At the home of the historian, Jadunath Sarkar, 10 Lake Terrace, Kolkata 700029

A unit of the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC)
Set up with the assistance of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India
The House on 10 Lake Terrace

The house was the former residence of the eminent historian, Sir Jadunath Sarkar (1870-1958). When Sir Jadunath moved with his family into this newly-constructed residence in 1938, the house address was P62, subsequently P255, Lansdowne Road Extension. The street was renamed Lake Terrace in 1943, and the house was subsequently renumbered 10 Lake Terrace. This is the place Sir Jadunath worked out of for the last two decades of his life, and it is in the ground floor study of this house that he passed away peacefully, after a full day’s work, on the night of Monday 19 May, 1958. His family continued to live here through the 1960s.

Sir Jadunath’s wife, Lady Kadambini (1880-1964), left a will stating that that the house should be sold after her death and the proceeds given to a hospital. When the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) was set up in 1973 under the Ministry of Education, Government of India, Professor J.P. Naik, then Education Advisor to the government, negotiated with the trustees of Lady Kadambini’s will and acquired the property for ICSSR, New Delhi, and the sale proceeds were donated to the T.B hospital in Jadavpur. Soon after its founding on 1 February 1973, the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC), one of the early research institutes established under the aegis of ICSSR, rented this house and subsequently purchased it.

The CSSSC at 10 Lake Terrace (1973-2000)

Gradually building additions and extensions to the house, including its two present upper floors, to accommodate its offices, library and class rooms, the CSSSC was located here for the first twenty-seven years of its existence.
When the CSSSC (soon to be known in the city as ‘The Centre’) first moved here in July 1973, it consisted of its founding Director, Professor Barun De, Registrar, Susanta Ghosh, Librarian, Arun Ghosh, 17 members of faculty and 30 members of administrative staff. The subsequent decades saw the Centre acquire its full strength of faculty and administrative staff and develop into one of the country’s premier institutions of social science research and inter-disciplinary studies. Its reputation drew in senior and younger scholars from universities in Bengal and all over India, who came here on permanent positions or temporary stints. Its library came to be regarded as one of the city’s best-stocked book and periodical resources in the social sciences. Its seminars and lecture series came to be equally well-known for the lively discussions and debates these generated. And it is in this house that, from 1978, the Centre developed and ran its pioneering Research Training Programme, which is the precursor of the institution’s current M.Phil. in Social Sciences programme. In this phase, the house bred many scholars who have gained national and international recognition, such as Javed Alam, Amiya Kumar Bagchi, Nirmala Banerjee, Gautam Bhadra, Dipankar Chakrabarty, Partha Chatterjee, Amitav Ghosh, Amalendu Guha, Ramachandra Guha, Tapati Guha-Thakurta, N. Krishnaji, Nita Kumar, Sugata Marjit, Rudrangshu Mukherjee, Gyanendra Pandey, M.S.S. Pandian, Madhava Prasad, Ranabir Samaddar, Hiteshranjan Sanyal, Asok Sen and Surajit Sinha. It opened up critical areas of theoretical and empirical scholarship, it also nurtured a close family of faculty, students and administrative staff.

The Jadunath Sarkar Resource Centre for Historical Research (JSRC)

In 2000, the CSSSC moved out of this location to its new campus at Baishnabghata Patuli. The house at 10 Lake Terrace thereafter underwent some restructuring to become a resource centre for historical research. The JSRC was inaugurated in December 2004 with a three-day international seminar on History in the Vernacular, that was a part of a Ford Foundation project at the Centre for building a Cultural History Archive of Eastern India. Occupying the second and third floors of the building, the JSRC came to house the large Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, Hindi and Urdu book and newspaper collections of the CSSSC’s library. Into this library also came the institution’s valuable scholar collections, consisting of books, pamphlets, photographs and other print material donated to the Centre on behalf of several eminent scholars such as Debiprasad Chattopadhyay, Edward Dimock, Hitesranjan Sanyal, Arun Kumar Dasgupta, Sukumar Mitra, Jaiakris Tripathi, Buddhadev Bhattacharyya, Buddhadeva Bose and others. Several other scholar collections have, since then, also come into the Centre’s library, such as those belonging to Naresh Guha, Tapati Raychaudhuri and Sumanta Banerjee, and the book collection of Ashok Mitra has also been willed to the institution.

