notes on JNU, sketching and thinking 02.10.2016



JNU (Jawahar Lal Nehru University) Campus, New Delhi.

It is a strange experience to create exercises and testing them like a science lab. It's even stranger to drive out of JNU and then come back because a thought popped up in the head. And then normal to think that since JNU is round (it took me 30 minutes, start time 7:18 pm, finish time 7:48 pm) I should do one round in a car and one walking. The time mentioned is for walking. And then seeing what happens to that very thought and how it changes and how wind currents crossover and dilute it, wash it away.

So I have lemon tea and I draw. Then I do one round in the car and I draw. Then I walk the campus and I draw. Then I leave and a thought comes and I drive back. The day passes by like this. I am doing things in the space or the space, my activities is doing it. I wouldn't know but this way I saw almost a pack of dogs howling at something which came out of the dark spaces of the Campus. They sensed the danger. I also imagined that the circle should be even bigger. Go out one gate and encircle the whole university and this would take two hours on foot maybe and then draw even a bigger circle keeping the university in the centre.

But can one do this in reading? but how will the circle form since the university is not the centre anymore. And here I am walking around?

But when you read something on the net, the article are like circles with something in the centre which keeps coming back, like philosophy in the centre or Cultural theory in the centre or a feeling that you get.

At first the Chai also became a circle, lemon tea, again lemon tea, then chai and each time the space was utilised to go back to and make a mark.

I think it's not thinking anymore, because you do pick up live things from the outside (as if they stick to you like glue). maybe the walk, the observation, like these gigantic water tanks on the campus. Or how posters of protest, from discrimination, not getting a hostel, a room on rent, a queer festival, a study group, a play, announcements, all telling you how people are engaging themselves. These are voices, all of them talking, of a past event, a massacre of Dalits, an injustice story, voices echoing through these posters.

But mark making changes something. In this I feel there is a difference or maybe not. Maybe because of the space, JNU being a liberal Arts college, the mark making somewhat takes up a similar tempo, feel as the posters. It is like a message, like a what's app message.

Further notes:

The Problem I face is that an experience cannot repeat itself. The entire walk cannot be repeated. I can do the walk again but the experiences can never replicate. I think not a single moment comes back?

Would it differ for the person making a burger at MacDonalds, when he has to repeat and make the same burger 100 times in a day. would he be keeping count of the time of the day, the numbers of burgers he created, the experiences he or she had?

I could not just walk into the forest area into the dark. There was no path for me and I would fear pain, injury, if I just turned in my left. And do what in the dark. I will not survive. I can't

sleep, rest. I would, within few minutes meet complete darkness and I would have to stop. My brain would not know what to do.

The person working in MacDonalds cannot risk to change the format. he or she knows there is an order to be completed and the burger has to look exactly like the picture, with the right amount of onions, chutney, the deep fried patty and a covering with a Bun. It is the way to eat it. What if one individual decides to start throwing the bun like frisbee?

Any such act would last for few seconds to few minutes. The other staff which is hypnotised to perform their functions would intervene. The Manager would have powers to physically capture such person and STOP this act. This act has gone against the ethics of the place. You cannot chuck, throw food. Such interruptions means dire consequences.

But I went back into the gallery space to draw on the wall. I did not venture into the forest area. I drew a bit. but kept on thinking of the forest, a desire to slip into it, somehow.



Pen and ink marks on the wall, inside School of Arts & Aesthetics Gallery, JNU (Jawahar Lal University) Delhi, site specific drawing.
Size: approx. 2 in by 2 in