

Book Review: The Chaotic Order: An Unknown Teacher's Pedagogic Travelogue by Avijit Pathak

*Khanday Mudasir Ahmad**

The book '*The Chaotic Order: An Unknown Teacher's Pedagogic Travelogue*' authored by Avijit Pathak is divided into twenty chapters in which the author shares his experiences as a teacher, writer, and supervisor. The main thrust of this manuscript is on higher educational institutes where the author understands the system as submerged under narcissism, where creativity is killed, the inner voice is muzzled, enjoyment is deprived, love is snatched, and writing has become a compulsion. Every academic activity which is written is just a showoff and makes the personal academic profile thicker. Academic activities are seen like survival of the fittest, but it is stupidity, foolishness, a ceaseless war as it snatches the joy of reading and writing. The author made it evident how the system wants us to be competitive and impatient as our carrier is based on measurable performance. In academic ritual, we are forced to read Foucault, Bourdieu and like prolific theorists and we are compelled to write research papers, book reviews, and theses as per the codified rules of the university which is *Brahmanization* that devalues us.

In this book, the author denigrates the banking concept of an examination. However, the author inflects and accentuates open-ended questions which stimulate imagination among students. The author of this book wishes a teacher as a 'friend' with an open heart who considers his students as flowers, an illuminating the flame of light, a source of love, and care that makes his doors open for them. The author narrates that despite having many friends, my students are my true friends, whose fragrance purifies me, their laughter makes me alive, and their luminous query inspire my thoughts.

Pathak lambasts the predefined style and standards followed in academic writing. The author reminds us here the fear of plagiarism which traps everyone due to the ceaseless competitive culture in academic institutes, where an individual is compelled to give reference and quote the well-known luminaries like Foucault, Bourdieu, Omvedt, Srinivas, and like others. It is all academic ritual that is compelled to follow for the production of technical papers that is without creativity and originality. Individuals need to be allowed to write what they have understood, felt, observed, and realized. He suggests that we should not rush to make our creation for name and fame. In the research journey we face many surprises, for example, sometimes our chosen inappropriate methods, unsuitable designs, undesirable data collection tools, and sometimes untoward

**Khanday Mudasir Ahmad, Research Scholar, Department of Education, University of Kashmir.*

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incident happens to us and we must always be ready to face these challenges as research is not a beaten track to be followed.

Regarding teachers, the author claims that the teacher should never think that he reached the zenith as it is arrogance but should always feel incompleteness, this incompleteness makes a teacher a student, not a perfectionist. The author reminds us here that if we are dejected, proscribed, exploited, and defeated, but we should know the power of innate potential which lies within us that helps us to rise again and again. We should not feel proud of ourselves, for power, wealth, possession, but should embrace love and give it to others.

The author highlights the *Brahmanization* which has stratified the Indian society and is being considered pernicious. Nevertheless, we pay meager attention to the other form of *Brahmanization* that is academic *Brahmanism*. This academic *Brahmanism* is rampant in our academic culture and has become a ritual where too much importance is given to Durkheim, Foucault, Marx, and like others. Eminent academic theorists are considered essential for the survival in academic world. The author finds this ritual as derisory because it snatches its fragrance, originality, and love. However, the author claims that he is not against these texts but insists readers to find these texts in the journey of joy and hope, in pain and in everyday academic life.

The author demonstrated and criticized the academic bureaucracy which is on a surge at present where everyone seems in a rat race, restless to publish papers, to attend conferences, workshops, projects, and finally to have a numerically lengthy academic profile. This academic bureaucracy is seen as survival of the fittest, but from the author's perspective, it is stupidity, foolishness, a ceaseless war, and aggression as it snatches the joy of reading and writing, the fragrance of originality, creativity, excitement, love and it has occupied our consciousness. However, the system wants us to be competitive as our carrier is based on measurable performance. The author suggests for writing when there is a call from within when you wish to disseminate without bothering its achievement. He suggests that teachers should not be in rush in academic production but should be calm and to live peacefully. Pathak raises the voice for "ecological university- a university that seeks to restore all that we have lost, a university that cares, a university that makes us sensitive, humane, and deeply ethical/spiritual" (p. 118).

