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As we've learned, it takes just one person infected with Covid-19 to unleash the chaos. The theme of the sixth issue of Pehel, 'Solace in Chaos' is based on the Chaos Theory and its relation to the year 2020.

The grid like patterns used in the front cover is inspired by, 'The Game of Life,' a two-dimensional cellular automata universe governed by a simple set of birth, death, and survival rules. It was invented in 1970 by the Cambridge mathematician John Conway. It incorporated a general principle of "deterministic chaos": that is, the smallest number of rules which could generate an inherently unpredictable system. Conway did not refer to this work but he implemented the principle, stating that "the rules should be such as to make the behavior of the population unpredictable."

Philosophically, this branch of mathematics suggests that the behavior of complex systems can follow laws and yet their future states remain in principle unpredictable. Hence, chaos theory implies that the future is not predictable based on past events, as it used to be thought. Much like how the year 2020 took us by an unpredictable surprise leading us to a chaotic system that landed us in a virtual world, making us question about the birth, death and survival laws of nature and the man.

We would like to thank our principal, teachers, and the department for the constant support and appreciation with which this idea and the newsletter came into being.

- Editorial Team



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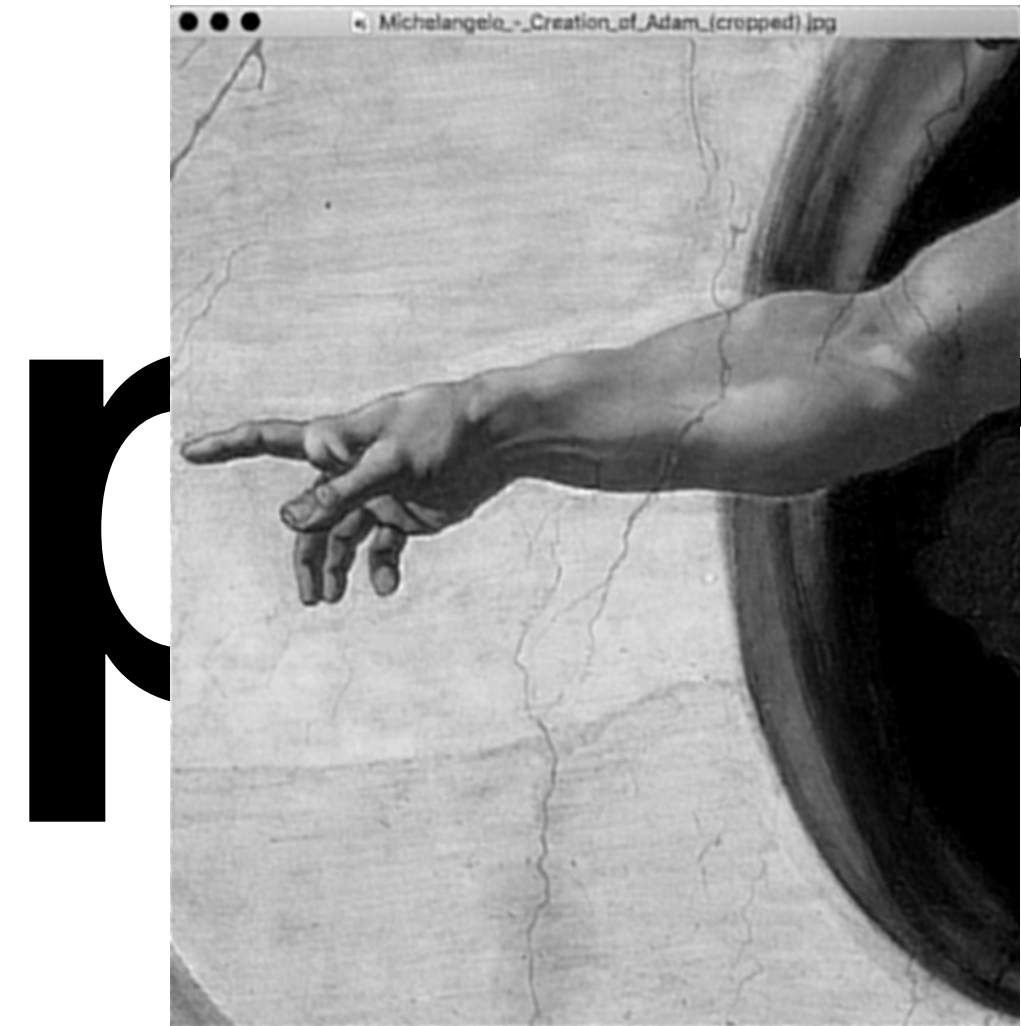
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Principal: Prof. Harpreet Kaur



