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A R C H I V E

**Interview Packet | Migrants**  
(February 2016 Version)

## 1. Pre-interview Equipment Checklist

- Digital video recorder** (audio recorder is okay)
- A good microphone** designed for interviews is highly recommended. Ask your nearest camera shop for assistance or send us a message.
- Sturdy tripod**
- Charged batteries** that will together last at least 4 hours.
- Interview Field Packet** with list of interview questions
- Laptop with/ printed copy of **Post Interview Questionnaire**
- Paper copy of **Interview Release Form**
- Digital still camera. Take 5+ still photos per interview.**
- Headphones**
- Extra recording media** (memory cards, etc)
- Pen and a notebook** for notes during interview
- Your **business card** and Archive Information card (download and print from [www.1947partitionarchive.org](http://www.1947partitionarchive.org))
- Plenty of time** (at least 4 hours) for interview plus travel

## 2. At the interview: Equipment setup checklist

- Check **lighting**
- Check **background noise**
- Framing of subject**
- Camera on?** Is the red record light on? Close LCD screen to conserve battery, if needed.
- Microphone on?** (If you are using an external microphone)
- Headphones on?** Can you hear them via headphones?
- Take photos** of your setup and subject. If team of two, ask one team member to take digital photos of the other conducting the interview.
- Enough memory** for at least 4 hours of recording?

### 3. Interview Packet Table of Contents

The interview question packet is organized according to the following tabs. Use these tabs as quick references to different sets of questions.

**Pre-Partition:** All experiences that occur before August 1947. Pages 7-19.  
Keyword packet pages 51-58.

**Partition:** All experiences that occur during and around 1947. Pages 22-30.  
Keyword packet pages 59-63

**Post-Partition:** All experiences that occur after the Partition period (exact year depends on the interviewee's personal experience). Pages 32-41. Keyword packet pages 64-69.

**Variable:** Questions that can fit into more than one of the previous categories: the time at which certain life experiences occurred will be different for different interviewees. Use this tab to refer to a part of the question packet that may be at a different point in your interviewee's life. Pages 17, 19, 35-41, 43-49. Keyword packet pages 56, 58, 66, 68, 69-74.

**Main packet:** Pages 7-50

**Keyword packet:** Pages 51-74

### 3. Interview Questions

Think of the interview as an assisted narration.

It is a conversation in which you minimize your own involvement. The interviewee dominates the conversation. Your job is to simply help them with recollection or in bringing out key parts of their story, using questions.

To help you, imagine you are painting a picture or writing a play. What details would you need from their story, from the particular scene they are describing?

The following questions are the basic guideline to use for the interviews. As it is a very sensitive subject, please keep in mind the following:

- Feel free to supplement this questionnaire with other questions or remove questions to accommodate your interviewee's unique story.
- During the interview, please stay alert, courteous, and on-track.
- **Do not interrupt, argue or disagree with the interviewee.**
- *Remember!* We are trying to genuinely record the interviewee's opinions and thoughts *without* letting our own views get in the way.

For general inquiries: [ask@1947PartitionArchive.org](mailto:ask@1947PartitionArchive.org)

***Best of luck with the interview process! We hope that you find this to be an immensely rewarding experience.***

**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet****Special instructions:**

- Before your interview, read through the questions a few times. As you read through them, imagine scenes an interviewee may be describing. This visualization will help you remember these.
- We recommend that you refer to the key words highlighted in **yellow** in each sentence to formulate your question appropriately and in the context of your interview, rather than reading the whole question off the page during the interview recording.
- The main questionnaire categories are highlighted in grey. Specific questions in each category are examples to help you probe deeper and are only to be used for reference. You are also encouraged to formulate your own questions based on the interviewee's responses.
- An asterisk (\*) signifies that the question is highly recommended.

## Introductory Passage

Let the camera record for about 10s before you begin the interview. Then, start by reading the following passage in English:

“My name is [your name] and [camera person name] is on camera . Today’s date is [date]. I am interviewing [name of interviewee] for the [first/second/third...] time. The interview is taking place at [name of city, state, country] and is being conducted on behalf of The 1947 Partition Archive.”

## The Questions

Your interview will be richer if you ask as many questions as possible.

### 1. Background

#### A) *Personal information*

\*What is your full **name**?

\*What was your **name at birth** (i.e. maiden name)?

\*What are/were your **nick names** if any?

\*What is your **father’s name**?

\*What is your **mother’s name**?

\*Where is your **place of birth**?

\*What is your **birthdate**?

#### B) *Can you tell us a bit about your family history?*

\*How far back does your **family history on your father’s side** go?

\*How many generations can you track your **forefathers**?

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- \*What is the origin of your last name?
- \*Describe any special family tales and stories passed down from your father.
- \*How far back does your family history on your mother's side go?
- \*How many generations can you track your mother's ancestors?
- \*What is the origin of your mother's maiden name?
- \*Describe any special family tales and stories passed down from your mother.
- \*Describe any stories your parents might have shared about their childhood.
- \*Where did your parents grow up?
- \*What were their favorite childhood activities e.g., shepherding, horse riding, spinning thread or yarn?

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## 2. Pre-1947 Life

### A) Describe your family life before Partition.

\*How many individuals lived within your household?

\*Describe roles of members in the household (mother, father, uncles, aunts).

\*How many brothers and sisters did you have? How many cousins? Describe them. What were their names? Their ages compared to you?

What did you all do for fun together?

\*Describe your daily life.

\*How was your daily routine affected by sunrise and sunset?

\*What languages did you speak before Partition at home? At school? With friends? when reading? Compare to now.

\*What do you currently consider your primary language? Your secondary language? What about for reading and writing?

\*Describe any poetry, songs, or stories in the language of your homeland?

\*Were there special songs for occasions such as childbirth, wedding ceremonies, etc.?

\*Describe your friends.

\*Describe your friends' religious affiliations.

\*What did you do together?

How did your activities with friends change as you became older?

\*Describe the places of worship you visited?

How often did you go to your place of worship, and what did you do there?

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Describe your family outings and family entertainment.

\*Describe neighborhood weddings, dance performances or other town affairs.

\*Describe your holidays. Where did you spend them? How did you get there?

What kinds of activities would the family engage in on holiday?

Describe any special holiday gifts exchanged that you remember.

If any of your extended family on your father's side visited, describe their visits. What kinds of gifts did they bring with them? If you visited them, describe those visits.

If any of your extended family on your mother's side visited, describe their visits. What kinds of gifts did they bring with them? If you visited them, describe those visits.

Describe your favorite holiday or festival.

\*Describe any regional or seasonal festivals.

What were some of the delicacies prepared for these festivals and holidays? Who helped to prepare this food?

How has the holiday or festival changed since the Partition?

Describe street entertainment you saw such as storytellers, singers, dancers, snake charmers, jugglers with monkeys, bears etc. Where did the performers come from? What time of year did they visit?

\*Describe any plays and performances in your village/town/city.

What was the nature or message of these performances? Describe if they were religious, patriotic, or social in content.

If you grew up in a place without electricity, describe your first encounter with it.

Describe your first encounter with a movie hall.

Describe your first encounter with a motor vehicle. How were the vehicles refueled?

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Describe the **music** you listened to. How did you listen to it?

If you **played musical instruments**, what did you play, and how old were you when you first started?

\*Please share some of your **childhood memories**.

\*Describe some of your favorite **toys**. Where did the toys come from?

\*Describe the **myths and stories** you heard.

\***In what setting** did you hear these stories/myths? **Who** did you hear them from? What was their **source**?

\*Describe **heirlooms** and items of historical significance that you or your family possessed. Do you or anyone in your family still have any of them?

***B) Describe your house and neighborhood***

\*Describe the **house** you lived in.

\*Where did you and others in the house **sleep**?

\*Where was the **cooking** done? Who did most of the cooking? What part of the house did you eat in?

Describe typical household **chores**. If you had specific household duties, what were they?

Describe any **animals** you had and how you tended to them.

Describe the arrangements for **water supply** around your home, e.g. water pumps, wells (common or personal), nearby bodies of water.

What **source of water** did your family mainly use?

Describe **what surrounded** your home.

Describe any **rivers, mountains, forests or wilderness** near your home.

\*What kind of **transportation**, if any, did your family use to get around? (Motor vehicles, horses, donkeys, mules, cycles, etc.)

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If your family had a **motor vehicle**, how did you obtain the fuel? What kind of **fuel** was used?

**How did you get** to school, places of worship, or other places? How long were the **distances** that you covered on a daily basis?

Where did you go when you fell **sick**? Which **systems of medicine** were used? Ayurveda, Yunani, Western or other?

**C) Describe culture, people, society, any details you remember.**

\*What was **life** like in your village/city/town **before Partition**?

\*What was your **family's role** in the village or neighborhood?

Describe **specific duties** your family carried out for villagers or neighbors.

What role did your **friends' families** play within the town, village, or neighborhood? **What duties** did they carry out?

\*How did you **tell the time** of day?

\*Which **calendar system** was followed in your locality/ neighborhood/ village? Did you use Gregorian, Saka (Hindu), Hijri (Islamic), Nanakshahi (Sikh), or another calendar system?

\*Describe the **postal service** in your town/ village.

Who **read the letters** received in your town/village, and how did people **reply**?

Who **enforced the law** in your village/ tehsil/ city?

Were the police officials representative of the British government, associated with the local royal family, or connected to a different **authority**?

How did you feel about the **presence** of police officials?

\*What do you **remember of the British rule**?

