

**Observational Study****Apathy, Ignorance or Natural Death? Present State of Museums in West Bengal, India and its Implication for Anthropological Study of Culture and Policy**

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Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Vidyasagar University, Midnapore 721 102, West Bengal, India; E-mail: [sumahan.b@rediffmail.com](mailto:sumahan.b@rediffmail.com)**Article information****Received:** May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018; **Revised:** October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018; **Accepted:** October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018; **Published:** October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018**Cite this article**Bandyopadhyay S. Apathy, ignorance or natural death? Present state of museums in West Bengal, India and its implication for anthropological study of culture and policy. *Anthropol Open J.* 2018; 3(1): 18-31. doi: [10.17140/ANTPOJ-3-117](https://doi.org/10.17140/ANTPOJ-3-117)**ABSTRACT**

West Bengal, one of the eastern states of India has the oldest museum in the country apart from housing probably the highest number of museums in India. These museums are showcases of the rich cultural heritage of the country and its development during prehistoric and historical times, artistic and innovative skills of the people, colonial connections and national sentiments. In spite of such a glory and apparent prosperity, the museums in the state are facing a number of problems. It is revealed that many of the museums exist only in name being seldom visited by the common people barring a few connoisseur and researchers. These are run by individual effort and financial support leaving little scope for proper maintenance of objects through appropriate methods of conservation and display. The state neither has a definite policy for the museums, nor does it have any up-to-date data on the number of the museums in the state. It may be said that there is an apathetic attitude and lack of awareness on the both sides of the state and the people residing there. This situation leads to the virtual death of museums when it fails to run its business. What are the reasons behind this situation in which so many museums exist but cannot function up to expectation? How can the interest or involvement with the museums be inspired or inculcated or at least be generated within the people in general? The present paper attempts to find an answer to these questions touching the frames of Foucauldian concept of power and cultural heterotrophy. The discussion deals with numbers, distribution and typology of museums in the state, their historical development and the factors that have contributed to the development of museums in the state, the multifarious roles museums perform and people's engagement with museums. By way of this discussion, the paper tends to focus on how people conceive of museum and how the cultural artifacts of museum become a site for anthropological study of ontology of culture. The paper ends with a pragmatic note suggesting a museum-policy for the state.

**Keywords**

Museum; West Bengal; History; Power; Cultural heterotrophy; Policy.

**INTRODUCTION**

West Bengal has had a pioneering role in the history of the museum movement in India. The first museum in the country was set up in this state. Besides this pioneering historical importance, West Bengal probably houses the highest concentration of museums in the country estimated to be approximately twenty-five percent of the total number of museums in India. Government of West Bengal<sup>1</sup> has provided us with a list of museums which possess a touristic merit. *Amar Rupasi Bangla*,<sup>2</sup> a magazine devotes an entire number to the descriptive ac-

count of the museums in West Bengal. The contributors to this volume comprise of journalists, scholars, popular essayists who wanted to focus on the popular image of varieties of museums as a site for visit. Santra<sup>3</sup> basically presented an outline description of museums in West Bengal. Banerjee's<sup>4</sup> work mainly deals with the quantitative information on the number, growth and types of museums. Two other works on museums are directories of museums in the state. Chakrabarti's<sup>5</sup> directory of West Bengal museums contains quite an exhaustive information on 136 museums. This directory also lists the National Parks and sanctuaries as museums. However, the present study does not include these

parks and sanctuaries in the list of museums. Moreover, the names and number of museums vary in the different lists since there is no central agency to draw up a comprehensive list. This indicates a kind of problem with the identification of museums. This problem has been addressed in the present paper when it attempts to find answer as to why such a problem has cropped up. Initially, a question arises as to why, despite the presence of quite a good number of museums, the state has no comprehensive list of these institutions? The lists available do not match with each other in names and numbers of museums. Some of the names of museums mentioned in one list have not been mentioned in another list. Such a situation is certainly an indication of the problem of identification of museum and points to a lack of proper interest or attention to museums in general. Therefore, we need to know how variegated the idea or image of museum in West Bengal is and the manner in which people feel and show interest and involvement in museums. The typology of the museum will give us an understanding of the variegated nature of a set-up or institution called museum. The present paper also shows the historical development of museums and their types in the state. It tries to identify the factors that have contributed to the development of museums in West Bengal and also casts light on the multifarious roles the museums perform. Nigam<sup>6</sup> (10) has cited four factors behind the growth of museums in India. The present paper argues that nationalism has been another important factor in the development of museums in the country. For a better comprehension of the feeling and involvement of people with museums, a questionnaire survey has been conducted among a section of post-graduate students. The study is basically exploratory and descriptive in nature. However, on the basis of the data collected thus far, the present study makes observations and draws inferences that have theoretical as well as practical underpinning for future museum research. The study tries to show how the development of museums is related to issues of identity, spatial and chronological distribution. Museums have been studied 'as symbols of power, heritage, and identity in a variety of national and institutional contexts' (907).<sup>7</sup> Dianina<sup>7</sup> has contributed to this understanding through her study on Russian museums. The three main conceptual frameworks that she thinks fit the Russian scenario quite well are national identity, public culture, and the museum as text. Cummins<sup>8</sup> (51) writes on the role of museums on Caribbean islands 'In this sense, the museum acknowledges and legitimizes Caribbean culture, unveiling to the masses what was once a hidden past. In this way, museum serves a number of roles in a region where popular culture has for centuries remained alienated from officialdom. At this time when a Pan-Caribbean political ideology remains in its infancy, regional museum may do more to help the Caribbean community to adjust to a far-reaching social, economic, political and cultural transformation'. It also comes up with some observations on the present state of affairs and suggestions for working out a museum policy for the state.

The second level of inquiry which is more surgical and invasive in nature delve in the issues of the inter-relationship among the numbers of museums and their nature of distribution, typology of museums, apathy or neglect, kind of involvement, role of museums *vis-à-vis* state. Actually, the museum as a knowledge domain was developed in relation to power. Foucault<sup>9</sup> (2) writes:

*'The history of knowledge domains connected with social practices – excluding the primacy of a definitely given subject of knowledge, etc.'*

Now this game of power is well understood through discourse. By discourse, Foucault<sup>9</sup> did not mean only the linguistic trope, but it included 'an ordered set of polemical and strategic facts' (3). The number, typology, distribution and origin of museums bear testimony to show how the 'strategic facts' were materializing an embedded power. All the time the primacy of definitive knowledge domain was not important because many a time that remained much sublime affecting the design of the power dynamics. Thus conceptualised, we may expect an understanding of the dialectics of the present state of affairs with museums of West Bengal. This dialectic has however been addressed by Guha-Thakurta<sup>10</sup> as form of 'binaries' or 'paradox' that she assumed to lie at the heart of museum in colonial Bengal. According to her, the crux of the binaries exist in a tension between the two images of museum one shows the museum as a pedagogical project and the other reveal its popular role in entertainment. To approach this relation from a different angle that revolves round the conflicting nature of practices that have given rise to so many museums have been performed. On the one hand, simultaneously breeding negligence and apathy. The entire project is linked to knowledge-power axis that is still at play in a different guise like many of the colonial appendages carried by us to the post-colonial regime. Commenting on the Indian Museum, the first general museum set up by the colonial masters in the Indian sub-continent, Chatterjee<sup>11</sup> (6) pointed to the knowledge reproducing mechanism that the museum embodied.

