



---

## **Crisis and Memory- Trauma, Testimony and Collective Remembering in Partition Narratives**

**Tandrima Das**

### **Abstract**

The 1947 Partition was considered the most cataclysmic crisis in Indian history. Based on an arbitrary line drawn on a map, it was not merely the division of a nation into two parts, but the division of people and hearts. Further, it came along with dystopian instances of exodus, genocide, ethnic cleansing, and unfathomable communal violence committed by people on either side of the border. The victims of Partition were deeply scarred by the trauma of their uprooting and they did not find solace in their new homelands. Consequently, a new branch of literature emerged to serve as a testimony to the horrific experiences of the victims, their ordeal, and their longing for lost homes. This intensified the steam of mistrust among communities, which continued to blow the whistle of violence through several other catastrophic incidents. Naturally, even after seventy-five years, the question remains as to whether there is any resolution to this psychological unrest. Therefore, in this paper, I wish to explore the works of authors such as Manto, Amitav Ghosh, Prativa Basu, and others who attempted to find a way to vent their agony and resolve peace with their daunting memories through their writing. I have put forth Derrida's concept of 'forgiveness' to seek how, only through mutual empathy and by forgiving the "unforgivable," the denouement for this forbidding tale can be reached and mental peace may be achieved.

**Keywords:** Partition, Crisis, Trauma, Collective Aphasia, Mistrust, Forgiveness.