It gives me immense pleasure that the department of philosophy is releasing the 6th edition of its e-newsletter Pehel. This newsletter is an open window which incorporates thoughts and precepts with an aim to provide an opportunity to our students and faculty to pen down their creative ideas and compelling viewpoints. Such academic endeavors not only channelize the creative energies of the youth but also, it is an essential parameter of the success of every educational institute. My heartiest congratulations to the department of philosophy for this literary treasure that is both engaging and thought-provoking. I also hope that the interaction established through grows stronger in the coming year. With this edition, the department once again proves that the dedication and commitment of its members is unparalleled and I can guarantee you that it will take you on a journey of immense introspection and learning, one that will stay with you through your lifetime.

Teacher in-charge: Dr. Hemlata Krishnani



With extreme joy and pride, we announce the release of 6th edition of Pehel, our annual undergraduate philosophy newsletter. This edition is dedicated to our experiences, learnings and teachings during the pandemic, the extraordinary 2020. For the philosophy fraternity, this space serves as a platform to aspiring philosophers, students and professors alike to express their philosophical concerns and questions from various fields.

Besides this, Pehel is a perfect medium to highlight the activities and accomplishments of the last academic session. In spite of the pandemic, the department was determined to give the best academic exposure to the students by organizing webinars on the various relevant topic and counselling sessions to help students cope with the pandemic. The academic journey as always has been incredible. The department in collaboration with the IQAC, introduced new programmes such as research mentoring, peer mentoring and a short-term course which were much appreciated and met with great success.

I must appreciate the hard work and enthusiasm of our students and faculty members to bring forth this newsletter which not only is vibrant in looks but in thoughts too. I am thankful to our Principal ma'am Prof. (Dr.) Harpreet Kaur for always supporting and encouraging our efforts. My thanks extend to our Editor, Dr. Garima Mani Tripathi, and the editorial team for their relentless efforts towards the creation of this edition. We sincerely hope that for readers this is enriching and pleasurable experience. Sukha Pathanam!!

Editor: Dr. Garima Mani Tripathi



All efforts of the students' fraternity towards academic activities must be welcomed. However, during these tough times, it should be more than welcome. I, as part of the Academic Team, can very well understand the pangs of boredom that our bright students must be going through sitting at home. In this context, Pehel – the journalistic journey by the students of the Department of Philosophy, must be welcomed into its sixth issue. The write ups, the poetic collections and the sketches reflect, more than anything, the desire of these very young students to come out of their captivity. They have taken flights of imagination to come out of the four walls and engender new trajectories of academic imaginations. I commend them for introducing philosophical perspectives and approaches in their write ups, wherever possible. The thematic write ups on COVID related issues are specially commendable.

Pehel, more than anything, reflects the desire of the future generation of philosophers, social activists and citizenry to indulge in creative writing. The initiative would be successful in its endeavours if more and more students start using pen to indulge in creative writing in their spare time. So while you enjoy this edition of Pehel, please step out of university syllabus and let your wild imagination and fanciful flights take new heights.

Student Council



2020 was indeed a difficult year with its unprecedented situations and challenges. The Student Representatives of the Department were elected with the ideals of discipline and innovation. They have always strived to work towards holding up the moral and professional ethos of ASTITVA while working for its betterment. They are thankful to the students and faculty for their endless support and motivation.

"When I left school I was not so optimistic about life, and did not expect much from my upcoming college life. But it would be an understatement to say that it has been a journey. I did see my seniors and classmates becoming council members but I was brushed it away until it was my last year and I knew I would not have another opportunity like this, ever. With a great team of course and support of our professors I was able to make a lot of things possible especially in the times of COVID19. My professors also welcomed new ideas and were always present there for us. Council is made with a team. And my team was no less than perfect!"

-Mantasha Sheikh (President)

"Right off the bat I was a sports girl, always into all kinds of activities, events, camps. I had a lot of experience in being a part of them but Astitva student council gave me a ability to on the other side. My friends encouraged me to become a member of the council, I myself did not plan it. But my destiny was set right. I developed a great relationship with my peers and teachers. I also had experiences which I would probably never have again. If I had a chance I would do it all over again. I appreciate all the efforts and support from my fellow team members and faculty. A big thank you to all."