\*Describe any **famous political leaders or freedom fighters** that visited your town. Did you meet or see them? How did it make you feel?

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Describe **newspapers and magazines** you read.

Describe **stories** that you liked to read.

Describe your **local library**, if any? Who ran the library?

\*Describe the **sellers** that came to sell goods. **Where** did they come from? What kinds of goods did they sell?

What kinds of **shops** were there in your neighborhood/ village/ town?

Which shops did you and your family go to frequently? Describe your **relationship** with the people who ran these shops.

\*Describe **interfaith relations** in your town/village.

Describe **relations** you/your family may have had with families and individuals of a religion other than your own.

Describe what **religious services and festivals** were like in your town/village.

What was the **religious background** of those who attended these festivals and services? What were the rules for religious exclusivity, if any?

\*Describe the **gender relations** in your village/town/place. How did men and women interact?

Describe **local artists and craft traditions** in your village/town/place.

Describe local **folk tales**.

Describe memorable **local personalities**, characters, jesters.

Describe any **attacks by dacoits or bandit groups** that may have occurred in your area.

**D) Tell us about your school days.**

\*Describe your **school**.

How did you **get there**? Whom did you go with?

What do you **remember learning**, **playing** and **eating**?

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Describe the **subjects** that were taught, including any favorite subjects.

If there was a **fee** to attend school, how much was it and how was it paid?

What did you **write** on?

Describe **exams** and who conducted them.

What **stories** were read to you in school? Describe what you remember of them.

\*Describe the **makeup of the student body**—was the school limited to one gender or religious affiliation?

\*How did the students **interact** with classmates from communities other than their own?

\*Describe one of your **best** school memories.

\*Describe one of your **worst** school memories.

Describe methods of **punishment** in your school.

Describe the **grading system** in your school.

Describe your teachers, including any **favorite teacher(s)**.

Describe school **inspections** and those who conducted them.

Describe any **scholarships or financial assistance** your school may have offered.

\*Describe any **informal education** that you received: what skills, stories, or prayers did you learn in social circles, from your parents, or from family members?

***E) Describe pre-1947 agricultural practices***

\*If your family tended to farmland, describe the **crops** you grew.

Describe the land. **Who owned** the land and **how large** was the area? If you owned the land, describe how your family **acquired** it.

**Where** was your family farmland located?

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Describe **your role, if any**, in tending to the land. Describe tasks by other family and community members.

Describe the **seasons** for the **crops and the harvests**.

Describe any **celebrations and customs** related to the crops and harvests.

Describe where and how the **seeds were stored**.

Describe the **fertilizers** and **pest control methods** your family may have used.

Describe **bodies of water** that provided resources.

Describe the **process for harvesting** the different crops.

How did you **process the crops** that you harvested?

How were these **crops distributed**? I.e., were they used locally? Were they sold and shipped?

Describe other **products produced locally** from agricultural goods in your town/village.

If you grew your own **cotton**, describe what kinds. What did you do with the crop?

If you used homegrown cotton to **weave cloth**, describe **the process**. Describe the **types of cloth** and clothing. **Who** did the weaving?

***F) Describe pre-1947 food ways and household necessities***

\*What were some of the **foods** you remember eating from those times?

\*Describe **where the food came from**? How much of this food came from your own fields and village and how much was purchased?

**Where did you purchase the foods** that were not home grown?

Describe the **food bazaar** in your village/town/locality.

Describe **where your clothes came from**. Were they home made or purchased?

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If your clothes were purchased, described where and by who.

If your clothes were home made, describe the whole process.

Where did your household **pots/pans** come from? What were they made of? If you continue to use the same kind of utensils today, describe your use of them.

How were your **household items made?** At home, acquired from local artisans, handed down, or acquired from another source?

**G) *Were you or anyone you knew involved in politics:***

\*Were you involved with or active in any **political movements** or political parties? If so, describe the group and your activities.

Describe **freedom or resistance movements** in your area. Were you aware of the ongoing struggle against the British Rule?

What kind of **activities** did you participate in?

Recall **names** of those whom you worked with.

Describe the **religions backgrounds** of members of your group.

Describe relations with other political groups.

Describe the **group leader**/leaders.

How did you get your **assignments?**

What were the **group's goals?**

Describe any trainings you received.

Describe the roles of **men and women** in this group.

How did the men and women of your group interact? Describe the **gender dynamics.**

Describe how the **local population** felt about your group.

Describe an **experience** during that time that stands out in your memory.



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How do you **feel today** about your activities then?

**H) Describe your marriage and family life:**

\*Were you **married** before Partition?

*If yes, ask the following questions now. If no, ask them later. They are repeated in section 4. Post Partition Life*

\*How **old** were you when you got married and what was your husband/wife's name?

\*Describe your **wedding**. Where did you get married, what time of year?

\*How was the **match made**?

\*If you **relocated after marriage** describe where to and why?

\*How many **children** did you have? What genders?

\***How old were they** during Partition?

**I) Describe your job and occupation before Partition:**

\*Did you have a **job** before Partition?

*If yes, ask the following questions now. If no, ask them later. They are repeated in section 4. Post Partition Life*

\*What did you do for a living? What was your **occupation**?

\*Describe your **workplace**.

If you worked for a company, **who owned** it and **where** was it based?

If you worked for an individual, describe that person.

\*If you were the boss, **describe how you ran your workplace and operation.**

\*How far did you **travel** to get to work? What method of transportation did you use?

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\*Describe a **typical day** at work.

\*If you had **customers**, who were they?

\*If you built or made products, where did you get your **raw materials**?

\*Describe other **details you remember** about your work life.

**J) Questions to ask those who lived in Princely states:**

*If you are unsure whether or not they grew up in a Princely state, ask them directly.*

\*Describe **the king/queen**. Had they been ruling for a long time?

Did you hear about the kingdom getting involved in **wars** during your time?

Did you hear stories about **feudal fights** between kings?

\*Describe your **encounters with the royal family**.

\*Do you have **specific memories** of the royal family? Describe any **legends or rumors** that you heard about them.

\*How did people **feel** about the royal family?

Describe your experience if you attended the **royal court/ "darbaar."** If anyone in your family worked at the court, describe what you heard of their experience.

\*Describe the **economic statuses and well-being** of the citizens in the kingdom.

Describe the state's **relationship with the British**.

How was the law **enforced** in the kingdom? How were citizen complaints handled?

\*How was **life in the kingdom different** after Independence Day and Partition? If life changed, when did things begin to change?

\*When you think of **the royal family**, what is the **first thought** that comes to your mind?

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**K) Questions to ask migrants to Israel**

\*Give us the history of the Jewish community in South Asia. Where did you learn this?

\*What is your understanding of how Jews in India felt about the British personnel?

\*How do you feel the British officials treated the Jewish community in India?

\*How did the people of other communities treat Jews in India?

\*How did you feel about the Holocaust that was taking place in Europe?

Describe the clothes or ways of dressing in the Jewish community.

What types of food did you eat, during Jewish holidays and at other times?

\*What were the specific customs that were followed in your community?

If there was a Sunday school, describe it. How did Jewish children learn about religion and traditions?

**L) Questions to ask musicians**

Describe the instruments you play (or voice).

When did you first start playing your instrument (singing)? Your age?

If your other family members played instruments, what were they?

What inspired you to play music?

Why did you choose the particular instrument you play/sing?

Where did you acquire your first instrument? If it was hand made, where and by whom?

Describe your teacher(s)/guru/master. Where did you meet them?

Describe the gharana (style) of your music.

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Describe **historical tales and traditions** associated with your style of music/*gharana*.

If you played/sang with a **group**, describe what that was like.

Describe how musical traditions **changed** in your lifetime.

**\*HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:** Record the interviewee singing or playing their instrument.

**M) Questions to ask traditional craftspersons (potters, cloth-makers, specialty traditional food makers, jewelers, other handicrafts and trades).**

Describe your **(pre-Partition) craft/trade**. What do you/did you make? Where did you get the raw materials from? How did you sell your wares?

Describe if other **family members** engaged in the same craft/trade.

Describe **how and why you first started** making this product. How old were you?

**How did you learn** your craft/trade? Describe your teacher(s).

Were you **influenced** by parents or other elders?

If anything **inspired** you, what was it?

If you followed a **particular style**, describe it. Describe the history of your style and any details about how your style was different than others.

Describe **traditions and historical tales** associated with your style.

**\*HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:** Record the interviewee demonstrating or engaging in their craft, or showing created items, both pre-Partition and post-Partition styles.

**N) Questions to ask those who served in the military**

**\*Did you serve in the military before, during, or after Partition?**

*[Interviewer: If the interviewee served in the military before or during Partition, turn to page 39-40 and ask those questions now. If they served after Partition, wait until you reach the post-Partition section of the questionnaire.]*

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### 3. Partition

*Throughout this section ask about names of specific people and times/dates.*

\*What was your **age** at the time of Partition?

\***Where** were you when Partition happened?

\*How did you learn about Partition? What was your **first thought** when you learned about Partition?

\*Please give your **whole story**, recalling as much detail as possible.

**A) Describe the circumstances before and during migration:**

\***How did you first learn** that you would have to leave?

\*How did that make you **feel**?

Who decided the **destination**? If people told you about safer routes, who were these people?

\*How long did you think you would be moving for? That is, did you **know** it would be a **permanent move**?

\*On which **date** did you begin migration? (**approximate or exact?**) Do you remember why you moved on this particular day/ time?

\***How many people** in your family migrated together with you?