*'...the massive Indian Museum was built to house "collections illustrative of Indian Archaeology and of the several branches of Natural history". The museum soon became the nucleus for an entire campus devoted to the pursuit of colonial knowledge.'*

This knowledge-power could have borne better food for the common people for the good of whom all institutions should run in a democracy like India, a country who has with all her strength and zeal struggled out of the colonial fetters. But this did not happen because of an imperfect negotiation between different poles in heterotrophic field of culture sired by uneven power relations. These poles are difficult to grasp through clear cut categories since they are interspersed, complex and extended by multiple genealogies. They may be constituted of scholarly or lay, pedagogical or amusement, elitist and popular culture. Under this cultural logic of heterotrophy where cultural meaning is fed to masses lies the root of ignorance, apathy or neglect. Guha-Thakurta<sup>10</sup> (47) rightly commented:

*'Throughout its early history, the museums in India would remain locked in the specialist gaze of the scholar and collector, never opening itself to the wondering gaze of the lay spectator.'*

What is apparently untold here, is the role of knowledge as power apparatus which is still at play and leads to a crippling state of museum at present. All through the following discussion we shall try to touch upon this game of power linked with knowl-

edge and embodied through museum.

The study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. It has followed a definite method for the collection of data which has been arranged and analysed in the way outlined above.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study has been based mainly on secondary sources. The secondary sources are the published report, print magazines, books and websites. For gaining an understanding of the people's interest in museum and their level of involvement in and awareness about museums, a questionnaire has been used to collect primary data from 60 (46% male and 54% female) post graduate (PG) level students of humanities (Bengali language with special paper of folklore) and social science (Anthropology) (Appendix 2). Students of the disciplines mentioned above are expected to possess a fair level of interest in museum since their subject of study has a fringe connection with museum. A complete enumeration has been made as all the students present in the class were asked to mark their response to the questions in the printed questionnaire handed over to them. The data collection has been done in March-April, 2018. The sample has been taken from the students who happen to interact with the present author in their regular or seminar classes. The questionnaire schedule had been distributed among the students to elicit their response in a written, documented form.

The author has been nurturing an interest in anthropological study of museums for long, which is, in turn, a result of his engagement with a number of museums as a voluntary worker, member of the Management Committee of a state government museum and member of the Academic Committee of a central government-aided museum. The technical understanding of a museum has also been gained through a formal certificate level training on Museology conducted by the Indian Museum, Government of India. At present, the author is also a member of the University Centre of Adivasi Studies and Tribal Museum. However, the seed of this paper was sown by way of an informal talk in a workshop organised by IGRMS, Bhopal (largest open air museum in the world), which the author attended in January, 2017. Through formal and informal conversations and academic exchanges, it became obvious as to how the knowledge gap exists with regard to museums of West Bengal.

One limitation is that the data is not always available with regard to the year of establishment of a particular museum. In the present classification on the types of museums, some amount of overlapping exists. Here, I have considered the principal collections in the museum for categorizing them. As there is no comprehensive list available with the government, the present author has tried to explore the available documentary sources. In fact, the author has not come across any comprehensive text that can give a fairly rounded picture of the museums in West Bengal. However, the Directory of West Bengal Museum has fairly presented a compen-

dium of basic information of 136 museums housed in the state of West Bengal.

## DISCUSSION

### Museums: From 'Wonder House' to 'House of Collections'

The museum is called *jadughar* (wonder house) in Bengali. Though literally *jadu* means magic and *ghar* means house, the aspect of wonder is more pertinent to the gross visitors of museum. This use of the word *jadughar* for museum is also reflective of its image to the public perception. This hits at the very base of the intended goals of establishing such institution by the British government. For them, it was a house of collected, classified and stored knowledge facilitating understanding of 'native' in a better way that would help the colonial administration. The initial collections were basically of objects of natural science that comprised of geological, zoological and botanical specimens. Archaeology as major collection and object of display took the stage later in the early twentieth century. The question is whether the past is looked as 'wonder' at which there is something to be amazed at. This way of looking differentiated the popular lay 'seeing' from scientific 'observation' that was aimed at by the British founders. This was the nature of cultural understanding with which the Indian gaze made itself distinct from the western 'positive' look. The empire presented before the common people a magnificent set up to be seen, amazed at. They never attempted to make it a participatory project for the commons in the same vein as they kept their form of government non-participatory. So, at the very root, we notice the factors that led to an apathy and neglect as a pervasive phenomenon among the majority. It never came to be identified with the majority, thus its power has been sacrificed to the authority.

Now, the word *sangrahashala* (house of collections) has replaced *jadughar* in a number of places. It might have meant that museum goes beyond than creating mere wonder. Its *sangraha* (collections) could have enriched the nation culturally. But, things did not change automatically with the change of name. Still the main image of museum is identified with archaeology. Its role for the educated people is primarily educational. The natural science connections of museum is still manifest in the enlistment of the National Parks and sanctuaries in the directory of museum.<sup>5</sup> The government has taken lesser initiative to make the museum participatory or more meaningful to the common people. In the remote corners of numerous rural museums, the group of people who played instrumental role in setting up those museums and their maintenance remained cloistered in an elitist way in a dedicated manner.

### Museums: Number and Distribution

In West Bengal, there is a wide variety of organizations known as museums. It ranges from large copious building of heritage calling to the very humble porch of the house that has been donated benevolently at times by a zealous and ardent collector. The following table 1 presents the number of museums in the state as mentioned

in different reports or publications.