-Samriddhi Arya (Vice President)

"In the two years of being a part of ASTITVA, it has become a greater part of me. Not because it pushes me out of my comfort zone every day, but also because it teaches me that the world really is an ocean of opportunities. The team is always beyond enthusiastic to work, and is the safest bunch of people to lean back on. It is only this energy that has got us through the rough time of a pandemic with utmost motivation and strength."

-Adhya Joshi (Secretary)

"Self confidence is a super power. Once you start to believe in yourself, magic starts happening. My mantra is try and try until and unless you achieve your goals."

-Premlata Singh (Joint Secretary)

"Working with the council has been an exceptional opportunity. I have not only gotten the chance to be involved with so many interesting activities but also gotten first row seats to all the hardwork and dedication my seniors and teachers put forward."

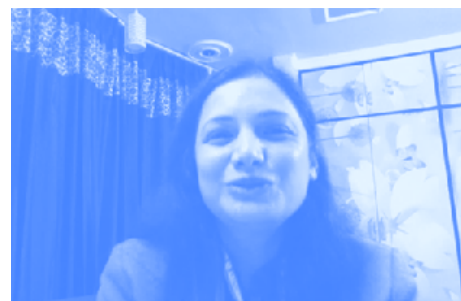
-Akriti (Joint Secretary)

Events

Interactive Session

10th October, 2020

An interactive session was organised on the topic "Dilemma of the transitioning phase" with a certified counsellor, Ms. Anusuiya Krishnan. The objective was to spread mental health awareness and discuss ways to cope with a global pandemic.



World Philosophy Day

19th November, 2020

On World Philosophy Day we organised a talk with Ms. Suryanshi Pandey, a Broadcast Journalist at BBC World. The results of an online competition organised by the department were also declared.



Women Achievers Seminar

3th-6th November 2020

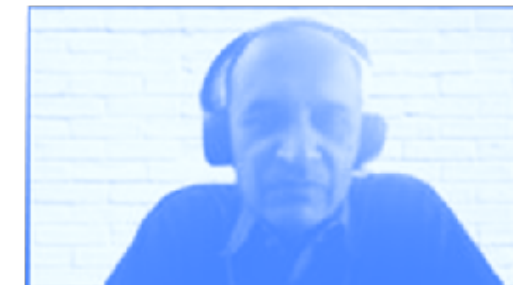
A three-day event was organised in association with Department of Psychology, Physical Education and IQAC to celebrate women and their accomplishments. Dr Kiran Bedi (Hon'ble Lt, Governor of Puducherry), Mrs Shailaja Chandra (First Woman Chief Secretary of Delhi), Dr. Pooja Hazari (Scientist and Joint Director DRDO), Ms. Preeti Tanwar (CEO Hi Ed Success USA), Ms. Manu Bhaker (Olympian), and Dr (Prof) Harpreet Kaur Principal MSCW presented as the guest speakers. To make the seminar interesting and interactive, the participants were given an assignment on the same.



Periodic Lecture Series

5th Feb, 20th Feb and 26th Feb 2021

The first e - lecture of the Series sponsored by Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR), witnessed a paper presentation by Prof. Rakesh Chandra on the topic "Some reflections on science, myth and philosophical analysis". Ms. Antara Vats presented on the topic "Manipulation of Human Agency by Social Media Algorithms- Truth v/s Hype "in the second lecture. In the final lecture Dr. (Prof.) Ravindra M Singh elaborated on the topic "The Neural Machine at work".



Youth Health Awareness Week

13th-15th Jan 2021

The Department, along with Parivartan, the National Service Scheme (NSS) Society, organised a three day virtual event. On first day, Dr. Pooja Wadhawan, assistant professor, Psychology Department, Mata Sundri College for Women, spoke on "Psychological Wellness". Day 2 was designated as Activity Day under which, a Slogan Writing and a Reel making competition was organised. On the third day, Dr. Manju Agarwal, a Consultant Gynaecologist, elaborated on "Comprehensive young adult health education".

Research

"To be a philosopher, is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live, according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust."
- Thoreau

A team of students under the guidance of Dr. Garima Mani Tripathi from the department conducted a research project on Philosophy as a subject in the school curriculum. They questioned why philosophy should matter and if it should be added in the Indian school curriculum as a compulsory subject. While researching they discovered how philosophy, as a subject, is viewed by different people through online surveys and the fact that it will only work as a boon for a school student not only for their academic but their personal life.

