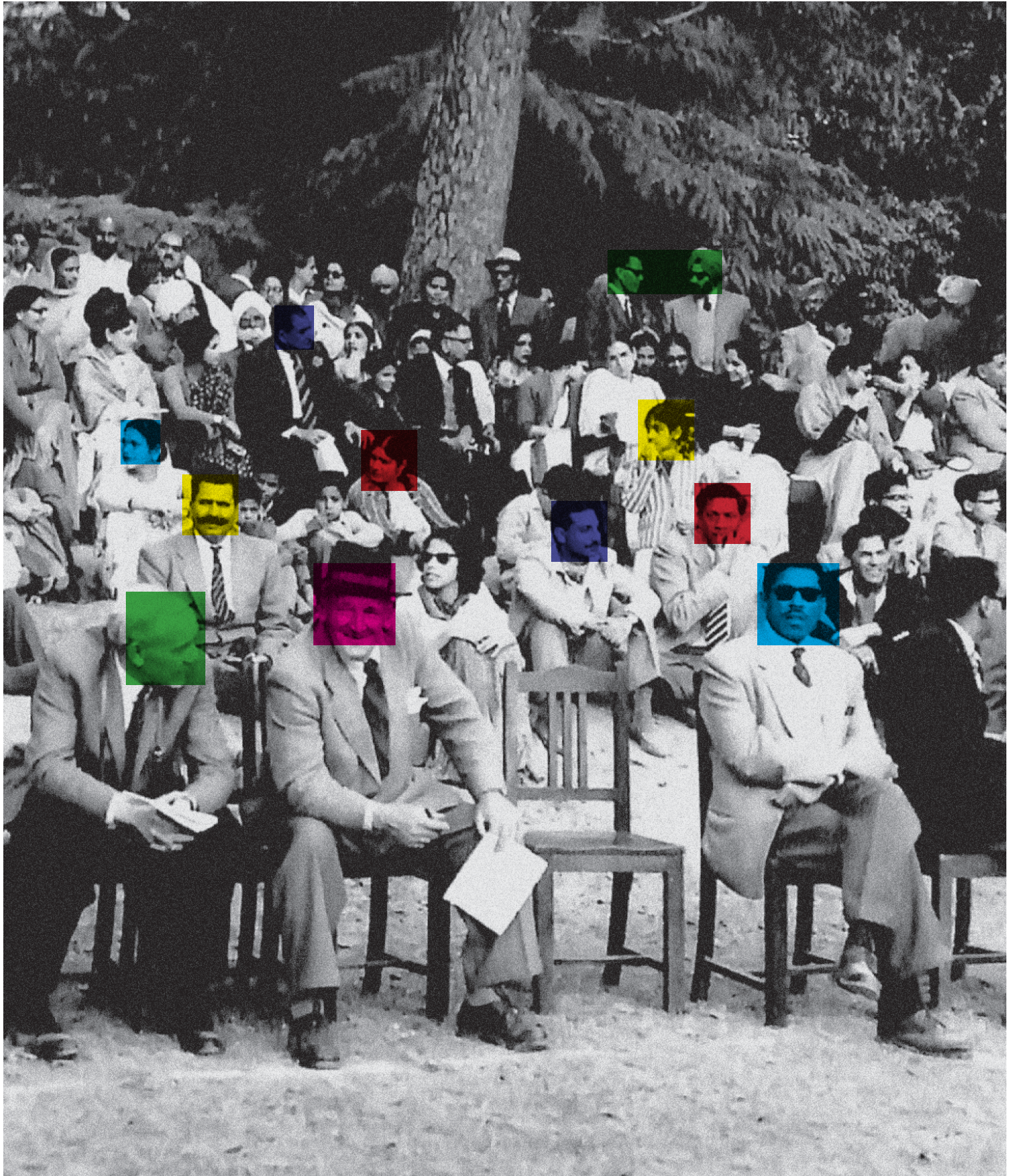


TheWeekly

Founder's Day Issue

SATURDAY, 23 OCTOBER, 2021 | ISSUE NO. 2622.

"UNITY TO BE REAL MUST STAND THE SEVEREST STRAIN WITHOUT BREAKING" - M.K. GANDHI



I sketch
your
world
exactly as
it
goes

Special Thanks

The effort put into this issue extends beyond the work done by the Editorial Board. We would like to thank Ms Abia Qezilbash for the pictures credited to The Doon School archives, Mr Manu Mehrotra for his support and inputs, and Dr Kanti Bajpai for his time and insights.



*Cover Picture: Founder's day program from the 1980s.
From The Doon School Archives.*

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes" will, I hope, be the motto of The Doon School Weekly. May it avoid the Scylla of dullness and the Charybdis of bad taste, and set forth on a long and honoured career

-

CONTENTS

Contemporary

The Camera Conundrum	12	Supratim Basu
The Defective Refresh Button	13	Arjun Prakash & Sriyash Tantia
Debating Debate	15	Vivaan Sood
Editorial Reprinted From 2015	16	Arnaav Bhavani Ex-144 K
DoonSpeak	20	Various authors
Interview with Dr. Kanti Bajpai	22	With the Editorial Board
Alone in this Together	26	Arjun Prakash
Everything Works Out in the End	28	Ahan Jayakumar
DoonSpeak	30	Various authors
Mes Que Un Club	32	Armaan Rathi & Katyayan Kanodia
समय का बीतना	34	Uddhav Goel
कोरोना काल—जीवन काल	35	Vishwavijay Rathore
How Blessed are the Meek	37	Varyam Gupta
A Tale of Two Letters	39	Aditya Gupta
Stereotypes Sell	40	Vihan Ranka

Fiction

Ninth Circle of Dante's Hell	43	Aryan Baruah
Crooked Love	44	Sriyash Tantia
Guns n Roses	47	Anshul Khakhar
How the Fish Survive	50	Sriyash Tantia
Boer	53	Neelotpal
I Liked our Old House Better	56	Shreyan Mittal

Poetry

Thoughts of a Child Sitting Near the Bank of a River	59	Avi Bansode
This World & Red Eyes	60	Ms Mughda Pandey & Maharshi Roy
North of Caulfield	61	Armaan Rathi
Silece	62	Pranav Lohia
Disdain	63	Pranav Lohia
So Lost	64	Ms Mughda Pandey
Qui Suis-Je?	65	Mughda Pandey
फूल	66	Arjun Mitra
समय, एक पहली	67	Aditya Saraff

Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief

Advaita Sood

Editor

Aryan Agarwal

Senior Editors

Aditya Jain
Kabir Singh Bhai

Hindi Editor

Keshav Tiwari

Associate Editors

Ahan Jayakumar
Armaan Rathi
Saatvik Anand
Shreyan Mittal
Vihan Ranka

Special Correspondents

Abhay Jain
Anshul Kakkar
Aryan Baruah
Tarun Doss
Yashovat Nandan
Rohan Taneja

Correspondents

Arjun Prakash
Neelotpal
Sriyash Tantia
Vivaan Sood
Vivasvat Devanampriya

Hindi Correspondents

Arjun Mitra
Krtin Goel

Faculty Advisors

Arvindanabha Shukla
Moulee Goswami
Purnima Dutta

Published By

Kamal Ahuja

Technical Support

Kritika Jugran

editorial

A HAPPY SISYPHUS

It is customary for Chief Editors in their final issue to recount their tenure and their accomplishments. While I will somewhat do this, the purpose of this editorial is to deliver unto the incoming Senior Board and junior batches of School whatever I have learnt over the course of my tenure. After all, the final task of any outgoing member is to set the publication up for the future, and this is what I intend to do with the following remarks. Furthermore, as a student at the helm of a school publication, I am perennially concerned getting students to write, regardless of how worn-out the issue. Therefore, I apologise in advance if you find this repetitive.

Hopelessly Happy

Sisyphus was a Greek figure ordained by the gods to roll a boulder up a mountain and to watch it fall back down in perpetuity. 'Sisyphus,' wrote Albert Camus 'is the absurd hero'. Camus defined the Absurd as the "divorce between man and his life" or the human tendency to decipher the meaning of life and our inability to find any with certainty. The case of Sisyphus is a case of the Absurd because his actions are futile and devoid of hope and will likely stir a deep dejection within anyone who considers it. And yet, Camus argued that 'one must imagine Sisyphus happy,' because in those moments after the boulder tumbles down the mountain and Sisyphus watches it go, he becomes acutely aware of his fate and accepts it without reservation, placing him above his fate. He doesn't delude himself with visions of a different, perhaps better, life, and so, the gods have nothing to punish him with.

The Pandemic is a circumstance of Sisyphian proportions. We enter lockdown, cases dwindle, we emerge from lockdown, cases rise, and we return to lockdown once again. Perhaps the analogy fails when we consider what ancient Greece didn't have - the vaccine - giving us an edge over the gods. Still, everyone, at some point, could hardly see past the pall of the Coronavirus. According to Camus, our mistake was that we mourned the hand life had dealt us and clung to the possibility that we could swap it for another. I did exactly this, when, halfway into my tenure, I began to wallow in nostalgia for the days of the printed *Weekly*, the *Weekly* that people would clamour for, the *Weekly* that united School every Saturday morning and was the culmination of late nights in the Publication Room spent mostly playing the fool. I didn't see the point of the current *Weekly*. It is then that I read about Sisyphus and adopted his, or what Camus considers to be his, outlook on the situation, and found myself growing happier. It was happiness born out of the satisfaction that comes with the various elements of each issue falling into place on a Thursday night, of finally clicking 'send' on the email containing the final issue after a week of work, of producing an issue that someone might derive something from, even if it was only one person chuckling at a single line in the entire issue.

I stated in my maiden Editorial that I was once told that the *Weekly's* duty was to set the tone for School. Over the past year, the tone has been one of perseverance, one that the School has continued to hum in the face of these absurd times.

On Writing

Though the *Weekly* has persevered through the pandemic, it is true that both readership and contributions have dwindled. Perhaps this is simply an inevitable byproduct of having an online edition. Most of the contributions we have been receiving have been written by members of the junior forms (D, C, B) and this is promising. Of course, I urge them to keep on writing, but more importantly, to stick with it through their senior years, when they're forced to surmount inordinate volumes of School work and, at the same time, courting the favour of universities when they can hardly manage four hours of sleep, let alone time to write. Smothered under the drudgery, students lose the motivation to write. I wrote of rediscovering some of this motivation in my first Editorial, citing the possibility of "one true sentence" resonating with a reader, forging a sense of community through writing. I realise that few people are so possessed by altruism that they are compelled to sacrifice what little free time they have to write something that may or may not impact someone. A more convincing motive perhaps is egotism. Most writers are

(Continued overleaf)

(Continued from the previous page)

possessed by a pressing desire to parade whatever they consider is their intellect - I know I am. I first realised this motive after reading an essay by George Orwell, in which he cited four main motives that drive writers. We (novice writers) saturate our works with ornate vocabulary and 'intellectual' jargon so as to paint a portrait of ourselves, rather than one of our arguments, in our readers' minds. If this seems like a shallow, brittle motive, that's because it is. But as long as it helps you to continue writing, I urge you to feed it, for in time it will take a backseat and your writing will be fuelled by something other than egotism, and serve some other purpose.

Another, perhaps more noble, motive that Orwell proposes and I think is applicable to School is political. This, of course, plays into the long-established purpose of *Weekly* as a medium of discourse, and it is repeated so many times precisely because it is so important. The *Weekly* has been, and continues to be, both a chronicler of School life and a device to change that life for the better. People often refuse to write on the grounds that nothing is truly accomplished by writing about something. In saying so, what they envision, however, is instant gratification, not true change. The worn-out adage goes "change doesn't happen overnight," but this is hardly a reason to abandon the idea of improvement altogether. We all lament certain aspects of School life in conversations with our friends, at the dinner table, in classrooms, so why not voice these opinions on a platform that has the potential to fix these issues? Students do not even attempt to write out of fear that censorship will inevitably blur the message of their pieces or strike them down completely. However, as long as one disciplines the impulse to rant and instead directs this passion into writing lucid, balanced, informed articles, censorship will not be a problem.

The *Weekly* is fortunate to have a legacy of quality. We need not reinvent the wheel, we need only grease it a little so that it is able to gather the momentum it has had in the past, and I am certain that this can be accomplished over the coming years.

A Final Note of Gratitude

I'd be remiss, in my final editorial, if I did not acknowledge the people who have fuelled the *Weekly* through the past year. First, I'd like to thank the Editorial Board: the juniors - the backbone of this publication - who worked diligently despite never having stepped foot in the Publication Room, and my fellow editors - Aryan, Aditya and Kabir - whose inputs revitalized the *Weekly* during the Lockdown. Furthermore, I am grateful to Keshav for resuscitating the role of Hindi Editor and enabling us to feature unprecedented amounts of Hindi content over the past year. My gratitude also extends to PKB Ma'am, whose pinpoint ability to spot the minutest of errors allowed us to uphold the quality of the publication, MGI Ma'am, who, despite joining the *Weekly* in the middle of the term, provided valuable inputs and has been a most efficient article editor, and PDT Ma'am, whose influence prompted me to grow over the course of my tenure. Finally, thanks are due to KLA Sir for his support, guidance and valuable inputs.

Looking forward, I wish the incoming Board, as well as the School, good luck, and would like to urge you all, one last time, to not only keep the *Weekly* alive, but to help it thrive. For now, I hope you enjoy this Founder's issue. Happy reading.

Advaita Sood

editorial

THE WEEKLY JOURNEY

As I write this final editorial - the last I shall write as a member of this Board - I find myself looking back at memories and thinking of the feelings I associate with the *Weekly*, searching for a narrative to string these elements together. I tried to piece together the archetypal last editorial but with each paragraph I wrote I felt more vacant; I had a sense that I was not being honest. So, I deleted and rewrote, over and over again.

I had always wanted to join the *Weekly*. Why? It was ostensibly an assortment of the smartest students on campus, and I wanted to join them and learn. While I did not know what I wanted to do yet in terms of my broader interests; therefore I didn't really see how the *Weekly* fit into the larger scheme of things. However, I knew that I would learn something, and I did. So, what did I really learn?

Starting at the very surface, the *Weekly* improved my writing or at least that's how I think about it; it turned writing from an elusory skill into a familiar form of communication and self-exploration. Furthermore, it revealed the cerebral exercise that writing for the *Weekly* is, which I am now able to appreciate. Make no mistake, this is the result of many unsparing critiques and rejections, yet I would not have it any other way, for the quality I value most in the *Weekly* is that it is a thoughtful and creative fraternity that holds itself to high standards. In retrospect, as I look at other aspects of my '*Weekly* journey' and consider the lessons and experiences that I value most, I understand that being part of the editorial group fundamentally meant holding ourselves to higher standards and thereby the visceral feeling of accomplishment after each issue was sent to print.

If I were to sit here and ask myself "what if I had not got into the *Weekly*?" I would not be able to tell you who I would be today as a person, or what my beliefs and thought processes would have been. That is not to say that all members of the *Weekly* learn to think the same way (if that is the impression), but that the *Weekly* has put me so often in positions where I have had to really think about abstractions such as perspectives and communication beyond the buzz-words that they have become, making me grapple with them as a writer and board member. 'Why does my writing matter; would it help others; which perspectives do we include?' are some questions that return to me time and time again, and I doubt I could have these same impactful experiences elsewhere.

However, weaving this into a 'perfect' narrative would be a disservice to the readers as we expect a certain degree of honesty and critical awareness from this editorial. After entering Sc form, the time I spent working for the *Weekly* gradually dwindled, and while a reduced role and the delimitations of the online medium are reasons I could use to rationalise this, I look back with a tinge of regret at the what the past months have been like, and what they could have actually been. It is ironic that only as I begin to consider the implications of not being a part of the *Weekly* any longer, that its true worth become apparent, yet I presume that is a lesson in itself.

Lastly, I dare point out an issue, that is the lack of initiative to write that exists in the community. As the mainstream goes full screen and clouds individual thought, independent intellectual exploration is becoming increasingly valuable - and writing is a tool that each one of you should explore for that reason. It is important to question, to think critically, to describe and understand the reality on our own and to not accept prescribed notions without a healthy scepticism. Looking back at the intensity of involvement of previous batches with the *Weekly* and the wealth of senior students who wrote, and wrote passionately, the dearth of vigour in present batches is apparent. Whether that is only due to the virtual displacement of our community, I do not know, but it is incumbent upon all of us to think not only for our sake but for the community, and therefore to set standards for others. And in doing so, to be fostering a community that challenges itself and avoids sinking into the quicksand of cheap apathy and mediocrity.

In the end, I am grateful for the gift the *Weekly* gave me, the realisation of the potency of writing: it is a tool for self-discovery, gaining clarity, exploring humour and communication - a treat-all. But above even this, I am thankful to the *Weekly* and all those whom I have worked with for challenging me and letting me learn from them at any level. Lastly, I am thankful for the opportunity to write. Working on the same article for days on end was always the greatest pleasure.

Aryan Agarwal

editorial

A LABOUR OF LOVE

I tore through my *parantha* as the CDH bell rang and silence filled the room.

“The following should meet the Editor-in-Chief of the *Weekly* after lunch....

Advay Sapra

Bhai Kabir Singh... “

I continued eating, unaware of what had been announced. All of a sudden, the table turned and looked at me. My friend smiled and said, “Do not forget to come to the meeting”.

“What meeting?” I asked.

“The *Weekly* meeting. We need more juniors for the 2500th issue, so KAR asked us to recommend form mates. I recommended you,” he said, annoyed by my incompetence. I was perplexed. I had always been so sure that the *Weekly* was beyond my intellectual capabilities that I had never even given the exam: a secret I guarded carefully.

I rushed through the rest of my *paratha* and ran across to the Gazebo. The Board occupied most of the Gazebo, while we ‘interns’ were shoved to the corner. Our Editor-in-Chief at that time, Kushagra Kar, stood on the concrete slab and informed us why we were called. We had two weeks to prove our merit, else, we would be thrown off the Board.