\*Tell us what you remember of their **names and ages**.

\*How large was your group? How many **other people** were there in your group in addition to your family?

\***What did you take** with you?

\*Describe any special arrangements you made to protect **your belongings** or for your return.

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\*Who did you know who **stayed behind** and decided not to migrate? (Siblings, cousins, parents, grandparents, other family members, close friends.)

If you knew people who stayed behind, did they adopt (willingly or by force) **a new identity/ appearance/ religion**?

\*How did they **manage and cope**? How did they **survive**? If you met them again or communicated with them in any way, describe the experience.

\*If you did not hear of them again, what comes to mind when you think of them? How do you feel when you **remember** them?

\*If there were people you knew personally who **turned against you**, who were they and what was that experience like?

\*Describe any help you got from neighbors and people in your town or village who didn't migrate.

\*How did you and the members of your group **protect/ defend** yourselves? What did you **arm yourselves** with? Were you in danger?

\*Describe any security arrangements made by the armies/ police/local authorities. If you were escorted by **armed forces or police**, who were they?

\*If you were **attacked or harmed** along the way, how did you cope/survive?

\*If anyone in your **family was attacked and harmed** along the way, what happened? Describe the experience.

\*If you **lost family members** along the way, what happened?

\*What **kept you going** through this difficult time?

\*Describe any **violent events you experienced or engaged in along the way.**

***B) Describe your journey.***

\*Describe your **exact migration path**, recalling the names of the villages, landmarks and cities that you passed.

\***How far** did you travel and **how long** did it take?

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\*Describe the **forms of transportation** you took.

\*If you were **helped along the way**, describe who it was who helped and in what ways.

\*How did you cope with the **heat/wind/rain/cold**?

During your journey, did you or anyone traveling with you have to **engage in any duties** that you felt were beneath your class/caste level? How did you feel having to perform these activities?

\*What did you **eat** and where did you **sleep**?

\*How could you tell that you were **approaching the border**?

\*How did you **feel** when you spotted the border?

\*Describe the **scene at the border**. Describe the **people** present, the **time of day**, the **temperature** and **weather**.

\*Describe any **volunteers/military/government personnel** that were present.

\*Describe **where you traveled to**, how long you spent at each place.

\*Where and when did you **finally settle**?

\*How did you **feel** when you crossed the border?

\*How did **others in your group** feel when crossing the border?

**C) Did you have to go into hiding at any point? If so, describe.**

\*Describe if you had to **hide** at any point to protect yourself (before, during, or after your journey).

**Where** did you hide? What did you **see, hear, smell**?

If you weren't alone, **who else** was hiding with you?

If you were alone, how did it **feel**? What were your **fears and motivations**?



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How did you **emerge** from hiding?

D) **Did you stay in refugee camps? If yes, describe.**

\*Describe the **refugee camp** and what it looked like.

\*Describe **how you learned** about the camp and why you took refuge there.

\*At what time did you arrive and what was your **condition on arrival**?

\***How many** people were already there?

\*Where did you **sleep** and what did you **eat**?

\*What did you **see, hear, smell**?

\*Describe if you experienced **difficulty getting food and other rations.**

\*If there were any **groups or individuals (rackets, mafia)** who controlled the management of refugee food and other rations, describe them.

\*Describe the **people you stayed** with in the refugee camps. Were they of your own caste and community?

\*Describe your **dreams** and/or **nightmares.**

\*How did you **feel about the new refugees** arriving everyday?

\*Describe the **mood** of the people in the camp?

\*Describe if people **helped one another.**

\*Describe **how the camp was managed** or administrated.

\*Describe your experience with **local volunteers** who may have been present

If the new **governments helped**, describe how.

Describe if there was a **hospital** in your camp.

\*Describe **hygiene** in the camp.

\*What was **security** in the camp like?

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Describe any **schools** present in the camps.

\*How did you spend **your days in the camp**?

\*How did **men** spend their time?

\*How did **women** spend their time?

\*Describe **news you heard** of what was happening outside the camps. How did you hear this?

How did you **feel** about staying in the camp?

If **political leaders** or entertainers came to the camp, describe their visits.

\*How did other refugees treat **orphans or widowed** women in your camp? How did you and others feel about them?

\*Describe **how they managed**.

\*Describe if there were any people in your family or around you who **changed their religious identity** while in the camp.

\*When did you **decide to leave** the camp?

\***How long** did you stay in the camp?

***E) Were you held captive? If so describe and tell us about your escape if any:***

\*Were you **held captive**?

\*If so, **by whom**?

If there was there **anyone else** captive with you, who were they? Where were they from?

\*Describe the situation.

\*How did you **feel**?

\*How did you **escape** or become free?

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F) *Questions to ask migrants to Israel:*

\*When and why did you decide to move to Israel?

\*How did you decide where to settle?

Which modes of transport did you take to move to Israel?

\*If you know people who didn't move to Israel, why didn't they move?

\*Have you ever reached out to Jewish communities in India? What is your relation to other Jewish communities in India?

\*Describe how Jewish traditions were different in Israel than in India.

\*What were your expectations before you came to Israel? How did you feel once you arrived?

\*How did the people of other communities treat Indian Jews in Israel?

\*Describe the major adjustments you faced after moving to Israel, e.g., in the social structure, education system, or culinary habits.

\*Describe your integration into Israeli society.

G) *Questions to ask emigrants from Sindh*

\*What were some of the most significant cultural changes you experienced in migrating to your new place of residence?

Describe how you adjusted to the changes.

If you experienced or witnessed any class or caste-based discrimination, describe it. How did it make you feel?

H) *Questions to ask those who were in Hyderabad in 1948*

What was your age at the time of the police action?

Where were you when the police action happened?

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What was **the first thought** on your mind when you learned about the police action and integration of Hyderabad state into the Indian Union?

What were the **conversations** going on in your home and with family/friends with regards to **Hyderabad independence** and the question of integration with the Indian Union?

Did you have to **leave your home** because of conflict between the Razakars and/or Indian forces?

*If **yes**, ask the following questions:*

How did you **first learn** that you would have to leave?

How did that make you **feel**?

Describe any **special arrangements** you made for your return or to protect your belongings.

On what **date** did you leave your home? At the what **time of the day**?  
What prompted you to leave at this particular time?

Who in your **family** left with you?

Tell what you remember of their **names and ages**.

**Who else** was in your group in addition to your family?

What did you **take with you**?

**Where did you stay** during the duration of the police action?

Describe if **friends, neighbors, or family take you in and protect you** throughout the conflict.

Where did they live? Why was it **safer**? What were their **arrangements** to help you stay safe?

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

If you knew anyone who stayed behind and waited through the conflict, how did they manage and cope? Were they hurt? How did they survive? Did you see them again?

If you knew anyone who joined or fought with the Razakars, describe them.

Describe those you knew who were self-armed and fought against the Razakars or helped Indian forces.

If there were people you knew personally who turned against you, who were they and what was that experience like?

If you were ever in danger, from the Razakars, Indian forces, or self-armed locals acting independently, describe what that was like.

If you were you escorted by armed forces or police, who were they? Describe measures you and/ or your group took for self-defense during this time.

If there were other armed people in your group, what were they armed with?

If there was a group (i.e., political party, paramilitary force, religious group) that armed you and/or trained you to use arms, who were they and how did they train you?

If you left your home, were you attacked or harmed along the way? How did you react/ survive?

Describe if anyone in your family was attacked or harmed in the police action.

Did you lose family members/ friends in the police action? What happened?

Where did you stay for safety during the police action?

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

How did you feel when you heard that Hyderabad had been **successfully integrated into the Indian Union**? How did people around you react to this news?

Describe any **changes** (immediate or long-term) that you observed in Hyderabad after integration into the Indian Union.

How do you **feel today about Hyderabad's integration**?

When you think about this time, what **memory** that stands out to you the most?



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## 4. Post-Partition Life

### A) How was it integrating in your new land?

\*What cities/town/villages did you live in before settling in a place?

\*What was the impetus for each move?

\*Who made the decisions about where to go?

\*How did you spend your first days and nights in your new village/town/city?

\*If you found empty houses or lots to live in, how did you find these? What was it like to stay there?

\*Describe if you retained this property or eventually had to leave.

\*If you left, describe the circumstances under which you left the situation.

If you were evicted, where did you go for the night or the following days?

\*Who helped you with immediate housing and security?

\*Where did you live after Partition? Describe your first permanent home in your new location.

\*Describe how you felt in your new society. How do you think the members of your new place of residence felt about you and your family?

How was the new educational system different in your new place of residence? If you were still in school, how did moving to a new place affect your personal educational experience?

What was your religious affiliation before Partition? What was it afterwards? If you have changed your religious identity, explain why.

\*Describe if you needed medical treatment after your journey?

\*Where did you get the treatment?



## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

\*Describe the **language** native to your new home and if you were affected by language barriers.

\*Describe if your **children and grandchildren** learned to speak the language.

\*How did you **integrate**?

\*How did you **manage as a refugee**? If you experienced **discrimination**, describe what that was like.

\*Describe the **sources** from which you were getting your information about current events.

\*How did you feel about the **local government and politics**?

\*Describe if you or anyone else you know was **involved in politics**.

\*How did you **rebuild**? Describe any help from **relatives or the government**

\*How do you **feel** about this time of rebuilding?

\*How did you **adjust to normal** life after Partition?

\*Can you share one of your most **vivid memories** of integrating into your new place of residence? What stands out to you the most when looking back?

