



**Department of Sociology,
Jamia Millia Islamia**

Society Watch

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<https://www.jmi.ac.in/sociology>

FROM THE DESK



Welcome to Society Watch - a dynamic platform where your curiosity, creativity, and sociological lens come alive. It is a privilege to address you through this esteemed platform, which continues to provide a thought-provoking lens on the social issues shaping our times. This magazine stands as a beacon for such inquiry, fostering critical thought and informed dialogue. Together, let us continue exploring the dynamics of our ever-evolving society, championing inclusion, equity, and deeper understanding in every stride forward. Wishing you success at every step.

Prof. Azra Abidi (Head of the Department)

We are delighted to bring to you the second e-edition of 'Society Watch' that curates the creative and intellectual contributions of our students and research scholars while archiving alongside, the events that marked the department calendar in the year gone by. Going through the pages, the readers will find a glimpse of the vibrant and dynamic academic community fostered at the department. We also invite you all to be part of this tradition by contributing ideas for our future editions.

Dr. Sumbul Farah (Student Advisor)



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EDITORIAL

We are delighted to present the 2nd e-edition of Society Watch. This edition is rich with diverse content, offering a blend of poems, prose, photo-essays, and dynamic articles. We have meticulously curated the submissions to ensure a harmonious flow and an engaging reading experience. Each piece in this edition thoughtfully and timely addresses issues that profoundly impact many people's lives today.

Smriti's work navigates the struggles and opportunities of "being different." Kumar's and Pavana's submissions explore the various facets of city life that affect every city dweller in one way or another. Nupur's and Jumana's articles delve into the hierarchical relationship between teachers and students, examining how power dynamics play out both inside and outside the classroom. Firoz's, Syed's, and Naba's writings offer insightful perspectives on ongoing wars and the resistance movements against them. Lastly, Niahi's soulful poetry poignantly recalls the "Lost Mother."

We hope you find great value in the published works and join us in making this edition a success.

Sincerely,
The Society Watch Editorial Team

<https://www.jmi.ac.in/sociology>

MEET OUR TEAM



Prof. Azra Abidi
(HoD)



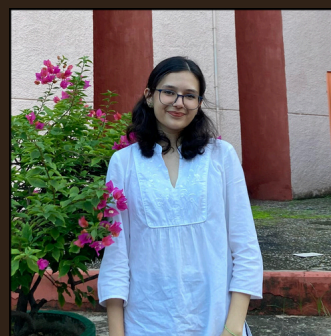
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Twisted Tales: Through the Eyes of a Curly Head

Smriti Priyam (PhD)

Life with curly hair—a roller coaster ride with the wildest twists and turns! In this process, I have not only learned to manage my curls but also experienced a journey of self-discovery.

For as long as I can remember, my curly hair has been more than just a physical feature—it has been a battleground. From the gentle childhood whispers of "Relax your curls, they are what make them beautiful" to societal beauty standards reinforced in mass media and society. Being a curly-haired person has felt like navigating a maze of judgments, assumptions, and unsolicited advice. My journey with my curls has been one of self-doubt, relentless effort, and, ultimately, a hard-fought acceptance.

The Roots of Self-Doubt

Growing up, I quickly learned that straight hair was synonymous with beauty, professionalism, and femininity. The world seemed obsessed with sleek, glossy hair that flowed naturally, while my hair was called "messy," "unruly," and "wild." My confidence was eroded by every comment, every side-eye, and unsolicited suggestion. I began to think that my curls were somehow a flaw—a thing to be fixed, hidden, or controlled. I felt that there was something fundamentally wrong with me and felt sorry for myself because I was "different." I started to feel ashamed of my curls and persuaded myself that having straight hair would make my life much easier and better.



The Price of Conformity

For years, I waged war against my natural hair. I spent incomprehensible sums of money and endless hours on chemical relaxants, blowouts, and straightening procedures. In addition to burning my hair, the heat from the straighteners also damaged my sense of self. I felt like I was deleting a piece of myself in every session to conform to a socially acceptable shape. And yet, no matter how much I tried, my curls always fought back, as if reminding me of their resilience. They would spring back to life even after a gentle touch of humidity, thereby getting on my nerves. I usually wore scarves over my head, ashamed of their look, especially after washing them. I avoided eye contact because I knew that there

would be whispers and glances. "What's wrong with her hair?" they'd murmur, as if I carried a defect for the world to judge.

The Turning Point

It took over two decades for me to realize that the problem was never my hair—it was the world's perception of it. Slowly, I began to unlearn the shame I had internalized for so long. I found stories of people who embraced their curls and proudly flaunted them as identities. The confidence shown by those people gave me the courage to take the first step: letting my hair be. Embracing my curls wasn't easy. Every day feels like a struggle between the years of conditioning I've undergone and the self-love I'm trying to cultivate. I still feel like I am fighting every day. The years of conditioning in my life and the self-love that I am trying to grow might just be too heavy. Some days, I still catch myself feeling insecure when people stare or comment. But now, I try to remind myself that their opinions do not define me

Lessons in Self-Acceptance

I've learned so much more than just hair care since I came to terms with my natural hair. It has taught me the value of self-love, the strength of perseverance, and the beauty of individuality. My curls are not "bad" or "wrong"; they are unique, vibrant, and unapologetically mine. Every twist and turn in my hair reflect the twists and turns of my journey—messy, unpredictable, but undeniably authentic. I've realized that my curls are a metaphor for life itself: they don't fit into neat boxes, and they don't have to.

Still A Journey

While I've come a long way, every day still presents its challenges. I continue to learn how to silence the voices—the internal and external—that deter one from being their best version. However, every day that I decide to live with

my natural curls, I reclaim a little more of myself. To all those out there who struggle with self-acceptance: it's okay to take your time. It took me over 20 years to appreciate my natural hair, and I still have days when I feel like I'm starting from scratch. But remember, there is beauty in every twist and turn—both in your hair and in your journey. So, here's to embracing our "twisted tales" and wearing our curls as a crown, proud, bold, and unapologetically ourselves!



Home and Belongingness in a Metropolis

Kumar Aryan

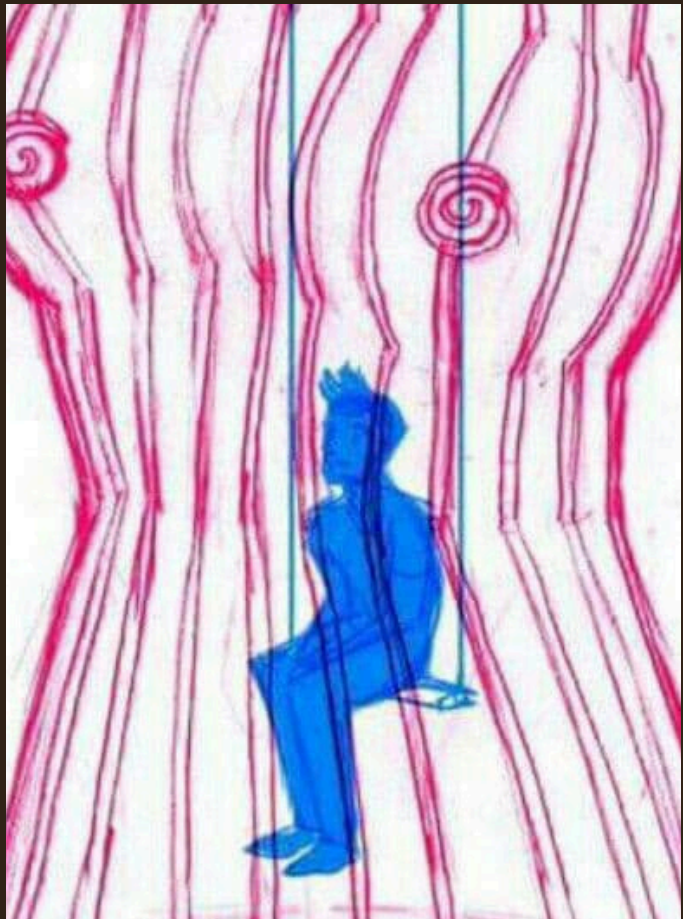
M.A. Sociology, Semester I

ये चेनाब का दरिया है, ये इश्क़ से भरया..
वो लहरों पे बलखाती, महिवाल से मिलने जाती..
वो नाम की सोहनी भी थी, महिवाल की होनी भी
थी.. लेकिन भय कंस का था उसको.. वासुदेवा ने
कान्हा को.. जमुना से पार लंगाया.. केरिया से तो
फिरों की ..

बहना ने फिर मुंह सा उठाया..

Lavanya's question was not in a rhetorical sense. Her fear was real. The fear of being killed any day. She's been living with this fear ever since she chose to rebel against her family and ran away with the person she loved the most - Aarush, her best friend in school. The two are so in love with each other that they wish to marry and live a life together. But fate has something else for them, they fear that neither their families will accept their union nor the government will recognise their love and desires. It is so because both of them fail to understand the difficulties of a non-binary person. Aarushi identifies as a trans man, and chooses to go by the name Aarush now and still struggles with her assigned female gender identity.

Shifting to a metropolis, they thought they had left every fear behind and got freedom from their families. Lavanya's family lives in a village in Ratnagiri district, about 20 kilometers away from Aarush's village in Satara district. Lavanya, 22, belongs to the Koli community. Aarush, 23, belongs to the Kunbi community. Both the communities are listed as Other Backward Class (OBC) in Maharashtra ut Kunbis' are



socially 'below' the Kolis' in the strict caste hierarchy prevalent in these areas.

It had been more than a year since the two left their homes for Mumbai. Aarush barely talks about his family in Village and when he does, it was always about how embarrassed he felt at home.

Aarush's mother works at a local zamindar's home and earns Rs. 6000 a month. "Don't even ask about Baba. He did whatever work he got, from land labor to working in a factory and so on. Whatever money he earned he'd spend on drinking and used to beat aai and us", says Aarush. Later, his father fell severely ill and had to completely rely on his mother's earnings. It was around this time when Aarush also started



working odd jobs during vacations, in stores running errands.

Aarush was in Class 8, when he first met Lavanya in the new school he had moved to. The Zilla Parishad School of his village was only till Class 7. He had to walk 4 kilometers one way to reach this secondary school. At first they were not in talking terms as people from both the communities preferred to not talk to each other.

But their friendship blossomed after a year in Class 9.

One day, while playing together, Aarush hesitantly whispered his feelings to Lavanya. She didn't know what to say. "Aarush had told me about his past relationship with a girl, it wasn't wrong but it did feel strange that two girls were together", says Lavanya "First, I said 'no', but after some time I agreed as deep down I liked him too. My mind wasn't calculating right or wrong here", says Lavanya. "No one could guess about us being together as they just saw us as two girls who are best friends", she continued with a sigh of relief.

Soon, the relatives began remarking on their

taste differences. "The Kunbi people were once workers in Koli households and since then people started considering the difference between the two communities", says Aarush. Aarush even recalled a frightening incident when a heterosexual couple eloped to their villages, one from Koli and the other from Kunbi community, their family members tracked them down and killed them.

