

THE BENGALI LITERARY SOCIETY

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Events:

1. *Bengal 1946-47: The Moment of Independence and Partition*

The Bengali Literary Society presents a recorded lecture by Dr. Suchetana Chattopadhyay of Jadavpur University, Kolkata. **This was released on 24.09.2022 as a pre-recorded lecture and was attended by 16 individuals.** Dr. Suchetana Chattopadhyay is a distinguished scholar and in her lecture, 'Bengal 1946-47: The Moment of Independence and Partition' she explores the provenance of the decisive moment of partition and independence situating the state of world politics in the aftermath of the World wars, political polarisation, and movement against the colonising forces by the colonised which led to a rapid disintegration of colonial states and communal violence and consolidations. Furthermore, she looks at this moment as one of dispossession and material exploitation where power transferred from foreign to indigenous exploiters. Therefore, Dr. Chattopadhyay nuances our understanding of this moment for Bengal.

Dr. Suchetana Chattopadhyay studied at Jadavpur University and the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Some of her research interests include Communism in India, Urban Social History, Muslim intellectuals and workers, Working Class Movements, sailors, twentieth century Calcutta, Colonial Surveillance; Imperial Masculinity, Empire and Violence, Imperialism and Race and Indian political activists abroad. She has traced the early career of Muzaffar Ahmad and what made him arrive at communism in the rife environment of colonial Calcutta in her book, *An Early Communist: Muzaffar Ahmad in Calcutta 1913-29*. She has published work on the Ghadar Movement, investigating the lived memory of the movement in Sikh workers in the industrial centers of southwest Bengal in *Voices of Komagata Maru*.

Link to the lecture:

<https://www.facebook.com/bengalilitsoc/videos/2455797524585560>

2. *'Where are the Little Girls?'*

The Bengali Literary Society of St. Stephen's College invited **Dr. Devjani Ray**, Associate Professor of English at Miranda House to deliver a lecture on the **15th of October, 2022** in **Room M**. The topic of her lecture was: "Where are the Little Girls?"

Discussing how girlhood can be constructed through the lens of children's periodicals in late 19th and early 20th century Bengal". Around 18 students attended the event, of which 6 were from other colleges. Drawing on a Foucauldian theoretical base, Dr. Ray used various examples from periodicals such as *Sakha* and *Sandesh* to draw attention to the patriarchal discourses inherent within them. Further, she highlighted their pedagogical role in the making of a patriarchal nation. The lecture was followed by a short question and answer session.

3. *'The Child Sati in Early 19th century Bengal: Tales from the Archives'*

The Bengali Literary Society, in collaboration with the History Society of St. Stephen's College invited **Dr. Tanika Sarkar**, current Visiting Professor at Ashoka University and ex-faculty member of institutions such as St. Stephen's College, Indraprastha College, JNU, Yale, Chicago, Göttingen etc. to deliver a lecture on the **7th of November, 2022** in the **College Hall**. The topic of her lecture was: 'The Child Sati in Early 19th century Bengal: Tales from the Archives'. Around 200 attendees were present, including faculty members from St. Stephen's College and other colleges as well as around 70 students from other colleges. Using a narrative as well as a legal framework and drawing attention to the often ignored age factor in the controversy regarding sati and its subsequent abolition in Bengal, Dr. Sarkar provided a comprehensive analysis of the archival evidence with respect to the same while also problematising the notion of a monolithic, progressive colonial administration.

4. *The Adhiraj Ghosh Memorial Debate 2022*

The Adhiraj Ghosh Memorial Debate 2022 was organised on the **19th of November 2022** in the **OCLT** at St. Stephen's College. There were 7 teams consisting of 14 participants in total, of which 10 were students of other Delhi University Colleges such as Ramjas College, Hansraj College, Kirori Mal College etc. The motion for this edition of the debate was - 'The Concept of Bengal is a Colonial Creation'. The debate was adjudicated by Dr. Sudipto Basu, a historian of colonial Bengal and a professor at St. Stephen's College.

The debate was conducted according to the following rules:

1. The debate is in the conventional format, with each team containing 2 speakers, one for and one against the motion.
2. The language of the debate will be English.
3. Open teams are permitted i.e. team members may be from different colleges.
4. A total of 10 teams will be accepted, in order of registration.
5. Each speaker has 4 minutes to present their case, and 1 minute for rebuttal.

6. All final decisions rest with the judges and shall not be open to questioning.

Winners of the debate:

Best Team - Prमित Das and Darakhshan Tariq (Ramjas College).

Runner Up Team - Megh Mazumdar and Rayan Chakrabarti (St. Stephen's College).

Best Speaker (for) - Megh Mazumdar (St. Stephen's College).

Best Speaker (against) - Prमित Das (Ramjas College).

They were awarded the following cash prizes:

Best Team - INR 6000

Runner Up Team - INR 5000

Best Speaker (for) - INR 2000

Best Speaker (against) - INR 2000