



Ramblings and Rigmaroles of an Anthropophagi:

Journey Chronotropes from the Margins (Patna) to the Metropole (New Delhi)

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This is an auto-ethnography of the time that I spent at three of the most renowned universities of India and my experiences thereof. Coming from a relatively decayed and deadened atmosphere of my college to a centre for excellence in higher learning filled me with my own set of anxieties and curiosities regarding my future and career path on which I was to embark. The story deals with my personal angst of the alienation that I felt while at DSE despite my best efforts to 'keep up' with the ambience that contrasted with my exuberant and carefree topography of JNU where one could be just like the other without putting on a mask. However, this place too was marked with its own coda and which bore a mark till one was associated with campus life. Now that I am no more actively associated with campus life, there are still times when I end up shadow boxing with questions about life and learning.

Keywords: Bihar, JNU, Delhi, Education, Students, Campus, Political

Before I was born and let out my first cry and uttered my maiden gibberish, the Oracles had come up with a dreaded prediction. My parents were informed that their first child would be an anthropophagi; a close cousin of the Indian *ashtavakra*ⁱ and in my case a rare physical disorder of vital organs dislocation found only in English lores, myths and fables. The news had sent shivers down the spine of the clan members and the entire household was thrown into utter disarray. However, much to my parent's relief,

this prediction was later proven as mythical and mystical as the existence of a headless cannibal is in real life since the vital organs were found to be in 'place' and at their usual 'sites' immediately after I stepped into this wide blue world. Yet, in a certain metaphysical sense, my anthropophagic existence held water as readers would find when they flip through the pages and enter the caverns and crevices of my journey chronotrope that began some twelve years back from Ashoka's *Pataligram*ⁱⁱ to the (post) modern Lutyen's Delhi. But before they try to needle through the maze and take a nosedive into the murky waters of my past, it is necessary to post a note of caution.

What follows next is the unfolding of various primeval as well as current registers that relate to the *flan eur*'s inter-subjective experience and emic view of India's two premier universities. It is therefore not an attempt at punching empty sand bags of the past but rather involves foraging and picking up shards from my illusive memoryscape and trying to build a larger picture out of it. The narrative oscillates between the past and present, the then and now, the surreal and the real and partakes voyeurism and parrhesia in order to sketch out the rough bumps in the journey covered so far. It deals with the cartographies of Deleuzian philosophy and Kafkaesque melancholia and the resultant testimonio thereof. The voyeur in me neither intends to make the readers happy nor to 'disappoint' or make them boil with anger. If at all it does any of these which it is not designed to, then do accept my sincerest apologies...mea culpa, mea maxima culpa!

Circa 2004: Retrieving The Past

As we were about to catpaw into the 21st century, we were confronted with a panic that had gripped the globe about a great technical catastrophe famously known in history as Y2K. This crisis pronounced an 'information standstill' all over the globe that was equally true for both digital and non-digital documentation and data storage situations which resulted from the practice of abbreviating a four-digit year to two digits. This therefore meant a grand difficulty in the entry of the year 2000 on the computer date sheet to begin with. Anyway, though we survived this technological 'end of the world' proclamation, four years later, life was to cast a similar shadow on my paler self and carve my own Doom's Day. It was a near 'existential blackout' much similar to the technological one mentioned above.

Circa 2004 was a significant year for me as in the first instance it proved to be an alchemy of my dreams as also a close shave with the kinetic pleasures of life. For one, not only did I have to negotiate with my much muddled head due to the pell-mell events that took place on the personal front that year but I was also standing at the crossroads of my 'academic' career. Firstly, I was a proud graduate in Sociology from an acclaimed institution of higher learning having an unmatched academic credence in India, and (not to forget the famous pearls of wisdom...in whispers though) as an alumnus of a 'sister concern of the London School of Economics.' Ideally speaking, going by this *doxa*, I should have been strutting around like a peacock carrying an extra bag of hubris and halo behind me and a bloated chest in front after having received my academic training in 'royal science' from one of the most coveted Centres of Academic Excellence. Hardly had this pride started to sink in that I realized that the moon in my palm had metamorphosed into a giant wobbly ball of a prickly crustacean.

After receiving the final Master's grades, I was made aware of a public transcript which later gave a wild goose chase to many others that were to follow next. According to this, I was deemed 'unfit' to apply for an M. Phil from this esteemed pedestal of higher

learning. Worse still was the hidden transcript that followed soon after which said, "I didn't possess the right kind of academic apparatus and therefore was an inept person to continue with higher learning." Later, even during my stint in Jawaharlal Nehru University (henceforth JNU), I wasn't able to meet academic deadlines as there was too much on the platter to choose from and my enthusiasm and imagination for the extracurricular got overemphasised at the cost of practical or utilitarian conditions. I was never particularly 'good' at studies if one keeps percentage or marks as an acid test to judge one's academic pursuit. I just wafted and trudged along alien shores and never seemed to listen to the call of my heart.

Throughout my primary and secondary education at St. Michael's High School, Patna, I was first among the 'non-persons' who relished playing ping pong even if it came at the cost of bunking classes along with the three important annual official socialising events that marked our lives as nifty Michaelites. These comprised of the 'Socials' involving the Anglophone damsels from Notre Dame Academy, Patna, who would converse at supersonic speed and leave us zapped and in complete awe of their English speaking skills. These social butterflies would come to our school for 'socialising' purposes (unfortunately in my ten years of schooling, I could never ever muster the courage to speak to a single dame). The 'Pool Side Party' was another bar of magnet that attracted all those who loved interludes (or 'free periods' as we knew) and where each section would have a day out at the swimming pool. The students would swim and paddle and slap on the surface of water as if overnight all of us had developed fins and gills for the occasion. This watery event usually culminated with snacks and if lucky, food too. And finally, we would be lying in wait for the cruise on the Ganges followed by a picnic on the other side of the river bank. I also enjoyed the film and documentary screenings in the big school hall every now and then.

Books were kept at a proxemic distance which resulted in my annual sloppy 'drags' and frog 'leaps' from one grade to the other. The Masters Degree at Delhi School of Economics (henceforth DSE) had only re-affirmed, attested and nailed my ancient

image with a red wax seal. However, as the narrative unwraps itself and leads to a thick description of sorts, it will become clear that the Golden Bough was not at all meant for me.

