



**Mumbai Münster Institute of Advanced Studies  
(MMIAS)**

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**Report on the MMIAS Junior Fellow Lecture 2023-2024  
Socio-Economic and Politico-Cultural Aspects of Diaspora in  
Erotic Stories, You People and Gold Diggers  
by Dr. Sharmila Jajodia, Junior Fellow, MMIAS  
16<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

The Mumbai Münster Institute of Advanced Studies (MMIAS), University of Mumbai, had organised the MMIAS Junior Fellow Lecture 2023-2024 on *Socio-Economic and Politico-Cultural Aspects of Diaspora in Erotic Stories, You People and Gold Diggers* by MMIAS Junior Fellow Dr. Sharmila Jajodia on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Dr. Jajodia delivered the formal Public Lecture as part of her appointment as MMIAS Junior Fellow.

Professor Nilufer E. Bharucha, Co-Director, MMIAS, University of Mumbai, welcomed all the participants and introduced Dr. Jajodia as the MMIAS Junior Fellow and invited her to make the presentation.



**I-r: Professor Nilufer E. Bharucha and Dr. Sharmila Jajodia**

Dr. Jajodia's lecture focussed on three novels — Balli Kaur Jaswal's *Erotic Stories for Punjabi Widows* (2017), *Gold Diggers* (2021) by Sanjena Sathian, and Nikita Lalwani's *You People* (2020).

Her presentation began with an overview of the three authors mentioned above. Following the overview, she introduced the term 'Diaspora' as a concept and later as a community with reference to Indian Diaspora. To substantiate her argument, Dr. Jajodia presented literature review from well know scholars and critics. It gave a holistic view of the term to the audience and formed the basis of her presentation.

Dr. Jajodia then shifted the focus of her presentation to analyse the three texts to discuss the different aspects of diaspora, socio-economic and politico-cultural. Over the next few minutes, she gave detailed plot outlines of all the three novels, which made it easier for the audience to relate to and understand the theme of the presentation. In each outline, using the characters and situations in the three novels, Dr. Jajodia gave examples of and reviewed the different issues diasporics face in their host country.

Dr. Jajodia began with Balli Kaur Jaswal's *Erotic Stories for Punjabi Widows* (2017). The novel is about Sikh women who migrated from India to London. It depicts how these women are betrayed in their love life, how they sometimes lose life, face fear, have issues with safety and security in the backdrop of a love affair, and face threats from men and community in the course of the story.

The second novel that Dr. Jajodia discussed was Nikita Lalwani's *You People* (2020) that portrays the problems faced by the diaspora - illegal migration, human trafficking, fear, safety and security, guilt, void, and loss of kindness and compassion in the backdrop of civil war, domestic issues and the legal quandaries in London.

In the third and last novel *Gold Diggers* (2021), Dr. Jajodia deliberated how the author, Sanjana Sathian, examines immigrant identity, community, and the identity of teenagers through her characters. A multi-directional saga, the novel takes the reader through the lives of three women.

Dr. Jajodia concluded the lecture by discussing how the main characters in all the three novels struggle with nostalgia, identity crisis, sense of alienation in their attempts to preserve their culture and tradition and, at the same time, contribute socially, economically and politically.

At the end of the lecture, Professor Nilufer E. Bharucha gave her remarks as she was also Dr. Jajodia's supervisor as MMIAS Junior

Fellow. She congratulated and commended Dr. Jajodia for acting on the suggestions offered and for making a unique presentation.

The lecture was conducted in a hybrid mode. Dr. Jajodia made her presentation from the MMIAS office on the Kalina campus of the University of Mumbai, and it was telecast on Zoom for online participants. Students and faculty from the University of Mumbai's departments attended the lecture offline.



**Faculty and students of the University of Mumbai's departments**

The event concluded with refreshments for all present at the venue.

[Click here](#) to view the entire lecture on the MMIAS YouTube channel.

**Place: Mumbai**

**Date: 16<sup>th</sup> December 2023**