**Table 1. Number of Museums in West Bengal**

Sl.	Source	Year	No.
1.	Government of West Bengal <sup>1</sup>	1975	52
2.	Sachitra Sangbad Kagaj <sup>12</sup>	n.d.	146
3.	Santra <sup>3</sup>	2002	52
4.	Banerjee <sup>4</sup>	2006	82
5.	Chakraborty <sup>5</sup>	2011	136
6.	Agrawal <sup>13</sup>	2013	77
7.	Present Study	2018	154

Here apart from the independent museum organizations, the departmental or institutional collections have been included in the list if these are separately managed or identified as a museum (Appendix 1). Besides these, there are a number of individual collectors who have preserved their collections under the name of museum. The number of such individual collections is not less than fifty. Baidya mentioned about as many as seventy rural museums besides private holdings in the state. So in West Bengal, we have more than two hundred potential museum organizations. These organizations however are not evenly distributed in the state. The following table 2 provides a view of their distribution.

**Table 2. Total Number of Museums in the State of West Bengal. (\*When the Earlier Studies were Done, the District was Undivided and Known as Midnapore District. During Present Study the District has been Divided into Purba Medinipur and Paschim Medinipur Districts. There were 15 Museums in Undivided Medinipur District)**

District	Number of Museums*	
	Earlier Studies <sup>1,10</sup>	Present Study
Kolkata	61	6
Howrah	6	7
Hoogli	5	7
South 24 PGS	14	17
North 24 PGS	5	4
Nadia	4	5
Burdwan	4	3
Murshidabad	3	3
Birbhum	6	7
PaschimMedinipur		8
PurbaMedinipur	15	9
Bankura	2	2
Puruliya	4	4
Maldah	4	5
Darjeeling	7	8
Jalpaiguri	1	1
Coochbehar	1	4
South Dinajpur	4	4
North Dinajpur	Nil	Nil
Aliporeduar	Nil	Nil
Total	146	154

Table 2 shows that the major concentration of museums is found in and around Kolkata. Out of a total of 154 museums 84 are in Kolkata and its adjoining three districts of North and South 24 Paraganas and Howrah. This accounts for more than 54% of total museums in the state. Kolkata, the capital of the district, has only 36.6% of the total museums in the state. Therefore it can be said that the educational background or awareness has a special significance. This regional or territorial dominance is linked with the cultural dominance that Kolkata exerts in the sphere of Bengali culture. Kolkata was a colonial city. The British ruler set up their capital first in Kolkata. The scientific (including archaeological) enquiries started by the institutions like the Asiatic Society had their foundation in this city. The first university in the country was established here, too. Apart from this, Kolkata was once the economic capital with a number of industries along the river Ganges and the headquarter of several business houses. This economic background facilitated the concentration of intellectuals and educated people who had pioneering role in shaping the Bengali mind and culture. With this, the historical circumstances play a crucial role in generating awareness on the necessity of museum. As a consequence, we find a greater number of museums in the more urbanised districts of the state. On the other hand, the regions like Bankura, Puruliya, Paschim Medinipur, Bankura where rich assemblages of archaeological objects have been unearthed, possess a smaller number of museums. Therefore, it is a matter of awareness and not the availability of artifacts or objects that fosters the development of museum in a place. Over the years, the growth is urban centric. This can be linked to the intellectual alacrity. The places like Bankura, Puruliya, Paschim Medinipur where regularly new reports on the archaeological findings are seen in the media, register little effort in museumization of these objects.

**Typology of Museums**

Typology of the museums reflect how varied roles museums play. Nigam<sup>6</sup> writes that museums may be classified in two ways: from administrative points of view or according to the nature of their main collections. The “administrative points” category of classification includes (1.) National Museum, (2.) Provincial Regional Museum, (3.) Local Authority Museum, (4.) University Museum, (5.) Private Museum administrated by board of trustees, (6.) Society Museum, (7.) Corporate Museum, (8.) Museum of Business organizations. Museums attached with different institutes or research bodies may be included within this category. Another classification emerged on the basis of “nature of collections”.<sup>6</sup> It runs – (1.) art, (2.) history, (3.) prehistory, (4.) folk art, (5.) site museum, (6.) Personalalia, (7.) natural history, (8.) science, (9.) military, (10.) health, etc. In the present study, an attempt has been made to classify the museums on the basis of major collections in a particular museum. Chakrabarti<sup>5</sup> made a classification of museums of West Bengal into following types: (1)General (2) Art (3)Archaeology (4) History (5)National Parks (6) Sanctuaries (7) Botanical Gardens (8) Zoological Gardens (9) Science (10) Specialised Museums. Among these types, Archaeology museums scores the highest ( 24.26%).

In the present classification as shown in the table below (Table 3), museums attached with national parks and sanctuaries,

and science museums have been included under a single categorical label nomenclatured as Science Museum. On the other hand, The art museums has been classified into three types constituting art, folk art (folklore) and folk art along with archaeology since my intention is to focus on the major collections of the museums and to bring the main character of the museum into focus. The type titled History museum has been presented under two sub-types in the following table which includes biographical and departmental museum. Such divisions will help one to comprehend better how we present history through our museums. In West Bengal there are quite a large number of biographical museums such as the museums named after Tagore, Gandhi, Netaji, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay or Moulana Abul Kalam Azad. They are a part of the research organizations set up in the name of the great souls. Again, the departmental museums like Police museum, Jute museum etc., depict the history of that particular department. Within this category, private museums shaped through individual collections may also be included because in West Bengal this is probably one of the major categories. However, the list of museums given in the directory mentioned above is not an exhaustive one as it does not contain the names of many such private museums.

table is also reflective of our nature of concern about museumization. The folk art objects is fast declining.<sup>14,15</sup> It has been a concern among a section of heritage activists to do something to preserve these vanishing relics of past life. It also hints at what should constitute the major components of museum objects in our common practice. We find the archaeological/historical, art, folklore and biographical records as the major contents that feed the popular view of museum “objects”. The predominance of archaeological museums reminds us of Shanks and Tilley’s writing that museums are still considered ‘...the main institutional connection between archaeology as a profession and discipline, and wider society’<sup>16</sup>(68). A survey on American adults reveals that 88% of the population under study had visited museums interpreting archaeological materials.<sup>17</sup> A lot has changed in museums over the last two decades after their remark,<sup>18</sup> but in West Bengal the image of museum is predominantly ‘archaeological’.

The archaeological objects found in a region may be linked to the pride of the place. However, the objects found in a region have been transported to the capital for the state or national level museums. This transportation is basically a power game through which a ‘distantiation’ is made with the local people. The knowledge of archaeology could have been an important tool in people’s empowerment by which they might have been able to articulate their cultural right over a region. However, this process has been resisted with the emerging consciousness about the local history. This can be counted as a negotiation between the local and the global in a world that started to strategically pay heed to the plural voices. The 1980s can be taken as the most fruitful decade for the local history. The local or district museums have come in maximum number during this period in West Bengal.