The moment the final Master's grade were handed out, I understood that I was actually being booted out from an institution where marks were not given as a matter of 'charity.' I twisted and turned, booed and rambled but to no avail. But, whatever one might say, DSE was different in its own right having its distinct grammar of politics, fashion, coiffure, and conversational lexicon.

Usually the atmosphere in DSE would wear a sombre look as if it was Armageddon on planet earth and people were supposed to walk on the edge of a cliff. Interestingly, the veritable presence of an avowed army of pet lovers mostly 'queen bees' and 'intellectualistas' would throw in some fun and frolic with their human-animal indulgence in the otherwise drabby and glum looking DSE environs. These canine lovers would fondle, cuddle, pat and play and feed biscuits to the lucky mongrels whose tail and tongue-wagging would match with the moving blades of a helicopter in all fury. Their tails would go full throttle at the mere sight of their favourite 'handlers' in complete view of the public around. A public performance of this nature required a peak time i.e. the recess in order to establish the credentials of being a diehard PETA fan. To add to this rainbow hue, the DSE monotony was also laid to rest by the impromptu guitar strumming and jamming sessions of an unheard English song from students hailing from the two arch rival colleges, Hindu or Saint Stephens (the chartbusters and easy going lyrics were considered way too 'unfashionable' and 'out of sync' for our young music lovers).

All this lazy indulgence in a regime of floating signifiers and display of arty-farty linguistic pyrotechnics were aimed at getting 'noticed' and earning those extra brownie points in the 'I am different than thou' mêlée that made afternoons in DSE a carnivalesque space of sorts. Students from different colleges in Delhi University would be vying with each other in this 'fighters club' and 'debating society' where acceptance was restricted to only those lucky few with 'high-flying-drop-dead' English being the most basic entry

requisite. This was followed by the strange outfits and latest home version of Mohawks, crew cuts, straight out-of-the-bed-looks, star-war spikes, Einsteinian wiry mop, Marley's dread locks and Beckhamesque coiffure. As for me, acculturation and a presentation of the self of this scale that was couched in pretense and simulacra was an impossible proposition but the straight out-of-the-bed-looks made a lot of sense. Moreover, with the cultural capital gone for a toss, social capital was also sent to the gallows. The difficulty at socialisation even with classmates at DSE was amplified due to the formation of cliques, gang and bands based primarily on affinity with the lingua franca i.e. English along with the 'presentation' of self.

I was from the pidgin land, a 'cow-belter' who spoke Hinglish for communicating his anxieties and being a boor, was having first time hands-on experience and encounter with the outlandish and bizarre. It was here that I learnt that flashing the upper rim of one's underwear was 'cool' and sitting cross-legged near a trash can proved that one carried the baton of intellectualism. The more casual, the better was the mantra here much like the college where I did my graduation from and where students behaved more like junta and would casually drift in and out of the classes in case there were any.

I had completed my Bachelor's degree from an obscure institution called College of Commerce that was part of the Magadh University and which lay frozen in the backwaters of Patna where classes and tutorials were a rarity and examinations at best a matter of annual ritual. These classes were conducted through the dog collared decade old notebook that carried the lectures in ink that had lost its former sparkle and 'hint' questions were dished out by the concerned tutor a month or two before the annual exams were to commence. Terms like feminism, environmentalism, nature / culture and sex / gender dichotomy etc sounded more like an abracadabra and didn't fit in the scheme of things. For a person who belonged to this state called Bihar and who is supposedly the vectors of disease, filth and muck in Mumbai as also being potential rapists and trouble makers, (at least this is what our glamorous Mumbai Don and his entourage continue to harp on) Delhi was certainly an imperial

encounter of sorts. Only later was I to learn that this melting pot was the 'contact zone' for the ever unruly fourth dwellers populated by Harrys' and Harias like me. But the margins being margins have always been unruly, brute, uncouth and uncivilised where polite manners and cultivated conversations are jungled out and become replaced by rather rustic and snip-snap dialogues.

The log book of the Capital said that there was a dire need to smoothen the incongruities and blunt edges so that this unwashed horde of Biharis and others like them could be 'enlightened,' 'civilised' and 'acclimatised' with the ways of the metropolis. Unfortunately, after discovering myself to be an adamant Goliath and as a total misfit therefore, my lifeworld started to revolve around J.P Tea Stall on the campus. However all this also left me pondering about my image as a castaway. I tried to reason out for cutting such a dismal figure and plunged in some self-reflexivity. It seemed as if the miasma of primitive feelings had lodged a cranky chip down there in my block too. After mulling over and rummaging through the events in the past, I concluded that it was the fetish and 'carry forwards' of an archaic mindset and a closeted world view that kept me at bay and infused in me an acute sense of ennui.

JP's tea stall at long last became a periscope through which I and my brethrens began constructing and deconstructing a montage while watching the great bohemian drama unfold like a text. The tea stall made me a homing pigeon that would often force me to come back to JP's tea shop irrespective of my physical and mental state.

Lines of Flight and De / Re (Territorialisation): Jnu as a Zomia Proper

Left stranded and horrified like a cat in rain after my Masters, I did not know how to re-start the 'generator' inside me which had failed not just in making an impression but which had failed miserably. It was time to move on but then suddenly I realised that there were scores of others from my batch in DSE who were wounded by the same stigmata and left orphaned at

a critical juncture of our lives. All of us who earlier swam like a shoal in lesser familiar waters now formed a detritus of shattered families in a dank well. It was at this point that JNU came in our lives offering an archipelago of hope and possibility.

Those deemed 'unfit' by DSE appeared for JNU's M. Phil written entrance examination and the successful candidates faced the grand finale i.e. the interview with their respective 'synopsis' at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems. Given the 'magic' percentage in my Masters, I was left with meager chances of making it through the interview even if I steered past the written exam. This inevitably meant that I had to be different from other aspirants who were fighting a closely contested competition and eyeing for the same seat as me. I was hunting for ideas in order to scrape through and there came the Eureka moment.

Next, I got xerox copies of all the droolings, sketches and drawings that I had done over the years and splayed it on the table during my interview the moment a question cropped up regarding the reasons for my proposed research on India's two prominent post-modern artists. Cosmic justice is delivered only on rare occasions and perhaps this was one of them. I was finally selected as an M. Phil student and was handed the cornucopia of ecstasy and plentitude from one of the most unique universities of the country. This de-territorialisation came along with its surrogate i.e. re-territorialisation or 'place making' which in my case was JNU.

