

Karvan - E - Fikr 2023

Annual Fest organized by the Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

Inter-University Students' Seminar: 15th February 2023

Call for Papers!

Theme: **Sacred and the Everyday**

The human yearning to transcend the physical realm and seek refuge in the mystic and the divine has not only characterized human life since antiquity but is as urgent a concern in the modern world. Despite post-Enlightenment assumptions regarding the eventual 'withering away of religion' or 'disenchantment of the world', religion continues to be a powerful and malleable force that defies academic classifications of formal/ popular, textual/ lived in the way it informs human experience of the everyday.

We seek to initiate conversations on the sacred and the everyday by unpacking the theoretical strands that constitute both categories. In order to do so, we invite papers on, but not limited to the themes mentioned below:

1. **Debating the sacred and the secular:** Theorizing religion, secularism and its variants.
2. **Sacred geographies and unsettled landscapes:** Wayside shrines, relics, djinns, spirits, vibrations, vastu, iconic and aniconic representations of the divine.
3. **Economies of the sacred:** Ritual exchange, marketplaces, human-divine transactions, holy cities, sacred souvenirs.
4. **Sacred temporalities:** Ritual calendar and the rhythms of the everyday, feasts, festivals and ceremonies.
5. **Politics and religion:** Religious iconography and symbols (stickers, tridents, rosary, symbolism of saffron/ green) and their deployment, the state, ideology and law.
6. **Representing everyday religion:** Media portrayal, cinema, theater, literature and art, comics, children's literature and cartoon characters.

7. **Science, rationality and modern life:** Belief, superstition, pseudo-science and everyday religion.
8. **Religious authority, hierarchy and power:** Gurus, spiritual mentors, saints, sages and charismatic leaders.
9. **Gendered practice:** Domestic ritual and formal religion, gendering of access and authority, space and affordance.
10. **Food practices and everyday religion:** Roadside langar, bhog, community feasts, prasad, food sharing, prescriptions and proscriptions, dietary restrictions, marketing strategies (Navaratra thali, Onam sadya, Diwali gift packs)
11. **Sartorial choices and dressing preferences:** Current fashion, identity markers, veils, headgear, religious symbols, stylistic innovations.
12. **Music and spirituality:** Devotional genres, popular representations of the sacred, hymns, chants, ceremonial recitations.
13. **Politics of censorship:** Blasphemy, hurt sentiments, bans on audio/ visual depictions of the sacred.
14. **Agency and contestation in the everyday:** Tactical and strategic negotiations, improvisations and creative manoeuvring, constructions of identity and community.
15. **Reinventing and reappropriating Satan and the Devil:** Taboos, cults, new religious movements.
16. **Spiritual healing and mental health:** therapeutic rituals, possession, alternative medicine, religious OCD.
17. **Karma, Manifestation and Vibe:** Novel conceptions of the sacred among youth and millennials, irreverence, playful appropriation of religion.
18. **Digital mediations:** Zoom prayer meetings, virtual pilgrimages, online funeral meetings, online puja, fatwa sites, discussion groups.

Guidelines for the presenters:

- An abstract of not more than 250-300 words should be mailed at: sociologyfest2023@gmail.com by 15th January 2022.
- It must be noted that the themes mentioned above are merely suggestive and not exhaustive.
- The Call for Papers is open to Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Research Scholars affiliated to institutions recognized by the Government of India.