The author unveils that in contemporary times it is being observed that students have no time for enjoyment, prayer, imagination, contemplation which have been deprived from them because of measurable product of success. Objective reasoning is developed among students and they are made prepare for different entrance examinations in numerous

education shops prevalent in our society where they need to be smart, quick, and efficient. The author talks about teaching which is an art not 24*7 live coverage like T.V. channels, which is just superficiality where they try to beautify the exterior decorum seeking to hide the gloomy interior. A teacher is like an illuminating lamp that enlightens the hearts of students in the classroom. Teacher cleanses the mind, generates love, empathy, and understanding, and enables students to differentiate between right and wrong. Teaching means intellectual, spiritual, and ethical development. Teachers face multiple challenges in the classroom due to individual differences among students. Teachers may be asked oppressed, biased, and ignorant, but the teacher grows by confronting such difficulties, hindrances, challenges in life as well in classrooms with dignity. The author makes it clear that when foreign thinkers, theorists are taught there is no issue, but when it comes to the teaching of Indian thinkers, theorists or poet then it creates a problem, students become impatient, for example, if the teacher will teach the poetry of Iqbal students pose questions why not another poet from Tamil, Bengal, Telgu and so forth. These barriers and trite answers will remain to rain. But the role of a teacher is about the cultivation of minds, overcome the constraints, and barriers. The author reminds us that teachers while entering the classroom should unburden the luggage of caste, religion, gender, and ethnicity, then exploration and learning are possible in the classroom. Caste is no doubt prevalent in our society which causes atrocities, violence, exclusion, isolation, division, erect barriers, and causes doubt about others. It generates doubt and mistrust and pollutes the relationship between student and teacher. We need to fight this victimization to build a good relationship. Teaching transforms us and saves us from stigmatizing the backward students.

The author further talked about the school teachers and the university teachers' very vividly. The author argues that the school teachers motivate, inspire, arouse, interest, and hope among tender minds as compared to university which has become the theatre of narcissism, where teachers lack love, laughter, innocence, wonder, and naughtiness. In contemporary times education has become life-threatening due to competition, overloaded curriculum, and obsession for success.

Teaching is not just about the calculation of comforts but also the name of sharing, offering ideas, positivity, and life energy. Pathak believes that we all should be givers in the form of opening night schools, visit nearby schools, offer books, plantation of trees, smiles, prayers, tales, love, energy, and much more. Giving is just as normal as we are breathing but not like charity which inflates the ego. But an unfortunate thing is that we see only receivers around us that is why exploitation, discrimination, poverty is on their surge.

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Pathak observes that the academic impact factor is just egomaniacal and has no impact in real life as it snatches inner voice, positivity, excitement, and joy. We are considered worthless if our work is not being acknowledged as sound academic publications. Nevertheless, the author states that he is not bothering about the culture of impact factor, citation index, and the like. But he writes with honesty, with an inner voice, curiosity, wonder, and what so ever idea comes into his mind like politics, culture, education, and society. He writes such work which has an impact in real life. The author reveals that he is not bothering about his prizes, papers, books, and academic profile as these things do not make him feel happy, what makes him happy is that - if the writers writing touches the readers. He states that he will not be remembered after his death, so why be so serious.

The author states that becoming a guide is very difficult as it is a long process than a supervisor who is a subject specialist with a professional relationship. But he intimates that always be as a teacher who “lives in many domains simultaneously” (p. 190) particularly as a companion and co-traveler who can suggest the research topic according to the interest of the scholar, who can rise them again if they fall.

Overall, the author is obsessed with academic vanity and allegorically says that as a bird comes to the tree as per his will, likewise books or academic work should be read as per the interest of a reader, the reader should not be compelled to read them. If we showoff, advertise, or speak about it then it loses its sacred sense and becomes the victim of narcissism. We should write when there is a call from inside, not for name and fame which is impact less. The teachers should develop the listening capacity and art of possibilities among students. The teacher should listen meekly student's arguments and need to remain calm.

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