If you remember hearing about **Gandhi's assassination**, where were you when you heard?

How did you **feel** about the event? How did your family/ the people you were traveling with feel?

**B) What about the property you lost and recovered?**

\*How much property (**houses, land, jewelry**) did you lose?

\*How much did you **get in your new country** in return? If you received government compensation or allotments, describe them.

\*What **hardships** did you face in recovering your property?

**C) What about people you knew who were left behind?**

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

\*Describe the people that you left behind (friends, relatives or acquaintances) whom you wish to see again or whom you have fond memories of.

\*Describe any news you received about those you left behind, after Partition.

**D) Have you ever gone back to visit?**

\*Describe your experience of visiting your pre-Partition home.

\*What was the date of your visit?

How did it feel to go back?

\*How were you treated?

\*If you were reunited with any of the people you had left behind, describe the experience.

\*What had changed about your village/town/house from the time that you left?

\*If you met the family that lives there now, what was that like?

\*If not, how do you feel about not having visited your old home?

**E) Describe post-1947 agricultural practices.**

\*If you continued to farm once you migrated, how did it change?

\*When and how did you acquire your new land?

\*How was the new land compared to what you left behind?

\*What crops did you grow in your new land?

\*What agricultural practices did you have to change in order to be successful in this new land?

\*How long did it take for you to develop your new practices?

Describe the crops you grew in your new land.

Describe harvest seasons for the crops you grew in your new land.

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

Describe **what you did** with your harvest.

Describe how you stored and **acquired seeds**.

Describe the **fertilizers** you used and **pest control methods**.

Describe **bodies of water** that provided resources.

If you grew your own **cotton**, describe what kinds. What did you do with the crop?

If you used homegrown cotton to **weave cloth**, describe **the process**. Describe the **types of cloth** and clothing. **Who** did the weaving?

How were these **crops distributed**? Were they used locally? Were they sold and shipped?

Describe other **products produced locally** from agricultural goods in your town/village/city.

**F) Describe post-1947 foodways?**

\*How was your **diet changed** after Partition?

\*Describe the **sort of food you relied on** compared to before?

What foods did you produce or purchase before Partition, and what did you/your family produce or purchase after?

\*Describe the **food bazaar in your new locality**. How did it differ from the food bazaar of your previous home?

**G) How did you get to where you are today?**

\*Describe your **whole journey**.

\*Describe your jobs and career after Partition.

*[Interviewer: Return to page 18 for specific questions about marriage/career]*

\*Describe all important events in your **life since** Partition. **Marriage? Children? Jobs? Degrees?** Travel?

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

\*If you have **siblings**, where are they **living** today? What did they do for their **careers**?

\*Whom do you **live with now**?

Whom have you **lived with previously**? If you moved from residence to residence, describe what that was like.

Have you ever lived close to a **border**? If yes, describe what it was like. Describe your interaction with people living across the border.

What are some of the **changes** that you've noticed the society around you undergo in terms of **culture and lifestyle** over the last few decades?

\*How do you spend your **time today**?

\*Describe your **job(s)** today? If retired, the job(s) you had during your working life.

Have you ever **written** anything (newspaper articles, books, poetry) about Partition or about anything else? Please **describe it in detail**. Are you comfortable showing it?

[Interviewer: please take pictures or scan the written item in question

*so that it can be included in the Archive, if the interviewee is comfortable with this.]*

### **H) Questions for South Asian diaspora (living outside of South Asia)**

\*Describe your **transition and move to** your current country of residence.

\***How** did you get to where you are? Tell us your **full story**.

\***Where did you live before you settled** where you are today? Describe each location.

\***Why** did you decide to **migrate** to your current location?

\***How was your move**?

\***What did you do for work in your new home**?

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

\*What was it like **integrating into a new land**?

\***How often do you visit** South Asia?

\***What do you miss the most** about South Asia?

What was the **biggest change** you experienced in terms of lifestyle, cultural practices, and habits of your new residence?

\***Compare your move** to your new country with your migration during Partition.

Did your **Partition migration** affect your adjustment to your new country when you moved outside of South Asia? If so, describe how.

Since having settled in your new place of residence, how have your **perceptions of your own culture changed**?

**I) Question for Bengali migrants**

What do you think of the **Kolkata-Dhaka bus connection** today?

What do you think of the **Maitreyi Express (Friendship Express)**, which renews the train route between the two places after many decades of frozen communication?

**J) Question for Muslim migrants**

How did you feel about the **Babri Masjid incident in 1994**?

If you have ever been on **Hajj**, describe your experience.

**K) Question for Shia Muslims**

If you have ever been to **Karbala**, describe your experience.

**L) Questions to ask musicians**

**Did you continue** your musical practices (playing instrument/singing) after migration?

**If yes:**

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

Describe your **instruments after migration**. Were you able to **bring** your instruments? Or did you **acquire new** instruments? Describe.

Describe **if music played a role** during the migration.

Describe if your **relationship with your teacher/master** was affected during and after Partition. If so, how?

Describe if your **practice/style was affected** by Partition. If it was, how so?

Describe if you **changed styles/gharanas** after Partition.

Describe others you played with. How was the **group affected** by Partition?

**If no:**

What prompted you to discontinue, specifically?

How did you feel about **discontinuing**?

***M) Questions to ask traditional craftspersons (potters, cloth-makers, specialty traditional food makers, jewelers, other handicrafts and trades).***

**Did you continue** your craft/trade after migration?

**If yes:**

Describe your craft/trade practice after migration. How did it **change**?

Describe if your craft/trade played a **role during migration**.

Describe how your **relationship with your teacher/master** was affected during and after Partition.

Describe how your **craft/trade has been affected** by Partition.

If you **changed styles** after Partition, describe your new influencers.

Describe **others you practiced** with. How was the group affected by Partition?

**If no:**

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

What prompted you to discontinue, specifically?

How did you feel about **discontinuing**?

N) **Questions to ask those who served in the armed forces**

What **branch** of the military did you join?

What **inspired you to join** the military?

When **did you join**?

Where and **what kind of training** did you undergo?

Describe special **memories of your training**.

Describe memories involving your **instructors/supervisors**.

Describe memories of your **batchmates**.

Why **did you choose** the army/navy/air force?

What **regiment/unit** were you in?

What was your **first posting**?

Describe any memorable **COs or positions of responsibility** that you held?

If you were a part of **1962, 1965, or 1971** operations, describe your experiences during those **war(s)**.

What was your **role during the war(s)**?

Describe any **violence** you may have experienced.

What were your most **memorable postings**?

Describe memorable (good or bad) **experiences with your superiors**.

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

How did your wife and family cope? How did you communicate with them?

If you were ever posted near a border, what was it like?

If you were ever taken prisoner, describe your experience.

Describe any meetings or interactions you had with soldiers from other countries.

What are your thoughts about the armed forces?

When did you retire?

Describe any changes that have occurred within the army or armed forces since the time when you were in active service.

**O) Post-1947 Partition incidents of communal or military violence\*\***

(including but not limited to: 1950 and 1965 riots in Bangladesh, 1971 Bangladesh war for independence, 1984 Delhi riots, 2002 Gujarat violence)

*\*\*Referred to below as a "conflict." You can substitute this word for the event name.*

At the time of the conflict, where and with whom were you living?

How did you first hear about the conflict?

What was your initial reaction to hearing about it? How did your family members and friends react?

[For Bangladeshis only]: If you, your family members, or your friends were involved in the movement for independence, describe what that was like.

How did the conflict unfold? How quickly or slowly did it happen?

What events did you witness personally, and what did you hear about from others?



## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

Describe any firsthand experiences that you, your family, or your friends had with the conflict.

How did you feel about the conflict at the time it took place? How do you feel about it now?

How did your family and friends react to the conflict?

If you lost any family members or friends in the course of the conflict, describe how it happened.

What was the effect on your lifestyle and family life?

If you or your family had to move, where did you go?

How did your experience of this conflict compare to your experience of Partition?

Describe the aftermath of the conflict.

Describe the memory from the time of the conflict that stands out to you the most.

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## 5. Supplementary Questions

*Note: This is a new section, designed to be built upon and filled out by interviewers. Please add your own supplementary questions, according to your own areas of expertise, and submit them to [stories@1947partitionarchive.org](mailto:stories@1947partitionarchive.org) to be considered for our next version of the Questionnaire. Questions at the beginning of each section are generalized and designed to be applicable to most interviewees. Questions specific to certain groups are labeled accordingly.*

### **A. Holidays and festivals**

Ask about festivals including: Eid, Gurburb, Diwali, Muharram, etc.\*\*

\*\*Referred to as “the holiday,” you may supplement the appropriate holiday/festival name.

Ask about multiple holidays/festivals.

Describe the holiday in as much detail as possible.

How did your local region celebrate the holiday? What traditions were different from other regions?

Describe any traditions specific to your family or neighborhood on the holiday.

If there were things that were made specifically for the holiday (costumes, offerings, etc.), what were they? Describe how they were made.

Describe the foods made during the holiday. What was your favorite holiday/festival food? If you know how it was made, describe the process.

If your family had a specific role to play in the festivities, describe it. What did you do, in particular?

If you witnessed any processions during the holiday, describe them.

If there was music/singing during this holiday, describe it. If you remember a tune, please hum or sing it.

If you saw any performers perform, describe them.

Who came to the festival? Which groups attended the festivities?

Describe any specific memories you have associated with the holiday. What image comes to mind when you think of it?

**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet**

Describe any **changes** you witnessed in the celebration of the holiday **before and after Partition**.

