The topic of this doctoral dissertation is evolution of Pannalal Dasgupta’s ideas and activities. Pannalal Dasgupta (1908-99) started his career as a young worker of the Anushilan (Revolt Group) and was arrested in the famous Mechua Bazar case in 1929. During his imprisonment in the 1930s he was attracted to Marxism and subsequently joined Saumyendranath Tagore’s communist group known as the Revolutionary Communist Party of India. This left leaning in his ideas gradually led him to adopt the line of armed strike against the newly independent Indian state. But when the radical action in Dum Dum-Basirhat that he had planned was crushed by the state, he withdrew from the path of armed struggle and adopted the Gandhian line of peaceful social reconstruction programme. As a student of Indian political thinkers my attention to study Pannalal Dasgupta’s political and post-political career was drawn primarily due to this remarkable swing of his political thinking after aborted attempt at Dum Dum-Basirhat in 1949. This interesting transformation of his ideas and activities immediately drew my attention. Hence my thesis.

I have seen that academic researches on Indian political leaders have focussed more on the lives of celebrated personalities in the mainstream Indian politics like Nehru, Ambedkar etc, rather than others who remained outside this arena.
This is truer about failed radicals like Pannalal Dasgupta, who after having failed in radical endeavours consciously leaned towards peaceful reconstruction to bring about exploitation-free just order in society. This impressed me also to take up the task to unravel the complex evolution of Pannalal Dasgupta’s ideas and activities.

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I also consulted old volumes of EPW in the library of Presidency University. I have also taken help from the library of Barasat Government College where I was working as Assistant Professor before taking the study leave for completing my research. I appreciate kind co-operation that I received from both these institutions.
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