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On Other Pages

Comment	2
Note	3
'THE IDEA OF JUSTICE' It is just that there be Law, but Law is not Justice-1 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak	3
RETURN TO MARX The Various Versions of Marx's Capital Marcello Musto	7
A TRIBUTE Humra Quraishi Lamat Hasan	9
"BLOWING IN THE WIND" India-Bangladesh Border Kirty Roy	9
BACK TO DICKENSIAN ERA? And Now 90-Hour Week Atanu Chakravarty	10
MOCKING AT MAY DAY Working Hours and Well-being of Workers Bhaskar Majumder	12
THREE WOMEN 'All We Imagine as Light' Jean Paul Mella	13
GCAC'S BATCH '96 'Amra Noy Choy" Atanu Basu	14
Letters	15

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'Ceasefire Is Not Justice'

FINALLY THERE IS A CEASEFIRE. BUT THIS CEASEFIRE IS fragile. Ironically both Biden and Trump are claiming credit for stoppage of war in the Middle East, at least for the time being. In truth ceasefire doesn't mean end of war. It is just the beginning of a new phase of continuing conflict by another means. Both sides are regrouping to prepare for the next confrontation. The future of the Gaza conflict is anything but certain. The Biden administration has so far provided Israel with at least \$17.9 billion in military aid since October 2023 when Israel's genocidal campaign commenced following an attack by Hamas on Israel. The US allowed mass massacre to continue by providing endless supply of weapons to Netanyahu. The Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel was 'barbaric' but Israel chose not to go to war simply against Hamas, but has instead waged an all-out war against the entire Palestinian people.

For 15 months Israel and its main backer America have tried to erase the Palestinian people without much success because of Palestinian perseverance and resistance. Also, the growing solidarity movement in support of the Palestinian cause across the world created an atmosphere conducive to ceasefire. Then multiple human rights bodies have repeatedly said that Israel's war in Gaza constitutes genocide or acts of genocide, all in the name of combating terror outfit Hamas. The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant for alleged war crime. The Court has also issued an arrest warrant for Hamas leader Ibrahim Al-Misri for alleged crimes against humanity. But all these exercises at international level are good for propaganda as these institutions have no mandatory power to execute their own orders. Both Israel and Hamas simply ignored ICC judgements.

In just the 24 hours surrounding the announcement of a ceasefire, the Israeli government killed as many as 116 Gazans. In a touching farewell of a child, a grief-stricken father said, 'let him be the last martyr of Gaza'. The death toll in the enclave stands at over 46,000 as per statement issued by the health officials. However, a recently published peer-reviewed analysis estimates that Israel's assault on Gaza had actually killed 64,260 people, mostly civilians—men, women and children—between October 7, 2023 and June 30, 2024.

Both sides are celebrating victory. In reality it is the defeat of superior

Israeli fire power. For over 15 months, the Israeli military has tried every possible strategy to destroy Palestinian resistance, yet it has failed. Defence experts are now busy to explain how a country with such advanced killing technologies could fail to subdue a group of fighters who make their own weapons, mainly relying on improvised devices, managed to defeat an entire arsenal provided to Israel by the United States, Germany, Italy and many other western and non-western countries. Israel and its American bosses assumed that by bombing Gaza to Stone Age they

would destroy the resistance. But the resistance in Gaza is directly tied to the Palestinian people. It reaffirms the people's resolve to continue struggle, drawing inspiration from the words of great African-American leader Malcom X: "By any means necessary". The bond between people and militants remained unbroken despite atrocious campaign by Israel. This time the Israeli army suffered devastating losses, greater than any military confrontation with Arab armies since Israel's establishment in 1948. They have not learned anything from Vietnam.

Ceasefire offers a brief reprieve. The path forward requires accountability, the dismantling of systemic oppression and unwavering global action.

Countless children have been killed, maimed and orphaned, lives irreversibly altered by amputation and entire communities devastated as homes, schools, and livelihoods have been destroyed. It may take years, if not decades to rebuild Gaza. The recovery will be a long and arduous journey. But healing cannot begin without addressing the root causes of the Palestinian crisis. □□□

19-01-2025

COMMENT

'The Mode of Resistance must Change'

THE ON-GOING FARMERS' AGITATION at the Punjab-Haryana border for the past year seems to have reached a new turn due to Jagjit Singh Dallewal's fast unto death. Despite suffering from cancer Dallewal has been on hunger strike since 26 November demanding Minimum Support Price [MSP] as a legal guarantee, something which the Narendra Modi government promised to farmers to look into after a 13-month long siege of Delhi by the peasant associations before the parliamentary elections. In truth 'everyone talks of MSP as long as it is not implemented'. The government promises it only to pacify the protesters but conveniently forget when the aggrieved are back to fields. MSP apart Dallewal additionally demanded complete loan waivers, the implementation of a pension for farmers and agricultural labourers and stoppage of periodic rise in electricity price. As Dallewal is in critical condition his life should be saved first by helping to break his fast. The farmer leaders who have come with the movement should not let Dallewal's hunger strike become a tragedy. One can hope not against hope that hunger striker

Jagjit Singh Dallewal will not meet the same fate as G D Agrawal or Devaki Nandan.

There has been no dearth of sacrifices of farmers' lives in the process of indiscriminate privatisation and liberalisation going on in the country for the last three and a half decades. Lakhs of farmers have committed suicide. This series is still continuing intermittently. Three farmers involved in the current agitation at Shambhu and Khanauri borders have committed suicide being upset because of government's non-responsive attitudes towards their movement. About 7000 farmers were reportedly martyred in the year-long movement against the corporate scripted three agricultural laws. They were the victims of police brutalities.

Surprisingly, the apex court instead of intervening directly, reportedly accused the Punjab government of speaking in the voice of protesters as it urged the Union Government to consider the demands of farmers. Everybody expects the Supreme Court would show its eagerness to save the life of Dallewal. No, that didn't happen. If anything the sacrifice of farmers' lives does not affect the ruling class.

Saving Dallewal's life by withdrawing hunger strike does not mean ending the movement. A new way should be explored to continue the struggle. One way could be to do group satyagraha-fast in rotation for a certain period—three weeks or so. At least the labour unions should be mobilised as far as possible in diverse ways to support the peasants. Communists have a pet theory of worker-peasant unity in any broader mass movement and the farmers' agitation has created an ideal situation to execute their theory.

MSP, loan waiver, cheap electricity should definitely be the immediate measures, but these are not solution to the basic crisis. The farmer leadership has generally not been interested in creating the politics of opposition to neo-liberalism which has been the root cause of the crisis. For politics they remain dependent on traditional political parties that in one way or the other are apologists of neo-liberalism. Then religion, caste, region and patriarchy continue to hinder the advancement of their movement.

The persons in authority in India find the solution to the agrarian crisis only in corporatisation of agriculture. Despite massive corporatisation and huge subsidies farmers in Europe and America have to take to streets again and again. The famous Seattle resistance against corporatisation at the

WTO ministerial conference in November 1989, a decade after the Washington Consensus, is there everyone to see. But the ruling parties and opposition as well in India cannot think any

alternative model other than corporatisation. As we go to press Mr Dallewal and 121 farmers ended their fast-upto-death on January 19. □□□
[Contributed by Prem Singh] 16-01-2025

NOTE

PM's Helicopter Matters

Sandeep Pandey writes:

ACCORDING TO SECTION 2(1)C of The Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, "natural market" means a market where sellers and buyers have traditionally congregated for the purchase and sale of products or services and has been determined as such by the local authority on the recommendations of the Town Vending Committee.

