

Book title: *Nationhood and the Indian Subcontinent: Contemporary Cultural Reflections*,

[p 350, Royal size, Hard bound]

Edited by Himadri Lahiri & Srideep Mukherjee

Synopsis

This volume with an extensive introduction revolves around the concepts and practices of nation, nationhood and nationalism in the Indian subcontinent. These themes are explored through various cultural media such as literature, film, and journalism. While partitions of 1947 and 1971 are inescapable backdrops for the cultural reflections, the volume's significance lies in its focus on their contemporary ramifications. It highlights human predicaments in problematic spaces such as the Chitmahals, the Sundarbans, Northeast India, and Kashmir, and investigates representational dynamics of issues like citizenship, statelessness, disability, gender, and cultural cooperation. Representation of political, cultural and ethnic resistance embodied in select Kashmiri poetry, Miya poetry from Assam, poetry that reflects on the precarities of living during the pandemic, are all approached with sharp understanding and clinical objectivity. The corpus examined includes novels, short stories, poetry and drama written in both English and regional languages by authors from Bangladesh, Pakistan and India, as well as film and media texts across the subcontinent.

Interestingly, the volume features conversations with two film and theatre actresses and a theatre director from Bangladesh, Pakistan and India respectively. This section offers unique perspectives on how creative minds in the culture industry view the developments of the nations, and promote people-to-people interactions. Abjuring homogenising tendencies of monochromatic nationhood that are lately evident, the volume privileges inclusive social spaces, multicultural nationhood, interactive societies, and diverse narratives. It uncovers points of intersection and divergence, as well as subtle continuities and differences in the lives of ordinary people across the subcontinent.