

**Panel 23:** Bengal Studies Panel

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**Abstract:** The ECMSAS Bengal Studies panel has through the years developed into an important forum for scholars working on Bengal and Bengali studies. As the number of scholars is quite limited and the group is scattered all over the world, the panel provides a meeting point and an opportunity to share research for all with an interest in the culture and society of West Bengal and Bangladesh - and the Bengali Diaspora worldwide. The interdisciplinary approach of the panel welcomes papers on diverse topics such as past and present, literature and media, religion and secularity, women and men, tradition and culture, and on theory and methods in a specifically Bengali context. Papers on all aspects of Bengal will be considered, but the common denominator should be fieldwork amongst Bengali speakers or the use of Bengali language sources. Some basic questions that proposed papers could address are: What makes Bengal distinct? Does the region have a unity that overrides political or religious divisions? What particular cultural and intellectual contributions has Bengal made to the subcontinent and the wider world? What makes Bengal worthy of study?"

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