

VOLUME 3

BITACORA

APRIL 2018



LITERARY MAGAZINE





The Teachers' Editorial Team

From left to right: Dr. Urvashi Vashist, Ms. Jeyakirthana J., Ms. Arunima Das, Mr. Sameer Chopra, Mr. Maisnam Arnopal, Ms. Pragya Gupta

BITACORA

Literary Magazine

-The Butterfly Effect-

Volume 3

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Department of English

Gargi College

University of Delhi

From the Principal's Desk

It gives me great pleasure that the Department of English is releasing the third issue of its magazine– *Bitacora*. The theme for the current volume is ‘The Butterfly Effect’, the term is coined by a famous mathematician Edward Lorenz. “The Butterfly Effect describes how a small change in one state of a deterministic non-linear system can result in large differences in a later state.” It is apparently a mathematical concept, but very philosophical if studied in the context of life. It states “a small change in one's habits at an early age can bring remarkable difference in the personality at a later stage”. The butterfly effect in our life may support us or go against us, it all depends on the choices made at an early impressionable age.

As a small initiative, we at Gargi try to inculcate good practices in our students for their better future. Tapping the vast potential of our students through such magazines and newsletters is one such endeavour in this direction.

I congratulate the entire editorial team and contributors and enthusiastically look forward to reading our students’ perspective on the theme undertaken.



Dr. Promila Kumar

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From the Editorial Board

The success of our first two Issues inspired real responsibility - to re-produce the nuanced and insightful complexity of previous editions. Brainstorming is always fun when many minds meet to hash out common ground. Possible themes ranged from scientific phenomena to creativity through mundanity. Each idea had its own fascination, but we discovered our common goal talking about how we all affect each other in big ways, how you as readers affect us, and how we as human beings affect the universe. The Butterfly Effect tied all ends in our minds together.

Edward Norton Lorenz, pioneer of the Chaos Theory in mathematics, coined the term to study the behaviour of 'dynamical systems' highly sensitive to initial conditions: seemingly insignificant events can bring about significant change; tornadoes are caused by butterfly wings flapping at a specific point in time and space. Similar to a ripple effect, the Butterfly Effect highlights how the ostensibly inconsequential can change the world in big ways.

Our writers through this Issue use the theme to re-present the human journey. How we all, as living beings, affect the ecosystem in ways we rarely foresee, and how we, as social animals, affect each other, globally, politically, personally. This edition of Bitacora is all about revealing the personal as political and the social as personal.

"What is Change" by Pridhi Chopra talks about what the world defines as change, and how metamorphosis works at a personal and natural level. "It Started As a Joke" and "Gramophone" describe how people's minds and lives are destroyed by the sound of explosions - by the unconsidered catastrophe - and how individuals need to document what happens to them; a singular experience may be representative, and re-present the world at large. "Justuju" and "Butterfly" reclaim personal identity, poignant journeys and the construction of powerful personhood.

We include, as always, interviews with two senior English Department faculty, Dr. Shatarupa Sinha and Ms. Mudita Mohile: their work in Gargi and beyond affects us in more ways than we anticipate. Our 'logbook' for the year likewise features department activities and events we have yet to finish feeling the full effects of.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our principal Dr. Promila Kumar. Special thanks due too to teachers who helped our magazine editors: Ms Arunima Das, Ms Pragya Gupta, Ms Ammu Jeyakirthana, Dr Urvashi Vashist, Mr Sameer Chopra, Mr Sahin Shah and Mr Maisnam Arnal. This magazine would not exist without student contributions. We thank all English department writers and artists for sending in their work and making the magazine what it is.

Despite their seeming insignificance on the world's stage, our smallest actions may have overwhelming consequences. Our identities are intermingled, we are all connected by the forces of nature - and perhaps some part of our production will spark your incalculably world-changing imagination today.

Words

Her pen worked wonders,
Her words spat fire.
The ink was her set of paints,
The page her blank canvas.
Like an artist,
She built an alternate universe.

In between,
Her words falter and
Her screams amplify
Through the walls of her mind.
She is transported back
To her former world of ordeals.
Harassment, violence and an unending string of quarrels
Made her who she is today;
A writer,
With copious stories to tell.

She shakes her head
And acknowledges her past
By storing it in a closed diary.
The words flow out
Like a lively cascade;
The pen moves subtly,
Like the first flight of a butterfly.

The smallest conversion in her life
Shaped her into a better person;
She isn't a caged animal
Anymore.

Angela Braru
I Year

Butterflies in my Stomach

Butterflies woke up when you appeared.
My brain stopped functioning when you appeared.
My nerves started dancing when you appeared.

Those butterflies turned into love birds
The moment you replied with a lovely smile

Pulling your cheeks upwards with a promise,
A ray of sunshine to my dead emotions.

Not just butterflies - you gave me a whole bunch of animals
That changed my whole state the day you appeared.

My day started with new energy
The moment you looked back at me.

My nerves transformed into guitar strings
The moment you sat beside me.

Your aromatic love got my attention
The moment you turned to me.

All of these emotions went away,
Butterflies died,
All my nerves went numb,
Flowers wilted,
The moment I heard the song of the morning alarm clock.

The moment I heard - "Hey! Wake up, you",
All I knew then was,
Nothing was true, not even you.

Bhupinder Kour
I Year

The Butterflies of Personality

“Personality is to a man what a perfume is to a flower.”

- Charles M. Schwab, American steel magnate.

Every day on an average 33,500 babies are born all over the world. An estimated 7.6 billion people currently make up the global population. Each growing child, every person on the planet, has a unique personality defined by a plethora of varying traits; some recurrent, some rare. It is commonly believed that the upbringing of children in their immediate surroundings is what nurtures their personalities. If we dig a little deeper to satiate our curiosity regarding them, we come across some very interesting factors which are equal parts ridiculous and inconceivable. They are, however, scientifically proven and carry truth.

Psychologically, the personality of a person is determined by four major determinants which affect an individual throughout their life span - biological, cultural, familial, and situational. These are the factors which come to mind while thinking logically about personality development. There are, however, some seemingly insignificant factors too, which produce a butterfly effect and influence the greater scheme.

One such factor is ‘birth order’, a rather strange component of personality development which recently received attention in *The Huffington Post*. Researchers say that the firstborn of a family is the most enigmatic and intelligent. The personality of a firstborn is characteristically confident and dominant, with a nurturing attitude due to the presence of a younger sibling. The second child is adjusting and flexible, qualities of an introvert, and a third sibling is usually frivolous and full of excitement, with a love of dynamism. The third one believes in living life to the fullest. A single child, on the other hand, is considered more understanding as well as sharper, more intelligent.

Age of course is another factor which greatly affects the personality of an individual throughout life. As one grows, one loses the chirpiness and innocence of childhood and grows into a person who cherishes stillness and indoor life, unlike kids who love the outdoors. It is a gradual process of changes people undergo between the ages of 10 and 65. In 1961, Ernest Tupes and Raymond Christal introduced the idea of The Big Five - a research-based theory which incorporated factor analysis to describe personalities based on openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. It is the changes in these five components which dominate our personalities as we grow.

Astrology claims that date of birth affects the personality of a child. This bears an unexpected truth as well. Nursery schools admit children over 3 years of age by August of any given year. This gives children born in September, October, November, and December an advantage of up to one year. Due to a higher level of brain growth, these children often do comparatively better in school, which boosts their morale and fuels motivation to do better throughout life.

Diet is another factor considered highly relevant, affecting personality through physical health. This mostly has to do with hormones. Higher testosterone levels make a person quick-tempered and irritated. Serotonin, on the other hand, is a happiness hormone secreted by the brain which is believed even to cure cancer. These hormone levels are mainly affected by what we eat. A healthy diet, along with a good fitness regime, increases levels of dopamine and serotonin and makes a person feel positive. It is worth mentioning that the effects of testosterone answer several questions about attitudinal differences across genders.

If the factors discussed above seem rather like a Jim Carrey speculation, and their supposed effects on personality bizarre, the idea that a person's "name" or the "sound" of a word affects personality has to be the showstopper. This happens due to hearing synaesthesia. Certain arrangements of letters and the sounds they produce generate involuntary feelings for that word, even if we don't know its meaning. Consider the words "vitriolic" and "spleenic". Good for you if you know their meanings but if you don't, read them again and try to guess what they might be related to.

Our personality, it now seems, is much more out of our control than we would like it to be, though it is worth mentioning that these factors are not at all rigid. Exceptions abound. But more examples accord with them affecting our personalities than not. However, these factors must not become a basis for judging someone, for these are not the only factors which make up a person's essence. To judge anyone is an exercise in negativity that one should flee. It generates malice, which makes you as well as those around you, vitriolic and spleenic. Personality development is highly dynamic. We are a different person every day, as is everyone else. Instead, we should all focus on increasing the dopamine and serotonin levels in our bodies and make the most of the little things that make us who we are. After all, they are the fragrance to our flower.

Ashlesha Balyan
I Year

The Little Changes

Mr. Williams – an admirable man – was the son of a baron. Though not very rich, he was knowledgeable enough to know the words the others in town could only nod at. Out of his two boys and three girls, the eldest son – Robert – was his favourite. There was not a moment when Mr. Williams would not boast about his son and his dreams. It wasn't that he didn't love the others, but Robert's aspiration of becoming a scientist made him proud.

Whenever Robert returned from the university he always shared new theories with his father, despite all attempts, he couldn't engage all his other family members. His mother always claimed that theories gave her terrible headaches, his two sisters were only interested in the vibrant ribbons he bought for them and the theories that interested his younger brother did not interest Robert.

This time when Robert visited, he explained the Butterfly Effect. The term only accelerated Mr. Williams' excitement because butterflies were his favourite. Robert described the concept as the occurrence of tornadoes caused by the flapping of butterfly wings at a particular time and space. Metaphorically, it meant how our little and insignificant actions can have a significant effect in our lives. In short, little things can make big changes.

Mr. Williams' reaction to the theory was bewilderment, as he never really paid attention to such stuff. When he was young, he wanted a motor car more than anything. New things attracted him. His friend Sebastian was rich enough to buy it and when Mr. Williams rode it, the experience was highly exciting. As a result, he pledged to buy himself one as well.

But with the changing times and increasing familial bonds, said pledge was forgotten. Robert's brand new discussion brought back the old excitement. Money was still an issue, but maybe he could make the required small changes – like saving money on a daily basis or cutting short on frequent purchases – and wait for the bigger impact...

He decided to keep aside three pounds everyday as a slow start towards his big dream. Further, he reduced the money he spent on his cigars; instead of using a carriage, he now walked. These small changes in his daily expenses helped him save a considerable amount. Finally, the total sum required for the huge purchase was achieved by the end of the year. These little changes he made helped him attain what he wanted, hence leaving an impact on his life.

The story of Mr. Williams tells us how important little changes can be. If each one of us reduces the usage of plastic, it will leave an impact; if we walk a certain distance rather than using a vehicle, it can cause a minor change, and so does the reduction in intake of cigarettes from four to three. Our smallest actions can directly or indirectly affect us. It is for us to decide whether we want them to affect us in a positive or a negative way.

Priya Verma
I Year

The Gramophone



(Image Credit: Joseph Eid)

I woke up this morning and carried out my usual routine. I walk three kilometres everyday passing through the rubble of the remaining skeleton buildings. It has somehow become a routine to glance at these buildings and streets before more and more crumble down into nothingness. As I take a walk every day, the Aleppo I grew up in ceases to be what it was and transforms into dust. My house is situated in the heart of the city not much destroyed by war. As I was walking through the rubble I heard a loud explosion coming back from where I left. I turned back and saw a huge cloud of dust and the ground sank in. It has become such a norm to hear and see these explosions, to see no more of people, and to walk through these skeleton buildings.

After my walk I went back to my house which looked a lot different from how I saw it an hour ago. It suddenly struck my mind, and things got connected making a clear picture in my mind. I rushed to my flat, and though I was held back by people, I couldn't stay back. I saw my flat become a part of the rubble but the primary concern was my gramophone. I climbed the stairs with difficulty because of the debris. My flat was on the third floor and when I reached my room, I went to the table near the window where the gramophone was kept. I sat down on my bed and looked around the unfamiliar but still familiar setting. I played an Arab song which was from the 60s and was my favourite. The thoughts came back to me piling up one by one. My book remains incomplete, the thoughts have still not shaped into words and words not put together into sentences. I walked to my study table in the far-left corner of the room. I removed the dust from my diary and started writing about the fresh incident while the dust from the explosion floated around making the surroundings blur and breathing hard. The song stopped, I played another song which I used to listen during my college days. The songs, they keep me going, they help me write when there is so much to distract me. I have a bigger task to achieve.

It all started when I lost my 6 year old two years ago; my wife had died during childbirth. I realised few days after Vidal's death that someone needs to write it down, all of this cannot be forgotten, what a country faced cannot be given into oblivion. I will tell the world about each day in this country of mine, how I lived, what I had, what I lost and how it all changed. I will tell them about these buildings, these loud shudders, these bullets. I will tell them about the cries they haven't heard of. I will tell them every little thing. But will I be picked up among those happy endings? I tried to be one but, in this place, where we survive on hope which in itself is like these skeleton buildings, so weak, it is so hard, so very hard like a water droplet thrown into the fire to survive. Today I have so much to write again. So, I started to clean the dust that covered my flat. My building became one with the skeleton structures present all around.

Tuba Firoz
III Year

The Broken Glass

With wet eyes and a smudged face,
With speechless, wrinkled lips,
In a moment when all stood still,
Waiting with anguish for the gap to fill.

To do something to aid,
To do something to care,
To seek a moment of respite
In this endless nightmare.

What do you see? What do you hear?
Why do you feel so queer?
Why so feeble? Why so weak?
What do I do to shake this fear?

I hope the end to this dread
Will soon come to pass,
I hope to be at ease and peace
And soon to heal the broken glass.

Asmita Pandey
III Year

It Started as a Joke

I was fourteen when I became intensely aware of myself and where I belonged. On a completely normal day, during a regular class of carbon chemistry, sitting amidst all those children, I heard someone called me a “Terrorist”.

I remember the joke vaguely, something about bombs and how they can be made by splitting the nuclei - all of it directed at me. It was a joke and I laughed along with the others; somewhere inside I began constantly convincing my consciousness that it was just a joke, again and again and every day. I never wore a hijab and neither was I religious. When I would tell people who I am, they would reel in surprise. Some would be happy I am not one of those “oppressed” Muslim women, while others would accuse me of being a shame, a disgrace to our religion.

