



PROFESSOR RADHAKUMUD MUKHERJEE: 1880 – 1963

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1. PRE-CARRIER

1.1 BIRTH

The birth of Professor Radhakumud Mukherjee great historian of ancient Indian culture and colony observer of 20th century, politician, economic expert, reflector and writer was in 1880 A.D. at Barhampur (Bengal) at an educated, civilized and prospers family. His father Shri Gopalchandra Mukherjee was a famous lawyer in the High Court of Barhampur.

1.2 EDUCATION

Radhakumud Mukherjee completed his primary and secondary education at Barhampur. Then he completed his graduation and post-graduation in the famous Presidency college of Calcutta. In 1901 A.D. he got his double honours B.A. degree. Then he achieved gold medal at his M.A. degree with first class taking the subjects History and Economics. Apart to it Radhakumud Mukherjee also achieved the degree of M.A. with English subject and also received the scholarship of Premchand Raichand.

In 1915 he achieved his Ph.D. degree from Calcutta University. Thus almost before a century, Radhakumud Mukherjee achieved the available best higher education and made his educational carrier elegant.

1.3 AS A PROFESSOR

Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee started his carrier as English professor in 1903 A.D. at Ripen and Bishop College of Calcutta. ^[1] Then after serving at National College as Professor for some time Radhakumud Mukherjee join the popular Indian University – Banaras Hindu University as a Professor of ancient Indian Culture and Colonies. Then he joined to Maysor University of South India as a Professor of History. Working successfully in the Maysor University for five years Dr. Radhakumud

Mukherjee at last in 1911 A.D. joined North Indian Lukhnow University as Head of the Department of Ancient Indian Culture and History and served there till his retirement. Thus, except western India, Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee achieved a fame of successful professor at East, North and South Indian universities as a successful and hardworking Professor at History and Indian Culture.

2. DR. RADHAKUMUD MUKHERJEE'S BESTOWAL AT HISTORY

Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee has given his bestowal at writing on the various ancient events of the history along with its teaching which includes some well-known books and articles. But ancient Indian Culture, ancient Arts and religion and ancient political thoughts were always at the major side of his teaching and writing. ^[2] His bestowals at history can be classified as follows:

2.1 BIOGRAPHICS

Biographic of the three great and important Emperors of ancient India Emperor Chandragupta Maurya, Emperor Ashok and the last ancient Hindu Emperor Harshvardhan can be included in this segment.

2.1.1 PERIOD OF CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA

Under Sir William Mayer Lecture series the speeches given at the University of Madras by Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee were published in a compiled form in a book. The article published here, is a part of thorough study and all the reasons discussed in the essence of the India's first emperor Chandragupta Maurya's birth and early life, administrative units of its conquering campaigns, military affairs, talk of contemporary social life and economic are been presented, which became supportive in the formation of a powerful state and later on in the form of sustainability of it.

The administration of Chandragupta Maurya and its well-know economic policies remained unmanageable till the reign of Emperor Ashok. The state of economic life control and the nationalization of the industry have been a special feature of the Maurya era, which has been attempted to highlight here.

At the criticising for analysis of the Indian community from fourth century Prof. Mukherjee's study and writing is extremely important. It includes some of the key materials of Kautilya's economics which was not widely known or was not enough attended. There is a great endeavour of the acquisition and comparative study of the bases taken from the resources of Sanskrit and Jain texts as well as the sources of Ashok's inscriptions and the classical compositions, and original Greek instruments have also been widely used at his write-ups.

His book has been established as a benchmark by the inventive scholars of Indian civilization and culture. Not only that, it has become a valid treatise for students of history, researchers and professors involved in the field of research. ^[3]

2.1.2 ASHOK

To write the biographic of Ashok, the details of life span of Samrat Ashok, management and administrative units of that period, military system from Mauryan era, social formation and culture of Ashok era, Mauryan era economic system, Arts and Sculptures, religious life & belief, etc. which were described through the inscription, column header, scripts written in Sanskrit and Pali, archaeological relics, etc. basic findings of Ashok era were utilized. The beautiful photos of archaeological relics, inscriptions, column headers, and punch marked coins which were found while digging are also presented in the book which is its speciality.

Under Gaekwad Lecture series, the speeches given at Baroda by Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee were published in a compiled form in this book on 'Ashok'. The basal and trustworthy information on Samrat Ashok is presented in the book.