Before leaving Delhi University, several prescriptions were dished out before me regarding the dos' and donts' in JNU along with some cautionary and pedantic notes thrown in by some of my legendary hostel mates from Gwyer Hall; a place where student leaders were 'made' and Student Union and Hostel Elections won or lost. According to this epistemic guide or the JNU Blue Book, JNU was a bastion of the radical left (read anarchists for the state apparatus) having a subterranean *Planet Hippie*-like touch to it. This was followed by a teaser! Remember pal...if you cannot 'make' a girlfriend in JNU, you can never 'have' one anywhere on this earth...better commit *harakiri* in the latter case (now I am forced to think that either

I am an utterly shameless idiotic creature or else a ruthless survivor). Moreover, the ancient belief doing rounds in JNU that a girlfriend is on the anvil if one spots a pair of *nilgais*ⁱⁱⁱ also stood falsified in my case. As if the string of such belief systems hadn't ended yet, I was informed that JNU was a 'sea of poppies' thereby painting the campus in a *laissez-faire* mode and in surrealist brushstrokes. Although I appreciated their catholicity of concern but things were already going overboard and I wasn't too keen to peck at their crumbs of wisdom anymore. Rubbishing all that I was told, suggested and advised, I started riding the lines of flight and dream horse called JNU that was later to transport me to the dizzying heights of fantasy, desire and hyperbole- all rolled in one.

Speaking candidly, JNU's image has been one of the most romanticised and sought after not just in the country but also outside encouraging media persons and educationists to pen down special columns on it besides citing it as an exemplar for other campuses in the country to follow suit. In the yesteryears and to some extent even now in the Indian cities and towns, the archetypal image of a JNUite has been that of a scruffy *khadi kurta*^{iv}-jeans-shawl clad scrawny fellow carrying a *jhola*,^v wearing *kolhapuri*^{vi} and having a thicket or maybe long tapering beard that wavers like seaweed in water every time the wind blows with unkempt hair to complete the facial décor. This was the proletarian haute couture, the attire of neo-revolutionaries. At least, this is what the 'social mind' spoke; a late 70s caricature of a hippie who was part of the Flower Power and Beatnik movement, doted on Beatles, Jimi Hendrix, Bob Marley and Doors, doted on left literature and were Rastafarians incarnate due to their love for cannabis. However, overriding all these externalities and padded makeovers has been its culture of dissent and intellectual virtuoso that differentiated this campus from all other universities in the country and elsewhere outside.

There are various notions doing the rounds regarding the 'how and why' of JNU's birthing. The most common of all is that Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India wanted to get rid of the leftists who according to the Congress were hedonists, delinquents and comprised the '*classes dangereuses*' for

the government. This was especially warranted since naxalism as a people's movement spearheaded by the radical left was becoming a grave threat for her government. She therefore thought of marooning all the leftists on an island from where their voices might be nipped and angry outcries and violent protests at best would take the form of mild whimpers and simmerings and soon capsize. And thus JNU was born in 1969. These were the heady days of hippie movement coupled with the clarion call for 'total revolution' under the banner of socialist ideologue Jai Prakash Narayan that was catching the fancy of the common man. Poor Indira couldn't have visualised that this institution named after her father would ring trouble for the ruling elite and subvert political symbolisms long after she would make an unnatural exit. And therefore JNU that bears her father's name stands as a signpost for other campuses to emulate.

In many senses, I feel that the uniqueness of JNU lies not just in its image in the striated space as a Zomia with a majority of its inmates not believing in the state's notion of modernity, progress and development. It rather bases its logic and thrust on 'nomad science' that flirts with 'nomad thought' and provides a different vocabulary and semantics to many taken-for-granted notions. In short, JNU's motto 'thinking beyond the text' and searching for alternatives and exploring the possibility of another world adds the ring of singularity to it. Given its rhizomatic mode of seeking and imparting knowledge, democratic ethos and its remarkable topography, JNU becomes a smooth space where several epistemes, ontological traditions and ideological paradigms colliding, co-existing and interacting simultaneously. A quite similar topographical analogy can be drawn here for the inhabited areas of JNU that are named after certain zones which exist in a single space like Uttaranchal, Uttarakhand, Poorvanchal, Paschimabad and Nilgiri.

Students on campus are more like nomadic bands and packs hopping from one hostel to another and traverse different 'academic cum residential zones' after finally resorting to their respective hostel rooms to catch the wee hour forty winks. These scholastic zones range from the Narmada Hostel which houses green horners chiefly from the School of Languages

to the more mixed groups in other hostels in mid-campus area; a hotbed of robust student activity, mobilisation and politicking. However, in recent times, the administration in order to provide a mixed crowd everywhere began a centralised system of hostel allotment. This inevitably meant that unlike in the past, students will not have their preference in hostel allotment. Brahmputra Hostel better known as 'oldies den' or the '*Andamans*' for others due to its distinctly removed and quiet location, houses senior Ph.D students or the 'would-be-Doctor-sahebs' and the honorific designation '*babas*.' The lifeline of JNU i.e. bus number 615 which plies between Minto Road and JNU caters to the peregrinatory needs of a large section of JNUite and has its start and finish line at Brahmputra Hostel.

JNU is characterised by some of the most famous architectural and natural landmarks known to the world outside. To begin with, Ganga *dhaba*^{vii} as an open space right in front of Ganga Hostel becomes one of the most important markers in JNU as soon as one enters the University. This is not just a recreational space where students meet and spend some leisure time having tea and snacks in the evenings but is a copybook definition of an *adda* or 'public sphere' which had its genesis in the French salons and cafeterias. Casual conversations at Ganga dhaba can easily turn into a serious one-to-one discourse or verbal tiff on the ideational assemblages of global rockstars of post-modernism like Derrida, Descartes, Deleuze, Dumezil, Alain Badaiu, Laclau, Zizek etc. The place caricatures a mini open air amphitheatre and becomes a trigger point for debates, discussions and sundry activities that include inaugurations of victory march processions, demonstrations, torch light processions, exhibitions, as well as the hush-hush amorous parleys. In all, Ganga dhaba is a milling spot and the Red Square where the JNU tribe congregates for every possible reason whether for radical politicking or for the Cupid smitten. The undulated rocky background at Ganga dhaba become areas to relax and gives the dhabascape a feel of natural terrain.