Describe any **changes** you witnessed in the celebration of the holiday in the **decades following Partition**.

How has your **personal celebration** of the holiday **changed** from when you were a child?

Today, which celebrations do you **continue to participate** in? Describe how you **feel** about them today.

***B. Linguistic matters on cross-community lines***

How have you noticed your **native language change** over the course of your lifetime?

**Who** spoke the language when you were young? Who speaks it now?

Describe your **relationship** with this language in detail.

In what **realms** was the language spoken when you were a child (home, school, places of worship, in the wider community)? In what realms is it spoken now?

If there was a change in environments, what do you think has **caused** this change?

Describe if the people who spoke your native language were **persecuted** for doing so, or **forced** to speak in a different language.

If you live in a community that has seen a shift in language use, how do you feel this change has **affected your community**?

If you moved away from the community where your native language is spoken, describe your **relationship** with the language after you moved. Did you **continue** to speak it? How is your native language regarded in your current community?

How do you feel about your **cultural identity** as it relates to your native language?

How did you feel about being **a speaker of your native language** while growing up? How do you feel about it **now**?

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

**URDU LANGUAGE**

If you learned to read and write at home, who was it that **taught** you?

If you attended **mushairas, Qawwalis, or Na'ats**, describe them.

If you moved away from a place where Urdu is spoken, are you **still able to read and write** in Urdu? **Do** you?

If you read Urdu literature/poetry, how did you **feel** about it?

What **genres** did you read? What **writers**? **'Urs**?

How would you describe the **changes** in the state of the Urdu language since Partition?

**PUNJABI LANGUAGE**

Describe any **changes in cultural perceptions** of the language. How did people regard those who spoke Punjabi before Partition? How are Punjabi-speakers regarded nowadays?

If you noticed any changes in the language itself OR in its perception, what do you think was the **cause**?

How do you feel about the presence of Punjabi in **modern South Asian cinema and music**?

**BENGALI/BANGLA LANGUAGE**

Describe how you felt about the Bangla national movement, and if you or your family felt it was connected with Bengali as a language.

For those in Dhaka in 1952: how did you feel when you heard about the **riots near the University of Dhaka** on February 21, 1952? Were you or your family at all involved?

How do you feel about **February 21** being recognized as **Language Movement Day** within Bangladesh, and international Mother Language Day by UNESCO?

If you **commemorate** this day in any way, describe how.

**C. Regional identity**

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

\*How did you feel your community or cultural group **changed** as a result of Partition?

What community **movements** were you a part of/ did you witness?

How did these movements **compare** to the changes in regional identity experienced as a result of Partition?

**HYDERABAD***Telangana movement*

Have you ever been a **supporter** or had involvements with the **Telangana (or anti-)** movement? If so, describe.

If your family or friends were involved, **describe their involvement**. What did they tell you about the movement?

Describe any **protests, marches, rallies, or conflicts** that you have witnessed or participated in as part of the Telangana (or anti-) movement.

Describe how you **felt** with the recent news of approval for Telangana independence from greater Andhra Pradesh.

**PUNJAB/HARYANA/HIMACHAL PRADESH/CHANDIGARH***Indian Punjabi Suba movement of 1950s and 60s*

Were you or your family a part of the **demonstrations** in 1955 and 1960-61?

Was anyone you knew **arrested** as a result of these demonstrations? Who was it? Did they tell you about their experience?

How did you feel about Indian Punjab being **split** into three different states?

How did the split **affect** your daily life?

Did you feel as though the splitting of Indian Punjab **changed** your “Punjabi” identity? How so?

How did this split **compare** to the changes in cultural identity **following the 1947 Partition?**

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

***D. Personal identity*****QUESTIONS FOR THE TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY**

Describe the first realization when you felt you were **different** from your siblings/friends/peers. What made you **realize** this? What was your **age**?

If you **shared** it with anyone, describe the experience. If you **kept it to yourself**, how did you feel?

Describe the **reaction** of the people around you when you first told them.

Describe the **clothes** you wore when you were **younger**, and the clothes you wear **now**. How were they made? Do you always wear the **same clothes**?

How does your **wardrobe** relate to your **gender identity**?

Describe the **gender with which you identify**: male, female, or gender-fluid?

What name and gender do you associate with on **official identification documents** (ID card, passport etc.)?

**Guru/Mentor**

Describe your **first guru/ mentor**.

Describe how you were taken **under their tutelage**. Did the guru have a **selection process**? Describe the guru-disciple relationship in your community.

Describe **changes in your lifestyle** when you were taken under their tutelage.

Did you continue to live with your **biological family**?

If not, did you maintain **communication with your family**?

**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet**

What was your **experience** like? Describe some **important life skills** your guru taught you, memorable moments, and valuable lessons.

Describe **other gurus** who might have influenced you. Describe your relationship with other gurus and their disciples.

Describe your **source(s) of income**: what did you do for a living? If you have had multiple jobs, which one of them has been the best for you, and why?

**Questions for professional singers or dancers**

Describe your **art**, what attracted you to it?

**Where** did you learn it?

Describe your **teachers**, and your apprenticeship.

Describe your most **memorable performance**.

**Partner and Daily Life**

Describe your **partner**. How and when did you meet them? Did you marry?

Whom do you **live with nowadays**?

Describe your present daily life: what is your **routine**?

Describe your **disciples (*chela*)**. How do you select them?

**How many *chelas*** do you have today and what are their professions?

**What do you enjoy** teaching them the most?

Describe any **changes you have perceived** over your lifetime in **societal perception** of the transgender community.



## 6. Opinions About Partition

### *What are your thoughts about Partition?*

\*How did you feel about the Partition when it occurred? How do you feel about the Partition now? Could things have been done differently?

\*When you think about the Partition years, what image has stayed with you the most?

\*Are there sights and smells that evoke this time in the past?

\*Describe your friends today. Are they mostly Partition witnesses?

\*In your opinion, what could the governments have done to handle things differently?

Are there any dates in particular when you or your community commemorate the Partition?

What do you think of each year on Independence Day, August 14th/ 15th? What feelings does that day bring with it? What memories does it bring forward?

How do you commemorate this time? E.g., observe fasts, prayer meets, community service?

## 7. Final Thoughts

\*Is there anything else you would like to add?

\*Do you have a message for the current and future generations?

\*How does it feel to have told your story?

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## 7. Keyword-Only Interview Packet

*The following pages are a replication of the interview questionnaire keywords only. It is intended for experienced interviewers to use if they prefer keyword prompts to full questions.*

### 1. Background

#### **A) Personal information**

- \* Name?
- \* Name at birth?
- \* Nick names?
- \* Father's name?
- \* Mother's name?
- \* Place of birth?
- \* Birthdate?

#### **B) Can you tell us a bit about your family history?**

- \* Family history on your father's side?
- \* Forefathers?
- \* Origin of your last name?
- \* Father's family tales
- \* Family history on your mother's side?
- \* Mother's ancestors?
- \* Origin of your mother's maiden name?
- \* Mother's family tales
- \* Parents' childhood stories
- \* Where?
- \* Parents' favorite childhood activities?

### 2. Pre-1947 Life

**A) Describe your family life before Partition.****Household**

\*How many individuals

\*Roles

\*Brothers and sisters, cousins

Fun

\*Daily life

\*Affected by sunrise and sunset

\*Languages

\*Primary language/ secondary language

\*Poetry, songs, or stories in the language of your homeland

\*Special occasion songs

**\*Friends**

\*Friends' religious affiliations

\*Do together

Activities with friends change

\*Places of worship

How often...worship...enjoy

Family entertainment— did you host or attend picnics

Town affairs

**\*Holidays**

Activities on holiday

Holiday gifts

Extended family on your father's side—visits? gifts?

Extended family on your mother's side—visits? gifts?

Favorite holiday or festival

**\*Regional/seasonal festivals**

Delicacies—who prepared?

Changed?

Street entertainment

\*Plays and performances

Nature or message

**Further questions**

First encounter with electricity?

First encounter with a movie hall?

First encounter with a motor vehicle. Refueled?

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

Listen to music

What did you play?

\*Childhood memories

\*Favorite toys

\*Myths and stories

\*In what setting? Who? source?

\*Family heirlooms

***B) Describe your house and neighborhood***

\*House.

\*Sleep

\*Cooking

Chores

Animals

Water supply

Source of water

What surrounded your home?

Rivers, mountains, forests or wilderness

Transportation

Motor vehicle...fuel

How did you get...distances?

Sick; Systems of medicine

***C) Describe culture, people, society, any details you remember.***

Life...before Partition

Family's role

Specific duties

Friends' families ... What duties?

\*Tell the time

\*Calendar system

\*Postal service

Read the letters ... reply

Enforced the law

Authority

Presence of police officials

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

- \*Remember the British rule
- \*Famous political leaders or freedom fighters

Newspapers and magazines

Stories

Local library

- \*Sellers. Where?

Shops

Relationship with shops

Interfaith relations

Religious services and festivals

Religious background

- \*Gender relations

Local artists and craft traditions

Folk tales

Local personalities

Attacks by dacoits or bandit groups

***D) Tell us about your school days.***

School

Transportation to

Remember learning, playing, eating

Subjects

Fee

Write

Exams

Stories

- \*Makeup of the student body

- \*Interact

- \*Best memory

- \*Worst memory

Punishment

Grading system

Favorite teacher(s)

Inspections

Scholarships or financial assistance

- \*Informal education

***E) Describe pre-1947 agricultural practices*****\*Crops**

Who owned the land and how large?

