir John Marshall remarked "Mr. Majumdar did good work at Mahenjodaro and that he looks forward to enlisting his help in future excavations in Varendra."<sup>70</sup> It is unfortunate that the Society yet again fell short to make use of the practical knowledge in excavation of Nanigopal Majumdar. In fact, being besieged by the work of Nanigopal Majumdar in the training phase, the Archaeological Department of India came to a decision to employ him in the post of Assistant director. Thus, Nanigopal gave up his job of curatorship in 1927 to join the Archaeological Department.<sup>71</sup> Even though the Society did not remain motionless exasperating with the development. Rather, it decided to send Nirodbandhu Sanyal as the third representative to get appropriate training in excavation. With the permission of the Archaeological Department Sanyal partook in excavation in the site of Mahasthan under the expert guidance of, no other than, K. N. Dikshit.<sup>72</sup>

To execute the long cherished aspiration to excavate a decisive and colossal site of North Bengal by itself, the VRS made each and every preparation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>73</sup> At this instant they had a curator who had been regularly trained in excavation. Correspondence was also made for the purpose in 1930-31 with the Director of Archaeology in India requesting him to entrust the excavation of a chosen site to the Society.<sup>74</sup> A sympathetic reply was also received by the Society from the Archaeological Survey of India.

But the accomplishment of this type of attempt depends absolutely on funds. And as the Society was stricken by economic depression at that juncture, the projected scheme could not be materialized. After the failure of this elongated attempt of the 3<sup>rd</sup> decade the VRS could not take up ever any scheme in this direction of excavation.

### **Casts:**

Besides exploration and excavation, a crucial step was advocated in 1926, by way of augmenting the Society's assortment and enhancing its efficacy to the scholars of comparative art, was the plaster cast of a few stupendous sculptures discovered and conserved in other parts of India. On the whole the sculptures which were revealed by VRS within the periphery of Varendra were more or less belonging to the related period and same school of art. Anyway, the first cast was of the renowned Mauryan female figurine which was exposed from Didarganj and potted in Patna Museum. The cast was crafted by Shyamapada Mishra, the modeler of the Patna Museum. It was handed over (1926) in exchange of a Vishnu image from the museum of the Society.<sup>75</sup> Six new plaster casts of the Sunga and Saka epochs were added in the following year. The outlay of these six plaster casts – one of being disbursed by Jadunath Sarkar and of four by Kumar Sarat Kumar Ray and that of one being paid out from a donation contributed by Hiralal Ghosh.<sup>76</sup>

Furthermore, the Varendra Research Society purchased an old print of the ruins of the city of Gaur drawn and engraved by Thomas Daniell and published in 1795.<sup>77</sup>

In consequence of these explorations, excavation and other alternative mode of collection, the museum of the Varendra Research Society was come out as an epistolary of antiquities for the history of ancient Bengal. It is to be kept in mind that the museum of the VRS was not filled up merely with sculptures, inscriptions, terra-cotta and coins of the Ancient period of Bengal, a lot of Muslim inscriptions, sculptures were also added to the

museum. In conjunction with them a quantity of coins issued by the Sultans of Bengal and Delhi and as well of the Mughol emperors were appended.

On the other hand, the library, the nucleus of the museum of VRS too came into view as a prosperous library comprising of manuscripts, rare books, periodicals, bulletins, magazines, reports and other well-off literary stuffs.

The statistics of the anthology of the museum and library (till 1937) of the Varendra Research Society are put together in the following tables:

**Collection of the Museum till 1937 <sup>78</sup>**

Serial no	Bits and pieces	April 1910 - November 1937
1.	<b>Sculptures</b>	
	a)Stone→	761
	b)Metal→	41
	c)Wood→	2
	d)Clay →	4
	Sculptures= Total	808
2.	<b>Epigraphs</b>	
	a)Copper plates →	10
	b)Stone, Sanskrit→	12
	c)Brick , Sanskrit→	1
	d)Stone, Arabic →	6
	e)Stone, Persian→	2
	f)Bronze cannon, Persian →	2
	Epigraphs= Total	33
3.	<b>Coins</b>	
	a)Gold →	23
	b)Silver →	215
	c)Copper→	182

	d)Billon →	13
	e)Nickel →	–
	f)Lead →	1
	Coins=	Total
		434
	<b>Terra-cottas</b>	
	a)Ornamental bricks→	196
	b)Human figures →	10
	c)Animal figures →	1
4.	d)Pottery →	31
	e)Inscribed Seals →	20
	f)Moulded Plaques→	14
	g)Glazed tiles →	29
	Terra-cottas=	Total
		301
5.	<b>Farman and Documents</b> →	5
6.	<b>Guns</b> →	4
7.	<b>Garments</b> →	4
<b>Grand Total=</b>		<b>1589</b>

Table- 4

**Library Collection** <sup>79</sup>

Serial no	Bits and pieces	April 1910 - November 1937
	<b>Manuscripts</b>	
1.	a)Sanskrit→	2530
	b)Bengali→	1223
	Manuscripts=	Total
		3753
2.	<b>Books and Periodicals</b>	1832
3.	<b>Other Literary items</b>	291

Table-5

### **Research and Publication till 1937:**

The Varendra Research Society had not ceased its sense of duty by means of accumulating the evidences of history of Bengal or by making the display of the same in its museum. It is already submitted that the Society executed a number of sustaining operations to realize the vision of the reconstruction of history of Bengal. And undeniably, the research and publication was one of the key mission in the line.<sup>80</sup> Accordingly, the skilled scholars of the VRS carried out research scheme from the very beginning with the basis of the stuffs collected by the society, formerly discovered evidences and utilizing its own handy reference library. And thus the Society took in hand the programme of compilation of the upshots of research activities and publishes them in a series of work named '*Gaudavivarana*'. Intended for the motive of discussion of different subject matters in different divisions, the VRS divided the '*Gaudavivarana*' into eight sections:<sup>81</sup>

- i) *Rajamala* (Dynastic History)
- ii) *Shilpamala* (Art)
- iii) *Vivaranamala* (Antiquarian Topography)
- iv) *Lekhamala* (Inscriptions)
- v) *Granthamala* (Old Sanskrit text)
- vi) *Jatitattva* (Ethnology)
- vii) *Shrimurtitattva* (Iconography)
- viii) *Upasak Sampraday* (Religious Sects).

The proficient scholars of the Varendra Research Society were not only contended with the subjects connected to the history of Bengal, relatively, they practiced different other

subjects interrelated to the history of greater India. Moreover, just not the research outcome, several old manuscripts were also published with notes and introduction as the segment of *Gaudavivarana*.

It is nearly beyond belief to note that above and beyond skillful scholars like Akshaya Kumar Maitra, Ramaprasad Chanda, Radhagovinda Basak, Kshitish Chandra Sarkar, Nanigopal Majumdar and so forth, there was a Post Graduate scholarship in the Varendra Research Society which was sanctioned by the Government of Bengal in appreciation of the former's involvement in the field of research activities. Tarapada Bhattacharya was the first post-graduate research scholar appointed to the Society under the direction and control of Akshaya Kumar Maitra.<sup>82</sup> The subject of his research was *Indian Architecture*. And Since Nanigopal Majumdar, the curator of the museum was also a distinguished scholar, the Society tried hard to place one research scholar under him.<sup>83</sup> But the effort turned out to be unproductive. Anyway, after the conclusion of the tenure of Tarapada Bhattacharya in the month of July, 1927, he was replaced by Nirodbandhu Sanyal. It is to be noted that, Nirodbandhu Sanyal was linked up with the Society, even prior to that appointment.<sup>84</sup> At that earlier period he studied the *Architecture in the Barhut Reliefs*. And when he joined as the post-graduate research scholar, he engaged himself in research into the *Early History of Bengal*.<sup>85</sup> Although the moment when Nirodbandhu Sanyal joined in the post of curator of the museum as the replacement of Nanigopal Majumdar<sup>86</sup>, the Government of Bengal put an end to the Post Graduate scholarship. Lot of efforts were made in support of the reinstatement of the scholarship. In due course, the Director of the Public Instruction (DPI) considered the issue very empathetically and restored the same.<sup>87</sup> Accordingly, Sarasi Kumar Saraswati had been appointed as the third post-graduate research scholar to the Society under the supervision of Nirodbandhu Sanyal, the curator in the month of July, 1931. Sarasi Kumar Saraswati worked on *Art and Archaeology of Bengal*.<sup>88</sup> The tenure of his scholarship was

completed by May 31, 1934. Though he applied for a renewal of his scholarship to complete the work, the extension was not approved.

To provide knowledge to the students of Rajshahi in the method of research the society opened a student's section in the year 1930-31. In actual fact, the educationists who visited the Society's compound, including the Sadler Commission recommended the Society to fabricate some close cooperation between the two institutions of Rajshahi viz... the Rajshahi College and the Varendra Research Society.<sup>89</sup> As a result the advanced students of Rajshahi College entertained instructions in various subjects such as epigraphy, numismatics, sculpture, iconography and reading and editing of manuscripts. Curator Nirodbandhu Sanyal and post-graduate research scholar Sarasi Kumar Saraswati used to take classes on Sunday in this section.<sup>90</sup> It is soothing to cite that the Student Section produced sweeping inquisitiveness among the advanced students of Rajshahi College. In other words, it can be uttered that the experimentation proved to be very successful.

### **Research Outcome Till 1937:**

#### **I) *Gaudarajamala* (1912)-**

This foremost original work of the Varendra Research Society was put in writing by Ramaprasad Chanda, the then secretary and published as the first volume of the first part of *Gaudavivarana*. The intact chronological political account (Dynastic History) of Bengal till the institution of the Muslim regime was integrated in it.

*Gaudarajamala* was essentially the history of Ancient Bengal composed on the basis of stone inscriptions and copperplates. An additional set of sources like the study of inscriptions discovered in other provinces, historical essence of the old manuscripts and the researches of the earlier investigators in the line were put into effect in writing this invaluable

work .<sup>91</sup> However, Ramaprasad Chanda did not show any sort of curiosity on popular fairy stories in lettering it.

It is remarkable that the first volume of the first part of *Gaudavivarana* i.e. *Gaudarajamala* was written in Bengali in the hope that it would reach like a calendar in the hands of every Bengalees in every corner of Bengal to furnish knowledge concerning the ancient history of their own.<sup>92</sup>

## II) *Gaudalekhamala* (1912)-

In this work Akshaya Kumar Maitra amassed fifteen exclusive Inscriptions (Copper and stone) of the Pala period and put out with annotations and prologue as the opening volume of the fourth part (Lekhamala) of *Gaudavivarana*. The incorporated inscriptions were:

- i) Khalimpur Copper Plate of Dharmapaladeva
- ii) Keshaba Prashasti
- iii) Mughyer Copper Plate of Devapaladeva
- iv) Veerdeb Prashasti
- v) Bhagalpur Copper Plate of Narayanapaladeva
- vi) Badal Inscription
- vii) Bageeswari Inscription of Gopaladeva II
- viii) Shatrusen Inscription of Gopaladeva II
- ix) Bangarh Copper Plate of Mahipaladeva I
- x) Baladitya/Nalanda Inscription

xi) Sarnath Inscription of Mahipaladeva I

Xii) Krsishne- Dwarika temple Inscription of Nayapaladeva

xiii) Amgachi Copper Plate of Vighrapaladeva III

xiv) Kamouli Copper Plate of Vaidyadeva

xv) Manahali Copper Plate of Madanapaladeva.