I was always stuck in the no-man’s land.

As a teenager, I was neutral toward all beliefs, but the tag of “allegedly dangerous” never left me. Surrounded by a new group of people I still laughed at jokes about terrorism aimed at me. At the same time, I was disgusted by stories of people in America, stared at and assaulted because of their race. Wherever I went, stereotypes and labels followed me, whether I was among my people or among foreigners; I was an alien to both.

At one point I felt cursed, born as who I was.

I had further grown up. I went for an interview and was denied a job because my name was apparently too “Muslim”. Yet I did nothing, and laughed it away as always. Just as I was denied a job, I was denied a home. To survive, to keep the peace, I stopped telling people who I was. So I would have someone to talk with, I stopped associating myself with who I was. I was denied access to places, so I changed my name. I spent the day with no worries to face, no burning glances directed at me, no racial jokes to force a laugh at.

But now, I feared the night rather than people.

I would flush with guilt and anger at my own cowardice, over my fake identity and the veil I wore. How humiliating and insulting it was, to be denied the rights I deserved. People never failed to astound me; their fickleness and hypocrisy shook me, every time. The Trump era dawned and trumpets of sorrow were blown. People were getting banned from entering the country where they yearned for no more than to live a peaceful life.

Things were taking a turn for the worse and I witnessed the metamorphosis as I had others, throughout different stages of my life.

It was when my miserable life was near its end that I saw something horrific. I saw a pregnant woman wearing a *hijab* being kicked out of a restaurant. I jumped in to help, not because I was a Muslim, but simply because I thought it was the most humane thing to do. But now I sit bound in handcuffs, along with the woman. We both wondered about the crime we had committed. She talked to me and thanked me, but when she came to know I was a Muslim by birth, she turned her back toward me, because I wasn’t faithful to my faith.

I was now serving a sentence for a crime I didn’t know of.

My only act of courage turned out to be an act of terrorism.

Sitting in a dingy cell a slave to racism, I thought over the joke I vividly remembered now. How my teacher jested about me having an AK-47 in my house and about why I was potentially dangerous. The giggles of others rang in my ears and the condescending stares became a

nightmare. I was amazed at how something I witnessed as a joke in a small room filled with children my age had evolved into something that made me criminal. I was a vigilante because I was born a Muslim. I thought of that joke again and laughed, but this time my laugh was a bitter one.

Albeena Alvi
I Year

Butterfly

Have you ever seen wind blow?
It takes everything with it.

Butterflies cannot fly in the dark
So they become fireflies, and burn
And keep burning till the dark is ashes.

Her scented feet catch the waves and send them back.
My five year old daughter thinks her toes are sending love letters to someone else's feet.

I taught her to swirl her fingers and she called a storm.
Whoever said girls can not brew anything but coffee has not met her.

I did not think butterflies could do much but nectar – turns out they can cause hurricanes.

Well if they could, so can you;
You can turn tables and heads and stars and burn down forests.

Hurricanes, darling, are not beautiful,
So the next time someone calls you ugly, tell them you are a hurricane.

Blowing wind takes everything with it.
So will you, one day.

And that day, I will tell everyone I knew you were
a butterfly.

Prithiva Sharma
II Year

What is Change?

In this rough and edgy world,
When mortals are thinking about change
In my broken and anxious dream world;
I wonder, what is change?

Is it parallel to transformation,
Or it is bare reformation?
When everyone wants a range,
I wonder, where is change?

Is it a journey?
From being a girl to a lady,
Or from a boy to a man,
Perhaps, it is a journey,
From being an infant to an oldie.

If actions and variations are siblings,
Turning the world upside down through mingling;
A basic caterpillar evolving into beautiful butterfly.
I wonder, what is changing?

Pridhi Chopra
I Year

Justuju (Quest, Search, and Pursuit)

Who should I tell my fears to?
Should I write them on a paper and burn it?
But cold ashes never have a wise solution.
Should I shout it out on the mountain top,
Let it echo within my barren soul?

I told it to the girl in the blue dress,
Whose story combined with mine a long way back,
But she would rather talk about the golden boy;
My fears misplaced and my words cut back.

I went to my mother in the hour of need,
She asked me to kneel before the figurines.
In the hope of finding the solution I need
I bowed to her wishes!
Some called him Allah, some called him Almighty!
I called him a wretch's imagination
And my fears remained within me.

Until I created an androgynous being:
I made it from my fears,
I cut it out of the cloth of my happiness,
It felt my tears and soaked my blood.
In discontent, I found contentment.
In my sadness, I found remedy.
I created my own God,
And my fears let me be.

I'm no more the little girl,
Sitting on the bench,
Wondering about the future.
I will let myself be.
I will be stronger than ever.
I have metamorphosed into another.

*Pragya Mehta
I Year*

Maternity Leave – A Tool of Patriarchy

The seed of patriarchy was sown long back. It has become so “natural” that it looks like the norm. In the past, biological differences between men and women led to the sexual division of labour. Since women reproduced, they were required to spend time with their infants and tend to their basic needs. On the other hand, men went outside the household to support their families financially. With a growing number of women staying at home, fixed roles and characteristics came into existence: the “breadwinner” of the family was invariably a man; a woman was supposedly “destined” to be relegated to a “secondary” status of rearing children and nurturing the home.

With the passing of time, women began to agitate for their rights and eventually got the right to vote. They earned the power to influence their own circumstances; a sense of authority was associated with them. They were considered important for their role as individuals who could contribute more to society than just an offspring. Opportunities like maternity leaves gave women the space to earn their living and be independent and allowed them to exercise their skills, unconstrained by biological and societal differences. However, the idea is to make men and women equally responsible for their own livelihood and their children. The notion that only a woman is entitled to a leave to raise a child reinforces the patriarchal stereotype that it is her primary responsibility to do so, and not the man’s.

If women are expected to be equally adept at managing the household and outside work, then men should also be encouraged to help women with childcare and other domestic chores. Even after they return from their maternity leave, women usually feel left behind at their workplaces. They lose on many opportunities and sometimes even their promotions are hampered. The company’s biases come into play when they avoid employing women of child-bearing age. Irrespective of the scale of the company, employers resist hiring an employee who might require a three-month paid leave, with a possibility of an extension. An unemployed mother is acceptable by traditional social yardsticks but not an unemployed father. A man sitting at home, taking care of his child, is often shunned for being incapable and questioned for his ability to support his family. Women require and have the right to rest and look after the child but the labour of childcare should not be linked to women alone. It is the responsibility of a parent to look after the child, irrespective of whether it is a woman or a man.

The weapons used by patriarchy may have changed but it continues to exist and function in society. Ownership of land led to patriarchy then and the association of maternity leave with only one gender is one of the means which buttresses patriarchal mores now.

Anahat Kaur Guron
II Year

Do You See?

So I keep pushing her into the ocean,
With undefinable spirit and unbreakable strength,
But what if her memories haunt me?
Surely they will,
For the writer inside me I murdered.
But I will be untouched, right?
Hidden amidst the chaos of those like me,
With no intention of peeping out ever again.
Not because I want them to find me,
But because I never want to be found anymore.
Suddenly, I peep out.
I see the ocean, all red and yellow.
“Is it possible?” I say.
The sun so far, apparently so small, almost gone,
Can change the expression of the whole ocean
In every way?
As I see her drowning,
The water turns red and I blue.
I hear a scream,
“Look look, the stars you write about are here.”
And then a voice,
“These ones in the sky are smaller than those in your poems.”
“No they are not!” I reply.
“At least not smaller than the things you need in life.”
My writer-self says as we shake hands and merge into each other again.
Yet again.
Well every so often,
Trivial things do something that's big –
Wait, didn't you see?
Like just a line in my poem did.

Gargi Sharma
I Year

Over

What she felt was a mystery,
She knew she didn't belong with them.
They pushed her away
Whenever she appeared.
She faltered, she cried;
It was a cycle of torture.
Her bullies got together,
They threw her into a corner.
She broke apart,
And succumbed to her wounds.
She didn't want a life of dull colours.
To the world,
This bullying was a joke;
It didn't matter, they never stopped.
But how she felt was a mystery.

She knew she didn't belong with them.
They covered her face in ink,
Whenever she appeared.
Her hands trembled
As she held the tiny bottle.
Her vision blurred with tears,
It was a gruelling decision.
The faces of her bullies,
Flashed in front of her eyes.
With raging determination,
She unscrewed the cap.
In a letter, she painted her life;
She opened the door to her bullied existence.
And with a fluid movement,
She swallowed the pills.

Angela Braru
I Year

Popular Culture

When we first look at a country, we categorise it in accordance with various standards. A country can be recognised as a ‘first world’ country on the basis of its economic growth and development. Or it may be recognised as a country with a rich heritage recorded by history. Or maybe it is defined by a certain scientific or cultural legacy. But most of all, a country is recognised by its people and their popular culture.

In a globalising world, popular culture becomes a major medium through which we learn about other countries. Everything is laid bare on the global platform and the gap between cultures is shrinking. These different cultures also influence each other giving rise to various hybridized forms of culture. This can be seen in the way we eat, dress, and talk. Everything we see and experience has an influence on us, and this influence encourages us to form our separate, and perhaps new, identities. This influence and knowledge of a foreign culture also leads to an almost unconscious comparison, even competition, which may result in positive growth.

When we talk about the influence of foreign countries on our everyday lives, the most important media are popular cinema, television series, music, and books. This influence is often derived from how a culture is represented. The most suitable example for India would perhaps be Hollywood. The fact that Bollywood, the Indian entertainment industry is borrowing a lot from western countries and is incorporating them in their native productions is proof as well, of the hybridized identity that it has acquired. And this identity in return is also making the industry popular and known to other cultures. A lot of Bollywood cinema and music is influenced by pop culture from western countries. Indian cinema makes a lot of adaptations in order to reach a wider audience. However, one of the first things that India is known for abroad is Bollywood and its musicals.

It is true that the popular culture of a country, or a distinct region, is defined by its people. It is the people who make things popular. Education or literacy are not the determining forces of culture but entertainment and popularity is. In this globalised world, we can't say that the demand for entertainment is limited to native productions. Even though there are a lot of western movies and television series which have gained mass fan followings in India, another instance of the international spread of popular culture has been from South Korea, also known as the “Korean wave”. Television dramas, Korean pop music and films have received good reception throughout the world. Korean dramas are family-friendly which helps in the propagation of a certain type of values and traditions. Korean pop music, in similar ways, has had tremendous popularity all over the world. Korean music has fused traditional and ethnic components with western elements, gaining a diverse audience.

It won't be wrong to say that popular demand, which shapes popular culture, reflects the culture of the country or the region. ‘Relatable’ art is in increasing demand worldwide over the past decade. This ‘relatability’ is precisely what makes it popular. This is true for all cultures, making them paradoxically homogenous.

Take the representation of patriarchy in these cultures, for example. Some of these dramas, which have been dubbed in Hindi (*Descendants of the Sun*, *Boys over Flowers*) are very similar in their treatment of patriarchal conventions. Both of them have received a lot of popularity and acceptance all over the world and have an 8.6 and 8.2 rating on IMDb, respectively. Being conventional romantic comedies, both these shows depict a love story between a man and a woman. Strong and independent women are trying to survive in a male dominated world, but at the same time, are shown to have very stereotypical feminine personalities who always need a male masculine figure to rescue them. This is very similar to the essential plot of Indian

television shows as well. Although Indian and Korean cultures differ from each other in a lot of respects, this similarity in such a popular medium somewhat dissolves the distance between the cultures. A lot of popular Bollywood movies like *Ek Villain*, *Jazbaa*, and *Zinda* are adaptations of Korean movies called *I Saw the Devil*, *Seven Days*, and *Old boy* respectively. There have been several attempts made by the South Korean government as well as their entertainment industries to reach out to the Indian audience. These include some variety shows like *Exciting India*, and other k-pop contests in India organised by the Korean embassy.

The hybridizing and homogenising influences on our respective popular cultures increases their accessibility to others all over the world, which helps in bridging the gap in between them. Similar gaps may be bridged, not between nations but between different cultural communities. The difference between various Indian popular cultures is immense. The widespread acceptance of other, foreign cultures (Chinese, Korean) often brings them close together. Dubbed versions or subtitled translations help us access different cultures of the world and in effect, help us grow.

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Asmita Pandey
III Year

Cocooned Haven

Light is all it sees
When it stumbles out of its cocooned haven.
Still young, it looks around
In confusion and amazement.

Wings too fragile to take its weight,

Aesthetics is all they carry.

The first wing flaps,
The second one follows.
It enters into a new world.
The simple flapping
Causes dynamic changes;
An effect becoming a metaphor.

Like an eager cub ready to pounce,
It stumbles out of its cocooned haven.
Its first flight resembles
The first steps of a toddler.
This world will nurture
Another butterfly.

Angela Braru
I Year

All's Well That Ends Well for Female Characters in Plautine Comedy

This paper aims to explore the endings afforded to women characters in Plautine comedy and how so-called deviant women are often disregarded when their reintegration into society takes place, while “virtuous” objects of affection are rewarded solely by marriage. This treatment serves as a window into the ancient Roman ideologies and social conditions. This paper considers seven plays of Plautus: *Aulularia*, *Menaechmi*, *Captivi*, *Truculentus*, *Pseudolus*, *Miles Gloriosus*, and *Casina*.

Domum servavit, lanam fecit.
Kept house, made wool (James, 2017)
(Common Roman epitaph)

The slave gains his freedom, the young lover gets his girl with a substantial dowry, and the maiden gets to marry a man who most likely is her rapist - that is the recipe to social harmony. At least, it would seem so from *Aulularia* and other similar Roman comedies. According to Northrop Frye, a comedy is a play in which at the end, there is a reintegration into society. The central character clearly always gets a good ending, as do most of the male characters, but the end for most female characters is either subversively tragic or they are completely dismissed by the playwright.

