



KIRORI MAL COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF DELHI, DELHI



In Collaboration With

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTION OF SINDHI LANGUAGE (NCPSL)
MHRD, GOVT. OF INDIA
organizes

A *Two Day National Seminar*

on the theme

Decoding the Partition L(i/a)nes: Reflections on Language, Literature and Culture

on

6-7th February 2018

at

Kirori Mal College, University of Delhi, Delhi

Chief Guest

Sri Ram Bahadur Rai

Chairperson , IGNSA, Delhi

Keynote Speaker

Prof. Kapil Kapoor

Chancellor, MGAHU, Vardha

Concept Note

The end of the World War 2 witnessed three partitions: of Germany, of Korea, and of India. Germany has reunified; Korea is seeking to reunify itself through force if necessary; and, in case of India, the undoing of partition is not on the front burner. While ethnic and religious identity of Germany and Korea may have facilitated/facilitate the undoing of the divisions, the ethnic, linguistic and religious multiplicity of India seems to have produced this event to a seemingly permanent scar. In the same way, the fourth partition of the land between the Palestine and the Israel is also seemingly unending.

Almost seven decades after its occurrence, generally for Indians, partition means remembering the dark side of the independence, a past stained by the bloodshed and violence, a moment of displacement and resettlement, a time in history characterized by the division of the country. What followed in the succeeding years was the reflection of memories about partition in art, language, literature and culture. However, over the years, determined by particular circumstances of the moment of remembering, memories have become more and more complex and acquired more nuances and layers. While the powerful and poignant voices of direct experiential memories diminish, what tends to acquire more significance is the reality of living with the consequences of partition despite our inevitable engagement with the partition's 'unfinished businesses'.

While the study of such a large corpus of works has its own advantages, it is also instrumental in conceptualizing and reconfiguring the contemporary notions of languages, communities, nationalities, and geographical territories. Displacement and resettlement of communities such as *sindhis*, *pashtuns*, *punjabis* and *balochis* and the consequent tensions fraught with their political and social identities provoke one to address these existing problems. It is needless to say that in the process of studying the 'effects' of partition, the academicians find themselves grappling as much with the present as with the past.

Seven decades after the partition, the two nations are still trying to heal the wounds left behind by this incision to the once-whole body of India. Many are still in search of an identity and a history left behind beyond an impenetrable boundary. The two countries started off with ruined economies and lands and without an established, experienced system of government. They lost many of their most dynamic leaders, such as Gandhi, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee and the like. India and Pakistan have been to wars twice since the partition and they are still deadlocked over the issue of the possession of Kashmir. The essential phonetic exuberance and linguistic sanctity got mixed up with other languages too at the cost of its authenticity and originality. The same issues of boundaries and divisions, Hindu-Muslim majorities and differences, still persist in Kashmir.

In the aftermaths of partition, an unfortunate development has been the construction of binary narratives and portrayals of one set of thinkers or leaders as heroes and another similar set as villains. However, this dynamic does not take us very far. The only way to forge a dialogue between these two seemingly antagonistic positions is to engage with concepts, themes, categories and issues that require further interrogation. Hence, a pertinent question to contemplate on is: how do we move forward and not only carry this history with us? Having experienced the territorial conflict in the past, how do we engage with the fissures within several other dominions at present? How do we address the problems of the displaced communities? These are some of the questions that this seminar intends to engage with.

The collective and individual consciousness of people from both the sides is still haunted by the horrific experiences of the partition, and consequently, sensitive souls have poured out their hearts, the impact of which can be seen on our language, literature and culture.

The seminar will concern itself with the followings:

- Partition and Literature on and evoked by
- Partition theme in Performing Arts and its representation in Theatre
- Partition in Popular Culture and Indian Cinema
- Partition in the Perspective of Ancient Indus Heritage
- Films and Plays on Partition
- Partition Divides and Victims:
 - # Culture and Identity
 - # Languages: Punjabi, Sindhi, Kashmiri, Urdu, etc.
 - # Displacement: Exile, Diaspora, Loss of Home
 - # Women and Children
- Nation and Nationalism; Ethnicity, Nationality and Religion
- The Tragedies of Partition: Suffering, Trauma, Catastrophe

While dealing with the aforementioned issues in particular, the seminar does not limit itself to these topics only. The topics indicate only of a broader framework whereby new insights are to be explored in course of our study of the partition and its aftermaths.

- **Abstract** in about 500 words with **keywords** on seminaronpartition@gmail.com before **20th December 2017**
- **Full Paper** before **15th January 2018**
- Best papers (English/Hindi) as selected by the team will be for the presentation.
- The proceedings (the best papers selected) in the form of a book with ISBN shall be published by a **Renowned Publishing House**.

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