Philosophy is seen as bringing an element of support in the counseling of youngsters through more difficult parts of teenage and self-development. Yet it is not a popular choice when its influence on practical day-to-day matters is considered or its ability to prepare a child for college due to certain stereotypes around it. The subject matter of philosophy and its concerns are widely accepted to lead a person to explore deep meaningful questions related to life and most surveyed people affirmed. Some believe philosophy to be complex and intricate for young minds to entirely grasp and fail to see how it can thereby have anything significant to contribute to their early years, some, however, prefer to make their students aware of the general concepts of the subjects that can enrich their understanding of various classic writers such as Mahatma Gandhi and S. Radhakrishnan writing about cultural values while others do not have much knowledge about the subject and think of it an impractical subject. The awareness regarding the scope of studying philosophy and how it can help students gain greater in-depth understanding amongst most people is limited. The fact that Philosophy offers a bird's eye view of the subjects students are already studying in school, helps them integrate all subjects into a singular understanding. There is a general lack of awareness around the subject. There are fewer views on which age is more appropriate to introduce the subject to students but more consensus exists on whether high-end topics should be attempted by students. Reasoning skills and logical analysis of situations can be very beneficial and effective while solving problems that require a refined thought process. The introduction of philosophy can help learn the skills to debate and discuss viewpoints in an orderly fashion with greater patience. It instills an open-mindedness in students and allows them to take their minds to the flexibility of imagine and entertain ideas, and come up with solutions to problems that are novel.