**Table 3. Categories of Museums in the state (Based on the Data Available from 143 Museums)**

Category	Number	Per cent
Archeological objects	48	33.37
Biographical	15	10.49
Folklore and Folk Art	11	7.69
Science	21	14.69
Departmental	25	17.48
Art	10	6.99
Folk art and Archaeology	7	4.9
Ethnographic	4	2.8
Misc	2	1.4

**Dates of Establishment**

Table 3 presents a breakdown of the categories of museums in West Bengal. The categories have been formulated by the present author on consideration of the principal collections of a museum. In fact, the categories are mixed since sometimes the content of the museum (e.g. archaeological, folk art, etc.) has been considered and at other times the public or official identity of the museum (departmental, science, etc.) has been acknowledged. It may give an appearance of juxtaposition of categories. The main character of the museum has been kept as the focal point. The department of science may have a museum of its own, which may be a departmental museum as well as a science museum. However, by departmental museum, jute museum, police museum, postal museum have been referred to. One advantage of such classification is that it presents the varied nature of museums in the state. Archaeology is still the main content to which the image of museum is mostly associated. The departmental museums serve a focused interest. This type of museum includes soil museum, theatre museum, jute museum, port museum, railway museum, coin museum, safety equipment museums and so on, besides museums of the department of anthropology, botany, geology, zoology etc. The

Most of the early museums were archaeological and founded either as a byproduct of antiquarian research or to promote social betterment through access to works of art and science.<sup>19,20</sup> The seeds of museums on Indian soil were sown for the first time in Kolkata as early as 1784 with the establishment of The Asiatic Society. Soon after that the foundation of the Indian Museum was laid in 1814. That the colonial rulers were keen on conservation of natural and cultural history of the country was evident from the setting of some of the important institutions that also housed the potential museum within it. The Botanical Garden, Carey Museum, Agri-Horticulture Society are examples of such enterprises. In spite of their pioneering efforts, the actual growth of museums in terms of their number, variety and sophistication took place after independence. Regarding the date of establishment of a particular museum the problem of proper documentation arises. Often we find more than one claim on the date of establishment. In some places, one cannot mention a fixed date or year of establishment. However, the dates we have, reflect that the most active years have been the four decades after the independence. During this period the museums not only grew in numbers but their interests were also more varied. Many local museums developed, preserving the objects piled up by the enthusiastic collectors who usually did not have any formal training in the discipline. These local museums

were very often personal collections. Typologically these were mostly archaeology and folklore museums. This growth of the museum might be linked with a renewed interest on the local history. This would help in building of an identity of the region being an ancient area of human settlement. It would bestow much pride on the place and help in reformulating a history from within the land itself—a spatial version of subalternity.

The museums were being set up in growing numbers well into the 21st century right from the closing decade of the last century. It has been mentioned that there was a shift in identity of museums and an increasing corporatization started taking place.<sup>21</sup> Mathur<sup>18</sup> also subscribed to the view that this shift appears to have been completed in the beginning of the 21st century. Moreover, there was growing public interest in museums and greater visibility of this institution with newer dimensions of activities.<sup>16</sup> This increased visibility is quite reflective of a cultural trend of exhibitionist practices hyped through advertisement and media. If we analyze the roles of museums at present in the state, the point will be clear.

Nigam<sup>6</sup> (9) mentions that there are five functions of museums. The functions are: (1.) Collection, (2.) Preservation, (3.) Interpretation, (4.) Education, (5.) Co-operation. It cannot be denied that the first four functions are more or less universal for all museums although with varying sophistication and magnitude. A museum in the interior part of rural Bengal may not quite reasonably be taken as active as that of a large museum in the capital. By 'active', a regular schedule of work with the collections by the designated staffs and presence of visitors have been meant. However these smaller museums have amassed an enviable corpus of manuscripts, archaeological objects and folk art objects which are invaluable sources of materials for reconstructing the cultural past of the people of the region. Besides these, the museums are seen to engage in other activities as is clear from the case of Gurusaday Museum. In the last one year the museum has organised the following events.

1. Seminar on folk art and heritage in collaboration with other government and non-government agencies like An S.I., Kolkata Society for Asian Studies, Loukik.
2. It is organizing workshops and hands on training programmes with financial assistance from Department of Textiles.
3. It is holding a folk festival focusing on the north-east with financial assistance from Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav (IGRMS), Bhopal. In this event, folk art objects are sold in the fair that is running on its premises.
4. It is organizing exhibitions on special occasions like Durga Puja or the like.

The museum also runs certificate courses on fieldwork methodology. It may be directly linked with their museum business, but in their view it will popularize their museum to the public. Another event that goes on regularly in a vacant hall of the museum is a drawing class run by a private agency at a nominal remuneration. This ensures a huge gathering of children with their guardians every weekend and makes the people aware of the pres-

ence of the museum. In the syllabus of the B.Sc. (Anthropology) of Calcutta University, there is a compulsory museum visit course. M.A./M.Sc museology students of Calcutta and Rabindra Bharati Universities are required to work in a museum as an intern for a stipulated period as part of their curriculum. The museum offers the students necessary assistance in this regard. This way the museum often becomes what Garioan<sup>22</sup> calls a 'performative cultural instrument' working at the levels of perception, autobiography, interdisciplinary services, and institution.

### Factors Behind Origins and Growth

Prevalence Nigam<sup>6</sup> (10) writes that there are four factors responsible for the origin and growth of the museum movement in India. These are:

- i. Enthusiastic leadership given by the British Civil servants in India at that time who saw the utility of museums in their own country.
- ii. A whole hearted support given by the rulers of the native states, who were equally interested in collecting objects of art and culture.
- iii. The collections of the learned and philanthropic societies helped in forming the nucleus of big museums.
- iv. The establishment of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) whose officers considerably strengthened the movement by opening the site museum, distributing the collections to other museums and interpreting the findings.

Nationalism as a moving force behind the establishment of museums can be seen in the story of Akshay Kumar Maitra and the 'Barendra Anusandhan Samiti' in 1910. Akshay Kumar got help from Sarat Chandra Roy and Ramaprasad Chandra. He was the first 'Director' of the Samiti. In 1919, the Samiti had its own building in Rajshahi. After Independence the museum of the Samiti was taken over by the Rajshahi University, Bangladesh. Akshay Kumar continued to take part in the national movement. His motive was to collect the archaeological evidence to write the history of Bengal. He took part in the movement with Subhas Chandra Bose, one of the great leaders of the Indian freedom struggle to force the British Government to dismantle the Holwell monument which was a symbol of the nefarious design of the foreign rulers to malign history. Another great name in this regard was Gurusaday Dutta, a former I.C.S. and founder of Bratachari Movement. Gurusaday was an ardent collector and promoter of folk art and craft of Bengal. He wrote:

*"The introduction of folk songs and folk dances into our schools and universities will not only affect musical life of Bengal; it will tend also to arouse that love of country and that pride of race the absence of which we now so much deplore. The same remarks apply, although to a somewhat lesser degree, to the indigenous art traditions of Bengal in the sphere of architecture, sculpture and painting.*

*And what I have said of Bengal applies with equal force to the various other races with distinctive art languages of their own that form the component units of the great Indian nation and that have contributed the products*

of their own distinctive race-genius to the common culture of India.<sup>23</sup>(10-11).