The “bad” women usually only advance the plot and perform actions for their own personal advantage. These women may be either prostitutes or old nagging wives. In *Menaechmi*, Erotium, the courtesan, is motivated to make her own personal gains as is her profession and is not driven by love. She plays a part in the plot as the one with whom the titular Menaechmus has an extra-marital affair and is the reason he gets thrown out of the house. Similarly, Menaechmus’ wife is important, in lamenting over his infidelity and nagging him about it, but she is admonished even by her own father for her actions. In the end, as the twin brothers are united, Erotium is forgotten completely. While this may be excused as her being merely the woman he has an affair with and not related to the brothers, Menaechmus’ slave says this even of his wife:

Sale by auction - this day week in the forenoon - the property of Menaechmus- sale will include - slaves, household effects, house, land, etcetera - and a wife, should there be any purchaser. (*Menaechmi*, Titus Maccius Plautus)

A woman deemed a nuisance is simply discarded in the ending, unlike the important male characters who have a discernible fate allotted to them. It is only the reintegration of males into society that seems to matter. The same is true in *Miles Gloriosus* where Acroteleutium and Milphidippa are both left in the same states of courtesan and maid respectively at the end of the play, while the young lovers are reunited and the male slave gains his freedom. Even the arrogant knight of the play is portrayed as having learnt his lesson, but there is no change in the lives of the courtesans who play a major role in the trickery involved in reuniting the lovers. Cleostrata’s victory over her husband in *Casina* merely lets her take back an adulterer. Without a husband she would have a harder time living, but this hardly a victory.

The “good” women are the young maidens who are the objects of affection for the male lovers. In *Aulularia*, this role is fulfilled by the invisible Phaedria, in *Miles Gloriosus* by Philocomasium, in *Pseudolus* by Phoenicium, who has no dialogue and in *Casina* by the titular Casina. These women are presented simply as objects to be gained. Phaedria, Casina and Phoenicium are not graced

with dialogue of any kind. *Miles Gloriosus'* Philocomasium is an exception as she herself tricks the titular knight into letting her escape, however, she does it for love and under the guidance of the male slave. These women do not appear to work towards any personal goal except that of for love, and inevitably receive nothing in the end but marriage. Good women have all the same qualities - chastity, modesty, silence. They do not nag at their lovers or refuse their fathers' wishes (James 2017). Titus Livy, in "The History of Rome", Book 34, Chapter 7, cites the tribune L. Valerius in 195 BC putting it thus: No offices, no priesthods, no triumphs, and no spoils of war. Elegance, adornment, finery - these are a woman's insignia, there are what our forefathers called the woman's world."

Female slaves like Staphyla in *Aulularia* usually are disregarded in the end as well, while male slaves go on to gain freedom. These depictions of female characters supposed "reintegration" are a window into the social role of women in Rome. Plautus adapted his plays from his Greek predecessors like Menander but his plays are different enough in form so as to reflect Roman attitudes and conditions and are not merely translations. Disposability seems to be a common denominator in each type of woman, and as a matter of fact, most divorces in the Roman empire were initiated by men (Pomeroy 1975). Women were not part of the public and political sphere and could not hold any public office, so their social value was limited to the domestic sphere. This is quite clear from the reintegration afforded to them in Plautine comedy, either in the form of marriage or dismissal. Even if a slave woman was freed from her master, she would most likely have to go into the profession of a courtesan as respectable men would not marry a freed woman. (Pomeroy 1975)

The values regarded as acceptable in a woman are also evident from the outcomes of female characters. The servile and silent get to marry their lovers as long as they are in the possession of male guardians, otherwise the ones left to their own devices (but act out of love) get to have a happy ending. Courtesans are constantly referred to as wicked and wily all for following the demands of their profession - to make money, not to offer their services for free. When a woman's personal, or financial gain is the focus in the end, the male characters fall prey to bankruptcy. Much like Pandora of Greek myths, she seems to unleash all the evils of the world. Society's view of a woman having personal gain does not seem too favourable, to say the least.

Courtesans, too, are usually partakers in the main trickery of the plays but are not mentioned once in the endings, their lives remain the same. They gain no reward on the surface, but they do earn money, which is far more stable than a marriage in a society where women like Cleostrata in *Casina* and Menaechmus' wife are forced to stay with adulterers. Even the women who get married to their lovers without a high dowry may have servile marriages, as Megadorus states in *Aulularia*:

Indeed, I think it would be an excellent thing if more rich men married poor men's daughters, without dowries. It would make for harmony in the community, and there would be much less friction in the home. The wives would learn obedience, and the husbands wouldn't have to spend so much money. (*Aulularia*, Titus Maccius Plautus)

Essentially, women without dowries were little better off than slaves in Roman households. The pattern of endings female characters received in Plautine comedy is a testimony to Roman society in this way - what men valued in a woman and how involved women were in the social and public sphere. Contrasting these with the endings of male characters, the social divide of male and female values and virtues is quite clear, and marriage with an honourable man is the greatest achievement a "respectable" and free woman can have, while lower class women must

carry on as they always had.

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Nashra Usmani
I Year

Here Comes the Money

There were colours of every kind,
Gold was the one he wanted to find.
Here comes the money, a dealer announced.
Excited and eager, he followed the sound.

A group of seven stared at him;
His chances of winning appeared slim.
The dealer passed him a look of expectation.
He kissed a goodbye to his frustration.

The dice played a game of chance.
He chose a number with just one glance.
Six, he exclaimed and looked around.
Ignoring the stares, he stood his ground.

With a ticking sound and a casual roll,
Looking unsteady, the light it stole.
His steel grip on the board tightened;
For the very first time, he seemed frightened.

A ticklish feeling emerged in his belly;
Butterflies fluttered, his knees turned into jelly.
Thrilled, he clutched the hem of his tee.
Number six was all he wanted to see.

Hitting the edge, the dice tumbled.
With great ecstasy, his words fumbled.
Like a dog, the golden colour pounced;
Here comes the money, the dealer announced.

Angela Braru
I Year

A Delicate Revolution

9 o'clock on a Monday morning
inside a literature class,
our young bewildered minds gather today
to argue about free will and destiny.

A sip of coffee and a plunge into deep thought,
Does it hold any significance or does it not?
Our bodies-
like embers of a wildfire sure do rise and die
in this conundrum we know as life and death
but our voices, our songs-
do they too have to fade away into the deafening silence of the world?

They mustn't. Oh, they mustn't.
For we've learnt our lessons,
a retrospective gaze into one's own youth,
secret of the universe,
a kaleidoscopic beauty,
what seemed like chaos was only a whirlpool inside a little cup.

A sip of coffee again and a plunge into pages and more pages
taken out of extraordinary yet ordinary books,
different tales of different cities,
words between the lines
speak all the same-
a potential revolution
the quietest and the most delicate,
simply waiting to happen.

It hides-
in the simplest things around,
a yellow flower, in the colour purple,
some raindrops on my skin,
or the hand that walks beside me
through thick and thin,
the little things and some things more
tickle the broken strings in my core.

What could then possibly silence
the thunderstorm that rises from your wings?
A phoenix is born every day,
one day it might even sing

Esha Kohli
II Year

The Change

She bore it all,
As she was taught.
Never questioned,
Never resisted.

But as she grew old
She realised something was wrong.
How could it be her fate?
How could the one she worshipped
Be so cruel to her?

The questions she wasn't expected to ask
Or in her world "allowed" to ask,
Now gave her hope.
Maybe it wasn't her destiny,
Maybe she could fight them,
Was what kept going in her mind.

And when she started to fight,
Started to resist,
It was difficult
But she continued.
For the desire to change was so strong,
That every pain gave power,
Every blow pushed her forward,
And at last,
The happiness she never dreamed of,
Was now hers...

Priya Verma
I Year

Let Us Make Some Eco-friendly Changes

According to latest reports, India produces 1, 00,000 metric tons of solid waste each day and Delhi alone adds 9,000 metric tons to it. Our country's waste management policies are not as advanced as some other countries' and people blatantly keep adding to the huge pile of garbage. It is a long way for India to adopt technologies as sophisticated as Sweden's or other European countries' but till then, young citizens like us can make small changes that will help in reducing pollution and saving the environment.

You start off your day by brushing your teeth in the morning. Regular toothbrushes available in the market are made of polyethylene (a type of plastic) and nylon. Both these substances are not only harmful but also non-biodegradable. Dentists recommend not using a toothbrush longer than three months. On calculation of this waste over a span of twenty years, an average person dumps eighty brushes. Mind you, you are not the sole user and millions of people in our country use the same ordinary plastic-made toothbrush. The substitute is the bamboo toothbrush which is biodegradable. Moreover, bamboo utilizes very less water for its growth.

You usually use disposable glasses, cups or plates for your meals at least once a day. These single-use packages are one of the biggest polluters and sources of waste. The way to rectify this situation is to carry your old coffee cup, tumbler or tin to drink those hot or cold drinks. You can carry a small tiffin box from home and your sellers would be happy to provide your meals in them. If you drink something at a restaurant, avoid using straw. It is also a one-time-use plastic; carrying your own water bottle saves you considerable money over a long period of time and reduces the plastic bottles at least one person wastes.

All of us use numerous cosmetics and skin-care products on a daily basis. As daunting as it might sound, it is very easy to switch from big brands to the ones that provide vegan, organic and eco-friendly products at reasonable prices. A number of Indian brands like Boutique, Khadi India, Fabindia, and Fuschia have a range of face washes, soaps, lip balms, lipsticks, and more at budget-friendly prices. There are even a number of emerging local businesses that use only natural ingredients to make skin-care products such as face oil, body oil and so on. If you want to take a step forward and not create any additional trash, you can make your own cosmetics, skin-care products and toiletries at home.

While out to shop for either vegetables or clothes, carry your own bag. Don't ask for one unless necessary. Make a conscious effort to reduce the usage of paper by making online payments and buying e-tickets. As students, we tend to buy a number of pens for making notes. The next time you go pen-shopping, purchase only refills of the pens you have already used. Give your old books as gifts and wrap them in newspapers instead of glittery plastic wrappers. Similarly, you can either donate clothes you no longer wear or use them to make pillows or bags by sewing different patches.

It takes consistent effort to reduce your waste but it is the only way to save the environment and believe you me, every single effort matters! If every individual tries to adopt any of these ways, it will make a difference as bigger change always begins with a single person.

Prachi Mehra
I Year

What This Heart Yearns For

My heart isn't weak,
but once in a while it gets tired.

Exhausted of having been so strong after all.
Demands to cry, demands to scream, but
looks like this capitalistic scheme won't let it weep.

For it has to wake up
every day
to be an achiever
when it just wishes to fall back and sleep.

"Run the race! Work hard and get there!" their slogan,
but where do I land
after having drained
my heart inside out
to meet their capitalistic greed?

My heart also longs
to walk barefoot on the sand,
endless, and no destination in mind.

It wishes to listen to the birds chirping and just breathe.
Smile, when the sun shines at me.
But the heart is chained in capitalistic chains,
where emotions have taken a step back and
progress seems to have taken life while
the living die each day, every night.

A moment to just keep quiet, a moment to breathe, a moment to feel, a moment to see is all I want, is all this dead heart yearns for me to be.

See, what you did to me?

Weren't machines enough that you mechanised me?

Running the capitalist race this long, I have forgotten
how the heart lives but I know how it works,
supposed to do this and that,
yes
you commodified my living heart,
when you taught it how to work
and since then it craves to feel, to be free.

***Sidra Islam
II Year***

It's the Little Things
(Dedicated to my Grandmother)

I remember the way you called my name,
asking me to eat;
Waking me up,
not letting me fall back asleep.

You were always there,
opening the door;
Talking about your health, you'd
fill up the silence in the hall.

Without you, I'm lost
like a pigeon in the swirling sky;
Looking for directions
to lead me out of this turmoil.

Every corner holds memories;
every place has a special meaning.
All of these memories, I now revisit
with a sad smile upon my face.

It all comes back to me now
as I sit in the empty hall -
The little things I paid no attention to;
It's the little things that matter after all.

Mansi Ramrakhyani
I Year

Sirens

The clock strikes an hour; I'm unaware of all that's going on with the rest of the world, simply because I can be. The hours that together make up 'night' are my favourite for this reason; perhaps also because of the darkness.

Night refers to the hours between, say, 11 PM and 7 AM in the morning. The birds are asleep, the trees are at peace, and most importantly, humans turn themselves off, to suit everyone. As I curl up inside the heavy folds of three blankets I've put together to make myself a cocoon, with my phone resting against the night stand in a position visible to my sleeping eye, in the perfect position for me to binge watch series and movies crammed together. The only sound that can break both my and the general, silence in the background is the siren of an ambulance which goes something like this: 'au, au, au...' and works its charm.

From a single engine revving through the empty streets with its wild call clearing out the mist, all the sound I hear is that of desperation that echoes in the space between the four walls of this vehicle at this ungodly hour while the driver, the patient, and his family just want to reach. It does not matter where, simply their path along it. Some days, even that loses its significance. They just want to reach. This destination amuses me. It holds a whole host of emotions and equipment merely called public service. It owes a lot of people a lot of things.

Duty in their profession of making and breaking days, words holding the power to change entire lives. Time, altering drastically between the before and the after, and hope, as it assures them of these in physical formations. The bulb lighting up or lighting off outside the operation theatre; a man in a certified lab coat patting their shoulder and passing a comforting smile, sometimes a good word in or two. It comes in the form of people with drooped shoulders and frowning foreheads. Some days, it even brings in trays with empty air in them and mouths brimming with silence that feel the heaviest.

I turn away from the screen of the phone, from humans on screen to humans in my mind, thinking of humans in families that place their faith, their life, in the hands of a frail man driving a critically acclaimed public vehicle. Families that have had their hearts in their throats as he drove on four wheels. Only four circular wheels, with a diameter of about 50 centimetres, hold the weight of these lives, and perhaps that's why the entire world paves a path for an ambulance.

The world is an unusual place, shockingly so. I've often spent extra time figuring out if I should comfort the woman crying through her spectacles, or stay for a bit beside the girl watching FRIENDS on her phone. I have missed a lot of stations this way. When you see another person going through something, could be a chore, an errand, an exam, an interview, a stressful phone call, or a life-changing event, you feel something inside yourself in response to it. *That* is the most evident act of selfishness in all human beings. Watch season 5, episode 4 of FRIENDS to further understand what I mean. For when you walk out of that bar connecting the metro station and the metro train, you take away with you your reaction to someone's ordeal, not your discovery of it.

