

CALL FOR PAPERS
YOUNG RESEARCHERS'
CONFERENCE
ON



**Panorama of/and the Pandemic:
Literary and Cultural Responses**

17-18 DECEMBER, 2022
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA
NEW DELHI



IMPORTANT DATES:

SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS: 5TH NOVEMBER, 2022
INTIMATION OF ACCEPTED ABSTRACTS: 15TH NOVEMBER, 2022
SUBMISSION OF FULL-LENGTH PAPERS: 15TH DECEMBER, 2022
FOR QUERIES, WRITE TO US AT ycjmi2022@gmail.com

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Panorama of/and the Pandemic: Literary and Cultural Responses

(17-18 December, 2022)

The intensity of the pandemic struck all at once and altered the social, economic and political fabric of the world. On the one hand, COVID-19 brought the momentum of the entire world to a grinding halt, giving rise to feelings of isolation and a consequent sense of languishing. On the other, rapid changes triggered by the pandemic such as the increase in the pace of digital transformation, deepening of global food insecurity and waves of mental health issues, triggered the new normal, world over. Important critical works such as Arundhati Roy's "The Pandemic is a Portal" (2020) and Slavoj Žižek's *Pandemic!: COVID19 Shakes the World* (2020) raised an alarm at the potential structural changes it precipitated. And yet, stories of creativity, caring and coping also dotted the pandemic years. The binaries of personal experiences hinged on narratives of survival, hope and kindness, death, morbidity and brutality, especially ones that were shared on social media sparked new ways of understanding lived realities.

This conference envisions such 'lived realities' of the pandemic/post-pandemic, in order to paint a panoramic picture of these unprecedented moments. Painter Robert Barker might be credited for contributing to the world what we frequently describe as Panorama, popularly understood as a picture or photograph that contains a wide view of a landscape. The word literally means 'a complete view.' Yet envisioning the panorama need not be

wholesome or a single layered full picture; instead it can be perceived as a montage of fragments and excerpts. This scopic process perhaps serves to help us observe and perceive deeply and comprehensively. The reality, as it was perceived during the pandemic, was truncated, owing to physical and logistical limitations. Therefore when physical movement was stunted, words branched out, across geographies and borders, religion and caste, be it as poetry and tales or as SOS messages, to others. Words painted a panoramic picture of a world struggling and healing simultaneously, in a manner not witnessed in recent history and still nowhere close to the actual panorama. As Roy wrote in her article, “People will fall sick and die at home. We may never know their stories. They may not even become statistics” (2020). As days rolled by, we watched a world seeping deeper and deeper into the abyss, shrouding hope and truth (at times). It is through panorama(s) that we seek to retrieve such voices and narratives to attempt to understand the pandemic in its entirety.

The re-centering of a philosophical worldview unleashed by the pandemic in 2020 met with a resounding response from the literary world as a plethora of books started to appear on the literary horizon in 2020 itself. There were deeper insights, existential envisionings, economic charades, political turmoil and excruciating shifts that made its way into people’s lives. Although the battle against the virus had humanity rallying as a unified and all encompassing unit, the lived experiences of the pandemic were starkly different. Since the narratives were delineated separately, the therapeutic function of Poetry sought to benefit the multi-layered differentials of suffering and struggle. This conference encourages researchers and scholars to ponder, about the excerpts and panoramas of the pandemic through the hedges of literature, literary histories, and public/personal memory. Žižek observes, “Such a universal threat gives birth to global solidarity, our petty differences become insignificant, we all work together to find a solution—and here we are today, in real

life” evoking panoramas which stemmed from hope and salvaged humanit(y)ies, giving it a new lease of life.

We invite papers which explore such ‘lived experiences’ of the pandemic and its offshoots, successive ideas, and topics that have come to the fore. For instance, how was the practice of isolation within homes and quarantine, a challenging reality for many, by way of constriction of spaces, especially those in large families from economically backward sections, negotiated as spaces of survival? Or how did individuals deal with challenges posed to mental health and right to mental health care, still considered either a myth or a taboo in various societies? How do these get reflected in literary and cultural articulations during the pandemic? We are merely offering a portion of the panoramic scope as we seek to understand and explore perspectives from the Global South, which may include narratives across the indices of indigenous communities, the spectrum of gendered identities, endangered/marginalised groups, literary and cinematic output and so on. We invite abstracts of 300-400 words on, but not limited to, the following theme(s):

- Pandemic Literature
- ‘Lived Experience(s)’ as Literature
- The Pandemic as a fragmented reality
- Narratives of Mental and Emotional Health during the Pandemic
- Literary Histories and the Plague and how was COVID-19 different
- Change in Literary Reception during the Pandemic
- Rise of Attention Economy in the Pandemic
- Digital Transitions during the Pandemic
- Cinema/Theatre/Art in the Pandemic
- Spawning of Digital Platforms and Content for OTT viewership

- Academic Fatigue during the Pandemic
- Irreversible Changes Post Pandemic
- Virtual Pedagogy in the Pandemic
- Pandemic and the Media
- Ethics of Care Giving during the Pandemic
- Work from Home and the Blurring of Private/Public Spaces in the Pandemic
- Surveillance and the Pandemic
- Space of Mourning in the Pandemic
- State of Exception and the Reimagining of Politics in the Pandemic
- Rethinking of the Category of Space in the Pandemic

Abstracts of not more than 300-400 words with a short bio note of 70-100 words should be mailed to ycjmi2022@gmail.com by 5th November, 2022. Selected abstracts will be intimated by 15th November, 2022 and would be required to submit full length papers (4000-6000 words) by 15th December, 2022. For queries, please write to us at ycjmi2022@gmail.com

Organising committee:

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