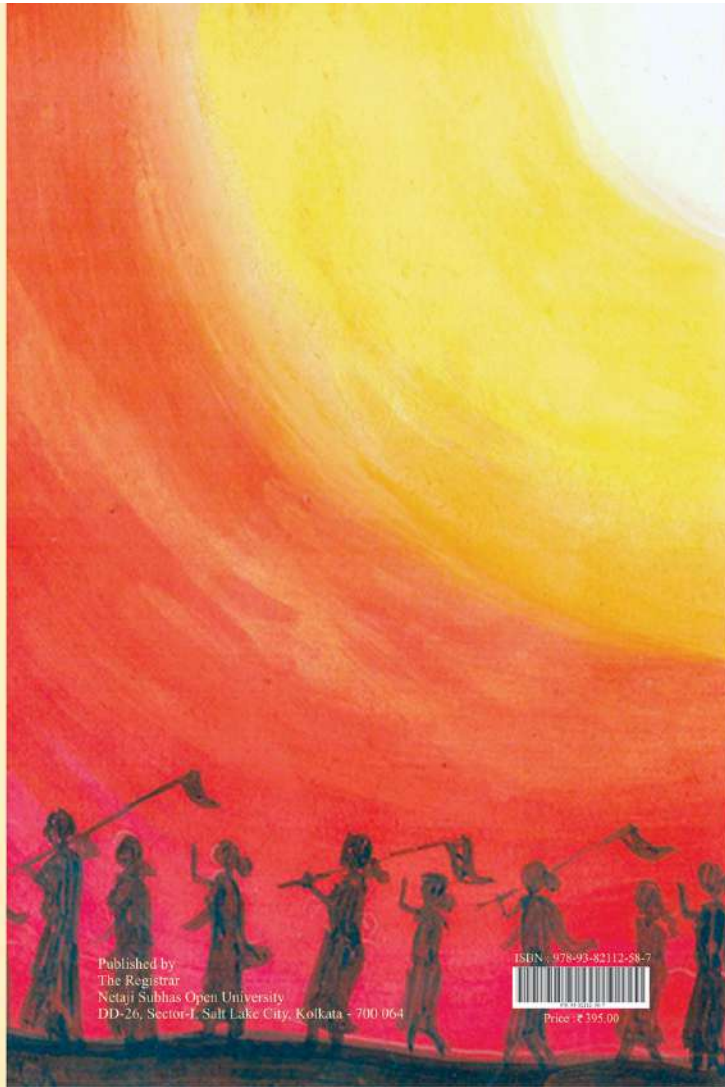




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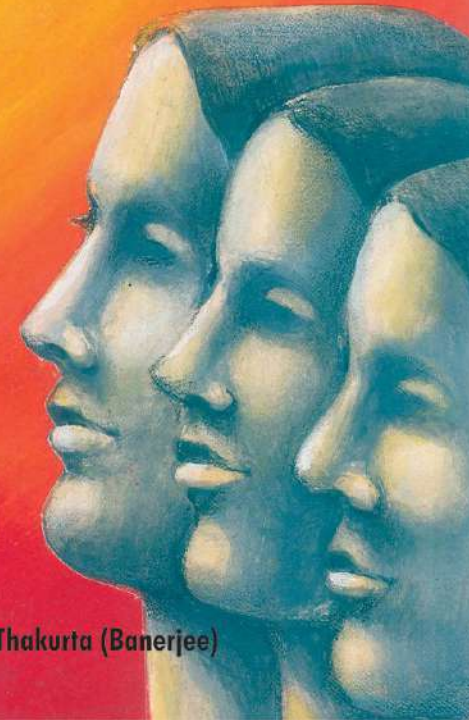
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Autobiographies and Women Activists • Barnana Guha Thakurta (Banerjee)



Autobiographies and Women Activists

A New Perspective of Open & Distance Learning



Barnana Guha Thakurta (Banerjee)

Autobiography is more than a literary genre. It is no longer dedicated to record the lives of great men and events but turns out to be effective in exploring the perception of ordinary individual whose voices remained unnoticed and left for oblivion in mainstream history. It assumes particular significance in feminist studies which is committed to bring to light, the otherwise unheard voices of the 'other' that was obscured in the private domain and left in the dark, for years. With the slogan of 'Personal is Political', since the second wave feminist movement, efforts to highlight women in history and break away from the so called public-private divide gained a momentum thereby inaugurating a new era of research in social sciences.

Autobiographies and Women Activists is one such attempt where the personal narratives of the women members of the communist party unfold a version that helps us to analyse the history of their time as a distinct frame of reference deviating from the dominant one.

Autobiographies are not mere reflection of memories or recollection of one's life. It becomes evident particularly for the women communists who guided by their strong sustained belief that their lives could not be secluded from the greater society and is tied by it to a great extent. So the influence of their political life outshine their personal entity and in doing so struggles to find a new meaning to life, politics and above all the communist party which to them, was an integral part of their soul, the very reason for their existence.

Based on primary data gathered through in-depth unstructured interview of some of the women activists, unpublished diary, party documents, pamphlets, memoirs, Governmental data, Assembly records, newspaper data etc attempts have been made to redefine the conventional understanding of the communist discourse. Thus employing some of the feminist research methods *Autobiographies and Women Activists* makes an introspection into the 'other' version of the communist movement of Bengal through a gender lens.