Akshaya Kumar Maitra had pointed out two important reasons regarding the importance of the anthology of *Gaudalekhamala* :<sup>93</sup>

Firstly, “Among the ancient stone and metal inscriptions written in Sanskrit that got discovered till date (1912), although not a huge number of them have intimate associations with the history of Bengal yet it was a tiresome work to trace out about a particular inscription from the existing bulk of books and essays. Although Kilharn had to help in overcoming this difficulty yet there was no possibility to know about all these ancient inscriptions together in Bengali.”

Secondly, “The history of Bengal that gets revealed through the ancient inscriptions, the history of Varendra occupies the major parts. It is because; all these antiquities are related to the rulers of Varendra region. Without compiling all these inscriptions together the endeavour to have a collected account of Gauda would not have been possible and it would also have been impossible to deliver, through proper interpretation, the authentic meaning of descriptions available in the inscriptions. Only after comprehending a large number of ancient inscriptions of one particular period, one can recognize the real meaning of the descriptions available in the antiquities. One inscription complements to the deciphering and interpretation of another one. The inscriptions when get explained singularly, there is

possibility that it might appear to be a trivial one, however when eventually other inscriptions get discovered, then the historians often understand the real importance of the previous one.”

It is to be remembered that later than the publication of *Gaudalekhamala*, more than hundred inscriptions of the Pala period got discovered. However, the well composed *Gaudalekhamala* is still indispensable to the scholars to work on Pala period.<sup>94</sup>

### III) *Tara-tantram* (1914)-

The VRS published Girish Chandra Vedanta Tirtha's *Taratantram* as the first work of Gauda Granthamala with the introduction of Akshaya Kumar Maitra.

It may be noted that the *Taratantram* is one of the *Tantric Mahavidya* (majestic instruction) which relates to the veneration of Tara.<sup>95</sup> The huge quantity of works associated with worship of Tara, demonstrate the enormous popularity which one acquired and maintained by this cult. To give an idea about useful light on the system of Tantric worship, the VRS tried to find out and publish old original manuscripts on Tantras. The Society not only turned out to be successful to collect Girish Chandra Vedanta Tirtha's *Taratantram* but more than a few rare original works on the same.

### iv) *Kashika-Vivarana- Panjika(The Nyasa)*-

Jitendra Buddhi's *Kashika-Vivarana-Panjika* (A commentary on Vamana-Jayaditya's *Kaska*), was published by VRS in eight chapters of three volumes.

All the eight chapters were edited with occasional notes by Srish Chandra Chakravarti, the superintendent of Sanskrit manuscripts of the Society. The first two chapters or the first volume was published in 1914.<sup>96</sup> By 1924 four more chapters were published. The 7<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> chapters were brought out in 1925. It is to be remembered that the last two chapters were published with the help of Savita memorial fund.<sup>97</sup>

The work of edition of *Kashika-Vivarana-Panjika* by Srish Chandra Chakravarti was highly admired by the scholars. In the words of Professor H. Jacobi of Germany and Professor Sten Konow,<sup>98</sup>

“Done in a scholarly manner”

“The edition is very good and scholar like.”

#### V) *The Indo-Aryan Races* (1916)-

It was the first volume of the 6<sup>th</sup> part (Jatitatta) of the *Gaudavivarana*. It is the product of ground-breaking research of Ramaprasad Chanda on ethnography.<sup>99</sup>

Actually, after going through the study of a number of works for a long time and completing experimentations according to anthropological methods, Ramaprasad Chanda had written a quantity of essays on the origin and features of the Bengalees. *The Indo-Aryan Races* was put out as the compilation of those essays. Therefore it is, no doubt, an outstanding work. Professor A. Berriedal Keith stated that

“This, the fifth of the publication of the Varendra Research Society, is by far the most important work issued by the Society and forms a valuable addition to the literature dealing with the origin of the Indo-Aryan peoples.”<sup>100</sup>

#### VI) *The Bhashavritti* (1918)-

The *Bhasha- vritti* of Purushottamdeva is, in actual fact, a commentary on Panini’s grammatical aphorism with the exception of those which totally is relevant to the Vedas.<sup>101</sup> This grammatical work was edited by Srish Chandra Chakravarti and dedicated to Sabita Ray, the deceased son of Sarat Kumar Ray.

It may be pointed out that there was a vast stride of Buddhist culture over North Bengal all through the pre- Muhameddan rule. It touched its literary motion and it facilitated to a large extent in dispersal the classical education there. Grammatical works by Buddhists such as Vamana - Jayaditya, Jitendrabuddhi, Maitreya Rakshita and Purushottamdeva, were enormously studied by and the Bhasha- Vritti fashioned an elementary textbook of Sanskrit grammar to its literary populace.

However, the primary attempt to publish this important grammatical work was made by Peetambara Tarkalankar and Harish Chandra Goshwami with the benefaction of Babu Prasanna Kumar Bhattacharya of Rajshahi in 1906; But after no more than the first six forms had been in print, Babu Prasanna Kumar expired and the effort fell through; One more endeavor to publish the same, with the aid of those manuscripts, was next made by the Asiatic society of Bengal; Although ahead of the completion of the printing of the first part of its first chapter the Asiatic society also kept back the work in abeyance; Eventually, it was published by the Varendra Research Society.<sup>102</sup>

#### VII) *Dhatupradipah-*

The Society published one more Sanskrit manuscript, *Dhatupradipah* of Maitreya Rakshita in the year 1919. It is a work on Paniniya dhatupatha or Sanskrit verbal roots. It is also edited by Srish Chandra Chakravarti.

VIII) *A Catalogue of the Archaeological Relics in the Museum of Varendra Research Society* was prepared by Radhagovinda Basak and Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharyya and published in 1919.

IX) *A Descriptive List of Copper Plates and Inscriptions in the Museum of the Varendra Research Society* was also compiled by Nirodbandhu Sanyal and brought out in the year 1928. The expenditure of its printing was very kindly contributed by Jadunath Sarkar.<sup>103</sup>

**X) *Alamkara- Kaustabha-***

Kavi Karnapura's *Alamkara- Kaustabha* is a work on Sanskrit poetics. The VRS decided to publish it in two (I & II) parts. Accordingly those were published in 1926 and 1934 under the compilation of Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya.

The work was extremely appreciated by the then reputed scholars like Ganganath Jha, A. B. Keith and H. Jacobi.<sup>104</sup>

**XI) *Prayaschitta- Prakaranam-***

It is a text on expiatory rites written by Bhatta Bhavadeva.<sup>105</sup> Under the compilation of Girish Chandra Vedantatirtha the text was published in 1927.

**XII) *Inscriptions of Bengal, Volume III* (1929)-**

This worth mentioning collection was edited with translations and notes by Nanigopal Majumdar. In fact, during the publication of *Gaudalekhamala*, the Society voiced its inclination to issue similar volumes containing the inscriptions of the Senas and other dynasties. Since the Society was busy in other activities, it could not take up that scheme for a long time. But in the month of December, 1924 when Nanigopal Majumdar joined in the post of curator of the Society, the council of management asked him to take up the work starting with the Sena inscriptions. It was resolute that the proposed work should be written down in English as a replacement for Bengali, so that it might get in touch with a wider sphere of readers.<sup>106</sup> The manuscript was sent to the Press early in 1926. As, the Society thought about the publication of two companion volumes, one dealing with the Gupta

inscriptions (the task was assigned to Radhagovinda Basak <sup>107</sup>) and the other with the Pala inscriptions (the job was assigned to Nirodbandhu Sanyal <sup>108</sup>) and as the current volume would come after them in sequential order, it was being proclaimed as ‘Volume III’ of the sequence. <sup>109</sup> It is unfortunate that the Society became unsuccessful to put out the first two volumes (I and II).

In the *Inscriptions of Bengal, Volume III*, altogether seventeen inscriptions have been edited, moreover six more dealt with in the Appendices. They are as follows:

- i) Rampal Copper plate of Srichandra
- ii) Kedarpur Copper plate of Srichandra
- iii) Belava copper plate of Bhojavarman
- iv) Bhubaneswar Inscription of Bhatta- Bhavadeva
- v) Deopara Inscription of Vijayasena
- vi) Barrackpur Copper Plate of Vijayasena
- vii) Naihati Copper plate of Vallalasena
- viii) Anulia Copper Plate of Lakshmanasena
- ix) Govindpur Copper Plate of Lakshmanasena
- x) Tarpandighi Copper Plate of Lakshmanasena
- xi) Madhainagar Copper Plate of Lakshmanasena
- xii) Dacca Image Inscription of Lakshmanasena
- xiii) Edilpur Copper Plate of Kesavasena

- xiv) Madanapada Copper Plate of Visvarupasena
- xv) Calcutta Shahitya- Parishad Copper Plate of Visvarupasena
- xvi) Ramganj Copper Plate of Isvaraghosha
- xvii) Chittagong Copper Plate of Damodara.

Among this seventeen inscriptions, No. xvi and xvii are isolated inscriptions which do not appertain to any of these dynasties.<sup>110</sup>

The Appendices of the work includes following six inscriptions:

- i) Dhullia Copper Plate of Srichandra
- ii) Edilpur Copper Plate of Srichandra
- iii) A Copper Plate of Harivarman
- iv) Paikore Image Inscription of Vijayasena
- v) Sundarban Copper Plate of Lakshmanasena
- vi) Adavadi Copper Plate of Dasarathadeva.

It seems to be essential to note down that every single outstanding research outcomes of the Society were not published. It was not possible on account of the non-existence of organ/ journal of the Society. One such non-published outstanding research outcome was Akshaya Kumar Maitra's *Fall of the Pala Empire*. Actually, this was a course of lecture delivered by A. K. Maitra at Calcutta University on the invitation of the University(1915). Unfortunately, neither the Varendra Research Society nor the Calcutta University published it. Although R. C. Majumdar printed a summary of the same in Bengali in four issues of the monthly periodical *Manasi O Marmavani*, Phalgun and Chaitra, B. S. 1322 and Vaisakh and

Jaistha, B. S. 1323.<sup>111</sup> After the death of Kshitish Chandra Sarkar (Who migrated from Rajshahi to India), his wife Usha Rani Sarkar handed over it to Nirmal Chandra Chowdhury, the responsible citizen of Jalpaiguri. Nirmal Chandra Chowdhury put forward it to the disposal of University of North Bengal. Considering its academic value of the work the University of North Bengal published it in the year 1987 with the introduction of D. C. Sircar.<sup>112</sup>

### **Monographs:**

In the year 1915-16 a momentous step was assumed by the Council of Management of the Varendra Research Society by passing a resolution to publish certain original articles of archaeological and historical interest as Monographs of the Society.<sup>113</sup> The decision was taken up with the expectation that such monographs would be a gesture to the members of the Society who were given by that time but were material return for the contribution they used to pay. Unfortunately, the scheme was not put into operation for no less than 10 years. It was executed after the appointment of Nanigopal Majumdar as curator in the museum of the Society. As a result, the No.1 of the series (Monographs), an innovative article of Nanigopal Majumdar on *Nalanda Copper Plate of Devapaladeva* which pitches welcome radiance on the issue of cultural relation between the Islands of Indian archipelago (Far-east) and Northern India<sup>114</sup>, was published in April, 1926.