Initially, Aarush's mother did not see a problem in their friendship but later on, she did try to curb their friendship.

Lavanya's father worked as a small businessman, her parents had separated when she was 10 and had remarried. She lived with her father, stepmother and four siblings. Lavanya's stepmother did not like Aarush.

Lavanya had an elder brother who also worked with his father. The same brother used to drop Lavanya to Aarush's home. "My brother used to pass remarks and said that he liked Aarush. It was frustrating but that was the only way the two could meet each other", says Lavanya.



Around this time, Aarush became more open about his gender identity and a desire for a male body. He could only talk to Lavanya about his feelings. "I didn't know exactly what 'trans man' means but I just wanted to be in a male body", says Aarush.

Aarush liked to dress up as a boy and his attempts to wear such clothes bothered her mother and she even tried to burn his "manly" set of clothes. She even started beating him up when he dressed as a boy. The only time Aarush wore salwar kameez was at school as it was the school uniform and that "suffocated" him, he confesses.

Everyone around him taunted him. They would say, 'Stay in your limits and be like a girl', also made him conscious of his age which was supposedly marriageable. All of it made him feel he was the problem and there was something wrong with him

Aarush began menstruating in Class 10, which was a huge relief for his mother, however this hope did not last long and soon, as Aarush started having irregular periods; and neither pills, nor potions worked on him.

When Aarush got access to the internet in Class 11 through mobile internet, he started exploring ways through which he could transition from female to male. It was in this pursuit he came across gender affirmation surgery. Lavanya was hesitant at first but accepted everything Aarush thought could help him with his identity.

Lavanya dropped out after Class 12, as she wanted to marry Aarush, who was studying for a Bachelor of Arts. It was the onset of the COVID pandemic and soon the whole of India was under a lockdown.

The lockdown was tough for both Lavanya and Aarush, the talks of her marriage were





still going on but Lavanya knew she wanted to be with Aarush, and running away seemed to be the only option. Aarush had asked her to go away with him in the past but she never agreed as it was too scary for her to just leave it all behind.

After lockdown, Aarush started working at a company and began earning Rs. 5000 per month. Aarush approached various groups and NGOs in hopes of finding a safe shelter for Lavanya and him. Stigma and harassment still never left the two alone.

An NGO took them to a shelter for women in the city run by Urja Trust. As grown up adults, they did not need any legal requirements but in sensitive cases where there could be a potential threat, the trust usually involves the police for their safety.

However, it backfired them. At the police station, the officers tried to compel them to go back to their families and kept telling them that such a relationship does not work in real life. The police informed both the families about their whereabouts. By this time, Aarush's family had filed a missing report and Lavanya's family had been threatening Aarush's family since the two eloped together.

Lavanya was humming the next stanza of the same song she was singing in her rented flat in Mumbai,

बिरहा का दुःख काहे हो बांकिये..
दिखे मोहे तू ही जो जिया में झांकिए..
पल-पल गिनती हूँ आठों ही पहर..
कितने बरस हुए मोहे हाँ किये..
नैना निहारों मोरे भोरे से झरे..
प्रीत मोरे पिया बातों से ना आंकिए..
मैं ही मर जाऊं या मरे दूरियां..

Aarush now focused on gender affirmation, which involves surgery and medical treatment. His only source of the information about the process, the costs,



and doctors were Google. Aarush went to a government hospital but the doctors were not willing to do so, instead asked him not to go through the process, for reasons only God knows.

Aarush finally decided to go to a private hospital. He was there diagnosed with what is called 'gender dysphoria' and required hormonal therapy.

The therapy process was long and extensive; hormone injections to be administered every 3 weeks which cost around 500 per injection, the cost of administering was 300 per session, counselor's charges were 1500, doctor's charges were 800 per visit as well as the tests and medicines, all cost Aarush a lot. But the therapy started showing results, which made Aarush and Lavanya happy. "I can feel the heaviness in my voice", he says

and adds, "I also get irritated and angry at times", explaining the side effects of the medication.

Noticing the behavioral changes in Aarush, Lavanya says, "Due to the side effects, there have been fights, but we sit down and deal with it, it affects me but I am with him".

Aarush repents that Lavanya has been sacrificing her own life for him, "she comes from a better caste family, she could have done better, but still supports me and has never belittled me", Aarush says.

and adds, "I also get irritated and angry at times", explaining the side effects of the medication.

Now, Aarush and Lavanya both spend less time together, as both are working professionals. They come back home tired, so they also argue less than before. But now, the last process was still left to be done, and that was the gender affirmation surgery. It required a hefty 8 lakh rupees. Aarush and Lavanya knew they wouldn't be able to save so much anywhere in the near future.

Aarush had decided to tell their parents only when he had undergone the surgery, as he recalls a moment when he tried to tell his mother about him, and she tricked him into taking him to a tantric (occultist) who banged his head on the floor shouting, "You are a girl, not a boy," but somehow Aarush managed to run away. If the government hospital had been good to Aarush, he would have never gone to a private hospital. Aarush knew his rights and knew that it was the state's responsibility to finance people who wished to go through this surgery but still he couldn't do anything about it.

Aarush still wishes to join the police force but fears the formalities of the process as his name



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is still officially Aarushi and not Aarush. But the news from Bihar where a trans man was recruited into the police force raised his hopes. He wishes that each of us were taught to accept everyone. Then no one will ever have to hide their true identities, and no one will ever leave their homes. "I have cried, cries which no one has ever seen or heard, the traces of which are only between me and my pillow. Why should anyone love in fear? Someday things will change, people will change, and no one will have to cry like I did."

The endings of Heer-Ranjha, Sohni Mahiwal, Sassi Punnun, and Mirza Sahiban, the greatest lovers of all time, were sad, but ours won't be like that. Because we are like Krish and Ananya, who, despite coming from different places and despite their parents' disapproval, still lived and loved together, facing everything together and ultimately making their families understand their love too.

My Arcane Soul

Ayushi Avipsa
M.A. Sociology, Semester I

Sitting on a rooftop,
Watching the moon shine
I thought of all the untold things,
Held within this heart of mine.

Alas! Letting my mind wander back to
The blurry days and sleepless nights
I silently cried for all the times,
That took away my shimmers and lights.

All came crashing down the memory lane
The arcane soul, the heavy emotion
Reminded me of every instance
Where my life was effaced of it's motion.

As night went by, the wind caressing me
The moon whispering through the tree
Reminding me of my countless triumphs
Despite the hurricanes in my sea.



© Fariha Rahman



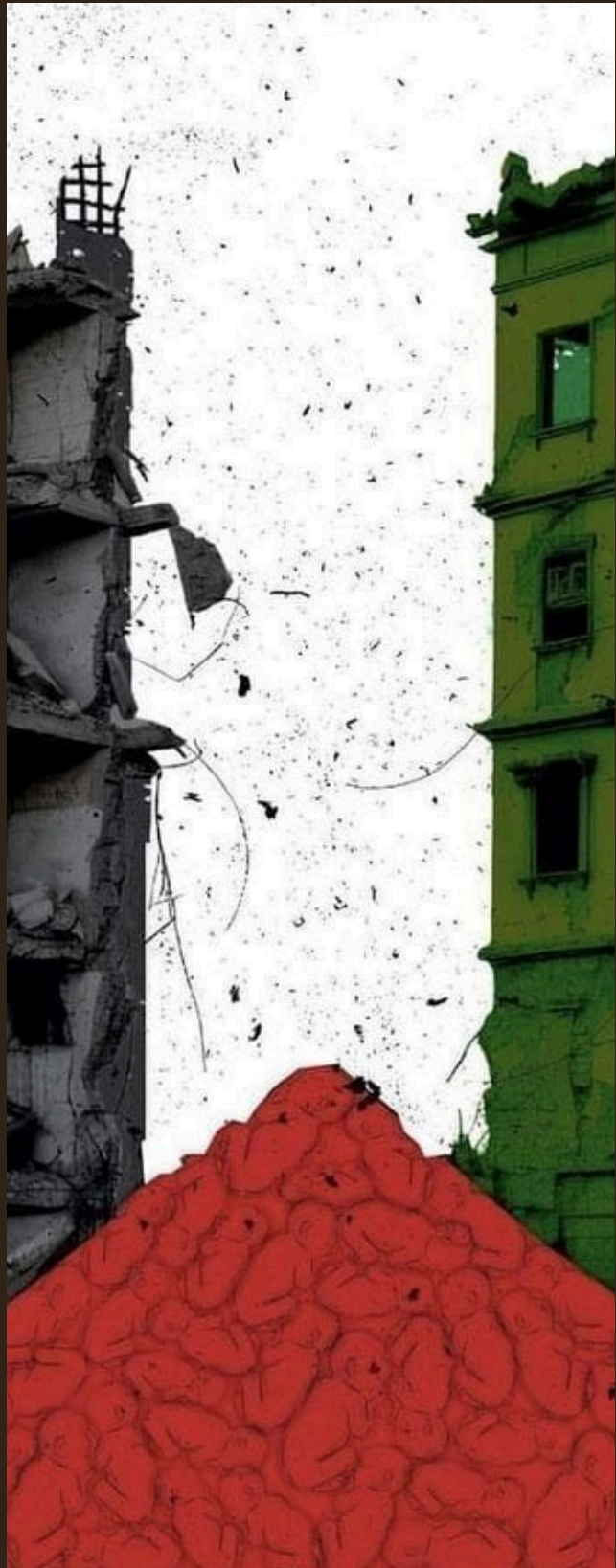
Gaza and Us: Reflect to Resist

Habeeba Haneef Mohammad
B.A. (Hons.) Sociology, Semester I

Its alarming how a genocide has become a background noise, something that is constantly happening. But why should something happening near the Red Sea in the middle east matter to us? Should it matter to us because we believed 44,176 (Al Jazeera, as of 24 November 2024) Palestinians killed by Israel had the right to live? Or why should we care about it when we think we are neither contributing to it nor are we affected by it? But what if we are contributing to it as well as we are also affected by it? If yes, then how? These are not just mere questions that stand before us but a predicament that all of us are a part of.

In order to find answers of these questions, its first crucial to realize that we are not isolated from the ongoing genocide in Gaza. It's by realizing that and questioning how, we move one step closer to our discovery. Active engagement with everything we are consuming, from the headline we look for in the morning to the shampoo we are using, this is how we begin our journey to answer the "how" of our interrogation. The key to find answers of these questions is by becoming active users and not passive consumers of the hegemonic system.

The content we consume has an overarching impact on us, as when we consume things passively or without reflection, we let it shape our subconscious which influences the way we think, interpret and see the world around us. And this content becomes a weapon for those in power, to occupy our minds and unleash violence against us.





This occupation and violence may not be physically directed but through deliberate eclipsing, concealment and erasure of the truth.