In Lanka, Varanasi outside Banares Hindu University from the main gate to Naria road about 50 vendors have been doing business for decades and would qualify for being called a 'natural market.' They have receipts dated 1985 when BHU used to charge Rs 62 as fees from them for 6 months. These vendors provide the useful service of making food items available to patients and their caretakers behind the wall in Sir Sunderlal Hospital of BHU. However, since Narendra Modi has become a Member of Parliament from Varanasi it has been a painful saga for them. First

they were removed for about a week every time PM's helicopter would land in BHU. They suffered tremendous loss due to this. They have also asked the PMO to compensate for the loss due to PM's arrival in Varanasi. Since G-20 events were organised in city their life has become even more difficult.

From the Lanka crossing to Naria road a vending zone with a capacity of 150 has been identified. Chintamani Seth and fellow vendors have been issued vending certificates after a survey. 54 of these vendors were also chosen to receive loans under the PM Swanidhi scheme. Hence, it is quite clear that these vendors were doing their business legally.

On 21 October, 2023 an Additional DM in violation of the Street Vendors Act, 2014 and U.P. Street Vendors Rules, 2017 wrote a letter prohibiting vending carts on road from BHU main gate to Naria because this road is used for VIP movement. The trouble for vendors began after this letter was written.

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On 28 December, 2023 police and municipal officials arrived without any notice and confiscated the material and carts of about 20 vendors.

On 3 September, 2024 again the vendors were brutally beaten and removed from Lanka. Chintamani Seth has also now been removed from the Town Vending Committee. After a dharna on 9 October at the zonal office of Municipal Corporation in Bhelupur Joint Municipal Commissioner agreed to carts being set up at Lanka from the next day. However, the police did not allow the vendors to carry out their business.

Narendra Modi takes credit for giving loans to vendors under the PM Swanidhi scheme by putting up big hoardings; however on ground in his constituency vendors are being evicted.

(Sandeep Pandey is General Secretary, Socialist Party-India)

'THE IDEA OF JUSTICE'

It is just that there be Law, but Law is not Justice-1

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

[This Keynote lecture was delivered at the History for Peace annual conference titled 'The Idea of Justice' in Calcutta on August 3, 2023]

I AM SITUATED IN THE HUMANITIES, a field misnamed, for which I have to inhabit a house which is not mine. But my feeling after teaching the humanities for several decades is that, when taught like the humanities, if other disci-

plines produce knowledge and ideas, then the humanities teach the practice of learning.

It is often said that talking the talk is easy, and then claiming to be walking the walk is even easier. That is what the humanities try to com-

bat. It is difficult to speak or keynote only on the idea of justice. Ideas, because they are one, don't help us in the long or short run. What the humanities would really look at is a sense of justice, which is rather different from an idea. Again, the word 'sense' in English and German has a very long history which is really a correction of the idea that we can access ideas to help us go forth. Ideas are too pure to follow, and so we turn them into a sense and so thinking justice becomes cultural. This is easier done

than said. Is it necessary to be institutionally educated in order to have a sense of justice? No, just to talk about it publishably as expository prose rather than testimony.

This is not to philosophise the idea of justice, for I am not a philosopher, although I do admire the first philosophies of the world which ask questions on the meaning of the human, of history, of justice, of the future, and so on. But the question here is, whether we institutionally educated folks can follow the line where *Sinne*—sense—corrected the idea that we could have ideas which could produce significations in turn, giving us systems that could then be followed to bring justice into the world? Hence, justice is to be looked at as a cultural practice.

Even at variance with the ideas, one could think of the entire idea of the tradition of justice through Rawls and Amartya Sen, who are representatives of a certain kind of authority in the thinking of justice today. Although unintentionally, they do reveal the situation where they have to take it for granted that the readers are themselves dispensers of justice. Therefore, in their writing, they never ask who dispenses justice; because it is assumed that the readers do so. This is a certain kind of cultural practice inherent to the British-German position of producing coherent ideas about justice.

Rawls keeps correcting himself to produce the best theory of justice. But when the best theory has been produced, problems arise regarding who uses this theory. This is why I keep repeating that justice should always be seen as a cultural practice. We think of the idea of justice by following certain predefined rules about how to think ideas. A particular edition or the revised edition which is better than the previous edition, and multiple footnotes, do not offer the best theory, as Rawls

claims, except through a predetermined set of pedagogic and publicational rules. Therefore, that's where I want to begin with a sense of justice.

The idea of justice is transcendental and not supernatural. Immanuel Kant writes about this at great length in *The Critique of Pure Reason* because transcendental is often misunderstood as supernatural. In other words, you must assume something but you cannot really account for it. There is the transcendental. Justice can't be proved; there is no reason that anything should be just. You cannot, for example, provide any proof that human beings have inalienable rights. On the other hand, in order to move forward, it is necessary to assume certain things without being able to prove them. These are legal fictions; and in the cultural practices of justice, justice is one such. That's the sense, not the idea.

For me, most things are like that. When I think of the English word, that's what it is—not what is justice, but a way of thinking justice, as it were, and this transcendental assumption of justice. That's where my title comes from: *It is just that there be law, but law is not justice*. This is a line from Derrida. I have not used this to point at him but to emphasise the importance of reading—and not writing down everything I say, so that you can spot any citation I use. My understanding of the sense of reading is that it is like a relay race. You take the baton, make yourself worthy of running the relay and take whatever the man or woman is saying to somewhere else. Activist history is a relay race. This is the humanities, the practice of learning. That's where I come from. That's why I'm thinking that justice is a cultural practice.

Before I begin with the explanation of the title, I wish to say that,

by way of this lecture, I am asking educators to educate themselves. There exists a pertinent question as to who will educate the educators. This too is a citation—from Marx's third thesis on Feuerbach: Who will educate the educators? Marx said this and Engels constantly revised it. I have often been asked why I use 'overthrow'—*Umwälzung* in German—when Marx used *Revolution* which means 'revolution'. This is due to Engels' revisions. He would revise 'sense of justice' into 'idea of justice', as he systematically turned overturning into revolution in the business of educating the educators. Marx repeatedly corrected him, because he believed that the difference between teacher and student should remain; it cannot be revolutioned out. It is a difference that is practical and adheres to common sense. When it is abused as power, then the effort of running the relay of educating the educators disappears.

Anyway, I took Derrida's remark as a kind of invitation for that relay—take it somewhere else. So when he says 'law is not justice', it means that, a law being passed is a very good thing but it's not justice. You pass a law and then you have to enforce it and this enforcement comes through a certain kind of internalised class prejudice. There are some who can follow the law and others need to be enforced upon to follow it. It's a class prejudice, gender prejudice, and all other kinds of things. And once enforced, you have to acknowledge the loopholes. In case of cyber politics today, one makes law after law yet there is loophole after loophole. Though not in the case of rape politics and bribe politics, where the law enforcers are ill-educated, so they too are a part of class discrimination.