Nalanda Copper Plate, however, was not first construed by Nanigopal Majumdar. Following the uncovering of this epigraph in the excavation of Nalanda, an apprehensive abstract was published in the Annual Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Central Circle, 1920-21, pp. 37-38 and in the Director General's Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, 1920-21, p. 27.<sup>115</sup> Afterward, Professor Kielhorn and

Hirananda Sastri decoded the same in *Indian Antiquary*, Volume XXI, pp. 257-58 and *Epigraphia Indica*, Volume XVII, PP. 324-27 correspondingly.<sup>116</sup>

Nevertheless, the significance of the article reclines in the verity that Nanigopal made alteration on some points of the earlier translation by confuting the explanations made by the previous scholars. Besides, Nanigopal was the first scholar who highlighted a few fresh but crucial points of the epigraph. In this regard it can be said that the earlier analysts have transported to light bunch of details bearing Indian influence to the people and culture of the Far-east, predominantly in the field of art and religion. But no one attempted to take a look at the answer of the query that from which particular parts of India contributed to expand of Buddhism or Buddhist art there. Nanigopal tried to get the answer of the query and finally he became successful in uncovering it. To him Magadh, very precisely Nalanda of Northern India was the source from which the Buddhist religion and art was derived by the Islands of the Indian Archipelago.<sup>117</sup>

### ***Monograph-2***

*Mahasthan and its Environs* by Prabhas Chandra Sen, the second Monograph of the Society was published in 1929. In fact this monograph has grown out of a short article on *the Antiquity of Mahasthan* which was read by the author Prabhas Chandra Sen on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1926, at a literary conference of the Society. Though the monograph was written down with local data and surveillance, the Society also brought in loan the Mahasthan inscription from the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Prabhas Chandra Sen made an effort to recognize Mahasthan (on the west bank of Karotoya, 8 miles north of Bogra town) with Pundranagara, the ancient capital of Bengal. However, Sir Alexander Cunningham was the pioneer in this regard. Because it was he, who first pointed out Mahasthan the same as Pundranagara. But it was Prabhas Chandra Sen who

presented reliable and passionate explication. Seeing as the inscription equips no detection of the exact spot of pundranagara, the capital of ancient Bengal, Sen tried to shield his estimation with the support of the literary evidences. And the atlas he had put in order signified 'eloquently than any word can do, of the archaeological importance of the locality and the needs for its exploration (excavation).' <sup>118</sup> The excavation in Mahasthan in succeeding occasion established the view of Cunningham and Prabhas Chandra Sen.

### ***Monographs- 3***

This number was published containing with the following articles:

- i) *The Antiquities of Khari* by Kalidas Dutt
- ii) *A new type of Vishnu from North Bengal* by Nanigopal Majumdar
- iii) *The Mother and Child images of Bengal* by Nirodbandhu Sanyal.

Among the three, the first article, *The Antiquities of Khari* was sent by Kalidas Dutt to the literary conference of the Society. <sup>119</sup> It is to be noted down that ahead of the advent of the Muslims, Bengal was divided for functions of administration into *Bhuktis* or divisions and these divisions were subdivided into *Mandalas*. Likewise, Khari was one of such *Mandalas* of Bengal. The Khari Mandala of those days included probably the whole of the Sundarban part of 24 Paraganas, east of the old course of Ganges, Ganger Bada. <sup>120</sup> And therefore, Kalidas Dutt aimed to illustrate the richness of this tract by providing an organized description of the exposed archeological finds.

*A new type of Vishnu from North Bengal* was first put out in the *Modern Review* in February, 1929. With the consent of *Modern Review*, the Society published it as the 2<sup>nd</sup> article of the Monographs – 3. The Vishnu image on which the article rests was brought by Sarat Kumar Ray from Kalandarpur of Bogra district in 1926. <sup>121</sup> The sculpture corresponds

to a divinity who puts on a lengthy wreath getting in touch with the Knees with four hands put up with respectively *Sankha* (Conch), *Chakra* (discus), *Gada* (Mace), and *Padma* (Lotus). What appends noticeably to the attention of the sculpture are two miniature figure i.e., a two armed male figure seated in meditation on top of Vishnu's head and a six armed dancing male figure beneath Vishnu's lotus seat. This form of Vishnu's representation is uncommon in Bengal art. However it is not odd in other Indian provinces. Anyhow, Nanigopal Majumdar identified those miniature male figures as Brahma and Siva respectively.<sup>122</sup>

The third article of the monograph i.e. *Mother and Child images of Bengal* was earlier contributed by Nirodbandhu Sanyal to the Oriental Conference held at Lahore in 1928.<sup>123</sup>

It is mentionable that Mother and Child image is a common group in medieval sculptures of Bengal. Hence, this group of sculptures came under the disposal of museum of VRS just by the year 1929. "The mothers in these sculptures appears as reclining on a bed with a male infant lying by her side keeping a hand on her breast; her person is covered with by a cloth, with a scarf thrown over her left shoulder and she is also decked in elaborate jewelry; In the right hand she holds an utpala(water lily); at her feet sits a female figure, either end is a female attendant one with a fly-whisk, the other generally with a fan; at the top of the back-slab appears a number of divine figures, which are, generally Siva-Linga, Kartikeya, Ganesa and Navagraha, besides the Gandharvas on either side; other figures are also sometimes found in addition."<sup>124</sup>

But the veracity is that scholars like A. K. Coomarswamy, M. M. Ganguly, Alexander Cunningham, and V. Smith and so on expressed divergent views concerning the subject in which these sculptures belong. While some categorized these sculptures with the nativity of Buddha or nativity of Mahavira, others identified them with either nativity of Ganesa or nativity of Krishna. However, Nirodbandhu Sanyal, all the way through his research,

unwaveringly established that these groups of sculptures symbolize the nativity of Krishna or *Janmashtami* since it bears a resemblance so strongly the depiction of it in the *Puranas*.

#### ***Monographs-4***

The monographs no-4 was brought out in 1930 with four articles and the whole cost of it was munificently contributed by Rai Bahadur Surendra Nath Bhaduri of Gwalior.<sup>125</sup>

The first item of these monographs was Kalidas Dutt's *Antiquities of North- West Sundarban*. It may be cited that Kalidas Dutt in his earlier article (Monographs – 3) had given some account of the antiquities of Khari and the neighbouring villages in the eastern or Poundravardhana section of Sundarban. And in the present article he copes with those in the northern half of the western or Vardhana section, the mouths of the Ganges and Sagar Islands.<sup>126</sup>

In the second article, *A New Specimen of Bengal Sculpture*, Kshitish Chandra Sarkar talked about the identity of the Kalandarpur image which is in relief resting on a stone slab measuring 32” x 15”. The uppermost part of the stone slab holds the icon of a seated male figure affianced in Dhyana (contemplation). To all appearances, however the icon in question could present a few distinctiveness forms of Vishnu, but it is unneeded to state that such a materialization with a dhyani Buddha. These considerations elevated a genuine uncertainty in relation to a specific and accurate identification of the figure.<sup>127</sup> Still, Kshitish Chandra Sarkar by means of his sharp and detailed analysis succeeded to identify it as a *Bodhisatva* (a type of *Manjushree* or other *Bodhisatva*), but he confessed that it could seem to one at first sight as a form of a Brahminical image.<sup>128</sup>

The third article is the account of *a tour in Dinajpur and Rangpur* carried out by Nirodbandhu Sanyal. He was accompanied by K.N. Dikshit, superintendent, Archaeological

Survey, Eastern Circle.<sup>129</sup> Sanyal and Dikshit visited the celebrated ancient site of Bangarh and its neighbouring ruins( like, Dinajpur Palace, Tapan etc.) in the south – west corner of the district of Dinajpur. To Sanyal Bangarh, “ was an important place from very early times and it had more than one name – Banapura, Umavana, Kotivarsha, Sonitapura and Devikota ; the site was a flourishing city from the time of the imperial Guptas to that of the early Muslim rulers; five copper plate grants have been discovered at Damodarpur, not very far from Bangarah, which shows that under the Guptas from A. D. 443 to 544, the city of Kotivarsha was the headquarters of a district of the same name, under the Bhukti of Pundravardhana; it was known to the Muhammedan historian, as the most important military post on the northern frontier of the territory of Lakhanawati , founded by Muhammad – i – Bakhtiyar and formed the base of further Muhammedan operations in this directions.”<sup>130</sup>

After concluding their excursion in Dinajpur, Sanyal and Dikshit walked off to Rangpur to sight the Rangpur Shahitya Parishad Collection. Here they too witnessed the Tapa Collection i. e. the individual sculptural collection of Nalinimohan Ray Chaudhury, the Zamindar of Tapa.

In *The Vaisnava Cult*, the fourth article of the monographs, Syamacharan Chakravarty had examined different stages of Vaisnavism. Chakravarty instituted his analysis with the Vishnu of Rig Veda and Narayana of Epics and then scrutinized the Ekantika Dharma, the Pancharatra system step by step along with the worship of Gopala – Krishna as the very last phase.<sup>131</sup>

### ***Monographs-5***

The monographs no- 5 was published in 1934 containing with seven articles. They are as follows-

i) *The Antiquities of Sundarbans* by Kalidas Dutt-

It is to be noted that in his aforementioned paper, *Antiquities of Khari* ( Monographs no – 3), Kalidas Dutt illustrated several antiquarian vestiges revealed in the south- eastern parts of Diamond Harbour and Alipur subdivisions of the 24 Paraganas district. But in *The Antiquities of Sundarbans* , above and beyond furnishing a comprehensive explanation including the architectural style of two temples – Jatar Deul and Delbari which were already mentioned in the *Antiquities of Khari* , he explained an additional temple i. e. the temple of Bonsham Nagore as well as a small number of new antiquities. <sup>132</sup>

ii) *The Mainamati Copper- Plate of Ranavankamalla Harikaladeva: 1141* by Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharyya-

This 24 lines proto Bengali Copper plate was exposed in the year 1803 at Mainamati, five miles in the direction of the west of the town Comilla and first deciphered and published by the famous Orientalist H. T. Colebrooke in the Asiatic Researches with an unconcerned facsimile and several erroneous reading. <sup>133</sup> Therefore, Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharyya re- deciphered the inscription. Although, in-between, an acceptable interpretation was provided by N. K. Bhattasali of Dacca museum, Bhattacharyya made further perfection in Bhattasali's reading. While Colebrooke identified Pattikera, the emblazoned terms of the copper plate merely as an important city and thereby diminished its significance, both Bgattasali and Bhattacharyya recognized as a powerful ancient realm. Not only that Bhattacharyya interpreted and explained in the approved manner that there was a social and political contact between Pattikera and Arakan or Burma and a highly regarded family of the Arakanese derivation settled and continued to exist in the 13<sup>th</sup> century A. D. in the district of Tippera. In his own words, "...All these references prove by implication that the kingdom of Pattikerea as powerful one of considerable dimensions, far exceeding the narrow limits of a small paragona

that now preserves its name; and the migration of Burmese families at the court of this king is nothing incompatible with social and political intercourse with Burma covering a period of more than a century.”<sup>134</sup>

iii) *A Short Catalogue of Some Aboriginal Rites and Customs from Chutia Nagpur* by Kshitish Chandra Sarkar-