The Jadunath Bhavan Museum and Resource Centre (JBMRC)

The idea of lending a new lease of life to this building and creating a composite library, archives and display complex came out of a grant received in 2010 from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, under its ‘Museum Scheme’.
It has given the Centre a wonderful opportunity to have the premises professionally restored and redesigned, to bring back to the house a semblance of its former appearance and history, while also equipping it with all the contemporary amenities of a library, archive, documentation centre and exhibition space. It has brought together under one roof the Centre’s special collection of rare books, journals, newspapers and photographs (which was earlier part of the JSRC) as well as its large analogue and digital archive of textual and visual material from 19th and 20th century Bengal and eastern India (called the Hitesranjan Sanyal Memorial collection). The renovated building provides some much-needed space for the expansion of these print and digital resources and acquisition of new holdings.

The notion of a ‘museum’ is conceived differently for a space such as this, as an archival museum rather than one of original objects. The plan includes (i) displays on the life and works of Jadunath Sarkar in his study and on the many scholars whose books and papers have been donated to the institution; (ii) exhibitions using the Centre’s archival resources of old periodicals, newspapers, photographs, paintings, prints, posters, advertisements and commercial art, gleaned from disappearing institutional and private holdings; and (iii) invitation to scholars, artists and curators to build on the Centre’s archival material and conceive of special research projects and exhibitions in this space. The gallery on Sir Jadunath in his old study offers a template for the first kind of display. The different archival exhibitions that the CSSSC has organized out of its visual resources – Visual Worlds of Modern Bengal (2002), From Imperial Product to National Drink: The Culture of Tea Consumption in Modern India (2005) and The City in the Archive: Calcutta’s Visual Histories (2011) – are examples of the second kind of display. As part of the third project, the India Foundation for the Arts (IFA), Bangalore (which had first funded the making of the Centre’s visual archive) collaborated with the CSSSC’s archives to offer three archival fellowships during 2015-2016, to develop new creative projects and displays. The exhibition, Accessing the Archive: Three Exploratory Projects, which went on view at JBMRC in June 2016, featuring the works of the graphic artist, Vishwajyoti Ghosh, a film-maker and animation artist, Afrah Shafiq, and a researcher on Calcutta’s colonial History, Sujaan Mukherjee, was a culmination of this project.

**Ground and Mezzanine floor:** Jadunath Sarkar’s study; reception and offices; auditorium; pantry; storage area for heavy, large format material like newspapers and maps.

**First floor:** Displays on scholars and their donated collections; dedicated room for the book and photographic collections of Hitesranjan Sanyal; gallery space for temporary exhibitions and rotating displays on archival images; audio-visual and smaller seminar rooms.

**Second floor:** Library stacks with the CSSSC’s full collection of Bengali books and periodicals and print material in other Indian languages; reading rooms and computer work-stations; server room; dedicated room for the book and photographic collections of Barun De.

**Third floor:** CSSSC’s archives, with older microfilms, transparencies and photographs and the new digitized collections; digital retrieval and documentation unit; archive users’ spaces, faculty lounge and open terrace.

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**From the Siddhartha Ghosh collection of early studio and family photographs**

- Hand-tinted portrait, Kamala Studio, College Street, Calcutta, c. 1920

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**From the Parimal Ray collection of commercial art**

- Advertisement for family planning, enamel hoarding, c.1940s

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**Bernard Matthews. Eden Gardens, watercolour, c.1930, painting for a poster of the Tourism Development of Bengal**

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**Lay-out of different floors of the Jadunath Bhavan Museum and Resource Centre**

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Satyajit Ray, Poster for his film, Debi, released on 19 February, 1960, Courtesy: Parimal Ray

Deboleena Majumdar, Bride, portrait of her sister Monobina Roy, c 1938, Courtesy: The Photographer

Cover of Visual Worlds of Modern Bengal, curated by Tapati Guha-Thakurta (Kolkata: Seagull, 2002)