At the end of the two weeks, four of the interns were handed termination slips. I was spared. As the 2500th issue grew closer, I spent hours (not all of which were productive) in the Publication Room proofreading and placing articles. As the newest member, I was assigned the most menial tasks available and I wondered whether that was all I could be trusted with. I sent across my first article, and it was rejected immediately. I was certain my future in the *Weekly* was nearing its end. I scraped by till the end of the year but the seeds of doubt were sown: I was going to be exposed as an imposter and my secret was going to be revealed.

As we entered B Form, we were mandated to write the *Weekly* test again. I quaked in my boots as I entered the ‘English 2’ classroom. I read the paper carefully but as I wrote the first line of my creative article, I tore it from my notebook and hurled it into the dustbin. As the clock ticked down, my fear grew. Finally, I started my third draft with 15 minutes to spare. My hand, bruised and beaten, pushed through to finish seconds before the exam ended.

After a week, the results were out. I stood still, rolling a pen between my fingers. Ansh Raj, the new Editor-in-Chief, sat on the iconic concrete slab. He smiled and said, “You all are going to remain on the Board”. The pen slipped from my hand. The work for the day was assigned, and as we dispersed, my Editor-in-Chief, somehow aware of my disbelief, came up to me and whispered, “You had the highest score, good job”. I had finally earned my place on the Board!

As we pass the baton onwards, I wanted to revisit this moment as a lesson for the coming batches. When I started in the *Weekly*, I was far from the best writer, and while I daresay I am a good one now, I have certainly improved. My improvement was only possible by the guidance provided by the previous editors and Editors-in-Chief and that is the primary obligation of a Senior Board: to mentor and nurture a culture of creativity, expression and engagement. As we move forward, I only hope the next Board works to the same end and cultivates the next generation of thinkers and writers. I also wish that this editorial helps the *Weekly* shed the ‘elitist’ tag and helps others realize what I did: The *Weekly* was not filled with naturally brilliant writers but rather individuals who are willing to work hard for the publication. I worked hard for the publication and that was the only reason I was kept on.

Bhai Kabir Singh

editorial

UPHOLDING ITS VALUES

Being called ‘front and centre’ during meetings outside the CDH, with the circular formation behind keenly staring at you, and with the Editor-in-Chief resting on his throne, was intimidating, if I am to be very honest. I initially had a tumultuous relationship with the *Weekly*, as it was often here that I found myself being temporarily terminated for a week or two, only to return later. I constantly wondered as to why I wanted to be a part of this team. What made it so special? Was it to leave a mark with whatever best an aspiring B Former could receive out of this publication?

Reminiscing my time here at the *Weekly*, I sit on my desk, writing this editorial during quarantine, tucked away in the corner of Kashmir House, rather than from the messy and chaotic *Weekly* room, in an attempt to answer this very question. Many of my predecessors have written about how the *Weekly* was crucial to their holistic development and their transformation during their time on the Editorial Board. Being the naïve junior I was, I never understood their perspective and nostalgia – after all, I considered the *Weekly* to merely be one of the many publications School boasted. It is only now, after years of service, have I truly understood the intrinsic value of the *Weekly* and have become cognizant of the fact that it is an institution like no other.

What ensued once I was on the Board was an onslaught of an endless cycle of chasing Seniors, working till late at night, exhaustive proofreading, and finishing meals early to be able to attend meetings. Between this hustle, I felt that I not only grew as a writer but also waited with great anticipation for the Community’s reaction to the *Weekly*, whether full of criticism or applause, while distributing the issues in the CDH. This is what made the *Weekly* something much more than a mere professional duty – it soon had an immense sentimental value to me, which only exponentially grew through the years. This growing connection could also be credited to the fact that I found other like-minded peers I could trust and effortlessly spend entire nights with in ‘the Room’, regardless of how droopy-eyed I would be when stepping out of the room at 4 AM during chilly October nights, after spending the entire day in the Music School before.

While this description may seem like a mundane routine to you, it has led to an eye-opening revelation for me: the *Weekly* stands for Freedom of Speech. It provides each and every member of the Community gated within the walls of Chandbagh to have the luxury of voicing their thoughts and opinions, whether it be on pressing issues related to the outside world, or the dynamic changes brought about in School itself. The *Weekly* is that single platform that provides budding minds with the freedom to express themselves without having to fear any restrictions. It allows you to put that question mark in front of any and all opinions, arguments, judgements, and actions, and this is perhaps its longest-enduring legacy, one we cannot afford to lose or compromise on one bit.

It is imperative, that as a community, we understand that the *Weekly* is what binds us together, even on an online platform, and that we must judiciously use it to fulfil its purpose of dialogue and discourse, because only then will we get the answers we yearn for. As readers and writers across diverse age groups, we need to ensure that we engage ourselves in discussion and not hesitate to voice our opinions because the *Weekly* is not a publication that can function solely with the efforts of the 30-odd members that comprise its Editorial Board - it is an institution that is successfully run and maintained because DoscOs use it as a pillar of support to voice their ideas. This, my dear DoscOs, is what makes it so special.

We currently live in an era where the freedom to voice your thoughts in the outside world is being increasingly impugned. I call upon all of you to actively contribute and immerse yourselves in the *Weekly*, not only protect the values upheld by this publication but also to ensure that young minds have a say in carving the future Doon. Therefore, it becomes extremely vital, that as readers and writers, that we actively involve ourselves with the *Weekly*. We owe this much to those black and white sheets we receive on our mailboxes each Saturday without fail.

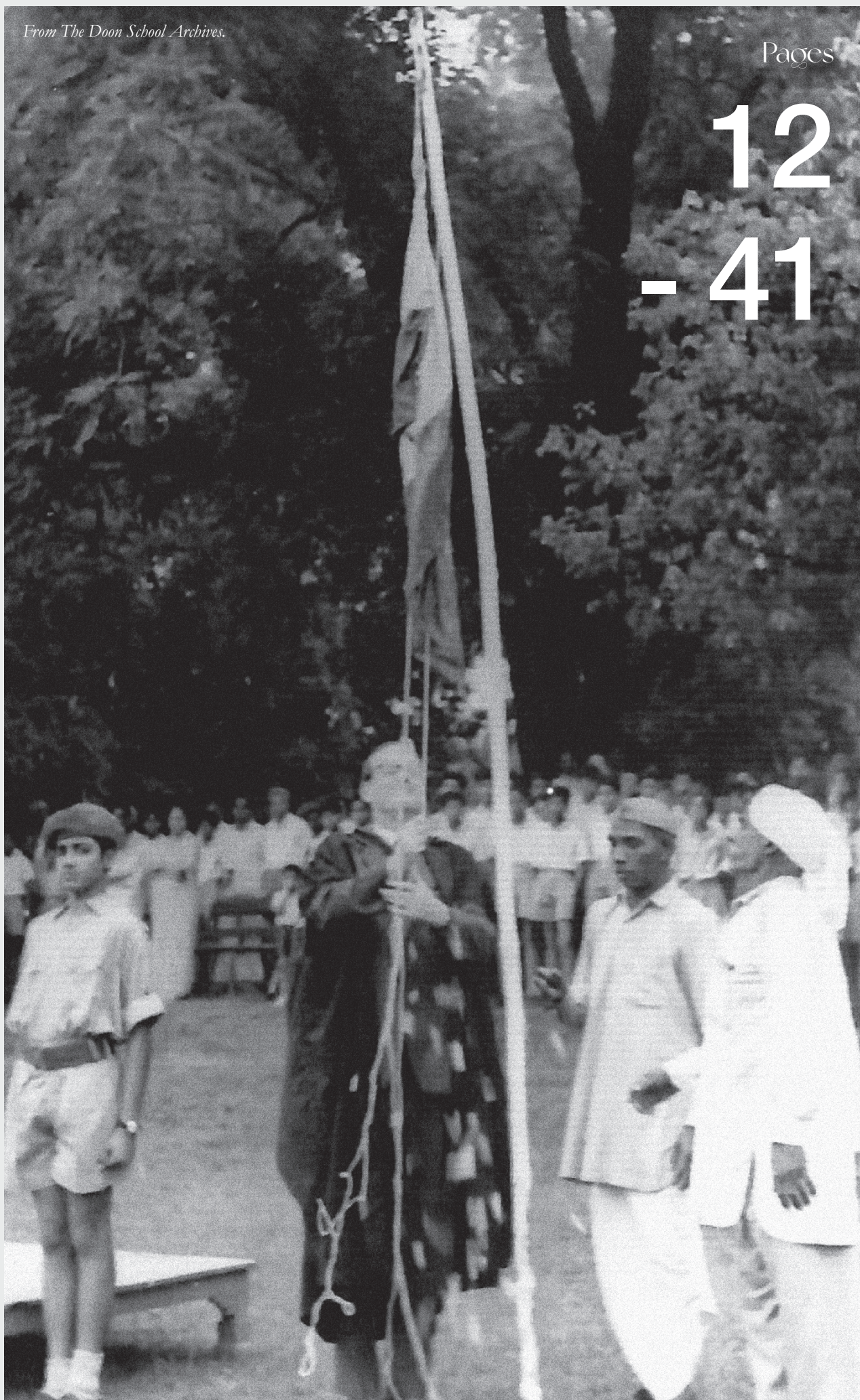
Aditya Jain

Contemporary

From The Doon School Archives.

Pages

12
- 41



75th INDEPEDENCE DAY
SPECIAL SECTION



HAPPY
READING

18 - 25

The Camera Conundrum

Supratim Basu

Of digital dilemmas and intellectual maladies during online learning.

The riddle is going on for quite some time now and the camera seemed to have taken all the spotlight being at centre stage of this sweeping bewilderment that stumps the education sector in every pocket of this planet.

The pandemic has certainly disrupted the whole ecology of education, no doubt, but, more than the virus, substantial damage is done by the growing number of half-validated theories which continue to befuddle the citizens of our huge education fraternity.

In my experience of almost one and a half years of remote teaching, I have faced the dilemma at least thrice on whether it is important (or even justified) for every member on the online platform to keep their video camera 'switched on' during a class, a meeting, a webinar or any such association for such matter during that which substitutes an offline setting of

“

In the beginning, a large number of pundits had clamoured for the switching on of the camera referring to the facts that it is the best way to adapt to the new normal and the most authentic asynchronous simulation of a face-to-face class.



the same.

In the beginning, a large number of pundits had clamoured for the switching on of the camera referring to the facts that it is the best way to adapt to the new normal and the most authentic asynchronous simulation of a face-to-face class. Thousands of policies were drafted, millions of emails were circulated and trillions of debates (of course asynchronously with half of the attendees keeping their cameras off and another half without any conceivable netiquette) were fought upon the internet highways. The result was anything between zero-tolerance-policy and inclusive learning in one house and screen time control and accessibility of smartphones and other legitimate devices in the other house.

An apparent improvement of the Global Pandemic situation (for a short while though) during last winter led to a multitude of indecisions while the profit of the online communication apps touched the heavens. Talks have begun coiling up – psychiatrists to academicians argued over the issue of equity and suggested that in order to respect the privacy of space and help people avoid any embarrassment of showing their home environment in the background, it's better to keep the camera policy 'optional'. Parents, students and even the hardcore policy makers (in secret though) lauded this

new avatar of online teaching.

Soon came the second wave and like the virus as it evolved from Alpha to Delta Plus, the exponential growth in slip-ups in search for a robust academic programme continued to disquiet the seekers and donors of education.

A new barrage of policies came into being after dutifully rubbishing the previous year's. The new ideas began dawning among the enlightened intelligentsia. Intellectual ennui paved way for new utilitarian theories of learning. Thousands of corporate *maharishis* started infiltrating the academic territories and online learning, an emergency *jugaad* (hack) in the beginning, now received the crowning glory of being the future of education.

In all the hoopla, camera-conundrum continues to seduce our intellectual judgment. From setting norms to showing empathy, we ran the whole gamut of human psychology with a distant desire to decipher the cloak and dagger story of our virtual behaviour, but the silence behind the screen seems to elude us always in our quest.

With institutions now opening their gates in a bid to return to normalcy, I hope this digital pandemonium will come to an end, finally, and exist only in the collective memory of the boys and girls as we return to our promised lands, the classrooms.

CONTEMPORARY

The Defective Refresh Button

Sriyash Tantia & Arjun Prakash

The rise of social awkwardness and internet relationships after COVID.

Have you ever been caught in an awkward social situation, where the typical icebreaker is missing? You would probably end up with your phone in hand and scroll pointlessly through a social media page as an escape from this boring reality. Our generation has simply just given up on trying. Many of us are now more comfortable with connecting with each other online and as a result, our so-called 'social skills' have hit a roadblock.

Engaging in in-person conversation is often considered the building block of creating a relationship with someone. However, with our lives now directly entwined with technology at almost every corner, one may question the importance of this notion. In today's society, the term 'anti-social' holds a negative connotation that portrays someone as brooding or excessively shy. This is most often directed



Illustration by Anja Slibar

towards our generation since we have grown up around technology. Playing games on your phone at a family function may not be the best idea but you must have experienced something along those lines. Over the lockdown, our lives have changed and we have evolved into a world of technology and virtual connection. When was the last time you actually wrote a letter to someone? It certainly feels like a very long time since I did.

In the unprecedented times of life during the pandemic, during which we couldn't get out of the house, we

still managed to make new friends whom we had never actually met. From one viewpoint, many extol the internet's capacity to broaden our connections — we can contact individuals across the sea at the click of a mouse; we can communicate at two in the morning with the click of a few buttons. We tend to know all about their profiles but there is always ambiguity about knowing the 'real them'. For that reason, it would be all too easy to assume everyone is more accomplished, happy, and self-assured

(continued on next page)



Illustration by Jessica Meyrick

(continued from previous page)

than you are. It's more for you than for others; it's how our generation tries to prove that we can fit in by following all the latest trends. You need self-assurance to be in a somewhat calm and peaceful state. The calmness arises in us when we feel we are accepted and this need to seek validation across social media is more prominent than ever when it comes to our working relationships and accomplishments. Our civilisation only exists the way it does due to the fear of judgment-based outcomes and the lust to feel validated. This constant need to feel validated is what actually makes us autophobic, leading us to create a social media account where we can't be ourselves to fit in and be accepted within society, a social media account that makes us put up multiple facades. Frankly, you can choose to be perceived in whichever manner you

display yourself online. The same does not apply to physical interaction as there is no way to hide behind a screen and portray what may be a make-believe image of yourself when being faced with a real-life situation. This is the reason why so many of us seem introverted these days. How much is this virtual interaction going to affect our real-life relationships with people? Fearing the worst, this could end up creating a world with a fake reality, where human trust and emotion are at an all-time low. It sounds rather depressing but as time passes, we as a generation will have to overcome this conception to prevent this from happening. Social distancing and the lockdown have definitely contributed to the reduction in our 'social battery' but there is a difference between staying safe during a global pandemic, and denying yourself the joys of interacting with others in person to

the point where it starts to affect your mental health. While some of us may still be the outgoing party animals we were before lockdown, we as a society have shied away from a lot of our old social habits.

Chandbagh will soon welcome students who have been away for over a year. To frame it digitally, this can be viewed as pressing the refresh icon on your laptop at home. However, this 'real-life refresh' is going to be a lot more important than simply restoring your internet connection on your web browser. Hopefully, it will serve as a kickstart into a new era full of fresh perspective, eager youth, and optimism. Your 'social battery' may be slowly running out but remember that your charger exists in the form of your friends and family. A small conversation can improve your mood and maybe even theirs.





CONTEMPORARY

Debating Debate

Vivaan Sood

The complexity of changing someone's opinion.

I've always thought of debate as an essential part of the functioning of society, as a tool that we use to resolve arguments and disagreements between parties. As a debater, I pride myself on my ability to (somewhat) be able to debate, even though it is primarily in debating competitions and not on the centre stage at the Lok Sabha.

However, I have noticed that no matter how good a debater one is, it is vexing how terribly hard it is to change another person's mind. No matter how valid my arguments may be, no matter how enticing my bribes may be, changing another person's mind is a herculean task that I have rarely found success in as a debater.

Firstly, let me talk about what debate is. To me, a debate is the thorough analysis, argumentation and rebuttal of a topic (or motion as it were) by two or more parties to arrive at a conclusion that all agree to, with the mediation of an unbiased third party. It is essentially a method through which people resolve conflicting standpoints.

By this definition, a debate seems like a reasonable avenue through which we must solve the world's problems.

However, after coming to the conclusion of that definition, I realised that this is a somewhat idealistic approach to debate. Rather, a debate can take on a number of forms, but at its core, it is just a way to resolve arguments, one way or another. Now, by this new definition, debate extends to numerous different scenarios, each unique in its situation and problem. It is possible that in many of these scenarios, one party does not accept the outcome of 'the debate'. I'm certain that all of us have found ourselves in a scenario wherein the other party continues to plead their case well after the 'debate' is complete. So, I ask the questions, why is it so hard to change people's minds?, and is debate and discourse really useful?.

To answer the first question, I believe that over the course of an argument, people start to properly analyse their stance to ensure their victory, and start to form more points supporting their views, thereby surrounding themselves with a chamber within which their opinion lies. Thus, over the course of an argument, people only further entrench themselves in their opinion to win and prove that their stance is the right one. So, when doubts do creep in, they can have a paradoxical effect, leading people to dig their heels in even more.

We also have a strong drive in us to hold on to our pre-existing beliefs and views, because they are what helps us understand the world. Therefore, when your stance on controversial issues both cements your group identity and plants you in opposition to perceived enemies, changing it can exact a high personal toll on your esteem in the eyes of yourself and others.

