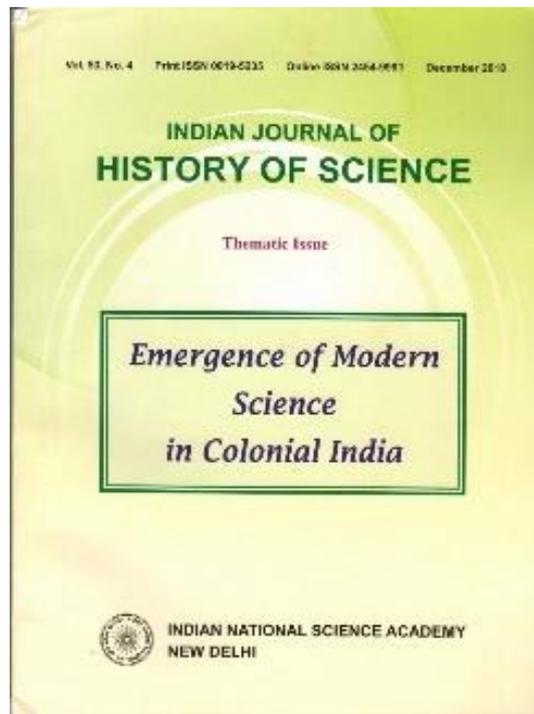


Emergence of modern Science in colonial India



A collection of papers presented at the conference *Emergence of Modern Science in Colonial India* held at the Indian National Science Academy (INSA), New Delhi, during 14 – 16 March, 2018 has been published in a special edition of the *Indian Journal of History of Science*, 53.4 (2018).

Although the practice of Science flourished in ancient India with remarkable contributions to Mathematics and Medicine, the practice of modern science did not indigenously grow in India. It was the contact with the British colonial rulers, who introduced the practice of modern science in the country. The papers included in this edition cover the practice of science in three phases viz., Pre- Colonial Phase: 1601-1757, early Colonial Phase: 1757-1900, and late Colonial Phase: 1900-1947 with vigorous participation by Indians.

There is only one paper on the pre-colonial phase, where it is shown that a few elites had the knowledge of the development of modern science in Europe, but remained passive observers and not active participants.

In the early colonial phase, the British rulers needed geological, botanical, zoological and meteorological surveys of their empire, as well as an understanding of tropical diseases for their own interests. Initially the work was carried on by the Europeans and Indians were only trained to assist them. Several of the papers deal with the introduction of modern practices in almost all fields of science including

forensics and psychology. At the turn of the twentieth century the British policy of higher education in science and technology for Indians changed and that accelerated the spread of modern science in India.

A large number of papers deal with the late colonial phase, in which the emergence of pioneering Indian scientists and technologists took place and the practice of modern science became firmly established in India. The reader will find these papers very interesting, specially how the indigenous efforts grew out of the clash of interests of the colonial powers and the native Indians. Evolution of almost all the pioneers of modern Indian science have been dealt with in these papers.

This is an important compilation of papers for any serious student of history of science in India. The reader would get a comprehensive picture of the emergence of modern science in colonial India. However, one thing that is missing from this compilation is an analysis of why this emergence resulted in producing individual stalwarts of science but not many schools of sciences as was the case in Europe and USA. Also missing is the topic of the role of the world wars in shaping the growth of science and especially technology in India, which continued after independence.

Amit Roy
amitroy1948@gmail.com