And owing to this class apartheid in education, I'm talking about educating the educators all over the world

in order to distinguish that the idea of justice brokenly translates into various kinds of cultural practice. So quite often, because of the way the hands-on and on-ground enforcers mete out justice, whenever you think of the sense of justice, you think about difference. You don't go to the theories of justice, the idea of justice, where things are unified for you. It's convenient; you must have them, but immediately teach your students to break it. Break it not in order to reject it but to show the limits of unified ideas and theories of justice. Therefore, unification is good, but it is a methodological necessity for us. It doesn't reflect the way we make the idea accountable.

For example, I was recently publicly humiliated at Jawaharlal Nehru University. A colleague took the risk of explaining away the grounds of humiliation, and the humiliator threatened her: *nanga kar dunga*. I will strip you naked. We thought of the recent cases of the collective punishment of tribal women stripped, and I thought of the globally diversified senses of gendered stripping as the cultural sense of justice.

Unification is necessary but without transgressing it you can't go forward. This is our limitation. This is why, although reason, the instrument for putting together ideas, is our strongest weapon, it has its limits. If you have children, you know it. If you are lawyers, you know it. It is the most powerful instrument, but it is also limiting. To an extent, you break it when you teach your students to break it immediately.

As a person of language and comparative literature, I can say that the sense of justice may be dependent upon not only your mother tongue—that is quite easy—but also the wealth of the world's languages, ranging from the extraordinary languages in Africa to those mnemonic languages that are wrongly called

oral. Although naming is necessary, it is impossible to do so in a unified manner when considering the idea of justice possibly translated into many languages as practiced by gendered folks not necessarily vehicles of the institutional customization that we call education. It is necessary, yet impossible. Not to say that it is bad because it is impossible, but it is connected somewhere with the transcendental. Therefore, law is not justice; for the idea of justice is transcendental, an *a priori* that synthesizes humanity.

On the other hand, there is a way in which you fight this impossibility. You don't just give it away or declare that it's impossible. The impossibility is an invitation to an active relay. That's why I say to the high-school teachers here that it is very important to teach this, especially to the English-medium high schools in Calcutta and outside. English-medium high schools are the starting points of class prejudice. It might not be strong or deliberate, yet it exists, especially when the students think of being dispensers of justice themselves. When they have access to English as a class, they should learn it. Not be patronising towards the Dalits but sympathise with them as fellow human beings—that's not what I am talking about. I stress this idea that the sense of justice is moving us towards something that is necessary, which is the passing of good laws. But it is impossible to secure justice by passing good laws. Passing of good laws, then, is both necessary and impossible with respect to upholding justice.

When I was in the ethics committee of the World Economic Forum, before it ceased to exist, I often had conversations about business degrees teaching legalised cheating where you can't strive for a change, to which my friends would say that it could be possible but in

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another world. Yet they made it possible by fitting it into knowledge management. The surveys we take where we rate from one to five in ascending order of our preference actually produce statistics and knowledge management. Through those conclusions, they decide that another world is possible and congratulate themselves—they tell us about the statistics of 16 million schools and congratulate themselves. So, to an extent, this idea that meting out justice is possible and we can collectively do so is also an aspect I intend to address through the title. Legality through knowledge management abdicates the transcendental of justice.

Nonetheless, what do we do in the humanities? We try to rearrange desires. That takes time. The humanities rearrange desires, not change minds because you can't change minds—that will have to be god. Although, money can change minds, humanities teaching cannot do so. It can only rearrange desires to a certain extent. And in order for that

you have to work very hard to have a sense of what desires roughly might be in the group you are looking at. We can only try to rearrange desires to make folks think that law is normal—not that we must obey the law, but that law is normal. But then, law disappears as law. This is the training in the practice of wanting equality for other people, which again is a transcendental thing. It's not just about liberty for me but also equality for other people. Achieving this is hard. Other people who don't resemble me, or may not be good people, or might be thieves and dogs and rapists—it is impossible to unify the idea of justice for all but necessary at the same time.

The other side, another example of justice as cultural practice, even when it is totally at variance with the idea, is the vocational justification of the Hindu past—Brahmins used to teach, Kayasthas had a clerical profession and so on. Such vocational justification of caste is a cultural practice of injustice, even when it is at variance with what the justification shows us. In places like the Silicon Valley and Bay Area in the United States, most of the people are caste-Hindus—mostly Brahmin—who have graduated from the Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai. This data is substantiated by an anthropological study performed at the University of Minnesota. In the United States we keep complaining that there is racism against us, by identifying with white folks. So the idea of vocational justification of caste at its origin is also one of those examples of cultural practice.

For Frontier Contact

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In the second part of the essay from which this title is indebted—'Force of Law'—Derrida, who was a Sephardic Jew having certain kinds of difficulties in France, and not just an analytical philosopher who never thinks that he or she himself is a philosophising human being, wrote that if one pushed Walter Benjamin's essay 'Critique of Violence' to its consequences, it would be indistinguishable from Hitler's 'final solution'. [1] Here we have to remember that, although Sir Francis Bacon said that revenge is a kind of wild justice, in reality, justice and revenge often become indistinguishable. [2] This too falls within the sense of justice. The sense of justice here is: a justification for my life's injustices that may well be indistinguishable from revenge? Varied justices, all kinds of language-located justices, justice as cultural practice can be related to Raymond Williams' point, in his *Marxism and Literature*, that every moment of cultural practice is something like a collective dance. [3] There is a dominant, and the dominant is the idea of justice, especially in the imperial languages that unify. Since all the wealth of languages divide, the big imperial languages must be used, and it is necessary but impossible to get justice through them alone for one and all. So you must break it. That doesn't mean we introduce the *vaadi*, *samvaadi* and *vivaadi* which the English language doesn't have, and declare that we are decolonising the discourse of justice. While it is true that I am speaking more from the *vivaadi* angle of establishing things by breaking idea into (the cultural practices of) sense, it doesn't mean I am decolonising anything. (An aside here: sustained and persistent decolonising would involve regulating capital, ultimately interrogating, again persistently, the Anthropocene itself. Justice as not-quite-not-law enforced?)

The idea of this sense of justice can be understood from the situation where justice is indistinguishable from revenge. So for each situation, many of which you will not be able to access justice, because you are yourself trapped within. I am not able to access this, but I can think this—that is called the imagination. I have suffered for 40 years because I dared to introduce the fictive imagination into a very silo-like understanding of history as the production of truth. And so I should know what happens when the imagination is allowed in. This is also part of my title. I didn't write it just to go and read Derrida.

And I will say, therefore, to the high-school teachers, that adolescence is when the students are drawing close to voting. Because of access to English of various kinds, and multiplicity of intentions, most of these children only want to be financially successful, which puts forward a benign family value and expression of the fact that the basic human affect is greed. But this is a very vulnerable population. The national or state curriculum can be taught in the old and bad way of memorising. But in class, do not teach them a survey. Because that's the way to stop thinking and begin citing. In this way, they will produce other-endorsed senses of justice. Today we need to think that we are being played by planetary justice in front of which human accountability is trivial and non-existent. Our adolescent students must learn this in every way. If there is anything like a general cultural practice (still broken by the wealth of languages), this is it. Beyond imagination, planetary justice begins when one creature that we call human makes more than it needs and thus starts destroying what exists as such. □□□

[To be concluded]

RETURN TO MARX

The Various Versions of Marx's Capital

Marcello Musto

DECADES PASS AND, AL-though *Capital* has often been described as an out-dated text, the debate surrounding this book persists. Despite being 157 years old, Karl Marx's critique of political economy retains all the qualities of a great classic: it sparks new insights with every reading and continues to shed light on key aspects of both the past and the present. Moreover, it has the remarkable ability to place the chronicle of the present—and the often-inadequate figures at its helm—into the relative perspective they deserve. It is no coincidence that the well-known Italian writer and journalist Italo Calvino asserted that a classic is one that helps us “relegate the present to the status of background noise”. Classics point to the essential issues and inescapable truths necessary to understand the problems thoroughly and resolve them. This is why they consistently captivate new generations of readers. A Classic remains indispensable despite the passage of time and, in the case of *Capital*, one could argue that its relevance only grows as capitalism spreads to every corner of the globe and expands into all aspects of our lives.