Jhelum Lawn that stands right opposite Ganga dhaba and adjacent to Ganga Hostel becomes a 'field'

of discursive practices that puts strategies and collective conscience of the inhabitants to test on various occasions. It ranges from the annual JNU Student Union Election Presidential Speech by candidates from various political outfits to a clarion call for UGBM's on important matters pertaining to the University. The Lawns also become an interesting area for celebrating Holi and other cultural events like the International Food Festival etc. Standing close-cheded to Ganga dhaba is KC or Kamal Shopping Centre; our own definition of shopping mall that caters to the daily needs of a JNUite which includes a mix of eateries, provision stores, milk booth, tailoring shop, barbers shop, book shop, grocery stores to complete the list. KC is hemmed in from the back by the open air theatre or KC OAT that has witnessed umpteen jam-packed national and international cultural events, movie screenings. Teflas or the University Cafeteria which also accommodates the indoor sporting centre and the JNUSU Office is adjacent to KC and stands opposite Narmada Hostel. The place bears great significance especially for the freshers who are housed here for a stipulated time period in their initial days on campus due to lack of accommodation facilities.

The arterial road that runs through the campus forks out on both the sides at regular intervals into numerous link roads that dot various hostels and professors' quarters and hostel wardens. Nilgiri dhaba or Godavari dhaba opposite Godavari and Periyar Hostels is another hangout for students who like to spend some light moments. The coveted mid-campus area starts with Godavari Hostel and being part of this elite ring that spans Periyar and Kaveri Hostel and stretches further till Chandrabhaga resembles more like falcon perched in one of the houses on the plush Prithviraj Road or Humayun Road.

In the recent past few very important food outlets have come up in the mid campus area that includes 24 x 7 dhaba which provides delicious hot and sumptuous food. Other eateries that cater to the mid campus area and cover roughly eight hostels include the North East dhaba, Mughal Darbar and few others behind Tapti hostel. Pramod's chai shop cum Maggi Point, Yadav jee's chai and bread and omlette and

Dahiya jee's *sattu paratha*^{viii} in front of Brahmaputra Hostel are the night time saviours and hunger quenchers for the foodies. They have given much respite to Bramhaputraites and married folks from Mahanadi Hostel who live at one end of JNU as well as outsiders who line up at night to snack, nibble, munch and gorge.

The Administration Block or Ad Block is the 'seat of authority' besides a proverbial Tiananmen Square and symbolises a highly contested and radically charged sector. It is also a 'subversive space' in many ways since it has for long been a stage for numerous protests, sit-in dharnas, demonstrations and strikes on issues that concerns the student community most of which have gone in their favour. The Parthasarathi Rocks or PSR named in honour of its first Vice Chancellor Prof. G. Parthasarthy has been a venue for cultural events especially the Fresher's Meet for various centres of JNU. It has also been a prime location for various musical and theatrical performances in the past. Apart from this, PSR resembles a hillock that provides a panoramic view of the surrounding areas including the university stadium nearby.

In terms of its floral bounty, JNU with its stretch of thousand acres plus of green canopy becomes the only campus in India which has the unique distinction of sheltering one of the country's oldest mountain range. The low column vertebra of the Aravali Range have their resting grounds in JNU and one can still find those old relics of the past that includes a cave, a small dried pond, acres of lush green jungle that abounds in peacocks, *neelgais*^{ix} and migratory birds especially seen during summers. A leisurely walk towards East Gate would give anyone the feel of a dense woody stretch that could ape perhaps the temperate forests. Of late cement benches have been introduced all over the campus for late night prowlers and nocturnal beings to gaze at the stars on a clear moonlit night and if lucky to make a wish at a shooting star. I was not too much of a star gazer but an 'airplane gazer' and would immediately look up in the sky the moment a plane flew overhead. A wish would follow next and I must say that I have been quite lucky since my wishes were more than met.

Ethnographising the lived-in experience and Embeddedness of a Hobo and an Enfant Terrible

I remember vividly that it was pouring torrentially that day when I had to re-locate myself to JNU for my M. Phil course. Given my nomadic disposition, I was shifting once again with my luggage that pouted and poured from both sides of the auto rickshaw. After my M.Phil viva voce, this was the second time I was in JNU campus and didn't have any inkling then that the place was to cast a lifelong spell on me. The campus seemed more like a gargantuan greenhouse with leagues and miles of endless woody - winding stretch that swirled at the bends like a black Mamba. The pitch black road was flanked on both the sides by thickets, tall trees and giant bougainvilleas that lent the topography an almost Amazonian feel and a world elsewhere.

I reached Ad Block and saw *pandals*,^x banners, buntings, posters and stalls of all hues and shape at the Admission Assistance near the entrance of the building set up by various political outfits. Senior students wore batches of their respective political parties and were helping freshers with the admission process. For a neophyte like me, this became the first encounter with a completely different pedagogical tradition; one that said 'Study and Struggle' and 'Another World is Possible' thereby proclaiming that dreams, struggles and cognition are intrinsically linked and complement each other. These slogans have been the harbinger of many a landmark student's struggles and historic victories on campus as well as outside.

The Admission Assistance provided by different political formations is the stage of primary initiation and a ploy for inducting new members (read troopers) by different political organisations. After couple of meetings, accidental encounters and bump-ins, students are 'marked out' and 'sorted' based on an individual's charisma, gregariousness and appealability either as potential candidates or as frontline party activists for the next JNUSU Elections. Those who were lucky also managed to find their eventual life partners or their Valentines at least for sometime if not for the

entire life. This way the senior rank and file keeps churning new and robust student leadership in the party and help maintain a reserve army of 'red labour' whilst passing the baton of leadership from one year to another. Those who waiver and aren't too sure about political convictions are left to be contacted later during the official membership drive by the 'old caps' and loyal troopers. It must be befitting to point out that there are different reasons for students joining a political outfit or choosing not to do so since they would take any ideology as a hegemonic and despotic commandment.

The duties and responsibilities of the old caps would entail a flurry of activity that encompassed the routine ones to those involvingmetis; in short, calling the shots. It involved gauging the political temper and verve of the green horners on a regular basis on campus, writing pamphlets on pertinent issues and assigning new recruits to stick pamphlets and keeping the same in the hostel mess. The new recruits by way of running around, befriending new faces on campus and getting acquainted with issues that different outfits are raising are able to keep themselves abreast with the past and the present. Apart from the regular duties performed by the old caps, they would also be arranging for meetings for the after-dinner talks and most importantly hunting for new issues where the administration and adversaries could be cornered and brought into the witness box. From time to time, those recruits who are put off or disenchanted by a certain decision made by the party would be given extra time by the 'old caps' at pacifying, explaining and weaning back such agitated souls into the party fold.