Therefore, it is not only the land in Palestine which is occupied but also the minds around the world that are captivated. Israel by weaponising language and narratives, dehumanizing Palestinians and Chomsky's fifth filter, creating a common enemy is manufacturing consent for genocide, its committing in Gaza. This manufacturing of consent unleashes epistemic violence and we become one of its contributors when we allow ourselves to reproduce it.

So, is there a way to resist it? The very act of active engagement, reflection and questioning the narrative is resistance. When we challenge an epistemically unjust narrative, we choose to not become victims of epistemic violence. We choose to resist.

Shadows in the Valley

Ph. Firoj
M.A. Sociology, Semester III

In the verdant hills where rivers run deep,
A tale of anguish makes the earth weep.
Two women stripped of dignity and grace,
Became a scar on humanity's face.

Their cries echoed through the valley's air,
Yet justice lay dormant, cold, and bare.
The soil that once bore songs of peace,
Now trembles under hatred's lease.

Their bodies become the battleground's pawn,
Where honor was shattered, and light was
gone.
Not for their deeds, but the names they bore,
They were made symbols of a warring lore.

Oh, Imphal Valley, how did you descend,
To see your women betrayed, to what end?
The hands that once nurtured and held,
Are now broken by rage, rebelled.

What worth is a land, its pride or its claim,
If its daughters are burned in the fire of
shame?

What justice can rise, what peace can mend,
When violence on women becomes the trend?

Let this not be where the story concludes,
Where silence and shame form the only
moods.

Let voices rise for the mothers who mourn,
For the dignity lost, for futures torn.

To the hills and the plains, let unity bloom,
Let empathy light the encroaching gloom.
For only through healing and truth laid bare,
Can the valley reclaim its heart, repair.



© Syed Zuhaib

Echoes of Injustice: A World in Strife

Naba khan,
B.A. (Hons.) Sociology, Semester III

In shadows deep, the horrors hide,
Media sweeps the anguish aside.
A girl in Karnataka screams in vain,
World's tolerance for cruelty is insane.

Sudanese fields drenched in red,
The "progressive" world can ignore their
dread.
Genocide marches with merciless stride,
While justice is elusive and truth is denied.

In Palestine, hope meets broken wall,
Bombs rain down, and children fall.
Lives reduced to rubble and blood,
A nation betrayed by an amoral world.

Lebanon's skies blaze with fire and fear,
As bombs shatter all they hold dear.
Destroying Nations after nations, none
have a say,
Rights to defend goes one way.

Hasina named rebels "razakars,"
Media calls students "Pakistani" stars.
Protests and questioning the rulers means
treachery,
The audacity after being altered of what
they were to be the emissary.

Manipur's been burning, they didn't care
Assault on women, bringing shame and
fear,

We have normalised violence and war
Ukraine-Russia "conflict" is now a distant
lore





© Daniya Mobin

Sha'ban al- Dalou burned alive,
A missile on a refugee camp ended his strive.
Yet the suicide of an Israeli soldier is
mourned,
On CNN, the narrative is carefully adorned.

People of a former state of world's largest
democracy,
Awaited their turn to get a chance to vote out
hypocrisy.
Ten years of interference and militant rule,
Kashmir been "colonized", caught in a duel.

These wounds are old, yet fresh and raw,
The chains of hate defy every law.
When will the world, with conscience clear,
A world with less polarization and fear.

Quotes and Prose

Zoya Habib
M.A. Sociology, Semester I



Quote 1:

Distance makes everything beautiful, however closeness can ruin the view.

Quote 2:

Luck strikes when you drive.

Quote 3:

The things that heal you somehow will also affect you.

Prose 1:

We often noticed, a person's appearance on social media is different from reality because as a person they have failed to express themselves in reality. Social Media has no barriers however the real world does have barriers. On social media you can do whatever you want to do, you don't ask or think twice to like a post, to comment, to share and so on; however in reality, you have to ask or think many times for doing anything!

I would say, social media is a new virtual social world in itself.



Prose 2:

When everything is done from both the sides, everything will look cool and beautiful!

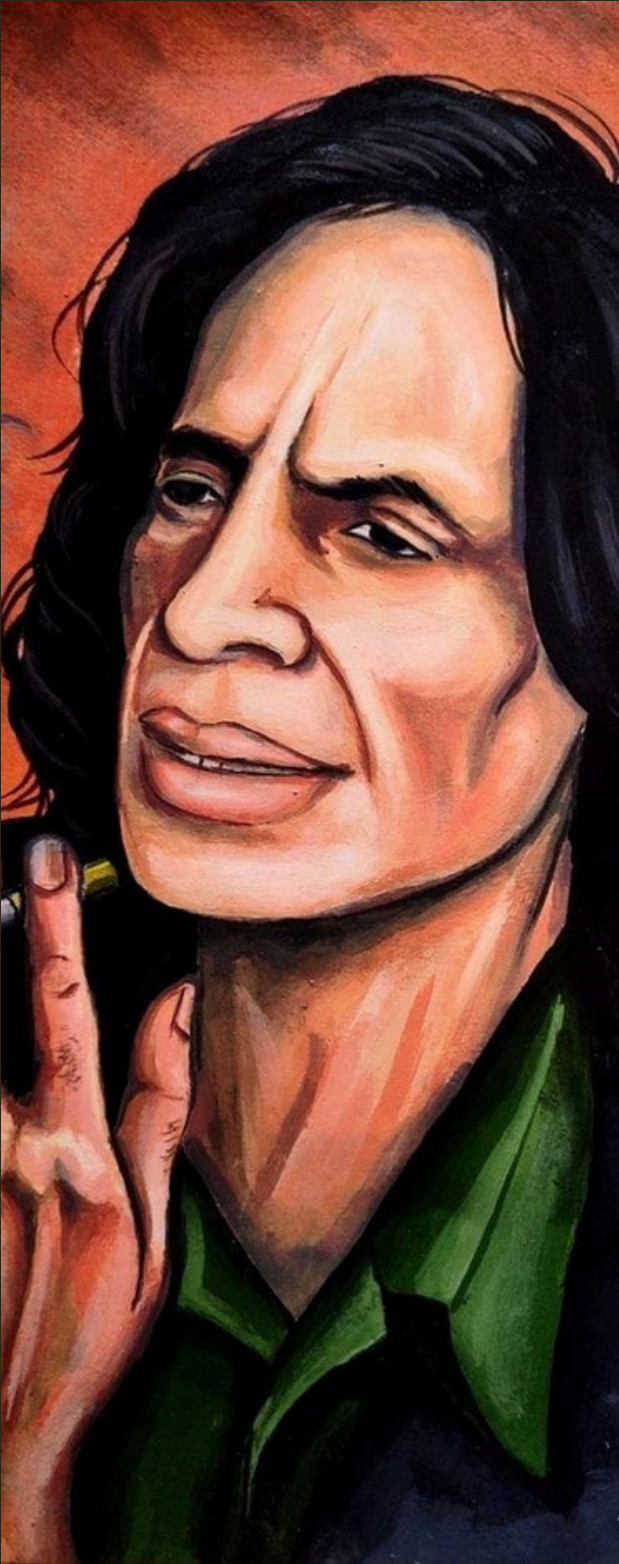
One side can destroy many things, be it your expectations, happiness, mental health, and whatnot.

Prose 3:

Truly we have forgotten to live our life in the desire to be better and successful than others. We tend to forget the terms of our lives and because of this we get caught up in a lot of negative thoughts!

عصری سماجی فکر میں جون ایلیا کی مطابقت

آنچل
پی ایچ ڈی اسکالر



جون ایلیا کے فن کو محض شاعری کے گلیاروں تک محدود رکھنا جون کی شخصیت پر نہایت ہی بے ہودہ انداز میں ضرب لگانے کے مترادف ہوگا۔ عاشقوں کے دلوں میں اپنی شاعری کے راگ بکھیرنے والے جون ایک حیران کن اور قابل ترین جید عالم بھی تھے، جو لغت کے پیچیدہ راستوں سے ہوتے ہوئے سیاست، ثقافت، تاریخ جیسے سنجیدہ موضوعات کو عام فہم زبان میں بیان کر گئے۔ کس نے تصور کیا ہوگا کہ شہرِ امروہ کے گلی کوچوں میں بے ہنگام گھومنے والا لڑکا نہ صرف محبت کے درد و ملال کو بیان کرے گا بلکہ سماج کی آشوب ناک صورت حال پر تلخی سے وار کرتے ہوئے یہ کہنے کی جرات بھی کرے گا کہ:

ہر طنز کیا جائے ہر اک طعنہ دیا جائے
کچھ بھی ہو پر اب حدِ ادب میں نہ رہا جائے
تاریخ نے قوموں کو دیا ہے یہی پیغام
حق مانگنا تو بین ہے حق چھین لیا جائے

بہت کم لوگوں کو اندازہ ہوگا کہ جون کو اردو کے ساتھ ساتھ عربی، انگریزی، فارسی، عبرانی اور سنسکرت جیسی زبانوں پر بھی عبور حاصل تھا۔ کیوں (1991)، یعنی (2003)، گمان (2004)، لیکن (2006)، گویا (2008)، اور شاید (2024) جون کے ان چھ شعری مجموعے کے علاوہ انہوں نے "مسیح بغداد حلاج" اور "جیومیٹری" جیسے کئی اہم متون کا اردو میں ترجمہ کیا۔ جون ایلیا نے تقسیم کے بعد پاکستان جا کر ایک رسالہ شائع کیا جس کا نام "انشا" رکھا گیا تھا۔ انشا ایک علمی رسالہ تھا، ادبی کم اور علمی زیادہ۔ جون ان دنوں سماج میں ہو رہی تبدیلیوں پر باغیانہ طور پر انشا میں لکھ رہے تھے۔ وہیں 'فرنود' جیسے انشائے، جو 1998 سے 2002 کے درمیان مختلف رسائل میں شائع ہونے والے مضامین پر مشتمل ہیں، کو بھی کتابی صورت میں مرتب کیا گیا۔ فرنود کو شائع کروانے میں ان کے دوستوں جناب شکیل عادل زادہ اور جناب خالد احمد انصاری نے اہم کردار ادا کیا۔ جون نے فرنود ہی میں لکھا:



سمندر کے کنارے تجارت فروغ پاتی ہے اور دریا کے "کنارے تہذیب۔"

یہی وہ نقطہ ہے جو جون کی نظر میں ادب کو سماجی ترجیحات میں سرفہرست رکھتا ہے۔ ان کی کتاب شاید کے دیباچے کو اردو کی بہترین نثر میں شمار کیا جاتا ہے۔ جون نے تھیٹر میں بھی دلچسپی لی اور "خونی خنجر" جیسا ڈرامہ لکھا۔ نثر میں حساس شخصیت کے مالک جون جب سماجی صورتِ حال قلم بند کرتے ہیں، تو معاشرہ یوں ہے نقاب ہوتا ہے

تمہارا مرض تمہارے معاشرے کے اندر کا مرض ہے، جب تک اس معاشرے کا علاج نہ کیا جائے تمہاری صحت یابی کی کوئی امید نہیں۔ (جون 1963)

