



**The British Academy Writing Workshop
on
Pakistan to Bangladesh, 1947-70**

Call for Proposals

Present day Bangladesh and Pakistan were one country from 1947-1971, a period of twenty-four years. While some remarkable studies have focused on the inequalities and the war which led to the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, other aspects of their combined histories have been overshadowed, leading to an eerie silence about the quarter century of entanglements between the two wings of Pakistan. Studies covering both wings of Pakistan were published in the period before the founding of Bangladesh, but since 1971 the tendency has been to treat them separately even for the pre-1971 period. While some scholars outside South Asia still take a holistic view, most writings in Pakistan either only mention East Pakistan in passing, or simply ignore its existence. In Bangladesh, this period is only teleologically significant as a build-up to its independence. As a result, current scholarship from both countries prevents a fuller grasp of the lifeworld of the erstwhile largest Muslim majority state called Pakistan. Coupled with the fact that there are almost no academic linkages between Pakistan and Bangladesh, and that relations between the two countries are often more polarised than those between India and Pakistan, no serious attempt has been made to bridge this historiographical and intellectual gap. Thus, it is time to appreciate that united Pakistan and the conditions that gave birth to Bangladesh represent not only political projects of emancipation—these also harboured a range of innovations, ideas, doubts, contestations as well as affective conversations which marked the history of many post-colonial nations across the global south.

This writing workshop invites proposals from early career scholars (ideally within 7 years of their PhD), on topics relating to the period 1947-70. Proposals from the disciplines of history, politics, sociology, anthropology, art, literature and architecture, among other related fields, are especially welcome, together with those with an interdisciplinary lens. An equal number of scholars will be chosen from Pakistan and Bangladesh, and we hope pandemic restrictions lift to allow for meetings within each country and outside over the course of one year. The scholars selected will also receive mentorship from an international team of senior academics, either in online and physical meetings. The papers, once they pass the peer review process, will then be published as a special issue of a leading scholarly journal. This is a yearlong commitment, and we request scholars to apply only if they have the time to commit to it for the whole duration.

Please send a proposal between 500-1000 words which clearly details the question/theme you are interrogating, the methodology, and engagement with current literature. With the proposal please send a copy of your cv. Both these materials need to be sent to: bawritingworkshop2021@gmail.com by midnight GMT, June 30, 2021. Those selected will be informed within a fortnight.



After selection, senior mentors will be matched with the early career scholars, followed by in-country meetings in July/August 2021 (either online or on zoom in Bangladesh and Pakistan). First drafts will be expected by early November 2021. After comments, the second draft will be due in January 2022, when the whole team will meet at the Lahore ThinkFest to present the papers and for a 2-day workshop (conditions allowing), where a final round of feedback will also be given. Thereafter the scholars will be helped with editing and language, if need be, before final submission to a journal as a special issue.

This Writing Workshop has been funded by the British Academy, and is a collaboration of the University of Oxford with IT University, Pakistan. BRAC University is the Bangladesh partner.