Painting made by Sunidhi Chaudhary, Year 1

02

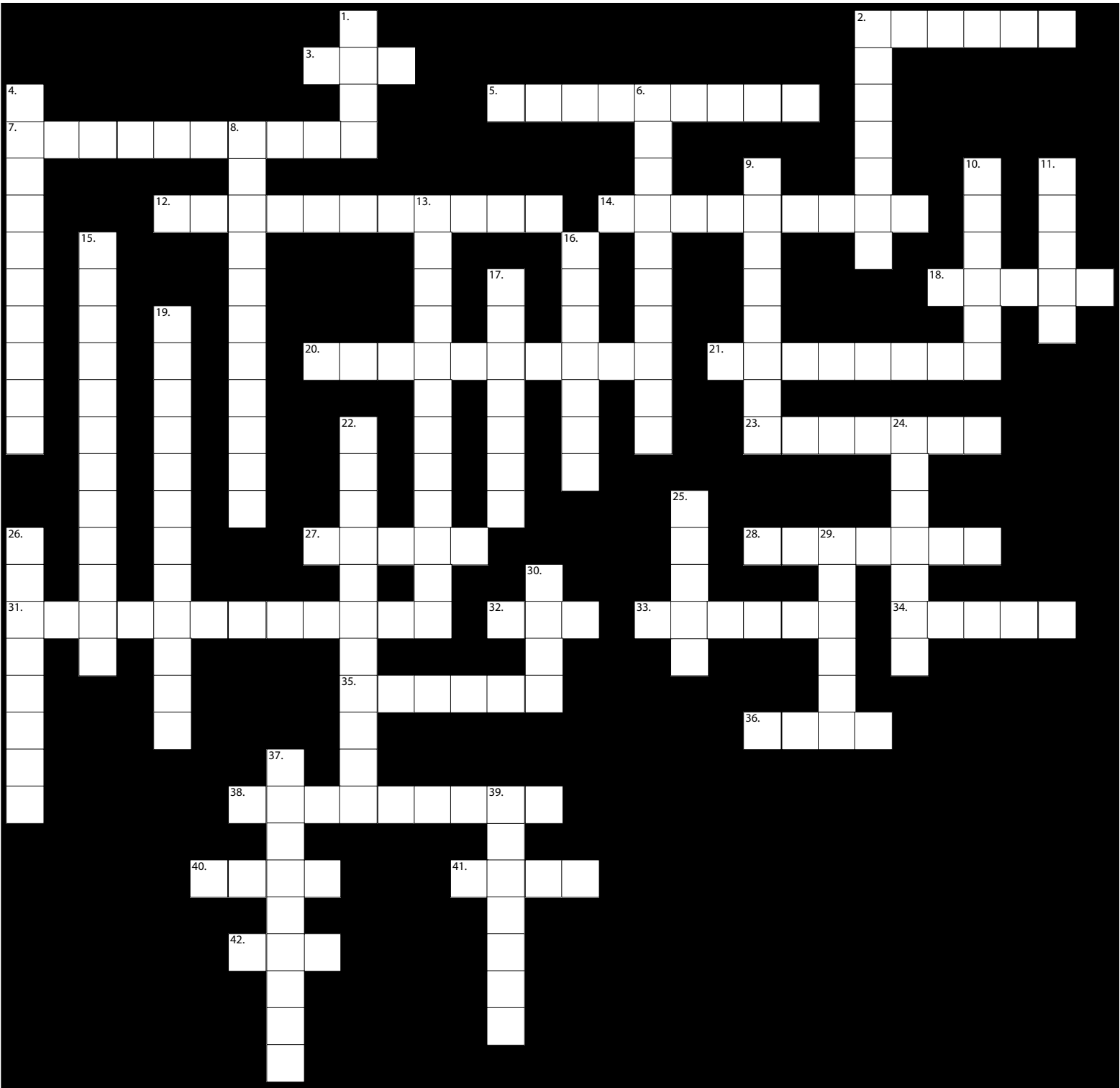


An M.C. Escher illustration sourced from Google

All Fun & Games

until it's not

Crossword



Down

1. One of Aristotle's four causes.
2. Socrates' defense speech.
4. View that there is no truth beyond what an individual or society regards as true.
6. Word that seems for John Dewey to include almost everything.
8. 34. Don't make excuses; just follow Kant's _____ imperative.
9. Kant's thing-in-itself.
10. Leibniz's widowless _____.
11. Heraclitus' term for the divine voice of reason.
13. According to Kierkegaard, truth is _____.
15. Galileo's _____ theory of the heavens got him into trouble with the Catholic Church.
16. Schopenhauer had his will-to-live; Nietzsche had his will-to-power; and William James had his will to _____.
17. Theory that there are two separate kinds of substances, such as body and mind.
19. Theory of interpretation for Gadamer and others.
22. I can't conceive of anything greater, so God exists. This is an _____ argument for the existence of God.
24. Buddhist theory of no-self.
25. Everything comes from this, according to Thales.
26. What the Cyrenaics considered to be the most important thing.
29. Heidegger's term for being in the world.
30. Heidegger's magnum opus was called Being and _____.
37. For Kant, _____ apriori propositions will give us real knowledge.
37. Like Hume, one who thinks we can't know reality.

Across

2. Greek god who represented light and reason, according to Nietzsche.
3. By the _____, god of the Egyptians, Socrates was fond of saying.
5. According to Hegel, what ideas have to go through in order to arrive at truth.
7. Theory that all knowledge is based on data that we get through the senses.
12. Theory of ultimate reality.
14. Study of ends or purposes.
18. Ockham's _____ cut pretty well.
20. What Marx says workers experience.
21. Confucius' Sayings.
23. Buddhist unconditioned state of release from suffering.
27. Greek word for city.
28. Type of intuition that Husserl thought we could have.
31. Theory of knowledge.
34. All things are made of these, according to Democritus.
35. According to Descartes, we're born with certain ideas; so they must be _____.
36. Plato said the philosopher should be a _____, since he knows how a city should be ordered.
38. Deductive argument.
40. Stoics said we should submit to this in order to have peace of mind.
41. Thales was said to have fallen into one of these while he was looking at the sky.
42. Branch of Buddhism that stresses immediacy without abstraction.

Word Search

	Q	P	A	P	O	L	O	G	Y	Q	B	Z	
	E	V	X	J	A	F	H	Z	F	M	M	E	
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	Georgias Thales Period												
						Socrates Milesian Apology							

Existential Crisis- Covid Edition



Graphics by Shreya Unnikrishnan, Year 2

03



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SEARCH

A



WITHIN

In the world full of wonder where no one wants to surrender
Things happen in such a way that makes us sit and ponder
We believe in complete freedom and suddenly mind captures
We are shaken for a bit and beliefs are ruptured
Oh! Was I living in complete shadow or is it just a streak of light?
See! I am fully aware and to protect my beliefs, I am ready to fight.
Wait! Are those really my beliefs or just the superimposed thoughts?
Am I really making choices or just caught?
Let me sit thoughtfully and widen the horizon of my thinking
Let's no notion captivate me that I start sinking
Freedom is not just a choice but a responsibility
Nothing can dominate me or my ability
When I am in search of happiness, I roam around places and ideas
The transient nature of pleasure just put more chaos
I sit back alone but not lonely to hear what the inner self says
Because in the noise of crowd whatever is said my mind obeys
But that's not the freedom one desires, neither is it the choice one aspires
Freedom is more than the definition, the idea or concept
It can never be carried with a predetermined precept
Thus, move beyond the shackles of what they say, what they mean
Don't be bothered so much, let the enlightened self be seen

