

3rd International Partition Seminar

Bengal Partition 'Katha'



29th February &
1st March, 2020

Refugee, Border, Citizenship &
Memories in Literature

Inauguration of
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Bengal Partition Repository

A Digital Repository on
Bengal Partition

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Submission of abstract and online Registration: 7th February, 2020

Notification of acceptance: 12th February, 2020

Last date of Registration Fees: 15th February, 2020

Capacity: 45

The official Language of the Seminar: Bangla & English

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ABOUT THE BENGAL PARTITION REPOSITORY

‘The Centre for Language, Translation and Cultural Studies’ under Netaji Subhash Open University has taken up an initiative to develop a digital repository titled Bengal Partition. The initiative had initially begun materializing through an International Conference organized during 8-10 February in 2014. Thereafter an effort was taken to spread this Research Project among many, surmounting the institutional constraints of the U.G.C Research Project (2015-16 and 2016-17). Utilizing the advantageous arena of an Open University, collaborative endeavours were taken up with other Universities of West Bengal and also of Bangladesh. The main objective was to collect the memories, writings and personal memorials of people having the experience of the years 1947 and 1971. Taking a significant departure from the usual practice of ‘archival documentation’ of Humanities at the inter institutional level, there has been an effort to build a repository about Bengal Partition- certainly a process which can never claim a conclusion ever. About 50 interested Researchers, teachers and Professors from the various districts of West Bengal have worked tirelessly in this initiative. It is now time to open and bring to the limelight a significant chapter of this entire endeavour. It is perhaps important to do so for the sake of carrying this work ahead.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The third International Conference has been titled ‘Partition Katha’. Do the realities hidden in the multiple layers of the Bengal Partition saga,- the agony of the broken lives- of the immeasurable love for life of the destitute who has been able to rebuild from the fragments, indicate a new trend in Bengali Literature? What kind

of cues does the saga of Bengal Partition carry beyond the much known and seen paradigm of the Indian Partition stories? How does the memory of the thrice, back to back Partition of Bengal create a new significance of the expression 'refugee' in Bengal – that which surmounts the literary meaning of the 'foreign' word 'refugee' taken as a loan in the Bengali language- In those memories and narratives of Bengal Partition where the woman breaks her 'silence' into smithereens and comes out into the wider world to grow and become a 'modern' human being.

In the Bengali Literature of the Partition and its various writings there has remained a deliberate apathy or in the motivated and evolving context of Bengali Language and there seems to be an imbalance in perspectives between that of Bangladesh and West Bengal. For various reasons the narratives of Bengal Partition have changed with the rebuilding of new lives. In the multiplicity of languages in India, the peculiar position of the Bengali language has influenced the Partition studies. There is no 'Kashmir' at the borders of Bengal—In the love that has flowed everlastingly along the waters; the movements to and fro, trade and commerce, and endless interactions, it is the Bengali language that has been effective and had retained its inevitable existence. There are memories and forgetting, envies and grudges, rumours have given rise of panicked groans which have filled the suburbs and the districts. The impact of Partition has changed the pattern of human tradition. In people's language, in their rituals and festivals in their food habits, the Partition flows as a never-ending stream, decades over decades. In the cartography of the evacuation of districts and wards and the implied conflict conveys a different 'katha' of Partition.

The characteristics of India –Bangladesh Border over the past

four-five decades has penetrated into the stories and 'Kathas' of Partition. Life after the 'trauma' is surrounded by the 'metaphor' of reality. The next generation has entered into new lives having had close affinities with that cloistered existence. The scope of Politics has been framed through the regular oscillations and upheavals of the society and economy. The refugee life is a significant anchor of this politics. The determined struggle to rebuild the refugee life has found its congruity with the leftist viewpoint in Bengal. Again the denuding perspectives have given rise to polyphonic voices of the subjective self and identity. The people of Partition have hidden themselves- they have moved away from the memories- in a slice of 'patta' land they have build their future homes. The Bengali family and its surprisingly complex cohesiveness is bound to become an important tool in interpreting the Partition reality- The practical nature of the family- this idiosyncrasy was never an experience of Partition Literature of the entire world. The complexity of psychological organization and its nature had not been referred to in the dense and mazelike corpus of the facts of Partition. Its warmth has remained captured in tight knit tales of Bengal.

