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EDITORIAL NOTE

The *Socio-Legal Review* was one of the few academic publications in the country devoted exclusively to socio-legal discussion at its inception in 2005. Since then, the *Review* has not only published leading pieces in this space, but has also helped carve out the contours of socio-legal discussion in India. Seventeen years later, we have had to contend with the nature of the space we occupy in a changed landscape of socio-legal writing. An encouraging spurt of publications sharing our mandate in recent years has provided us with the opportunity to re-evaluate the advantages that we can bring as a student-run interdisciplinary journal. At the same time, the Covid-19 pandemic forever changed the way in which we think of socio-legal issues. The pandemic prompted the realisation of the ways in which all problems with a legal interface even those traditionally not thought of as so are social.

Grappling with this insight, we attempted to experiment with an expanded understanding of our ‘socio-legal’ mandate in Volume 18. Acknowledging the important role that disciplines outside of the law play in understanding legal institutions and outcomes, Volume 18(1) utilises methods from adjacent areas of study to provide insights where traditional legal analysis ends. In doing so, the discussion in this issue breaks in both form and substance from wider writing on these topics as well as our own previous volumes. We hope the articles in this issue demonstrate the critical need for an interdisciplinary approach to address legal problems, and for socio-legal writing to adapt to meet this need.

Continuing our series of *Notes from the Field*, the first article in this issue is *Living by Religion, Playing by Law: Early Glimpses of the Ban on Triple Talaq* by Dr. Kalindi Kokal. *Notes from the Field* are inter-disciplinary pieces highlighting the complexities in the impact and implementation of the law, with an aim to inform legal discussion with observations from the ground-up. To this end, Dr. Kokal makes an invaluable addition to the literature on triple talaq by documenting the implementation, negotiations, and navigation of the Muslim Women’s Act 2019 over a period of 16 months in three police stations in central Mumbai. Her ethnographic research is relevant, timely, and important in understanding the complex relationship between the law and the State, and its effect on interpersonal relationships.

The four other pieces in this issue are full-length research articles. Ms. Maansi Verma in *Agenda Control in the Indian Parliament and the Impact on its Oversight Function – Analysis and Evidence*, presents empirical evidence to show how the legislature’s institutional ability to hold the executive accountable through debate and discussion has been compromised. This piece not only

fills a gap in existing literature through its study of granular data on the functioning of Parliament, but also contributes to larger theorisation on the separation of powers and democratic backsliding through analysis of Parliamentary rules and procedure.

The third article in this issue is *Majesty and Dignity of Courts: Changes in Court Dynamics with the Onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic in India* by Dr. Rahela Khorakiwala. This piece explores how the concept of the majesty and dignity of the courts, which usually relies on visual aspects such as the architecture, dress code, and traditions within the courtroom, has changed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The second piece in this issue to use ethnography, Dr. Khorakiwala asks readers to interrogate the narratives of authority and different forms of control exercised by the courts.

The last two pieces in this issue look closely at trends in religious discrimination. Dr. Rowena Robinson in *'Private Acts' and Structural Inequality: Law and Housing Discrimination*, focusses on housing discrimination experienced by Muslims in urban areas from a sociological perspective. She argues that segregation produces and is a product of economic inequality and targeted social exclusion, and calls for the legal community's active involvement through demosprudence. In the final piece of Volume 18(1), Dr. Seema Kazi explores the intersection of religious discrimination and gender politics seen during the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution. Dr. Kazi, in *Women, Gender Politics, and Resistance in Kashmir*, explores the misogyny in the nationalist subtext that justified the revocation and the parallels between the State's claims over Kashmiri territory and Kashmiri women. By using local Kashmiri reportage, Dr. Kazi captures Kashmiri women's voices, their resistance, political resolve, and struggle for justice in the midst of ethno-political dominance.

In addition to rethinking the mandate and style of the *Review*, we have also worked towards putting in place formal editorial and publication policies, to be finalised over the coming months. We are grateful to Professor (Dr.) Arun Thiruvengadam and Ms. Nishtha V for going over these aspects and the general direction of the journal with us at length over multiple discussions through the year. We would like to thank the Editorial Board 2021-22 and the observers to the Socio-Legal Review for their efforts, as well as our peer reviewers and our Vice-Chancellor Professor (Dr.) Sudhir Krishnaswamy for their continued support and guidance. We hope you not only find this issue useful, but also enjoy reading the pieces as much as we did. We look forward to your feedback and welcome responses to this issue on the *Forum* as well as in upcoming issues of the *Review*.

Srobona Ghosh Dastidar and Jwalika Balaji,
Chief Editor and Deputy Chief Editor,
Socio-Legal Review,
New Delhi/Bangalore, October 2022.