

Avik Chanda in conversation with Dr. Sukanya Mitra

On December 2, 2019, the History Department organized a discussion on DARA SHIKOH: THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING. Sukanya Mitra asked the author Avik Chanda the reasons behind choosing Dara Shukoh's character as the theme for his book to which he explained how Dara often relegated to the margins of Mughal history was noted for his spirituality and was in many ways ahead of his time. He also drew attention to many lesser known facts of Mughal History like the erudition of the princesses of the empire for example Gulbadan Begum who wrote the biography of Humayun, and Jahanara Begum who was also very well informed and was deeply affected by the politics and war of succession in the Mughal Court. The students also asked questions about some almost unknown practices of the Mughal dynasty like the princesses never getting married. Mr. Chanda explained that the reason behind this was to prevent wars of succession as contenders for the throne would increase if the princesses were married off. The discussion was very fruitful and enriching and was well received by students and teachers alike.