

# The new and the old in seventeenth century Indian logic: the case of Gokulanātha Upādhyāya

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In an earlier book (Ganeri 1999), I documented the extraordinary achievements of the Bengali philosopher, Gadādhara Bhaṭṭācārya (1604–1709). His work established him firmly as a leading 'new intellectual' of seventeenth century India. There is good evidence that, within a relatively short period, his influence had spread far outside his native Bengal. Bengali intellectuals were already describing themselves as 'new' (navya), in order to distinguish themselves and their ideas from an older site of intellectual production, Mithilā. The Bengali genius Raghunātha, in the sixteenth century, had first migrated to train in Mithilā and then returned to Bengal to found the new site in Navadvīpa. Towards the end of our period, Mithilā re-emerged as the centre of gravity for philosophical studies in India.

In my conference presentation, I will begin to explore the causes of this transformation in the balance of intellectual power at the end of the seventeenth century. The key thinker of the period is Gokulanātha Upādhyāya (c. 1675), a brilliant polymath, prominent public intellectual and a man of wide horizons and extraordinary intellectual resources. He is the only Sanskrit logician for whom we have evidence of competence in Persian and engagement with the literati of the Islamic court. He wrote widely about the nature of argument and debate, the role of language, the transmission of knowledge, and he responded directly to the intellectual challenge of Raghunātha and the self-proclaimed 'new' intellectuals in Bengal. Gokulanātha lived too near to the advent of colonialism for his work to achieve the spread and fame of Gadādhara.