Gurusaday founded 'Palli Sampad Raksha Samiti' (society for the protection of village arts) in 1931 to collect and preserve the rich folk art tradition of Bengal. In 1940 he laid the foundation of 'Bratachari Gram' where he planned to set up a large educational institution and a *Sangrabhabari* (museum). However he died before the plans were materialised. He chose a name for his museum—'Bratachari Sangrahasala'. In 1958, 17 years after his death 'Bengal Bratachari Society' took possession of his 2326 collections and formed a museum named after him.<sup>24</sup> Mukherjee<sup>25</sup> has shown how the the nationalist consciousness has proved instrumental in the growth of local museums during the pre-Independence period.

Sometimes, the zeal for preserving family history acts as a motivating force behind the establishment of a museum. Sabarna Sangrahashala<sup>26</sup> in Kolkata and Subhendu Mohan De Sangrahashala<sup>27</sup> in East Burdwan are two cases in point. These two are private museums and are housed in their palatial ancestral houses. The Sabarna family was once the Zamindar of Kolkata and surrounding areas and they leased three villages to East India Company in 1698. The metropolitan city of Kolkata was grown from these three villages. The De family was also a landed gentry in Barsul village near the historical town of Burdwan. Enthusiastic members of the present generation have taken initiative so that the heritage is not lost into the abyss of oblivion. However, this interest was lacking among the larger section of the people.

#### Apathy, Ignorance and Natural Death: Life-Cycle Trajectory

The term apathy has a technical meaning in psychology and its degree is assessed clinically to determine the magnitude of a pathological state. In the present case, the term is used more in its literary sense as a state of indifference or lack of interest. This lack of interest creates no real concern for museums. The interest for museum can be understood by actual visit for some specific reason not linked to any service requirement like cleaning, repairing as requisitioned by the museum and/or taking some positive action towards establishing, maintaining or patronizing museums. Ignorance is the lack of information or knowledge about something. It often has its root in apathy. A museum dies naturally when it lacks support or patronization and suffers from a dearth of funds. A museum always needs a group of enthusiastic staff paid or voluntary and regular visitors. A private or public fund should be available for the museum for its sustenance. In contrast to the condition of natural death, the life of a museum may be cut short abruptly when the funding agency stops its support or any calamity happens to the museum. Such calamity includes war or vandalism that may cause irreparable damage to a museum.

A journalist while narrating his life experience of roaming through the museums of Kolkata opined that except a few highly visited places, the conditions of museums were grossly pitiable. He saw a damaged sculpture of Gandhiji who himself certified the artist for authentically depicting him, was kept in the open without any protective measure. A central government organization's museum represented only by a few hazy charts and some chairs in a

large room covered under thick film of dust. He concluded:

*'There are more so examples of such disdain (abogya) and neglect (abobela)'.<sup>28,29</sup>(13)*

A doctoral research scholar of the Department of Museology, University of Calcutta told the present author about his appalling experiences of interactions with some museum officials and staff and his dismay at the sight of the museum objects being used as support to a photo frame and table. This was the sight in a government museum of an erstwhile colonial town in West Bengal. This kind of lethargic attitude has also been pointed out by Hodges.<sup>30</sup>

Now if we turn to discuss on the findings of the survey conducted in the sample population mentioned earlier, the following trends emerge. It is revealed that very few students have never visited a museum (6.67%) in their life. 25% of them have visited a museum at least once in their life. Frequent visitors to museums are very few. Only 6.67% have visited a museum more than six times. This is also supported by the data which reveals that 53.3% of the students have not visited a museum in the last year. Only 3.33% among them have gone to a museum more than six times in past one year.

The museum is still a place where the most important reason to visit is to educate. 40% of the studied population says that they have visited a museum for educational purposes. For 20%, it is entertainment. 18.33% of them have responded saying that they would visit a museum if they had leisure time. However, a little above 20% remark that the museum visit is a favourite option for them. Their desire for visiting a museum is also reflected in their prioritizing the passing of time as a part of leisure/entertainment/favourite activities. For example, 33.3% of the students interviewed have museum visit as their first choice. The other choices include visiting a shopping mall, watching cinema in a hall, or visiting a zoological garden and park. Therefore, the majority of the students under present study (for whom museum visit is important so far as their disciplines of studies are concerned) do not have museum visit as the first item on their priority list.

During the awareness campaigns about museums, it has been revealed that all of the students in the present study could name at least one museum. 45% of them could name one museum instantly, 20% of the sample population could name two museums instantly. 13.3% of them would recall names of three museums of the state instantly. Only 10% of the studied population could name five or more than five museums located in the state. Their awareness about museums is again revealed when they are asked about specialised museums. The students were asked to name two types of museums—to name a folk art and a technology museum. 28.33% of the students surveyed could name perfectly a folk art museum of West Bengal; the same is the percentage of the students who could tell the correct name of a technology museum located in the state. The central government has recently stopped funding to Gurusaday Museum in the state. The news was quite well covered by the print and electronic media. The students under present

study were asked whether they could name the above mentioned museum that had recently come in the news. Only 8.33% of them replied correctly.

The data have been collected from the students who are expected to have a better level of engagement with the museum since they are to study anthropology or folklore in their curriculum. Moreover, they form for the highly educated section of the population. Therefore, one should expect a better level of awareness about museums from them. One may also think that the sample has been a bit biased and has covered a percentage above the average. Even if this critique is taken without any counter argument, it can be said that the general level of awareness about museums is still very poor among the educated section of the population. Either they lack interest or do not possess any special zeal to visit museums, or this in itself is an evidence of the reflection of a level of apathy in them towards the museum or issues related to the museum. They have a low level of knowledge about the museums in the state. A considerable percentage of students are completely ignorant about the presence of any museum in their surroundings or in the district. The government has also failed to formulate a rounded policy on museums so that they could be meaningfully linked to the lives of the people. Therefore, a policy must be present to account for a better role of the museums.