This piece is as of the field of ethnological study. Here Kshitish Chandra Sarkar presented the customs and rites of various aboriginal tribes of Chutianagpur. Among the indigenous ethnic groups of Chutianagpur nearly each month of the year is connected with certain customs and rituals. Therefore, Sarkar instigated with the month of Chaitra parallel to March- April in which the natives of Chutianagpur on the very last day of the month rejoice the ‘Bhokta ceremony’.<sup>135</sup> Though there is no inclusive resemblance, Sarkar compared this ceremony with that of the ‘Charak Puja’ of Bengal in the perspective of cruelty. Then he evaluated the ‘Rohan Parab’ of the month of Jaistha, worship of Serpent deity, ‘Manasa’ on the last day of Shraban, ‘Karam Puja’ of the month of Bhadra, ‘Chchata Parab’, on the last day of the same month, ‘Jitaparab’ of the month of Asvin, worship of Goddess ‘Kali’ of the month of Kartick and ‘Aska Cake Parab’ of the final day of Aग्रahayan. In addition, he talked about the ‘Karakhonta<sup>136</sup> Parab’ of the third day of *Dewali*. In this game “.. a number of buffaloes are tethered to their respective posts and are excited by a determined throw of a stuffed hide moulded into the shape of an animal on introducing a lot of straw within its hold; the bull that puts the boar to rout and strikes it dead is made much of and its owner is made the headman of the whole community...”<sup>137</sup> Fascinatingly, Sarkar compared Karakhota with that of the Spanish ‘Matador’.<sup>138</sup>

iv) *A very rare work on Sanskrit Prosody, not found elsewhere but imperfectly preserved in the library of the Varendra Research Society* by Dhires Chandra Acharyya Sastri-

In this item Dhires Chandra Acharyya Sastri coped with the 'Chhandamalanta', a manual Sanskrit metrics of Purusottam Bhatta. Dhires Chandra had corroborated the date of the text. He had assigned Purusottam Bhatta with the later part of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, a little earlier than Jayadeva. <sup>139</sup> Likewise, he highlighted some values of the work. He put in writing, " Although the work of Gangadas ( disciple of Purusottam) is very popular all over India, it is an incomplete manual Sanskrit prosody; but even the fragment at our disposal shows that Purusottam did not fight shy of this important but abstruse portion of metrics; moreover a section of this book on 'Geetabritta' or songs alluded to before; this point has not been touched in any of the existing treaties on Sanskrit prosody; his treatment of 'Upajati' metre is fuller and clear than of any other known work." <sup>140</sup>

v) *Somapura- an Ancient Buddhist Monastery in Varendri* by Dr. U. N. Ghoshal-

Before the preparation of this paper, the excavation of Paharpur i. e. Somapura Vihara was just about concluded. However, Upendra Nath Goshal through his paper had thrown some light upon this once celebrated monastery with the help of a small amount of literary references. In fact, Ghoshal tried to make out essence of the information of three Tibetan works (two of Lama Taranath and one of Khaupo Yese) with reference to Sompuri Vihara.

Lama Taranath in his *History of Buddhism in India* (translated version) and *Mine of Precious Stones* (translated version) and Khaupo Yese in his *Pag Sam Jan Zong* brought up the Somapura Vihara as Sompuri Vihara. To Ghoshal this was an occurrence of their coordination of flawed translation of Sanskrit names in Tibetan. Secondly, both Tibetan writers accredited the institution of the Sompura Vihara to the sovereign Devapala whom they illustrated as the son of Dharmapala. But Ghoshal proved the information as absolutely incorrect with the assistance of the clay seals bearing- Sri= Sompure Sri= Dharmapaladeva=

Mahavihariya- arya- bhiksusamghasya etc. revealed at some point in the excavation of Paharpur.

But the information of those Tibetan works greeted by Ghoshal was a biographical explanation of an Acharya called *Ratnakarasanti* (briefly called Santi). This Acharya supposed to have been born in a Brahmana family, intended as monk at Odantapuri and learned Mahayana- sutras all along with Tantras at Vikramshila; after concluding his studies he worked for several years as head of the Sompura Vihara.<sup>141</sup> But neither the Tibetan scholars nor Ghoshal succeeded to authenticate the epoch in which the Acharya belongs.

vi) *Aghora- Rudra* by Nirodbandhu Sanyal-

Nirodbandhu Sanyal initiated this article with Siva and Saiva philosophy. After that he made available a description of the derivation of Aghora (a- ghora, non terrific), one of the five characteristics of Siva.<sup>142</sup> He pointed out the taxonomy of Aghora with the eleven Rudras. And after discussing the rituals and representations of Aghora, Sanyal examined the Aghora image under the collection of Varendra Research Society and of the Dacca museum.<sup>143</sup> He finished the article by supplying some information on a sect of ascetics or Aghori which is related with the cult of Aghora.

vii) *The Vrndavanakavya and its Author* by Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya-

The *Vrndavanakavya* is a *Yamaka- kavya*. The work provides information that its author Mananka was the son of monarch Ugrasena. With the aid of inscriptional verifications Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya recognized Ugrasena and Mananka with the Rastrakuta sovereigns Dhruva and Govinda III respectively. But since there is no affirmation from the inscriptions about the poetic command of Govinda III, Sivaprasad doubted that it( work) could be originated from the pen of some court poet of Govinda III.<sup>144</sup> To Sivaprasad there was no plot

in the work and the narrative of the same in the common style reminding one of similar things in the writings of the classic masters including Kalidas and Valmiki.<sup>145</sup> Anyway, subsequent to traditional salutation, the work proceeds to recount the wandering of Krishna with his brother Balarama over Vrndavana and their leisurely sipping of the waters of the Yamuna in a holiday mood in the companionship of cowherd associates; there is also the account of the rainy season in a finished form.

### ***Monographs- 6***

Reminiscent of the monographs- 5, the monographs- 6 too contained seven articles. It was published in 1935 and the articles are as follows:

i) *Biral Inscription of Sayfuddin Firoz Shah: A. H. 880* by S. Sharafuddin-

The Biral inscription was revealed by Upendra Prasad Lahiri in 1923 and presented to the Society. So, Sharaffudin put out the article from the original inscription.

After the customary salutation, this Arabic inscription describes about the foundation of a mosque by Sayfuddin Firoz Shah in A. H. 880. It is to be noted that since there was a ruler in Gaur named Shamsuddin Yusuf Shah in the referred time, Sharafuddin assumed that in that very date Malik Adil who subsequently known as Sayfuddin Firoz Shah became a rebel and curved out a small principality for himself in a part of the Sultanate of Gaur.<sup>146</sup>

ii) *Rajshahi Inscription of Jamaluddin Fath Shah 887 A. H.* by S. Sharafuddin-

The Rajshahi inscription was transported from Gour to Rajshahi by E. H. Rudock, once District Magistrate of Rajshahi and after his transfer from Rajshahi, a gardener conveyed the same to the mosque of Hetam Khan Mahalla of Rajshahi town. Subsequently, it was granted and preserved to the museum of VRS at the attempt of the present author.

The inscription traces the reconstruction of a stone edifice in the time of well known Makhdum Mawlana Ata Wahiduddin in the reign of Sultan Abul Muzaffar Fath Shah, son of Sultan Mahmud Shah I in the year 887 A. H. It is pleasing to note that the erection of a mosque at the time (896 A. H.) of renowned Makhdum Qutb Awaliya Makhdum Mawlama Ata. Consequently, Sharafuddin identified the saint Makhdum of both the inscriptions as a same individual. He also expressed that ‘ it is highly probable that the saint was generally known as Makhdum Mawlana Ata but his proper name was Wahiduddin.’<sup>147</sup>

iii) *A Note on the Baigram Copper plate: Year 128( Gupta)* by Sarasi Kumar Saraswati-

The unearthing of Baigram copper plate was publicized on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1932 by Gauda Research Society of Howrah.<sup>148</sup> And when Saraswati published this article, Dr. Radhagovinda Basak was editing the same plate for the *Epigraphia Indica*.<sup>149</sup>

This Sanskrit inscription was of the era of Kumaragupta I and records the purchase of revenue Free State land. But Saraswati extracted a number of important points from it. Firstly, Saraswati found out close resembles between the land transaction procedure of Baigram copper plate and other copper plates of ancient Bengal.

Secondly, this inscription provides the name of a new *Vishaya*- that of Panchanagari, the district headquarter (Vishayadhikarana) being located at a place known by the same name. Saraswati became certain that ‘this Panchanagari was like Kotivarsha and Khada Para, one of the many districts into which old Pundravardhanabhukti was divided in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.’<sup>150</sup>

Thirdly, he had revealed the fact that the Vishayapati of Panchanagari was directly appointed by the emperor, although it was an exception. He remarked that “...Kumaramatya Kulavridhi, the Vishayapati of Panchanagari, seems to have been directly appointed by the

emperor himself, his epithet, Bhattarakapadanuddhyata, clearly implying such an inference.”

151

Fourthly, Saraswati laid emphasis that the customary value, at which unassessed lands were sold, varied in different districts of early Bengal. In Panchanagari the rate was two *Dinaras* per *Kulyarapa* but in Kotivarsha it was three *Dinaras* per *Kulyarapa*.<sup>152</sup>

The fifth point, highlighted by Saraswati was that the Baigram copper plate(448 AD) provides reference to both the gold and silver coins of Gupta period. According to him “... the silver currency, introduced by Chandragupta II and considerably extended by his successors, Kumaragupta I and Skandagupta, seems to be for the first time mentioned in this inscription.”<sup>153</sup> And he concluded with that a Dinara (Golden coin) was equal to sixteen Rupakas (silver coin).

Finally, Saraswati focused on the method of defining the boundaries of land. To him “.. it is a unique method perhaps mentioned for the first time, of defining the boundaries by making the four quarters by chaff cinder.” He took for granted that the practice was to dig up some soil by the side of the line of segregation all around the land in question and to seal it up with chaff cinder.<sup>154</sup>

iv) *Siva and Sakti* by Atal Bihari Ghosh-

This is an incredible article of Atal Bihari Ghosh. He has put in plain words realistically here, the notion of what the combination of Siva and *Sakti* implies through the back up of several relevant instances. He illustrated Siva the same as insight trait and *Sakti* as might trait. But the authenticity is that without insight *Sakti* is sightless and without might Siva is lame.<sup>155</sup> For that reason, he uttered that these two cannot be alienated. He concluded

by articulating that according to the Brahminical religion earth was originated because of the union of these two.

v) *A note on the reign of Alauddin Firoz Shah III of Gaud* by b S. Sharafuddin-

In this paper S. Sharafuddin accurately established the reign of Alauddin Firoz Shah, the Sultan of Gaud. It is noticeable that scholars like Stewart and others assigned the reign of Alauddin Firoz Shah as three months on the basis of the information from the *Riyaz- us- Salatin*. But Sharafuddin proved the earlier observation as wide of the mark with the help of three silver coins and an inscription of the reign of Sultan Alauddin Firoz Shah and asserted that the duration was not less than three years.<sup>156</sup>

vi) *Rajshahi inscription of Ghiyathuddin Bahadur Shah: 966 A. H.* by Sharafuddin-

In this item Sharafuddin dealt with two inscriptions. The first one was of the reign of Ghiyathuddin Bahadur Shah collected from a mosque of kumarpur in Rajshahi, and the next one from a mosque of Kusumba. After translating and interpreting date, language and other points of the inscriptions, Sharafuddin came to the conclusion that the same Sulayman, the converted Zamindar Chilman Majumdar of Mauza Kusumba, was the founder of both the mosques on which they appear to have been originally set up.<sup>157</sup>

vii) *Mahalaksmi* by Sarasi Kumar Saraswati-

In this article Sarasi Kumar Saraswati coped with an exceptional image of Mahalaksmi of tenth century A. D. which was revealed from the village Simla in the district of Rajshahi. The icon is twenty handed holding different weapons. It wears a jatamukuta (matted tiara) over which is represented a miniature linga. To prove it as the Mahaliksmi image, Saraswati profoundly examined and clarified the weapons, ornaments, celestial vehicle and so on of the same. Besides, the description of Puranas as regards the depiction of

Mahalaksmi was also scrutinized. Accordingly, Saraswati succeeded in verifying that the Mahalksmi can have any number of arms, though eighteen is the conventional number.<sup>158</sup> He also commented that the mini carving of the Linga was occasionally attached to the Goddess Mahalaksmi only.

