

Murzban Jal is Professor and Director at the Centre for Educational Studies, Indian Institute of Education, Pune. He did his PhD from the Department of Philosophy, Panjab University on Marx's theory of fetishism and consequently worked at the Centre for Civilizations, New Delhi with the eminent philosopher D.P. Chattopadhyaya. He was Fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla and an Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) Senior Fellow where he worked on the ethnography of the makings of a minority community in India. He is author of *The Seductions of Karl Marx* (2010), *Zoroastrianism: from Antiquity to the Modern Period* (2012), *The New Militants* (2014), *Why We Are Not Hindus* (2015), *What Ails the Indian Muslims* (2016), *Challenges for the Indian Left* (2017), *In the Name of Marx* (2018), *Zarathushtra and the Inmates of Paradise* (2018), *Yusuf and Zuleika: On the Return of the Despot* (2019) and *The Prison House of Alienation* (2019). His edited book with Jyoti Bawane *Theory and Praxis: Reflections on the Colonization of Knowledge* which is now in press is soon to come out, as also his and *Fetishism: Genealogy of a Concept*. He is presently concluding his books *Who Wants Liberalism?*, *Marxism and Science*, *The Importance of being Enlightened*, *The Imbecile's Guide to Public Philosophy* (edited with Jyoti Bawane and Muzaffar Ali) and *Yes the Subaltern can Speak*. He has also published around hundred papers research papers in national and international journals and completed a number of important projects which include the state of education in educationally marginalized communities and problems emerging from caste-stratified societies.

Jal is a humanist psychoanalyst who basis his research on theories of alienation in late capitalist society. He combines Georg Lukács' theory of the reification of consciousness and Freud's theory of neurosis and psychosis. His recent claim is that the old stages theory of psychoanalysis where neurosis and psychosis are divided into two distinct stages of mental illness is now redundant. Instead he claims that both neurosis and psychosis are integrated as "neurosis-psychosis". Combining the understanding of neurosis-psychosis as the new disorder of contemporary society, he argues for a model of psychotherapy in the form of understanding the process of humanization, where knowledge is articulated as the cultivation of the human mind. This process of the cultivation of the human mind and the process of humanization, Jal claims, are constituted in the parallel process of de-alienating humanity. This de-alienating humanity is central to his philosophical and scientific repertoire.

He is a critic of Eurocentric understanding of Asia and the colonization of the human mind. Being a critic of Eurocentric understanding of Asia, Jal advocates Marx's original theory of the "Asiatic Mode of Production" (which he transcribe as "Indic social formations"), where he argues for a multi-linear theory of history. He is critical of the imposition of the neo-liberal model on India as well as critical of the established left's theory of "Indian feudalism". His trenchant critique of Stalinism, the Indian left thinkers and the Indian communist movement is based on the idea that Indian never had feudalism and that they impose wrong idea on Indian society. Jal is also a trenchant critique of liberalism and Indian liberal thinkers like Romila Thapar and Ramchandra Guha. Working on Indo-Iranian studies, Jal claims that there is need for the recovery of this Indo-Iranian life-world such that creative development of the social sciences is possible.

Basing his theory on the research methodology of critical realism, he has developed a unique interdisciplinary method that understands the nuances applicable to India in particular and South Asia in general. In this articulation of the nuances of Indian society, Jal has developed a new outlook at understanding economic and cultural backwardness, especially in the form of the caste system in India, and the relation of caste with the modern class system. He has integrated global emancipatory philosophies of with those of Jotiba Phule and B.R. Ambedkar. Besides this, Jal is also involved in the advocacy of understanding the Hegelian dialectical method as the method that involves a paradigm shift from the earlier scientific problematic based on the Aristotelian method.

In this new dialectical method, Jal has created a New Physics for the social sciences where he argues for the possibilities of the realization of the ideals of modern democratic society. This New Physics he calls after Marx “human natural science”, where not only are the social sciences concretely integrated, but also where the social sciences are united with the natural sciences. It is in this New Space that Jal is able to construct a theory of universal education applicable for the Third World. This theory of universal education is based on the principle of “equa-liberty” (where equality and human liberty are synthesized) and the double process of humanization: the humanization of the sciences and the humanization of humanity itself.

Unlike thinkers who argue for the interventions of civil society and the state with regards education, Jal argues for creating education collectives based on the theory of the “commons”. An efficient education system, so he claims, can only emerge from these educational collectives that are endowed with an emancipatory humanistic philosophy and grounded solidly in the Indian ontological and epistemological life-worlds.