## CONCLUSION

The study, by way of presenting a more or less a comprehensive picture of the contemporary state of museums in West Bengal, tries to pose certain questions and offer a tentative explanation of the situation pertaining to these questions. The over-arching theoretical frame was devised in Foucauldian discourse of power and its strategies. One of these strategies was the heterotrophy of culture of the concerned sections of people who get the meaning of an institution as made apparent to them. This heterotrophic nature of culture created a contradiction or possibility of existence of polarities. This has been well surmised by Guha-Thakurta<sup>11</sup> (82) when she writes: *'Caught in the unresolved tensions between the scholarly and the popular, the museums as an institution fumbled, floundered, and turned increasingly inward.'* In fact the number, distribution and typology get linked to a strategic mechanism of power that tends to centrally control the institutional legitimacy and sustenance. The unease with numbers, lopsided distribution, diffused image of museum actually signposts of that subtle power game which is eager to avoid any clarity and consolidation. Therefore, we find museum concentrates more towards capital and its urban surroundings showing a spatial inclination towards power. The typology reflects an image that is more akin to the colonial image of museum. The emphasis on archaeology may also be connected with knowledge producing mechanism of the postmodern era. The mesmerizing imagination of past may be formed around the material relics classified under archaeology. Thus, the quintessential wonder image does fade totally. This is again quite evident from the dates of the establishment of the museums. We find that maximum number of museums was established during the second half of the twentieth century (Appendix 1), most of them came in the 1980s when the emergence of local history movement could be noticed in this part of the country. It had a potential to bring the local voices to the

forefront. Same occurrence recurred during the period of national movement in the country. But ultimately, the negotiations of power ended unfavourably for these wayward voices. The authoritarian power retained their sway over the system by breeding apathy, ignorance and total neglect in a heterotrophic cultural milieu in which people prefer to get meaning from others and be oriented accordingly.

However, we must hold hope for betterment. A note towards the tentative path that we may take has been outlined at the end of this discussion.

In West Bengal we find that there are a good number of museums across the state. However, the Department of Information and Culture of the Government of West Bengal neither supplies any comprehensive list of museums found in the state nor any hint on the museum policy. But given the historical depth and geographical spread, museums in West Bengal perform a great many roles. For this, change has to be made in orientation as well as management. The following suggestions can be made in this regard.

- i. A museum policy needs to be formulated keeping in mind the multifarious roles the museum could perform. Government must specify its stance with regard to registration, financial assistance, management support or other logistic help. This would link museums with the socio-economic development of the people.
- ii. A participatory approach may be devised.
- iii. Museums-small and large-should be linked with heritage tourism.
- iv. As a part of the school and undergraduate level curriculum, museum visits may be made mandatory. It will definitely help to utilize the educational value of the museum to a greater extent.

We have to think about broadening the role of museums from an institution of preservation, conservation, education and interpretation to a more inclusive role of a performing body that would act as a cultural instrument with multiple functions in which it would go beyond the traditional roles of museum. The present study reveals certain things very clearly. All the respondents are unequivocal in stating that the government should not shake off its responsibilities in running of museums. It must extend financial and other supports to the museums. Another pertinent response of the individuals surveyed is that a museum visit should be made mandatory in their curriculum. Therefore, the role of museums in education should be fostered. In fact, it is revealed through the survey that the purpose of most of the respondents who visited museums was educational. Therefore it can be said that still the museum in the state retains an image primarily as an educational body. The Bonner's study reflects that museum is basically a good support to teaching in anthropology.<sup>31</sup> However, the concept of museum should be made more circumscribed one. The idea of living museums where each and every individual is a 'conservator' of heritage has a great relevance in this regard. There is every possibility to set up various types of museums—an eco-museum in Sundarban and/or Darjeeling, site museums in numerous histori-



cal or archaeological sites or in the district museums, local history and culture museums, and folk art museums in the places where the particular folk art has earned fame or may have a possibility to become known and popular. Museums will definitely be a site for education, interpretation, conservation, and participation. It will help to generate a living tradition through workshops and interactions. The identity of a region can be reflected in these museums. Local history projects that may link museums with the local people will generate a sense of belonging among the people. This instills a sense of local history that is based on more concrete evidence. Here people's identity is enmeshed with memory. However, this potential role of museums is not being emphasised. The educated section of the population under present study opine that museums should be given due importance. They also want to emphasize on the greater role of museums in education. They want the government to take responsibility for museums. But it is seen that the educated population has very minimal knowledge about what is happening with museums. Their own participation in the museum or frequency of visits cuts a sorry figure. The inherent dialectics undermine the importance that museums possess. For this, we cannot justify that museums are a site for participation and recapitulation. Here, every individual has the potential to act as a curator. Here, 'museumization' is a complete project—not mourning in the graveyard, but a place where one can wholeheartedly and holistically welcome the new born while simultaneously being related to their ancestors.

#### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author reports no conflicts of interest. The author alone is responsible for the content and writing of the paper.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix I				
Sl.	Name of Museum	District	Year of Establishment	Type
1	The Asiatic Society	Kolkata	1784	SBooks, Manuscript, copper plates, Sculpture
2	Academy of Fine Arts	Kolkata	1933/1960	Painting, sculpture
3	Ashutosh Museum	Kolkata	1937	Art and antiquities
4	Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Chitrashala	Kolkata	1910	Art, manuscript, sculptures
5	Birla Academy of Art and Culture Museum	Kolkata	1966	Paintings, medieval art, sculptures
6	Birla Industrial and Technology Museum	Kolkata	1956	Science and technology museum
7	Birla Planetorium	Kolkata	1962	Astronomical objects
8	Crafts Museum	Kolkata	1950	Rural arts and crafts
9	Ethnographic Museum, CRI	Kolkata	1955	Tribal museum
10	Government Industrial and Commercial Museum	Kolkata	1939	Hnadicrofts, cottage industry products ,West Bengal
11	Indian Museum	Kolkata	1814	Largest museum, general
12	Industrial Safety , Health and Welfare Museum, GOI	Kolkata	NA	Safety devices of the areas mentioned
13	Institute of Port Management Museum	Kolkata	NA	Models of port related objects and Specimens
14	Jute Museum, ICAR	Kolkata	1936	Jute products
15	Marble Palace Art Gallery	Kolkata	1855	European art and paintings
16	Municipal Museum	Kolkata	1932	Historical records, health and public welfare products
17	Netaji Museum	Kolkata	1961	Historical records
18	Nehru Children Museum	Kolkata	1972	Puppets, dolls etc
19	Rabindra Bharati Museum	Kolkata	1961	Historical, Tagore's family and life
20	State Archaeological Museum	Kolkata	1962	Archaeological objects
21	Victoria Memorial	Kolkata	1903	Art and historical specimens
22	Gurusaday Museum	Kolkata	1961	Folk art
23	Soil Museum	Kolkata	1998(1976)	Soil
24	EZCC	Kolkata	2012	Folk art
25	Police Museum	Kolkata	1996	Police history
26	Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Musuem	Kolkata	2006	Historical
27	Gandhi Smarak Museum	Kolkata	1985	Historical
28	Basu Bijyan Mandir	Kolkata	1917	J C Bose life and collection
29	Town Hall Museum	Kolkata	1998	Historical, Kolkata
30	Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture	Kolkata	1976	Art, folk art, manuscript, paintings, textiles