JNUSU or JNU Students Union and its catchy slogans become the 'war machine' which besides many other struggles also engages with the dictates of neo-imperial forces and transnational capitalism outside i.e. the oppressive 'state apparatus', and its hegemonic 'space of flows.' The basic aim of JNUSU run by the left outfits is to achieve a 'plane of consistency' and 'rhizomatic' distribution of power not just at the level of teacher-pupil relationship or the administrative juncture i.e. in JNU but also the local, national as well as the international level. One of the strongest

ammunitions that has been feeding and serving the war machine and sustained the students struggle till date has been the diehard commitment of the 'troopers' and 'old caps' toward the particular cause which they avowedly vouch or oppose as the case maybe. A wide array of slogans would rant and pierce through the air whenever the clarion call for a protest or demonstration was given by the JNUSU. The usual salutation and greeting of Lal Salaam Saathi^{xi} / Comrade establishes a 'phatic communion' among the left rank and file. Talismanic slogans like *Jalado Mitaado..Inquilaab Zindabaad...Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh, We Shall Fight, We Shall Win...Che, Charu, Chandrashekhar, Khoon Ka Badla Rahenge Leka..El Pueblo Unido, Jamas Sera Vencido...Hitler Ke Auladon Ko, Ek Dhakka Aur Do..Aei Lal Farere Teri Kasam, Iss Khoon Ka Badla Lenge Hum*^{xiii}...binds the student community in an of mechanical solidarity. The diasporic population of foreign students on campus would also join the band wagon of procession carrying torchlights, raising slogans in Hindi and English and would throw their clinched fists in the air; the emblematic gesture of left wing politics.

The first big event that I participated in JNU was the JNUSU Elections of 2004; one of the most unique student body elections organised and managed exclusively by the students themselves on a university campus. This has been going on at times when neo-liberal forces work extra time and aggressively to thwart any attempt at building a counter-culture of protest and dissent. It calls for a tall order of sorts to muster the roll call of harpies and students belonging to different ideological formations who gear up for those last minute preaching and sermons in order to increase the strength of their brotherhood. These elections over the years have become an alibi for a congregation of old friends and adversaries in that all the 'old caps' coming from different political beliefs and ideological backdrops flock to JNU to be a part of this annual *Mahakumbh*.^{xiii} It has also become a cynosure for national politics as the entire nation looks with rapt attention toward the election results of this Red bastion and other political developments on campus in general. Histrionics and nostalgia are pressed into service among old timers who brush shoulders

with their teachers and classmates while having cups of tea and chatting away the good old times spent at JNU.

The real political attraction in JNU is the Presidential Debate which is a barometer of who can be a probable victor in the ensuing JNUSU Elections. Jhelum Lawn where the debate is hosted becomes a proscenium stage for sloganeering, folk songs, heated questions and answer session and a test of patience, lung power and leadership skills. Presidential candidates from different political outfits on campus speak for an allotted time at Jhelum Lawns amidst high decibel sloganeering after which they have to answer a volley of questions that the candidates hurl at each other followed by those from the student community. Students from different political outfits sit under the same space marked by the *pandal* with student volunteers who ensure the smooth functioning of the event and manage the student crowd which raises slogans and sing songs till the wee hours when the debate finally gets concluded. It is a truism that over the years, however, the level of debates as well as relations among rival parties have soured and petered out. But whatever one might say, political life on JNU campus is addictive and I too could not remain untouched by this contagion.

After settling myself on campus, I got associated with AISA, the radical left youth wing of CIP (ML). Those were the hardy days when AISA was trying to revive its lost ground after its victory with Chandu as the JNUSU President few years back which later came to a halt after his martyrdom in 1999. Activists were designated their respective jobs and I was asked to stand as a Councilor from SSS. As a 'customary stranger', I was AISA's choice since in those days there weren't many who wanted to join a radical outfit that too which was trying to resurrect itself from the ashes much like the proverbial phoenix. I refused the offer amidst a lot of peer pressure not because I didn't want to but strangely enough because I couldn't speak with an iota of confidence in front of a crowd during the School GBM. Few like me who had the itch of becoming a 'red star' and wanted to join the tribe of orators would try clearing their throat with slogan shouting, singing protest songs and managing the

traffic of comrades during protest marches and processions. Later, these very same budding 'managers' would get into a stunning mode of performativity and theatricality during the eve of JNUSU Elections either as door to door campaigners in the hostels or as star speakers during UGBMs.

The UGBMs are metaphorical foghorns indicative of a crisis that the University is beset with and on which it seeks the opinion from the student community on the way ahead. Speaking vociferously whilst shouting ones' heart out and belching 'red' in these GBMs is necessitated in order to display the recruit's allegiance towards ones' political outfit and her or his capability as a star campaigner and speaker. Unfortunately, I still face the glitch of not being a blare-out-all in front of a group and have been jittery in my class presentations; a fact that haunts and bites me to this day. I was absolutely miserable and would envy my classmates who despite coming from regional backgrounds would 'perform' well and do brilliant 'presentations' sans chapped lips and sweat beads on their foreheads.

I was too coy when it came to a presentation. For me, it stood like a live Frankenstein monster. The night before I was to do the presentation during my M. Phil days, I would try to pose extra normal but deep inside, I would be shaking like a bloody meek rat that was being dragged out of its hole. Unfortunately, things haven't been any better till date. However, there were a couple of activities that would thrill me and which would boost a modicum of confidence in me, one of them being watching people make colourful posters for their respective party organisation.

I relished the company of poster makers. JNU's culture of handmade poster distinguishes it from all other campuses in the country and calls for a creative streak and ability to turn oneself nocturnal till eye balls bulge out and cry red. Since such a task could only be undertaken when the mess was empty and clean, night was the most suitable time for these artistic endeavours. The poster makers would seek permission from the hostel administration for a hostel mess and then begin the night out with imagination running 'anarchic' over cups of tea, cigarettes and

tobacco-chewing while humming and singing revolutionary songs. AISA, SFI, SFR, SFC, AISF and DSU^{xiv} as left and radical left outfits had their own distinct band of poster makers having a specific thematic and a peculiar font style. So was the case with ABVP, NSUI, Y4E, UDSE, AIBSE, BSE, RCF^{xv} and of late few more who have joined the political choir.