Following the outbreak of the 2007-2008 economic crises, the re-discovery of Marx's magnum opus became a real necessity, almost a response to an emergency: bringing back into circulation the text—long forgotten after the fall of the Berlin Wall—that offered still-relevant interpretative keys to understanding the true causes of capitalism's destructive madness. As global stock market indices were burning through hundreds of billions of euros, and

numerous financial institutions declared bankruptcy, within a few months *Capital* sold more copies than it had in the previous two decades combined.

The current revival of *Capital*, however, responds to a different need: the need to define, thanks to the substantial body of recent scholarship, which version of the work to trust as the most reliable one. Marx's original intention—outlined in the early preparatory manuscript of the work (the *Grundrisse* of 1857-58)—was to divide his work into six books. The first three would focus on capital, landed property, and wage labour; the following books would cover the state, foreign trade, and the world market. Over time, Marx's realization of the impossibility of undertaking such an expansive project forced him to adopt a more feasible approach. He considered leaving out the last three volumes and incorporating parts on landed property and wage labor into the book on capital. *Capital* was then conceived as a three-part structure: Book I would focus on ‘The Process of Capitalist Production’, Book II on ‘The Process of Circulation of Capital’, and Book III on ‘The Overall Process of Capitalist Production’. A fourth book was planned to cover the history of theory, but it was never started and is often mistakenly conflated with *Theories of Surplus Value*.

The Five Versions of Book I

As is well known, Marx was only able to complete Book I of *Capital* in accordance with his original plan. Books II and III were published posthumously, in 1885 and 1894, respectively, thanks to a massive editorial effort by Friedrich Engels.

While scholars have long debated the reliability of these two volumes—based on incomplete, fragmented manuscripts written years apart and containing numerous unresolved theoretical issues—fewer have delved into another equally crucial question: whether a definitive version of Book I existed. This debate has resurfaced, capturing the attention of translators and publishers, and this year two major new editions of *Capital* were released.

In Italy—the third country after Russia and France to translate the work, which was intended as a key tool in the struggle for proletarian emancipation—the text was published by the prestigious Einaudi. This represents the eighth Italian translation, the first having been published in 1886. In the United States, the prestigious Princeton University Press released, in a print run of 13,000 copies, the first new English translation in fifty years—the fourth English edition.

First published in 1867, after over two decades of preparatory research, Marx was never fully satisfied with the structure of the volume. He ended up dividing it into just six lengthy chapters and, notably, was dissatisfied with how he presented the theory of value, which he had to split into two parts: one in the first

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chapter and the other in an appendix, hastily written after the manuscript had already been submitted. As a result, the work continued to occupy Marx's attention even after its publication. In preparation for the second edition, published in installments between 1872 and 1873, Marx rewrote the crucial section on the theory of value, added various supplements addressing the distinction between constant and variable capital, surplus value, and the use of machinery and technology. He also reorganised the entire structure of the book, dividing it into seven sections, comprising 25 chapters, which were then meticulously subdivided into paragraphs.

**Marx and
the Translations of Capital**

Marx closely followed the progress of the Russian translation (1872) as much as possible and devoted even more energy to preparing the French version, which appeared in installments between 1872 and 1875. In fact, he had to spend much more time than anticipated correcting the drafts. Dissatisfied with the work of the translator, who had rendered the text too literally, Marx rewrote entire sections to make the dialectical parts more digestible for the French audience and to implement changes he deemed essential. These revisions were mainly concentrated in the final section, dedicated to the "Process of Accumulation of Capital". He also altered the structure of the chapters, which increased after further adjustments to the distribution of the material.

For Frontier Contact

**DHYANBINDU
COLLEGE SQUARE**

In the postscript to the French edition, Marx did not hesitate to assign it "scientific value independent of the original" and observed that it should "also be consulted by readers who know German." Not by chance, when the possibility of an English edition arose in 1877, Marx emphasised that the translator should "necessarily compare the second German edition with the French edition", in which he had "added something new and better described many things". These were not merely stylistic tweaks. The changes Marx made to the various editions also reflected the results of his ongoing studies and the evolution of his critical thought.

Marx and Engels differed on the issue. Marx, satisfied with the new version, considered it, in many parts, an improvement over the previous ones. Engels, on the other hand, while praising the theoretical improvements in certain areas, was highly sceptical of the literary style imposed by the French translation, vigorously writing: "I would consider it a great mistake to take this version as the basis for the English translation." Consequently, when Engels was asked shortly after his friend's death to publish the third German edition (1883) of Book I, he limited his changes to "only the most necessary ones". In the preface, he informed the reader that Marx's intention had been to "rework the text largely," but that his poor health had prevented him from doing so. Engels worked with a German copy, corrected in various places by Marx, and a copy of the French translation, in which Marx had indicated the passages he considered indispensable. Engels kept his revisions to a minimum and could confidently declare: "In this third edition, no word has been changed that I am not certain the author himself would have changed". How-

ever, he did not include all the variations Marx had indicated.

The English translation (1887), fully supervised by Engels, was based on the third German edition. Engels claimed that this edition, like the second German edition, was superior to the French translation—especially in terms of the structure of the index. The fourth German edition was published in 1890; it was the last one prepared by Engels. With more time at his disposal, he was able to incorporate—though still excluding some—other corrections Marx had made to the French version.

**In Search of
the Definitive Version**

The 1890 Engels edition became the canonical version of *Capital*, from which most translations worldwide were derived. However, the debate has never truly ended. Which of these five versions presents the best structure for the work? Which edition incorporates the theoretical advancements of the later Marx? The editors of the new American translation decided to rely primarily on the 1872-73 edition—the last German edition revised by Marx. A recent new German version (edited by T. Kuczynski) proposed an alternative that, claiming greater fidelity to Marx's intent, includes additional changes made for the French translation. The former has the flaw of neglecting parts of the French version that are clearly superior to the German, while the latter produced a text that is confusing and difficult to read. In contrast, the best is to include all the variants of each edition and various other preparatory manuscripts written by Marx in the long process of writing his masterpiece (the Italian translation does so). Nevertheless, no definitive version of Book I exists, and the systematic comparison of the revisions made by Marx and Engels remains a task for future scholars. □□□

A TRIBUTE

Humra Quraishi*

Lamat Hasan

DELHI-BASED WRITER, COLUMNIST and human rights activist Humra Quraishi passed away on January 16 weeks before her 70th birthday. Tributes poured in from her colleagues, friends and well-wishers. She was remembered for her fearless journalism, for being the voice of the marginalised and for being a 2 am friend. Even those whose lives she hadn't touched were moved by the void she had created with her passing.

