



Call for Papers

Workshop

Caste, Exclusion, and Memory: Dalit Narratives of Partition

The Partition of 1947 shattered and reshaped political boundaries, social relations, and everyday lives across South Asia. While an extensive body of scholarship has examined Partition through lenses such as nationalism, religion, violence, and migration. There is a significant lacuna when it comes to caste structured experiences of displacement, vulnerability, survival, and post-Partition reconstruction. Memories of Partition are often preserved through personal recollections, state-conserved testimonials, community histories, and cultural narratives. They bear the traces of unequal experiences, even as caste is frequently rendered implicit or invisible. Considering both visible and invisible forms of violence shall deepen our understanding of caste's role in shaping survival and memory during and beyond Partition.

Recently, new scholarship has started to document the voices of Partition survivors and migrants from the perspectives of marginalized identities. However, this task becomes particularly challenging for Dalit experiences, as they remain underrepresented in the archives and popular narrativisation.

This interdisciplinary workshop seeks to address this absence by bringing Caste and Dalit Studies into critical engagement with Partition Studies. To do so, we focus on how caste location shaped experiences of migration, displacement, violence, survival, rehabilitation, and remembrance during and after the partition. The workshop encourages a rethinking of Partition scholarship from the margins in the form of a new perspective, bringing into focus Dalit lives and narratives that have long remained outside dominant accounts.

Themes of the Workshop

- **Migration:** Explorations of caste-differentiated experiences of displacement, border crossing, and mobility during and after Partition.
- **Rehabilitation:** Analysis of post-Partition relief, resettlement, and state policies, with attention to how caste shaped access to resources, housing, and citizenship.
- **Memory:** Studies of how caste figures in individual, collective, and intergenerational memories of Partition, including silences and erasures. Tracing how cultural practices and institutions such as memorial projects, films, art, etc (un)see the caste lines in Partition.

- **Narratives:** Readings of literary, oral, visual, and archival narratives that foreground or obscure caste in representations of Partition.
- **Violence:** Investigations into how Partition violence was experienced, enacted, and remembered across caste lines, including structural forms of violence.

Details about the Workshop

The workshop will be held on 26-28 November 2026, at the **Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies**. Abstracts must be 500-700 words. In addition, please highlight your methods, sources and references (excluding from the word limit) and send a one-page curriculum vitae (CV). Please send the documents as one pdf document to casteandpartition@gmail.com. The last date for submission of abstracts is 30th March 2026.

We welcome papers from the fields of the humanities and social sciences. The aim of the workshop is to prepare a special issue for a distinguished academic journal. Therefore, we request that selected participants to submit a 6,000–8,000-word paper, two months prior to the workshop. All contributions will be circulated in advance in order to facilitate substantive discussions during the workshop, and participants are expected to read and prepare feedback for all workshop contributions. Based on the in-depth feedback provided on all papers during the workshop by discussants and fellow participants, authors will be invited to revise their papers within two to three months for formal submission of the special issue.

We are pleased to offer full funding for flights and accommodation for all invited participants, and we look forward to your commitment to this collaborative endeavor.

For any queries, please contact minee.pratiksha@uzh.ch

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