In my tenure as a much hyped colourist and 'painter,' (which I never deserved but would love to be one day perhaps) I made only one poster that was pasted on the sides of the Central Library but it surely gave me epicurean delights as it was included in JNU's Alumni Booklet and was part of JNU's brochure.

There is an extraordinary burst of scholarly and creative activity among the Young Turks especially when fissures plaguing the University system come to the fore. Hectic parleys among the students belonging to the political formations begin when administrative malpractices and deficit are brought before the student community. One such case that created furore and a strong student's movement on the campus was the issue of on-campus construction workers' right to fair wages. This also meant that there was swindling of funds by the higher ups in the administrative echelon and after having come to notice, the students started demanding for a Proctorial Enquiry into the matter. Later, as the outburst reached a matured stage, various other issues got tied up too.

At the apogee of student's protest, JNUTA or the Teacher's Association along with JNUSA i.e. the JNU Staff Association joined the agitation and spoke in favour of the protest. It was claimed by the administration that the Rector of the University was harassed and was held hostage by the agitating students. Ad Block turned into a battle ground between the administration and the students which involved every form of peaceful protest including torch light processions, relay and indefinite hunger strike, University Strike, street plays, pamphleteering and mess talk by eminent activists and teachers. Unfortunately at this point in time, the then Vice Chancellor (VC) was yearning to travel to foreign locales on the pretext of signing MOUs with Universities abroad like a first time backpacker rather than looking into matters of an urgent nature. In the meanwhile, University administration

resorted to high tech electronic surveillance and recorded the identities of the chief protestors on camera. Based on the panoptican gaze, the VC after his return from the 'Far West' pronounced different categories of penalties to the students which depended on the level of their involvement in the agitation. Accordingly, the 'social bandits' were either declared out of bounds, rusticated or else pardoned only after they signed bonds and committed in writing that they were not going to repeat 'similar' acts again.

Time went by and I just slipped into the JNU mould without much pain or pangs. The Fresher's Nights at PSR and the mess talks by academicians, social activists and political pundits were a cynosure for freshers like me. In addition, concerned students would also join a Protest March to Jantar Mantar, Parliament Street, North Campus, in front of foreign embassies etc given by either the JNUSU or any other particular political group. In the beginning, it was difficult for me to participate in these political and cultural activities held in the mid campus region due to the distance problem as I was staying in Brahmaputra. However, no sooner did I feel the angst of a loner that I was invited by one of my classmates to stay with him as a third roommate in Kaveri where I put up for a good eight months. Later I was allotted Lohit; a new hostel in the mid campus region where I had one big room to myself. It is true that certain spaces reproduce symbolic power and Lohit's location made me feel like a king and my room became my fort. I was living life in tranquility - 'Wills' and 'Monk' size.

A rendition of some of the selected works of Muktibodh, Paash, Gorakh, Dushyant or Nagarjun^{xvi} in the hostel rooms could sometimes stretch till late in the wee hours with audiences taking their turns between bouts of Royal Stag, Sikkim or Old Monk. And so for all good reason, JNU was an idyllic haptic space for those who sought something different and perhaps preternatural too. But those were the days and blessed be those who lived those glorious years.

Here, I was on an intoxicant called LIFE as I was a free bird and everything was catered for till I got a jolt in one of my M. Phil papers in the first semester. After confronting the concerned Professor for the depressing grade, I was recommended to pursue other

career options and evacuate the 'queen' of social sciences. I was given a choice between being a PR man or a media person. I realised that this feedback cannot be a mere coincidence as what I was receiving now wasn't as different as the one given in the past. The anthropophagitic being in me which was in a dark slumber till now was coming back to life once again when I started facing a dislocation of a scholastic kind. I was the wrong person pursuing a wrong career at the wrong place. However these short spells of advocacy that quickly turned into despair were later laid to rest when while pursuing my PhD, I was selected for a couple of Fellowships abroad for brief periods. I suppose, looking up at the sky and making a wish when an airplane thundered past had been answered in the end.

I thought sociology was as much about socialisation as it was about the social concerns and so called 'sociological' issues that it tries to address. Also what made my M. Phil and PhD days in JNU distinct was that most of my classmates and friends were hooked onto working for the government i.e. with the Union Public Service Commission; a 'national pastime' particularly for the cow-belters and the most 'elite' and 'sacred' of all government jobs in India. I therefore ended up having friends from other centers' owing to an almost incommunicado status with my own classmates as most of my dear friends cum aspirants were locked up in their hostel rooms busy burning the midnight lamp and preparing for the Public Service examination. Even if I was lucky enough to 'overhear' the snatches of conversation of these elevated souls either in the hostel mess or at the tea stall outside Brahmputra, their conversational genre would be too obtuse for a knuckle head like me. It would either be focused on the general knowledge section of the UPSC syllabi which would invariably coalesce into current national politics or else about a particular panel and the questions posed to the successful candidate in the final round of interview. The aspirants would indulge in a meticulous study done in microscopic detail about the chair's profile which would sometimes zoom down to the persons' psychological traits, temperament and behavioral patterns. The real showdown would take place after the declaration of

results. If the aspirant is finally successful in getting selected especially in the top three job categories, it eventually bestows the rockstar status overnight on the successful candidate and puts them in the reckoning. Fan mails on social networking sites swell in numbers unexpectedly and whatever one says or writes draws the attention of people around.

I was lucky in that during the second year of my M. Phil, I was selected as a GSP Student Co-ordinator which gave me the extra bunch of friends for two years. GSP parties at regular intervals on Brahmputra rooftop were memorable evenings that were as much about merry-making as it was about knowing the 'other.' This helped me build new bridges of camaraderie with students from foreign countries and generate social intercourse with a *mélange* of cultures. Besides there were other 'safaris' and extra-curriculars that kept life in JNU running smooth and colourful. This included the two festive occasions of rhythm and dance, fun and laughter, the *Mahamoorkeh Sammelan*^{xvii} which coincides with *Yaoshang* or the Moonlit Dance Festival.