Cover of From Imperial Product to A National Drink, curated by Gautam Bhadra (Kolkata: Tea Board of India, 2005)

Cover of The City in the Archive, curated by Tapati Guha-Thakurta (Kolkata: CSSSC, 2011)
Opening of the Jadunath Bhavan Museum and Resource Centre on 1 February 2015

After the completion of the civil construction and renovation work on the premises, the building at 10 Lake Terrace was reopened and the Jadunath Bhavan Museum and Resource Centre was formally inaugurated in the renovated precincts on 1 February 2015. The date marked the 42nd anniversary of the founding of the CSSSC in this historical building. While a small amount of the renovation work remained to be completed then, the entire ground floor was made ready for the occasion.

The highlight of the event was the setting up of a gallery on Sir Jadunath Sarkar in the room that was his former study – with text panels, photographs and his own study table that was gifted by his grandson – and the release of an Occasional Paper by Professor Dipesh Chakrabarty titled, Reading Sir Jadunath: Literature and History. A special logo for JBMRC was designed on this occasion, which was installed as a plaque at the building entrance and used in the signage and publicity for the house. The occasion was marked by the hosting of an evening tea for a large gathering of the Centre’s alumni of its older faculty, staff and students, along with its current faculty and administrative staff.

Events organised at the building - February 2015 to February 2017

The first lecture of the JBMRC Lecture Series was delivered by Mr. Jawhar Sircar, CEO, Prasar Bharati, on Competition, Conflict and Harmony: Vividh Bharati and the Emergence of a Supranational Identity in India, on 8 September 2015, in the auditorium of the building.

A Memorial Meeting was organised on 5 January 2016 for Professor Asok Sen, one of the senior-most founding members of faculty of the CSSSC, who passed away on 10 December 2015. Professor Sen was at the CSSSC from 1973 until his retirement in 1992 and remained closely connected with several of the Centre’s faculty and activities for long after.

A workshop was organised by The National Museum of Denmark and the CSSSC with support from the Indian Council for Social Science Research – Eastern Regional Centre, titled Establishing an Indian-Danish Research Network on the Social History of Serampore (Hooghly District), at the JBMRC auditorium on 13 April 2016. A panel discussion was jointly organised by the JBMRC and the “Achhyut Mlechha Chandal Katha” magazine, titled Asurer Itihash [The History of Asuras] on 23 April 2016. An exhibition titled, Accessing the Archives: Three Exploratory Projects, was held on the first floor rooms of the JBMRC from Friday, 10 June to Saturday, 18 June 2016. A product of the archival fellowships awarded by the India Foundation for the Arts, Bangalore, the exhibition featured three multi-media displays – “Sultana’s Reality” by Afrah Shafiq, “Bengali Spring, Winter Sun” by Vishwajyoti Ghosh, and “Chance Directed” by Sujaan Mukherjee.

The library at the Jadunath Bhavan Museum and Resource Centre was reopened at the renovated building from Thursday, 11 August 2016.
An Exhibition Lecture Series was held at the JBMRC auditorium between 17 December 2016 and 7 January 2017. The lectures series, chaired by Rosinka Chaudhuri, had the following four lectures –

(i) 27 December 2016 - Tapati Guha-Thakurta, “From Craftsmanship to Commercial Art: The New Vocations of Design in late Colonial India”; discussant - Parul Dave Mukherjee.

As a part of the CSSSC’s collaboration with partner German institutions, an international conference on the subject, ‘The City as a Site of the Political: Urban History, Infrastructure and Culture’ was held on 15 and 16 December 2016. The workshop explored and identified critical themes in the understanding of urbanism, and focused on the city as a site and subject of archiving practices, drawing on the long-standing work the CSSSC has undertaken in archiving domains of urban experience in Kolkata and Eastern India. The conference brought together an important group of urban historians and archivists from across India and other parts of the world. To coincide with this conference, the CSSSC’s archival exhibition, curated by Tapati Guha-Thakurta, The City in the Archives: Calcutta’s Visual Histories, was remounted in the first floor rooms of the JBMRC. A new set of panels on the archives of the Calcutta Improvement Trust was added to the exhibition.