That is why it is hard to change people's minds. With that in mind, is debating really useful? In short, yes. Regardless of how hard it may be to change other people's minds, debating is still quite a pivotal part of our functioning. Other than teaching us research and critical thinking skills, debating is, as F. Scott Fitzgerald once said, "the ability to hold two opposed ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function", making it a "test of first-rate intelligence". Even if we cannot change our own minds on an opinion, debate still forces us to assess different viewpoints and broaden our horizons. Even politicians have to listen to and assess an opponent's argument.

To conclude, however hard it may be to persuade someone, you should always try and debate, whatever form it may present itself in. Maybe you will break through the wall and change someone else's mind, or perhaps even change your own.

If that doesn't work, kitchen knives are quite readily available.

EDITORIAL

Arnaav Bhavanani Ex-144 K

Reprinted from 2015, issue no. 2400.

Our Main Building is the oldest building on campus. Its foundations are solid, and its structure is incredibly strong. But time is ticking, and nothing old is indestructible. Change is required, because all things are vulnerable, and in time, the foundations of the Main Building too will collapse. Scary thought, isn't it? Let's change track.

For the past couple of years, we have seen the phrase "new initiative" become a colloquial term. Students are relentlessly founding initiatives that die out once they leave, or abruptly cease to exist with their departure. Why? The answer is simple. We do it to make our college CVs look a cut above the rest. We pretend to care. You know where we stand as people when the common answer to "Why are you starting this initiative?" is "For college".

Somewhere along the well-worn race track leading to the Ivy League, we forget about the main reason we are accepted into those places. Our education, and what we make of it, is that main reason. Doon's unique all-round melee of activities and extensive array of talent is why Doscocs make it in the outside world, often far better than their peers who haven't had such an atmosphere to make full use of. And since we're such an elite institution, we bear a certain responsibility to make the best of this knowledge.

So when we go to the Panchayat Ghar, or to Bindal to teach young children, what do we teach them? Exactly what their teachers are teaching them. What we are doing is essentially giving the teachers a break from their work, while we sort out some doubts and spend time with their students. All said and done, this is a great, tried-and-tested system. When I look at our own education and then theirs, however, one difference is startlingly clear. They study, we study; true. But we do so much more; we learn things that those children sitting at their small wooden





* we bear a certain responsibility to make the best of this knowledge.

desks the whole day will probably never know.

When this thought crossed my mind a few weeks ago, the solution seemed so simple. Stop teaching them English and Geography, and impart this holistic knowledge. Give them an education that is beyond their grasp, and this will go a long way in improving them not only as citizens of this country, but as people.

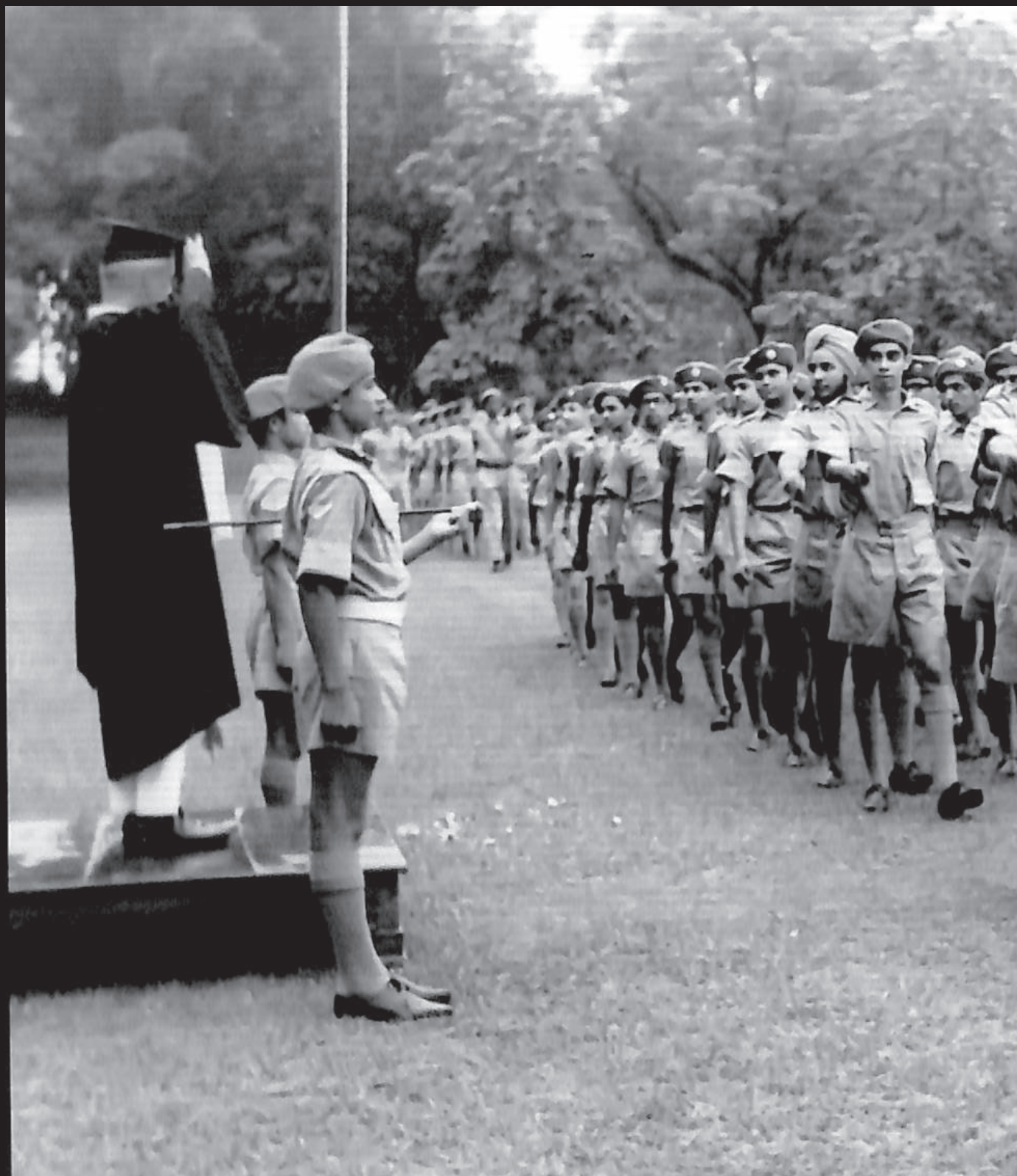
This kind of education is essential, but one would be extremely lucky to receive it. Hold debates, teach them about gender sensitivity; condition them to a world that is growing closer and smaller as each day passes. There are so many things to learn apart from the curriculum, and this might even help in changing the Indian Education System to include more thinking and less rote-learning. The possibilities are endless.

But there's always a 'however'. This proposal might seem all very rosy on paper, but the truth is that such subjective teaching requires experience, and a maturity to differentiate right from wrong; to fully understand what one is preaching. Juniors are hardly up to that task; they have so much to learn themselves! And since they're the ones who do the most service in School, this is one point where the flaw in the plan becomes evident. Who will teach

them what? How will they do it? Can this method be sustained? Honestly, sticking to the syllabus seems far easier. Teach them some rudimentary mathematics, leave, and everyone is happy. Why change?

Well, if the world has proven anything to us in all the time we have lived here, it is that camaraderie takes a people far further than any self-serving ambition. And as Doscós, we are obligated to share our knowledge with those less fortunate than us. If the system doesn't work, then we are obligated to give it one more try. We are obliged, simply because we are a part of an elite institution, to share that very education that makes us elite. Now, by no means is this a criticism of the existing system. It has worked for a long time, and for good reason. However, I feel that we are ready for change.

Adding new initiatives to the School's list of social service activities is not helping as much as it should, simply because the entire way we impart our education is obsolete. To return to the opening analogy, the foundation needs to be reinforced or rebuilt, as the need may be, or a time will come when the entire structure will come crashing down on us.





doonspeak

■ What does freedom mean to you?

Freedom can be defined as the ability to make independent choices. However, whenever I think of freedom, I am immediately reminded of democracy and its role in protecting our fundamental rights. Democracy is founded on the principle that individual freedom and equality should be preserved and to that end, it has incorporated checks and balances to ensure that power is not concentrated in the hands of a single individual. The judicial system keeps a check on the legislature and the executive. Freedom of speech and media is also imperative for the functioning of a democracy. Unfortunately, in recent times, there has been a record increase in the imprisonment of journalists across the globe. As we move forward as a country, we must reflect on this worrying trend and work towards protecting freedom of speech and democracy. The *Weekly* is a brilliant example of an institution that promotes these freedoms and should be protected.

Bhai Kabir Singh |

Freedom is self-determination. Technically, freedom means 'the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint,' but to me it means so much more. Freedom is the right to be yourself anywhere and everywhere. It allows you to choose your own moral compass, make your own decisions. It is what allows humanity to realise its full potential without being beset by forced diktats or imagined constraints. Freedom isn't simply what makes dreams come true, it is what makes dreaming possible. Though we live in a world we'd like to call 'modern,' even the most basic humanitarian necessity - freedom - is lacking in many places. Across the world, select groups of people are oppressed for who they are or how they look. It's truly appalling to see how people across the world are deprived of such a fundamental and essential right like 'freedom,' and even worse, is how multitudes turn a blind-eye to this issue. In the words of Moshe Dayan, "Freedom is the oxygen of the soul" and all of us deserve it.

Tarun Doss |

Freedom, to me, is the ability to follow your drives and desires without anchors slowing you down. Freedom in the current world is a prerogative but should be a birthright. These anchors may be your parents or even global crises' like COVID. To have freedom is to be able to make a mistake without being penalized for it or to speak out loud and not be ostracized for it. The global pandemic has proven to be a great hindrance for many, including myself. For instance, I wasn't able to travel to Canada with my sister despite a three-month-long wait. International travel today is a far-fetched thought. Another present-day impediment is the restricted ability to leave one's House while in School to play sports or even take a stroll. However, travel may not seem like much of an impediment to those who face racism, sexism or hate speech, for these truly are universal restrictions on freedom.

Freedom is or has been a privilege to some and it comes with a duty. Free people have a duty to stand up for those who are denied this right. Furthermore, we must do so without harming others, for there are many who abuse the power of freedom to oppress others. These people pay the consequences for their acts.

Aarav Prakash |

The word 'freedom' is often thrown around in conversations today, but it can have so many different interpretations. Individual perspectives on freedom is unique to everyone, just as how everyone's DNA is unique to them. On a personal level, my view on freedom is being able to be who you are and enjoy yourself without others judging you or taking those factors that you consider part of your identity away. Taking pleasure in things that make you happy is something I consider to be a very important part of myself and having the freedom to do so is vital to my mental health.

My definition of freedom is also tied to having the liberty to go out and escape your daily life for a little mental reset and not being binded to a tiring schedule. Being able to relax once in a while with your friends or someone that you like spending time with is something I cherish a lot. However, with the lockdown and being stuck at home, I have had to try and redefine freedom and escape, which I eventually did.

Freedom is an extremely specific thing for me. I have tried my best to put it into words and the significance of the freedom I have described is, as mentioned before, that it has a huge impact on my mental health and how happy I am. This then goes on to affect all parts of my life and drains my social battery. I would say that being able to find your own freedom is crucial in order to enjoy life to its fullest potential and I am glad to be able to say that I have found mine, for now.

Krishnav Sachadeva |

Freedom holds a great significance to it for obvious reasons. However, not everyone defines freedom similarly. The word itself has multiple facets to its definition and every one of those facets is unique to the individual. Every person in our School community might define freedom differently, in a way that matches their experiences and upbringing. However, one thing about freedom is certain: we derive some sort of pleasure from the feeling of freedom. Everyone seeks freedom for that very reason, and rightfully so. For me, being free is something as simple as knowing that there are people I can put my faith and trust in and share my burdens with, but for other people, it may hold a different meaning altogether.

Vihan Ranka |

Freedom, to me, means the ability to eat and drink what I like, to watch the shows and read the books of my choice, to express my right to freedom of speech and movement, and to practice and preach the religion of my choice. However, I do agree with the opinion that these freedoms are subjective and dependent upon various different factors. Fortunately, this opinion of mine is enshrined within the Indian Constitution, which says that freedom of speech, like many other freedoms, is not absolute, and subject to reasonable restrictions such as national security and sovereignty, public order, decency and morality. Freedom of speech should most definitely be utilized to speak the truth and evaluate the government of the day, but on the other hand, I do believe that we can still keep our personal freedoms intact by speaking with a certain standard of morality, decency, and regard for national security.

Aryan Prakash |



Dr Kanti Bajpai is a former headmaster of the Doon School and the current Wilmar Professor of Asian Studies and Director of the Centre on Asia and Globalisation at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy of the National University of Singapore.

Dr Bajpai's areas of research are Indian foreign policy and national security, South Asia, Asian international and strategic thought, and international security. He worked extensively in the education and journalism sector during his career and has served in universities such as Oxford University and Jawaharlal Nehru University among many others. For over 25 years, he has been a regular commentator in the Indian press and electronic media and was a regular columnist for the Times of India from 2009 to 2021.

*Modernity isn't putting up
dams and science laboratories...
it is a relentless commitment to
critical inquiry, with a view to
understanding and reimagining
the world.*

interview

WITH
FROM

DR. KANTI BAJPAI
—12.10.21*



The Doon School Weekly (DSW): With the advent of cosmopolitanism, we see the dilution of constructs such as nationality and national identity. Countries across the

world, however, constantly stress the importance of these two constructs, and they are rarely questioned. As a result, many have rejected cosmopolitanism. However, there are various examples of people perpetrating great atrocities on others in the name of nationality. In fact, authors such as Amitav Ghosh have gone so far as to say that the divisions between nations are merely ‘shadow lines’, illusions that hold no actual value, while political scientist Benedict Anderson called the Nation an ‘imagined

community’. Considering this, what do you think is the relationship between national identity and cosmopolitanism?

Dr. Kanti Prasad Bajpai (KPB): The argument I would make about the relationship between cosmopolitanism and nationalism is based on the notion that the two are vital for each other. What is cosmopolitanism? It is an open stance to the ideas and practices of others. It is a willingness to share your ideas and practices with others. It is not necessarily a dilution of nationality and national identity; indeed, it might be the opposite, namely, a positive strengthening of them. Several things might be said here but let me just make two broad points.

First, you can only really be cosmopolitan when you have a sense of yourself as well. Otherwise, how would you know what is truly different about others and what of yourself it is useful to share with others? Second, when you engage with someone else, at least one element of the engagement is hearing arguments from the Other that will lead you to question some of your own practices, values, and norms. You may not give up your practices, values, and norms and may continue to hold them dear, but in trying to defend them, you will sharpen your arguments under questioning from another. As you refine your practices, values, and norms, you contribute to the global conversation and enrich cosmopolitanism.

So, the relationship between national identity/nationalism, and cosmopolitanism is one of mutual enrichment. You don’t bring anything into a conversation with another if you don’t have a rich sense of your own inheritance and your own sense of identity. And you don’t lose yourself in a cosmopolitan conversation: the Other helps you sharpen your sense of who you are and refine your practices, values, and norms, better than if you hadn’t encountered the Other. This is a long-winded way of explaining the relationship between cosmopolitanism and nationalism. People like Tagore, Gandhi, Nehru, the neoliberals, and even Hindutva proponents had that sense in India.

Another aspect of cosmopolitanism is a more moral one. Do I owe anything to someone from another land? Do I have any moral obligations towards them? Or do I only owe something to those of my land? When foreigners are in trouble, is it any of my business? I think we all have an intuition and deep sense that we do have to take care of others in another land when they need help. Can we be comfortable with a self-regarding and narrow nationalism? Is it inspiring to be united by selfishness and amoral behaviour? Humans are self-consciously compassionate creatures, and it would be astounding if our moral concerns stopped at the shadow lines and in our constructed imagined communities.

DSW: So, we saw a lot of ‘What if’ questions during the talk. Considering this, what is the role of ‘What if’

(Continued on the next page.)

(Continued from the previous page)

questions in historical inquiry? And is it something that actually leads to the development of ideas?

KPB: That's the promise of "What if" questions or what are called counterfactuals – they can lead to the development of interesting ideas. Years ago, I read a book on some of the 'What ifs' of history, such as "What if the Nazis had won World War Two?". Playing around with those kinds of questions is partly just having fun, but from a social scientific point of view, it can be productive to ask "What ifs" because they force us to clarify what the counterfactual questions are asking.

First, counterfactuals can lead you to think about cause and effect more clearly. Take the rise of Nazism and World War Two – most people would say there is a causal connection. What the example alerts us to is the possibility that fascism leads to terrible strife and warfare. However, fascism may not have been the only cause of World War Two and the surrounding social and political turmoil. The counterfactual question can take us beyond the correlation between fascism and war: it can make us think more deeply about why fascism leads to calamitous violence – and that is a good causality question to ask.

Secondly, the "What if" is useful because it encourages us to look more closely at the experience of those areas that did indeed fall to fascism – Western Europe (except Switzerland), Eastern Europe, the Baltics, large parts of the Soviet Union. We have a record of what those parts of the world were like under fascism. We therefore have evidence about what the world would have been like if fascism had won, because fascism ruled in those parts for six to seven years. There is a record from which to draw lessons, for the future.

A third possibility is to use the counterfactual to ask, "What is it about an authoritarian social movement that would allow it to prevail over democratically resilient societies?" That's a productive social science question to ask. In Italy and Germany, fascism defeated liberal democracy. There were strong liberal democratic roots in Italy and Germany. There was a plurality of political parties. Elections were held. There was a vigorous, capable judiciary. Both countries had strong constitutions and rule of law. There were liberal-minded people. But fascism still won. The counterfactual makes us think back to how fascism was able to defeat well-established democracies.

And by the way, that's rather important today. On January 6, 2021, after the US presidential elections, what appears to have been a proto-fascist group invaded the legislature. The result could have been political chaos in the days before Joe Biden's inauguration, with who knows what consequences for America (and by extension for the world). If significant elements of the American military or police had been co-opted by proto-fascist groups, you might have had a fascist/semi-fascist takeover of

the United States government. We must remember that although that possibility may seem unlikely, Adolf Hitler, operating from a position of great political weakness, took over Germany.