Best known for her reportage on Kashmir, her death was announced by her daughter Sarah, son Mustafa and daughter-in-law Mansi and grandchildren Ali, Hasan Amna in a statement.

"It is with deep sadness that we inform you of the passing of our beloved Humra Quraishi. Your presence at the farewell prayers would mean a great deal to us as we come together to remember her kindness, love, and enduring legacy." She was laid to rest a day later in Gurgaon.

Humra's most important work was "Kashmir: The Untold Story",

published in 2019. In this book, she documented the unending humanitarian tragedy as it unfolded in the Valley when she started frequenting the state in the 1990s. Her dispatches from Kashmir were an eye-opener for the world presenting the stark reality on the ground and the blatant human rights violations. In their tribute, many of her journalistic colleagues from Kashmir lauded her brave and unbiased reportage.

Her lifelong commitment, undaunted courage and perseverance to stand up for the truth have left an indelible footprint in many hearts. She was a portrait of grace and grit till the very end. She continued to voice her concern for the minorities and the causes that were close to her heart. In one of her last columns she wrote about how Anhad was empowering rural Kashmir by teaching embroidery to women and nurturing interfaith harmony through its #MereGharAakeToDekho campaign.

On December 25, on a social media platform she spoke about the

escalation of attacks on Christians and how following the demolitions of the Babri Masjid in 1992, the communal situation in the country had only worsened. She quoted historian Irfan Habib and said that one felt insulted by the systematic otherisation of the minorities – not as a Hindu or a Muslim – but as a citizen of India.

Her collaboration with her mentor - celebrated writer Khushwant Singh - was well-known. With him she co-wrote "The Good, the Bad and the Ridiculous: Profiles" – a provocative and unabashedly entertaining collection of pen portraits of famous men and women whom Singh crossed swords with. She also helped him write his part autobiography, part biography "Absolute Khushwant."

Humra was a beacon of hope in this increasingly polarised world. Her courage was contagious, and her extraordinary voice will not be lost. Her legacy will live on in her works and continue to inspire generations.

□□□

[*Frontier readers are familiar with Humra Quraishi's regular weekly column, albeit her association with frontier was very recent]

(Lamat Hasan, an Independent Research Journalist based in Delhi)

"BLOWING IN THE WIND"

India-Bangladesh Border

Kirity Roy

INDO-BANGLADESH BORDERLANDS in West Bengal (2017 kms in length), fraught with strife, has borne witness to a harrowing pattern of extra-judicial killings perpetrated by the Border Security Force (BSF). The modus operandi employed by the BSF is both methodical and chilling: after taking the life of an individual, they lodge a complaint with the local police, alleging self-defence.

The accusation often includes claims that the deceased attempted murder or sought to grievously harm BSF personnel. To substantiate these charges, rudimentary agricultural tools—such as sickles, knives, and wooden staffs—are placed beside the lifeless body, creating a grim tableau of fabricated culpability.

Border Security Force (BSF), an armed force, was established by

Parliament of India (BSF Act & Rules, 1968), to aid Indian military on Pakistan border. In 1971, East Pakistan eloped by forming a new state, Bangladesh; but still BSF is posted there.

In collusion with the BSF, the local police proceed to register criminal cases against the deceased, invoking charges under Section 307 IPC (Section 101 of BNS) and other provisions of the Indian Penal Code. These charges, however, serve merely to cloak the killings with a veneer of legality, rendering them state-sanctioned acts of violence. The griev-

ances of the bereaved families—those who dare to seek justice for their loved ones slain, tortured, or vanished—are systematically ignored. Even in rare instances where public pressure compels the registration of cases against BSF personnel, the subsequent investigations are farcical. Arrests are seldom made, and inquiries invariably culminate in the exoneration of the accused.

Through the relentless efforts of human rights groups such as MASUM, over 500 criminal cases have been filed against BSF personnel implicated in acts of murder or torture. These cases, forwarded by judicial mandate to the concerned police stations, languish in abeyance—some for decades. The complainants, meanwhile, are left in a state of perpetual ignorance, their pursuit of justice thwarted by bureaucratic inertia.

This grim reality underscores the broader framework of impunity that pervades the nation—a dual edifice of legal and socio-economic privilege. On the one hand, government officials, judges, and armed forces personnel enjoy legal immunity from prosecution. On the other, a select echelon of society, the so-called “creamy layer,” wields its affluence and influence to evade accountability. These privileged few procure the finest legal counsel, treating justice as a commodity for purchase, and manipulate every facet of litigation to secure their immunity.

This systemic inequity grants them an unassailable status, insulating them from the consequences of even the gravest allegations.

One must not overlook the complicity of successive governments in perpetuating this state of affairs. Before 2014, India was governed by non-BJP administrations, including a period when a self-proclaimed communist held the Home Ministry. In West Bengal, the Left Front reigned until 2011. Despite the division of authority—BSF falling under the purview of the Union government and police under state jurisdiction—both entities have operated in unison to enforce a reign of terror along the border. While publicly posturing as adversaries, these governments have privately harmonised their oppressive policies.

The complicity extends further, as the trafficking of cattle from northern India to the Bangladesh border involves a vast nexus of officials, from DGPs to station house officers, who ensure the smooth passage of these animals in exchange for illicit gains. Yet, the masterminds behind this racket remain untouchable, while lowly operatives, earning a pittance of Rs 200-Rs 500, are left to face the BSF’s bullets and batons.

Pakistan is a country which was named as ‘Enemy Country’ by External Affairs Ministry of GOI. But at the border of Pakistan number of killings by border guards of India is too low than at Bangladesh border.

A glaring disparity emerges when one considers India’s borders with Bhutan and Nepal, where no fencing or militarised presence exists. Citizens of these nations traverse the boundaries freely, unencumbered by passports or visas. Bangladesh, despite its historical camaraderie with India dating back to 1971, faces a starkly different reality. The reasons for this dichotomy, as a famed lyricist and singer once opined, are “blowing in the wind.”

The situation has deteriorated sharply since 2014. During the preceding years, the annual death toll at the India-Bangladesh border was estimated at 100. However, in the so-called “achhe din” (good days) that followed, this number has surged to over 150, with approximately 20% of the victims being Bangladeshi and the remainder Indian citizens. One must question: in whose interests are these atrocities committed, and by whose patronage are they enabled?

In both national and international arenas, the clarion call against such rampant impunity is growing ever louder. It is imperative that people unite in this struggle to dismantle the architecture of privilege and hold perpetrators of injustice accountable, lest the very foundation of democracy be eroded beyond repair. □□□

[Kirty Roy is Secretary of Banglar Manabdhikar Mancha—MASUM]

BACK TO DICKENSIAN ERA?

And Now 90-Hour Week

Atanu Chakravarty

“Capitalism is the extraordinary belief that the nastiest men for the nastiest of motives will somehow work for the benefit of all.”—John Maynard Keynes

AFTER A SEVERE BACKLASH on the comment of L&T Chairman S N Subrahmanyam’s controversial remark on 90-hour work week, a spokesperson for L&T came out with a clarifica-

tion that the remarks were meant to underscore India’s current opportunity for growth, emphasising that this decade is pivotal for the country’s development. So, a 90-hour work week is meant for eco-

nomics prosperity and benefit of the nation, and ironically in this context, Keynes’ quote is so relevant!