31	PWD Museum	Kolkata	2000	Map and PWD objects
32	Anthropological Survey of India	Kolkata	1981	Ethnographic objects
33	Bhuban Museum	Kolkata	1989	Archaeological objects, private
34	Sainik Museum, Fort William	Kolkata		Arms ammunition
35	Philatelic Museum	Kolkata	1980	Postal museum
36	National Council of Science Museum	Kolkata	1998	Science
37	Haraprasad Sashtri Museum, Sanskrit College	Kolkata	1962	Manuscript, etc
38	Geological Museum, ISI	Kolkata	NA	Geology
39	Agri-Horticulture Society Museum	Kolkata	1820	Botanical
40	State Archives	Kolkata	1891	Documents
41	Pictorial Museum of National Movement, GOWB	Kolkata	NA	National movement
42	Mint Museum	Kolkata	2008	Coin museum
43	Geological Museum, Presidency College	Kolkata	NA	Geological objects
44	Botany Museum, C.U.	Kolkata	1918	Departmental Museum
45	Anthropology Departmental Museum, C.U.	Kolkata	1920	Departmental Museum
46	Pathology Museum, Medical College	Kolkata	1837	Departmental Museum
47	CAB	Kolkata	NA	Cricket Museum
48	Nandan Museum	Kolkata	1922	Film Museum
49	Mahabodhi Society	Kolkata	NA	Buddhist art and objects
50	Pathological Museum, RG Kar Medical College	Kolkata	NA	Pathology instruments
51	Sabarna Sangrahalaya	Kolkata	NA	Historical documents, archaeological objects
52	Sabarna Sangrahashala	Kolkata	2005	Historical documents, archaeological objects
53	Sundarban Anchalik Sangrahashala, Baruiapur	S 24 Paraganas	1979	Folk art, archaeology
54	Sundarban Loksanskriti o Purakirti Sangrahasala	S 24 Paraganas	1976	Folk art, archaeology
55	Kalidas Dutta Smriti Sangrahashala, Ramnagar	S 24 Paraganas	1980	Folk art, archaeology
56	Manasadwip Ramkrishna Mission Museum	S 24 Paraganas	NA	Folk art, Archaeology
57	Ramkrishna Mission Vidyapith Museum, Nimpith	S 24 Paraganas		Folk art, Archaeology
58	Ramkrishna Mission Narendrapur Museum	S 24 Paraganas	1993	Folk art, Archaeology
59	Majilpur Coin Museum	S 24 Paraganas	1987	Coin
60	Tulasicharan Bhattacharya Smriti Sangrahashala	S 24 Paraganas	1980s	Folk art, Archaeology
61	Khari Chartrabhog Sangrahasala, Khari	S 24 Paraganas	1982	Archaeological objects, folk art
62	Pragatisangha Sangrahasala, Sagardwip	S 24 Paraganas	1978	Folk art, Archaeology
63	Gangaridi Research Centre, Kakdwip	S 24 Paraganas	1983	Archaeological objects, folk art
64	Dakshinbanga Manishijiban Sangrahasala, Joynagar-Majilpur	S 24 Paraganas	1994	Biographical museum
65	Jadavpur Puratatwa Parishad o Sangrahashala	S 24 Paraganas	1980	Archaeological objects
66	Pratnatatwik Kalidas Dutta Smriti Sangrahasala	S 24 Paraganas	1983	Archaeological objects
67	Dr. Ramcharan Chakraborty Memorial Heritage Museum, Magrahat	S 24 Paraganas	1987	Manuscripts, folk art, archaeological objects
68	Sundarban Pratna Gabeshana Kendra, Kashinagar	S 24 Paraganas	1985	Archaeological objects

69	Sagar–Kapil Pratna Sangrashala	S 24 Paraganas	1987	Archaeological objects
70	Gandhi Smarak Sangrahasala	N 24 Paraganas	1961	Mahatma Gandhi's life
71	Rishi Bankim Library and Museum	N 24 Paraganas	1954	Rishi Bankim's life
72	Balanda Pratna Sangrahasala	N 24 Paraganas	1959	Archaeological objects
73	Chandraketugarh Sangrahasala	N 24 Paraganas	1955	Archaeological objects
74	Nadia Sangrahasala, Krishnanagar	Nadia	1975	Mohit Roy's house
75	Nabadwip Puratatwa Parishad	Nadia	1993; 21 June	Registered ; Archaeology and Manuscript
76	Folklore Museum, Kalyani University	Nadia	1990	Folk art, folklore
77	Santipur Sahitya Mandir Sangrahasala	Nadia	1915	Manuscript
78	Krittibas Smritibhavan o Sangrahasala	Nadia	1960	Manuscript
79	Ananda Niketan Kirtishala	Howrah	1962	Folk art , Archaeology, manuscript
80	Botanical Garden	Howrah	1787	Botanical
81	Belur Ramkrishna , Ma Sarada, Vivekanada Museum	Howrah	1994	Biographical
82	Sabuj Granthagar Sangrahashala, Pandihal	Howrah	1976	Folk art , Archaeology, documents
83	Sarat Smriti Granthagar o Sangrahasala	Howrah	1958	Biographical
84	Central National Herbarium	Howrah	NA	Botanical
85	Railway Museum	Howrah	2005	Railway
86	Institute de Chandernagore	Hooghly	1966	Historical
87	Carey Museum	Hooghly	1818	Historical
88	Saradacharan Museum, Sheoraphuli	Hooghly	1929	Historical, Manuscripts, material culture
89	Amulya Pratnashala, Rajbolhat	Hooghly	1941	Archaeology
90	Prachyabhaban Sangrahashala, Mahanad	Hooghly	NA	Archaeology
91	Sudhir Mukherjee Smriti Sangraha, Bandel	Hooghly	NA	Archaeology
92	Textile Museum, Srirampur	Hooghly	1960	Textile
93	Burdwan University Museum and Art Gallery	Burdwan	1965	Archaeology and art
94	Science Centre, NCSM	Burdwan	NA	Science
95	Rural Museum, Mangalkot	Burdwan	NA	Folk art, ethnological objects
96	Acharya Jogeshchandra Purakirti Bhaban, Bishnupur	Burdwan	1951	Archaeological objects
97	District Library and Town Hall Museum	Burdwan	NA	Archaeological objects
98	Rabindra Bhavan, Visva-Bharati	Burdwan	1942	Biographical
99	Uttarayan,	Burdwan	NA	Art
100	College Museum	Burdwan	NA	Art
101	Path Bhavan Sangrahasala	Burdwan	NA	Art
102	Kalabhavan	Burdwan	1981	Art
103	Bharatchandra Kristikendra	Burdwan	NA	Folk art, Archaeology
104	Birbhum Sahitya Parishad Sangrahasala	Burdwan	NA	Folk art, manuscript, records
105	Zilla Museum, Haripada Sahitya Mandir	Puruliya	1960	Archaeological objects
106	District Science Centre, GOI	Puruliya	1982	science
107	Ramkrishna Mission Vidyapith Sangrahasala	Puruliya	1963/1980 (Mandal)	Archaeological objects
108	Victoria Institution, BITM	Puruliya	1968	Science
109	Tamralipta Sangrahashala	Purba Medinipur	1973	Archaeological objects
110	Malibura's Museum, Mahishadal, Private	Purba Medinipur	1963	Archaeological objects
111	Bijan–Panchanan Sangrahasala, Moina/ Inda, Kharagpur	Purba Medinipur	NA	Archaeological objects
112	Paribrajak Panchanan Roy Sangrahasala, Basudebpur, Daspur	Purba Medinipur	NA	Archaeological objects
113	Rajanikanta GyanMandir, Ramnagar	Purba Medinipur	NA	Archaeological objects