Yaoshang signals the onset of spring and is the Manipuri version of Holi and its usual venue is the basketball court at Sabarmati and Tapti hostel junction. Young students not just from NE but also from other parts of India throng to JNU to participate in the *Thabal Chongba* or moon light dance festival which goes on till midnight to the beat of drums and cymbals. The percussionists who are in the centre are surrounded by young and old folks who dance to the rhythmic beat of the music and this circle gets bigger and wider as night advances. *Mahamoorkeh Sammelan* held on the same night at Jhelum Hostel or else at Jhelum Lawn becomes another carnival where students vie with each other for being crowned with the coveted title of *'Maha Chaat'*^{xviii} or the 'most bovine' on campus. Students come on stage and perform different antics that include reciting poetry and Urdu couplets but with 'permissible' elements of grotesque fun and mimicry in order to win this coveted crown. Holi, the colour festival follows the very next day when everyone rushes to the hostel mess in the morning for 'bhang'^{xix} although on other days students tend to miss their breakfast in an almost predictable

manner. *Bhang* becomes the elixir for the day and is served in all the hostels. Students arm themselves with bottles of this transcendental tonic that transports many-a-folks to the cloud cuckoo land and delirium. The real drama kicks off at Jhelum Lawns with the breaking of an earthen pot by the students in a pyramid-like formation which is hung at a considerable height between two ends of a pole or tree trunk after which a riot of colour and madness play their respective roles. I for one would douse myself in bhang and get sozzled up and would embark upon several non-stop diagonal rounds of the Lawns till my legs broke to splits; an action which puzzles me till today. Other events like the International Food Festival, musical programmes by Spic Macay and Hostel Nights kept us all busy and hearty since fun, frolic and nostalgia was guaranteed during these events.

Although in many senses, JNU still continues to thrive, throb and pulsate with the same virtuoso, the past few years have witnessed some change in its essence, substance and landscaping as I view it from my camera obscura in my room in Munirka. But this somehow does not deter me from getting into the typical JNU mode with chai and endless bunkum conversation that switches gear from Patna to Paris in the blink of an eye. After all, it is in JNU that I learnt much about the politics of love and the love of politics.

While the epistemic whirlpool started spinning, whrooming and churning, it leaves behind few significant questions to be answered at the end of the day. I am often flummoxed by the question what is 'doing' Sociology and who 'can' do it? Extending further, is the discipline of Sociology a steely body which is impenetrable and where there is no possibility of criss-cross currents and winds of other disciplines that can have a lateral effect? Is Sociology a monolith where borrowings and 'cross-overs' aren't possible? Furthermore, is it restricted to certain set thematics and inserting the post-modern language of the avant-garde and dropping fashionable terms? What does it mean when someone quips - what and where is sociology in your argument? Is it an 'art form' as Robert Nisbet had conceived? Does sociology have a distinct parlance of its own, its own language which differentiates

and delineates it from other disciplines? The anthropophagi in me is still grappling with these questions and trying to seek answers. He is trying to figure his next move, find his place in the scheme of things and look contented under the inclement weather outside.

Circa 2012-13: The Anthropophagi Returns

I received my PhD Degree in September last year and by virtue of this coronation of 'doctor' before my name, I am yet another addition to the swelling army of unemployed degree holders of India. Better put, I am another numeral in the reserve army of unproductive labour force. This is however not to say that I did not relish my share of 'employed' status however brief they have been but the prestige and pleasure of a 'permanent' job and 'social security' so to speak has been alluding me till now. Life goes on as it does sometimes in a mundane manner and at other times raising high hopes of a bright future. However, the moment the spell is broken, I find myself in my two room set in Budh Vihar in Munirka Gaon away from the glitz and gaze, far away from the maddening crowd where things are scattered every which way in my room with a slightly 'erratic' hippocampus and an uncertain future to battle with.

Budh Vihar is one of the several hundred urban villages in the national capital and earns its name due to the remains of a Buddhist monastery and few stupas at the entrance of this *Lal Dora*; a term designated for urban villages in Delhi proper where municipal and construction bye-laws do not apply. For long, Budh Vihar has been a shelter to many-a-migrants, students, dreamers, unemployed folk and idlers, sportsmen and wrestlers, small time businessmen and politicians. Budh Vihar abounds in various 'Street Corner Societies' inhabited not just by younglings and adults but also the old guns comprising of both men and women. I am sure had Mr. Whyte been alive and heard of this village, this time he would have done a masterpiece on 'gossip culture' and 'chit-chat societies.' This residential pocket is among the most interesting urban spaces in Delhi where modernity and tradition stare each other eye to eye and where one

finds donkeys as ferries that transport sand and bricks to various construction sites in the village and married women observing long drawn veil in public.

I have been a journeyman who has been wearing the badge of the primordial and old, the different and lonely. In order to beat the moronic existence, I slipped into an almost office-like routine. This included reaching JNU campus in the morning, exchanging pleasantries and chatting with few familiar faces in the department and spending time in front of the computer. When evening drew to a close, I would return back to my dingy room but not before I have had steaming cups of *chai* at Ganga dhaba since the Kula Ring never leaves you. However, the weekends were far more interesting as it enabled me to meet my weekly grocery needs at *Malai Mandir*^{xx} Sunday market that invited the hustle and bustle of the Indian middle class. Here, I used to get the sparkle and the whiff of fresh vegetables, excited faces of couples and twinkling eyes of kids when they will feel gratified with *chole-bhature*^{xxi} at the makeshift stalls in the weekly *haats*.^{xxii} The same public while returning back home reminds itself once again of its (middle class) fantasies i.e. owning a small flat, having a car and English education for their children in this metropolis.

As we 'third worlders' rolled and hopped from the Age of Revolution to that of Capitalism before entering the Age of Empire and finally to that of Memes, it was perhaps time for JNU as well to undergo certain transformations. Over the years, JNU has obeyed the laws of nature to the minutiae and has therefore metamorphosed in terms of its demography, politicality and sociability. For example, one finds more motorbikes and comfort zones now as compared to times when I had entered JNU eight years back. People like us kept taking turns between swigs of Royal Stag and Old Monk which would sometimes get replaced by Teacher's and Bacardi and where Navy Cut would occasionally give way to puffs of Classic Mild.

JNU kept changing like a protean being. The proletarian looks that once defined a JNUite who donned the brown *Kolhapuri* has been replaced by fake versions of Adidas slippers and Action shoes. A cup of tea way back in 2004 is more than double its earlier

price now and so has the price of bus tickets that has increased almost three-fold. While, the green canopy on campus has thinned down owing to the new school buildings and hostels that have come up in the recent years, problems of accommodation go unabated. This denudation and deforestation has forced *nilgais* and peacocks to come out in the open and play peek-a-boo on the roads and near school buildings for grazing purposes.