**Other recorded research works/ papers till 1937:**

In the year 1925-26, Nanigopal Majumdar contributed five research papers. They were as follows-<sup>159</sup>

- i) *Notes on Some Buddhist Sculptures.*
- ii) *The new Sunga inscription from Ayodhya.*
- iii) *Jamalgarh inscription of the year 359.*
- iv) *Peswar Museum Inscription of the year 168 and*
- v) *Adi Buddha in Eastern India.*

In that year Nirodbandhu Sanyal was active in the study of an vital epoch of Northern Indian history, viz. that prior to the Muhamadan take-over. The foremost outgrowth of the study, a piece of writing on '*the Predecessors of the Gahadavalas*' was accepted for the publication in the journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Year 1926-27-<sup>160</sup>

Nanigopal Majumdar put in a few research papers-

- i) *A New Brahmi Inscription from Mathura.*
- ii) *Rohitagiri of the Rampal Copper- Plate.*
- iii) *A gold- plated Bronze from Mahasthan.*

Year 1927- 28-<sup>161</sup>

Ahead of his departure from VRS, Nanigopal Majumdar wrote an important paper-

i) *Adi Buddha in Eastern school of Art.*

Nirodbandhu Sanyal wrote down some papers-

i) *The Buddhist inscription of the time of Jayachandradeva.*

ii) *A new type of Revanta from Dinajpur district.*

iii) *Early History of Haihayas.*

Year 1929- 30-<sup>162</sup>

Nirodbandhu Sanyal put in writing a paper on *Surya in Bengal Art*, which he read at the Bengali Literary Conference in Calcutta in February 1930.

Year 1930- 31-<sup>163</sup>

Following papers were contributed by the scholars of the Society-

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| a) Nirodbandhu Sanyal      | i) <i>Dhurail Inscription of Mahamuda Shah</i>   |
| b) Kshitish Chandra Sarkar | i) <i>A new specimen of Surya from Varendra</i><br>ii) <i>The Capital of the Pala Empire</i> |
| Sarasi Kumar Saraswati     | i) <i>The Brahminical Iconography in Gupta Art</i><br>ii) <i>The Pala Empire</i>             |
| Radhagovida Basak          | i) <i>The Murder of Rajyavardhana</i>  |

Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharyya i) *Mandana, Suresvara and Bhavabhuti: the problem of their identity*

ii) *The lost kingdom of Harikela*

U. N. Ghosal

i) *New light on Gupta administration*

ii) *Taranath's history of Buddhism in India*

iii) *On some points relating to the Maurya Administrative System*

Jitendra Nath Banerjea

i) *The Webbed Figures of Buddha*

Haran Chandra Chakladar

i) *Contribution of Bihar to Vedic Culture*

Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya

i) *The Dhvanyaloka and the Text of Dhvani Karikas*

Shyamacharan Chakravari

i) *Origin and Development of Bengal School of Nyaya*

*Philosophy*

Kalipada Bhattacharyya

i) *Some Problems of Samkhya philosophy and Samkhya*

*literature*

Dhires Chandra Acharyya

i) *On the Existence of Rice in the Regvedic Age and the Original*

*home of the Aryans*

Bijay Nath Sarkar

i) *Finger Posts of Bengal history*

Year 1931- 32-<sup>164</sup>

Kshitish Chandra Sarkar

i) *Kurkihar I*

- Radhagovinda Bsak i) *Sasanka, King of Bengal*
- U. N. Ghosal i) *On a Few Technical Terms in the Hindu Revenue System*  
 ii) *Some Notes on Ownership of Soil in Ancient India*
- R. C. Majumdar i) *King Nayanadeva of Mithila*
- Jitendra Nath Banerjee i) *Ushnisha- Siraskata ( a Mahapurusha Lakshmana) in the  
 Early Buddha Images of India*
- Kalipada Bhattacharyya i) *Gleanings from the Gupta Inscriptions*
- Kshitish Chandra Chatterjee i) *Authorship of Anunayasa*  
 ii) *Vyosha*  
 iii) *Kasakritsna*
- Dhiresch Chandra Acharyya iv) *On the 64 Arts of Ancient India*  
 v) *The Age of Savarasvamin*  
 vi) *The Date of Pingali, the Father of Sanskrit Prosody*
- Bijay Nath Sarkar i) *Benaras- Past and Present*
- Aditya Kumar Bhattacharyya i) *Studies in Comparative Ideals*
- Year 1932- 33 <sup>165</sup> -
- Nirodbandhu Sanyal i) *On the so called Images of Chandi in the Rajshahi Museum*  
 ii) *Ren Plate of Givindachandra*

iii) *Reminiscences of the Operations of the Archaeological Survey of India at Mahasthan in 1928- 29*

iv) *Notes on Seated Image of Surya*

v) *The Ghoraghat Temple Inscription of Raja Prannath*

vi) *A Dancing Ganesha from Dinajpur*

vii) *The Monuments of Bengal a) the Stupa, b) Pillars of history c) Begunia Group of Temples*

Shyamacharan Chakravarty i) *The Date of Subandhu's Vasavadatta*

Kalipada Bhattacharyya i) *Belava Copper Plate of Bhojavarman- a Review*

Aditya Kumar Bhattacharyya i) *Religious Worship in and through Literature: from the earliest times to the Present day*

ii) *The Religion and Philosophy of the Bhagavatgita: Some Distinctive Features*

iii) *Introduction to the Study of Ujjvalanilamani*

Kshitish Chandra Chatterjee i) *Panini as a Poet*

Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharyya i) *Jayaditya and Vamana*

ii) *Sri Sri Chaitanya Dever Triobhavakal*

Year 1933- 34- <sup>166</sup>

Kalidas Dutt i) *The Soura Images From the District of 24 Paraganas*

Radhagivinda Basak ii) *The History of North- eastern India*

Year 1934- 35- <sup>167</sup>

Nirodbandhu Sanyal i) *Jaina Iconography: A Document from Varendra*

ii) *Visvarupa*

Ramaprasad Chanda i) *Art in Orissa*

ii) *Temples of Bengal*

S. Sharafuddin i) *The Charter of Al- Madinah*

Year 1935- 36 <sup>168</sup>

Sarasi Kumar Saraswati i) *A Gold Coin of Budhagupta*

ii) *A Clay Head from Kalinjar*

1936- 37 <sup>169</sup>

Sarasi Kumar Saraswati i) *Ghoraghat Inscription of Raja Prannatha*

ii) *Early Sculpture of Bengal*

iii) *Krishna Panel at Paharpur*

Kshitish Chandra Sarkar i) *Kurkihar, Gaya and Bodhgaya*

### **Literary Meetings and conferences:**

Once a year, Varendra Research Society inured to arrange literary gathering and sometimes symposium where research papers were read out. But the records of those were accessible only from 1925.

In the year 1925- 26 five literary meetings occurred and following papers were read-<sup>170</sup>

31 June 1925- *The Story of Buddha in Stone* by Akshaya Kumar Maitra

15<sup>th</sup> August,, *The Date and Place of inception of the Yogavasistha Ramayana* by Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya

14<sup>th</sup> September,, *The India of Kalidasa* by B. N. Sarkar

17<sup>th</sup> February ,, *The Works of Asvaghosha* by Nanigopal Majumdar

14<sup>th</sup> February ,, *Birth and Rise of Buddhism* by Shyamacharan Chakravarty

In the next year (1926- 27) there were one Literary Conference and five gatherings <sup>171</sup>-

22<sup>nd</sup> & 23rd April 1926- Literary Conference & Papers read-

i) *Indian Influence on Cambodia and Sumatra- Java* by Jadunath Sarkar

ii) *The Bengal Commentators on the Amarakosa with Special Reference to Raya Bhattacharyyamukuta's Pada- chintamani* by Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya

iii) *Jitendra- Buddhi's Nyasa and its place in Sanskrit Grammatical Literature* by Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya

iv) *The Discoveries at Mahenjodaro* by Binodbehari Ray

v) *The Antiquity of Mahasthan* by Prabhas Chandra Sen

vi) *The Excavations at Mahenjodaro* by Nanigopal Majumdar

vii) *The Sankhya Philosophy of Kapila and its Influence on the Tantric form of Worship* by Shyamacharan Chakravarty

viii) *The Brahminical Conception of the Temple* Tarapada Bhattacharyya

ix) *A New Buddhist Image*( museum no- 662) by Brojendra Mohan Maitra

x) *A New Four- armed Image from Kalandarpur*(museum no- 661) by Kshitish Chandra Sarkar

Literary Meetings-

First August 1926- *An Introduction to Virasaivism( or the Ligayat cult)* by Sudhendu Kumar Das

20<sup>th</sup> „ „ - i) *Theology of Virasivism* by Sudhendu Kumar Das

ii) *The Mathura Lion Capital* by Nanigopal Majumdar

16<sup>th</sup> January 1927- i) *An Introduction to Pancharatra Vaisnavism* by Sodhendu Kumar Das

21 February „ „ i) *Rambles from Mathura to Mysore* by Bijay Nath Sarkar

15<sup>th</sup> March „ „ i) *The Excavations at Paharpur* by Kshitish Chandra Sarkar

ii) *the Architecture in the Barahut Reliefs ( with lantern slides)* by

Nirodbandhu Sanyal

1928-29- Only one scheduled literary meeting was held during the year <sup>172</sup>-

11<sup>th</sup> October 1828- K. N. Dikshit delivered a lecture on the Paharpur excavations, with lantern slides.

An additional speech (non scheduled meeting) was illustrated with lantern slides Kalidas Nag on Indian culture overseas, in which he marked out the spreading out of Indian culture by land through Afghanistan and Central Asia to China and by Sea through the Archipelago and Indo- china to China and Japan.

1929- 30- <sup>173</sup>

During the year five literary gatherings were held and papers read out as follows-

25<sup>th</sup> August 1929- i) *Adavaitavada and Buddhist philosophy* by Sudhendu Kumar Das

30<sup>th</sup> September *The Teaching of the Bhagavat* by Dhires Chandra Acharya

First December „

8<sup>th</sup> December „

4<sup>th</sup> January 1930- *Bacteriology* (with lantern slides) by Kumudnath Chaudhury

Literary conference

4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> January 1930- Following papers were presented-

i) *Muslim India* by Aswini Kumar Mukherjee

ii) *Antiquities of North- west Sundarban* by Kalidas Dutt

iii) *The Recent Additions to our Coin Collection* by N. Sanyal

iv) *The Origin and Development of Vaisnavism* by Shyamacharan Chakravarti

v) *The Influence of Buddhism on Christianity* by kalipada Bhattacharyya

vi) *The Origin of Varendra* by Binod Behari Ray

1930-31- Eight literary jamboree were arranged and following items were read out <sup>174</sup> -

9<sup>th</sup> April 1930- i) *A New Specimen of Surya from Varendra and the Antiquity of the Cult* by Kshitish Chandra Sarkar

17<sup>th</sup> August „ i) *Diversified Assam* by Bijay Nath Sarkar

12<sup>th</sup> September ,, i) *Brahminical Iconography in Gupta Art* by S. K. Saraswati

30<sup>th</sup> November ,, i) *Mughal Painting*( illustrated with lantern slides) by O. C. Ganguly

7<sup>th</sup> December ,, i) *Aghora- Rudra* by N. Sanyal

14<sup>th</sup> December ,, i) *Nature , Art and Literature* by Aditya kumar Bhattacharyya

25<sup>th</sup> January 1931 i) *Some Characteristic Features of Buddha icons* by Jitendra Nath Banerjee