114	VidyasagarSmritiMandir	Purba Medinipur	1939	Biographical
115	Hamilton Sangrahasala	Purba Medinipur	1934	Archaeological objects
116	Sati Smriti Sangrahasala	Purba Medinipur	NA	Art, material culture
117	Dandapur Pratna Sangrahasala	Purba Medinipur	NA	Archaeological objects
118	Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Sangrahashala	Paschim Medinipur	1920	Manuscript, historical
119	Rupnarayan SmritiPathagar	Paschim Medinipur	NA	Manuscript
120	Rarh Sanskriti Sangrahashala, Narayangarh	Paschim Medinipur	1990	Folk art, ethnographic
121	IIT,Kharagpur	Paschim Medinipur	NA	Science
122	Digha Sea Fish Aquarium	Paschim Medinipur	1997	Zoological
123	Kangsabati –Shilabati Sangrahashala, Chandrakona	Paschim Medinipur	NA	Archeological
124	Kolaghat Loksanskriti Gabeshanakendra o Sangrahashala	Paschim Medinipur	NA	Folk art, Manuscript
125	Tribal Museum, Vidyasagar University	Paschim Medinipur	2012	
126	Murshidabad District Museum, Jiagunj	Murshidabad	2004 (1975 records)	Archeological
127	Hazarduary Palace Museum	Murshidabad	1985	Archaeological Site Museum, ASI, GOI
128	New Palace Museum, Lalbagh	Murshidabad	NA	Archaeology
129	Malda Zilla Sangrahashala	Malda	1958	Archaeology
130	Institute of Folk Culture, Englishbazar	Malda	1969/1990 m	Folk art
131	District Science Museum,GOI	Malda	NA	Archaeology
132	Raja Rajaram Sangrahasahala	Malda	1946	Archaeological
133	Malda Museum	Malda	1937	Archaeological
134	Balurghat College Museum	South Dinajpur	1975	Archaeology
135	Zilla Museum	South Dinajpur	1956	Archaeology
136	Prachya Baharati, Balurghat	South Dinajpur	NA	
137	Paschim Dinajpur Sahitya o Sanskriti Parishad, Balurghat	South Dinajpur	NA	
138	Museum of the Dow Hill Forest School	Darjeeling	NA	Forest product
139	Akshay Kumar Maitra Historical Museum, NBU	Darjeeling	1965	
140	Llyod Botanical Garden	Darjeeling	1878	Botanical museum
141	Museum of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute	Darjeeling	1955/1968 opened as Everest Museum	Mounteneering
142	Himalayan Zoological Park	Darjeeling	1958	Zoological Museum
143	Natural History Museum	Darjeeling	1903	Science
144	C R Das Smriti Sangrahashala, Mal	Darjeeling	NA	Biographical
145	Tagore Museum, Mongpu	Darjeeling	NA	Biographical
146	Phanindradev Sangrahashala	Jalpaiguri	NA	Archaeological
147	Palace Musuem	Coochbehar	1982	Archaeological
148	PWD Museum	Coochbehar	2002	
149	Rail Heritage Museum	Coochbehar	NA	
150	Coochbehar Sahitya Sabha	Coochbehar	NA	Manuscript
151	P C Mahalanabis Memorial Museum and Archives	Kolkata	2000	Biographical museum on P C Mahalanabis
152	Natyasodh Sansthan	Kolkata	1981	Theatre museum
153	Bangla Natyakosh Parishad	Kolkata	1993	Theatre museum Kamal Saha9231572343
154	Mahajati Sadan Museum	Kolkata	1958	National movement

Appendix 2							
Museum Schedule							
Name	Age	Sex	Education	Occupation	Native-Rural/ Urban	Present Resi.	Urban/Rural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you interested in visiting museum as leisure/entertainment/ favourite option?</li> <li>• How many times have you visited museum? ----</li> <li>• How many times have you visited museum in the last one year? ----</li> <li>• Have you advised anybody to visit museum in the last one year? – Yes / No</li> <li>• How many museums of West Bengal can you name instantly? –</li> <li>• Do you know that a museum in WB is facing closure as central government has stopped funding it? – Yes / No</li> <li>• Can you name one folk art museum of West Bengal? – Yes/ No</li> <li>• Can you name one technology museum of West Bengal? – Yes/ No</li> <li>• Have you visited any museum in your district? – Yes / No/ Don't know of any museum in my district.</li> <li>• Have you participated in any discussion about museum ever? – Yes/No</li> <li>• Do you want to participate in any discussion on museum? – Yes/No</li> <li>• Do you think that museum has any utility in education? – Yes / No</li> <li>• Do you think that museum visit should be made compulsory in the curriculum of education? – Yes/ No</li> <li>• Do you think that government should take responsibility for promotion of museum among the public ? – Yes/No</li> </ul>							