Where?

Your role, if any

Seasons ... crops and the harvests

Celebrations and customs

Seeds were stored

Fertilizers/pest control methods

Bodies of water

Process for harvesting

Process the crops

Crops distributed

Products produced locally

Cotton

Weave cloth, describe the process

Types of cloth/Who?

***F) Describe pre-1947 food ways and household necessities*****\*Foods**

\*Where the food came from?

Where did you purchase the foods?

Food bazaar

Where your clothes came from

Pots/pans

Household items made

***G) Were you or anyone you knew involved in politics:***

\*Political movements

Freedom or resistance movements

Activities

Names

Religions backgrounds

Group leader

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

Assignments  
Group's goals  
Trainings  
Men and women  
Gender dynamics  
Local population  
Experience  
Feel today

**H) Describe your marriage and family life:**

Were you married before Partition? [If yes, ask the following question now. If no, ask them later. They are repeated in section 4. Post Partition Life.]

- \*How old?
- \*Wedding
- \*Match made?
- \*Relocated after marriage?
- \*Children
- \*How old were they?

**I) Describe your job and occupation before Partition:**

*\*Did you have a job before Partition? [If yes, ask the following questions now. If no, ask them later. They are repeated in section 4. Post Partition Life.]*

- \*Occupation
- \*Workplace
- Who owned ... where?
- \*Describe how you ran your workplace and operation
- \*Travel
- \*Typical day
- \*Customers
- \*Raw materials
- \*Details you remember

**J) Questions to ask those who lived in Princely states:**



\*The king/queen

Wars

Feudal fights

\*Encounters with the royal family

\*Specific memories

Legends or rumors

\*Feel?

Royal court/ “darbaar”

\*Economy and well being

Relationship with the British

Poverty—were most citizens well of?

Law enforced

\*Life in the kingdom different

\*The royal family...first thought

### ***K) Questions to ask migrants to Israel***

\*History of the Jewish community in South Asia

\*Jews in India felt about the British personnel

\*Officials treated

\*People of other communities treat Jews in India?

\*Holocaust in Europe

Ways of dressing

Food

\*Specific customs

Sunday school

### ***L) Questions to ask musicians***

Instruments

First start— age?

Family members

Play music

Particular instrument

Acquire your first instrument

Hand made

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

Teacher(s)/guru/master

*Gharana* (style) of your music

Traditions and historical tales

Group

Changed

*\*HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:* Record the interviewee singing or playing their instrument.

***M) Questions to ask traditional craftspersons (potters, cloth-makers, specialty traditional food makers, jewelers, other handicrafts and trades).***

Describe your (pre-Partition) craft/trade

Family members

*\*How/why you first started*

*How did you learn?*

*Influenced*

*Inspired*

*Particular style*

*Traditions and historical tales*

*\*HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:* Record the interviewee demonstrating or engaging in their craft, or showing created items, both pre-Partition and post-Partition styles.

***N) Questions to ask those who served in the military***

***\*Did you serve in the military before, during, or after Partition?***

*[Interviewer: If the interviewee served in the military before or during Partition, turn to page 68 and ask those questions now. If they served after Partition, wait until you reach the post-Partition section of the questionnaire.]*

### 3. Partition

*Throughout this section ask about names of specific people and times/dates.*

- \*Age?
- \*Where?
- \*First thought?
- \*Give your whole story

#### **A) Describe the circumstances before and during migration:**

- \*How did you first learn?
- \*Feel  
Decided...destination
- \*Know ... permanent move
- \*Date? (approximate or exact)
- \*How many people?
- \*Names and ages
- \*Other people
- \*What did you take?
- \*Your belongings
- \*Stayed behind
- A new identity/ appearance/ religion
- \*Manage and cope/ Survive
- \*Remember
- \*Turned against you
- \*Help ... from neighbors
- \*Protect/ defend/ arm yourselves
- \*Armed forces or police
- \*Attacked or harmed
- \*Family was attacked and harmed
- \*Lost family members
- \*Kept you going
- \*Violent events you experienced or engaged in along the way

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

**B) Describe your journey.**

- \*Exact migration path
- \*How far? How long?
- \*Forms of transportation
- \*Helped along the way
- \*Heat/wind/rain/cold
- Engage in any duties
- \*Eat/ sleep
- \*Approaching the border
- \*Feel
- \*Scene at the border. People, time of day, temperature weather
- \*Volunteers/military/government personnel
- \*Where you traveled to
- \*Finally settle
- \*How did you feel
- \*Others in your group

**C) Did you have to go into hiding at any point? If so, describe.**

- \*Hide
- Where? see, hear, smell?
- Who else?
- Feel/ Fears and motivations
- Emerge

**D) Did you stay in refugee camps? If yes, describe.**

- \*Refugee camp
- \*How you learned?
- \*Condition on arrival
- \*How many?
- \*Sleep/ eat
- \*See, hear, smell
- \*Difficulty getting food and other rations
- \*Groups or individuals (rackets, mafia)
- \*People you stayed with

**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet**

- \*Dreams
- \*Feel about the new refugees
- \*Mood
- \*Helped one another
- \*How the camp was managed
- \*Local volunteers
- Governments helped?
- Hospital
- \*Hygiene
- \*Security
- Schools
- \*Your days in the camp
- \*Men
- \*Women
- \*News you heard
- Feel
- Political leaders
- \*Orphans or widows
- \*How they managed?
- \*Changed their religious identity
- \*Decide to leave
- \*How long?

***E) Were you held captive? If so describe and tell us about your escape if any:***

- \*Held captive
- \*By whom?
- Anyone else
- Describe
- \*Feel
- \*Escape

***F) Questions to ask migrants to Israel:***

- \*When and why did you decide?
- \*Where to settle?
- Modes of transport

**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet**

- \*People who didn't move to Israel
- \*Relation to other Jewish communities in India?
- \*Jewish traditions ... in Israel vs India
- \*Expectations
- How did you feel?
- \*Treat Indian Jews in Israel
- \*Major adjustments
- \*Integration into Israeli society

***G) Questions to ask emigrants from Sindh***

- \*Significant cultural changes
- Adjusted
- Class or caste-based discrimination

***H) Questions to ask those who were in Hyderabad in 1948***

- Age
- Where were you?
- The first thought
- Conversations...Hyderabad independence
- Leave your home?

*If yes, ask the following questions:*

- First learn
- Feel
- Special arrangements
- Date/ Time of the day
- Family
- Names and ages
- Who else?
- Take with you
- Where did you stay?
- Friends, neighbors, or family...protect
- Safer arrangements
- Stayed behind and waited through the conflict
- Joined or fought with the Razakars
- Fought against the Razakars

**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet**

Turned against you  
Danger

Escorted by armed forces or police  
Self-defense  
Other armed people  
Group...train you

Attacked or harmed in the police action

Lose family members/ friends

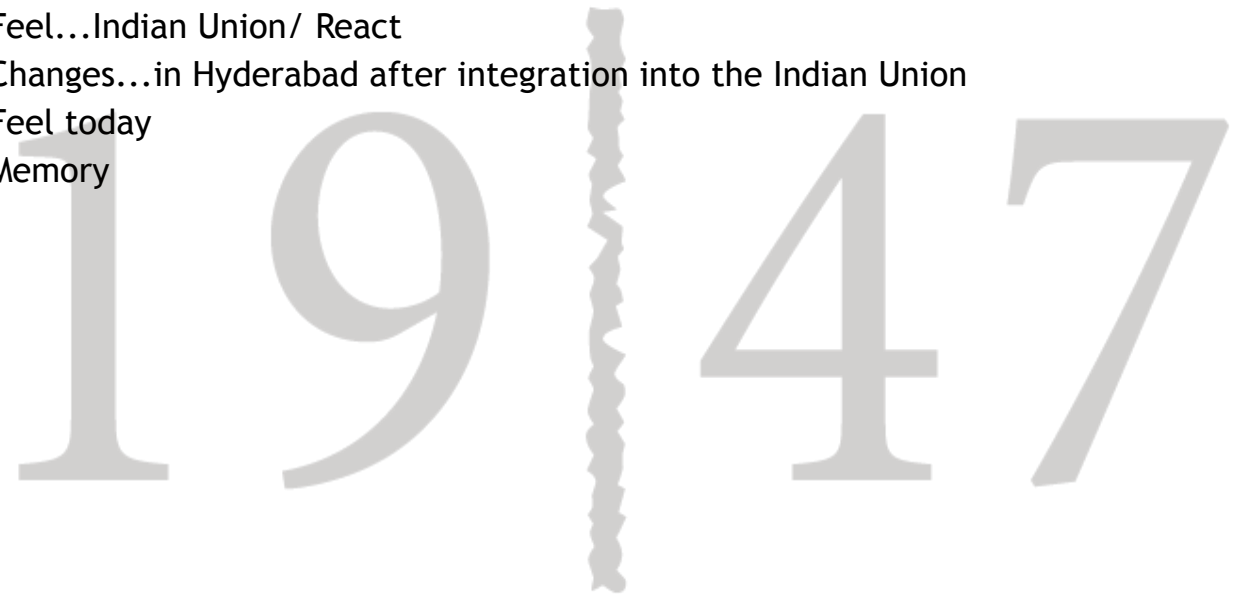
Stay for safety

Feel...Indian Union/ React

Changes...in Hyderabad after integration into the Indian Union

Feel today

Memory



A R C H I V E

Partition

## 4. Post-Partition Life

### ***A) How was it integrating in your new land?***

- \*Cities/town/villages
- \*Impetus
- \*Decisions
- \*Your first days and nights
- \*Empty houses or lots
- \*Retained this property
- \*Circumstances
  - Evicted
- \*Who helped?
- \*Where ... home?
- \*New society
- New educational system
- Changed your religious identity
- \*Needed medical treatment
- \*Where?
- \*Language
- \*Children and grandchildren
- \*Integrate
- \*Manage as a refugee— discrimination?
- \*Sources...information about current events
- \*Local government and politics
- \*Involved in politics
- \*Help rebuild? Relatives or the government
- \*Feel
- \*Adjust to normal life
- \*Vivid memories
- Gandhi's assassination
  - Feel