In short, counterfactuals are not just mind games. They can be productive in social science questioning and rigorous study as well.

DSW: In the talk, you spoke about how India has been shaped in the past 75 years. In the coming 75 years, the future generations will be in the process of redefining the country, specifically its identity. Considering that there is an increase in exposure to foreign ideas, to what extent must the four images of India that you mentioned during the talk be kept in mind? Do you think that these foreign ideas and the new identity that will be defined share a relationship of just correlation and not causality?

KPB: When you speak about the four images of India that I mentioned in my talk – Gandhian/Tagorean, Nehruvian, neo-liberal, and Hindutva – they were all influenced by foreign thought. Gandhi was influenced by Thoreau, Tolstoy, the Bible, and the Quran, and of course by Indian thought in the form of Hinduism and Buddhism. Likewise, Tagore had read very extensively, including other Asian thought. Nehru, from his school days to his Cambridge University days to his law days, was exposed to various streams of non-Indian thought including Marxism and Socialism, the history of ideas, and global history. Even the neo-liberals of the Swatantra

Our
own Hindu
traditions have
been interpreted
and *come back*
to us *via*
foreigners.

Party and Hindutva thinkers were influenced by foreign ideas. There's quite a lot of work on how Hindutva proponents, Veer Savarkar and M.S. Golwalkar, were influenced by the writings of European nationalists. I didn't speak of B.R. Ambedkar who had a powerful idea of India as well and was one of the great architects of free India. That was a serious omission on my part in my talk. Ambedkar went to university in the US and UK and was steeped in Western social and political thought, and surely his exposure to the West informed his idea of a thoroughly emancipated, egalitarian, and constitutionally guided India.

You mentioned Benedict Anderson. You will remember his arguments about the modularity of nationalism. The models of nationhood that arose in Latin America and Central Europe were "exported" to other societies and adapted. That continues to this date: political, social, and economic ideas and practices that germinate in one place are exported to and flourish in other places including ideas about nationalism. It would be hard to find Indian thinkers who aren't influenced by foreign thinking – in fact, I would challenge you to find Western thinkers who have not been influenced by ideas from other countries in the West or even ideas from other parts of the world.

There's quite a lot of work in the field of International Relations on Kautilya and the Arthashastra. The Arthashastra was discovered by an Indian scholar in the twentieth century, but several interpretations of it were by Western scholars. Some of India's great books and works were translated by Orientalists like William Jones of Britain and Max Mueller of Germany and as a result were made more accessible to many Indians. Our own Hindu traditions have been interpreted and have come back to us via foreigners. Visitors from various Muslim lands and from China wrote about the India of their times. They left us accounts of those eras that have enlarged our idea of India.

Likewise, the West got back Greek and Roman thought from Muslim scholars in the Middle Ages. It's clear that Chinese thought and Japanese aesthetics as well as Hindu and Buddhist philosophy and iconography travelled to the West to affect their societies. Non-Western science, technology, and mathematics made their way to the West. The field of Global History argues that the world was always globalised, except perhaps in some very prehistoric times. Mutual influences spread through artists, writers, pilgrims, traders, adventurers, travellers, and migrants. What this means is that no one can claim pristine native thought.

So, whatever ideas of India arise in your generation, they aren't going to be what cultural purists might fantasize about. There is no pure Indian thought and never can be. Benjamin Whorf, the linguist, said that language is

a window onto the world and that when you acquire a language, you acquire access to the world of that language. We have many languages in India including English. Many Indians know non-Indian languages. We have access to works in translation. We are bombarded by media from all over the globe, we are in contact with others through the internet. In other words, we have many windows into many worlds. Cultural purism is impossible. Hybridity is the norm.

There is therefore absolutely no chance anyone can escape foreign thought in some degree. The issue is figuring out how we synthesise it and what we do with it. How do we critically engage with all forms of thought, Indian or foreign? How do we sift out the emancipatory and the progressive from the oppressive and the regressive? That's the trick really. I'm not interested in being true to Indian ideas and ways if that means ignoring other thought and practices. I'm concerned with being true to the emancipatory and progressive elements of any tradition. Of course, foreign thought must, indeed will, be adapted to Indian reality, but that's a different matter, and in that engagement with Indian reality, you might get a synthesis that is more Indian than foreign (if we can make that distinction). But I think the real challenge is figuring out what the emancipatory and progressive element of any thought is.

DSW: You mentioned that there are remnants of some colonial institutions in India, and that even Doon could be considered one of them. Often, people condemn and reject such institutions. How do you feel we should treat these institutions?

KPB: I can't think of an institution in India that hasn't been touched by 200 years of colonial rule, including our religious institutions. That's the brute reality of where we are, and it can't be undone. If you try to undo it, how would you go about erasing hundreds of years of history that have formed the world we inhabit? I can only imagine terrible destruction if we tried.

What we need is a constant critical endeavour. Modernity isn't just building dams and science laboratories – to use the Nehruvian imagery – and living an urban existence; it is a relentless commitment to critical inquiry, with a view to understanding and reimagining the world. By critical inquiry, I mean questions that ask "What is the best we can do? Where do we direct our criticism so that we can avoid the worst and try to build a decent, civil world?" I say, "What is the best we can do?" because perfectionists worry me: they're humourless and think that once you've arrived at some "truth", that's it for all time. They don't allow for uncertainty, imperfection, and change. People like that are worrisome. I think that a relentless scepticism, a critical stance, is the touchstone of modernity, and that must be our inspiration and commitment.

Album art from the hip hop single *Bye* by Jaden.

alone | in this together

CONTEMPORARY

Arjun Prakash

The dynamics of a struggle spent in solitude and a universal obstacle.

Regardless of whether we're at home, or together on campus, a term in Doon is always intense. This intensity can be wonderful yet confusing at times. The one thing that has glued us together during these 18 months of solitude has been the camaraderie we all share. Today, I isolate myself in a room on campus, separated from my friends by only a wall. Even in this isolation, we still have this sense of solidarity because we are together in this – a common obstacle that ties us together, and that comforts me.

The strength of School is this camaraderie felt on campus, which amalgamates the different perspectives we offer as individuals. This 'physical' atmosphere creates room for discourse. An idea or perspective that may sound completely ridiculous to me, may often be viewed as innovative in my friends' eyes.

However, this can also take a toll on our mindset. It can sometimes reach a point where it feels like you are the

only person who has a distinct view on a particular topic, and subsequently you might start questioning whether your own views and ideas are even correct. No matter how much we share with each other, we have never had a common objective we can all relate to. Given the varied backgrounds that shape our minds and the choices we make, I have often felt alone, even though I was surrounded by people. The challenges we face influence the shared perspective of how we see things.

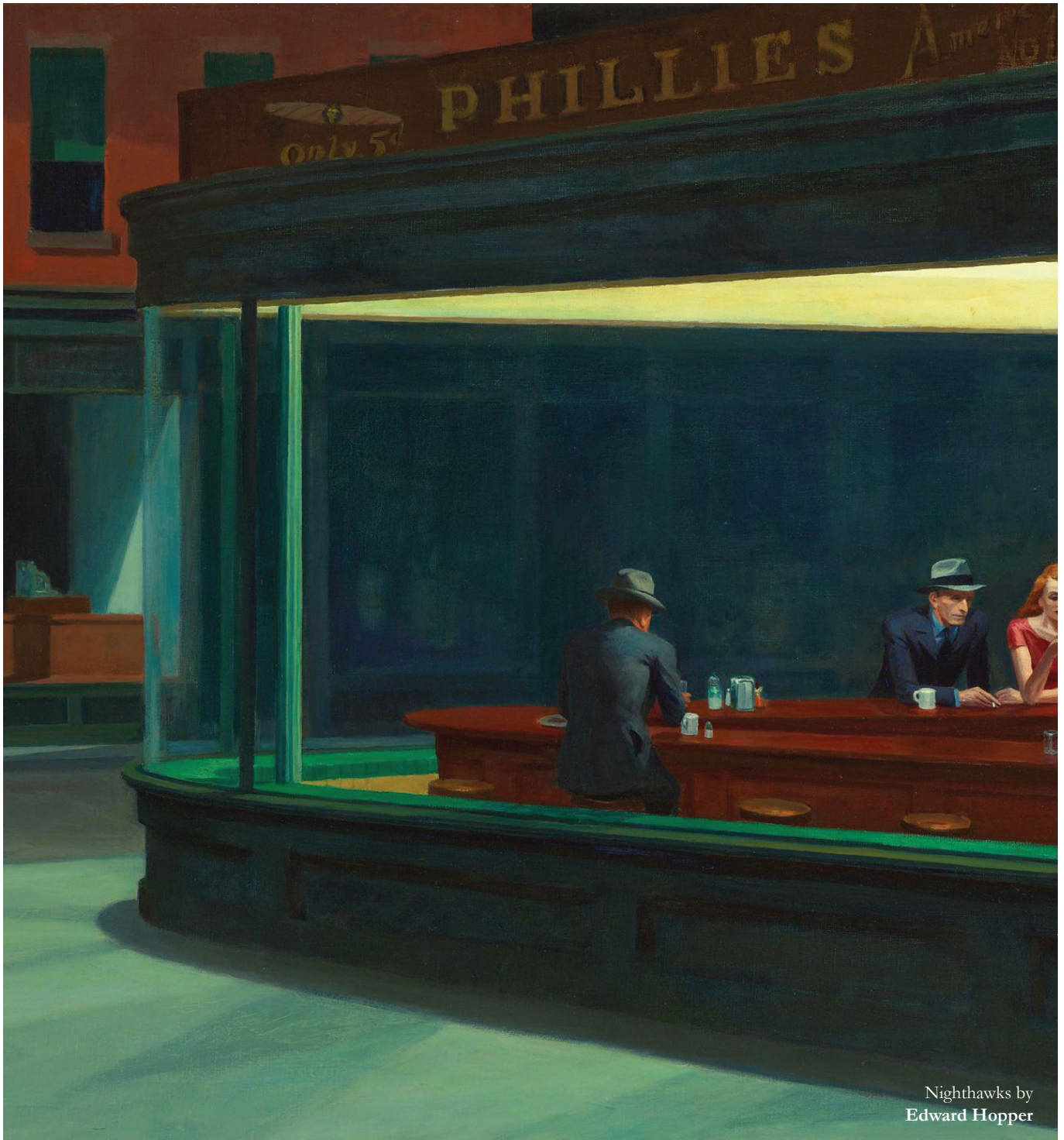
This experience of solitude can be just as intense as a physical term at School, but there are good things that can come from it. For me, this solitude is not restricted to physical isolation. It builds a remote fortress within my mind in which I can reflect on the past. Although this is a somewhat subjective idea, we can all agree that it involves a lack of contact with people. The way each of us reacted to such a situation of no contact is what gives it its subjectivity.

For some, silence is maddening, for others silence is an escape. I have learned more about my friends and myself during this period, not because I am on call with them for the majority of the night (although that is somewhat

true), but rather from their ability to cope with this situation. Some have struggled to accept the change, away from their past extroverted lifestyle. However, as always, we adapt to these changes in our own ways. Some spend more time on carefully crafting their 'perfect Spotify playlists', while others have spent this time reading books or playing video games. I don't mind being alone. In a world where everyone is connected with each other in some way, it gave me a chance to put things into perspective. I have spent my time producing music and working on my debating skills. I may not have been the most productive at times, but realising the value that this isolation plays in our development has helped me grow as a person.

This takes me back to my original point on the stark difference of perspectives that existed in the pre-pandemic world: whether we find pleasure in this new-found solitude depends on emotions moulded by our personal experiences.

This pandemic has given everyone a common lens to look through by putting us all in the same position. Could this result in the loss of healthy debate and conflict which arises from more varied perspectives? Not really,



Nighthawks by
Edward Hopper

because we are not connected by ancient bridges built by the Emperors of Yesterday, but rather by a far more advanced one-touch, direct message system built by the Tech Pioneers of today. Social media has the power of uniting people and encouraging discourse and reform during this period of isolation. When the global mindscape changes on such a great scale, our habits and norms inevitably change as well.

Forced to stay at home, whether we like it or not, this has been a

'global' obstacle that affects everyone regardless of where they live or what they do. Essentially, this was the first time I felt like we were alone in a struggle together. Although it was difficult at first, realising that everyone was in the same situation enabled me to find pleasure in this solitude.

Now we are finally back in the familiar landscape of Chandbagh and things remain the same, yet so different. Who would have thought a campus usually vibrant with a special buzz of togetherness, now requires protocols,

to keep us at a "six foot" distance from each other? In a pre-pandemic world, where physical distancing seemed to be an absurd notion, we found ourselves clashing with our isolated views which were uniquely moulded by our own experiences. To conclude, this solitude has brought the contrasting perspectives of yesterday into this new reality, a juxtaposition where we are alone and yet very much together.

Ahan Jayakumar

The importance of experiences in a Dosco's time at School.

If I had to sum up my initial experiences in School, one word immediately comes to mind. I was lost. Within the first couple of weeks, I had learnt so many new words, met so many new people, and then there was this newfangled concept of hierarchy that took some getting used to. I was reminded of a letter I received from my guide a couple of months before I joined. He said that it would be a big change, moving from the senior end of my previous school to now being the junior-most members of the boarding house and that it took some getting used to. Never before did I resonate with a sentence so profoundly.

I was unaccustomed to doing menial tasks like filling someone's water bottle, or running to another House to deliver a message, or waking up in the morning to ensure that a Senior doesn't miss his flight home. I didn't see the point of this whole system. Similarly, as B Formers on the board of the *Weekly*, we did all the small work that rarely got any credit, and frankly, we all despised doing it, and naturally so: nobody likes being at the bottom of a hierarchy, because you need to face the brunt of all those above you.

What I didn't realise at the time was these very menial tasks laid the foundation for who I am today. They

EVERYTHING WORKS OUT IN THE END





Luncheon of the Boating Party by
Pierre Auguste Renoir

Comfort Mound by
Clive Smith



provided not only me but all others before me with invaluable experiences and opportunities to interact and bond with people we normally wouldn't. Many people say that the classroom isn't the only place of learning in a school ecosystem, and this is a prime example. As a Junior in School, you always have a certain Senior you look up to, for whatever reason, and working these late hours in publications, or doing favours provided me with the opportunity to observe and learn from people who I looked up to, and whose shoes I would have to fill in the future. I didn't enjoy a lot of the work I was made to do, but I did it because that's the way things work here. Most people can't fathom the work that goes on in the House, or behind the scenes, in any of the School's publications or in organising committees, and because of that they don't understand the bond one Dosco can forge with another. The time you spend provides you with invaluable experiences and memories, regardless of whether you were the head of the organising committee

or if you were the chit boy in DSMUN.

At times it seemed massively unfair and unnecessary that by virtue of our age we were meant to be sort of obedient to our Seniors, but that is the beauty of this place. I never looked forward to coming back to School when I was in C or B Form, but as a Senior now, I can't wait. Regardless of the global pandemic, the cycle has continued, life has continued and now, we are one of the more senior forms in School. We don't have to be under pressure from five forms above us, but rather we have now become a part of this overwhelming force of seniority. We are now the ones who delegate the work to Juniors, and I don't say this with a sense of entitlement that just because I've had my fair share of the pain, others must too, but rather I say this in retrospect. There will always be different types of Seniors, some will be understanding, some won't, some will be friendly, others a tad bit less. However, the one constant is that the Junior will start off with doing the running around and the fetching

and the delivering, if not in the House, then maybe in a publication. The fact is that at some point of your School journey, the 'menial' work that you do gets you started in being better integrated and included, whether it is in your House or in your chosen activity.

This is not to say that Juniors should just embrace the work and do it with a smile, because it is painful, but rather they must prepare themselves mentally. Through the ups and downs of the School journey, you will forge many new bonds with people you never thought you would. I'm sure many Juniors would have heard stories of cruel and unforgiving Seniors, of copious amounts of work to be carried out within the House, but in this barrage of stories, what many forget is that through all of this, unforgettable lifelong connections are formed between Juniors and Seniors and between form mates. As the saying goes, the harder the climb, the better the view. I can't guarantee you'll enjoy these first few years of your School journey, but as I said earlier, everything works out in the end.

doonspeak

Founder's is usually a three-day affair with exhibitions, speeches, plays and Pagal Gymkhana, and ends with an outing, right? There was a time where there was a very limited cuisine at the Pagal Gymkhana, and you ate at your Main House. There was a time when you could bring tuck into School and when you could only take only two outings a term. Here's an insight into the Founder's days of the past.

Well, back in '69, though Founder's was pretty similar to what it is today, there were a few things that were present that you wouldn't see today. Exhibitions would take place in the same venues, like the Art and Music School, and the science block was filled with experiments. A fun prank at the time was to go to the roof of the Main Building and pull the rope up so the bell couldn't be rung. In the morning, all the parents came and walked all over the School, and back then boys were appointed to take parents around and look at exhibitions. In the evening there would be the Board of Governors and Chief Guest's speeches. One of the most memorable Chief Guests was Tenzing Norgay. Then, a big one-and-a-half-hour long play in the Rosebowl. Afterwards, you would go back to the Main House and have a House Feast. The next day was a *Pagal Gymkhana*, in which there were hundreds of stalls that were devoid of any food other than Indian. You could get food with coupons bought with Tuck Shop money. There was a prize for the best crazy costume. There was also a prize for top marks in the year, and the reward was The Complete Set of Shakespeare. You would get an outing but you could not stay overnight. You only got half-a-day's holiday.

Founders were generally fun, and you looked forward to the Chief Guest speeches, but nobody remembers those.