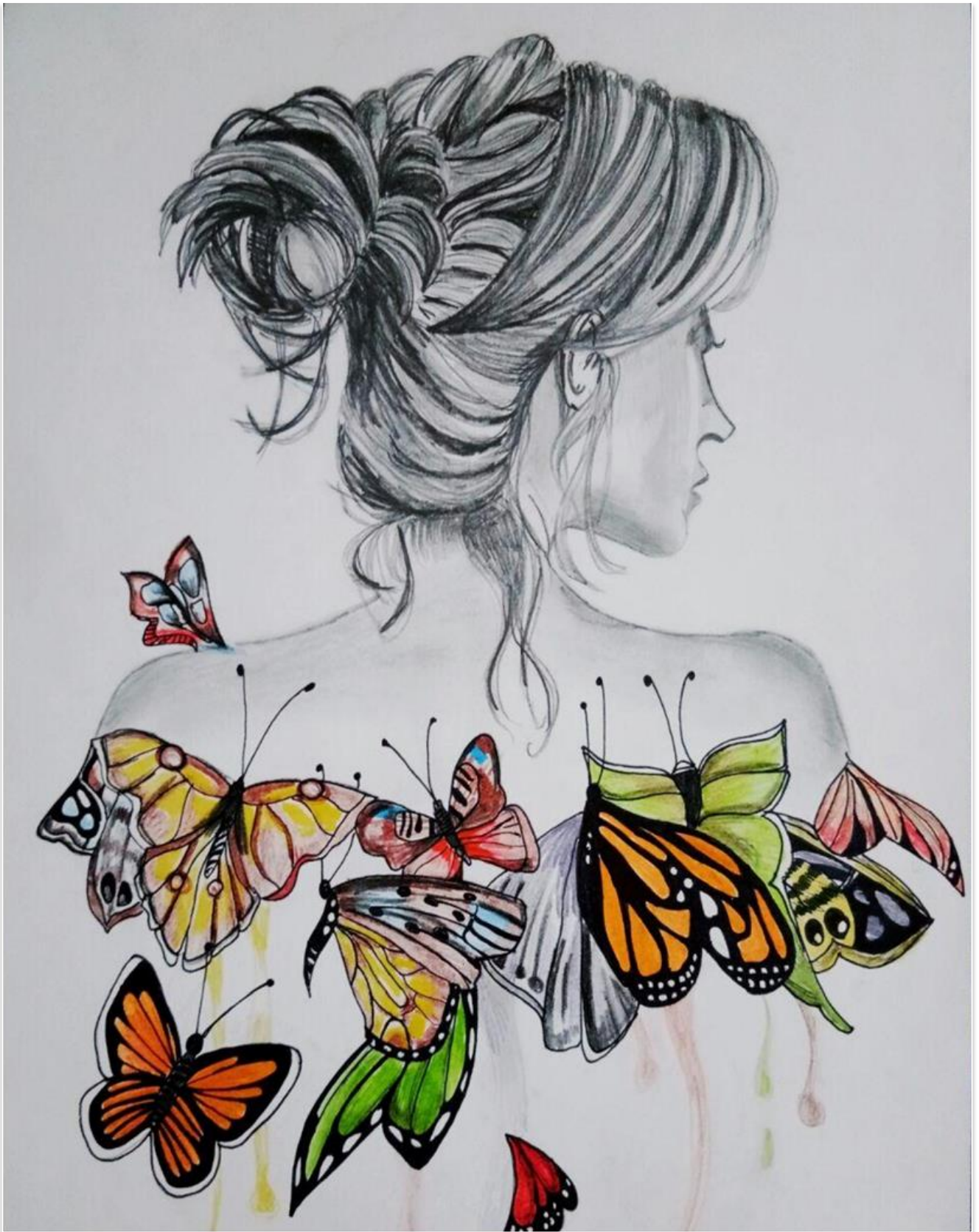
'Au, au, au...' I imagined two people sitting inside the ambulance, beside the patient, other than the hospital attendants and the driver. One of the family members held the patient's hand, looking at him with moist eyes, and the other one remained busy on his phone, comforting both of them while informing the other relatives about the situation. Pardon me, I watch a bit too much *Star Plus*.

So, the nearest hospital is about 20 minutes away. As the noise fades out into a noiseless night yet again, I wonder how they're reacting to reaching their destination now. Are they sane enough

to initiate an informed conversation with medical experts? Or have they huddled up in agony beside the patient? I'll never know what the patient had to base my imagination on it.

As I turn the other way, awake, somewhere in anticipation of another siren blazing through the silent roads outside, alerting me to life again, I slowly begin to understand how, at every minute, every second on this planet, there will always be a lot more going on beyond, than our realisation will ever do justice to.

Sonalee Das
II Year



Swati Bhardwaj
II Year



Abida Khan
III Year



*Abida Khan
III Year*



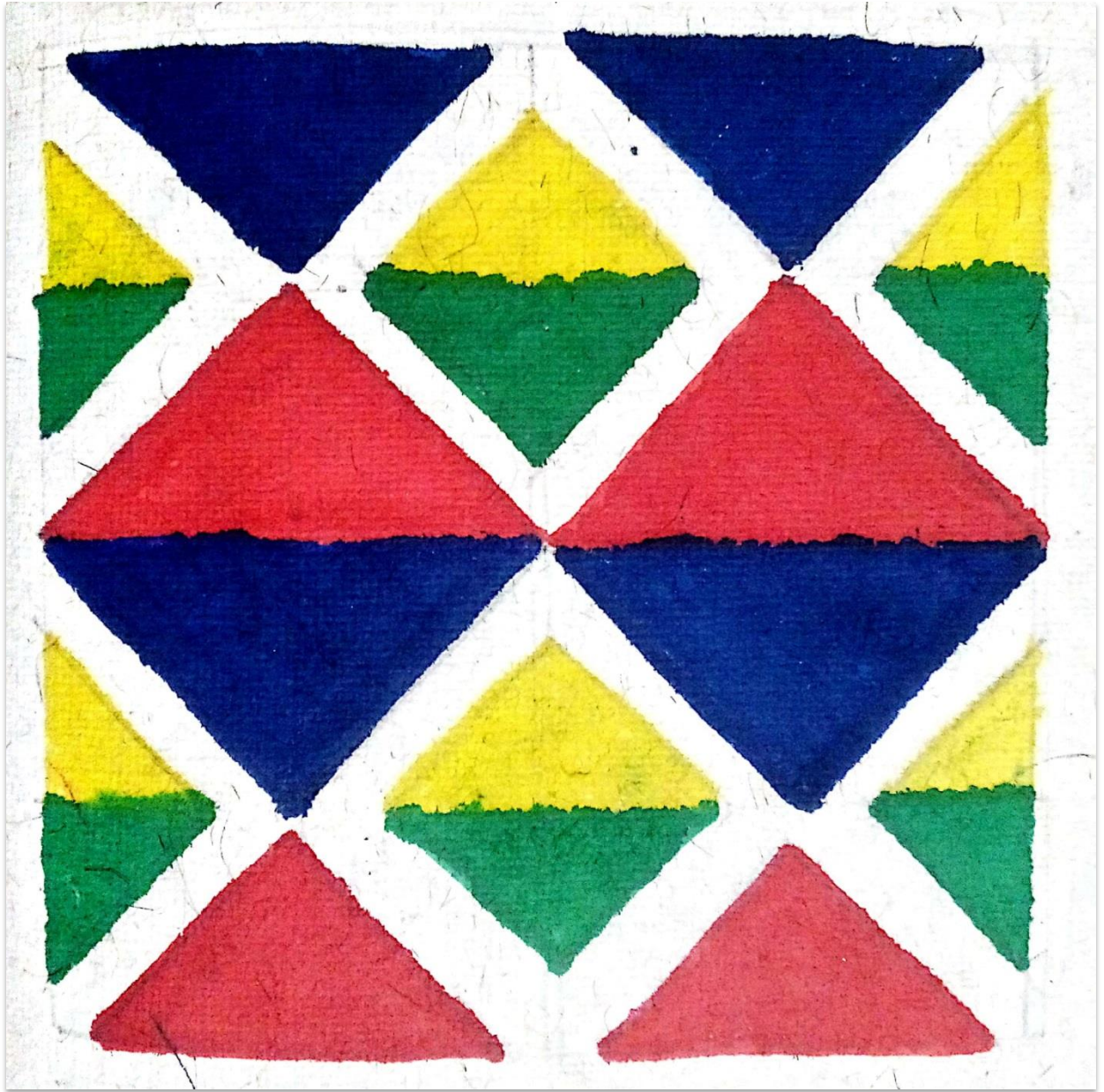
*Pridhi Chopra
I Year*



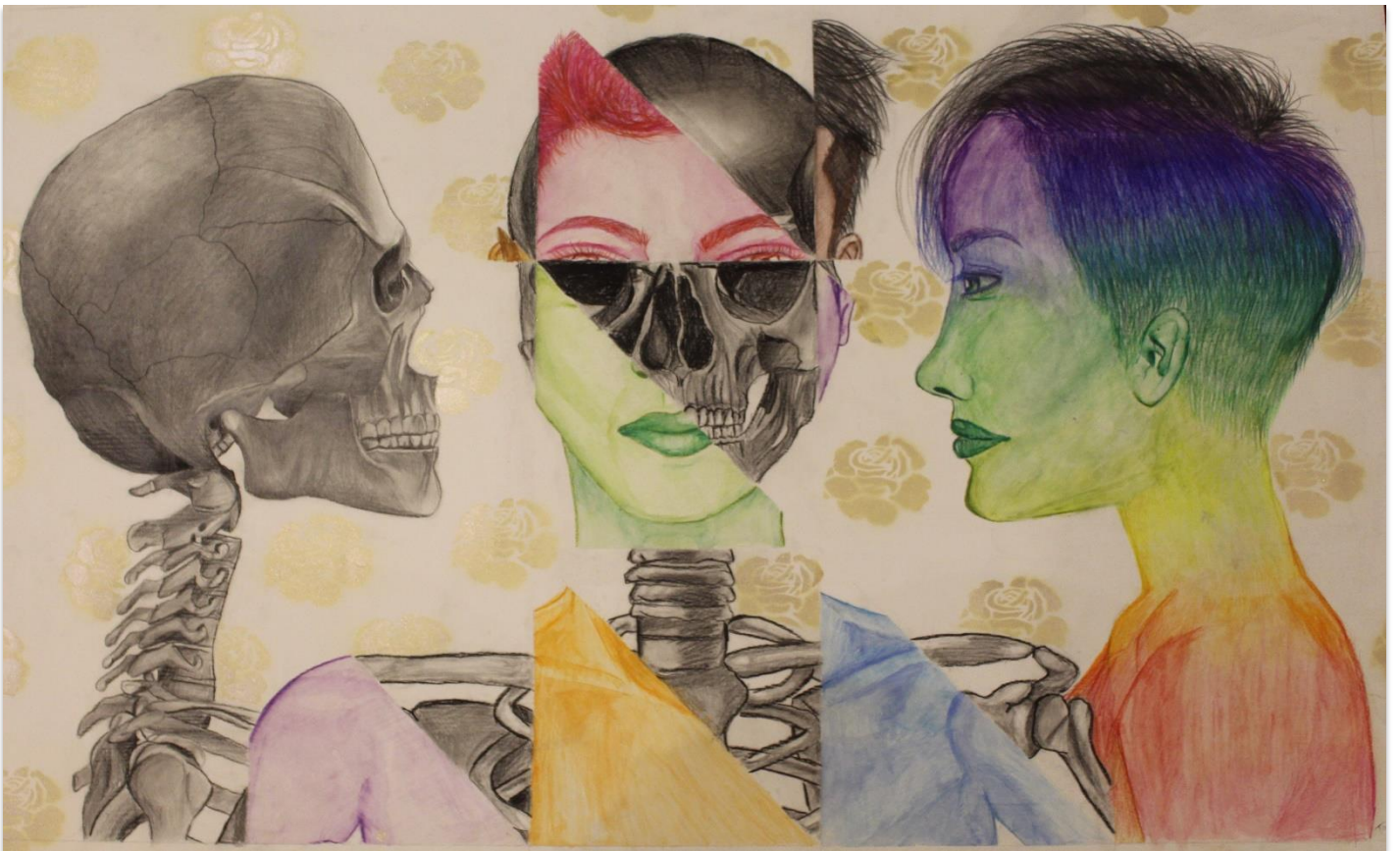
*Pridhi Chopra
I Year*



Nitisha Chand
III Year



Nitisha Chand
III Year



Tanya Yadav
III Year

Sociological Critique of Crime

There have been numerous attempts in fields like psychology, philosophy, and anthropology to determine the causes of deviant behavior such as indulgence in unlawful activities. A sociological reading is one way of looking at criminal/unlawful activities - basing arguments on the socio-political context of a crime. Such a reading is vital to observe the role of society (the bystanders, the media, the government, etc) in creating a safe or unsafe space. It attempts to analyse how seemingly unrelated details in an environment can impact the life and psyche of its residents. This paper presents a sociological critique of the outlaw in Carol Ann Duffy's poem, "Stealing".

"Stealing" (first published in the poet's 1987 collection, *Selling Manhattan*) is a first person narration by a thief who has recently stolen a snowman. It traverses the thoughts of an amateur outlaw, probably a delinquent, who participates in odd unlawful activities which at first glance appear peculiar in nature as they seem to have no immediate or overt motivation. However, the layers of thoughts explored by Duffy, enveloped in the monologue of the thief, highlights a certain degree of cynicism that he harbours toward his surroundings, making the social and political context important. (For ease of reference, the male pronoun is used for the thief throughout the paper. This choice invites comment, as the poem does not reveal the gender of the thief at any point.)

Duffy was inspired to write "Stealing" after someone stole her neighbour's children's snowman from their front garden. She instinctively felt that "only under Margaret Thatcher would someone be driven to steal a snowman" (Duffy 49). Thus the poem is very political, even though it does not make any direct allusion to politics. Thatcher came to power when Britain was facing extreme inflation and miners were protesting against wage cuts. Being highly influenced by economists like Friedrich von Hayek and Milton Friedman, Thatcher adopted monetarist policies. Von Hayek favoured minimum government interference to the working of companies and industries. Following his lead, Thatcher privatised many industries like British Gas, British Steel, British Airways etc. According to her, privatisation was a way "to give power back to the people" ("Margaret Thatcher and Conservative Politics in England", n.pag.). Even though monetarism did curb inflation for a while in 1980s, it had some unintended consequences. To privatise coal mines Thatcher planned on closing 20 of them, which would lead to 20,000 miners losing their jobs, adding to the 3 million people who did so under her governance. The recession and high unemployment further weakened the power of the trade unions, leading to high exploitation under private companies. Thatcher also changed the housing policies by allowing council home tenants to buy their residences, leading to a spike in housing prices, rental costs, debts and homelessness among the poor. It is this condition of unemployment and homelessness that forms the background of Duffy's "Stealing".