Before going into the details of the statement of the Chairman, it is better to go through the Annexure ‘D’ to the Board Report of Larsen & Toubro. In 2023-24, L&T Chairman got 51.05 cr as salary and allowances, 43% more than last year. But the average salary of common employees is 535% less than the chair-

February 2-8, 2025

FRONTIER

11

man. Mr R Shankar Raman, President, Whole-time Director & CFO got 31.66 cr; the ratio of remuneration of directors to the median remuneration is 331.52. One, Mr A M Naik, Non executive Chairman received 1.69 cr. This reminds one to a recent survey by FICCI and Quesada Corp.Ltd that revealed private sector profits have reached a high, while salary growth has remained minimal or even negative. The report highlights record profits in the private sector alongside stagnant worker salaries, which is cited as a key factor behind sluggish private consumption—a crucial driver of economic growth, (Hindu Business line, Kingshuk Sarkar, 06 Jan 2025).

Few months ago, the Co-Founder of Infosys Narayana Murthy stated that in order to increase work productivity in the nation and increase India's competitiveness, young Indians should work 70 hours a week of labour. Soon after other business tycoons, like Bhavish Aggarwal of Ola, Sajjan Jindal of Jindal Steel Works Group publicly supported the proposal for a 70-hour work week.

All the recent researches have found that "elongation of working hours to unbearable limit tells upon the productivity rendering serious health, mental problems of the workmen. Cognitive anxiety, musculoskeletal disorders, sleep disturbances, and severe stress. Associated fatigue created by excess working hours also creeps into other organs affecting the neuromuscular mechanism leading to reduced sensory perception, less attention, reducing the ability of discrimination, weakening of muscles, reducing gland secretions, reducing the heart beat or irregular heartbeat and dilating the blood vessels".

India already has one of the hardest working workforces in the world. ILO reports that, in 2023, 'Indians will have the longest average workweek among the world's

ten largest economies'. Only Qatar, Congo, Lesotho, Bhutan, Gambia and the UAE have higher average working hours than India, which comes in at number seven in the world.

Few months ago, the tragic death of a young EY employee reignited the debate on workplace stress. A young employee at Ernst & Young, passed away, allegedly due to work-related stress. In a heart-wrenching letter, her mother addressed the EY India CEO expressing concern over the relentless workload that left her daughter drained, exhausted and overwhelmed. The letter emphasised how late nights and high expectations placed upon the employees, particularly women, can severely impact mental health and personal well-being. Coincidentally, the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad recently released a report revealing that 67% of women in the workforce struggle to maintain a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives. The report provides critical insights into the pressures women face in the modern workplace and has highlighted the urgent need for organisations to reassess their approach to employee well-being.

The findings also highlighted the role of organisational culture and the absence of support systems in exacerbating the problem. For many women, long working hours, coupled by rigid expectations from employers, leave little room for personal time, leading to feelings of isolation and frustration.

RBI has cautioned the private banks on the high attrition rate which has risen sharply over the last three years to around 25%. According to the report, high attrition increases recruitment and training costs, hampering productivity and efficiency due to the departure of experienced employees. It also impacts employ-

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ees' morale, creating instability within organisations. Bankers said that high attrition levels were largely at the lower end. RBI reminded the bankers, competitive compensation and fostering a supportive workplace culture are critical to ensuring long-term employee engagement.

The 8-hour working day is a product of great struggle, one for which workers had to make im-

mense sacrifices. India's legalised 8-hour working day came with 1946 Amendment to the Factories Act of 1934—a result of the bill introduced by Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar as Labour Minister in the Viceroy's Executive Council. Raja Ram Singh, a CPI-ML MP who is a member of Standing Committee on Labour, Textile and Skill Development, urged the Union Labour Minister to take

measures against anti-labour statements and unfair labour practices by some big companies.

Modi's four labour codes have provided a fertile ground to violate all the labour laws achieved through long drawn battles. Ease of doing business is the point of departure of these labour codes that would script a new modern wage slavery that has to be halted—come what may. □□□

MOCKING AT MAY DAY

Working Hours and Well-being of Workers

Bhaskar Majumder

SOME INFLUENTIAL INDIVIDUALS continue to use state rhetoric without reflecting on its implications. Many of these influencers have recently emerged from the corporate sector, where there has been a push for workers to labour 70 to 90 hours per week.

People work for their well-being, and there is most likely nothing unethical about this. Personal well-being is not a concept that harms society. When individuals willingly participate in an interdependent society, it contributes to social well-being. This raises the question: where do the sermons from a few wealthy individuals fit into this context?

Most people in India actively participate in society; however, society is not homogeneous. Individuals engage in the economy both willingly and unwillingly. Some participate reluctantly due to adverse conditions in the labour market. As social beings, people undertake economic activities for their livelihood and become citizens or members of the state within a specific political and legal framework.

Recently, corporate tycoons have made statements that are out of touch with the realities of many workers in India. Their comments do not resonate with the daily struggles of

self-employed family workers labouring on their subsistence-based farmland, urban rickshaw pullers working on an eight-hour basis, and women domestic workers serving multiple households from early morning until 2 pm. Each of these groups, along with many others, constitutes 90 percent of the workforce in India's labour sector. Most of this work is survival-based, often necessitating that adolescents also join the labour market to help supplement the household income. It is unclear who the corporate leaders were targeting with their advice for people to work 70 to 90 hours a week, especially if reports from electronic media are to be taken seriously.

The history of May Day, which has fixed working hours for industrial workers, doesn't require restatement in the context of India's labour market. The very recent expansion of the fractured, fragmented labour market proves the irrelevance of working hours when workers are engaged ad hoc and move on the road anytime required to provide services. These workers are mostly in their youth running on tattered two-wheelers on dilapidated roads in urban India to supply to the doorstep households anything and everything and anytime. It is not under-

stood who the working-time fixers aimed at.

It is difficult to understand why one needs to work 70 to 90 hours per week because technological advancement over the past few decades is expected to have lessened labour hours to produce the same output. It is also difficult to accept that national wealth is composed of only material wealth – national wealth is no less to be understood in the physical and mental health of the workers, education of children to be competent workers and all that. There is every reason to believe that 90 percent of the workers in India who constitute the unorganised segment of the economy do not have access to dependable healthcare facilities.

Time does not dictate the working hours of workers in the unorganised sector who do not have wrist watches; rather, the amount of work they complete determines their daily working hours. They work and live on a daily basis, making weekly calculations irrelevant to their circumstances.

To assess working hours accurately, it is necessary to recognise the potential workforce. Many individuals in the queue for jobs in the organised sector may not get the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to work extended hours—often up to 90 hours a week—because their predecessors produced more goods than could be sold in the market, dictated by their corporate employers. It is important to note

that neither job-seeking nor job-exit workers should be blamed for the low demand for products produced by these corporate entities, as the choices made by the latter play a significant role.

The corporate masters of course are not accountable to the common people. The core state as the 'willing guardian' of the people is accountable—the people voted the legislative to power. The type of guardianship needs to be tested on the ground. The core state facilitates the formation and functioning of an economic system where common people are thought to be included in a favourable environment like regular employment or 'Roji-Roti'. There is

no denying that there is no right to regular employment for the working population in India.