Anil Dhar |

Ex - 395 T, Batch of 1969

Founder's would run over two or three days. Mainly, you would be spending time preparing exhibitions prior to the Founders day. There would be experiments. The most fun one that caused the most gasps was a jar full of water with a flame inside the base. In E and D Forms, the task would mainly be chart-making. The first day had mainly exhibitions and in the evening there would be the musical entertainment with the orchestra and choir, with a play afterwards. I remember turning up to the choir in make-up and performing the piece, then rushing backstage to perform the play minutes later. The AV squad's biggest struggle was to try and not get electrocuted while setting up the spotlights. The music pieces were *raags* and the occasional *kawali*. The music teacher at the time, Mr. Gursharan Singh, liked hybrids, so what would start off as classical Hindustani music would transition to Western rock-type music. The musical part was always well received. There was an evening for parents and students, and another evening for schools, like Welhams — I remember Vikram Seth giving a talk at Founders, saying that he had, in fact, hated his time at Doon. *Pagal Gymkhana* was the day after, and there would be burgers, *khaatis*, and *aloo tikkis*. There were also games like tug-of-war. There was an outing option the next day, but no overnights.

Towards our final years, aside from the events and parent's, girls from Welham would turn up and everybody would immediately get their game together, trying to dress smarter and shave, and take a bath in some cases.

Tuck at the time was a gray area, so everyone would bring back *President's* and Dairy Milks, and all sorts of candy.

Govind Dhar |

Ex - 392 T, Batch of 1997

Founder's Day was much the same 60 years ago when I was at School. Mr J.K. Martyn was the Headmaster then. There were exhibitions of Art, Photography, Industrial Chemistry, Woodworking and Machine shop. The Chief Guest would be taken around and chit-chat with the boys. Art prizes would be distributed in the Sunken Gardens. Opposite the music room, in the evening, we all assembled in the Rose Bowl - which was much smaller. Visitors came only by invitation. The audio-visual facilities were not very advanced. Then, the Chief Guest, the Chairman, the Governors would assemble at the podium with the HM and there were speeches. A music program and a play, followed by dinner at the Houses since there was no Central Dining Hall. The caretaker of each House was called a Dame - Ms Gomes was K House's undivided dame, and the Dames would compete to provide the best meal for Founder's.

Sudhir Prakash |
283 K, Batch of 1965

From The Doon School Archives.



CONTEMPORARY

Katyayan Kanodia &
Armaan Rathi

Més que un club' ('More than a club') is a phrase embedded in the hearts of the millions of supporters of the Catalan club FC Barcelona. This motto stems from the beacon of hope and revolution that Football Club Barcelona has become for the citizens of Catalonia, an autonomous community in Spain. Founded by the Swiss sports enthusiast Joan Gamper in 1899, Barça, which is currently in the midst of arguably its greatest ever financial crisis, has overcome far greater obstacles to reach its position at the pinnacle of world football.

Post the Spanish Civil War of 1936, harsh repression and reprisals carried out by the civilian and military authorities threatened the very existence of Barça. The club's headquarters were bombed by the fascist air force. Measures such as forcing the club to change its name to Club de Fútbol Barcelona and removing the Catalan flag from its crest were taken. Under Francoist Catalonia, the Catalan language was banned and so were gatherings due to the fear of political uprisings. Barca during such tumultuous

més que un club

*Football Club Barcelona's
political past and present.*

times, was truly more than a club. For Catalans, the Camp Nou was the only place for politically like-minded individuals to congregate, individuals who believed in republican ideas. Despite the adverse political situations of the 30s, the 1940s and 50s proved to be relatively successful for Club de Fútbol Barcelona, which won La Liga (Spanish First Division) titles and a Copa Latina under the management of Josep Samitier and notable players such as César, Ramallets, and Velasco.

Following the completion of the Camp Nou and introduction of the Ballon d'Or recipient Luis Suárez. Despite being unsuccessful in La Liga, the 1960s saw the emergence of Barcelona. Thereafter, with the end of Franco's dictatorship in 1974, the club changed

its official name back to Futbol Club Barcelona (Barça) and reverted the crest to its original design. With the record-breaking signing of Johan Cruyff, who immediately won over the hearts of the Blaugrana fans with his Catalan love and footballing aptitude. In 1974, Barça won many accolades and occupied the Spanish centrestage alongside arch-rivals Real Madrid.

It was in 1978 that the club members elected a president for the first time (a practice which still exists) and under Josep Lluís Núñez (1978-2000), Barça achieved stability and prosperity. With the massive (albeit short-lived) signings of Diego Maradona and Ronaldo Nazario, Barcelona clinched numerous titles and trophies. With the



return of Johan Cruyff in 1988 (this time as a coach), who assembled a dream team composed of players such as Ronald Koeman, Romário, Hristo Stoichkov, and Pep Guardiola, FC Barcelona found themselves flush in trophies. The most prominent of these being the European Cup, (now UEFA Champions League) won by a match-winning free-kick goal from the current Barcelona manager Ronald Koeman. With the introduction of Total Football or the tiki-taka style, Cruyff revolutionized modern football. His approach of high levels of ball possession is one of Barça's most recognisable traits. This passing style of play was later implemented and built upon by Pep Guardiola in his four years as the coach of FC

Barcelona. Indisputably its best period ever.

After clutching another Champions League title under the management of Frank Rijkaard, Barça's two-season trophy drought paved the way for the golden era of FC Barcelona under Josep 'Pep' Guardiola. Guardiola is a staunch believer in building his squad around the club's own youth system (La Masia), and as a consequence, numerous young players were promoted to the first team, resulting in the construction of the most decorated Barça side ever. Guardiola won all three titles available in his first season. Following a strong start to the 2009/10 season, Barça won the historic Sextuple, or six trophies, all in the same calendar year. Guardiola's winning streak

continued, with 14 trophies out of a possible 19 in his four seasons as manager.

Now under the presidency of Joan Laporta, FC Barcelona is undergoing through a phase of rebuilding, relying on young talents such as Frenkie De Jong, Pedri Gonzalez, and Ansu Fati in an attempt to mitigate the detrimental fallout of the financial mismanagement by former president Josep Bartomeu. Culés (Barça fans) today can only hope that FC Barcelona bounces back from this crisis as well, much like the numerous crises it has overcome in its rich history.

Oppression from the Francoist Era is still a highly relevant theme in the Catalan social fabric. The horrifying police brutality during the 2020 protests

were symbolic of Franco's legacy. Today, Catalanian self-determination and the tense political atmosphere go hand in hand with Barça. With over 90% of Catalans in favour of self-independence including club captain Gerard Pique, who has been publicly critical of the Madrid government's polarising behaviour. Fans can be seen chanting 'Independencia' in the 17th minute of home games to mark the 1714 battle. Barça, a democratic institution itself, has become symbolic of its Catalan values globally and in Spain. To strip apart Barça and Catalan politics would mean radical change in both institutions and to many fans and citizens, do the unthinkable.

समय का बीतना

Uddhav Goel

उद्धव फॉइल राजनैतिक मिमांसा पर अपने
विचारों को कलमबद्ध करते हैं

गुफाओं से निकल कर, मानव शीघ्र ही, एक आदर्श समाज (प्रोटोपिया) की स्थापना करने में लीन हो गया था। यह बहुत अनिवार्य था क्योंकि इससे मानवजाती का कल्याण होता और इस पर हमारा आर्थिक, वैज्ञानिक एवं सामाजिक उत्थान निर्भर था। बड़े दार्शनिक दिग्गजों ने इसको प्राप्त करने में कठोर मंथन भी किया। अंततः वे एक आदर्श समाज को बनाने में विफल रहे। प्रत्युत राजनीतिक मीमांसा उसके द्वंदात्मक प्रकृति के चलते, समय के पड़ावों से गुजर कर, बहुत विकसित हुआ है। शताब्दियों के संघर्ष के बाद हमें अभी तक का सबसे नैतिक तथा सुघड़ व्यवस्था, लोकतंत्र मिला है। हालाँकि यह तब भी उत्तमता से कोसो दूर है। यदि हमें यह व्यवस्था सुधारनी है तो हमें राजनीतिक मीमांसा के इतिहास का पाठ करना और देखना होगा की समय ने इसमें कितने बदलाव करे हैं।

यद्यपि पश्चिम दुनिया में खरी राजनीतिक मीमांसा प्लेटो और अरस्तु के समय से चली आ रही है, परन्तु यह एनलाइटनमेंट ट्रेडिशन की वजह से प्रचलित हुआ है। इस समयकाल में तीन महान विचारधाराएं प्रकट हुईं, सोशल कॉन्ट्रैक्ट थ्योरी, यूटिलिटीरियानिस्म तथा मार्क्सवाद। "अर्ली" तथा "मच्योर" एनलाइटनमेंट में एक चीज़ सामान्य है, वह की वे व्यक्तिगत अधिकार और विज्ञान को मद्दे नज़र रख कर, अपने आदर्श समाज की स्थापना करना चाहते थे। वे अपने सिद्धांतों को वैज्ञानिक मूल्यांकन से वैध साबित करने में व्यस्त थे। व्यक्तिगत अधिकार को महत्ता देना एक स्मारकीय कदम था। अर्ली एनलाइटनमेंट अपनी निश्चितता के साथ व्यस्तता के लिए भी जाना जाता है, जो डेसकार्टेस की मशहूर पंक्ति "मैं सोचता हूँ इसलिए मैं हूँ" (कोगीतो एर्गो सुम) से साफ़ प्रकट होती है। किन्तु अर्ली एनलाइटनमेंट दार्शनिकों ने मानव की मानसिकता का स्वयं अंदाज़ लगाकर एक भूल की, जिसने इस ट्रेडिशन को विनाश के कगार पर ले आया। बेन्थैम, ह्यूम जैसे आदि ने मानव में बसे गहरे बहुवाद का बहिष्कार कर, एक "टेलिअलोजिकल" तरीका अपनाया। अच्छा

और बुरा क्या है, वे अपनी अपनी धारणाएँ बनाते चले, और उन एक तरफ़ी धारणाओं के आधार पर अपने "निर्धारणात्मक" प्रकरण लिखे। यह एक इतनी बड़ी गलती थी कि क्लासिकल यूटिलिटीरियानिस्म बिना जाने नरसंहार को वैध बताने लगी, जिसे हम "यूटिलिटी मॉन्स्टर प्रॉब्लम" के नाम से जानते हैं।

एंटी एनलाइटनमेंट ट्रेडिशन के एडमंड बर्क ने इस ट्रेडिशन के खिलाफ मोर्चा खोला। वे विज्ञान के विरुद्ध थे क्योंकि वे अरस्तु के कथन "जितना अधिक जानोगे, उतना ही पता लगेगा की तुम नहीं जानते" से सहमत थे। वे एनलाइटनमेंट ट्रेडिशन के व्यक्तिगत अधिकारों वाली विचारधारा के भी विरुद्ध थे और समझते थे की एक व्यक्ति को जानना चाहिए कि समाज को उससे क्या अपेक्षा है। रूढ़िवादी सोच के आधीन, वे सामाजिक बदलाव करने से संकोच करने कि शिक्षा देते थे। बर्क के उत्तराधिकारी, मैकइन्टायर, अरिस्टोटेलियनवाद के द्वारा समुदायवादी विचार को बढ़ावा देना चाहते हैं। अर्थात्, उनके अनुसार एक समुदाय उसके सदस्य से पहले आता है। वे सामाजिक रीति-रिवाज़ों में बहुत विश्वास रखते हैं, और मानते हैं कि हमारी क्षमता तब सामने आती है जब हम प्राचीन प्रथाओं का सही ढंग से पालन करते हैं। हालाँकि विज्ञान को पूर्णतः अनदेखा करना भी समाज के लिए अत्यधिक हानिकारक साबित होता है।

इसके पश्चात, विरोध एवं सैद्धांतिक खेदों के कारणवश, एनलाइटनमेंट प्रोजेक्ट तथाकाहित बीसवीं सदी के दूसरे भाग तक त्याग दिया गया था। जॉन रॉल्स ने अपने बलबूते पर इस सच्चाई को बदल दिया और अपने समय के दर्शनशास्त्र का प्रमुख चेहरा बनें। उन्होंने एनलाइटनमेंट की गलती न दोहराने के लिए इम्मानुएल कांत की "डेओन्टोलॉजी" का प्रयोग किया। बिना मानस की धारणा बनाये उन्होंने स्वतंत्रता, अवसर तथा आय को दूसरे से अलग बता कर कहा, कि ये सामान्य तौर पर लोगों कि भलाई के लिए समाज में बांटनी चाहिए। वे अपने आदर्श

समाज के सबसे पिछड़े समुदाय का जितना भाग बढ़ा सकते वे उसमें संतुष्ट हो जाते, अंग्रेजी में कहें तो "मैक्सिमिन"। यदि आप सबसे वंचित सामाजिक वर्ग में जन्म लें तो आपको कम से कम कष्ट होये, इस ही सोच से प्रभावित होकर उन्होंने यह उपरिलिखित सिद्धांत बनाया। एक परिपक्व रॉल्स ने अर्ली एनलाइटनमेंट की वैज्ञानिक आकांक्षा को त्याग कर एक वाक्यांश "राजनीतिक, आध्यात्मिक नहीं" लिखा। समय का पहिया ऐसे चला कि अर्ली से लेकर मच्योर तक विज्ञान के प्रति एक सही परिप्रेक्षा बना, निश्चितता से "प्रोविज़नल" और अनुमान से परीक्षणवाद।

पूर्ण लोकतंत्र के अस्तित्व का श्रेय इन ट्रेडिशन एवं विरोधियों को जाता है। काफी परीक्षण और निरीक्षण के बाद ही, लगभग एक डार्विनियन तरीके से, इस राजनीतिक व्यवस्था का अत्यधिक लोकप्रिय होना संभव हुआ। परन्तु लोकतंत्र शुरुआत से ही उत्तमता से कोसो दूर रहा है, क्योंकि इससे बहुमत के अत्याचार कि संभावनाएं बहुत बढ़ जाती हैं। इसकी सम्भावना कम करने के लिए रिपब्लिकन ट्रेडिशन का आगमन हुआ। पॉलिटी (रिपब्लिकन व्यवस्था), अरस्तु के अनुसार सबसे कारगर था क्योंकि यह एक (राजतंत्र), कुछ (कुलीनतंत्र) तथा बहुत (लोकतंत्र), अर्थात् सबके हितों को संजोय रख सकता था। रिपब्लिकन सोच नियंत्रण और संतुलन के रूप में वीटो अंक को बढ़ावा देती है, जो संवैधानिक तरीके से सत्ताधारी सरकार कि शक्ति, निजी व्यक्तियों की सुरक्षा के लिए, कम करती है। चाहे वह दो सदन बनाना हो (बाई-कामरालिस्म) या फेडरलिस्म का लागू होना। लोकतंत्र को और मजबूत बनाने के लिए आधुनिक दार्शनिकों जैसे हाबरमास ने चिंतन मनन किया है परन्तु अंततः वे विफल रहे हैं। मेरे अनुसार हम आने वाले समय में हमारी राजनीतिक स्थिति को वार्तालाप और विमर्श द्वारा और सुधार सकते हैं।

कोरोना

काल-जीवन काल

Vishvavijay Rathod

विश्वविजय सिंह राठौर कोविड के समय में बदलती जीवनशैली पर प्रकाश डालते हैं

पूर्व-कोविड

यादें बीते दिनों की अर्थात् कोरोना / कोविड १९ से पहले के वक्त की बात करें, ये वो दौर था जब हम सभी बिना किसी डर के न कोई मास्क न ही कोई सनेटाइज़ेशन न ही कोई और फ़िक्र के जीते थे | सुबह की पहली आवाज़ “ उठो जल्दी उठो स्कूल जाना है ऑटो आ जायेगा देर हो जाएगी” और फिर भाग दौड़ी | स्कूल जाना, दोस्तों से मिलना, टीचर्स से मिलना, टेस्ट की चिंता, होमवर्क नहीं किया तो डांट खाने का डर, लंच में टिफ़िन शेयर करना, मस्ती करना, ये सब हम स्टूडेंट्स की रोजाना जीने वाली जिंदगी थी | इसी तरह हमारे घर व आस पास के लोगो का भी ये ही हाल था, किसी के पास किसी से बात करने की फुरसत नहीं थी, सभी अपनी भाग दौड़ वाली जिंदगी में व्यस्त थे, दोस्तों का वो टाइम जिसमें हर पल एक मस्ती रहती थी, कोई किसी से मिलने से पहले कुछ नहीं सोचता था | किसी के मन में ये नहीं था की जिस से मिलने जा रहे वो ठीक तो है ना, किसी को कोई बुखार या कुछ हुआ तो नहीं है | सच कहे तो आज का जो वक्त है वो डर और मुसीबतों का है लेकिन वो बीता वक्त जिसमें हमेशा कुछ करने का जोश, उत्साह, लगन रहती थी उसमें बात ही कुछ और थी | हमने देखा है कि कैसे वो बीता समय हमें हमेशा कुछ नया करने के लिए प्रेरित करता था | कोरोना से पहले परिवार के लोग किसी के कही जाने पे इतना नहीं परेशान होते थे, किसी के घर में बुखार आजाने पे सभी उसकी देखभाल करते, डॉक्टर के पास भी जाने में कोई डर नहीं था, आज तो ये ही जाने पे उसी से दूर रहना पड़ता है | कुछ भी कहो दोस्तों वो बीता वक्त बहुत याद आता है, ईश्वर करें वो वक्त फिर से हमारी जिन्दगी में आए |

कोविड के दौरान

कोविड १९ ये एक ऐसी महामारी जो चीन में सबसे पहले २०१९ में आयी | फिर इस महामारी ने धीरे धीरे पूरे विश्व को अपने चपेट में लेना