26<sup>th</sup> ,, ,, i) *Aryan Expansion in Eastern India and Beyond* by Hemchandra Chakladar

Literary conference-

14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> March-

i) *History of Bengal During the Reign of Akbar* by S. K. Ray

ii) *The Proposed Identification of Mother and Child Images as Sadyajata* by n. Sanyal

iii) *The Pala Empire: First Phase* by S. K. Saraswati

iv) *Amaravati School of Sculpture* by Devaprasad Ghosh

v) *The Sinarpur Mound* by Sriram Maitra

vi) *The Poet, the Philosopher and the Prophet* by Jitendra Nath Chakravarty

vii) *Muslim Inscriptions of Bengal* by S. Sharafuddin

viii) *Uluka* by Bsanta Kumar Chatterjee

ix) *The Racial Classification of the Indian People* ( illustrated with lantern slides) by Haranchandra Chakladar

1931- 32-

There was one literary meeting and one important literary Conference was held. The items of the Conference <sup>175</sup> -

i) *Kurkihar I* by Kshitish Chandra Sarkar

ii) *Kurkihar II* by S. K. Saraswati

iii) *On Some Sculptures Illustrating the Life of Krishna* by S. K. Saraswati

iv) *Gleanings from the Gupta Inscriptions* by Kalipada Bhattacharyya

v) *On the 64 Arts of Ancient India* by Dinesh Chandra Acharyya Sastri

vi) *The Age of Savarasvamin* by „ „ „

vii) *The Date of Pingala, the Father of Sanskrit Prosody* by „

viii) *Benaras- Past and Present* by Bijay Nath sarkar

ix) *Studies in Comperative Ideals* by Aditya kumar Bhattacharyya

x) *Gauda or Varendra from About 326 to 725 A. D.* by Prabhas Chandra Sen.

### **Annual Report published till 1937**

The VRS set off the publication of its Annual Report from the year 1925. Unsurprisingly the first report was of the year 1925- 26. This essential attempt was the pet project of, no other than Nanigopal Majumdar. Just following joining as curator in the museum of the Varendra Research Society, Nanigopal Majumdar got the approval of the

council of management of the same in this direction. Till 1937, the VRS published following annual reports:

*I) Annual Report for the year 1925- 26*

*II) Annual Report for the year 1926- 27*

*III) Annual Report for the year 1927- 28*

*IV) Annual Report for the year 1928- 29*

*V) Annual Report for the year 1929- 30*

*VI) Annual Report for the year 1930- 31*

*VII) Annual Report for the year 1931- 32*

*VIII) Annual Report for the year 1932- 33*

*IX) Annual Report for the year 1933-34*

*X) Annual Report for the year 1934- 35*

*XI) Annual Report for the year 1935- 36*

*XII) Annual Report for the year 1936-37 & 1937- 38.*

### **Varendra Research Society and Varendra Research Museum After 1937**

Though the museum of the Varendra Research Society was alienated and came under a different agency of admin in 1937, the earlier relation stuck between these two, yet, was not infected very much. In reality it was not possible to them to steer clear of each other. Because, the museum (VRM <sup>176</sup>) and the Society could only anticipate to grow up closest. Besides, the composition of the new administrative body proves that most of the members

were taken from VRS. In fact the erudite members and associates and scholars of the Society were predominantly the driving force who would make use of the artifacts and the documents to be found in the museum and the library in favour of circulation of knowledge along with culture to both the academic circle and the lay man.<sup>177</sup> On the contrary, the VRM could be altered into an antique superstore. Because, the affiliates of the new museum committee, excluding the nominees of the VRS, had no scrupulous knowledge on historical objects. More to the point, the depot of antiquities is not simply for the escalation of beautification of a museum; rather, it is the major source for the history of Early Bengal. Hence, it can be detected in the annual reports that subsequent to the independence when Sureswari Devi of Puthia made a contribution to the VRS of Rs. 500, the latter, along with the intact sum appended Rs. 150 and offered the VRM intended for accompaniments of antiquities and erection of a compound enclosure.<sup>178</sup> Not only that, the VRS produced joint annual reports as of 1947 to 1949.<sup>179</sup>

However, it is to be pointed out that even later than the transfer of its handy library under the Charitable Endowments Act, the VRS put together a standing apart collection with the assistance of the conditional<sup>180</sup> gift of a few contributors. Among these contributors, the name of Binod Behari Ray is most important. Besides, after the death of Santosh Kumar Chatterjee, the once secretary of the Society, his son handed down with condition quite a lot of rare and priceless books as commemoration to his father.

Yet, it is factual that since the vesting of the belongings under charitable Endowments act (1890) in 1937, the funds and activities of the VRS went through an immense slow down. It was expected at some point in the time of changeover that as soon as the Society would be mitigated of its liability of running the museum, it would be proficient to give out better concentration in the direction of other area of its actions.<sup>181</sup> But the reality was completely opposites.

Nevertheless, with the inception of the year 1947 the enthusiastic members like M. H. Ali, Rajaniprasad Chanda, Kshitish Chandra Sarkar and so forth conferred an impulsion to impart a new spirit in the activities of the VRS.<sup>182</sup> In support of the accomplishment of this re- organization scheme, the council of management of the Society formed few committees and accordingly the council was requested<sup>183</sup>

- i) to amend the existing rules;
- ii) to carry on activities as set out by reorganization scheme;
- iii) to augment resources of the Society;
- iv) to improve the building and garden of the museum;
- v) to start journal and publications as far as possible;
- vi) to include adequate social activities to stimulate popular interest;

But the passion and sincerity with which the re-organization design set in motion could not be kept it up owing to the transfer of M. H. Ali and Rajaniprasad Chanda from Rajshahi.

On the other hand, the aspiration by means of which the supervision of the VRM shifted to a Charitable Endowment was not realized. If truth be told it was not possible with the then income of the museum to uphold that sort of effectiveness which was required of such establishments. Its inadequate resources facilitated the management to handle no more than its routine dealings. Consequently, the museum committee pleaded the government to bring back the cut of the government grants for the maintenance of the museum. But the Government response was disappointing. The latter clarified that they were incapable to take

up issue of the reinstatement of cut on the grants remunerated to the museum until it was come to a decision to reinstate the cut inflicted on alike grants.

It is not that owing to the monetary upheaval the activities of the VRM were totally stopped up. Even, within this state of affairs the museum committee made a decision to adjoin an Anthropological section.<sup>184</sup> The basis of that till 1939 the collection of the museum were chiefly archaeological relics and very little deliberation was granted to the collection of anthropological relics.

A further addition in the museum in the past independence phase was the installation of the Gallery of Islamic Culture. The section slowly but surely turned out to be the destination of relics like, inscriptions, coins, Farman and documents, paintings etc. of Muslim period. It was opened on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 1951 by Nurul Amin, the then chief minister of East Bengal.<sup>185</sup>

In this phase, however, a sufficient amount of improvement in accommodation occurred in the library of the museum. As a result, in 1961 the library was shifted to a new building put up on the northern side of the premises at a sum of Rs. 44, 000 of which major portion( 30,000+ 11000= 41000) was munificently endorsed by the Department of Archaeology and the Government of East Pakistan.<sup>186</sup> Moreover, the Director of Public Instruction, East Pakistan approved a non- recurring grants of Rs. 5000 for the enrichment of the library by means of which substantial additions have been made to the library in its books and furniture.<sup>187</sup>

But the addition of the new library building did not come out as an energizer either to the VRS or the VRM to reinstate their activities. Consequently their activities, particularly of VRS were abridged step by step and absolutely stopped up the same in 1963. Yet, it is astonishing that eve of its own disappearance the Varendra Research Society was able to

shield its hobbyhorse i. e. museum (VRM) from extermination. While the VRM was saved from total destruction, the VRS, it failed to defend from total extinction.

**Collection of VRM from 1937 TO 1964** <sup>188</sup>

<b>Serial no</b>	<b>Bits and pieces</b>	<b>November, 1937 to October, 1964</b>
1.	<b>Sculptures</b>	
	a)Stone	26
	b)Metal	05
	Total =	31
2.	<b>Epigraphs</b>	
	a)Copper plate	02
	b)Stone, Sanskrit	02
	c)Stone, Arabic	15
	d) Stone, Persian	03
	Total =	22
3.	<b>Coins</b>	
	a)Gold	04
	b)Silver	236
	c)Copper	186
	c)Billon	41
	d) Nickel	11
e) Lead	01	
	Total =	479
4.	<b>Terracoras</b>	
	a)Ornamental bricks	22
	b)Human figures	16
	c) Animal ,,	18
	d)Pottery	188
	e) Inscribed seals	09
	f) Moulded plaques	129
g) Glaged tiles	03	

	Total	=	382
5.	<b>Painitings</b>		09
6.	<b>Weapons</b>		22
7.	<b>Farman &amp; Documents</b>		13
8.	<b>Guns</b>		02
<b>Grand Total=</b>			<b>960</b>

Table-VI

Table VII

**Library Collection**<sup>189</sup>

Serial no	Bits and pieces	November,1937to October, 1964
1.	Books & Periodicals-	4653
2.	Manuscripts	
	a)Sanskrit-	
	b) Bengali-	391
3.	Others -	155
<b>GrandTotal=</b>		<b>5199</b>

### **Research Outcome:**

The Aforementioned graphic representation signifies that even if the VRS & VRM could not act upon their intact activities, there were atleast a small number of actions which facilitated to accrue some artefacts and volumes in the museum and library respectively. In the sphere of research and publications too they had a say in some degree. The name of Nirodbandhu Sanyal can be brought up as an instance in this regard. In this stage, Sanyal contributed several piece of writing in "*Palli- bandhava*" , the local periodical.<sup>190</sup> He conducted museum tours for groups of students of local college and schools and also post-graduate students of the Calcutta university, who came up to visit the museum from time to

time.<sup>191</sup> Special guide-lectures were also arranged by him for distinguished visitors. And when the University of Rajshahi was set up the teachers, particularly the teachers in history and Bengali literature of the same attached with the Yanja of investigation of this noble institution. Because at that initial stage the university had no infrastructure of its own to accomplish research or other similar works.<sup>192</sup>

### I) *Ramacaritam-*

The foremost noteworthy publication of the VRM in post transition phase was the *Ramacaritam* of Sandhyakaranandin. The manuscript of this work was discovered by M. M. Haraprasad Sastri from Nepal in 1897. Sastri brought into being the transcript in the *Meoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Volume III, No. 1*. Ever since its publication the Ramcarita has been looked upon as the most essential literary deed relating to the history of the Pala reign. At the same time, the publication of M. M. Sastri produced a subject matter of critical discussion by prominent intellectuals.

To reconcile the dispute and thrash out the deficiencies of Sastri's volume, Debaprasad Sarbadhikary, the then Vice- Chancellor of Calcutta University invited Akshaya Kumar Maitra. Akshaya Kumar responded to the invitation and presented a well researched paper on the text *Ramacaritam*. In his discourse Maitra efficiently offered effective and pleasing suggestions as regards the interpretation of *Ramacaritam*.<sup>193</sup> Hence, a fresh and critical version of the text with a running commentary and an English translation was an immense necessitate. To facilitate this long- felt need, a new edition of *Ramacaritam* was brought out by VRS in 1939 with the support of R. C. Majumadar, Radhagovinda Basak and Nanigopal Banerjee of Dacca University. This trio set right a number of disparities from that of the version of M. M. Sastri.