The speaker in Duffy's "Stealing" is very unspecific; she gives neither a name, nor an age, nor gender. Thus, the thief can actually represent anybody in the society, or more importantly, all of society or at least a large section of it. As a critique of the policies of the Tory government which created a culture of individual pursuit of success and money rather than a collectivistic development of society, the speaker in the poem can be seen as a product of the culture of greed and selfishness which ostracised and exploited the working and lower classes. Thatcherism represented an "anomie" in society. There was no moral guidance for one's upliftment, and people resorted to individual measures to achieve their goals. Oftentimes, such measures could only be taken by the better situated who could afford to exploit the privatisation of industries, and buy shares in the crashing markets. As Thatcher famously said, "There's no such thing as a society" ("Margaret Thatcher: A Life in Quotes", n.pag.).

The aforementioned context of England at the time, and its role in developing the identity of the outlaw can be better understood by the theory of “anomie” developed by Emile Durkheim, and those who influenced him. According to Durkheim, a capitalist society produced a forced division of labour where people could do little to change their lifestyle. Capitalism gave people a way to move ahead economically and socially, but did not provide the means to do so. Hence, those with means keep moving ahead, while those without them kept moving further down. It increased the gap between the poor and the rich. Such a situation left “man’s nature eternally dissatisfied, constantly to advance without relief or rest, towards an indefinite goal” (Durkheim 257). Reflections of this goal can be seen in the thief’s actions in Duffy’s “Stealing”. The following lines,

Sometimes I steal things I don’t need. I joy-ride cars
to nowhere, break into houses just to have a look.
I’m a mucky ghost, leave a mess, maybe pinch a camera.
I watch my gloved hand twisting the doorknob.
A stranger’s bedroom. Mirrors. I sigh like this - Aah.

show a constant sense of being unsettled, and even instinctive. It is not a professional, but rather an amateur thief who is struggling with his own reasons and with his deviant behaviour. According to Albert Cohen, who took Freud’s ideas of “reaction formation” forward, when an individual is unable to attain his set goals in a system, he starts to demonstrate deviant behaviour which attempts to overturn the system itself (Rock 54). The identity of the thief can then be seen as a reaction to a failed system, or at least to a system that failed him. He steals children’s snowman, and says

Part of the thrill was knowing
That children would cry in the morning. Life’s tough

almost as if he wants children to know what kind of society they are going to face soon. By giving them a taste of the tough life, he attempts to break apart the facade that one could achieve what they want, or have what they want.

The list of things stolen by the thief also makes the reader aware of his interests; joy riding cars, stealing a snowman, stealing Shakespeare’s bust, or a guitar, all point towards the fact that the thief is perhaps a young person, who is unable to bear the competition of the system, and blames it for being unfair. As scholars of youth culture have argued, youth is not just the state between childhood and adulthood but rather acts as “a metaphorical device to embody both the aspirations and anxieties of a particular historical time”:

Youth could be a harbinger of change, an emergent consumer, a signifier of hope, or a portent of social decline. In other words, youth was a social construct shaped in accordance with a variety of socio-economic, cultural and political determinants; its meaning—and its relationship to wider society—could vary according to the context (Garland et al 266).

Thus, the identity of the thief isn’t just that of an outlaw, but rather offers a sociological critique of the time period. He is someone who has reached that point of disappointment in life that he is willing to cross legal boundaries in order to feel alive. The words, “better off dead than giving in” show his desire to *act* like an agent. When the social conditions take away his agency, he forcefully acquires it by breaking the law, even if it is to steal something of no practical or

monetary value. He then articulates or gives voice to his actions, at the same time doubting if someone else would truly understand what he is trying to say.

By giving a voice to the thief, Duffy makes the reader look inward into society. Instead of distancing the outlaw, it shows deviant behaviour as a product of culture and law itself. The thief's last words, "You don't understand a word I'm saying, do you?" makes the reader scrutinize the implications and meaning of the entire poem further. Since the thief sounds an amateur, it is not a completely corrupted individual speaking either, but someone who has just *started* being irretrievably affected by the system. Someone who is willing to look within himself and ponder the reasons for his own deviant behaviour, rather than someone who has become a compulsive thief. By voicing the psyche of the thief, Duffy presents the negative sociological impact of 20th century neo liberalisation in British society on the minds of individuals, who struggled within the social order but failed.

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Aqsa Khan
III Year

Emotions – A Series



A spark flutters away



Winds down almost extinguished



Yet a blaze is born.

Writer and Curator - Pavini Suri, II Year
Photographer - Madiha Ansari, II Year

***Metamorphosis of the Tangible –
A Conversation with the Author of Remnants of a Separation: A History of
the Partition through Material Memory***



She is a rover - a traveller of space and time. Born and brought up in New Delhi, Aanchal Malhotra settled in Canada to pursue her MFA. Subsequently, for the purposes of research, she travelled to unexplored places in India. Her international trips to Pakistan and England in pursuit of a deep and comprehensive engagement with pre- and post-independence India are symbolic of this oral historian's attempts to preserve the 'remnants of a separation'.

Her maiden book is a testimony to her role as "a collector of objects and associated memories, an antiquarian, an archivist" and a memory keeper. In order to comprehend and recover the vast history of Partition, she used the avant-garde technique of observing the material, the tangible belongings of those who migrated across the newly-formed borders. This journey of transformation, rendering valuable that which was hitherto considered of little or no significance is an example of the butterfly effect, the theme for this edition of *Bitacora*.

In an interview with Habiba Faisal, Ms. Malhotra describes this process of emotional exploration as one where the "emotional weight [of an object] far exceeded its physical weight. In a way, it contained the weight of the past." These objects offered a sense of belongingness to a certain place and period to the refugees on both sides. For Azra Haq, her pearls led her into a nostalgic reminiscence of her merrier lifestyle, Bhag Malhotra's *maang tikka* became a reminder of her formidability and endurance, the stone plaque of Mian Faiz Rabbani was converted into an emblem of his conflicted identities.

For historians, objects like those mentioned above serve as mirrors of their respective time periods, presenting fascinating insights into the material culture of Partition and those transient memories which paradoxically sustain the wound of that traumatic historical incident.

Her exploration of these "relics of a shattered age" and its associations with the past is demonstrated through a deeply touching style of writing. To comprehend this in addition to the intersectional impact of her interests and her background along with literary influences, I met her in a chirpy Khan Market cafe on a wintry Friday morning. The interview simultaneously highlights her documenting procedure, the other projects she has undertaken in the same field of research, the barriers to acquiring information and the work's holistic impact on her.

Q. This text, there is palpably influenced by your scholarship in Art, familial connection to Partition, environment of books around you, and a love for photography. Please throw some light on this.

A. When we write or make any form of art, we are influenced by our environment and because most of my formal education has been in the fine arts, I have been taught to pick up certain visual clues. As artists we always explore our surroundings deeper, we are told to pay extreme attention to detail. And because we are always trying to move our viewer in some way, and

because I had not been in a studio for the last three years, all the energy that I would have put in a piece of work has transferred into this piece of literature. Even in my style of writing, I've noticed myself that there is an extreme scrutiny of surfaces, colours, movements. These are things I would actually look for when I'm painting, drawing, making a sculpture. So when you are reading the text, it seems visual, like images. That's the only thing I knew - how to create images. Of course, your environment growing up and familial history plays a huge role in how you behave, how you become. I grew up with books, which meant, as they say, when you read you travel the world. All the books have an impact on the sensitivity you cultivate which translates in your work and photography. Similarly, because I hadn't been in a studio for so long, all the energy was put in this work to make it feel and affect the reader the same way an image would.

Q. Can you name a book or a work of art that has profoundly impacted your creative consciousness?

A. One of the works that really impacted me was *Everything is Illuminated* by Jonathan Safran Foer, a book I read a few years ago. It's a beautiful book that talks about an American Ukrainian man who goes back to Ukraine to trace his roots, his grandfather's roots, and look for the woman who saved him in World War 2. But to call it just a story about that is unfair because it is about identity, migration, cowardice, life, war, and about a protagonist who happens to be a weird collector of things of a mundane nature. When I read the book and watched the film, together they gave a very cohesive picture of the work. It showed me that mundane objects have worth and how they can play a considerable role in reminding us of people that we never met. It was one of the first books that made me think about my nani whom I never met and encouraged me to start collecting things that belonged to her including memories that other people provided me about her.

Q. Were there any elements that you were particular about retaining in your book? For me, your sensitive mode of narration seems to be one of them. How successfully do you think you have retained them?

A. The thing I was most particular about retaining was the colloquial language. It provides a lot of earthiness, locality, to the story. And I don't think that sometimes when we translate words into English, it really explains the full depth and emotion of the person who originally says it. The local language is so colourful and vibrant, expressing a sense of loss, a sense of happiness that English cannot, being a utilitarian language. Unfortunately, this is the language I'm best acquainted with. English goes from A to B only, while Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Bangla go from A1, A2, A3 to A557 to B. There are so many different ways to say the same thing, to feel the same thing. "We will never forget the Partition of India" is not as impactful as "*Hum vo taksim-e-hind bhula nahi payenge*" which is something Najis Khatoun said to me in Lahore. When one hears this, one is able to identify that this is a Muslim saying likely to be said by someone who had migrated due to Partition, so it also helps you to situate people and see how colloquialisms have grown before and after Partition. This was the most important element for me and it made me glad that my editor agreed to keep it. I also wanted to make my book one that was understandable by people of all generations including our generation which has little connect to in depth history of Partition. I tried to write it in a way which was resonant to people. Being able to bring the flavour of the places I visited for the interviews is another thing I was concerned about. The

spices of Bengal, the glacialness of Pakistan- I wanted to keep all of that with the essence of languages I heard.

Q. ‘The Museum of Material Memory’ that you co-founded along with Ms. Navdha Malhotra is a similar archive of historical narratives in the digital mode. In that sense, it is an extension of your project. What then still motivates you to continue your enterprise in this arena?

A. It was truly founded as an extension of my research so that people from all over the world who owned objects of age from the subcontinent could talk about them and gain ownership over their history. What we are doing in the museum is not writing about having an object which is archaic and fascinating but also attempting to unravel the personal and physical mystery around an object. For instance, if you have a *shawl* or a *bagh*, I would like you to write not only whom it belonged to, where it came from and how it came into your possession but also about the sewing and weaving of the *shawl* or the *bagh*, for that is equally necessary. We wanted the museum to be democratic and so it’s online, accessible to everyone. We wanted it to be a research tool for people so that they may in ten or fifteen years be able to discover the things that people wore, the music they listened to, what the travel tickets, books, instruments looked like, what a lawyer used to read at a certain time in a certain place. This is what really makes us people ‘of here’ and we wanted the museum to be a reflection of these lives. There is a beautiful story in the museum about these medals of the grandfather of a person named Arjun. He knew nothing about the medals and later, on asking around in the family, he found out that his grandfather had run away from home at the age of 16 to join a *toil* of performers in the King’s court; later he went on to join the British Indian Army which led him as far as the North Western Frontier and Mesopotamia to fight in World War 2. This justifies the existence of the museum as a space where a collection of stories can happen without requiring the material entity that a physical museum would demand. More so, it encourages people to write and reminds people that objects that are mundane in nature can hold significance and if you allow the object to show you a person or a place, it will.

Q. The last chapter provides an instance when you faced a language barrier in understanding the conversation of a Bengali couple. What were the other challenges you encountered in the process of collecting these stories?

A. One of the challenges beyond the language barrier was to find people, but to locate refugees in Delhi and make them talk about memories is not difficult in comparison with getting to know their objects, because people couldn’t really recall if they had brought anything with them. When I had started this exploration, 66 years had already passed since Partition, it was around 2013-14. They didn’t remember if they had some *ghara* or plate or clothes from pre- Partition and how old it was. It was another hurdle to be able to collect diverse enough objects and the second thing was to choose the interviews because there were so many similar yet quite distinct interviews, while the experiences of Partition which were of the same kind in collective memory. How does one decide a criterion to choose one story over the other? Subsequently, the interviews I put in the book were based on the diversity of objects and experiences. I had three stories of *shawls* so I happened to pick one that had something about a freedom fighter attached to it. Apart from Bangla, one of the obstacles was to understand Urdu. They speak Hindustani here in India but when I did interviews in Pakistan, especially with older people, they spoke very pure Urdu which led me to take Urdu classes. This was a very new experience. Yet beyond all this, it was doing justice to the stories which was a test. Even if I didn’t agree with things, I had to say them with sensitivity and honesty. Naseeruddin Adhami from AMU, whose story is a part of the book, was

saying things I didn't agree with. It was really hard for me to write those things but I did it, for it was his truth. Partition was made up of different versions of history so to include all that objectively, for me, is a mark of good research.

Q. In the epilogue, you discussed how you were bizarrely transported into a dreamy realm where you found yourself before the fragments of the narratives. Were there other instances like this? Do reveal the unrecorded details of your odyssey of interviewing, researching, and writing.

A. There were many instances. When you're listening to experiences you have never lived, you ask yourself how you're able to relate to them and visualise them, and they become dreams and haunt you. You constantly worry about them and think about whether you are hurting the person by asking about their memories. One thing that I have put in very briefly in the book is the sense of guilt: who am I to ask the question that is causing someone so much pain? How do I ask the question more sensitively, softly? But there is no gentle way to ask such questions, you just have to ask. There was one particular week I can recall when I did all these interviews starting from Jhelum going to Bengal to Sahiwal, I had bits of these people's really gory memories which even in my mind, I can imagine. Prabjot Kaur, the Punjabi poet told me when she was in the train with her family, the train was silent and they thought that they were so lucky that it was quiet. But they realised that there were dead bodies all around and they had to sit on them and I wondered about the neat freak in me who hates sitting on dust. They had to sit on dead bodies whose blood soaked into their *chadar*, there was even stray hair and people's belongings scattered around. These things do impact a person even if one doesn't consciously think about them. There were other cases like this that've disturbed me but then I could only write them down because one cannot just take them out of one's mind, so I had to fit them in a story.

After the interview, I could comprehend her words in the book "I feel like a palimpsest, where each voice is softly pressed on to the last, and the many become one." I could also identify how the book develops a similar, parallel attribute, of being a multi-layered reservoir of various untold narratives of multiculturalism and migration. Commonly tied by a thread of common events, these accounts coexist on different pages blooming into a palimpsest.

