Partitioned Lives: Migrants, Refugees, Citizens in India and Pakistan, 1947-65

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Abstract
Partitioned States offers new perspective in the histories of Partition and its aftermath by connecting it to the long, drawn out and skewed formation of new national entities: India and East Pakistan. The book focuses on the Bengal Partition and locates its narrative within the intersection of long term cross border movement, chronic small-scale violence, the emergence of a document regime, and biased national refugee policies, all of which contributed to the formation of national citizenships in India and East Pakistan.

This book argues that minorities -- Hindus in East Pakistan, Muslims in eastern India -- and the discourse over their citizenship and national identity were central to the project of nation building. However, rather than being automatic after 1947, the identity of Indians and Pakistanis were produced, often constructed arbitrarily, through the discretionary powers of lowly officials as through legislation emerging out of parliaments over the next two decades.

The product of several years of archival research in Calcutta, Dhaka, Delhi, and London, Partitioned States is the first to examine the experience of Partition from both sides of the Bengal border. It urges for a rethinking of the Bengal Partition, which continues to inform the contemporary politics of India and Bangladesh. (Publisher’s Website)

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Comments
From Partitioned Lives: Migrants, Refugees, Citizens in India and Pakistan, 1947-65, by Haimanti Roy. Introduction is made available in the repository in
Partition refers to the historical division of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan. The partition of India and Pakistan into the world’s second and sixth most populous nations occurred at midnight on August 15, 1947 the same time both nations became independent of Great Britain. During the mass migration between India and Pakistan people crowded onto the roofs and positioned themselves in the frames windows of trains with all the possessions they could carry because there was no room inside. Others walked in hot, humid and rainy summer weather. A Sikh living in a Muslim village in India told Critchfield, “The Muslims thought they were safe. They were ready to fight back as soon as they saw the Sikhs start to surround the village at daybreak. Partitioned States offers new perspective in the histories of Partition and its aftermath by connecting it to the long, drawn out and skewed formation of new national entities: India and East Pakistan. The book focuses on the Bengal Partition and locates its narrative within the intersection of long term cross border movement, chronic small-scale violence, the emergence of a document regime, and biased national refugee policies, all of which contributed to the formation of national citizenships in India and East Pakistan. This book argues that minorities -- Hindus in East Pakistan, Muslims in...