If people's expectations are not met, the result can be unemployment, poverty, and increased inequality. This may lead to begging, stealing, and borrowing. At such a low level of well-being, the core state fails to provide adequate education and health care. Corporate leaders need to recognise that education-wealth, and health-wealth are just as important as material-wealth. The recent proposal of a 90-hour work week by L&T boss seems to have been a misguided remark that shouldn't be taken seriously.

It is undeniable that the present

is shaped by the past, including the evolution of labour division and the working hours of wage workers. However, one must also understand that mistakes made in the past, such as slavery, cannot be used to justify current errors. A core state's responsibility is to learn from historical mistakes and move forward, as demonstrated by the 1976 Act that abolished labour bondage. Past mistakes must not be set a precedent for today's actions. The responsibility lies with the core state, not with corporate leaders. □□□

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THREE WOMEN

'All We Imagine as Light'

Jean Paul Mella

PAYAL KAPADIA'S 2024 Malayalam film, *All We Imagine as Light*, is a remarkable and subtle showcase of the everyday alienated lives of working people in the modern capitalist world. Set in the bustling megacity of Mumbai, the story centers on three women working in a hospital—Prabha, Anu, and Parvathy, played richly by Kani Kusruti, Divya Prabha, and Chhaya Kadam, respectively.

These three working women each struggle with challenges imposed by class society. Prabha copes with the failure of her arranged marriage, Anu (a Hindu) struggles to conceal a secret engagement to a Muslim man, and Parvathy resists eviction from her home following the death of her husband, whose union had won workers' housing rights. The film often dwells on scenes of Mumbai, with the camera lingering on commuters, shops, and other regular working people going about their lives on the trains and city streets. Cold blue lighting predominates, accentuating the omnipresent

alienation permeating the city and its working population. Looming skyscrapers peppered with a few lit apartments draw attention to the distant, inaccessible world of the wealthy above.

The film transcends its setting as much as it pays homage to it. Notably, the film opens with a brief narration in multiple languages from the subcontinent—Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, and others—as workers describe what motivated them to move to Mumbai from the countryside and seek work in an emerging industry. Their tales are familiar in the development of capitalism: the diverse countryside population migrates into urban centers, despite the squalor, as the rural areas become increasingly desolate and capital demands an ever-larger market of labour power in the industrial centers. From enclosure in the UK in the sixteenth century to the textile mills of 20th-century India, the laws of capitalist development remain universal.

Where the film truly resonates,

though, is in the stories of these three women. They serve as the lens through which people experience these much grander historical processes, distilled into intimate personal stories. The oppression of women in class society leaves Prabha subject to the tragedy of an arranged marriage that ended in her abandonment. The religious divisions that find much purpose in capitalism inhibit Anu's romance. The insatiable appetite for luxury housing (far more profitable than low-income housing) drives Parvathy's displacement from her home. In particular, Parvathy's trajectory as a migrant worker under constant threat of displacement speaks to an experience shared by workers throughout the world.

All We Imagine as Light has received well-deserved recognition for Kapadia's direction and the actresses' performances, winning the Grand Prix award at the 2024 Cannes Film Festival. While much of the film's beauty comes from its dream-like depiction of Mumbai, the exceptional aspect is its intimate display of the daily experiences universal to workers in any corner of the world.

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[Courtesy: *New Worker*]

GCAC'S BATCH '96

“Amra Noy Choy”

Atanu Basu

28 ARTISTS OF BATCH 1996 of Government College of Arts and Crafts (GCAC) recently presented their works in the 6th Annual Exhibition at Academy of Fine Arts. This event is undoubtedly a significant happening for the art-lovers of the city. 66 student level artists and a few from the various departments showcased their works in this exhibition. The exhibits were both Indian and Western style of painting; a few of them were in ceramic art, pottery, wood and finally, in leather design. Exhibits were mainly centred on sculpture, graphic and textile design. The group they formed had a rather exotic name—“AMARA NOY CHOY”. This group, consisting of 28 artists took part in this event.

The viewers of this exhibition tacitly received a hidden message—the space of style and technique, now-a-days, as far as they are concerned, are essentially experimental in nature, yet they are very specific and take their endeavour very seriously. Most of the exhibits conveyed some sort of an aesthetic thought, coupled with modern view. This could be thought of as their *signature specifica*.

Anjan Das excelled in acrylic on a canvas, particularly his piece, “Mysterious Light”. The study of nude male model attracts the viewers with its internal beauty, his gifted use of tonal variation, mingled smoothly into the far away sky and

figurines placed strategically in close distance, conveyed a vibrant feeling in viewer’s mind.

Avijit Sengupta, though a student of graphics, his tempera was excellent. His piece, named “Untitled”, used a judicious choice of red, orange, brown and black, portrayed as a fiery dawn, a landscape which would be remembered by the viewers for quite some time. His other piece, also named as untitled, was excellent.

Dipankar Ray’s forte was his choice of two styles of media as well as his superb techniques. His preferred medium was canvas, where acrylic and natural pigments were used. He captured the expanse of distances mingled in geometry; his patterns and selection of objects portrayed a sort of rhythmic beauty, which invariably reminds one the theme—‘nature within me and beyond’.

On the other hand, Dipanka Chanda, once again used acrylic on canvas. But he depicted the distance in soft colour. His pet themes seemed to be sky, land, tree and stuff like that. The tonal quality and the skilful placement of light unfolded like a humble poetry.

Nirmal Kumar Mallick used terracotta and metal to create the image of ‘Durga’. The stylistic ten hands and soft facial expression, all are arranged in his own way. He used a novel idea of putting his work on a high pedestal, made out

of wood and iron wheels. He had exhibited a work on wood, named ‘Dream step’.

Ramkrishna Rajbanshi also used wood as his medium. His exhibits, ‘Nature’ and ‘Fondness’ are worth-mentioning because of their stylistic and rhythmic patterns.

Shovon Mukherjee’s exhibit, an acrylic on canvas bears an exotic name—‘Metropolis 3’. This exhibit depicts the tension, yet its appearance is very much soft, but marred with black colour. It had also conveyed an angry mood to its viewers.

Sandip Bajpeyi’s paintings are very much impressive. He used both thick as well as thin colours. His skill in using spatula and brush depicts a kind of modernity, which is simply mind-boggling.

Sekhar Basu’s water colour on paper, entitled ‘Nature-02’ deserves a special mention.

Santanu Bandyopadhyay presented his viewers a splendid blend of amazing realism bordering almost to surrealism. His piece, ‘Awaiting brutal ambush in a calm pink dawn’ will stay for quite some time with us.