Simran Arora
II Year

Slash in a Flash Creative Writing Competition Winners

The Weather

That very unusual morning was when I first felt the music. The hypnotic sounds accompanied an unnatural urge to follow it. You could say I was *swept away*. It was odd, because I was thin air then, one of those floaters who couldn't make up their minds. I was indecisive as a human, barely assertive, barely attractive, and a little lopsided.

So, when the Reaper came by for a cup of tea, I wasn't surprised.

True to his name, the Reaper was awfully grim (and hardly a contender for the *top 5 I'd love to have over for tea*) and I was unprepared. Did he take his tea black? Without sugar? But he was nice enough to bring his own, and I noticed that he added 5 cubes of sugar. He didn't say much, just that Time's Up! I changed into comfortable shoes—I wasn't the sure if I would have to climb or run or float.

As it turned out, I was on the waiting list to heaven and not very patient, to be honest. So I decided to be air. It's lighter, you don't have to feed much. It'd be a lie to say I had any real choice. The wait-listers, the drifters, we just sort of hang around. My human years gave me plenty of practice to *hang around*.

I most loved to hang out with Cherry. Cherry was red. Unlike my weird, pale blue. I admired Cherry. She wouldn't be waitlisted I assure you. Reds always became fire—holy, unholy. Fire meant belonging, not drifting.

My cat Chip must have been afire on catnip, on other days she just sat around. Chip cuddles the air sometimes, she knows about me, I think. Sad thoughts make me cranky.

He began to sing, Apple. Apple was his name, I liked it most when I became sad to watch him. And one day as I felt brave and walked right past him, he breathed me in and he welled up and he sang.

I had made my decision then, although it was probably too late. I wanted him to be with me. I wanted to be a Cherry. As I hear him.

I am. I want to be. I bleed away.

And when I bleed? The humans, they... well.

They didn't take it too well.

This is probably why I was pale, blue.

Indecisive and chill too.

(Ever so slightly inspired by *GOBLIN* (Korean Drama))

Arundhati Rawat

III Year

(Winner I Prize)

Ode to the Cold Shoulder

My virtual canvas was half-empty.
Her tumbler was not flowing with any form of art.
Muskeets and prairie dogs,
Cats and quotes on Sartre's philosophy,
The Starry Night or #positivity.
Nothing snuggled into the bed with me that night
but an autumn of split-second's duration
that passed in a hide and seek
of awkward, murky silences filled with
breaths longing to talk, talk, talk and talk,
but not communicating.
I hold your uncensored memory intact,
From dawn to dusk of last-seen scenes.
So, the next time we meet I hope to calm the ocean of queries
and step forward in the company of crows and squirrels to
ask her just this once —
“How do you wear that *je ne sais se quoi* so confidently?”

Sarah Jalil
II Year
(Winner II Prize)

*Delhi Poetry Creative Writing Competition Winners**Lunar Revolutions*

The red sand stone was burning cold
when the clouds were crying.

The call for the evening prayer started with a burp
“The muezzin must have eaten biryani!”
said some voice, unknown.

Tall towers of testimony were enmeshed with coal
amongst which stood Prince Khurram’s
bankrupt legacy.

As I stepped on a puddle of blood,
which was some twenty years old,
I realised
Jahanara was nowhere to be seen.

Some say, she is waiting for a miracle to happen
I think I should touch her buried bones in a music-wrapped consolation,
and whisper to her that
the moon doesn’t shine on Chandini Chowk like before.

*Sarah Jalil
II Year
(Winner I Prize)*

Dear Delhi

Dear Delhi,

There is a barricade between you and me...

Why?

Dear Delhi,

your sky isn't as clear as my heart

Why?

Dear Delhi,

Where is your music and why am I not dancing anymore?

Dear Delhi,

you and I are one so why the lathis?

Dear Delhi,

I've forgotten what colour you are

maybe show me some light again?

Varnika Mishra
I Year
(Winner II Prize)

DUTA and DUSU Strikes

Starting in the month of February, teachers and students of Delhi University have come together to protest against the government's policies which would lead to higher education becoming inaccessible to most middle-class and economically weak sections of society, with strikes in colleges and suspension of classes so as to ensure public higher education in India does not become a commercial business.

The government's proposal to have colleges pay for 30% of their expenditure on infrastructure, teacher salaries, etc. by taking loans from the newly-installed HEFA (Higher Education Funding Association), if implemented, will lead to increase in student fees from approximately Rs. 50,000 for three years of an undergraduate course to potentially several lakhs. If this increase does not take place, colleges will have barely any funds to spare on seminars and other programs for students' all-round development. There is no way in which financially hard-up families will be able to handle such a vast increase in expenditure, making education easily accessible only to those who have the lakhs of rupees to spend for it, not the street vendors and shoemakers, among other poor people, who may have otherwise somehow arranged for their children to get a good higher education in one of the most highly-regarded institutions of the country. Even middle class students' parents would have a hard time coping with it.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had stated in a speech at Patna University as it celebrated a hundred years of its establishment last year that the government would grant autonomy to ten private colleges and ten publicly-funded colleges so India can take a place in the list of the top five hundred higher education institutions worldwide. To achieve this end, ten thousand crore rupees would be provided to them over the course of this government's run. However, the budget for the 2018-19 session specifies only two hundred and fifty crores for education, leading to the conclusion that these colleges, if granted autonomy, would more likely than not have to fund themselves and turn themselves into an education market by raising fees to sky-high levels.

Teachers themselves are faced with financial instability as governments over the years have avoided opening up vacant positions to ad-hoc teachers and 60% of the total teachers in the University are working on this basis. Moreover, a change in the way teachers are appointed is being proposed which would reduce the amount of open positions and decrease the likelihood of new Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe teachers of being appointed in the coming years; the proposal is to have department-wise appointments, leading to low representation of SC/SC/OBC teachers. Promotions have not been given to teachers who are already appointed in many years, to the point where job instability is such a serious concern that many are forced to switch from teaching in publicly-funded institutions to private ones so as to improve their quality of life, reducing the quality of knowledge imparted to students.

Numerous dharnas and protests have been held by the DUTA and the DUSU in locations varying from the departmental facilities in North Campus to individual colleges, including the one at the Arts facility which kick started a week of continuous strike and suspension of classes from the 19th of March to the 23rd. The government's policies have been called "anti-people" and "anti-education", and it is essential for both students and teachers to partake in these strikes to convince the government that quality education in India should not and will not be commercialised and confined to the elite.

Nashra Usmani
I Year

Interviews

Ms. Mudita Mohile

Ms. Mohile has been Asst. Professor with the Department of English since 2004 and is also an alumna of Gargi. In this interview with Bitacora she discusses some of her academic interests, classrooms, pedagogy, and some of her areas of specialisation.

Q. Does a student's perspective about a text alter your approach towards it?

A. Yes, it does. The way people respond to texts changes on the basis of their own historical context and I think as teachers we have to build that into our pedagogy. Literature is not something that can be taught in isolation. So if there is an overwhelming point of view expressed by the class, I see myself as a learner and try to include that in my teaching practices.

Q. How do you think transliteration affects the original aesthetic of the text?

A. My position on this has always been that the practice of translation and adaptation, more than transliteration, is never a one way process. It always does the impact the "original", it becomes a lens through which we view that original. I've taught Sanskrit and Hindi texts translated into English; I've also taught, for example, Spanish novels and poetry translated into English. There have been very productive instances in class where students have asked me how two translations differ from each other. And I've had to do my research, go back to the original, and explain that sometimes the original harbours a pun, other times the two translators work through completely different vantage points...

Q. How does your research of women's representation in Marathi Bhakti traditions affect your understanding of women characters in Sanskrit and Western texts?

A. Long before I formally began working on Bhakti, I've always been interested in gender and subjectivity. My work on Bhakti fed into that already existing interest and what I learnt is that religion, gender and poetry coincide in a very peculiar fashion and one is actually able to see the nascent moment of what we understand as "modern" subjectivity. Subjectivities are those deeply multidisciplinary nerve centres that we just have to struggle with, if we want to study literature in a productive manner.

Q. How does the coming up of terms like feminism, queer theory and post colonialism affect the reading of texts written way before these terms were coined?

A. I think we've come a very long way because when I was a student I remember being told that there is a problem with looking at Milton through a feminist lens because feminism wasn't around when he lived and wrote. I was told that if one reads race into *Othello*, that's a terrible misreading. But I know that literary studies, as a discipline, has evolved over the last couple of decades and there is no going back at all. The rise of these terms marks the political transition our field is going through, and we have to embrace those transitions rather than being resistant to them.

Q. Do your personal opinions of a text, or any new books that you read, permeate your pedagogy?

A. Always. Pedagogy is a very fluid thing, an ever evolving creature. The moment one sets ones pedagogy in cement, I believe one's life as a teacher is over; it's time to write one's resignation. There are times when I struggle not to allow my judgment to colour my teaching of a particular text. That too is an art because at the end of the day one wants students to judge for themselves, and to go through their own struggles of interpretation. As a teacher I'm duty bound to occasionally put my views on the back burner, and not focalize all my teaching through my opinion.

Q. How have the gender dynamics changed in the workspace?

A. Tremendously. But the change is positive. I also think that this moment is actually a moment of struggle as far as feminism itself is concerned, and while there are laws against discrimination and sexual harassment at the workplace, not all human relationships need to be mediated through the law. Then, on the flip side, there is also an atmosphere of terrible suspicion and blame and extra-judicial defamation which for me has sort of come to crisis in the "Me Too" and "Him Too" diatribes – I wouldn't even call them movements. Also, as a feminist, I'm always struggling to emphasise that gender is never the only basis of anybody's identity...a monochromatic view of feminism is one I wouldn't support, ever.

Q. How will the recent change in our syllabus by removing a lot of canonical texts and introducing new texts and genres change the future course of Literary studies in India? Are there any texts/genres that you would like to add?

A. I think that's a very important and very difficult question. I say that, first, I do believe that the canon has to constantly be disrupted, but I'm actually very hesitant to dismiss the idea of teaching the canon in the classroom. I believe that the canon can be read differently, I believe that its outer limits can be unravelled, it can be rewritten altogether – but the canon ultimately is a window not so much to good literature, but to the material practices, economic modes of production, cultural ideas of taste, and macroeconomic things like globalisation. I believe that these actually mediate what we understand as literature, and if one wants to hang on to those insights then it's very important to engage with the canon.

I feel that some genres, like autobiography, are terribly under-represented in our syllabi, and in the Indian context, secularism isn't the erasure of religions, but according all of them equal respect. So I believe that the secular sanitisation of English studies is a problem that needs to be remedied. For instance, when I was a student we had some excerpts from the Bible in our course, and I think that set the foundation for our understanding of literature as much as Plato did. Then, I also think we need to consider newer areas such as post-structuralist interventions in gender studies and queer theory; and very, very contemporary literature – the literature that our students today are reading. I think our syllabus, every syllabus, is by definition dated, and that is something which we need to remedy.

*Interviewed by Prithiva Sharma
II Year*

Dr. Shatarupa Sinha

Dr. Sinha is a long-standing member of Gargi's English department faculty. Her work in Comparative Literature culminated in a doctoral thesis on 'Indian English Literature: A Critical Inquiry into Reading Strategies and Pedagogy' in 2015. In this interview with Bitacora she discussed expanding canons, expanding approaches to new literatures, and expanding conceptualizations of gender.

Q. Does a student's perspective about a text alter your approach towards it?

A. A text comes alive for me when I begin teaching it. As I keep reading the text for myself and to teach in class, new perspectives emerge. It ought to serve the students the same way for the students as well - that's what I feel. When my students begin thinking actively about a text, it becomes lively for them too... and meanings start emerging. Newer approaches to any text excite me. I feel happy and intellectually stimulated when students come up with new perspectives. If the argument and critical analysis is substantial, I have no qualms about altering my approach towards the text.

Q. How do you think transliteration affects the original aesthetic of the text?

A. Translation, or even transliteration, is a process of creation. I would rather call it a process of transcreation. It is a process of creating a text using a new paradigm.

Since it is creating/adding a different perspective to the text, it certainly affects the original aesthetics of the text. The perspective or approach to a transliterated text is different. We may approach it using different theories of translation, but the idea of reading that new text definitely goes beyond theorisation. It needs to be seen in the light of the aesthetics of the target language. The linguistic-cultural aspect of the translated/ transliterated text determines its reception to a great extent. Every such text is an original text in that sense.

Q. How does the coming up of terms like feminism, queer theory, and post-colonialism affect the reading of texts written way before these terms were coined?

A. Reading a literary text does not always necessarily indicate or require a borrowed theoretical terminology. It is true that literary theory has been established as a discipline in the last 100 years, but criticism has been in practice since antiquity.

Literature is a reflection of the ways and times of people. As newer perspectives emerge in society, newer approaches to literature emerge as well. This has been a flaw in modern literary theory - to read everything from the perspective of any particular theory rather than contextualising in its own socio-linguistic-cultural space.

The pedagogy of literature requires reading and studying literature within its socio-cultural location. I believe literature can be read and taught from the point of view of aesthetics and its contemporary politics, rather than transposing theoretical terms from different cultural locations.

Q. How does coming up of new psychological concepts affect the understanding of texts in the Indian setting?

A. I think a part of this has already been answered in the previous question.

However, I would like to say here that the reading strategies and pedagogical implications of an Indian literary text are culturally, socially, and linguistically very different from new western psychological concepts. Imposition of literary theory onto all literatures appears to be an instance of absolute hegemonic eurocentricity.

Q. Do your personal opinions of a text, or any new books that you read, permeate your pedagogy?

A. Yes, they certainly do. The act of reading is a continuous process that evolves over a period of time, and then undergoes change. As a student of literature, I think reading opens up new avenues of understanding. Unless there is growth in our thought processes, we stop growing as individuals. That curbs the overall development of critical thinking. Therefore, new approaches should always be welcomed, that eventually expand our horizon of understanding and reading.

Q. How have the gender dynamics changed in the workspace?

A. Academics is gradually accepting alternate realities into mainstream discussions. It is certainly a good move to look beyond the two defined genders, male and female.

As far as the dynamics between male and female colleagues are concerned, they too have undergone certain positive changes. However, we need to go a long way.

In an all girls' college like ours, I think there should be gender sensitisation not only towards girl students, but across all genders. This is a right everyone should enjoy in their workplace.