शुरू कर दिया | भारत में ये महामारी २०२० के शुरुआत में आयी | सबसे पहले ये महामारी केरल में जनवरी २०२० में पकड़ में आयी | फिर तो इसने पूरे भारत में अपना असर दिखाना शुरू कर दिया, मार्च तक आते आते इस कोरोना से बहुत संख्या में लोग बीमार होने लगे तथा मृत्यु का डर भी बढ़ने लगी | फिर प्रधानमंत्री द्वारा मार्च को पूरे भारत में लॉक डाउन की घोषणा की गयी, यही से शुरू हुआ एक नया अध्याय, इस लॉक डाउन ने शुरू किया आम जनता पे अपना असर दिखाना, पहली बार ऐसा हुआ की हर एक आदमी जो कितना ही अमीर हुआ हो या गरीब सब अपने घर बैठ गए | इस लॉक डाउन से सबसे ज्यादा असर हुआ उस वर्ग पे जो रोज कमाता था, रोज खाता था वो मजदूर वर्ग जो अपना घर, गांव छोड़ कर शहरों में मजदूरी करते थे | इस बीमारी के डर से उन्हें अचानक से काम से, किराये के घरों से निकल दिया वे सभी रातों रात सड़क पे आगाए | सरकार के द्वारा उनके लिए शुरुआत में कोई कदम नहीं उठाये गए, इन मजदूरों ने आखिर में मिलो चल कर अपने घर जाने का फैसला किया और चल पड़े | ये वो दौर था जब हर आदमी एक डर में जी रहा था, कहीं मानवता ने खुद को खो दिया था तो कहीं मानवता स्वयं सेवी संस्थाओं के रूप में सामने आ रही थी | इस बुरे वक्त में हम ने बहुत कुछ खोया, तो सीखा भी बहुत | इस वक्त ने हमें अपने रिश्तों हमारे अपनों की अहमियत सिखाई, हम रोजमर्रा की भाग दौड़ वाली जिंदगी से समय निकाल कर अपने परिवार को समय देने लगे, हमने सीखा की हम कैसे आभाव में भी जिंदगी जी सकते हैं, हमने रोटी, पैसे, तथा लोगो की कदर करना सीखा | हमने देखा की कैसे हमारे रियल हीरो (पोलिस, डॉक्टर, नर्स अन्य हॉस्पिटल कर्मचारी एम्बुलन्स चालक आदि) ने अपना कर्तव्य निभाया | उन्होंने घंटो पीपी किट पहन कर अपनी जान की परवाह किये बिना कैसे इस बीमारी से लड़ रहे मरीजों को बचया, आज के इस दौर में ये रियल हीरो हमारे लिए भगवान से काम नहीं थे |

इस कोरोना महामारी के दौरान हमने वो सीखा देखा जिसे हम कभी भी भुला नहीं पाएंगे, इस वक्त ने हमें मजबूत बनाया है |

कोविड के बाद

दोस्तों अब ये वक्त जो कितना बदल चूका है, आज हम जी रहे हैं एक महामारी के साथ उस से हाथ मिलते हुए | बीते लगभग डेढ़ साल से

हमें हमारे जीवन में तथा आस पास बहुत कुछ होते देखा है | लोगो ने अपनों को खोया तो कहीं परिवार ही पूरे खत्म हो गए | ये वक्त बहुत बुरा गुजरा और बुरा ही आया, रोजाना अखबार में टीवी पे सिर्फ बुरी ही खबरे सुनने को देखने को मिली | बेरोजगार को भूखे मरने कि नौबत आयी, प्राइवेट काम करने वालों को कंपनियों ने निकाल दिया, मजदूरों को काम छोड़ कर जाना पड़ा, और स्कूलों और विद्यार्थियों कि तो क्या कहे पिछले दो सालो से ऑनलाइन पढ़ रहे हैं, और जिनके पास मोबाईल, नेट जैसी सुविधाएं नहीं वो बच्चे तो पढ़ना लिखना ही भूल गए हैं | शिक्षा का स्तर और नीचे आ गया | आज की ये युवा पीढ़ी जो दसवीं, बाहरवीं कि परीक्षाएं नहीं होने पे खुश हो रही वह ये नहीं जानती की उन्होंने क्या खोया है | आज जो भी हो रहा है उसका सीधा असर आगे आने वाले सालो में खुद उनकी जिंदगी में बुरा रहेगा साथ ही देश के लिए भी बुरा ही रहेगा | ये परीक्षाएं नहीं लेके सीधे ही पास के देने के सरकार के फैसले आने वाले वक्त में बेरोजगारी को बढ़ावा मिलेगा जिसका असर हमारे देश की अर्थ व्यवस्था पे पड़ेगा | आने वाली भावी पीढ़ी कैसे देश को चलाएगी वो आज के ये फैसले ही तय कर रहे हैं |

इस कोरोना महामारी ने आज भी हमारे देश की आर्थिक स्थिति को हिला कर रख दिया है, आज जो महंगाई बढ़ रही है, पेट्रोल, डीज़ल, गैस जैसी जरूरी चीजों के दाम बढ़ रहे हैं ये सभी आम जनता के लिए मुश्किल होता जा रहा है | आज हर आदमी, परिवार जरूरत की चीजों के अलावा बाकि जिंदगी तो जीना जैसे भूल ही गए हैं | पता नहीं अभी तो ये बीमारी और क्या नए रूप लेकर आएगी ना जाने क्या और देखना बाकि रह गया है | ईश्वर से यही प्रार्थना है की जल ही ये कोरोना जाये और हम आप सभी एक सामान्य जीवन जीये जिस पर हम सभी का हक भी है |



how blessed are the meek?



Varyam Gupta

For years we have found comfort in the art
of blind consumption,
in the soulful practice
of acquiring
aestheticism via disposable wares,
in the lull of gossamer fabric
that couldn't make it past our
social media threads,
and in the e-instruments
that last almost just as long
as our attention span.

Everyday wails like a new-born child
unwilling
to be born

In a world where “ashes to ashes, dust to dust” takes millions of years to really materialise, everything except the satisfaction of man's materialistic needs is deemed dispensable and the things we dispose of in our everyday lives outlive us by exponents. Yet, the human species lives on, on borrowed time and resources purloined from the future. We inhabit a world where the nihilistic idea of economic growth matches ranks with social-media-endorsed commodity fetishism, trending in four lettered hashtags. Ignorance has become a breed of religion that will brook no questioning. The malady of nature neither appeals to human avarice and ego, nor does it portend debates of nationalistic or identity politics, thus falling well out of the ambit of issues we deem worthy of attention. With our plunder-some technology and bourgeois ideals, our moral depravity has left nature bankrupt.

As we preserve without the need to conserve, we become the disinherited of Rainer Maria Rilke's remark, finding that “Each vague turn of the world has such disinherited ones, to whom the former does not, and the next does not yet, belong”

So how do the Meek stop man's weary scissors from ripping the seams of interdependence that thread life on earth? What do the Young do when the only things we are due to receive

(Continued on the next page.)

(Continued from the previous page.)

as heirlooms are commercialised carbon caps and countries bombed into the Stone Age? As the heirs of a ramshackle future, it is time we truly think for ourselves in the face of institutions which are designed to serve numb oligarchs.

Despite the rhetoric and hypocrisy that surrounds us, change, as it always has, must first be accepted before it is enacted. It is time we not only talk about this change, but also feel it, chew it, wear it and grow it. What our karmically-inclined universe needs is not mass graves, but mass lifestyle changes that will only occur once we become mindful consumers of nature's industry. It is time the youth takes the onus of restoring before storing.

Households form the unit of every economy, the consumption and disposal patterns of which vary greatly. The young can go a long way to modify these patterns and to adjust them in a way that helps prevent ecological malfunction by making their families aware of the threat that mindless consumerist tendencies pose towards the global village. Change must first occur in our attitudes and beliefs, and real-world manifestation of the same will follow in tandem.

It is time we realise that our wardrobes cost us more than just reams of printed

paper and that the food we put on our table, more often than not, leaves us with a burgeoning environmental debt that cripples entire food chains. Young people must weed out the negative externalities caused by economically sound, yet environmentally deplorable mutually beneficial transactions. We must hold specific actions, and not specific people, accountable for driving future populations to the brink of existence. We must abandon our pulpits and podiums of ignorance and take the fight to the street, making our way inside every home and every heart to give ourselves a fighting chance against the very event of extinction that we have inflicted upon other living, breathing species. This fight - our fight - is one of making more sustainable choices. Let's make local markets the new pitstops, let's uncover nature's secrets before we let ourselves in on Victoria's, let's have our Facebook post instantly gratify our backyard compost.

We must remodel our politics, now knee deep in issues of social stratification and communal ramifications, before we remodel our homes. In the face of leaders who thrive on the perverse politics of hate, let us pose the love for nature as a prerequisite to political popularity. It's time we let the 'adults in the room' know that every unsustainable practice that puts us at

risk of standing dispossessed of the earth's resources will be deemed as theft. It is time we take on the baton of governance and march towards more progressive policies that do not leave our planet derelict and have our future populations cross oceans as climate refugees. We must think of shrinking our waste before our waists and of growing what we grow off.

The youth today inhabits several positions of power and influence - be it financial markets, networking industries or pop culture. In its position to mobilise and mould opinion, the onus of calibrating the dynamics of change rests upon us. We need more than just thirty under thirty to help the world construct pillars of viable habits and choices to prevent an architectural collapse of the universe as we know it. With our warehouses of abundance losing inventory at an alarming rate, it is imminent for us to break vicious circles of deprivation and to create circular economies. The young have brought on an era of social entrepreneurship that highlights issues of social and ecological importance; we must embrace this call to shorten our supply chains and our shower playlists.

The earth is a ticking time bomb under our feet - let us know which wires to pry loose.

Nothing feels pretty
or prolific

Warped odours
tear through limbs
of aching stalactites

Leaves press their ears to the ground
waiting to be walked all over
by mankind's eternal engines

Winds howl
and rivulets leak

Tides of time
will not wash away
craters of carbon footprints
For too long
have we perceived
what we do not understand as

silence.

A Tale of Two Letters

Aditya Gupta

Musings on personal finance.

Dear Cash,

We wish you a restful stay in heaven once we fully remove you from the face of the earth. The time is nearing so it is our sincerest advice that you get your will and estate in order. It is a tearful goodbye (but just a teeny-tiny bit) to be wishing adieu to one of our worthiest foes but then again there is only victor in any fight.

Yours Only,

The Future Consortium (TFC)

(Digital Payments and the FinTech Industry)

To the Users of TFC,

Let me tell you something about your dear little friends. While they may be rejoicing my expected death, let me inform you, I am here to stay for longer than they think. You see, I am a positive nudge in this entire world as I do not alter your financial behavior by making you spend more than you should have and would have in most circumstances. Multiple recent research studies have proven that the use of credit cards makes you spend more than a cash purchase. This might sound absurd, but it is the truth because the use of TFC delays paying the actual bill which makes it easier for you to splurge as you wouldn't immediately feel that unpleasantness accompanied by a cash expenditure. Furthermore, research on digital wallets and credit cards points towards a more intriguing phenomenon of psychological distancing, which shows how it is more painful for you to lose a \$10 version of me since there is a "real" feeling and distance we feel when we lose that note. Virtual coins and notes are not fake, but then they are also nothing more than a few sequences of binary that show up on our screen and as is with the rest of the digital world we seldom feel that "real" distance and feeling when employing their use. While TFC may promise you a world of convenience and accessibility at a seemingly "cheaper cost" they are also promising a world of disaster where your financial behavior could be altered for lifetime. Heck, even the New York City's council has made it illegal for business owners to refuse me as a means of payment for all these reasons and more. But, on the other hand, I do admit that my foes are innovative solutions to many of my shortcomings. For those of you with a steady recurring income, immense wealth, or a high income TFC can be a much better financial product than me because you could potentially afford an extra splurge or two. The chances of you defaulting on your credit card payments is quite minimal, which ensures that you don't fall prey to the cruel interest rates that are charged for late payments. For the rest of you who have found freedom from your unsettling financial burdens in TFC please use it with caution as that freedom may be short lived because my foxy foe could trap you in shackles and burdens, like a vicious debt cycle, for an even greater part of your life. Think about your less-digitally enabled ancestors for a second. Without the cheap and fast lending available today they could only spend as much as the cash at hand with them. The moment they started falling short on that, they would have to either rein in their spending or find an extra income source or two. They wouldn't jump to lending facilities like we do because not only would no good bank lend to them but also because they would know the importance of spending within their limits as would be taught to them by that lesson in frugality.

The use of TFC will accelerate in the coming few years with solutions designed to create a seamless shopping experience locking in more and more consumers into the consortium. While that may not be a bad thing for many it could be harmful for the larger masses as it could alter their financial behavior for years to come. We are slowly proceeding into a territory where a profit hungry corporate world will do everything within its power to suck every penny off of us. When they created "Buy-Now-Pay-Later", or even EMIs, all they were doing was taking away that immediate pain and replacing it with the false sense of comfort that is found in staggered payment schemes. Identifying and being cautious of these false senses will be the key to avoiding the vicious foxholes of TFC. Finding the right balance is between you and your finances, but don't let go of me. Use me every now and then to remind yourself of the friction you need in life to maintain your financial sanity. Use me to remind yourself of the boundaries you need to define with those wants of life. Hold onto me and use me to find the right balance in a cashless world.

Yours Truly,

Cash

Stereotypes Sell

Vihan Ranka

On the marketing of stigma and prejudice

The consequences of stereotype-based marketing have a subliminal impact on us as consumers and a society. The erstwhile portrayal of fairer skin as being more beautiful by skincare companies have set beauty standards that affect several people negatively, insitlling in us a false sense of beauty.



The London Underground in 2015 was witness to one of the most controversial advertisements of our time. “Are you beach body ready?”, read one of the adverts stuck on the wall of the underground rail. The reaction to the advert was staggering, to say the least, after multiple complaints flooded the Underground’s office. However, the existence of the advert is a testament to the fact that stereotypes sell.

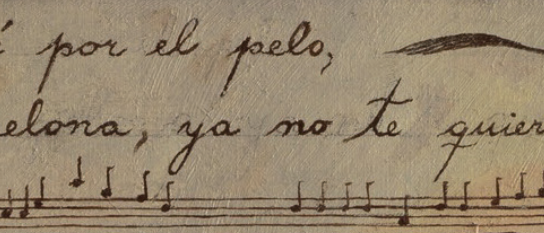
The political stances of our generation tend to aim towards inclusivity and acceptance for the previously marginalised. However, companies still use stereotypes and stigma to base their advertising campaigns. Whether it is the inappropriate portrayal of a

certain community or the usage of inappropriate slurs, companies tend to overlook the sentiment behind their motive to sell their products. Various stereotypes, ranging from gender to race, are used to sell products. Often, advertisements about baby products colour the products of newborn boys as blue, whereas girl products are coloured pink. Societal associations are used as the basis or a selling point by companies, and most of the time, they’re successful.

The consequences of stereotype-based marketing have a subliminal impact on us as consumers and a society. The erstwhile portrayal of fairer skin as being more beautiful by skincare companies have set beauty



por el pelo,
elona, ya no te quier



Self-Portrait with Cropped Hair
By Frida Kahlo



standards that affect several people negatively, instilling in us a false sense of beauty. It is not only a cause of insecurities and body dysmorphia for several members of society but also instills in us a false sense of beauty. Beauty standards don't stop at the colour of our skins. The shape of your body, the structure of your face and even the shape of your nails have a precedent that must be fulfilled, and companies advertise their products to propagate those standards.

Pop culture has often been our escape from the bleak reality we live in. However, this too uses several stereotypes and profiling to sell their content. Often, certain groups of people are portrayed in ways that may hurt their sentiments. There are innumerable examples of it in recent movies and television shows. Moreover, stand-up comedy mocks the same stereotypes. Even newspaper articles can be biased against a minority to gain the favour of the populace. Blatant examples of this have often found their way into the homes of the masses, which not only increases the animosity between the public and the minority but also fuels hatred and further ostracization towards them. 9/11 remains as one of the most stark examples of the most heinous crimes committed in the history of humanity. However, and equally unfortunate fallout of this event has been an alarming rise in Islamophobia after the incident. Several newspapers allowed the publishing of anti-Muslim articles and opinions as a reaction to the attack on American security. While the sentiments behind the articles were

understandable, it seemed very unjust towards the people of the Islamic community who had no connection with the incident whatsoever, and several hate crimes were also committed against Muslims living in the USA right after.

However, several companies are now working towards breaking the norms and stereotypes.

In 2019, Diet Coke launched the campaign "Unlabeled - Imagine the world imposed without labels." They removed the label from their soda as a way to show their support to the people who weren't labelled and were ostracized. Such campaigns have become more and more of a common occurrence as companies have started to realise that every individual is unique and that stereotypes may be true, but they tell us an incomplete story. More clothing companies are hiring models with diverse body shapes and sizes. Fair and Lovely, a popular skincare brand owned by Unilever, changed its name to Glow and Lovely. These changes have had a huge impact on consumer behaviour and purchasing patterns. Furthermore, they've helped in allowing inclusivity and acceptance to be more widespread.

Stereotypes and norms have long plagued our society, and various companies have exploited that for monetary gains. As renowned author, Chimamanda Adichie aptly says, "The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story."



FLECTION



Ninth Circle of Dante's Hell

Aryan Baruah

College recruiters are often portrayed to be beastly creatures. They hold an unjust amount of power, the power to decide those who get to glimpse the gates of success and those who never experience the ultimate triumph. But today, he refused to be the latter. His thoughts as he entered the field to the roaring crowd were nothing short of pragmatic in nature. Strategies, exercises, names and muscle memory (amongst many other things) flooded his mind, as did the slight anxiety. As he stepped onto the pitch, he found the grass still wet from the morning dew. The sun shone brightly, like a thousand stars upon his hairless head, and it made the sweat on his head quite prominent.