جون سماج کی حالت پر لکھتے ہوئے انتہائی مایوس نظر آتے ہیں، اور ان پر کمیونسٹ اور نیہلزم کے اثرات واضح دکھائی دیتے ہیں:

"زندگی بس رائگانی ہی تو ہے۔۔۔"

تاہم جون اپنی مایوسی میں بھی امید کا پیغام دیتے ہیں:

ایک انسان دوسرے انسان سے مایوس ہو سکتا ہے، لیکن انسانیت سے مایوس نہیں ہونا چاہیے، اس لیے کہ ایک انسان فقط زمانے میں سانس لیتا ہے اور انسانیت زمانوں میں زندہ رہتی ہے۔"

جون کے خیالات گنگا جمنی تہذیب کا بھی حسین عکس ہیں:

میرے ہندو مسلمان سب مجھے سر پر بٹھاتے تھے انہی کے فیض سے معنی مجھے معنی سکھاتے تھے"

یہ تمام پہلو اس بات کا مظہر ہیں کہ جون کی شاعری محض شاعری نہیں بلکہ ایک مکمل فلسفہ ہے۔ جون کو صرف اردو ادب کا ایک شاعر کہنا ان کے علمی اور سماجی مرتبے کی تحقیر کے مترادف ہوگا۔

Parallel Lives: The Urban Divide Between Slums and Skyscrapers

Pavana Sanga
B.A. (Hons.) Sociology, Semester III

As cities grow under the capitalist system, they show clear and visible differences between wealth and poverty. One of the most striking examples of this is the coexistence of slums and towering skyscrapers. This contrast is a clear sign of inequality and exploitation that Karl Marx discussed in his analysis of capitalism. On one hand, the skyscrapers represent wealth, comfort, and privilege. On the other hand, the slums reflect the harsh and difficult lives of the working class, whose hard work keeps the cities running but who themselves live in poor and challenging conditions.

In this essay, I explore the contrast between slum housing and tall skyscrapers that shows the deep divide in urban areas. According to Marx's ideas, this divide highlights the class struggles and inequalities that are central to capitalist societies. The crowded and neglected slums reveal the struggles of people who have limited opportunities and live in poverty, while the skyscrapers symbolize the wealth and luxury enjoyed by a few. Using Marx's theories, I will discuss how this visual difference is not just about buildings but about deeper problems of inequality, where the comfort and success of a few are often built on the hard work and struggles of many.



The conditions of a slum area are depicted in this image, which shows a narrow, congested street with a lot of informal dwellings and an unclean environment with garbage covering it. The crowded buildings and all the activity of daily life reveal a community that struggles to get basic necessities, with residents frequently having to make their way through limited space and inadequate facilities. This area is a representation of the proletariat, or working class, who provide labour in many ways to the city's economy yet live in poor living conditions without access to basic amenities like safe housing, clean water, or sanitation facilities. These individuals continue to live in poverty despite playing a vital role in the operation of the urban economy, frequently working in low-paying jobs that sustain the wealthier strata.

It further clearly portrays the effect of capitalism on the working class. Capitalism prioritises profit over giving equitable housing for the working class, leaving them in areas with insufficient infrastructure. This picture also illustrates the exploitation, where the labour of the working class is utilised by the capitalists or urban upper class in order to meet their high standards of living. For example, the women from these slum dwellings offer domestic work to those upper class households.



This image clearly portrays the stark separation between the working class, who live in overcrowded and poorly maintained slum dwellings, and the urban upper class, who reside in tall, modern skyscrapers. The physical divide between these two living spaces reflects the deep social and economic inequalities inherent in urban life under capitalism. This disparity is closely aligned with the concept of alienation that Karl Marx described. For Marx, alienation occurs when workers are separated from the products of their labour, from meaningful work, and from their own humanity. In this context, the working class is not only alienated from the value they create through their labour but also from the ability to live in a safe and decent environment. Despite their essential role in driving urban economies—whether through construction, domestic work, or other forms of low-paid labour—they remain excluded from the prosperity they help create.

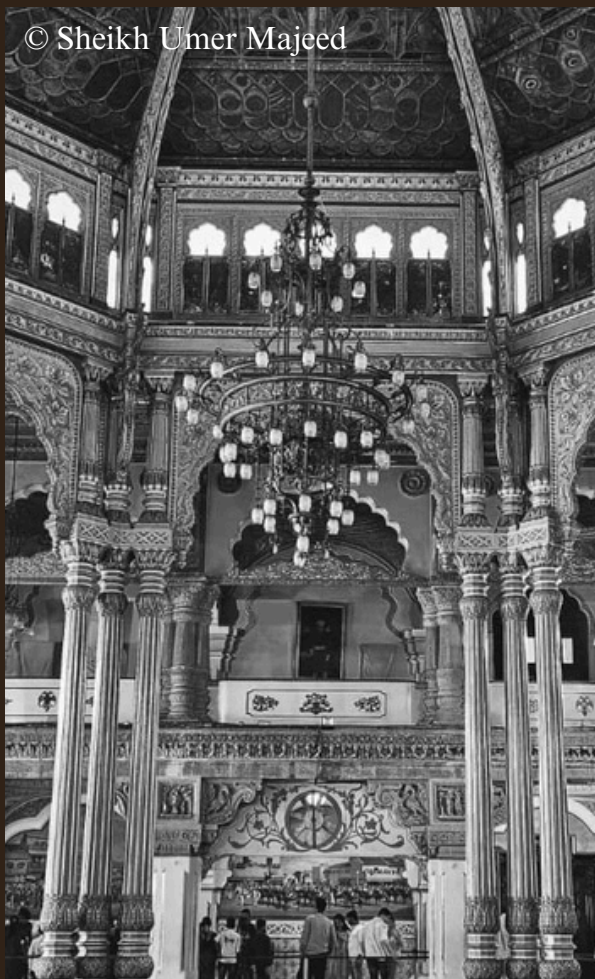


In stark contrast to the previous image of slum dwellings, this picture captures a well-maintained, spacious road lined with cars and residential buildings. This area represents the lifestyle of the affluent urban upper class, where residents have access to ample space, a clean environment, and high standards of living—luxuries that symbolize wealth and privilege in an urban setting. The orderly streets, modern infrastructure, and the presence of private cars reflect the success and comfort of a class that has the means to afford such amenities, further reinforcing their social status.

From a Marxist perspective, this image portrays the world of the bourgeoisie—the wealthy elite who own the means of production and enjoy the benefits of the capitalist economy. These affluent individuals thrive in environments that are built upon the labour and struggles of the working class, yet they remain distanced from the daily hardships experienced by those who work to sustain their prosperity. The wealth and comfort seen in this picture are directly tied to the exploitation of the proletariat, or the working class, whose labour produces the very goods and services that fuel the capitalists' wealth.

The contrast between this image and the slum area depicted earlier highlights the class divide that Marx argued is inherent to capitalist societies. The bourgeoisie's privileged existence, with its access to resources and opportunities, is made possible by the unequal distribution of wealth, where the working class—though essential to the functioning of the economy—remains marginalized and deprived of the benefits that their own labour helps generate. This disparity reveals the fundamental inequalities of capitalism, where the accumulation of wealth by the elite comes at the expense of the working class's exploitation, alienation, and lack of upward mobility.

In conclusion, the stark contrast between slum dwellings and towering skyscrapers serves as a powerful reminder of the deep-rooted inequalities in capitalist societies. While the capitalists enjoy the fruits of wealth accumulation and reside in neighbourhoods with well-developed infrastructure, the working class remains confined to devastated areas with minimal resources. This dissimilarity highlights the ongoing exploitation of labour, where the hard work of the working class contributes to the prosperity of the wealthy, often without fair compensation or improvements in their own living conditions. Through Marx's lens, it is evident that such disparities are not mere accidents of urban development but are intrinsic to the capitalist system, where wealth is accumulated at the expense of the proletariat



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Learning to Listen to NO: Deconcentrating Power as a Classroom Praxis

Nupur Rastogi (PhD)



X: “What does it take to be in power and still not exercise it over others?”

Y: “I do not get it. What are you trying to ask?”

X: “It is not easy to not exercise power over others when you know that you can. Most of the time, it remains unchallenged—for example, between a teacher and students. One might say that students as a collective carry power, which is true, but in everyday classrooms, and in my experience of being both a student and a teacher, I think a teacher holds immense power. Moreover, exercising power over others can give one a strong sense of control. For example, I, as a teacher, can induce fear in the classroom whenever I want. One day, I can question their self-esteem, capability, and worth; the other day, I can encourage and boost their morale, being super supportive. This power is strong and easy to operationalize. It remains unchallenged unless something extreme happens, inviting outrage from the students as a collective, which is a matter of rarity.”

Y: “Hm, now I get it. In my experience, you can talk to my students separately about this. If I reflect on my relationship with my students, I can say it is possible. The position of Teacher is indeed a position of power. Nevertheless, there are ways to ensure one does not fall into the trap of dominating with power and remaining a teacher. All you have to do is to “Learn to Listen to NO.”

X: “Learn to Listen to NO? From whom?”

Y: “From people over whom you can exercise power. In this case, your students.”

X: “Can you elaborate on this? This is important for me to learn so that I do not fall into the trap of gaining self-validation from exercising power over my students?”

Y: “We as teachers tend to forget to ask, discuss, and request to our students. We like to “tell” or “instruct” them. Even if one makes a request, it is with an unspoken condition of receiving “yes” in response to the request. This is problematic. As a human being, one should learn to listen to NO and be OK with it. This acceptance of

NO reflects on your role as a teacher. And more than a teacher, I want to be a learner. I do not want to create a hierarchy. So, my eagerness to be a learner ensures that I learn to listen to NO. Their NO allows me to be on a plane like theirs. Of course, this might have repercussions for many things; you might get a NO for something extremely unexpected, might not submit an assignment, or say NO for a Test, and so on. One can manage those situations creatively without taking a threatening position. I should know that their NO in such situations is not to rebel against my “authority,” but an indication that they are practicing what we learn about power.

I have had the above conversations with Professor Y whose students usually praise him for his humility and openness for discussions and dialogue. I was curious to know the principles that guide his classroom praxis. This conversation allowed me to reflect on my experience as a student, a school teacher, and now a teacher to undergraduates. In one of my previous articles, *Conflicts in a Classroom: Forbidding or Empowering* (2021), I contemplated my position as a student and a teacher and the gaps I noticed between what I needed as a student and what I offered as a teacher. Such reflexivity in a teacher helps in being careful about the concentration of power in the classroom and how it is exercised over and among students.

In my experience of nearly twenty-nine years in educational and academic spaces, from being a school student to a college student and from being a school teacher to a college teacher, I have met quite a few teachers who decentralize the power within the classroom in practice. For those who

do not, the benefit of the doubt one can offer is that they do not know how to do it, which is even more the reason to discuss and learn about it.

Why listen to NO? Why decentralize the power within the classroom?