- Dr. Jolly Singh
(Faculty, Philosophy
Department)

COVID 19:

An Ethical Dilemma



The current global pandemic of Covid-19 has undoubtedly raised many Philosophical questions for individuals as well as for society at large. From healthcare workers facing the dilemma of prioritizing some patients over others due to the resources being limited, to reminding humans of their vulnerability in the wake of the new virus despite the great technological advancement in medical sciences since the time we faced the past global pandemics. I intend to highlight two of these areas. The need for healthcare workers and the heavy pressure on them is evident, but if we have a closer look, there are other ethical issues that they are facing alongside, which are distinguishable from the everyday ethical issues that the healthcare workers used to deal with before the covid-19 outbreak. Some of these dilemmas, exclusive to the time of the pandemic, for healthcare workers and policymakers are: balancing their ethical duties while treating patients and risking their health and the health of their families. Another major issue is the choice of allocating scarce resources for those patients who need them the most. Moreover, it is a task in itself to further keep the emotionally charged families of patients informed about the condition of their loved ones as well as the need for the decided action to be taken. The third issue relates to the current time when we have developed vaccines for this deadly virus. This stage involves dealing with issues like deciding which group of people should be vaccinated first. These are some of the major issues, but not the only issues that we (especially those involved in policy making and healthcare) are dealing with.

Another philosophical question posed in front of humanity reminds us of our vulnerability despite the technological advancements we've made so far; it reminds us of the human fragility or human impotency in the face of the new virus, questioning our belief in Science and Technology as the most important factor in the lives of humans. Like our ancestors from the times of the previous pandemics, like the Spanish Flu, isolation has proved to be the best defense so far. The scenario today of wearing masks, isolating ourselves, taking public health measures like hygiene and maintaining respiratory etiquette appears to be the same as it was years back during the time of the Influenza pandemic. The modern man is reminded of his fragility in this world which he seemed to have forgotten completely. The supremacy we have assigned to Science has also come under doubt.

Science has made immense contributions in almost all aspects of our lives and it is one of the most important factors in the progression of our lives, but the question is if it's the 'only' factor? The point to be highlighted here is that scientific development is one of the most important area of development for humankind but it's not the only area of development we have to cater to for our betterment and progression. Lastly, the point is not just to bring forth the contemporary philosophical questions and issues but also to call to attention the significance of philosophers and philosophical inquiry at an individual as well as a global level.

ETHNIC CLEANSING

Mass expulsion or killing of members of one ethnic or religious group in an area by another is called ethnic cleansing. It is carried out with a motive to achieve a higher degree of ethnic homogeneity or "purity".

The group facing the exodus are mostly observed to be the Minority groups of the area. The Majority, as they are more in number, believe that they have greater power or claim over the area which gives them a sense of superiority. The cultural divide caused due to either historical reasons or different lifestyles sows anger in the majority and their wish to maintain one type of cultural ethnicity is served through such campaigns often carried out with the help of government, powerful officials, or militant groups.

One of the widely known ethnic cleansing campaigns in the world is the genocide of Jews, "The Holocaust"- carried out by Hitler as the leader with the aim to have a pure-Aryan community. But there have been numerous similar cases even before and after the Holocaust. I would like to emphasize the issue that even in the 21st century, a world where the UN is said to be the most powerful peace-keeping organization and where the human rights activists are very alert and active in raising their voices against injustice, ethnic cleansing is not an uncommon scenario.

This campaign can be violent or non-violent. Minority groups are paid to flee to carry out a non-violent campaign but the more accepted way is violent. Now, even if the campaign is violent it doesn't have to be genocidal (mass killing), it can also be through forced relocation by fear of massacre or death.

It is believed to be morally wrong because of mass killing or relocation of people from their previous habitat areas. There is loss of lives, territory, property, integrity of people, and what awaits the survivors of such campaigns is a painful and uncertain life where they are in a foreign land, not knowing whether they'd ever lead a successful life in the future or not.

There have been supporters of such campaigns usually with the same view of having a homogeneous area. But multi-ethnic and multinational societies have been successful at many places and this desire to have a homogeneous society often leads to bloodshed.