As they formed a huddle, the smell of body odour filled the air. This cup final created an atmosphere of delirium and euphoria that could only be caused by an event such as this. They broke off with loud cries, for they knew it. They knew that this was why they were awake, that this was why they had bled and that this was why they were born: to play the gruelling yet beautiful game of football. Every bone they broke and muscle they tore, every night they lay in their beds, writhing in pain from all the running, it all came to this.

It was kick-off, this was it. This was the beginning of his journey onto the balustrade upon which Nike stood. It was time to practice in the warm rain, the determination for that last repetition, the perspiration caused by the long runs, the discipline of the endless days filled with protein, the early mornings embodying what it meant to be an elite athlete, this was it.

The ball ran across the grass, with the smoothness of a pebble across the still surface of the water, and into his feet. He savoured the first touch, before advancing into the enemies half. A spear was thrown at his feet, which he narrowly dodged with an expert manoeuvre. He could hear the steps of the swordsman, looking to take the ball off his feet. He stopped with a sense of trepidation, expecting to find himself on the muddy grass, but instead was greeted with the incompetence of the defender, the enemy's arrows sliding ever so narrowly over his boots and allowing him to advance the ball to his ally.

They were in the final circle, the ninth circle of Dante's hell. He could hear the screams of those entombed in ice, the curses from Hades himself and as he saw his fellow gladiator pass him the golden mantle, slipping over the smoothness of the ice, he extended his foot and pushed it into the goal and for a second, he saw Nike's congregation above him as the enemies collapsed in utter defeat with screams of agony. They could sense the impending doom which came to greet them, the vanquished forces of the enemy-side.

He lay on the ground, taking in the atmosphere of the settings, the roaring crowds, the screams of congratulations, the sweat-stained grass, the pats on the back, the setting sun creating an orange hue on the horizon, it was something out of a dream. So maybe that's all it was, a dream inclined towards reality, a manifestation of his dedication, a figment of his imagination that had come true. However, he would never know whether that day had been real. So, he lived in that moment and decided to never come out of it.

a crooked love

| Sriyash Tantia

There was something about the woman that made the children stop in their tracks. Was it her pursed smile, significant yet corny? Was it her wary eyes with bags under them? Well, nobody knew, but there was something sinister and enigmatic about her, quite contrary to popular belief.

In 1874, the town of Bluebell was in disarray due to the ever-increasing number of crimes. The spike in the number of deaths was off the charts due to a single mysterious woman, Cokila. She only killed men who had

From the *Ladies and Gentlemen* Collection
by Andy Warhol.



served as the president of the Bluebell Estate Management. The body of every man she strangled smelled like a bouquet of roses and couldn't have smelled fresher. It was the only mark she left behind, her obsession, her muse.

The streets lay empty, and no one had it inside their hearts to go out unless their work forced them to. The orphans were unprotected as they did not have the supervision of any adults. They had no one but each other and often went days on end without eating a warm meal. Three meals a day for them was the rarest of occurrences.

Gaffey, one of the orphans, was always curious about where his parents were and searched for them whenever and wherever he could go with a faded photo in his hand and a sliver of hope in his heart. Chase was Gaffey's best friend, and had come to terms with reality: his parents were no more. These orphans didn't know what was going on in the town, and even if they did, there was nothing much that they could do about it. Their ignorance or maybe their innocence lit their face up at all times during the day.

For the first seven years of their lives, Chase and Gaffey were assigned various foster families, and no family was able to keep them for more than three months as Chase was suffering from stage two dyslexia. In contrast, Gaffey was diagnosed with several deficiencies soon

after birth. Their medical bills and requirements kept increasing daily, forcing each family to turn them back to the Malaga Orphanage and estrange them. Soon, they ran out of luck because, in 1872, their orphanage was shut down after it was discovered that the Orphanage was a front for a child-trafficking racket.

The biggest problem for them was to look for a different place to live every night and survive. They usually spent the day roaming or playing around the town, begging for some food, or finding joy in places people would turn their heads away in disgust.

One fateful night, when Gaffey and Chase were returning from the Mesaverda park, while looking for a place to sleep, they noticed that an older woman was staring at the estate of a wealthy aristocrat. The mansion was home to one of the richest people known to mankind, Lord Arturo Galecki. He used to be an actor, but since his retirement, he started a real estate company and served as the current president of the Bluebell Estate Management, which sold for trillions of dollars, leaving him flush with money. The woman was laughing until she saw the two kids. As soon as she saw them, she cursed them and started moving towards them with an axe. They were petrified as they had no idea of what to do. Their cries for help fell upon deaf ears and their

hearts pounded. They were sweating profusely and had nearly given up on defending themselves when Chase struck the baseball bat he had on the woman's forehead, leaving her dizzy, leaving them with just about enough time to run. The boys ran without thinking twice, and after the gravity of the events sunk in, they slowly made their way to the police station. After hours of search, the woman was caught not far from the mansion inside a broken, abandoned barn. Alas! It was Cokila. Although her reason was somewhat understandable, her means were not justified at all. Her son was shot dead in 1869 by a group of Russian activists, who had a vendetta against the estate management, but little did they know that he had nothing to do with that business. They left a rose potted inside the body of the only man she ever loved, so she took it upon herself to avenge her son with a hint of rose.

She was sentenced to life imprisonment, and Chase and Gaffey were awarded handsomely.

As a mark of his gratitude for saving his life, Lord Arturo adopted the orphans. The boys now found new hope in a new life of security and happiness. After all, both the kids got a parent that cared for them, and Lord Arturo got two wonderful kids with whom he could share his fortune and live his last days in peace.



Cover of Newsweek Magazine, August 1, 1936.
Photography by Centelles



Guns *n* Roses

Anshul Khakhar

For Joe, nothing could have prepared him for what he saw: stuka bombers whizzing past, their shrill sound penetrating the hearts of men. Cries of excruciating pain. Bombs, bullets, missiles and Heinkel HE's enveloping Guernica in the stench of Hades. "I hope they forgive me for being so indulgent," he whispered.

Joe remembered kissing Claire goodbye as he entered JFK International Airport. She didn't want him to leave and made no secret of it. He, on the other hand, could not begin to contain his excitement. After years of chasing his editor, Joe had finally been assigned to report on a battlefield. Where more apt than the Spanish Civil War. He tingled to meet heroic soldiers and stoic generals whose presence shook the room — he would get to witness what he saw in the movies! Oh, if only it was so, for he was yet to know what the smell of blood did to a man. For now, he hugged Claire, relishing the fragrance of her new perfume, trying to savour as much of it as he could. He had invited her to fly with him to Spain but she wanted to stay clear of the violence. How one could resist watching history being made first hand was beyond him.

Sobbing from the summit of a mountain overlooking a major battle of the war, holding Andy, he screamed "Help!" Andy was shot in the head and was bleeding violently. There were too many dying men for the medevacs to cover, it would be impossible to get one on time: they were on a high, remote mountain shooting

aerial clips of the war, far, far away from their base.

Limping, he piggybacked his partner on his shoulder and started on a devilishly daunting and tiring trek to their base, praying that Andy would make it out alive. When they reached, Joe was exhausted, and fell immediately to the ground. The last thing he remembered was looking up at someone dressed in white.

Joe woke up abruptly to the violent shaking of a hurrying nurse who needed him to empty the bed for another patient. He got on his feet, but his head was still throbbing. He hurriedly grabbed a chair. Looking around he finally spotted Andy coming out of a makeshift operation theatre. Joe could barely walk but at that instant he remembered Andy. Too tired to get up, he asked the nurse who woke him up about Andy.

Andy was alive! A possibility that had not held much promise the last time he was conscious. Joe rushed to the ICU, his head still throbbing. There, in the corner lay Andy. Joe hugged his sleeping friend for what seemed like an eternity. He cried and thanked the stars that Claire had chosen to stay away from the war. The thought of losing her stole the breath from his lungs.

"Can't sleep?" Andy mumbled, Joe nodded, laying on the couch beside Andy's ICU bed. Whatever he tried, sleep just wouldn't come to him and on the off chance it did, a nagging thought of his friend dying on the bed while he was asleep strung him back awake. "What if I

(Continued on the next page)



(Continued from the previous page.)

get shot like you?” asked Joe “or what if you get shot again?”, “we’re not even fighting, why are we putting our lives on the line?” Andy tried to mumble something, but to no avail. Frustrated, Joe decided to let it be.

A week after Andy was discharged from the ICU, the doctor had, after much convincing on Andy’s part, allowed him to resume his work. Joe hadn’t left Andy alone since the incident, and

now was on the verge of losing his job if he strayed from the war any longer.

The ensuing weeks brought on the bloodiest days of an all-devouring war. Hundreds of medics scurried to treat the wounded. Every time the medics returned from the previous trip to the base, a thousand more soldiers would be found wailing under excruciating pain on the bare desert sand. At night the remaining soldiers were to be found

merrily drinking, singing and guffawing with their buddies. This beyond but boggled Joe’s mind for he could not have fathomed the prospect of a merry bonfire amidst such atrocities.

Frustrated by his futile attempts at sleeping, he got out of his bunk bed, sweaty from the heat. As he stood outside, looking at the vast sand ahead, he glanced upon a soldier who he remembered from the day’s conflict. He

couldn’t refrain himself from approaching the man and asking him “How can you possibly sing and drink at the end of such a bloodbath? Despite knowing it’ll be the same tomorrow.”

The seven-foot tall hulk of a man looked at Joe with his starkly kind eyes and whispered in the dead of the night, “You are merry for every moment that threatens to be your last, and weary for those which don’t, death is only



From the book *The Red Box: The Last Great Photographic Treasure of the Spanish Civil War*, by photographer **Antoni Campaña**

dreaded when it isn't on your doorstep and once death is an acquaintance, life is your slave."

The next day, he shot his daily aerial clips of the war under that blazing afternoon sun, from a sniper's distance. Involuntarily, for the first time he didn't look away from the sight of soldiers dying. The words that man had told him last night kept ringing in his head. He couldn't escape the feeling as though looking

away from death only delayed seeing it for later, but those man's words? That man couldn't afford to wait for later – for now, life was his slave and death, his acquaintance! And neither could Joe.

Suddenly, Joe lay writhing on the ground, wailing in excruciating pain. Blood gushed from his chest where an inaccurate bullet had just found him; it was clear that he would soon die. He was bleeding at an alarming rate, the

bullet had hit him point blank on the heart and there was no one within earshot. But did he care? He too had made his acquaintance with death. Was he grieving? If one dared to look, they would have seen him smile.

"No wonder I couldn't afford to wait for later", he smiled sheepishly. "But I will miss Andy and Clare, I hope they forgive me for being so indulgent".



HOW THE FISH SURVIVE

| Yashovat Nandan

The light that fills the room feels cold and blue, darkened by the shades across the window. This window faces south, so the light trickles in slowly and at first, I can ignore it, but eventually, I must open my eyes to this underwater light and take a deep breath in.

Some days, I would just go outside and watch the sunrise.

The world was quiet, but not still.

I admired the people moving about the streets, getting an early start. We had something in common, they and I. We all knew the feeling of the first light of day rising over the mountains and hitting our faces. We carried that feeling with us throughout the day, like a token. But I haven't seen them, the people of the sun, for months





now. I peel back the sheets and stare at the fan, motionless. The air is heavy and empty all at once. Perhaps, I think, it is the emptiness that has weight. I pull the sheets back up to my chin, shivering as they glide over my body. I cannot decide if I am warm or cold, in limbo. I consider shutting my eyes again, but I know that the morning light will find me and penetrate my eyelids the way it penetrates the shades, taking on a different tone as it shines through my skin: red, urgent. And so I keep my eyes open, swimming in the blue. When I was a child I believed that in winter, as the water froze, the fish froze with it. I looked at the icy lakes and streams with curiosity, wondering how the fish survived. I mentioned this once to my mother, who smiled and told me that it is only the surface that freezes and not the fish. The ice forms like a windowpane against the world, she told me. I could never decide which seemed worse, to be frozen or isolated. Now I feel that I am both, and it has been a long winter with a seemingly endless pandemic. I am unable to move. Continuing to stare, I try to appreciate the stillness, the silence, and the light. I know that I must get up and start the day. I will walk to the kitchen, I tell myself, and brew the coffee I switched out for my tea. I will stand in my kitchen, but to what extent? Once the coffee is poured, what have I to do? I could change the sheets, or prepare dinner, or open the mail, but I don't have the energy to do them all. These voyages, these escapades. I used to do those things and more in a single day, I suppose, though that seems so long ago. That was then, and this is now, and before I can get to those chores I must first get out of bed.

I kick away the sheets, back where I began. Slowly, I stretch out my legs and arms, as far as they can go, and then pull them back to my body. I am on my back. I try to lift myself up, starting with my shoulders, my vertebrae leaving my mattress one

by one. I make it halfway up before sinking back down. Sinking into the bed as it cocoons me. Again I try, this time using my arms to support me. Slowly I bend at the waist, knees rising to meet my chest, reaching towards the ceiling. My muscles climb each other until only my feet and rear touch the mattress. I've nearly done it! I'm crouched! I'm sitting! It's uncomfortable. I lie back down. Is that enough? I wonder. Can I go back to sleep now? It takes so much, making the pieces of me come together. It wasn't like that before the pandemic when it left me treading water. I have changed, metamorphosed, but hasn't everyone? Surely I cannot be the only one awake in bed, struggling to change my lifestyle, to even change my position. I unfocus, away from my body and back into the comfort of my mind. Thoughts move in and out of my mind, like a fish swimming. It's strange, I think, that you never see the fish moving underneath the ice. Maybe they are frozen, just in a different way.

I lay there a bit longer, waiting for nothing. Time drifts aimlessly, perfectly willing to leave me behind. It should be peaceful, but I feel chained down rather than supported. Try again, I whisper, for real this time. I lift my head from my pillow and slide my elbows underneath my rising body. My arms become two perfect triangles, the strongest shape, holding me up. My legs, two more triangles, lifting and bending. I rise upwards. Knees, shoulders,

(Continued on the next page)



When I was a child I believed that in winter, as water froze, the fish froze with it. I looked at the icy lakes and streams with curiosity, wondering how the fish survived.



Morning Sun by
Edward Hopper

(Continued from the previous page)

equal. Hands, feet, level. Hips, bed. feet, floor. I'm standing. A jumbled mess of body parts, but standing.

I know that if I try to make the bed I'll inevitably fall back into it, so I do not. Instead, I make my way to the bathroom, noticing the cold touch of the tile against the pads of my feet. I ignore my appearance in the bathroom mirror, directing my attention elsewhere. I crane my neck under the faucet, spilling myself into the sink. I turn the handle, and the cold water hits me in the face. From somewhere in the garage my water heater rumbles to life. I keep my face under the water until it warms. Until it warms me.

I bring my face up from the sink, shut off the water, and pat myself with a towel. Some of my hair has gotten wet, and it cups my face with its dark little curls, clinging to my tragus and forehead. Water trickles down my temple and outlines my jaw. The beads of liquid move slowly

at first, growing in size until they form perfect drops that fall from my face. I trace my fingertip down from my hairline, following the curved path left by water. Flowing, serene.

Turning towards the doorway, I focus on my feet. One after the other I make my way to the kitchen, my fingertips tingling slightly as I trail them across the walls. Once in the kitchen, I prepare the coffee slowly, methodically, and savour the sound of it pouring into my favourite mug. As I take a deep breath in, the steam curls upwards into my nostrils, comforting me.

I'll do something different today, I decide, taking my first sip. It's warm, filling my mouth and sliding easily down my throat. I walk, the movement fluid, the fish swimming freely. A sense of togetherness. I walk through the backdoor and outside, into the sun, swimming upstream.



The beginning of a novel.

BOER



Neelotpal

Prologue

Bera was a farmhand living in Boer, an unforgiving, harsh forest biome whose breathtaking beauty was matched only by the danger and death lurking around each dark corner of the greenery. He lived with his father, Kurst, his adopted brother, his loyal steed Frostbeard and terminally-ill mother. His mother had contracted the 'Breath of Death'. The origins of this disease were unknown, however, through macabre experience, Bera learned that it was usually fatal.

The landscape of Boer was quite unforgiving, especially so to its inhabitants that were more flesh and blood than sinew. Such things, however, did not bother Bera. He was just a farmer's son, who had nothing to do in life aside from farming and other agrarian things.

He woke up, stumbled around looking for his waterskin, and upon finding it, consumed some water to quench his thirst. After doing so, he started his day. It was monotonous as usual. He had gotten so accustomed to the life of a farmhand that right after he got up in the unearthly hours of the morning, could carry out his chores perfectly even though he would be too groggy with sleep to be attentive.

He first went to the fields to tend to the crops, then, after a few hours of removing any vexatious weeds, he headed to the stable to visit one of his only companions in the deadly forest known as 'Mount Misery'. The name was quite ominous but Bera was far from sacred, having grown up here itself. It was his home. Besides, the only reason it had such an ominous name was due to how hard to traverse it was. Due to its geographical location, the forest had mist around the year. This made it hard for anyone but the best of merchants to traverse it without getting lost. The villagers that inhabited the outskirts of the forest knew of the plight of the merchants but dared not interfere

(Continued on the next page)

He cast these unp thoughts aside as Frostbeard's stal

(Continued from the previous page)

due to their fear of being enslaved, or worse still, to be killed at the hands of the Letum, evil creatures that they were.

He cast these unpleasant thoughts aside as he entered Frostbeard's stable. Forstbeard was a beautiful black steed with a white mane, thus earning him the name. Bera and Frostbeard got along quite well, or so he hoped.