Q. How will the recent change in our syllabus by removing a lot of canonical texts and introducing new texts and genres change the future course of literary studies in India? Are there any texts/genres that you would like to add?

A. I am glad you asked this question regarding literary studies in India and not English literary studies. Literary studies in India is undergoing major change. The discipline of English honours is changing, and so are many new courses that are opening new vistas of learning - especially World Literature, Comparative Literature, Postcolonial Studies etc.

The hierarchy between classical/canonical and popular literature is gradually eroding, and again, we have a long way to go. Changes in syllabi of any course must be practiced in order to overcome stagnation in the intellectual thought process. These changes have made forays into new paradigms of reading and understanding literary studies in India.

Changes in syllabi after a few years are always welcome.

*Interviewed by Prithiva Sharma
II Year*

*Log of
Departmental Events
2017-2018*

25th August, 2017

Anuja Chauhan's Book Reading Session

On 25th August 2017, the English department inaugurated the Book Club with the first event of the year by inviting Anuja Chauhan, the famous author of 5 outstanding books. The event began with her reading an excerpt from her new book *Baaṛ*. Her books were also on display and available for purchase after the proceeding. A book discussion followed the reading in which students presented varied perspectives and questions. The author reciprocated with enthusiasm.

Simran Arora
II Year

30th August, 2017

Literary Quiz

On 30th August, the Quiz Club of the English Literary Society conducted an interesting quiz competition on “literary terms”. First year and second year students participated in it with as much zeal and fervour as the third year students displayed in playing the quizmasters. Ms. Jharana Rani, the convenor of the club smoothly organised the whole event accompanied by Ms. Perna Pradhan and Mr. Maisnam Arnal. All in all, the students thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the event.

Simran Arora
II Year

31st October, 2017

Bitacora Old Book Sale

On October, 2017 an Old Book Sale was organised by the Bitacora committee of Gargi College, Delhi University. The collection of old books had started weeks ago with both students and professors of the English Department bringing in old books and contributing for the event. Since the annual fest of Quilluminati – the creative writing society of the college – had been organised on the same day, the stall for the book sale was set up in the morning just outside the auditorium to attract an enthusiastic crowd and the books were stacked in different piles according to their genre.

The stall saw a lot of activity that day, with a wide range of interested students and professors coming in to examine the spectrum of books in the stall, from literary criticism on the extreme left to authors like Dan Brown on the right. As the day passed by and the customers increased, the members of Bitacora got an opportunity to display their marketing skills while also getting to know each other. Along with the plethora of these literary texts, the members of the team managed to sell beautiful bookmarks, which were exclusively made by fellow students of the department. To wrap up the day on a positive note, the committee celebrated the closure of a highly successful event, with a sum of twenty thousand rupees deposited with the members as a

result of the sale. The day ended with the sheer joy of success and a promise of readying the best possible version of the annual departmental magazine.

Mansi Ramrakhyani
Angela Braru
I Year

8th January, 2018

Dr. Easterine Kire's Lecture on 'Writing History and Retrieving Culture'

Dr. Easterine Kire graced the English Department at Gargi College on the morning of January 8, 2018. Dr. Kire's fourth novel, *Bitter Wormwood*, was shortlisted for The Hindu Literary Prize and her latest novel, *Son of the Thundercloud*, won the Tata Literature Live Book of the year Award in 2017. Her books have been translated into a number of foreign languages, which sing of her stature as an established writer. The famous poet and novelist from Nagaland came to talk about 'Writing Oral History, Retrieving Culture'.

Dr. Kire began her lecture by revealing that she realised she had a role in bringing forth the oral stories of her culture early in life. She was greatly inspired by African writers who wrote about their cultures through old-tales. Following in their footsteps, she wrote about Nagaland's tribal cultures, their taboos and negotiations with patriarchal practice.

The freedom to write and publish books came after decades of war and struggles for peace in her state, and her books have followed a historically chronological order. She entwined people's fears, aspirations and inhibitions with Nagaland's history. Before writing her books, she would often talk to her elders and villagers because they were like "walking history books". She enumerated the various beliefs of Naga culture and folklores, the way to live a good life, and respect for every living thing on earth. It is believed that each creature has a spirit. The culture's ancient philosophies teach each generation about the co-existence of the spiritual and material worlds.

Four students from the department discussed Dr. Kire's books and she answered their questions encouragingly. She even expressed amazement at points of view she had not considered before. Dr. Kire's books explore realms of fiction and folklore combined. The books deal with everyday problems, complex issues, political history, taboos, as well as other aspects of culture. Her books transport the readers - as did her performance. On the audience's request, she performed jazz poetry; her poem 'Diamonds' enthralled us all.

The students were introduced to the rich culture and heritage of Nagaland by Dr. Kire which ended on a pleasant note with a number of students getting their copies of *Bitter Wormwood*, *Son of the Thundercloud*, and *Don't Run, My Love* signed by the author. Everybody walked out with new perspectives to see through and new notions to delve into.

Prachi Mehra
I Year

23rd January, 2018

Humanitarian Development - A Talk with Mr. Malay Firoz

Warm winter afternoons and drowsiness are like Siamese twins; joined at the hip. To the determinedly productive person, the rarity of their severance comes as a pleasant surprise. And so it did to the attendees gathered at 2:20 pm in lecture theatre 4, for a talk on "Developmental

Humanitarianism”. His talk straddled two charged words, the implications of whose overlap had escaped most gathered students before Mr Malay Firoz, the day’s speaker, broke it down for them. As they gained hair-raising knowledge within a period of just two hours, the listeners came upon an unsaid consensus: sleep is for the dead.

The chair, Dr Puja Rani of the Political Sciences Department, and Mr Firoz, both had an easy air about them. The latter, after his introduction, strolled across the front of the room as he spoke. At the beginning of the same, Mr Firoz warmly invited the gathered to interject with a raised hand at any given time, if they desired to.

The lecture began with a helpful explanation of the field of anthropology, where he explained that the discipline can’t be understood through definitions as well as it can be through organised experiences. Mr. Firoz offered a diagrammatic understanding of humanitarian work. If the standard of living is taken as the baseline, the task of non-governmental organisations is to re-establish it. Mr Firoz contrasted this with developmental work expected of the government, which should ideally be traced as a curve upward of the base. A critique of humanitarian bodies followed which acknowledged the repeated use of graphic images of physically deteriorated children to put “shock value” into play - a questionable act which converts human beings into inanimate markers but is nevertheless meant to raise funds for good. He also pointed that humanitarian organisations may come to represent foreign policies of states from which power and funds flow.

The focus of Mr. Firoz’s research centres on the refugee crisis in Syria. “Crisis” is a word that is used increasingly casually and frequently; he considered it important to start with discussing the term and its implications. The listeners were apprised of an interesting upward spike in the use of the word, as tracked by Google Analytics. Circling back to Syria, Mr Firoz explained why he picked it as a focus of his study rather than places like Iraq. It was startling to learn of European countries that sent across funds to regions ravaged by internal strife only so that they themselves did would not have to deal with an outpour of refugees. And additionally, that it was simply a desire to form alliances against the backdrop of the Cold War that had made them offer an open-armed welcome to immigrants in the first place. The collective frowns that took shape in the room were a clear disapproval of the back-and-forth being played globally with human lives.

The question-answer session that followed the talk raised some pertinent queries. A student asked about the challenges involved in conducting interviews with people who have only recently warmed up to you. The answer extracted an amused chuckle from Mr Firoz who explained that the reason he started smoking is because sharing a cigarette eased the air between him and his interviewee, making a marked difference to the honesty and openness of responses. A question raised about race as an affecting factor in a South Asian researcher’s career prompted Mr Firoz to briefly discuss the importance of the emergence of academics from non-European countries. While answering another inquiry towards the end, he highlighted the importance of creating balanced perspectives by interviewing not only the marginalised, but also the administrative powers that are often painted with a homogenising brush.

It has been all too easy to characterise the latter as the unthinking villains of James Dickney’s famous words: “So much destruction in modern war takes place miles and miles away from the source... the human being who has caused it.”

Aarushi Chadha
III Year

24th January, 2018

Lit Soc's Flea Market!

As Gargi College buzzed with the crowd of society fests and the hum of music on the morning of 24 January 2018, the Literary Society set up a Flea Market with the slogan: “Come break capitalism!” Both students and teachers had spent weeks bringing in jewellery, household utensils, clocks, photo frames, scarves, etc. Milkshake bottles and coffee jars were also repurposed into something new, and stalls had been set up to sell the same at extremely affordable prices.

The stalls lined the garden boundary of the college, greeting everyone who entered the premises with an array of clothes, photo frames, accessories, and even footwear. Accessories saw starting prices of as low as ten rupees, while things like earphones were sold at just thirty five rupees. Coffee jars were transformed into cute home décor with ribbons and glittering hearts – just in time for Valentine’s Day! – and glass bottles into vases that looked as good as new. Handmade notebooks and folders were among the biggest attractions, with their printed covers giving them a unique advantage over the ones seen in markets.

Flyers were distributed all over the college to the students present; the Flea Market attracted throngs of people to its display of affordable goodies. The accessories stall, glittering in the sunlight of the afternoon with its golden bracelets and rainbow earrings, attracted the largest crowd – mostly consisting of girls, but guys found themselves browsing the stall too! The handmade and repurposed goods also found themselves being sold by the minute.

Most things were sold out by the end of the day as the Flea Market began winding down and the crowd in the college started dwindling. As a few people browsed the remaining items lazily, the evening winds fluttered the stringed decorations and colourful banner proclaiming “LIT SOC FLEA”, which itself was made out of newspaper. Teachers and participants who had been waiting till the end to buy their share bought out what was left of the day’s wares.

Everyone who had participated in the Flea Market had lent a hand to the challenging of capitalism, the competition of rising and falling prices and the rat race of one company trying to outrun the other. In contrast, this was a uniquely peaceful experience for all involved, not having to be bothered by things that look good but have prices to beat their looks.

Nashra Usmani
I Year

2nd February, 2018

Transcreation: “A Political Act, Always”
Conducted by Ms. Mudita Mohile

Bitacora in collaboration with the English Literary Society held a workshop on February 2, 2018, on Transcreation. The 2-hour session conducted by Ms. Mudita Mohile, was enlightening as well as interactive. For students of English literature, the introduction of an “alternative narrative” to a canonical narrative felt like a liberating adventure.

Transcreation in literature refers to a rewriting, or an adaptation of a primary text intended for the readership of a specific target audience. Transcreation can be seen as a reclamation of the

minorities' voices. It addresses the silence as well as the remaking of history which often furthers the opinions of dominant voices.

The focus of the writer while transcreating should be on the form/genre, context, interpretation of the characters, focalisation and plot/denouement of the primary text. Examples of critically-acclaimed transcreated texts include *The Penelopiad* by Margaret Atwood (primary text: *The Odyssey* by Homer), *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys (primary text: *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte), and several others.

The students' active participation led to an enlightening discussion, which allowed for a stimulating experience as a participant as well as an observer.

Trishala Mohan
III Year

22nd February, 2018

Poetry Workshop

Conducted by Dr Anjana Neira Dev

On the 22nd of February 2018, about 50 pupils from the Department of English along with many from Quilluminati, the English Creative Writing Society got together for a workshop on the basics of poetry conducted by Dr Anjana Neira Dev. The event was organised by *Bitacora* and the *Lit Soc*. With her characteristic energy and charm, she grabbed the attention of all the participants describing poetry. This quote from William Blake's **Auguries of Innocence** encapsulated it best:

“To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a heaven in a Wild Flower.
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour.”

Dr. Dev explained various kinds of lines in poetry like enjambed and end-stopped lines, as well as the different kinds of stanzas based on the number of lines in them like couplets, tercets, and quatrains. The participants got to explore various poetic forms, including Fibonacci poems and Japanese haiku. In these short forms, the students were encouraged to write their own poems and many recited them during the workshop, merging theory with practice.

Dr. Dev read out from longer poetry forms too, many of which were completely new to the participants of the workshop and helped expand their knowledge. Dr. Dev also encouraged the participants to try writing in the new styles they had discovered which included *ghazals* in English, and Pantoums. She stressed the importance of not paying heed to baseless criticism when it came to writing one's own poetry but to ensure that one feels confident in writing it and likes it themselves while simultaneously making sure one masters the language they are writing in. The hour spent with her not only clarified the basics of poetry but opened up a whole new world of poems to discover and write.

Nashra Usmani
I Year

26th February, 2018

Poetry in Delhi

Conducted by Dr. Akhil Katyal

Dr. Akhil Katyal, well-known poet activist conducted a workshop on **Poetry in Delhi**. Dr. Katyal is also Assistant Professor of English and Creative Writing at Ambedkar University. He was welcomed with great applause and enthusiasm and he in turn expressed his delight at being at Gargi.

The workshop began with a quote by Muhammad Ibrahim Zauq expressing his love for Delhi. Dr Katyal then read out the poem 'I Have That Small Town Feeling' by journalist Ravish Kumar. The poem narrates the tussles of love between classes by comparing the two lovers to different areas of Delhi. His own poem 'Ghitorni' emphasised the aural effect of linguistic play. This was followed by a small activity in which Dr. Katyal asked the students to associate themselves with different areas of the city. This was to explain the working of similes and metaphors in a poem.

He talked about the Toolbox of Poetry which includes the tools of language, aural and visual, available to the poet to get the attention of the reader. Dr. Katyal also taught the students the art of enjambment using a stanza from 'A Butcher' by Agha Shahid Ali, a Kashmiri-American poet. He discussed each student's perspective on changing the prose paragraph into poetry and later revealed how the poet had done it. He repeatedly emphasised the importance of location, softness, action, speed, and the subconscious forces based on Rebecca Hazelton's essay 'Learning the Poetic Line'.

In the penultimate session, he displayed a map of Delhi and asked the students to mark certain areas in answer to certain questions. He then discussed how the answers reflected the theory presented in Shilpa Phadke's 'Why Loiter? Women and Risk on Mumbai Streets'. The students got to share their own written pieces and discussed them with the author, which made it a very insightful experience, ultimately. The session ended with everyone lining up to take photographs with the famous contemporary poet.

Prithiva Sharma
II Year

9th March, 2018

Kiran Nagarkar's Book Reading

On the 9th of March, as students gathered in the Seminar Hall to listen to the eminent author Kiran Nagarkar, little did they know that they were in for an hour of impactful reading, politics, and a rethinking of the known and the unexplored.

