

May 1, 2023

Press Release

University of Texas, USA Professor delivers lecture on “Ambedkar, Dewey and the Evolution of Pragmatism in India” at JMI

The Department of Sociology, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) organized a lecture on ‘Ambedkar, Dewey, and the Evolution of Pragmatism in India’ by Prof. Scott R. Stroud from the Department of Communication Studies, University of Texas, Austin, on 25 th April 2023. Prof. Stroud’s recent book on the same theme was a part of the discussion, which is a nuanced study of Babasaheb Ambedkar.

The lecture started with the Head of the Department, Prof. Manisha T. Pandey welcoming everyone and introducing the speaker with a brief introduction to his recent book. Then, Prof. Stroud’s presentation highlighted the impact that John Dewey, Ambedkar’s teacher at Columbia University, have had on him and how Ambedkar reimagined Dewey’s pragmatism to apply it to his academic as well as political life.

The speaker’s research relied upon several archival sources, to connect the dots between the two philosophers and even suggested that Ambedkar had tried to bridge the gaps between Buddhism and Pragmatism, to deal with the problem of caste. He spoke about pragmatism's influence on the philosophical ideas underpinning Ambedkar’s fight against caste oppression. Stroud was careful to point out the ways that Ambedkar pushed back against Dewey’s paradigm and developed his own approach to challenges in India.

The lecture was stimulating and was followed by a thought-provoking Q&A and discussion from the audience. The lecture was well-attended by the students, scholars and faculty members of the Department and various centres at JMI. The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Mr. Ankush Pal, an undergraduate student of the Department.

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