One of the changes that I have observed in JNU in the recent years has been its hegemonic character. This has led to a shrinking of spaces for dissent and differences and instead has been replaced by scapegoating, labeling and petty politicking. The level of tolerance and freedom of speech among students and between student-pupil relationships has scaled down. I feel that a potent reason for this regressive tendency lies in a politically inert campus for almost three years due to the Lyngdoh Committee Recommendations. Though the Union has once again risen from the ground and taken over the reins of steering the campus through thick and thin, this new lease of life has come at a cost.

Winds of change have also brushed CSSS, my own centre. New kinetic groups from M.A. onwards are the 'Young Hegelians' who are more inclined towards academic pursuits unlike previous batches for whom public service examination was a fetish. The students keep crooning the revolutionary slogan 'study and struggle' while trying their best to link themselves with larger struggles both within and outside the campus.

Changes have affected JNU politics in a big way. Today, its leftist orientation has encouraged many other offshoots of the left and ultra left and dalit outfits absorbing everyone right from Che and Mao to our own indigenous extensions of Bhagat Singh, B.R. Ambedkar, Phule, Charu and Chandu.

I feel that it is time that artificial hierarchies between student and teachers are done away with so that liberatory spaces of shared and open debate and free intercourse is made possible. Knighthoods are not any assurance for respect and at this stage of higher scholarly pursuit it is regressive. In my view it is far more important that pupils are treated like colleagues and

friends rather than as one down the pedestal who takes the heat. It is only then that we can think of a meaningful dialogue between the seeker and the sought and sharing of ideas can take place without fear of the 'other'. Merely 'teaching' without practising and living the concepts of equality, egalitarianism, compassion would result in a renal failure of social sciences and higher learning. Any academic achievement no matter how mighty it may sound would but be a hollow crown and at best be labeled as 'literacy' but not education. It is about time that we stop basking in past glories and turn inwards and wallow in self reflexivity. I am pretty sure that this introspection and critical engagement with ourselves would help make JNU a unique institution and keep its masthead flying high. If not, we would be creating origami intellectuals and armchair scholars who would be charting various theorylands and hermeneutias devoid of any substance and meaning.

Adding to the string of 'end of the world,' thesis, the year 2012 was beset with yet one more fatal prediction based on the ancient Mayan calendar. And as we move past this hoax once more i.e. 12.12.2012, it seems that my journey has begun yet again. I still have to meet many more strangers who would spin tales of firewalkers and tumblers, of smurfs,imps, goblins and anthropophagis and usher me in these fabled terrains.

Notes

ⁱ *Ashtavakra* comes from the word *asht* i.e. eight and *vakra* meaning angles. Put together, the word means bent or deformed from eight angles. In local parlance, the word symbolizes someone ugly and deficient. *Ash-tavakra* was a sage during the Vedic period although the precise period of his existence is debatable. The preaching and sayings of *Ashtavakra* is available in *Ashtavakra Gita* and contains the traditional teachings of *Advaita Vedanta*. *Ashtavakra's* bent body originally a symbol of disease and weakness ultimately represents the symbol of true and all powerful knowledge by the end of his journey.

ⁱⁱ One of the ancient names of Patna where I come from.

ⁱⁱⁱ Literally translated would mean blue cows is the

largest Asian antelope and one of the most commonly seen wild animals of central and northern India.

^{iv} *Khadi kurta* is a long stole or an overall made by *Khadi* industry which specializes in making handspun and hand woven cloth in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

^v *Jhola* is a long dangling cotton bag.

^{vi} *Kolhapur* in Maharashtra famous for its leather items especially slippers the *Kolhapuri chappals* or sandals which is liked by most leftists and completes his / her attire.

^{vii} *Ganga dhaba* is one of the most famous open air eateries of JNU among many others where students gather for evening discussions with steaming cups of *chai* or tea. Moreover, it is also a vantage point for mobilizing students for demonstrations and protest marches for which JNU is well known and revered. All the dhabas and hostels in JNU are named after Indian rivers.

^{viii} *Sattu Paratha* is a delicacy of north India especially Bihar. It is made out of a mixture of ground pulses and cereals which is stuffed inside *roti* or bread and rolled out in a circular shape with the help of rolling pin and board and tossed with butter or ghee.

^{ix} Nilgai or nilgau (literally translated as 'blue cows') is the largest Indian antelope and most commonly found in farmlands and scrub forest. The mature male is called a blue bull or *nilgai*.

^x *Pandal* is a big canopy or a tent.

^{xi} *Lal Salam* is Red Salute

^{xii} Different salutations to greet each other on campus.

^{xiii} *Mahakumbh* comes from word *kumbh* meaning a pitcher and *maha* is great. Put together, the word *Mahakumbh* mean a great pitcher. It is a mammoth congregation and pilgrimage of Hindus to bathe in the sacred river. It is held every three years at one of the four places by rotation – Haridwar, Allahabad, Nashik and Ujjain

^{xiv} All India Students Association (AISA), Student's Federation of India (SFI), Students for Resistance (SFR), Students for Campus (SFC), All India Students Federation (AISF), Democratic Students Union (DSU).

^{xv} Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Revolutionary Cultural Front (RCF), National Students

Union of India (NSUI), Youth for Equality (Y4E), United Dalit Students Federation (UDSF) All India Bahujan Students Front AIBSF), Bahujan Students Federation (BSF).

^{xvi} *Mahamoorkh Sammelan* is translated as the Greatest Fools Conference

^{xvii} *Maha Chaat* is the Greatest Bore and one crowned as such means that he / she has impressed the audience and the judges with his / her 'boring' performance and antics.

^{xviii} Bhang is a liquid preparation made by grounding

the leaves and flowers of the female cannabis plant.

^{xix} Uttara Swami Malai Temple commonly known as Malai Mandir (literally Hill Temple) is a famous South Indian temple complex dedicated to Lord Swaminatha (commonly known as Lord Murugan) located in Ramkrishnapuram (R.K Puram), New Delhi beside which the famous weekly Sunday market or *haat* is held.

^{xx} *Chole-bhature* is a popular breakfast item from North India which comprises of spicy chick peas or *chole* and fried bread called *bhatoora*.

^{xxi} *Haat* is a local weekly market.

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