He would feed him, bathe him, and exercise him on a daily basis. At the end of it all, Frostbeard would seem quite happy and would nuzzle Bera, which he would return in kind. He had done all of these tasks with Forstbeard today, and now, he was running his hand through his loyal steed's thick, glamorous mane at the end of the day to unwind. Those foul thoughts had started crawling into the back of his head again,



pleasant

he entered

ble.



in a similar manner to a predator creeping up on its prey. Recently, there had been more patrols of drunk knights of "The Brotherhood", escorted by two letiae. The drunk men would keep getting in fistfights with the villagers over their "habit to overindulge themselves due to their past traumas." Bera had heard the stories of such "trauma" from the tales told by the travelling bards - these were apparently "little more than a bit of blunt force that the knights would receive at the hands of the annoyed villagers". Aside from draining the villagers' supplies of ale, the knights

would often ask around for a man called Saber. Upon being asked why, they would reply quite brusquely, stating that the man was naught but a dog who needed to be hung for conspiring against Lord Raven. Bera's knowledge of Lord Raven was as scarce as plant life in a desert. However, just as there are plants in a desert, Bera knew a few things about Lord Raven. For one, he was known for being an unparalleled warrior, he was trained in both normal combat with weapons such as swords and bows, while he was also very well-versed in magic, it was the magic,

however, that pained and hurt the most, unlike Raven's normal weapons.

However, he was unsure of how true these tales were, as his sources of information were those travelling bards from faraway lands.

He yawned and took that as a sign that he needed to sleep. He got up and petted Frostbeard on his head, bade him goodnight and walked to his room. He slowly walked up the steps, changed from his tattered farm robes into slightly more comfortable cotton robes that he had received for his birthday. At this point, he remembered that he had left his waterskin at the stable with Frostbeard. Back on his way from the stable, as he climbed up the stairs to his house, he heard some screaming coming from the north of his village...



“LEAVE BEFORE IT’S TOO LATE”

I liked our
old house
better.

It was a moonlit winter night in Grimmire, a shantytown secluded from modern civilisation. Shrouded in darkness due to the towering mountains that hid the sun from the remaining few citizens, the town was a mere shadow of its past self.

As the screeching of a raven cut through the bleak air like a knife through butter, the eerie fog rolled over the Willow family's '97 Chevy as they reversed into the garage of their new home.

"I liked our old house better. This one looks scary and old," proclaimed Anna as she unloaded her luggage from the boot of the vehicle.

"Well, I'm sure you'll start liking this house just as much once you get used to it. As soon as I'm done unpacking and tidying up the house, we can have a look around town," her mother replied.

Anna didn't want to take a look around town. She wanted to go back to her old house with her old friends as making friends didn't come naturally to her. It had taken her so much time to finally get a group of friends but now she was being forced to leave them and move away.

She sat down in the overwhelming silence of her new room, trying her best to cope with all the sudden changes. It was a futile effort, however, as the creeping emptiness filled her up despite her best attempts to resist. The last thing she saw was her plain, wooden closet before she closed her heavy eyes and allowed herself to get swept away into her dreams.

Tap. Tap. Tap. The door slowly creaked to open up just a wee bit. A single, bony finger slipped through the crack, glistening in blood. Slowly, four more fingers followed, gripping the door tightly. All the lights went out. All of a sudden the door flung wide open...

Anna woke up from her sleep with a sharp breath. Launching herself from her damp

bed she rushed to the massive window in the middle of her bedroom. She pulled back the faded curtains to reveal the crescent-shaped moon in the pitch black night sky and attempted to forget the nightmare she had just had. Grabbing a glass of water lying on top of the antique study table, she tried her best to calm her nerves. After about five minutes of repeatedly telling herself that it was all a dream, she finally felt her heartbeat slowing down.

It was only then that it struck her to go check on her Mom. Tip-toeing across the wooden floorboards, she quietly shut her door after her and crossed the hallway to her mother's room. She opened the door to her room and was relieved to see her sitting on her rocking chair, enjoying a glass of red wine while reading a novel.

"Hey, Mom! You haven't slept yet?" Anna inquired.

Her mother didn't respond, however. Instead, she looked up from her novel and stared directly at Anna, her eyes unfocused and hazed.

"Mom? Are you okay?" Anna asked, getting more anxious by the second.

Suddenly her mother gasped. "Run!" she commanded.

"What?" Anna asks confusedly, still trying to make sense of what was happening.

"Just run!" her mother screamed, now shouting at the top of her lungs. "Leave before it's too late!"

Anna, shaking and visibly scared, turned around to open the door. Her hand trembling, she turned the old brass knob but found it stuck, almost as if someone had locked the door from outside. Suddenly, from somewhere close, Anna heard a low, sickening growl. It was something she had never heard before and it brought goosebumps all over her skin. She felt something gripping her ankles and looked down to see the same fingers from her dreams, black and slick with blood.

The candles in the room, the only source of light, were blown out by an icy breeze, one that chilled Anna to her spine and bought a bitter taste in her mouth. The darkness of the room slowly began closing in on her, coming closer and closer until the only thing she felt was fear. The cold made her lips turn a purple-blue hue and her skin a pale white. Frozen in place, she tried her best to fight back but she was too weak. She submitted to the darkness and let it consume her: the last thing she ever saw.

It was a playground. Kids were playing catch with a baseball, building sandcastles in the sandpit and having fun on the swings. On a bench sits her mother, reading the same novel but this time with a smile on her face. Anna moved forward and joined her old friends, finally back to where she belonged.

A black and white photograph of a person walking in a desert landscape. The person is wearing a hat and carrying a bag, walking away from the viewer towards the right. The landscape is flat with some sparse vegetation. A bright sun or moon is visible in the sky. The word "Poetry" is written in a large, white, serif font across the bottom of the image.

Poetry



In collaboration with
The Doon School
Poets' Society.

Thoughts of a Child Sitting Near the Bank of a River

He thought to himself,
What is the cause of human presence?
Why he was a mortal,
In this infinite realm.

Every time he saw the water glisten,
he asked how it changed itself with the situation.
He wondered why the light reflected,
Off the transparent liquid?

Why the leaves rustled
so musically when the wind shuffled?
Why there?

Every time his mind went hollow
To his brain came only one thought
Why are we here with sorrow,
When can our pain be naught?

-

Avi Bansode



This World

A world
where one guards
the Self with high walls,
where no one touches
another soul,
where emotions
bear no imprint
on others' hearts
and rationale resides
in oblivion,
where all voices
clamour simultaneously
to an unknown audience,
is this the world
We choose to live in?

-

Ms Mughda Pandey

Red Eyes

Parched hands out begging,
Old nomad in torn pants,
Peer deep in her red eyes,
Sleep-deprived, for long nights,
Await her as daylight recedes.
Her plight is never seen,
By men who pass by, yet she still tries,
to fend for her only child.
Gods gift.
But cruelty is the only thing consistent in her
existence.
One bill and some change,
Clutched in her bruised hands.
Praying, praying for a change,
But it seems like her god is on a holiday.

-

Maharshi Roy

North of Caulfield

I'm at Caulfield
falling further into the rye.
Faster by the second.

Right at the fringes
machines hum
and hazy colonnades bloom through.

The labyrinth outside doesn't have
nascents or carousels.
Rather hemlocks and phoney pigeons strewn

in shallow, grey waterways.
There's no middle ground;
just overwhelming quicksand and skyscrapers.

Punch-drunk, with its Greek figure
brimming with cheap spirits,
the labyrinth continues, calculated like always.

The ink of lousy principles
inevitably seeps through the stone walls
and the songs get dumber than last year's songs.

But all that's
North of Caulfield—inside, the rye's feathery
touch
kisses me reasonably insane.

I mustn't leave Caulfield
for people outside always clap for
the wrong things.

-

Armaan Rathi

Silence

The power of emptiness raged through the desert.
With nothing more than sand and wind,
A lone stranger treaded the dunes with a ruffled
mind.
The sound of the wind was music to the ears,
The cream-like shade of the dunes was soothing to
the eyes,
And soon the ruffled mind was clear and fine.

A bottle in hand with a few drops left,
And a bag with a blank book to sketch,
The stranger sat on the banks of the dune river.
The wind stopped and the sound of silence kissed
his ears,
Time had stopped until eternity,
He was now a lone stranger sitting under a tree.

On the blank page, he drew,
As his subconscious instructed him to,
A bird that had left its cage.
The bird went high up in the sky,
A serene place where layers of clouds lie,
Where the binary shades meet the eye.

Soon the silence was broken by a band,
The stranger returned to his homeland,
With the chaos ruffling back into his mind.
He was grateful for the momentary loss of time,
Now his silence was forever lost in the sand,
The power of silence was gone with the band.

-

Pranav Lohia



Disdain

Can you question the way the grass grows,
The way the wild thicket spreads its branches?
Can you question the way the flower blooms,
And the unpredictable weather changes?

Can you question the way you are being forced,
To lead a life simulated by others?
Can you question your stability in a regime,
With dysfunctional human rights?

Are you sure this is the way you want,
To continue this strenuous pattern of repetitive
events?
Do you want to resolve this matter,
Or just let it clatter?

As you can raise a voice,
Make a change.
Make some noise
To not suspend it in disdain.

If you want you can question,
If you want you can mention.
Your opinion might be similar or strange,
If you want you can make a change.
To not suspend it in disdain,
To not suspend it in disdain.

-

Pranav Lohia

So Lost

The crystal dew rises
up at dawn (first light)
Forming a mist
clouding my sight.
The piercing rays disperse (just so)
Amongst the clouds of my red misty heart. (clingy clouds)

Mountains spring up (like weeds)
In my tread,
In time, I will find myself
blocked by my past
Each step like climbing Everest
(I never learnt climbing)

I reach towards Faust,
A quest, (no childish play this time)
of what can never enter my (mortal) hands
I shatter into a thousand crystals
glittering and gleaming, (so shiny)
Laying softly down on the (weeping) spring autumn grass.

-

Yash Adalti



ALL
SEATS

SMOKING IN MEZZAN

New York 1963
By Joel Meyerowitz



Qui suis-je ?

Suis-je un reflet
de toutes mes pensées,
qui s'engendrent
à chaque pas de mon existence ?

Suis-je un reflet
du recueil de mon œuvre
qui se découle de créativité
qui demeure chez moi ?

Suis-je un reflet
des rêves
qui s'envolent avec abandon
et prennent forme en réalité ?

Suis-je un reflet
des désirs et des émotions
qui se cachent et se manifestent
au et du fond de mon cœur ?

Suis je
mon esprit,
mon corps,
mes sensations,
mon cœur ?
Qui suis- je ?

-

Ms Mughda Pandey

-

Written a few years ago, this poem is an attempt to define the Self. How does one even fathom to delineate this far from a monolithic entity that is the Self? Is it one's thoughts or reflections, others' perceptions of oneself, one's emotions or feelings, ones' body, one's mind? And, the list could be endless. The poem touches only upon a few layers that create this Self.

फूल

सूरज अभी उठा नहीं हैं,
पर फूल अपने आप को उठा रहे हैं।
पंछी की चहक अभी सुनी नहीं हैं,
पर फूल अपनी कसरत कर रहे हैं।

सूरज उठ रहा हैं,
उसकी किरणे फैल रही हैं।
पंछी उठ गए हैं,
और अपने काम पर चल लिए हैं।

फूलों के पसीने छूट रहे हैं,
उनके काम से दिमाग बढ़ता हैं।
सुबह से कई बागों को परख लिया हैं,
अब बस आखिरी बाग बचा हैं।

पंछी घोंसले में पहुंच गए हैं,
पर फूलों को पानी-मिट्टी खाना हैं।
सूरज अपनी चरम पर हैं,
पर फूलों के सीखने का समय हैं।

सूरज आलस्य को प्राप्त कर रहा हैं,
पर फूल हवा में झूम रहे हैं।
पंछी घर जाने की तैयारी कर रहे हैं,
पर फूल भीगने को मंजूर हैं।

सूरज डूब चूका हैं,
चन्द्रमा हस रहा हैं।
पंछी सो गए है,
सन्नाटा छा गया हैं।

दुनिया शांत हो गयी हैं,
पर फूल शोर मचा रहे हैं।
अँधेरा छाया हुआ हैं,
पर फूलों की ज़िन्दगी में उजाला हैं।

-

अर्जुन मिता

समय, एक पहेली

मौत हो, या फिर सुख-दुःख,
सभी दरवाज़ा खटखटाते हैं,
तो फिर ये महाशय समय कैसे
बिना अनुमति ही अंदर आ जाते हैं?
जिनका सटीक परिचय माँगते
वैज्ञानिकों की पुस्तें हार गयीं,
वो क्या किसी घड़ी की टिक-टिक है,
या सूरज की उतार-चढ़ाव नई?

समय सबसे बलवान है,
बाक़ी सब हैं सेवक इसके,
पूरी की पूरी सभ्यता मिट जाए,
खड़े हो जाए ये विरुद्ध जिसके।
प्यार से अपनाओ तो,
मरहम सा काम ये आता है,
सहनशीलता का पाठ पढ़ाकर,
गहरे से गहरा ज़ख़्म भी भर जाता है।

भूत का हिसाब ये रखता,
कल की सम्भावनाओं का रचेता है,
रेत सा बंद मुट्ठी में ये,
फिसलते ही खो जाता है।
राजा-रंक पदवियों की अदला-बदली,
इसका रोज़ का खेल है,
जीवन-मरण, खिलना-मुरझाना,
निहितार्थ इसके अनेक हैं।

शैली की ऑजीमैनडियस,
शेक्सपीर की सेवन एजेज़,
भी यही तो बतलाती हैं कि
समय में है शक्ति इतनी,
कि पानी को पत्थर पर भी
निशान छोड़ने जितना सशक्त कर जाती है;
कि उस नन्हे 'डी फ़ॉर्म' के जूनियर को भी
पल भर में 'एस-सी फ़ॉर्मर' बना जाती है।

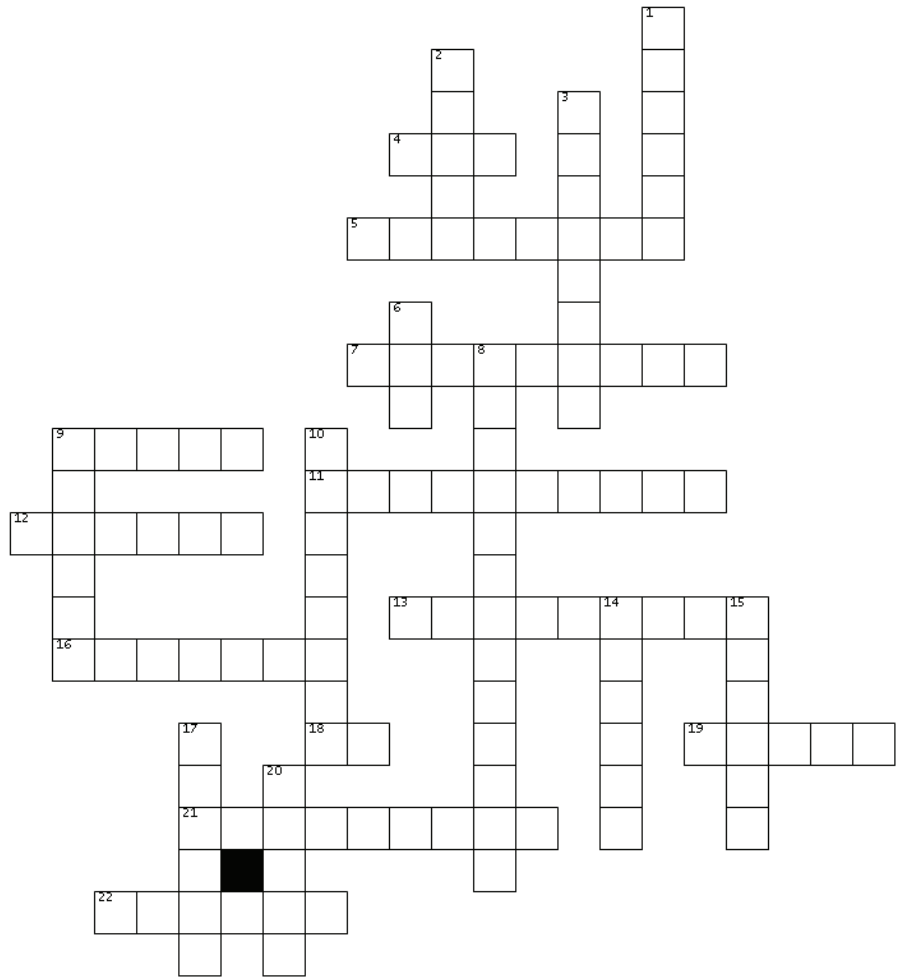
-

आदित्य सराफ़

Crossword

Across

4. A time in history.
5. A large Roman stadium.
7. The inverse function to exponentiation.
9. The 1970 cyclone that struck East Pakistan and West Bengal.
11. To make more noticeable or prominent.
12. The outer edge of something.
13. The Oscar-winning actress known for 'Nomadland', Frances _____.
16. To remove or take out something.
18. The 13th letter of Greek Alphabet.
19. _____ of the devil!
21. The composer of the Stabat Mater of 1715, son of Alessandro, Domenico _____.
22. To have courage in the face of danger.



Down

1. A term used to describe violence and extreme disorder.
2. Artwork applied directly on walls.
3. A small, tube-shaped organ; the end of a book that gives additional information.
6. The author of 'The Raven' and 'Annabel Lee'.
8. The creator of 'The Indian Society of Oriental Art', the first major exponent of Swadeshi values in Indian art.
9. An alloy consisting of copper.
10. A Decorated British F1 driver.
14. A reason for doing something.
15. The capital of Assam.
17. A Swiss Multinational food and drink company.
20. The first of the five great Mughal Emperors.

Down		Across	
1. Mayhem	10. Hamilton	4. Era	16. Extract
2. Mural	14. Motive	5. Coliseum	18. Nu
3. Appendix	15. Dispur	7. Logarithm	19. Speak
6. Poe	17. Nestle	9. Bholá	21. Scarlati
8. Abanindranath	20. Babur	11. Accentuate	22. Valour
9. Bronze		12. Border	
		13. McDormand	

Answers to the Crossword