### ***B) What about the property you lost and recovered?***

- \*Houses, land, jewelry



**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet**

- \*Get in your new country
- \*Hardships

***C) What about people you knew who were left behind?***

- \*People that you left behind...wish to see again
- \*News

***D) Have you ever gone back to visit?***

- \*Visiting your pre-Partition home
- \*Date
- Feel to go back
- \*Treated
- \*Reunited ... the people you had left behind?
- \*Changed
- \*Family that lives there now
- \*Feel ... not having visited

***E) Describe post-1947 agricultural practices.***

- \*Continued to farm
- \*Acquire your new land
- \*Compared
- \*Crops
- \*Change
- \*How long?
- Crops you grew
- Harvest seasons
- What you did?
- Acquired seeds
- Fertilizers ... pest control methods
- Bodies of water
- Cotton
- Weave cloth ... the process/ types of cloth
- Crops distributed
- Products produced locally

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

**F) Describe post-1947 foodways?**

- \*Diet changed
- \*Sort of food you relied on  
Produce or purchase
- \*Food bazaar in your new locality

**G) How did you get to where you are today?**

- \*Whole journey
- \*Jobs and career  
[Interviewer: Return to page 50 for specific questions about marriage/  
*career*]
- \*Life since: marriage/ Children/ Jobs/ Degrees
- \*Siblings...living? Careers
- \*Live with now  
Lived with previously  
Border  
Changes ... culture and lifestyle
- \*Time today
- \*Job(s)  
Written anything? Describe in detail  
[Interviewer: please take pictures or scan the written item in question so  
that it can be included in the Archive, if the interviewee is comfortable  
with this.]

**H) Questions for South Asian diaspora (living outside of South Asia)**

- \*Transition and move to
- \*How did you get to where you are? Full story
- \*Before you settled
- \*Why ...migrate?
- \*How was your move?
- \*What did you do for work in your new home?
- \*Integrating into a new land
- \*How often do you visit home?
- \*What do you miss the most?  
Biggest change

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

\*Compare your move  
Partition migration effect  
Perceptions of your culture changed

**I) Questions for Bengali witnesses**

Kolkata-Dhaka bus connection  
Maitreyi Express (Friendship Express)

**J) Questions for Muslim witnesses**

Babri Masjid incident in 1994  
Hajj

**K) Question for Shia witnesses**

Karbala

**L) Questions to ask musicians**

Did you continue?

**If yes:**

Instruments after migration: bring them/ acquire new

Music played a role in migration

Relationship with your teacher/ master

Practice/ style was affected

Changed styles/ *gharanas*

Group affected

**If no:**

Why ... discontinue?

Feel ... discontinuing?

**M) Questions to ask traditional craftspersons (potters, cloth-makers, specialty traditional food makers, jewelers, other handicrafts and trades).**

Did you continue?

**If yes:**

Change

Role during migration

**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet**

Relationship with your teacher/ master

Craft/ trade has been affected

Changed styles

Others you practiced with

**If no:**

Why...discontinue?

Feel ... discontinuing?

**N) Questions to ask those who served in the armed forces**

What branch?

What inspired you to join?

When?

What kind of training?

Memories of your training

Instructors/supervisors

Batchmates

Why did you choose?

Regiment/unit

First posting

COs or positions of responsibility

1962, 1965, or 1971...wars

Role during the war(s)

Violence

Memorable postings

Experiences with your superiors

Wife and family: communicate

Border

Taken prisoner

Soldiers from other countries

Thoughts about the armed forces

Retire

Changes

**O) Post-1947 Partition incidents of communal or military violence\*\***

*(including but not limited to: 1950 and 1965 riots in Bangladesh, 1971 Bangladesh war for independence, 1984 Delhi riots, 2002 Gujarat*

Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

*violence)*

Where and with whom were you living?

First hear

Initial reaction

[For Bangladeshis]: Bangladeshi movement for independence

Unfold

Witness personally vs hear about

Firsthand experiences

Feel...at the time vs now

Family and friends react

Lost any family members or friends

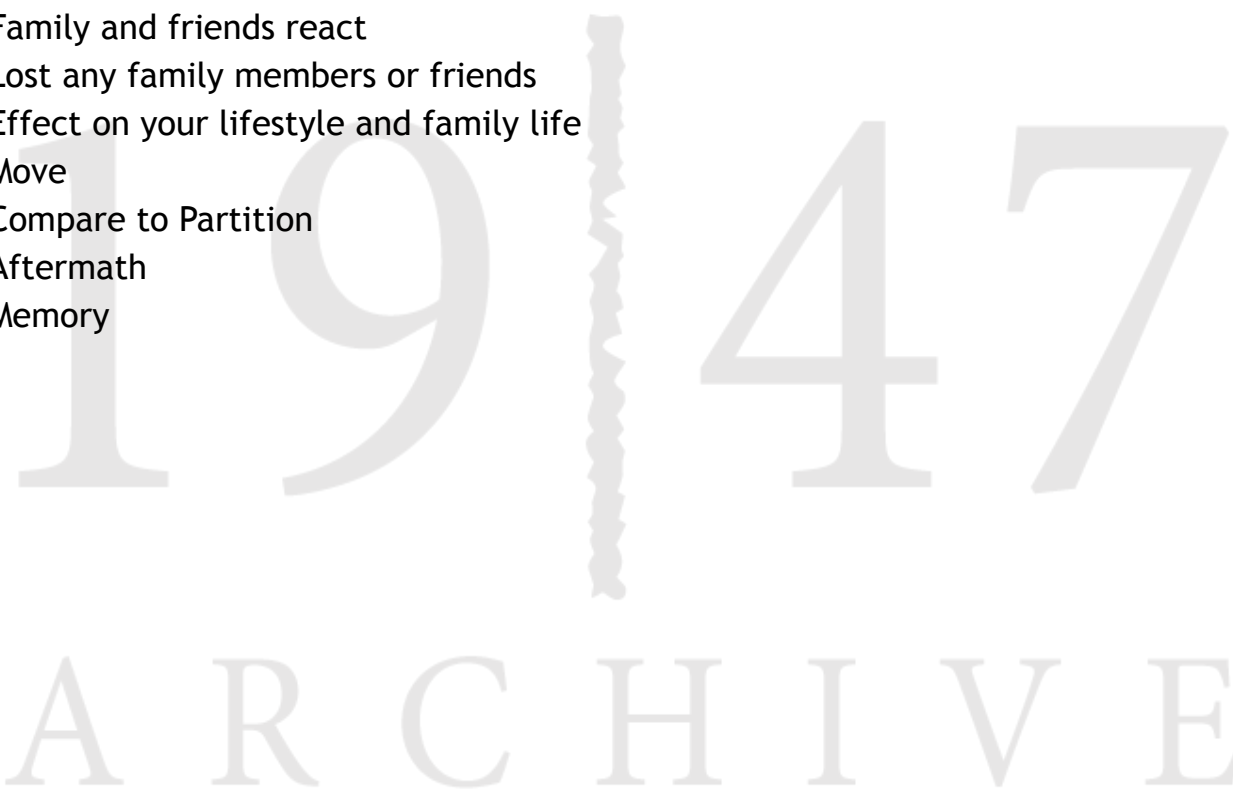
Effect on your lifestyle and family life

Move

Compare to Partition

Aftermath

Memory



Post-Partition

Variable

## Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

**5. Supplementary Questions**

*Note: This is a new section, designed to be built upon and filled out by interviewers. Please add your own supplementary questions, according to your own areas of expertise, and submit them to [stories@1947partitionarchive.org](mailto:stories@1947partitionarchive.org) to be considered for our next version of the Questionnaire. Questions at the beginning of each section are generalized and designed to be applicable to most interviewees. Questions specific to certain groups are labeled accordingly.*

**A) Holidays and festivals**

*Ask about festivals including: Eid, Gurburb, Diwali, Muharram, etc.\*\**

*\*\*Referred to as “the holiday,” you may supplement the appropriate holiday/festival name.*

*Ask about multiple holidays/festivals.*

Describe ... detail

Local region

Traditions

Things that were made

Foods

Specific role

Processions

Music/singing

Performers

Groups

Specific memories...image

Changes...before and after Partition

Changes ... decades following Partition

Personal celebration ... changed

Continue to participate

Feel

**B) Linguistic matters on cross-community lines**

Native language change

Who spoke?

Relationship

Realms

Caused

Persecuted ... forced

Affected your community

Relationship ... continue

**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet**

Cultural identity

Growing up vs nowadays

**URDU LANGUAGE**

Taught

Mushairas, Qawwalis, or Na'ats

Moved away...Still able to read and write? Do you?