One of the founding members of Gargi College, ex-faculty members of our department Ms. Shashi Mutatkar chaired the session and introduced Mr. Nagarkar to the audience as one of her favourite authors and spoke of his popular works *Cuckold* and *Jasoda*. Mr. Nagarkar then began by reading the chilling prologue to his newest work *Jasoda*. The room was engulfed by a stunned silence as the rather unusual prologue ended on an unsettling but intriguing note.

Mr. Nagarkar recounted his early days, saying that although money was usually tight, he managed to spend some on books anyway. He emphasised the importance of reading newspapers and being in touch with the world since "our future is being decided there".

The author pointed out the lack of protest in India and how important it is to make enough noise to be heard. He said that, given the opportunity, he would always wish to send a message for the underprivileged to rise up. He began to read part of his play, *Bedtime Story*, that reimagines Eklavya as the hero he could've been.

Following the narration, Ms. Prithiva Sharma and Ms. Nashra Usmani shared their comments on the author's work and asked him a few interesting questions which led to a lively discussion. During the discourse, Mr. Nagarkar specifically pointed out the importance of feminist ideology but also took care to mention that feminism and misandry should not be used interchangeably. The session ended with Mr. Nagarkar autographing the students' copies of *Jasoda*.

Varnika Mishra, Nashra Usmani
I Year

17th March, 2018

Film Studies Workshop with Anupama Srinivasan

The Film Studies workshop organised by the English Literary Society on 17 March 2018 was a rather enlightening one. Anupama Srinivasan, freelance filmmaker, and film curator based in Delhi, conducted the workshop. She is a documentary film maker with over 16 years' experience who introduced the participants to a completely new dimension of cinema. The workshop helped the literature and cinema students understand the basic technicalities involved in creating the cinematic experience for the viewers. The workshop helped to understand how what we read in the texts in class is actually applied in making movies.

With a brief introduction to the fundamentals of film making, the workshop focussed on the theoretical aspects of film making, such as shots, shot divisions, foregrounding techniques; beginning with a discussion on how commercial cinema prefers the creation of a logical, continuous narrative which allows the viewer to remove disbelief comfortably, Ms. Srinivasan spoke of how editing helps describe the relationship *between* shots and the process by which they are combined and compressed. She also discussed how a film consists of a succession of fragments excerpted from a spatial and temporal continuum. Three clips from different regions and time frames were screened aimed at soliciting the intellectual participation in a reflexive manner. The first was Robert Bresson's *Mouchette* (French), Ritvik Ghatak's *Meghe Dhake Tara* (Bengali) and Abbas Kiorastami's *Where is the Friend's Home?* (Afghani). Participants were even encouraged to consider a classroom scenario and imagine it in five shots and got to discuss their ideas. This was a great exercise that got all participants involved and helped to understand how films are made through practical application. It was well received by all.

The second half of the workshop was on documentaries. Shilpi Saluja's documentary *Is Anybody Watching* was revelatory in a manner deviating from the conventional plainspoken documentaries of the very source of our approach towards social issues while also addressing what we can do to bring about change on a personal level. Ms Srinivasan ended the workshop with a short excerpt from *Nirmay* (winner of the Most Innovative Film Award at MIFF 2014) the documentary questioning young, educated women who question their choices with regard to marriage or work in a lower-middle class neighbourhood. The five hour workshop was a meaningful learning experience for all and left the students looking forward to more such informative events.

Samridhi Rana
III Year

17th March, 2018

Theatre Workshop with Ms. Shilpi Marwaha

On 17 March 2018, the English Literary Society organised a theatre workshop conducted by Ms. Shilpi Marwaha, theatre artist and activist from **Sukhmanch Theatre**. The workshop began with a warm-up round of “Walk Around”, where the students briskly walked, keeping off each other, in a zigzag pattern in a space that kept decreasing till everyone was crammed very close to each other. Through this exercise Ms. Marwaha discussed the participants observations and explained how less space for a team that co-exists meant more teamwork and vigilance. It also helped to understand how performance was about navigating time and space on stage.

A second exercise required the participants choosing a partner to “mirror” them, or walk on the stage guiding the other person, copying her actions and exchanging roles. This exercise helped to understand the need for trust among team members. This had a huge impact on most participants and helped them shed their inhibitions and understand how performance is not just about dialogues.

Post lunch, Ms. Marwaha divided the participants into groups and introduced Improvisations. Each group had to improvise a *Panchatantra* story with a modern twist. Stories like ‘The Blue Jackal’, ‘The Crocodile and the Monkey’, and more were performed impromptu and brought out the amateur actors in all the participants. This exercise helped develop a spontaneous sense of confidence in their acting abilities in a fun and informative manner; all the well-known tales were adapted to contemporary times using very few props. Each group’s performance was then reviewed by both Ms. Marwaha and other participants which made it a truly interactive session. While the workshop helped most overcome their stage fright, others too found it a refreshing break from internal assessment submissions.

The workshop concluded with Ms. Marwaha giving a few tips on how to put together a production and was especially helpful to those part of the English Performance Club. The participants look forward to more such workshops conducted by Ms Marwaha and other theatre personalities.

Sonalee Das (II Year)
Albeena Alvi (I Year)

Annual Lit Fest 2018 - Participatory Cultures
2 – 6 April, 2018

Do you know what's better than a Literary Fest? A week long Literary Fest and that's exactly what we did this year!

We started with the *Life Writing creative writing competition* on the 2nd of April, inviting people to pen down any aspect of life- theirs or someone else's. As around twenty six writers huddled together in the Arts Quad, multiple sheets were asked for, lines written and re-written, and it seemed that we had finally found the time to pour our heart out about this puzzle called life. On the same day, we had the *Literary Quiz*. The Seminar Hall boomed with the sound of buzzers and hands shot up with the speed of lightning only to win the quiz on comics! After 3 rounds of multiple questions (including aural and visual ones), we found out that Harsh Digwasia, Mohit Verma, Bhumuka Arya and Neha Goyal had mastered the world of comics, as they stood first and second respectively - taking their prize money to buy more comics perhaps!

Putting a twist on our favourite childhood game of dumb charades, we organized a *Literary Dumb Charades* event this year on the 4th of April. The event attracted students in considerable numbers, making for 6 teams who trusted their sign language enough to enact and guess book titles and movie adaptations pertaining to literature. Each round was dedicated to different categories like pop culture, canonical texts, women-centric novels and children's fiction. As the difficulty level rose so did the not-so-quiet whisperings, and the pace of the game quickened. The twist of fate was such that at the end of the 3rd round, four teams found themselves in a tie - calling for a rather unexpected option- a second round!

And just like that, the day of the main event arrived. To say that people arrived in big numbers is one thing but to say that people arrived equally mad would mean that our *Mad Hatter's Tea Party* was a success. And that's exactly what happened: Cat-Woman, Matilda, Frankenstein, Samantha Jones (two of them), Lady Macbeth and L from *Death Note* amongst others sat down to have tea and biscuits with the Mad Hatter. It was a whacky morning with an even whackier audience who participated in the madness, kicking off our Annual Lit Fest 2018 with a great start. The madness continued as we tried to settle the Literary Dumb Charades dispute in its second round. As it turns out, the English Department of our college has some really witty guessers. All three years won – with the eldest, the third years, standing first, and the first and second years settling for a tie.

After the many games and hoorahs, it was time to lend our ears to Ms. Mridula Koshy. Dr. Anjana Neira Dev chaired the event. Ms. Koshy delved into the working of her community library Deepalaya, her journey with the help of other professionals, the joyful toil of providing the amenities, her famous story of Tushar published in *The Caravan*, and her favourite books. Answering the many questions on how one can help out at her organisation, Ms. Koshy provided us with internship details at her library and emphasised the need to spread the roots of the library to all sections of the community and make knowledge more accessible. We met members of Feminism in India, who enlightened us about 'gender ethical reportage'. Over the course of the workshop, we looked at problematic headlines and news pieces and recreated them in a more inclusive and ethical manner. Talk about taking matters into our own hands!

Post a hearty lunch, we sat down for yet another inspiring session with India's first graphic artist Orijit Sen and acclaimed journalist Neha Dixit; the session was chaired by Dr. Aneeta Rajendran. Both discussants talked about how art is socially transformative and gave us a glimpse of their work and projects. As it turns out, our speakers had also collaborated on a project, a graphic

book called *The Girl Not from Madras*, which they spoke about too; and talked about the challenges to freedom of expression and how they tackled them in their respective fields. They left us with the most heartening thought in times of grave censorship - fight on!

And soon it was time for the last and much awaited event - the *Literary Treasure Hunt*. With clues spread all over college and a sheet of paper guiding us to them, we ran faster than we ever have. The storm that appeared out of nowhere couldn't stop us; if anything, it only added to the Famous Five-esque adventure. The winners took home some real literary treasure! As we called it a day, we realized that a fest involving people from all walks of life could be themed as nothing other than "participatory cultures" and couldn't have been a greater success than this.

Varnika Mishra
I Year

List of Films Screened by the Department's Film Club:

- 1) *Modern Times* - 16th August 2017
- 2) *Beloved* - 23rd August 2017
- 3) *Suraj ka Satvan Ghoda* - 25th September 2017
- 4) *Murder of Roger Ackroyd* - 29th September 2017
- 5) *Chauranga* - 9th October 2017
- 6) *Troy* - 16th October 2017
- 7) *Kafan* - 30th October 2017
- 8) *The Great Gatsby* - 10th November 2017
- 9) *Pride and Prejudice* - 12th February 2018
- 10) *Macbeth* - 26th February 2018

Album 2017-2018



The DUTA and DUSU marches to save higher education



A film screening by the department's Film Club



The Literary Quiz



Talk with Mr. Malay Firoz



Anuja Chauhan on her visit to the Book Club



People shopping for books at Bitacora's old book sale



Dr. Easterine Kire at the podium



**Goods and customers at the Lit Soc
Flea Market**



**Mr. Kiran Nagarkar reading from
*Jasoda***



**Dr. Anjana N. Dev's poetry
workshop**



**Ms. Mudita Mohile's transcreation
workshop**



Dr. Akhil Katyal's workshop



Ms. Shilpi Marwaha in the theatre workshop



Ms. Anupama Srinivasan in the film studies workshop



Various events in the Annual Lit Fest, with active participation from students and teachers alike



Abida Khan
III Year

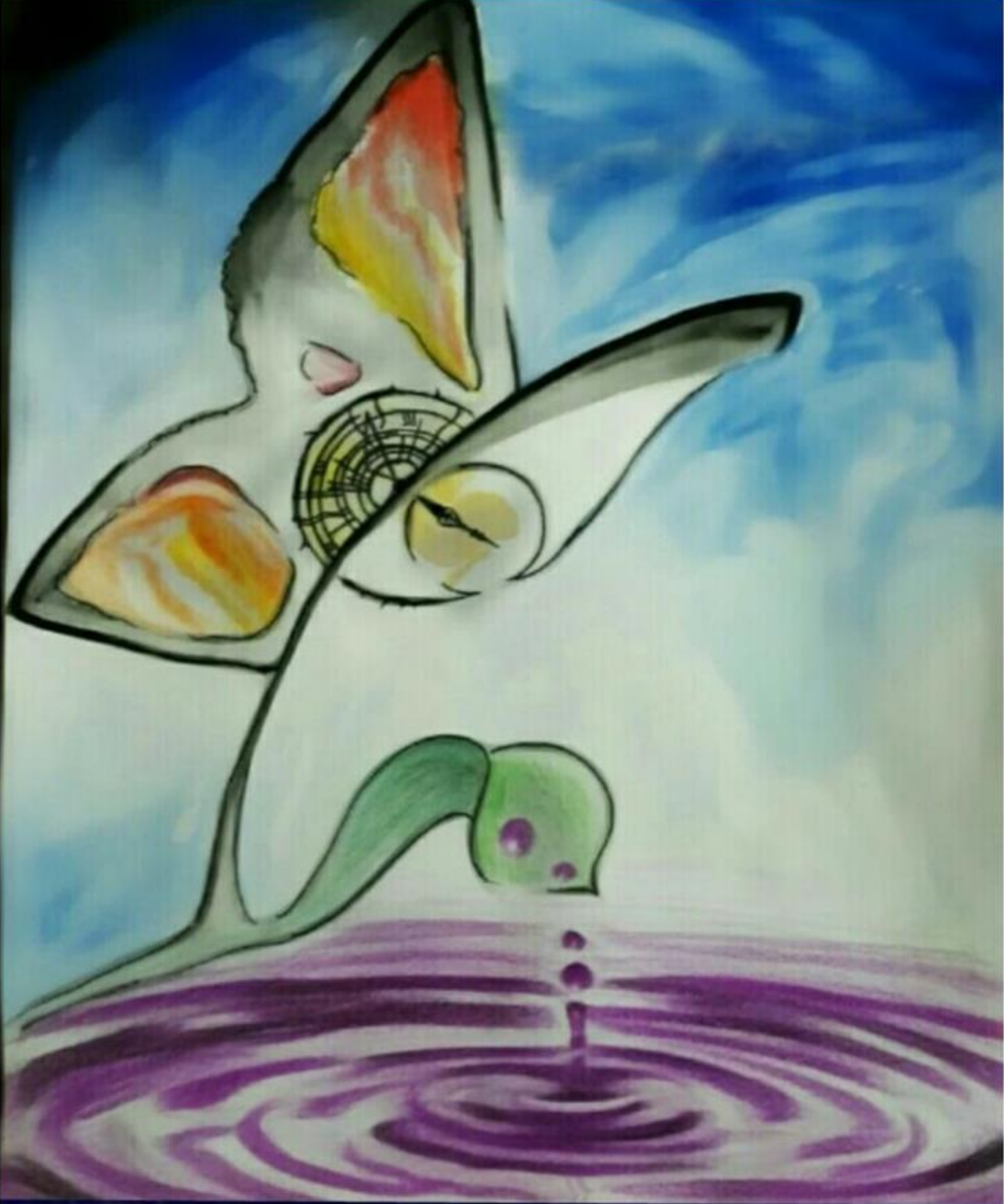


The Student Editorial Team

Top, left to right: NashraUsmani, Pavini Suri, Mansi Ramrakhyani, Pridhi Chopra, Trishala Mohan

Middle: Swati Bhardwaj, Aqsa Khan, Abida Khan, Angela Braru

Bottom: Simran Arora, Itika Singh, Prithiva Sharma, Sonalee Das



Department of English
Gargi College
University of Delhi