The works presented by Subhrajit Talapatra, Tapas Hazra, Sumitava Raychowdhury (‘untitled’ series), Sukanya Ghosh (‘Nature’), Sekhar Ghosh (‘Consequence’), Ranjit Shee (Raga Behag), Kakoly Chattopadhyay (‘Nature’), Aniruddha Chowdhury (‘The burning’), Atish Mukherjee (‘Phool Kumari’), Beli Sarkar, Dibyendu Tripathi, Sucharita Poddar, Pradeep Chanda, Kanchan Ray-Kanjilal and Mita Ray in various forms and media are also worth-mentioning. □□□

LETTERS

Unani

[Neshat Quaiser. (2024). ‘*Bazaar-Subaltern Unani Medical Public Sphere: Blanket Binaries, Disjunctions, Implications and the Making of Alternative Texts and Ar-*

chives Convivially’. In: Edited volume—*Decolonizing Science and Modernity in South Asia: Questioning Concepts, Constructing Histories*. Springer, Singapore. Introduction-Abstract]

The essay deals with the *bazaar-*

subaltern unani medical practices, demonstrating how contrary to the predominant view within the studies of South Asian medical practices, unani has been a dispersed and discursive terrain since the beginning with simultaneous presence of the two broad paradoxical

spheres of unani practices, such as textual unani on the one hand, and bazaari-subaltern unani on the other in different geographical, social, and cultural locales. Critically examining the recent endeavour of a group of historians to recover “the realm of subaltern therapeutics”, this essay, however, argues that the relationship between the textual unani and bazaari-subaltern Unani medical practices cannot be comprehended properly through a blanket totalising elite-subaltern binary framework. Moreover, the concept of subaltern itself is to be re-examined contextually, particularly to account for the ways in which a textual tradition such as unani itself can be rendered to a state of Subalternity particularly in post-colonial situation. The essay examines the ways in which bazaari-subaltern unani medical public sphere remained outside the textual unani and statist medical imaginations and control, therefore, was/is declared inauthentic for its practitioners were/are considered untrained, and yet it catered the medical requirements of vast masses during the colonial and post-colonial periods. Bazaar unani medical practices were/are not confined literally only to bazaar, but found in homes and other social locales such as in print medium as well. The essay outlines the nuances of this simultaneity of the two paradoxical spheres with the focus on the critical prevalence of bazaari-subaltern medicine and therapeutics, and the ways in which they can produce their own text without being immanently well-ordered, fixed and complete but ever evolving.

Section I explains the preliminary theoretical considerations with regard to the relationship between the *bazaari-subaltern Unani* practices and textual Unani; and the *ashrâfiya-casteist* predispositions and moral economy; section II deals with the questions of blanket binaries, disjunctions and implications in the light of the recent endeavour to recover “the realm of subaltern therapeutics”; section III deals with bazaar-bazaar in social history of South Asian medicine; bazaar-bazaar medicine and the colonial state; bazaar, bazaari and subaltern: concepts in context; nuances of bazaar, bazaari, ‘market’ and Unani; caste-class, economic dimensions and bazaari Unani; post-colonial turn and im-

plications for bazaari Unani; and institutionalised explanations; section IV examines the framework and types of bazaari-subaltern Unani medical public sphere as a convivial dialogic terrain within general medical public sphere; eleven cases to illustrate the bazaari Unani sphere; and the question of how Unani is bazaari-Unani and how different it is from non-Unani bazaar medicine; and section V is an epilogue summing up the critical issues with a focus on the making of bazaari Unani texts and archives at the end. Illustrative cases are drawn from the provinces of Bihar, Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana, Delhi, and United Provinces of both colonial and post-colonial periods.

Neshat Quaiser

Avaaz is facing a new Threat

Trump ran for president pledging a crackdown on his political enemies. Now the US Congress could be about to hand him the tools he needs to take down any non-profit he wants, including Avaaz.

A bill—dubbed the “non-profit killer”—could see huge taxes levied on donations raised by Avaaz and other progressive organisations. And because we’re 100% funded by small online donations, and registered in the US, we’re vulnerable.

This could just be the start. We’ve campaigned hard against Trump’s vicious brand of politics for nearly a decade. We know he holds a grudge. And he’s more powerful than he’s ever been.

But one thing’s for sure—we won’t be silenced. So we have to protect ourselves. And fast.

So we’ve put together a defence plan—covering everything from legal protections to moving Avaaz out of the US completely. But all of it will be costly, and we already need funds for our critical campaigns.

Avaaz Team

China-US Rivalry over Greenland

While Trump’s blunt demand to buy Greenland and threat to invade are received with shock and mockery, the reality is that for years both China and the US have been ramping up their

pursuit of economic and military interests there.

Climate change will inevitably open up Arctic sea routes in the next ten to twenty years. They are destined to be objects of naval contention and advantageous shipping routes. In 2019, then secretary of state Mike Pompeo said at an Arctic Council Ministerial Summit, “Steady reductions in sea ice are opening new passageways and new opportunities for trade.”

The Kvanefjeld deposit in South Greenland is the world’s second-largest resource of rare earth oxides. These are used in electric vehicle batteries, wind turbine magnets, and a range of military hardware. A Chinese state-owned company invested in the project—not openly, but through an Australian intermediary.

China has purchased Greenlandic fisheries, sent cruise ships full of big-spending tourists, invited Greenlandic officials on junkets to Beijing, and taken stakes in Greenlandic iron mines they knew were unprofitable. China even tried to buy an abandoned naval base on Greenland’s North Atlantic coast.

Whether it is a port in Greece, copper and cobalt mines in the Congo, or Arctic sea routes and resource contention in Greenland, Chinese monopoly capitalism is out for profit and hegemony. Meanwhile, US imperialism scrambles to fortify its established holdings. The rivalry is classic, reminiscent of the years leading up to World War One. This time, World War Three approaches. None of this benefits the workers of China or the US. The solution for them and the world is socialist-communist revolution. The only contest here, a friendly one, is: who will break through first!

Charles Andrews

[Charles Andrews is the author of The Hollow Colosus and other books]

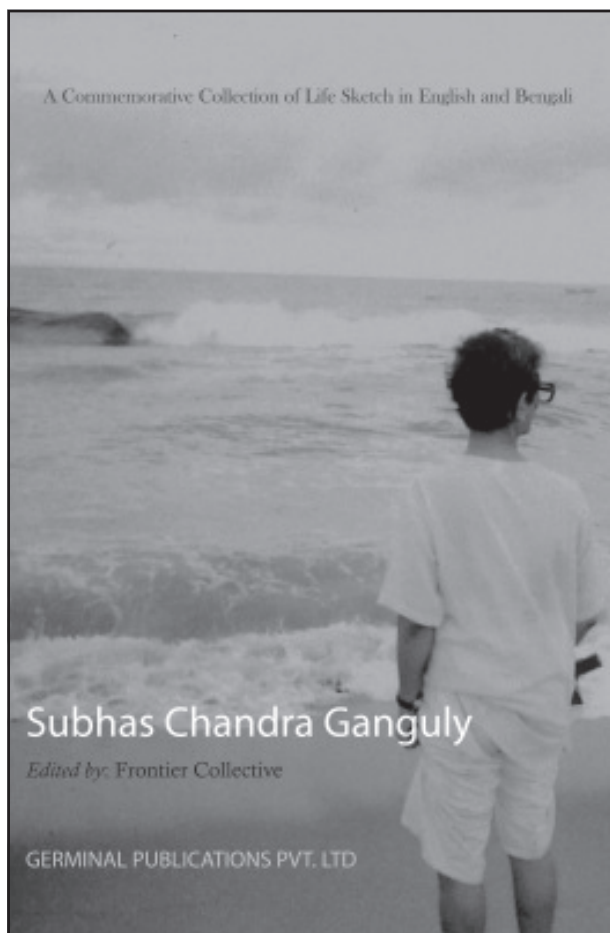
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