

Mushirul Hasan Memorial Seminar (One Day)-

23rd February 2023

The department of History & Culture, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi -25 is organizing the Mushirul Hasan Memorial Seminar on the following topic: **HISTORY OF HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS IN INDIAN CULTURE** on the 23rd of February 2023.

This is a humble attempt to draw the attention of the academicians and researchers to the Unit-IV of the NEP which deals with sciences, environment and medical sciences etc.

The New Education Policy (NEP) offers an opportunity to effect a paradigm shift from a teacher-centric to a student-centric higher education system in India. The ever expanding boundaries of History necessitate the understanding of the various aspects of human life. The problems posed by globalisation make it essential for the History discipline to expand its boundaries of knowledge. The History curriculum under the New Education Policy (NEP) seeks to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to comprehend historical processes; place the importance of historical changes within a community or culture and analyze and evaluate patterns of transitions and continuity.

The seminar titled: **History of Health Consciousness in Indian Culture** is an attempt at fulfilling the objectives of the New Education Policy (NEP). It is being organised to help researchers interact and acquire the skills of critical thinking. It will explore the relationship between the past and the present in context of healing and health consciousness.

Seminar Proposal:

Historians have developed a complex literature on the history of health and healing in India during the last few decades. In South Asia, the existing historiography on colonial medicine has emerged around two conflicting viewpoints. There is one school of thought that locates the impact of Western medicine most profoundly within certain colonial enclaves such as the army, the jails and the lunatic asylums. In her work "Imperial Health in British India, 1857-1900," Radhika Ramasubban makes a strong case for enclavism and terms it 'the colonial mode of public health.' In contrast to such an argument, there has emerged the argument of colonial

hegemony which came to be propounded especially in the work of David Arnold “Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth Century India”. This equally dominant view traces how western medicine achieved complete hegemony over existing medical systems, thereby relegating them to the margins. In contrast to such views, there is now a growing body of work which seems to exhibit how the growth of a shared medical market created a cultural space, where pluralized understandings of disease, body and therapeutics coexisted. The existence of a shared market where western medical knowledge circulated side by side with traditional medical knowledge systems, thereby mutually influencing each other and undoing a single, homogenous understanding of a disease. Western medical knowledge was forced to engage with pre-existing ideas of body, disease transmission and prophylaxis. Western systems of medicine were often juxtaposed with folk wisdom, existing public knowledge and shared cultural memory of disease. Hence, came up a number of explanations regarding the cause, symptoms and treatment of diseases. These explanations were also heavily influenced by factors such as race, culture and nationalism. In the context of the colony, western medical knowledge far from achieving complete hegemony had undergone metamorphosis and had indeed come to be *vernacularized*.

The objective of the seminar is to help investigate why the theme of health and healing occupies such a central role in our understanding of India’s pasts. The sessions will focus on the innovative and evolving ways in which Indians have attempted to build healthy communities through expanding therapeutic repertoires. The seminar aims at covering a wide chronological span and a variety of topics, including: faith and healing; medical pluralism (Yoga, Ayurveda, *Kaviraji*, *Hakimi*, *Unani Tibb*, *Tibb-ul-Nabi*, *Allopathy and Homeopathy etc.*); medical eclecticism and the shifting nature of traditional medical knowledge systems and practices; epidemics and the relationship between public healing and political authority. This is an enthralling history of how changes in health and healing are inextricably linked to greater shifts in political power and the structuring of economic production.

It is a subject at the heart of some of the most pressing issues confronting contemporary societies, and it begs for a critical understanding of: What is health and healing; in fact what holistic living is about.

IMPORTANT: Besides academicians and teachers, research scholars and medical practitioners are also welcome to send their proposals on any of the following themes:

- Yoga and health systems.
- Healing systems in ancient texts.
- Ayurveda.
- Unani.
- Allopathy
- Homoeopathy
- Superstitions around diseases and healing.
- History of Mental illnesses and stigma attached to it.
- Epidemics
- History of hygiene
- Socio-cultural attitudes towards debility and disability
- Faith and healing
- Role of administrators in health systems.
- Any theme closely related to the title of the Seminar.

Important Dates:

1. Last Date for the submission of an abstract of 300 words: 25th January 2023.
2. Communication regarding selection of abstracts: 1st February 2023.
3. Last Date for the submission of full paper: (Approximately 5000 words): 15th February 2023.

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- Convenor: Prof. Farhat Nasreen. (9871567668)
- Co-organizers:
 1. Dr. Rohma Javed Rashid
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