To answer this, one must ask the fundamental question: Why educate? Why to Teach? bell Hooks (1994) may help us here – that one “teach[ing] to transgress” – the many social-political-economic-cultural boundaries that macro structures bestow upon us. The structures that prescribe the hegemonic ways of being in ideology, bodies, and the world. One teaches to create dialogue over what Krishna Kumar (1986) calls “counter-socialization” within the classroom. A dialogic space for radical hope, compassion, and love – acknowledging that Love and Hope never existed without being critical and in dialogue with each other.

Several scholars have been writing about the loss of engagement with political action (Arendt, 1958), the loss of the public sphere (Habermas, 1962), and the fear of strangers (Bauman, 1991). Their writings also call for a space of radical hope, and classrooms could be those spaces. As Giroux (2004) argues the pedagogical must be political inside the classroom so that political becomes pedagogical outside the classroom. A pedagogy fundamentally rooted in the praxis of political action, decentralizing power, and the idea of “other.”

With the rising neoliberal insecurities, possessing and exercising power over others could create a sense of security, control, and self-validation. Conversely, deconcentrating power in the classroom and exercising one’s ability to Listen to “no” is a resistance against the regimes of ontological



ontological insecurities surrounding one. It is an act of self-liberation, and any act of self-liberation is a political act.

For a classroom to be a liberated space, the teacher must liberate oneself from the traps of neoliberal insecurities, which is not an alienating process. It is a de

-alienating process that needs a dialogic and brave space like a classroom. So, a liberated classroom and the liberation of the teacher form a dialectical relationship with each other. In this dialectical relationship, education emerges as a transformative and democratic practice; as the practice of Freedom (Freire, 1968).



Unseen Suffering: The Ideological Roots of Palestinians Oppression

Syed Mohammad Laraib
B.A. (Hons.) Sociology, Semester V

In what way is it “Unseen”

The sufferings of Palestinians are described as “Unseen” due to its relatively less media coverage and acknowledgment on a global level. This oppression remains largely 'unseen' because, unlike other conflicts and atrocities throughout history, it has persisted for an exceptionally long time. It is essential to remember that Israel's oppression did not begin as a reaction to the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023. Instead, it only became more prominent in mainstream media after that date. This persecution of Palestinians started back in 1948 with the establishment of Israel. Even if we focus only on events from 2007, when Israel began imposing severe restrictions on the basic needs of Palestinians, this ongoing oppression has now stretched for 17 continuous years. Secondly, Israel directly strikes Gaza strip, which is one of the world's densely populated areas with around twenty lakhs population in 365 km square area and since 2007, Israel imposed strict restrictions on all supplies of basic necessities such as water, food, and electricity and intensified its attack with rockets and missiles. Now the Gaza strip has been converted into an “Open Air Prison,” where they fortified the entire Gaza strip with fencing, military posts and watchtowers and constructed underground barriers, declared this area as ‘No flying zone’ and stopped the movements through boats and ships and blocked naval aid.





In march, 2024 Israel destroyed more than 200 schools through his targeted attack. Similarly, Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) heavily destroyed Gaza's major hospitals including Al-Shifa, Al-Ahli Arab, Al Nasser children's hospital and in one incident Israeli Army tanks surrounded four hospitals Al-Rantisi, Al Nasr, an eye hospital, and a mental hospital.

According to Volker Turk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Most of the dead are women and children. This unimaginable situation is overwhelming due to recurring failures by Israeli Defense Forces to comply with the rules of war." In all of history's wars no country has ever officially banned an international organization like the UNRWA from aiding the victims. But this shocking step has been taken recently by Israel's government through passing a bill from the Knesset (Israel's parliament) to ban the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for providing humanitarian aid in this crucial time. UNRWA is responsible for providing all kinds of essential services such as food, water, temporary shelter in emergency situations and even operates most of the educational institutions and healthcare services including child and maternal health and treatment related to severe stress and trauma, considered as a lifeline for Palestinians. Many UN officials expressed serious concern over this, such as Joyce Msuya serving as Acting Under Secretary at UN office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that "This decision is dangerous and outrageous and there is no alternative to UNRWA. Similarly, Commissioner General of UNRWA, Philippe Lazzarini has said this bill increases the suffering of Palestinians and is nothing less than collective punishment.



The Ideological roots of Palestinians Oppression

The atrocities Palestinians have faced over the last several decades would not have been possible without the backing of a strong ideology; every atrocity committed so far has been carried out under a specific ideology. Their oppression started after the establishment of Israel in Palestinian territory and this oppression became more intense since 2007, by imposing severe restrictions on necessities and that ideology is “Zionism” which is basically a movement for the establishment of Jewish nation in the territory of Palestine. Zionists considered Palestine as “a land without people for a people without land”, and they ignore the native Palestinians and generally treat them as an obstacle to establishing a Jewish homeland. Ilan Pappé discusses in his book “The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine” around 1948 Nakba, where more than 7,00,000 Palestinians were forcefully displaced from

their homes by the support of Zionist leaders. But now this war is going on directly between Hezbollah and Israeli defense forces. In September, 2024, Israel’s pager attacks in Lebanon around the afternoon time, when people were busy in their daily work, then the pagers of thousands of people blasted with beeping sound and due to this, some people died and more than 3000 people got badly injured. While Pager is an electronic device used only for messages and considered as a device which cannot easily be hacked by hackers. That is why Lebanese use Pager so that they can protect themselves from Israel’s attack. Another electronic device, the Walkie Talkie exploded. It also became the cause of death and injuries in different parts of Lebanon. But killing through their own devices is not done first time by Israel but Israel has used these kinds of tactics for other operations like in 1996, Israel used this for the assassination of Hamas bomb maker and similarly, in 2000, for killing of an activist of Fatah through his cellphone. But both attacks in Lebanon have raised concerns worldwide, as they highlight a troubling situation. The idea that electronic devices with minimal or no internet connectivity can be hacked to cause harm is unsettling. This makes it comparatively easier to misuse smartphones, laptops, and other devices.

Furthermore, smartphones are often suspected of containing spyware like Pegasus, which was developed by the Israeli company NSO Group. So, the Zionist ideology, currently misusing technologies to carry out killings, could repeat such dangerous tactics against civilians in other countries in the future. This makes it clear that, this kind of Zionism is a serious threat not only to Palestine and the Middle East but to the entire world.

Bridging Bonds: The Complex Dynamics of Teacher-Student Relationship

Jumana Shemeer
B.A. (Hons.) Sociology, Semester I

The statement "Teachers are the second mothers of every student" encapsulates the essence of the teacher-student relationship. From the tender age of three or four, children begin interacting with teachers, who play a pivotal role in shaping their lives. To evaluate the current dynamics of teacher-student relationships, we must explore three key areas that highlight their profound impact on society. While this relationship often emerges as a strong and nurturing bond, it also carries certain challenges that deserve attention.

Teachers are more than mere educators; they are trusted friends and influential mentors. They serve as pillars of support, guiding students not only in academics but also through personal challenges. Today, students are more empowered to share their concerns openly with teachers. In return, teachers often share inspiring anecdotes and personal experiences, fostering motivation and trust. Effective communication between teachers and students can address and resolve many challenges in their relationship. When a teacher excels as a communicator, they become a bridge to understanding and growth, creating a positive and transformative environment for their students.

Teachers open the doors to a world of possibilities for their students. By sharing their past experiences and encouraging creativity, they ignite curiosity and inspire





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dreams. Behind every successful student lies the unwavering support and guidance of a dedicated teacher. This bond grows stronger over time, often leaving an indelible mark on a student's life. The evolution of the teacher-student relationship has brought about significant changes. Unlike in the past, where interactions were limited to formal instruction, today's teachers actively engage in discussions that extend beyond the classroom. This shift encourages holistic learning but also introduces certain risks.

While the teacher-student bond is predominantly positive, it is not immune to abuse and exploitation. Unfortunately, instances of misconduct, such as sexual harassment and abuse, have been reported with increasing frequency in recent years. In 2022, a teacher from a prestigious school in Tamil Nadu was accused of sexual harassment by multiple students. The students came forward collectively through social media, leading to widespread outrage and legal action. This case underscores the vulnerability of students and the importance of mechanisms to protect them from abuse. These cases, affecting students of all genders, highlight the darker aspects of this relationship. Media representation, through films, web series, and music, often emphasizes teacher-perpetrated abuse.

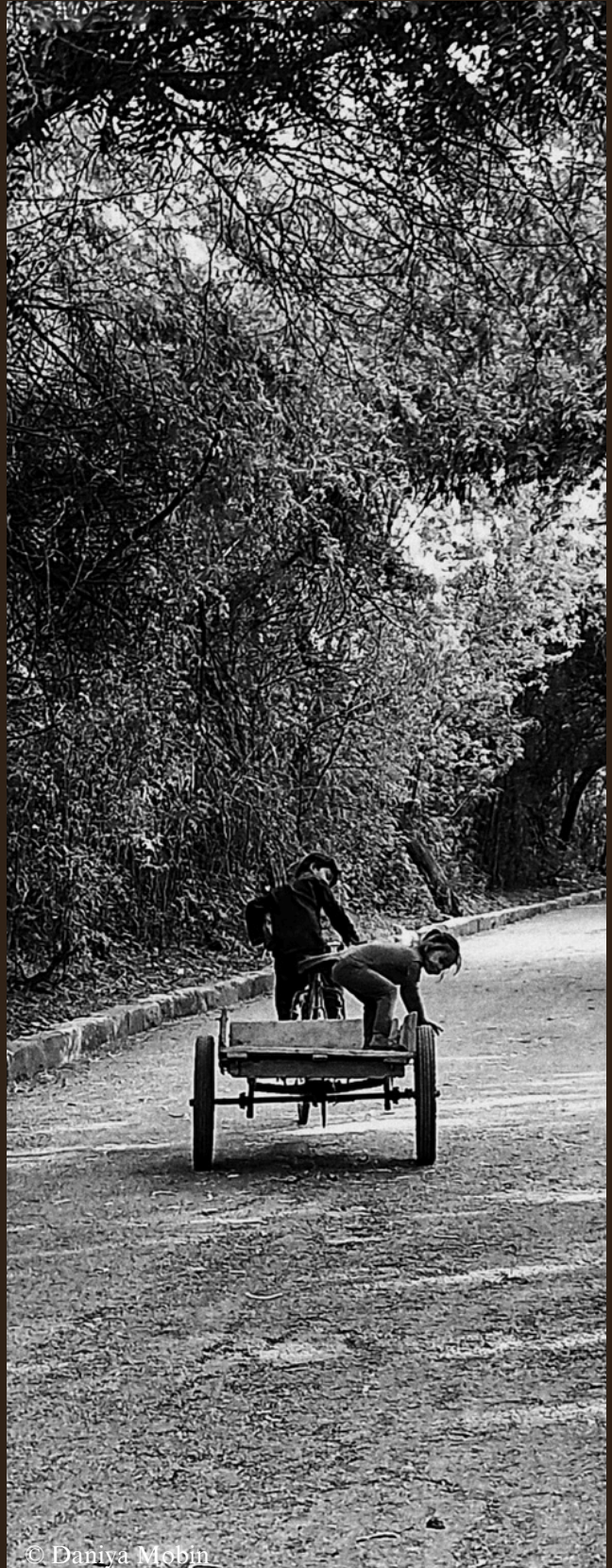
However, the issue is not one-sided. Teachers, too, face harassment and abuse from students, though these instances rarely receive societal or media attention. In 2019, a teacher in Kolkata faced severe cyberbullying from her students after she reprimanded them for inappropriate behavior. The students leaked her personal photos online, causing emotional distress and harm to her reputation. This example highlights that teachers can also be victims of exploitation and abuse, which often goes unnoticed. This imbalance in addressing the problems of both parties perpetuates an incomplete narrative that fails to account for the challenges teachers encounter.