A FEW



Painting made by Tanya Kapoor, Year 1

Saw years and years of being excessively tough breaking into
tears of regret
Years of suppression in the name of roles and norms turning
into expression today
Ages of love and ignorance turning into a demon today
Noise turning into fear
Years of hardwork in the hope of an untroubled and an at
ease afterlife being physically crippled and soul too tired to be
joyous
Saw the emotions being bounded by the gender and the
body altered by the mind
Saw smiles with hearts filled to the brim with the desire to be
heard, to be loved, loved so bad and to be understood
Saw many things in a few faces today

None I want to inherit but I hope I have no demons to hide

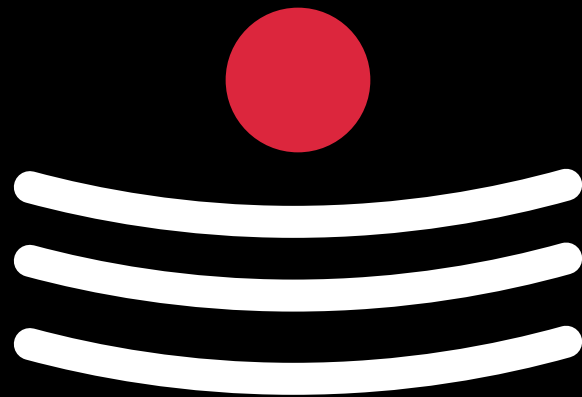
- Srijna Masih
(Year 1)

GLIMPSES³⁰

ADI SHANKARACHARYA

Adi Shankaracharya (788-820 A.D), one of the greatest Indian philosophers, gave his philosophy named Advaita Vedanta. Advaita means no two or non-dualism. Shankaracharya believed that there is only one reality, that is, Brahman, and this world that arises out of Brahman through Maya, is false. According to him, Brahman is 'neti neti', which means 'not this, not that', Brahman has no attributes. Brahman is beyond space, time, change, causality. It is pure consciousness. Brahman is not different from Self or atman. Maya (ignorance or avidya) conceals the real i.e., Brahman. According to Shankaracharya, he who attains true knowledge of the Self or Brahman gets liberated. Shankaracharya uses a famous verse to summarize his philosophy, "Brahma satyam jagat mithya, jivo brahmaiva naparah", which means that Brahman is the only reality, the world is unreal and Jiva or Self is not different from Brahman. Shankaracharya, even though lived a very short life span of 32 years, contributed a lot to Indian heritage. He explained his philosophy in such a way that he became a great inspiration for many people. Sham Lal, a great critic, refused to criticize Shankaracharya saying that, "I can critique Tagore but not Shankaracharya", he felt that since Shankara's Advaita was the last word, it would be foolhardy to critique him. Swami Vivekananda said that he is a great admirer of Sri Shankaracharya and considered him the greatest Vedanta philosophy teacher.

- Garima Gupta
(Year 3)



MATREYI:

the woman who questioned



Illustration made by Ayushi Rajput, Year 3

Indian philosophy has been prevalent and has flourished in India since ancient times. It encompasses different schools of thought that are mainly divided under the category of orthodox and heterodox. Both male and female philosophers have had their contributions towards different philosophies.

One of them was Sulabha Maitreyi, a female philosopher from ancient India who lived during the late Vedic period. According to the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Maitreyi and Katyayani were the two wives of sage Yajnavalkya, who is believed to have lived during the time of Janaka, 8th century BCE. But as the Asvalayana Grihya Sutra and the Hindu epic Mahabharata state, Maitreyi was a young and beautiful Advaita philosopher who remained ascetic throughout her life. In ancient Sanskrit literature, she is recognized as an expounder of Vedas, a Brahmovadini. The Rig Veda contains thousands of hymns out of which around ten hymns are accredited to Maitreyi.

Maitreyi engaged in theological dialogues with sage Yajnavalkya, rather than the domestic life, and was much more interested in making philosophical self inquiries, and introspection. She is known to have contributed to the personality

of her husband and in the flowering of his spiritual thoughts. She explores the concept of atman and Brahman and their unity in a dialogue with her husband as mentioned in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. When Yajnavalkya is about to take the ascetic vows (to become a sanyasi) for the path of renunciation, he wishes to divide his worldly possessions among his wives so that they can lead a satisfactory and comfortable life. Katyayani, who was an ordinary woman, didn't question him, but Maitreyi asked him whether wealth and material possessions could be the source of permanent happiness, could they make her immortal? He answers that these could just provide a person with comfort and momentary happiness but not immortality. He further explains that immortality is concerned with something absolutely immaterial. There is no scope for immortality through wealth.