2.1.3 HARSHVARDHAN

The early life of Harshvardhan, his wars and victories, sovereignty, religious conferences organised by Harshvardhan, his religious belief, contemporary social life and culture, farming system, economic aspects like trade and industry of Harshvardhan era are been included in this book. Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee has beautifully included the factors affecting human life of those eras and has revealed new horizons of history writing. Under a Lecture series, the speeches given at Calcutta by Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee were published in a compiled form in this book in which the utilization of the trustworthy resources found from three coins of Samrat Harshvardhan, scripts of his contemporary kings like king of Assam Bhaskarvarman and king of Bengal shashank, Chinese traveller Hue-en-Chang and poet Ban was done. In this book Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee has described Samrat Harshvardhan as a king, poet, warrior, an expert diplomat, and philanthropist and has analyzed him very neutrally.

2.2 BOOKS ON GENERAL HISTORY

Under this segment Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee has wrote majorly the books which are as follows:

2.2.1 ANCIENT INDIA

In this book Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee has described and introduced history of ancient India in very easy and perspicuous style. In the starting of the book he has presented the geographical elements influencing the ancient history and thus, he has shown the basic factors of unity. Specially, the elements which were the basic reasons of the combines of the country, due to which the making of the large country like India was possible, are presented. He has given importance to the basic factors of the independency and nationality in the Indian context and is written in the book. The scientific and religious pax critics of it are pleasing.

Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee has described the history era starting from the pre-history to Samrat Harshvardhan. He has also presented the achievements at contemporary social and cultural formations along with political and economic situations.

This book of Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee is very useful for the scholars and researchers due to its authenticity whereas is also very acceptable in the Lehman readers who are interested in the history due to its easy and presentable way of writing. This book can be count as a trustworthy precious book revealing the ancient history of India.

2.2.2 ANCIENT INDIAN CONCEPTS AND DIVINE PERSONS

In this important book the description about the important persons and cultural characteristics is written. The 'Vaidic' characteristics of 'Yagnavalkya', generous empiristics of Samrat Samundragupta, and the common sprit of Samrat Harshvardhan, Ashok and Samundragupta are been discussed. Harshvardhan management shows Ashok's humanism and Samundragupta's generous empiristics spirit. In this book the Vaidic, Buddha, Ashok, Samundragupta and Harshvardhan era are discussed along with the presentation of the five maps of Harshvardhan era and seven types of gold coin photos of Samundragupta era which increases the authenticity and trustworthiness of this book.

2.2.3 BASIC UNITY OF INDIA

The factors affecting to the basic rules of Indian unity and its cultural facts are specially and effectively presented in this book. While the publishing of the second edition of this book in 1947 after the independence of India, Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee has expressed keen sadness about the partition of India. He visualizes this partition as an artificial political partition, even though he requests and emphasis to all the castes and community of India to concentrate on the geographical and cultural unity. Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee has deep faith and trust on the Indian public's cultural unity spirit.

2.2.4 HINDU CULTURE

Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee has revealed the various factors of Hindu culture and its specialities in this book on Hindu culture which is very important for the deep study on Hindu Culture.

2.2.5 GUPT EMPIRE

The important era of Gupt Empire and its great achievements are been described in this book. The political, social, economic, cultural progress and achievements of this era are presented with trustworthy descriptions. The wide usage of the basic revealing instruments makes this book remarkable.

2.3 HISTORY SCRIPTS IN CONCERNED TO ANCIENT INDIAN COLONIAL SYSTEM

India was the pioneer at the starting and development of public colonies and social system. Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee was a deep observer of ancient colonial system, culture and history. He has

written some books on the basic colonial system with appropriate and authentic supportive documents. Out of which the following books should be discussed:

2.3.1 SELF GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS OF ANCIENT INDIA

In this book Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee has discussed and tried to reveal arise, development and its bestowal of basic self-government system of ancient India. This book revealing the ancient self-government system is admired by the administrators and experts of various institutes. Famous English expert Lord Braes suggested then Indian minister Montague to re-establish the Indian self-government system while British rule on the base of this book. Dr. A. B. Kith and other some English writers also admired the trustworthiness and usefulness of this book of Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee. The speciality of this book is the utilization of the found basic information.

2.3.2 ANCIENT INDIAN EDUCATION

The script written by Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee on 'Ancient Indian Education' is segmented in two parts (1) Brahmin and (2) Buddha education system. ^[4] Each part contains 12 chapters. First part contains details of education system described by Panini about the Kautilya economic system of Vedic, post-Vedic period. In which, the details of general education, technical education and religious education are described in critics analytical form. Whereas in the second part the description of literature, Milindo Panho, Myths, the travel notes of Chinese travellers Fahyan, Hue-en-Chang and Itsing about the education system of India are been presented. Moreover, a descriptive analysis about the education system of famous Vidyapith's like Nalanda, Vallabhi, Vikramsila, Audantpuri, Mithila of ancient India are been presented. All the details about the ancient Indian education system is available in this book.