The teacher-student relationship is a cornerstone of personal and academic development, offering immense potential for growth and inspiration. However, it is crucial to address the dual challenges that arise within this bond. Society must adopt a balanced approach, acknowledging and responding to the issues faced by both teachers and students. By fostering mutual respect, communication, and accountability, we can create a stronger and more positive teacher-student relationship, paving the way for a healthier and more inclusive educational environment.

समाज, संस्कृति और ज्ञान परंपरा: स्थानीयता से सार्वभौमिकता तक

पंकज कुमार, शोधार्थी

भारतीय ज्ञान परंपरा में समाज और संस्कृति को समझने के लिए एक समग्र दृष्टिकोण अपनाया गया है, जिसमें पारंपरिक ज्ञान, आध्यात्मिकता और सामूहिकता का महत्व प्रमुख है। यह दृष्टिकोण व्यक्ति और समाज के बीच के संबंधों को केवल भौतिक और आर्थिक संदर्भों तक सीमित नहीं करता, बल्कि इन्हें मानसिक, सांस्कृतिक और आध्यात्मिक संदर्भों में भी देखता है। विद्वान जैसे अंबेडकर और लोहिया ने जातिवाद जैसी संरचनात्मक समस्याओं को उजागर करते हुए यह तर्क दिया कि भारतीय समाज की समझ के लिए पश्चिमी व्यक्तिवादी दृष्टिकोण पर्याप्त नहीं है। उन्होंने भारतीय समाज की संरचना और परंपराओं के गहरे ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक संदर्भों पर बल दिया। वंदना शिवा और रामचंद्र गुहा जैसे पर्यावरणविदों ने आदिवासी ज्ञान प्रणालियों को भारतीय समाज के सामुदायिक और पारिस्थितिकीय दृष्टिकोण को समझने के लिए महत्वपूर्ण माना। गांधी का सर्वोदय सिद्धांत और टैगोर की सांस्कृतिक दृष्टि इस बात को रेखांकित करते हैं कि भारतीय समाज को समझने के लिए केवल आर्थिक और राजनीतिक परिप्रेक्ष्य पर्याप्त नहीं हैं, बल्कि इसमें सांस्कृतिक और आध्यात्मिक पहलुओं का भी समावेश आवश्यक है। इस प्रकार, भारतीय समाजशास्त्र में पश्चिमी दृष्टिकोणों के बजाय स्थानीय और सांस्कृतिक दृष्टिकोणों को प्राथमिकता दी जानी चाहिए। भारतीय संदर्भ में, बुद्ध, गांधी, टैगोर और अंबेडकर ने स्थानीयता और सार्वभौमिकता के समन्वय से भारतीय समाज को समझने के लिए समग्र दृष्टिकोण प्रस्तुत किया। इन विचारकों ने भारतीय समाज की संरचनाओं को ऐतिहासिक, सांस्कृतिक और नैतिक संदर्भों में देखने पर जोर दिया। इसके साथ ही, आदिवासी दृष्टिकोण ने यह तर्क दिया कि समाज के सिद्धांत पश्चिमी मापदंडों से परे होते हुए भी अपनी विशिष्टता बनाए रखते हैं। भद्रकाली जैसे विद्वानों ने समाज को एक पारिस्थितिकीय और सांस्कृतिक इकाई के रूप में परिभाषित किया, जो इस बात पर बल देता है कि आदिवासी ज्ञान और परंपराएँ सामाजिक अध्ययन के लिए समग्रता और विविधता का अनिवार्य आधार हैं। यह दृष्टिकोण भारतीय समाज की विविधता को न केवल



मान्यता देता है, बल्कि उसे वैश्विक सामाजिक अध्ययन में एक महत्वपूर्ण योगदान के रूप में प्रस्तुत करता है।

जाति प्रथा में व्यक्ति का जन्म और व्यवहार उसके सामाजिक संदर्भ से गहराई से प्रभावित होता है, और इसे समझने के लिए भारतीय समाज के कुछ प्रमुख विचारकों ने व्यापक और सांस्कृतिक दृष्टिकोण अपनाए हैं। भारतीय लोक-ज्ञान परंपरा और आदिवासी समाजों का अध्ययन करने वाले विद्वानों, जैसे कि शिव कुमार वर्मा और दया किदवई, का मानना है कि पारंपरिक भारतीय समाजों में व्यक्तियों और समुदायों के बीच गहरे और जटिल रिश्ते होते हैं। इन विद्वानों का तर्क है कि पश्चिमी समाजशास्त्र का व्यक्तिवादी दृष्टिकोण इन रिश्तों की जटिलताओं को पकड़ने में असमर्थ है। उनका विचार है कि भारतीय समाज को समझने के लिए पारंपरिक ज्ञान प्रणालियों, जैसे कि आध्यात्मिकता, पर्यावरणीय चेतना, और सामुदायिक संबंधों, को केंद्र में रखना अनिवार्य है। यह दृष्टिकोण न केवल भारतीय समाज की गहराई को उजागर करता है, बल्कि इसके सामाजिक अध्ययन में नए आयाम जोड़ता है।

आधुनिक समाजशास्त्र में आदिवासी समाजों का अध्ययन करने वाले विद्वानों, जैसे कि नीलकंठ और अर्जुन देव, ने यह स्पष्ट किया कि आदिवासी समाजों में व्यक्ति और समुदाय का रिश्ता सामूहिक और पारिस्थितिकीय दृष्टिकोण से देखा जाता है, जो पश्चिमी दृष्टिकोण से भिन्न है। उनका तर्क है कि आदिवासी और लोक-ज्ञान आधारित दृष्टिकोण भारतीय समाज की जटिलता और विविधता को समझने के लिए अनिवार्य हैं। इसी क्रम में, सामाजिक अध्ययन में 'कृष्णकांत सिद्धांत' पर आधारित अनुसंधान करने वाले भारतीय समाजशास्त्रियों का कहना है कि भारतीय समाज को उसकी गहरी जड़ों और संस्कृति के साथ समझने के लिए पश्चिमी सिद्धांतों की तुलना में भारतीय दृष्टिकोण का अनुकूलन आवश्यक है। उनका मत है कि जाति व्यवस्था जैसी समस्याएँ केवल व्यक्तिगत स्वभाव की नहीं, बल्कि ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक संरचनाओं से जुड़ी हैं। इसे समझने और हल करने के लिए भारतीय समाजशास्त्र को स्थानीय और सांस्कृतिक दृष्टिकोण से देखना अनिवार्य है, ताकि समाज की वास्तविक समस्याओं का समाधान किया जा सके।

उपरोक्त व्यक्त किया गया है कि अंबेडकर और लोहिया ने भारतीय समाज को समझने के लिए समग्र दृष्टिकोण अपनाने की आवश्यकता पर बल दिया। उनका मानना

था कि जातिवाद, धर्म, और इतिहास के परिप्रेक्ष्य में समाज को देखने से उसकी संरचनात्मक समस्याओं को समझने में मदद मिलती है। अंबेडकर का तर्क था कि जातिवाद केवल व्यक्तिगत व्यवहार का परिणाम नहीं है, बल्कि यह एक संरचनात्मक और ऐतिहासिक समस्या है, जो समाज की परंपराओं और व्यवस्थाओं में गहराई से निहित है। इसी तरह, लोहिया ने समाज में मौजूद सामंती और पूंजीवादी शोषण को उजागर करते हुए इन मुद्दों के खिलाफ संघर्ष की आवश्यकता पर जोर दिया।

भारतीय समाजशास्त्र में यह मान्यता है कि समाज और संस्कृति को समझने के लिए पश्चिमी सिद्धांतों के बजाय भारतीय परिप्रेक्ष्य, और उसके ऐतिहासिक, सामाजिक, और सांस्कृतिक संदर्भ को प्राथमिकता दी जानी चाहिए। भारतीय आदिवासी और लोक समाज पर आधारित शोध दर्शाते हैं कि समाज को केवल व्यक्तियों का समूह मानने की समझ अपर्याप्त है; इसके लिए समूहों, परंपराओं, और सांस्कृतिक संदर्भों का ध्यान रखना जरूरी है, जो व्यक्ति की पहचान और आचरण को प्रभावित करते हैं।

इन चिंतकों ने भारतीय समाज की संरचनाओं को समझने के लिए वैश्विक सिद्धांतों के साथ स्थानीय संदर्भों को जोड़ा। उनकी दृष्टि में समाज न केवल भौतिक अस्तित्व है, बल्कि मानसिक, सांस्कृतिक और आध्यात्मिक धारा के रूप में देखा जाना चाहिए। इन विचारों के आधार पर, भारतीय समाजशास्त्र में समग्र और बहुसांस्कृतिक दृष्टिकोण की आवश्यकता को स्पष्ट रूप से रेखांकित किया गया है। उनके योगदान ने भारतीय परंपराओं और सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों को समझने के साथ-साथ समाज के गहरे संरचनात्मक मुद्दों को उजागर करने में भी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है।



भारतीय समाज अध्ययन में देसी दृष्टिकोण को बढ़ावा देने की आवश्यकता पर बहस हो रही है, जिसमें मुख्य रूप से चार सवाल उठाए गए हैं। पहला सवाल यह है कि क्या समाज अध्ययन का ज्ञान समाज की वास्तविक समस्याओं पर प्रभाव डालता है। दूसरा सवाल समतावादी दृष्टिकोण को लेकर है, क्या समाज अध्ययन समाज में समानता लाने में मदद करता है। तीसरा, क्या अनुभवजन्य और आत्मज्ञान दोनों प्रकार के ज्ञान का समाज अध्ययन में महत्व है। चौथा सवाल यह है कि क्या भारतीय समाज की विशिष्टताओं और ज्ञान परंपराओं के आधार पर समाज अध्ययन में मूलभूत परिवर्तन की आवश्यकता है। इन सवालों के माध्यम से यह तर्क किया जा रहा है कि समाज अध्ययन को भारतीय संदर्भ में अधिक प्रासंगिक और स्थानीय दृष्टिकोण से जोड़ा जाए।



Kaku and the Migratory Birds

Kumar Aryan
M.A. Sociology, Semester I

In the remote village of Kheechan, a few kilometers away from the city of Jodhpur lived Kaku. He lives with his grandmother who he called dado.