### II) *Paribhasavrittii, Janapakasamuccaya, Karakachakra-*

These three treatises of Purusottamdeva on Panini's Grammar were published in Savita Memorial Series. They were edited with an introduction and appendices by Dinesh Chandra Bhattacharyya.

III) *Varendra Research Museum Bangla Puthir Talika* by Manidra Mohan Chaudhury-

The conservation of the manuscripts in the museum has never been suitable. They did not appear to have been classified and set subject wise or alphabetically. They have been recorded one after the other according to the date of receipt. The scholars had to face complicatedness to detect their required Bengali manuscript from the preserved scripts which figured no less than 1500. Therefore, the VRM decided to publish a list of Bengali manuscripts and accordingly it was brought out in 1956.

IV) *Inscriptions of Bengal, Volume IV* (1960)-

This highly praised collection was edited with translations and notes by Shamsud-Din- Ahmad. The inscriptions integrated in this collection are those which were issued by or during the reign of the viceroys and governors employed time to time, by the Sultans of Delhi and also for the period of that of rulers who having proclaimed complete governmental power, ruled over Bengal as independent sovereigns. These inscriptions were gathered at different times by numerous academicians and admirers from a range of sources and locations all over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa which at that time shaped into one governmental unit and governed by a central authority in Bengal.

The inscriptions include in general-<sup>194</sup>

a) Names of reigning kings of governors or their deputies during whose period of rule these were issued with dates.

- b) Reference to charitable buildings and monuments such as mosques, forts, gateways, palaces, bridges and so on.
- c) Dates of construction of the above monuments with names of their authors and donors.
- d) A short genealogy, occasionally of rulers and eminent historical figures and
- e) Sundry other cognate informations.

It is to be stated that this collection is a companion to *Inscriptions of Bengal, Volume III*, published by this Society in 1929. But the publication of the collection delayed on account of various causes, the most vital being the lack of a scholar skilled to undertake its compilation. In this perspective it should be mentioned that the charge of compilation of this valuable work was first given to Ghulam Yazdani,<sup>195</sup> and secondly to S. Sharafuddin<sup>196</sup> and ultimately the work was accomplished at the hands of the present editor.

#### V) *Tararahasyavrittika* (1961)-

The manuscript is unique, it being the oldest of its kind existing in the Indo- pak sub-continent. It was therefore put out in 1961 with the edition and notes of Manindra Mohan Chowdhury Kavyatirtha.

The *Tararahasyavrittika* otherwise called *Vasanatattvabodhini* is actually a compilation which mainly deals with the mysteries of the Tara cult.<sup>197</sup>

#### **Monographs:**

In this phase only two monographs were brought out by the Varendra Research Society, one in the year 1949 and the very last one in 1950.

### ***Monographs No- 7***

The monograph encompassed purely a piece of writing. The title of the item is *The Ancient Monuments of Varendra*. The article chiefly centres round the subject of a lantern speech delivered in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, on the 18<sup>th</sup> March 1927 by Akshaya Kumar Maitra.<sup>198</sup> It was edited with an introduction and appendices by Kshitish Chandra Sarkar and foreworded by R. C. Majumdar.

The illustrated lecture note of A. K. Maitra was initiated with the narrative of the land of Varendra. Afterwards, have as a feature one after other points. The paper includes simultaneously, the unorganized exploration of Buchanan Hamilton, Westmacott and Cunningham in the archaeologically rich in and around Varendra region and the development of a repository of the handy monuments of Varendra with the efforts of the VRS. Maitra analysed the monuments first into i) architectural and ii) iconographic classes and then into i) stone, ii) metal and iii) clay categories.

Maitra put in plain words the history of pillars of Varendra with special reference to Garuda pillar, Kamboja pillar and the Kaivarta pillar. He gave details of the mound of Mandoil, Kumarpur, Kosipur, Mahisantosh, Mahsthan and Paharpur. Here he put emphasis on Paharpur. Then he talked about the Buddhistic images as well as the Santinatha<sup>199</sup>, the Jaina image exposed in this region. Finally he analysed about the village deity/ Snake worship/ Manasha.

Hence it is clear that the monograph no- 7 is an invaluable publication. In the words of R. C. Majumdar “It shows his (Maitra’s) unrivalled knowledge of the monuments lying scattered over vast area and genuine appreciation of their historical importance.”<sup>200</sup>

### ***Monographs No- 8***

The VRS brought into being its final *Monographs- 8* in October, 1950. The monographs consist of seven scholarly papers.

#### **I) *Cultural Notices of India in Early Medieval Arabic Literature* by G. M. Hilali-**

In this item Hilali investigated the cultural relation between India and Arabia even previous to the birth of Islam. Examining the early medieval Arabic literatures, Hilali found two routes of cultural contact- (a) through the means of trade connecting Arabs and South India and (b) Contact all the way through Persia.<sup>201</sup> He has given an idea about how Indian texts, Sanskrit texts in particular, were translated into Pahlawi or Arabic; how certain Indian works had become current in Arabic prior to the birth of Islam and how Indian games like Chess (Sanskrit name Chaturanga- in Persian it became Shatranj) were brought in Persia. He also observed that many Indian scholars and doctors were taken to Bagdad to translate the Sanskrit works. Finally, Hilali highlighted the writings of the Muslim scholars with special reference to Ibn- Nadim who wrote on India.

#### **II) *Mandhuk Inscribed Image of Ganesa of the Reign of Gopal II* by N. B. Sanyal-**

This inscribed image was discovered by Archaeological Survey of India at Mandhuk in Chandina police station of Comilla district. Nirodbandhu Sanyal intensely studied it and presented the paper. The image under notice is a representation of four- armed Ganesa. N. B. Sanyal focused not only on the image but also on the inscription under the seat of the image. Sanyal hauled out few significant information from this inscribed image:<sup>202</sup>

- i) Gopala II, the Pala king had his hold over Vanga and Samatat and
- ii) This image with inscription is an of those mementos which are reminiscent of the dominant note of the times, which was one of the tolerance, Catholicity and mutual good

feeling and respect among the adherents of different faiths that lived here side by side. Because the inscription affords evidence of the conscreation of an image which was a Brahminical one, by one who was apperentl Buddhist.

**III) *A Critical Review on the 'Black- Hole Trgedy' as Presented in the Dacca University Publication- History of Bengal, Volume- II* by Kshitish Chandra Sarkar-**

In this paper Kshitish Chandra Sarkar, the secretary of VRS criticized a version on Black Hole Tragedy which was provided in the *Hisotry of Bengal, Volume II*( P. 476). In fact, on that page of *Hisotry of Bengal, Volume II*, the black hole tragedy has been accepted as an undisputed episode of history without having attempted at discussing the amount of evidence in opposition to it or without keeping in mind the explanation of Akshaya Kumar Maitra who proved the improbability of the story in his work *Sirajuddowla* more than fifty years ago.<sup>203</sup>

**IV) *Religious Toleration in Ancient India* by Sivaprasanna Lahiri-**

Through the study of inscriptions, Sivaprasanna Lahiri, the assistant secretary of VRS had tried to show that the general outlook in Ancient India was one of tolerance. Lahiri set off his discussion with the Asokan inscriptions and in fact, edicts of Asoka present a high pitch of religious toleration in Ancient India. After Asokan inscription, Lahiri focused on Allahabad pillar inscription in which he found the inclination of Samudragupta towards Vaisnava Gods although the Gupta emperor performed Asvamedha Yajna. To Lahiri Chandragupta II too, the next greatest ruler of the Gupta dynasty had excellent religious toleration. He defined king Kharvela as a unique figure in the sphere of religious toleration. Because the Hatigumpha inscription proves the fact that Kharvela repired all temples irrespective of caste and creed. But the most interesting case of religious toleration found by Lahiri was in the Banskhera Grant of Harsavardhana. The Grant supplies information that in the same family while Harsa was a Saivaite, his brother Rajyavardhan embraced Buddhism

and their father Prabhakarvardhana was a devotee of Sun- God. Finally, Lahiri highlighted the tolerance of the Palas whose religion was Buddhism but paid due homage to the Hindu Pantheon.

V) ***Hariyupiya in the Rigveda*** by Ahmad Hasan Dani-

Ahmad Hasan Dani was the superintendent of archaeology, Eastern Circle. He tried to identify Harappa, the famous archaeological site with that of Hariyupiya of Rigveda (Hymn 27 of book VI ). However, Dani was not the first scholar to point out the name of Hariyupiya as a possible counterpart of Harappa.<sup>204</sup> But since the earlier scholars differed in their opinions as regards the interpretation of the passage(Hymn 27 of book VI), he tried to furnish a re- interpretation from the point of an archaeologist by taking due consideration the archaeological resources.

Vi) ***Caste System in Ancient India*** by Sivaprasad Lahiri-

With this article, Lahiri traced that the root of the caste system in the Rigvedic period. To him the Aryans came in the soil of India as conquerors and the by that means the vanquished aboriginals were called by them as Dasas or Dasyu, later on most conveniently placed in the category of Sudras. However, he reminded that the system took its definite and rigorous shape in the Smriti period. In the next stage he highlighted a quantity of interesting piece of information from Manu concerning this part and parcel (caste system) of Brahminical religion.

VII) ***A Muhgal Mosque at Egarasindur*** by Ahmad Hasan Dani-

As the last item of the *Monographs -8*, Ahmad Hasan Dani dealt with a mosque of the reign of emperor Shajahan. The mosque was built by a person named Sadi, the son of Shaikh Sheroo at Egarasindur in Mymensingh district in the year 1652. Dani noticed that the

mosque represents a style which is a happy intermingle of Bengali elements and Mughal features.<sup>205</sup> He clarified that the square structure with octagonal turrets is typical of Bengal and traceable from well-known Ekhlakhi Mausoleum at Hazarat Pandua, but like other Mughal buildings, this mosque is also presented all over, excepting at the east entrances.

**Other recorded research works/ papers:**<sup>206</sup>

A) Maulvi Shamsuddin Ahmad-

i) *Mahenjodaro, a Monograph*, Government of Pakistan Publication Karachi, 1952.

ii) *A Guide to Thatta, a Monograph*, Government of Pakistan Publication Karachi, 1952.

B) Muhammad Abdul Bari-

i) *The Genesis of Pakistan Movement, The Arafat*, Dacca, 1962.

ii) *Early Muslim Historiography*, Proceedings of the Seventh session of Pakistan History conference, Dacca, 1957.

iii) *Political Aims of Saiyid Ahmad Barelwi, The Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad, Deccan, Volume- XXXI, 1956.

iv) *The Faradi Movement*, Proceedings of the Fifth Session of the Pakistan history Conference, Khairpur, 1955.

v) *Islam and Socialism, The Islamic Literature*, Lahore, 1951.

C) Dr. A. F. S. Ahmad-

i) *The Early Urdu and Persian Newspapers of Bengal 1822- 1835*, Rajshahi University Studies, Volume II, 1962.

ii) *The Origin of Separate Representation in India*, *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, Karachi, October, 1964.

Dr. Sahanara Hussain-

i) *Nalanda*, Rajshahi University Studies, 1962.

ii) *Paharpur and its Material Contents*, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Volume VI, Dacca, December, 1961.

iii) *Prathamik Madhya Yuge Bengali Nari*, *Purba Megha*, Rajshahi, 1962.

iv) *Sandhyakaranandir Varendri*, *Purba Megha*, Rajshahi, 1963.

v) *The Terracotta Plaques from Paharpur*, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Volume- I, No- 2, Dacca, 1963.