2.3.3 HISTORY OF SHIPPING & SEA TRADE FROM ANCIENT INDIA

This book was published with the necessary changes done in the thesis of Prof. Radhakumud Mukherjee which he has presented while his Ph.D. studies at Calcutta University. [5] As India is having sea at its three sides i.e. East, West and South, from the ancient times sea trade is an important aspect of the Indian trade system. In the research form Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee has spotlighted the following matters in his book. Which are – (1) Sea trades from ancient times to the Mogal time period, (2) Wide sea shores and its ports, (3) Indian sea trade with the other countries of the world, (4) India enjoying as a supreme sea power for a long time, (5) Ship construction business in India, and (6) Various types of Indian ships – etc. matters were included with appropriate supportive documents and its deep analysis.

Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee has studied various scripts, books, sculptures, inscriptions, column headers, coins etc. written in Sanskrit, Pali, Tamil, Farsi, Bangali, English etc. languages prior to writing this book and thus has provided trustworthiness to this book. Big references list provides the

opportunity to explore reading and research opportunities in the subject. Lord Kazan, V. A. Smith, Dr. K. P. Jayshval etc. has praised a lot about this book.

2.4 SCRIPTS ON UNITY OF INDIA

The scripts written by Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee in context to the unity of India includes – (1) The Basic Unity of India, (2) Nationality in Indian Culture, (3) United India, (4) New Viewpoint on Communism, (5) Our Problems – etc. are included, which presents the unique thought process of Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee on Indian unity.

2.5 OTHER SCRIPTS

The other scripts written by Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee are – (1) Notes on the Initial Arts of India, (2) The Land System of India – are especially notable. Apart to it the article written by him in various magazines are also notable.

3. SERVICE ACTIVITIES OF PROF. DR. RADHAKUMUD MUKHERJEE

Along with a successful and expert teacher, professor and established historian Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee was also connected to many social and educational organizations for the public service during his long life span. Out of which the following can be described herewith: (1) He was minister at the organization establish to fight against communism in Bengal, of which the chief convener was great poet Rabindranath Tagore. This organization worked to develop brotherism in between various communities in Bengal. (2) Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee was the congress appointed member of Bengal Act Committee in 1937 where he worked successfully for six years. (3) He was member of “Bengal Land Revenue Commission” in 1939-40. He played an important role at analysing the appropriate revenue charges on land in Bengal. (4) Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee represented India and served appreciably at United Nations’ “Food and Agriculture Organization” (FAO) in 1946. (5) In 1952 Dr. Rajendraprasad the then President of India, invited him as a member of ‘Rajyasabha’ for his special contribution at social service where he served for six years. (6) Indian government appreciate his work by awarding him ‘Padmabhusan’ award. ^[6] (7) Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee was also appointed as the president of Teachers Association where he solved many problems and did development works for teachers and education. (8) Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee was elected as the president of ‘Akhil Hind Itihas Parisad’ in 1952. (9) Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee was the active member of Hindu Mahasabha and stayed as the vice-president of it till his death.

4. CONCLUSION: PROF. DR. RADHAKUMUD MUKHERJEE AS AN HISTORIAN

Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee was involved for the entire life span at the studying of Indian History. He wrote many books, researches and critics on various subjects of ancient India. He studied and utilized all the available supportive resources prior to his all the write-ups. ^[7] Almost for the half

century he served continuously as a professor and writer of history. Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee died in September, 1963 at the age of 83 years at Calcutta. Baroda State once awarded him with the title 'Itihas Siromani' and Rs.7000. His friends in his honour started Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee lectureship.

Along with the character as a great researcher and expert, he was also a particular and clear speaker. He lectured on Indian history and culture at many universities of India. In 1954 at Maysor University at degree award function he gave a memorable speech.

Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee was an established historian. He presented the memorable and real pattern of Indian history and culture through his books, articles, lectures and researches. His history writing was based on trustworthy instruments. He revealed the various factors of ancient Indian history neutrally and highlighted the nationality and high cultural beliefs and thoughts clearly. "History writing without truth base is veined" - Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee truly implemented this thought of History. Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee believed at presenting the history on the base of the true findings keeping apart the thoughts of nationality rigidness like Leopold Von Ranke. He presented the positive and negative aspects of ancient Indian culture on the base of the available resources without any fear. Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee was in opposing of artificial relationship.

In short concluding the whole discussion we can say that late Prof. Dr. Radhakumud Mukherjee was one of the leading historians of the country. His place is unique and important among the traditional historians.

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