Dado was almost 23 years away from being a centenarian. Fall was nearly over, Kaku was playing with his favorite toy in the backyard.

“Aye Kaku, till when will you play, c’mon in, have some buttermilk, it is fresh. Do not make me give you a second call, your dado is old now. C’mon in child”

“Dado” literally translates to grandfather in Marwari language. Kaku was only a few months old when his grandfather died, after which the family of five, Kaku, two of his brothers and his parents migrated to Delhi, leaving dado to live on whatever little the barren village lands produced. Dado mostly grew vegetables in her home garden and lived on the meager amount her son sent from the city she visited only in her imagination.

“Dado, are there very tall buildings in cities?” Kaku asked while sipping his buttermilk.

“Only Laxmi Narayan knows what buildings these cities have, I do not know.” “Do they have buttermilk there also?” six year old Kaku curiously asked. “We will ask all these questions to your parents when they arrive, and if they do not arrive, we will ask the “Khurjas”, because they are definitely coming in a fortnight or so.” A pacifying smile spread across Dado’s face.





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The winds in Kheechan were brutal and dust-laden but worse was the conditions in cities where Kaku's parents were trying to make a living. They had understood they would not be able to sustain like this. Therefore, after two years, they came back to Kheechan, much to dado's short-lived pleasure, only to leave Kaku at the village. They were not to stay. Putting a budding three year old kid in her arms, they headed back to the strange city after only two nights because the master did not agree on more holidays. Kaku was chosen because he was too little to understand or question anything and also a liability. The other two sons worked at the paint factory.

"Cities make the core of humans rock-like, Kaku," dado said when Kaku asked about her mother leaving.

Kaku had been waiting for his parents for the past three years. For all these years he had been waiting for the "Khurjas" to come. Waiting round the year for their arrival. "How much time will they take, dado?" "They will take their time, Kako, just like everything does," wisdom swept underneath her wrinkled smile.

As September sets in, Kheechan prepares for their bird guests that visit only once every year. Demoiselle Cranes, the smallest of all crane species, looking younger than the young, majestic as they fly over the sky of Kheechan. They call them Khurjas. Kaku along with his friends goes from one house to another collecting grains for the yet to arrive bird friends. He is extraordinarily happy, hopping his way from one house to another.

Most of the houses in Kheechan have no youngsters as they flew to the cities to earn or

study. The local radio station near the Panchayat Samiti office read, "India is the most populous of all the nations in the world with more than 50% of young population." The news was as strange to Kheechan's air as is an ocean in the midst of the Thar desert by which the village was walled from one side.

"Kakuuuuuuuuu," yelled dado in her shrill but loud voice but Kaku was nowhere to be seen. As the dust left the sky pink and purple, Kaku came running towards home, eager to tell dado that the first human guests had also arrived, Khurjas must be coming.

"You saw them?" Dado asked.

"Yes dado, I saw them. They were very fair, they had hats on and sunglasses too."

"These Goras have been coming since the past 10 years, they came to know about our Khurjas and they flocked in too, huhhhh." Dado continued with the chores.

"Why dado, they are nice too. They took our pictures from the "camira" and showed us too, "I should have oiled and combed my hair today."

"You don't know people from cities, Kaku, they forget their roots. Anyway, go have your dinner and do not forget the milk." Dado limped her way through sadness.

The next morning, Kaku woke up to the crackling of the Khurjas. He removed the curtains and there they were, the beautiful black and white. He jumped out of bed and shouted, brushed his teeth, spat joy and ran towards the grounds. Villagers had set a Bird feeding ground as well as grain storage facility just for the guests.

His friends, their relatives, tourists from near and far enhanced the rustic charm of the



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yellow sand, the scattered bushes and of course the most special, the Demoiselle cranes. However, when eyes get tired of watching the birds peck on grains, they move elsewhere and they see plastic bottles, chips and snack packets. The tourists from cities bring with them these little things and just like them, their litter is temporary too. Few children collected the water bottles to play with them, others wondered what that water tastes like.



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“The birds seldom plan a stay in cities, they know, there is no space even for them,” dado said as she watched from a distance.

Kaku watched the birds but more than that, he eyed the roads. The only road that leads to ‘Dilli’ they say. After an hour or so, he returned with a small face. “Kaku, is it you? Come eat with me, you did not even have breakfast.” but there was silence in response. Dado called again but only to hear no word. Kaku was sitting on his bed beside the window, his eyes glued to the road.

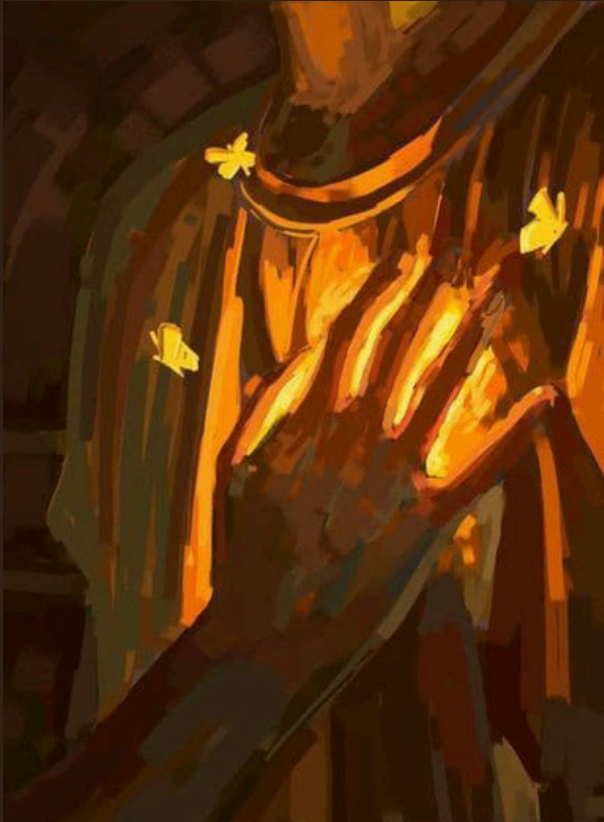
“Aye Kaku, what happened to my child, ah ?” Dado caressed the little boy. “Dado, they would not come this year too, right ?” his eyes welled with tears. Her heart sank, she hugged the child and said, “It is only the first day Kaku, the birds are going to stay for a while, we will wait for a little longer, till then, I will take you to the telephone booth and you can ask your parents yourself, okay?”

“They always say they will come soon, never tell me when.” “Beta, they will come and get you toys and snacks that those Goras eat and also a camira.” I promise. “Dado, you said they would come with the Khurjas.”

Dado did not have an answer. She knew, hope dies with time.

The Lament Of a Being

Sadiya Qureshi
M.A. Sociology, Semester III



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Ne'er under the tutelage Left in the lurch,
Unheeded.

Words that leave a profound mark of sorrow,
That cleave through the soul and bone.

Born and furthered in strangeness, Through
strangers, mistaken for kin.

A product of places ne'er thine own,
Estranged from thy very flesh and blood.

Ne'er a cherished charge, ever a burden borne.
Far thou hath come, yet to them thou art
channeled back. Inquire into thyself,
Saith my heart.
Thou asketh thyself It sayeth nought.

Thou waketh thy wandering self, seeking
home,
In the fullness of time resigned to the certainty
that nay safehaven exists hereon.

Mere refuge is cumbersome to find,
For it is a weary, grim world to seek a soft
spot thereon.

Perennial peace lies through departure From
this world.
Whence thou camest, to Him shalt thou return
For it is with the timeless that thou shalt find
unabated joy.

Thine soul runneth over to free itself; Thy
Death is Thy final freedom.
Freed is thy soul that lives ever on.

Oh! Dear Mother

Nishi Afroz
B.A. (Hons.) Sociology, Semester I



Two months have passed since
You left, yet the ache remains
A heart once full, now bears a
Scar that remains
Your loving smile and presence
I can't replace
A bond so strong it surpassed
Time and space

Memories of you, a
Bittersweet refrain
Moments we shared in vain
Your guidance was an umbrella
In the rain, a beacon that lit my way

In your arms, I found solace
And peace
A sense of belonging to my
Soul's release
Your kindness a gift I can
Never repay
A debt of gratitude, I'll carry
Everyday
Though may be you gone, your legacy stays
I tell myself, I'm the one you made
Your memory, a treasure I hold
Tight
A bond between us that will
Shine like a guiding light
Time may dull the pain, it
Won't erase
The memories we made, the
Love we embraced
You shaped me into who I'm
Today
A part of you lives on, in every
Step of the way
In my manners your ethics will
Always be displayed.

And Love

Shivam Khurana (PhD)



Dear Iota ($\sqrt{-1}$),

You, a friend of a friend, as of a few hours ago, were a total stranger to me. Now as you sit beside me, I shift to the extreme corner of my seat, ensuring that we don't touch accidentally even though there is still an empty seat between us. Sitting in the last row of a car at 2 am in the night without any particular purpose, without any sense of fear, is a luxury, I just wanted to extend that luxury to you. A bit drunk and sleepy, as you hum along to the songs, I look at the night sky which to my surprise was much clearer tonight. I too hum along as I lean on the closed window, and clasp a small pillow in my arms, hugging it while missing the warmth in which I too would be able to sleep peacefully. I kept gazing at the sky, as you proposed that we all go to a club. This 'night out' is something that I thought I could never undertake, given the symbolic capital it mandates, going to a club might be too giant a leap even when three out of the six of us won't remember any part of my silly embodiments by tomorrow morning. In between, as the dialectics of my evolving habitus, the struggle between my structured residues and the presently structuring structure clouds my thoughts. As I try to find a reason to say no to clubbing, I look towards you. Confused within myself, trying to find a way out, I gaze into your eyes and transcend through all of us, somewhere in the unknown.

Later, when we got back in the car after taking a walk, I was still in a transcendental abstract space. Your accomplice wanting to rest on your shoulders, took the back seat



before either of us could get back in. I still remember the irritation and hope in your voice as you asked her (using multiple reasons and tactics) to sit at a different spot so that I could sit with you. You even went to the extent of warning her that you might vomit. But she, a bit clever, a bit experienced, and a bit more concerned for you, did not budge.