Dr. A. B. M. Hussain-

i) *An Introduction to the History of Muslim Culture*, East Pakistan Book Syndicate, Dacca, 1958.

ii) *The Royal Occupation of Fathpur Sikri*, Rajshahi University Studies, 1962.

iii) *Is Islam Compatible with Modern Western Way of Life?* *Young Pakistan*, 1961.

iv) *Why was Fathpur Sikri Built?* *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Volume- VI, Dacca, 1961.

v) *A Study of Firoza Minar at Gaur*, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Volume- VII, No- 2, Dacca, 1963.

Dr. Abu Imam-

i) *A Re-examination of Andhra Chronology*, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Volume- II, Dacca, 1957.

ii) *Role of Museums in National Reconstruction*, *Museums Journal of Pakistan*, Volume- X, No- 1, 1957.

iii) *An Analysis of the Material Content of the Sculpture of Sanchi*, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Volume- III, Dacca, 1958.

iv) *Origin of Name Dacca: A Note*, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Volume- III, Dacca, 1958.

v) *Sir Alexander Cunningham (1814- 1893): The First Phase of Indian Archaeology*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, London, 1963.

vi) *Jagadishpur Copper- Plate Grant of the Gupta Year 128( in Bengali)*, *Bangla Academy Patrika*, Dacca, Magh, 1370 B.S.

M. M. Chowdhury (Kavyatirtha)-

i) *Dinajpur Silalipi*, *Bangla Academy Patrika*, Volume-IV, No- 1, Dacca, 1367 B. S.

ii) *An Ivory Miniature of the Later Mughal Period*, *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Volume- VI, Dacca, 1961.

iii) *Banglar Lokasilpa- Nakshi Katha*, *Varendra Shahitya Parisad patrika*, Rajshahi, 1961.

iv) *Mughal Chitrakala( Mughal Painting) in Bengali*, *Purba Magha*, Volume- 1, No- 3, Rajshahi, 1960.

Literary Meetings & Conferences:

Throughout this phase very little literary gatherings were organized wherein following papers were presented:

i) *Date of the Extinction of the House of Raja Kans*, by N. B. Sanyal.

ii) *Date of the Reign of the Hussaini king- Nasir- din Nasrat Shah* by N. B. Sanyal.

iii) *Notices of India in Early Medieval Arabic Literature* by G. M. Hilali.

iv) *Uchcha Siksha Samskdrer Prayojana* by B. C. Bhattacharyya.

v) *The Holwell Monument Recalled* by Kshitish Chandra Sarkar.

#### **Annual Report in post 1937 phase:**

After the transfer of administration of the museum, the new museum committee put out only two Annual Reports-

I) *Annula Report for the Year 1938- 39*

II) *Annual Report for the Year 1939- 40.*

And the VRS brought out a three years report (from 1947- 1949)-

I) *Report of the Varendra Research Society, 1949.*

## Notes & References

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3. *Annual Report for the Year 1925-26, 1926-27, 1927-28, 1928-29, 1929-30, 1935-36, 1949.*
4. Kajee Muhammad Michher, *Rajshahir Itihash*, Gatidhara, Dacca, 1965,(2007), p.110
5. See chart of the council of management in the cover pages of all early publications of Varendra Research Society including *Taratantram* and *Kashika Vivarana Panjika*.
6. Ramprasad Chanda, *Gadurajamala* , Varendra Research Society, 1912, republished by Nababharat Publishers , Calcutta, 1975, see Upokramnika(Foreword) , p. 0.36
7. *Ibid.* p. 0.37
8. Mukhlesur Rahman, ‘Seventy One Years of the Varendra Research Museum’ in the Seminar volume – *Akshaya Kumar Maitra and Archaeological Studies in Bengal*, Varendra Research Museum, 1982, p. C/2
9. F. J. Monahan had visited various exploratory sites and examined a quantity of relics.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Sarat Kumar Ray, *Presidential address*, 1319 B.S.
12. Panchkari Bandopadhaya, *Vanger Bhaskarya, Shahitya*, Volume-23, no. 7, Calcutta, 1319 B.S., pp. 554-72
13. Sachindra Nath Siddhanta, ‘A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts’ *in the Varendra Research Museum Library*, Varendra Research Museum, University of Rajshahi, 1979, see preface.
14. *Ibid.*

15. Chowdhury, Manindramohan, *Varendra Research Museum Bangla Puthir Talika*, Varendra Research Museum, 1956, see Nibedon.
16. Dhananjay Ray, *Uttarbangla* (Unish o Bish Shatak), Deep prakashan, Kolkata, 2002, p.63.
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18. *Report of the Varendra Research Society, 1949.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Annual Report of the year 1925-26.*
21. *Report of the Varendra Research Society, 1949.*
22. *Annual Report for the year 1925-26.*
23. *Annual Report for the year 1926-27*
24. *Annual Report for the year 1927-28*
25. *Annual Report for the year 1931-32*, See also balance sheet of 1932-33.
26. Srish Chandra Chakravarti (ed.), *Bhasha- Vritti of Purushottamadeva*, VRS, 1918, see Preface-ii.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Annual Report for the year 1925-26.*
29. *Annual Report for the year 1939-40, Varendra Research Museum.*
30. *Annual Report for the year 1926-27.*
31. *Annual Report for the Year 1927-28.*
32. *Annual Report for the Year 1926-27.*
33. *Annual Report for the year 1936-36.*
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35. *Annual Report for the year 1935-36.*

36. *Ibid.*
37. *Annual Report for the year 1936-37 & 1937-38.*
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39. Nirmal Chandra Chowdhury, *Akshaya Kumar Maitra: Jivan O Sadhana* , University of North Bengal, 1984, p.93.
40. Mukhlesur Rahman, *op.cit.* 274.
41. Saiffuddin Chowdhury, and Tasikul Islam (ed.), *op.cit.* 41.
42. Sarat Kumar Ray, *Presidential Address.*
43. *Ibid.*
44. *Annual Report for the year 1925-26.*
45. *Annual Report for the year 1926-27.*
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48. *Annual Report for the year 1929-30.*
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51. *Annual Report for the year 1932-33.*
52. *Annual Report for the year 1933-34.*
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58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.* p.8
60. Akshaya Kumar Maitra, ‘Varendra Khanan Bibaran’ in *Uttar Banger Purattva : Sankhpta Itihas*, Akshaya Kumar Maitreya Museum, University of North Bengal, 2005, p.21.
61. *Ibid.*
62. Mukhlesur Rahman, ‘The Varendra Research Society and Museum Rajshahi’ in *Studies in Modern Bengal*, edited by S. A. Akanda, The Institute of Bangladesh Studies, Rajshahi University, 1981, p.288.
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64. Prior to departure for Calcutta Chanda got married for the second time with the communication of Sarat Kumar Ray.
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66. *Ibid.* p.2.
67. *Annual Report for the year 1925-26.*
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69. M. A. A. Qadir, *Paharpur (A Guide to Paharpur)*, Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, 1963, pp. 1-3.
70. *Annual Report for the year 1925-26.*
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73. *Annual Report for the year 1929-30.*
74. *Annual Report for the year 1930-31.*
75. *Annual Report for the year 1925-26.*
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78. *Seventy One Years of the Varendra Research Museum*, Seminar Volume on Akshaya Kumar Maitra and Archeological Studies in Bengal, Varendra Research Museum, Rajshahi University, 1982, p. C/30.
79. *Ibid.* p. C/31.
80. *Annual Report for the year 1925-26, 1926-27, 1927-28, 1928-29 etc.*
81. Ramprasad Chanda, *Gaudarajamala*, Varendra Research Society, 1912, republished by Nababharat Publishers, Calcutta, 1975, see Upokramnika (Foreword), p. 0.20.
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83. *Ibid.*
84. *Annual Report for the year 1926-27.*
85. *Ibid.*
86. Nanigopal Majumdar resigned from the post of curator to join the Archaeological Department of India.
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89. *Annual Report for the year 1930-31.*
90. *Annual Report for the year 1931-32.*
91. Chanda, *op.cit*, 0.21.
92. Sarat Kumar Ray, *Presidential Address*, 1931.
93. Akshaya Kumar Maitra, *Gaudalekhamala*, *op. cit.*, p.1.
94. *Ibid.* p.6.
95. Girish Chandra Vedantatirtha (ed.), *Taratantram*, with an introduction in English by Akshaya Kumar Maitra, Varendra Research Society, 1914, p.9.
96. Srish Chandra Chakravari (ed.), *Kashika-Vivarana-Panjika* of Jitendra Buddhi, Volume-I, Part-I & II, Varendra Research Society, 1914, See title page.
97. *Ibid*, Volume-III (Adhayas- 7-8), 1925, See preface.
98. Srish Chandra Chakravarti (ed.), *Bhasha-Vriti* of Purushottamdeva, Varendra Research Society, 1918, See cover page (back).
99. Ramaprasad Chanda , *The Indo-Aryan Races*, Varendra Research Society, 1916, See title page.
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115. *Ibid.* P. 1.

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118. Prabhas Chandra Sen , Varendra Research Society's *Monographs*, No- 2, *Mahasthan and its Environs*, VRS, 1929, See note of Vijay Nath Sarkar.

119. *Annual Report for the year 1928-29.*

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121. *Ibid.* P. 15.

122. *Ibid.* P. 16.

123. *Annual Report for the year 1928-29.*

124. *Monographs* No – 3, p. 19.

125. *Monographs* No – 4, p. 2.

126. *Ibid.* P. 5.

127. *Ibid.* P. 19.

128. *Ibid.* 23.

129. *Ibid.* 24.

130. *Ibid.* P. 24 – 25.

131. *Ibid.* pp. 32 – 39.

132. *Monographs* No- 5, p. 1.

133. *Ibid.* p. 10.

134. *Ibid.* p. 14.

135. *Ibid.* p. 17.

136. Sporting with the buffaloes are styled as Karakhonta.
137. *Ibid.* p. 21.
138. *Ibid.* p. 22.
139. *Ibid.* p. 24.
140. *Ibid.* p. 26.
141. *Ibid.* p. 27.
142. *Ibid.* p. 30.
143. *Ibid.* pp. 32-33.
144. *Ibid.* p. 52.
145. *Ibid.* p. 44.
146. *Monographs*- 6, pp. 1- 2.
147. *Ibid.* p.3.
148. *Ibid.* p. 5.
149. At that time Radhagovinda Basak was the professor of Dacca University.
150. *Monographs*- 6, p. 7.
151. *Ibid.*
152. *Ibid.* p. 8.
153. *Ibid.* p.9.
154. *Ibid.* p. 11.

155. *Ibid.* p.12.
156. *Ibid.* p. 18.
157. *Ibid.* 20.
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176. *Ibid.*

177. *Annual Report for the Year 1949.*

178. *Ibid.*

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180. The condition was that the council of management of the VRS would undertake to preserve those books as a separate collection.

181. *Annual Report for the year 1935- 36.*

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185. *Report of the working of the Varendra Research Museum, from August 14, 1947 to June 30, 1969, p. 11.*

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187. *Ibid.* 12.

188. Mukhlesur Rahman, *Seventy One Years of the Varendra Research Museum* in the Seminar volume op. cit., pp. C/ 30- 31.

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198. *Monograph* No- 7, See preface by Kshitish Chandra Sarkar.
199. Santinatha- He is the sixteenth Tirthankara.
200. *Monograph*, No- 7, See Foreword by R. C. Majumdar.
201. *Monographs* N0- 8, p. 5.
202. *Ibid.* p. 6.
203. *Ibid.* pp. 7- 11.
204. *Ibid.* p. 17.

205. *Ibid.* p. 34.

206. *Report of the working of the Varendra Research Museum, from August 14, 1947 to June 30, 1969, pp. 36- 42.*

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