The words of the Hindus evacuated into West Bengal, the words of the Refugees in Bangladesh are each in themselves surprising tales- those which imagine a tale of spurning and refusal through continuous play of hide and seek—again those which try to authenticate the tales of communal harmony. In the manifestation of these dual realities is woven the narrative which gradually grows in complexity. Partition remains a process in Bengal. Recent references to citizenship bring back those perspectives of Partition among the human minds. In the narratives of Bengal are frozen the notes of those dialectics of oppositional voices. Bengal Partition

‘Katha’ is the reverberation of those notations.

The Third International Conference invites participation of audience and paper –presenters. A maximum of 50 participants can be accommodated, apart from the registered participants of the ‘Bengal Repository Project’.

PRESENTATIONS ARE INVITED ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS

**Those aspects of Bengal partition-‘katha’ on which
interested participants can talk are**

1. Border
2. Refugees’- home
3. Citizenship
4. The impact of Partition on Bengali Poetry
5. Publications of the various districts of Bengal (Those published before 2000) and personal memories (’47 and ’71) may be discussed
6. Publications and writings of the people migrated to/ from various districts of Bangladesh may be discussed
7. Translation of English pieces related to Partition
8. English novels/stories/ prose writings of Bangladesh
9. The politics and problems of editing and anthologizing writings related to Bengal Partition.

Well thought out abstracts (within 400) words are to be send along with the registration form (Google doc file) mailed to you. It is desirable that the topic number be mentioned below the title of the abstract. Only in special cases will the manuscript be invited. The seminar committee will publish a list of 30 abstracts after careful consideration.

SEMINAR ROUND TABLE

An interactive session of interested representatives with the senior and veteran people associated with the Partition Repository, will be arranged on the second day of the conference. Participants will be : Bagerhaat Samity, Noakhali Samity, Anil Sinha Birth Centenary Commemorative Committee, UCRC representatives, Peoples from Hili, 'Shikarer Sandhane' and others..

IN CONVERSATION WITH AUTHORS AND EDITORS

Representatives will have a face to face interaction with the authors to be continued with Question- Answer sessions. Representatives will share experiences of their reading of the author's works- Well-thought out and focused questions to be mailed earlier.

PARTITION LECTURE SERIES

The 'Centre for Language and Cultural Studies' has been organising Partition Lecture series keeping in mind the Partition Research Project. The 10th and 11th Partition Lectures will be delivered at the third International Partition Seminar. The lectures are being sponsored by ' Cambridge University' Press.

The tenth Partition lecture will be delivered by Professor Tapodhir Bhattacharya, ex-Vice-Chancellor, Assam University.

Professor Fakrul Alam, Department of English, Dhaka University has given his kind consent to deliver the eleventh Partition lecture.

PROJECT PRESENTATION

Some of the interviews taken by the Researchers of this Project

over the past three years will be presented at this conference. The interviews and the catalogues of other collected materials will be published.

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED RESEARCH PAPERS

Registered participants will be presenting their Research Papers in a maximum of three sessions at this conference. Presentations in English and Bengali will be in separate sessions. Facilities for Power Point Presentation and others will be available. The Presenters will get 7+3 minutes of Presentation time. It is expected that the presentation be made through a PPT mode with a focused and rational opinion progressing through logical cues. The conference is interested to listen to well organized deliberations on the above topics and sub-topics.

Three selected presentations will be awarded cash prizes. The amount of the cash prizes will be 3000, 2000 and 1000 INR respectively.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Kindly submit the abstract on the above mentioned selected themes in about 400 words (Times New Roman, Font size 12) with 4-5 Keywords in the google form which will be provided after the initial communication via email. Only thirty abstracts will be selected for presentation. The time limit for each paper presentation is (7+3) Minutes. The language of the abstract is English/Bangla.

We will request you send your full-length paper after sixty days of the seminar for publication and editing. Selected papers will be published later on as the second BPR project book.

REGISTRATION FEES

**Includes conference kit, tea and lunch during
the days of the conference**

College/ University Faculty/ Paper Presenters: 1500/- (India)

Research scholars and students: Rs. 800/-

General Participants without Paper Presentation: 1000/-
(India)

International Participants and Paper Presentation:

Bangladesh/ Other Countries (4000/- Rupees or 60
Dollar)

In case of joint papers, both the authors need to register separately. No accommodation will be provided by the organizer. However, guidance will be provided for arranging accommodation. We will not be able to provide any TA/DA for attending the conference.

For details log on to www.cltcnsou.in

Manan Kumar Mandal
Director, School of Humanities &
Coordinator, CLTCS, NSOU