I am not drunk, I don't drink but my consciousness still floats upon the absurdity of the neurochemicals pumped upon by the morning hormonal cycle and the entire socio-cultural construct of love. Yet to me, at this moment, the otherworldly reveals itself in an incomprehensible entirety. Hence, each time we look into each other's eyes from the sideview mirror, each time we sing along the lyrics of songs, my intuitions kick in. Neurons fire up my brain, each time our hands touch, as you intently pass on the phone to me, to change the song, locking it by mistake several times while looking for the next song. Later as it rains, and the grasp of your hand tightens upon mine when we all stack our hands on each other's while confounding on our common knowledge of dance moves of that song; this grasp, this touch revealing the purest possible forms of

the transcendental reality humanly perceivable. If someday we meet again (although it's very unlikely) and I'm still unable to tell you, what it was, as the scarcity of words always dawns upon me. I think I'll bring you to one of my lectures while teaching the sociology of forms, furthermore, while drawing a trajectory of transcendental aesthetics - from Plato to Kant to Simmel. Eventually, unethically, skipping certain paragraphs such as



“A trace of strangeness lingers in even the most intimate relationships. Erotic relationships decidedly deny generalization in the first stage of passion: to the lovers, a love like this has never existed before; nothing can match the beloved or our feelings for him or her. Once this experience of singularity wanes, an estrangement sets in (it is hard to say whether it is cause or effect). Skepticism about the relationship's unique value becomes tied to the idea that one might merely be enacting a generic human fate, that one's experience has been gone through already a thousand times by others, and that if one had not accidentally encountered this particular person, many others might have gained similar importance for us instead” (I usually agree with him, but I also tend to disagree with Simmel here, especially on those days when the consciousness of not acting enough against the structures of oppression, trauma, and violence gets too heavy to bear, on those days I tend to believe more in the conspiracy of destinies, than the brute reality of randomness and coincidence (Marx would have characterized this as my opium)).

As I'll skip these paragraphs, being wilfully ignorant, I'll read this letter to you, divulging upon the superseding forms of reality over the contents and structure; for you to perceive this synthesis of apprehension of my intuitions. Hoping that this metaphysical deduction of feelings dawns similarly upon you too, hoping that you may understand whatever I could not say, hoping that we attain a transcendental unity of apperception.

Yours
Shivam



Reflections

Reflections is a platform for research scholars and faculty members at the Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia to share their work and reflections on critical issues that society faces every day. When we often feel that our private lives are a series of traps, as Mills said, discussions, debates and deliberations become the need of the time. It is such a forum where scholars deliberate and critique each other's work to encourage co-learning and critical consciousness, which asks us to engage in “conversation”, which Riesman hoped.

As a monthly forum, to challenge the hegemonic narratives and accentuate the diminished voices through the use of Sociological Imagination, discussions and deliberations have taken place on diverse and dynamic topics which touch the lives of individuals, the structure of society, and the intermingling of both.

So far, there have been 14 sessions of Reflections conducted. In these sessions, if someone stresses "Mediating with failure" by discussing the “dynamics of school education and migration in rural Bastar”, then some try to conceptualise “Intragenerational Social Mobility through the Politics of Recognition Debate”, if someone remembered “Partition” through “Memory, Narrative and Representation”, then some tried to visualise “Plastic Art” of a particular artist. If someone evaluates the “Effectiveness of the Public Distribution System in Mitigating Food Insecurity”, then some with the metaphor of “Wheels of Struggle” have examined the “Migrant Workers’ Commuting Challenges and Social Dignity”.



Zikr - ARC

ZIKR is a yearly confluence organized by the research scholars of the Department of Sociology. A vibrant platform shared to the scholars all over India where they are encouraged to come up with their wide ideas and critically divulge themselves with diverse and dynamic world present around them. This forum was started in the year 2022.

The 1st Annual Researchers' Confluence was conducted in 2022, on the theme "Decolonising Methodologies".

The 2nd Annual Researchers' Confluence was conducted in 2023, on the theme "Let's (Dis)agree to Disagree: Beyond Postmodernism".

The 3rd Annual Researchers' Confluence, the latest, was conducted in 2024, on the theme "Education and Democracy: Prospects and Challenges in Contemporary India".

In contemporary India, curtailment and crushing of democratic voices are of much concern that are raised against inequalities and injustices. When the voices are not able to be embodied for the sake of justice, and when some educationists or academicians put scholarship in the service of an ideology that makes citizens become the consumers or victims of injustices and violence. It was necessary to select a theme which addressed these questions. We have received an overwhelming response of 64 abstracts across different institutions of different regions of India (including one from Sri Lanka and one from the USA), of which 27 papers were selected and thematically structured into four sessions. Besides the presentations, a welcome lecture by Prof. Furqan Qamar discussed the changes, opportunities, and challenges observed in the relationship between Education, Democracy, and Development. There was a Keynote Address by Dr Irfanullah Farooqi on the relationship between Democracy and Education, specifically arguing John Dewey's notion of the same and a Valedictory Address by Prof. Azra Abidi. It was held on April 23rd and April 24th, 2024, respectively, at the Conference Hall, Dean's Office, Faculty of Social Sciences, Jamia Millia Islamia.

International Lecture Series

The Department of Sociology is organizing an International Lecture Series for the academic session of 2024-25 (between October 2024 and April 2025), inviting distinguished scholars who have made exceptional contributions in the fields of social sciences and humanities, to foster a culture of intellectual curiosity among the academic community. This lecture series will be held in-person and online over the course of the academic year.

TITLE	SPEAKER	AFFILIATION OF SPEAKER	DATE
“Jamia’s Appa Jaan: A Global History Of Friendship”	Prof. Margrit Pernau	Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, Germany	10-10-2024
“A Thousand Tiny Cuts: Mobility and Security Across the Bangladesh-India Borderlands”	Dr. Sahana Ghosh	National University of Singapore, Singapore	26-11-2024

Bikram Nanda Memorial Lecture



The Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) organized the 3rd Bikram Nanda Memorial Lecture and Symposium on February 14, 2024 at the University Polytechnic Auditorium. The theme for the event was *Is Social Media - 'Social'?*, which was chaired by JMI Officiating Vice Chancellor, Prof. Iqbal Hussain. The memorial lecture was delivered by the renowned social scientist Prof. Amrit Srinivasan, Head of Department, Humanities and Social Sciences at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi.

The thought-provoking lecture was followed by astounding questions from the audience. Dr. Sumbul Farah, the Students' Advisor, thanked the Hon'ble VC for his valuable time, the Keynote Speaker for the insightful lecture, late Prof. Bikram Nanda's family members, the Subject Association and the faculty members and the students who put in their heart and soul in organising this event and making it a success.



Karvan-E-Fikr

Karvan-e-fikr is an annual student fest of the Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia. Each year, a theme is decided wherein the seminars, lectures, competitions and cultural events are held. The first day of the fest is generally marked by the Annual Student Seminar and a keynote lecture followed by competitions and cultural programs on the second day.



In session 2023-2024, Karvan-E-Fikr was held on 14th and 15th February 2024 with the theme “Tags, Trends and Trolls: Locating the ‘Social’ on Social Media”. The student conference had papers ranging on the subjects of romance and love online, e-commerce, influencers and bloggers, religion and culture online, online communities and solidarities, digital identities, paperless offices, cyber security and surveillance, etc.

On the second day of the fest, photography and reel competition, JAM session and debate competition were organized among the students across colleges and universities in Delhi. The two day fest was ended by a stage play, fashion walk and open-mic from students of various departments of Jamia Millia Islamia. The students of the Department of Sociology set up various stalls to enhance the cheerful spirit of the fest.

The fest was an incredibly colorful and vibrant event with the perfect blend of fun and learning and was attended by students and faculty alike.

Lectures and Talks

TITLE	SPEAKER	DATE
Lecture on “Making Domestic Modernity Beyond the Home”	Dr. Sneha Krishnan	16-10-2023
Lecture on “ <i>Jamia ki Kahani, Jamia Walon ki Zabaani</i> ”	Prof. Akhtarul Wasey	30-10-2023
Lecture on “Democracy: The Absent Presence in our Social Lives”	Dr. Aiman Mustafa	25-01-2024
Lecture on “Prof. Oommen’s Writings in Sociology: Perspective and Paradigm”	Prof. Vivek Kumar	04-03-2024
Lecture on “Caste Discrimination in Indian Academia”	Prof. N. Sukumar	27-03-2024
Lecture on “Ambedkar & Politics of Social Justice	Dr. Harish S. Wankhede	16-04-2024
Talk on “Inquisition into the Paradigms of Health & Wellness: An Islamic Approach”	Dr. Javed Jamil	30-04-2024
Lecture on “Bureaucracy, Legal Identity and the Crisis of the Rule of Law: Insights From a Field Site”	Dr. Mohsin Alam Bhat	05-08-2024
Lecture on “Independence and the Quest for Equality: A Critical Reflection”	Dr. Pradyumna Bag	14-08-2024

Lecture on “Indian Sociology & Knowledge-Power Matrix”	Prof. Irfan Ahmad	26-09-2024
Lecture on “Excel in UGC NET: Effective Preparation Strategies and Career Guidance”	Dr. Arpita Karwa	27-09-2024
Lecture on “Gandhi’s Nai Talim & the Idea of a University”	Dr. Bhat Khalid Bashir	01-10-2024
Lecture on “A Sociological Reflection on the Strife-torn World”	Prof. Rajesh Mishra	09-10-2024
Lecture on “The Making of Jamia: Exploring its Evolution Through Virtual Narratives”	Mr. Saniuddin Khan	28-10-2024
Lecture on “For a Global Sociology of Social Movements”	Prof. Geoffry Pleyers	20-12-2024

Workshops/Symposiums/Discussions

Research Methodology Workshop	23-11-2023 24-11-2023
Book Discussion on “Education in a Ghetto: The Paradoxes of a Muslim-Majority School & Ek School Manager ki Diary”	14-10-2024
Symposium on “Addressing Gendered Violence at Workplace: Sociological, Psychological & Legal Underpinnings”	15-10-2024
Workshop on “Questioning the ‘Research’ and Re-searching the Quest-ions” by Dr. Jyoti	21-10-2024
Interactive Session with Prof. Geoffrey Pleyers	18-12-2024

Webinars and Online Activities

Online Workshop on “Sustainability Courses for Climate Change Careers”	21-02-2024
Online Lecture on “Sanitation workers, Lifeworld and Swachh Bharat Mission: Reflecting from the field” by Dr. K. M. Ziyauddin	15-09-2024
Online Lecture on “From Research to Biography: The Art of Writing an Effective Research Paper” by Shakti Shukla	18-10-2024
Online Workshop on Research Methodology	22-11-2024

Extra and Co-Curricular Activities

Street Play on the theme “The Spirit and Diversity of Jamia”	30-10-2023
Anti-Ragging Week	12-08-2024 to 18-08-2024
Anti-Ragging Pledge	12-08-2024
Anti-Ragging Poster Making Competition	13-08-2024
Eco Pledge for Swacchta Hi Seva	25-09-2024
Cleanliness Drive	25-09-2024
Photowalk for Swacchta Hi Seva	26-09-2024
“Aap Ki Tasveernigari” a Public Art Event	26-09-2024
Quiz Competition	28-10-2024
Debate Competition	29-10-2024

Photographs



Teachers' Day Celebration 2024



Teachers' Day Celebration 2024



Diwali celebration 2024



Diwali celebration 2024



Eco Pledge 2024



Cleanliness Drive 2024



Debate Competition 2024



Poster Making Competition 2024



Quiz Competition 2024



104th Foundation Day Celebration 2024



Farewell 2024



Karvan-E-Fikr 2024



Farewell 2024



SOCIETY WATCH

The Magazine Committee, Department of Sociology invites comments, feedback and suggestions on this issue of Society Watch.

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