Urdu literature/poetry...feel

Genres? Writers? 'Urs

Changes...since Partition

**PUNJABI LANGUAGE**

Changes in cultural perceptions

Cause

Modern South Asian cinema and music

**BENGALI/BANGLA LANGUAGE**

Bangla national movement

Riots near the University of Dhaka on February 21, 1952

February 21 ... Language Movement Day... feel?

Commemorate

**C) Regional identity**

Changed

Movements

Compare

**HYDERABAD**

*Telangana movement*

Supporter ... Telangana (or anti-) movement?

Describe their involvement.

Protests, marches, rallies, or conflicts

Felt

**PUNJAB/HARYANA/HIMACHAL PRADESH/CHANDIGARH**

**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet**

*Indian Punjabi Suba movement of 1950s and 60s*

Demonstrations in 1955 and 1960-61

Arrested

Split

Effect

Changed

Compare ... following the 1947 Partition

***D) Personal identity*****QUESTIONS FOR THE TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY**

Different...realize/ Age

Shared vs. kept it to yourself

Reaction

Clothes...younger vs now. Same clothes?

Wardrobe...gender identity

Gender with which you identify

Official identification

**Guru/Mentor**

First guru/ mentor

Under their tutelage— selection process

Changes in your lifestyle

Biological family

Communication with your family

Experience/ important life skills

Other gurus

Source(s) of income

**Questions for professional singers or dancers**

Art

Where?

Teachers

Memorable performance



Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet

Daily Life

Partner

Live with nowadays

Routine

Your disciples (*chela*)

How many *chelas*?

Enjoy teaching

Changes you have perceived...societal perception

19|47

ARCHIVE

## 6. Opinions About Partition

*What are your thoughts about Partition?*

\*Feel about the Partition when it occurred? Now? Done differently?

\*Image comes to mind

Think of each year on Independence Day, August 14th/ 15th? Feelings?  
Memories?

\*Sights and smells ... evoke this time in the past?

\*Your friends today?

\*Governments have done to handle things differently?  
Commemorate?

## 7. Final Thoughts

\*Is there anything else you would like to add?

\*Do you have a message for the current and future generations?

\*How does it feel to have told your story?

## 8. Post-interview Checklist

- Interview and B-roll Video files in order? **required**
- Summary written completely and submitted online at <http://bit.ly/1Mc6THV>? **required**
- Online version of Post Interview Questionnaire complete (at <http://bit.ly/1b25vaS>)? **required**
- .doc version of Post interview questionnaire complete? **required**
- Release form complete (paper)? **required**
- Release form scanned or photographed (high resolution)? **required**
- At least Five Photos taken during interview? **required**
- Other Scanned photos and documents? **highly recommended**
- Blog post? **highly recommended**

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The 1947 Partition Archive: Post Interview Form

**INSTRUCTIONS:** 1. PLEASE FILL OUT ALL PAGES COMPLETELY AFTER THE INTERVIEW.  
2. FORM CAN BE FILLED OUT IN PAPER OR ON YOUR LAPTOP/COMPUTER (PREFERRED)  
3. SUBMIT THE WORD OR TEXT DOCUMENT ONLINE. WE DO NOT ACCEPT PAPER FORM.

1. INTERVIEWEE BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Interview date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Care of: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip/Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee Email address(s): \_\_\_\_\_

2. INTERVIEWEE NEXT OF KIN INFORMATION:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

3. INTERVIEWER INFORMATION:

Other Narrator(s) and relation to interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Camera person Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Language(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Interview location (address): \_\_\_\_\_

SUBMIT ONLINE: [www.1947PartitionArchive.org](http://www.1947PartitionArchive.org) Page 1

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The 1947 Partition Archive: Oral History Release Form

**INSTRUCTIONS:** 1. PLEASE PRINT, COMPLETELY FILL OUT AND SIGN THIS FORM.  
2. ANYONE WHOSE VOICE IS RECORDED MUST SIGN THIS FORM  
3. SCAN A COPY AND SUBMIT ONLINE.  
4. MAIL IN THE ORIGINAL COPY TO: PO BOX 9505, BERKELEY, CA 94709-9505.

In consideration of the recording and preservation of my oral history memoir by The 1947 Partition Archive, I,

interviewee \_\_\_\_\_ and  
interviewer \_\_\_\_\_, and  
other narrators\* \_\_\_\_\_ herein  
permanently give, convey, and assign to The 1947 Partition Archive, a California non-profit organization, the oral history interview listed below, transcripts thereof, and all photographs and historical materials taken during the interview process. In so doing I understand that my interview and any transcript made of it, will be made available to the public by The 1947 Partition Archive for research and educational purposes; and may be cited, quoted from, published in original or edited form, or broadcast in any medium, including print, television, radio and electronic formats such as the World Wide Web and future technological mediums. I hereby give The 1947 Partition Archive the right to distribute the recording(s) and/or transcription(s) to any other libraries and educational institutions for scholarly and educational uses and purposes.

I convey all legal title and literary property rights that I have or may be deemed to have in my interview and any transcript made of it, as well as all my rights, title and interest in any copyright that may be secured under the laws now or later in force and effect. My conveyance of copyright encompasses the exclusive rights of reproduction, distribution, preparation of derivative works, public performance, and public display as well as all renewals and extensions. This Agreement and Release shall be binding upon, and shall inure to the benefit of my legal representatives, heirs, successors and assigns.

**PLEASE FILL OUT COMPLETELY, CLEARLY AND LEGIBLY**

Date/s of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Interviewee or Proxy: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewer(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Signature(s) of Interviewer(s): \_\_\_\_\_

(1) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Other narrator\*(s) present: \_\_\_\_\_ Signatures of other(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*OTHER NARRATORS\* are those other than interviewer and interviewee whose voice gets recorded.

**Migrant Questionnaire and Interview Packet**

- **Thank you note** for interviewee, to be mailed in. Hand written by you.

## 9. Basic Interview Requirements

*Only interviews that meet the following criteria are accepted upon submission. Please see the complete Interviewer Evaluation document.*

- **Minimum length one hour:** There is plenty to ask and probe when recording a life story shaped by Partition.
- **Basic etiquette and procedures:**
  - Questions asked must be open ended
  - Interviewer must be professional and courteous
  - Interviewer must let interviewee speak without interruption
  - Interviewer must speak clearly
  - Interviewer must remain sensitive to interviewee needs
- **Interview content:**
  - All sections of the enclosed questionnaire must be covered
  - Questions must encourage rich and detailed responses
  - Interviewer must remain unbiased
  - Interviewer must encourage interviewee to elaborate
- **Responses and reactions:**
  - Interviewer allows pauses when interviewee is thinking
  - Interviewer must respond with patience, humility and empathy when things get emotional, and encourage interviewee to focus on strengths
  - Interviewer must gently bring interviewee back to main topic
- **Video techniques and quality:**
  - Interviewee must be well framed, according to rule of thirds.
  - Proper lighting
  - Clear voices of interviewer and interviewee
  - Minimal background noise

## 10. Submitting your Interview Online

After ensuring your interview meets our requirements, it can be uploaded following these steps. **NOTE:** The video upload system is currently under development. It will become more sophisticated over time. For now, please follow these directions.

- Name all interview files using the following convention:
  - a. Videos - [Interviewee name]\_[interview\_date]\_[1ofx].**mov/mp4/other**  
  
**example:** Iqbal\_Khan\_4-5-2013\_1of3.mov  
Iqbal\_Khan\_4-5-2013\_2of3.mov
  - b. Post Interview Form - [Interviewee name]\_[interview\_date]\_POST.**doc**
  - c. Release Form - [Interviewee name]\_[interview\_date]\_RELEASE.**pdf/jpg/other**
  - d. Photos - [Interviewee name]\_[interview\_date]\_1ofx.**jpg/png/other**  
  
**example:** Iqbal\_Khan\_4-5-2013\_PHOTO\_1of8.jpg  
Iqbal\_Khan\_4-5-2013\_PHOTO\_2of8.jpg
- Login to our website: <http://www.1947PartitionArchive.org>
- Step 1:** After logging in, under the “Share your Story” drop down menu tab, click on the “Upload Files” sub tab. Click “Choose files,” and after the window pops up, the green “Add files” button.
- Once you have added all the files you would like to upload, click the blue “Upload” button.
- Fill out and submit the digital post-interview form here: <http://bit.ly/1b25vaS>
- Copy and paste the summary to submit online here: <http://bit.ly/1Mc6THV>
- Please expect to receive a confirmation email within 48 hours of submitting your story. **In the future**, the confirmation messages will be sent immediately upon submission of interview.

## 11. Tips for post interview blogging

*We highly encourage you to analyze the content of an interview, and write your reflections in a blog. If you do write a blog post, please contact us and we will post it to our online blog and social media sites.*

Ask yourself these questions when reflecting on the interview.

1. Summarize the interview.

What are the most important points made in the interview? What patterns, key phrases, themes emerge from the stories told? How does the interviewee express his/her feelings about the topic? If this isn't your first interview, perhaps compare this with your other interviews.

2. How did you feel before the interview?

Were you apprehensive? Calm? Why? How did you expect your interview to go? Why?

3. How did you feel after the interview?

Was it awkward? Uplifting? Ignorant? What made you feel this way? Was this different from how you expected the interview to go? Why?

4. Did anything stick out during the interview?

What did your interviewee believe regarding the necessity of Partition?

5. Anything new you learned?

Did you learn anything about South Asian Culture? Did you learn anything that changed the way you perceived Partition? How does the input of your interviewee compare to the popular characterization of Partition? Can you relate anything you heard to what you learned in class?