Maitreyi goes on with her quest for immortality and requests Yajnavalkya to explain the method that could be adopted to reach supreme satisfaction. The sage is highly pleased with her and consequently describes the doctrine of atman and how the knowledge of self could lead a person to permanent happiness and immortality. Indian philosophy has been prevalent and

has flourished in India since ancient times. He tells her that it is the atman that needs to be searched for, there is nothing that exists perennially, other than this. When the person is able to attain the knowledge of self, keeping ignorance aside, he sees that he is the Supreme Self, i.e. Brahman. The sage said, "Maitreyiatmanova are darsanenasravanenamatyavijñanenedamsarvamviditam": This means that if we are able to understand what atman actually is, then we know everything, we become one with everything, there is no duality, we possess everything. It is only because of the Maya, or the ignorance that we run after the material things, these are impermanent things, the finite things give us finite happiness and satisfaction. Everything is one; if we regard it as the other, it shall surely leave us one day. Maitreyi puts forward keen inquiries to engage herself in the discussion and requests him to clarify her doubts. He says that 'After dissolution, there is no awareness.' Knowing of objects is only before liberation, after liberation, the object becomes a part of knowing itself, it becomes a part of the Knower. According to Adi Shankara (influential philosopher of Advaita Vedanta), the purpose of this dialogue was to tell the importance of Knowledge of Atman and Brahman, and their oneness.

This dialogue also includes the discussion about the nature of love; it states that love is driven by a person's soul. The love towards an object is actually the love towards perfection and completeness. The aim is to show that love is a connection between the soul and the universal self. It is also interpreted by Max Muller that in the dialogue, love is defined as that which extends to all the aspects of one's life and beyond.

So, after having this dialogue with her husband, Maitreyi leads a life of an ascetic and goes forth on the path of self-knowledge. She has been an inspiration to a lot of people, her sharpness clearly shows the intelligence of Indian Women. This discourse also bursts the myth of gender biases which is followed in Indian traditions, as it is clearly a highlighted proof that shows everyone, intelligence is not regarded by gender.

-Mehak Aggarwal
(Year 3)

A

CONCRETE

WILL

I wish I could come out of the baffled zone of duties and roles being altered by sexes, genders and norms , a zone where compliance is just as valid as a fork in soup

Where a fair share of efforts, emotions and expectations, far away from the woke patriarchal values that instills a sense of never questioning it

Where the only panacea for patriarchy is feminism

Where the constitution is more than a written document and dissent is a choice not something latent under the layers of dictatorship

Where love could last for a lifetime and beyond
But for now a little sensitivity and the will to listen from the correct narratives would do the necessary

- Srijan Masih
(Year 1)



Illustration made by Ayushi Rajput, Year 3

the look

This photo series is inspired by Sartre philosophy- The Look. It discusses how a look can contribute to one's intersubjectivity with nature and others; makes them conscious of the self.



Just like 'the look' of these subject gives an eerie feeling of 'the self' in these photos.

CORONA POSITIVE?

The Corona Virus outbreak was declared a global pandemic in March 2020. With the entire world being restricted to their homes and masks, there is much more to the pandemic than just its cause. While we cannot deny the mental, financial and social disrupt that has been caused, we must also not neglect the positive impacts that it has made. The world has observed a significant decrease in crime rates and road accidents. Carbon emissions are globally down so much so that the long polluted canals of Venice and the Yamuna river in India, now appear clear. As a community, we have adapted to the circumstances by using technology for work, education, and interaction. In fact, lifestyle changes have habituated us to better hygiene. While washing hands and covering the mouth while coughing or sneezing were long forgotten textbook concepts for most of us, the pandemic brought them into implementation. Consequently, it is hoped that the generations that follow will abide by a higher standard of hygiene than their ancestors. The pandemic has also witnessed a widespread of skills, hobbies, and art among people. In the condition of being restricted to their houses and no means for recreation, most people took to learning skills like cooking, painting, or other forms of art. Carson Ellis, a children's book illustrator and artist initiated a "Quarantine Art Club" on Instagram, a social media platform, with daily assignments for people in home quarantine. Initiatives like these show how the masses have attempted to help each other through these trying times by the display of their skills and the human tendency of kindness. Art and its numerous forms were used as a means of expression, strength, and comfort - be it then, professional graffitis in the form of protest in the Black Lives Matter Movement or amateur paintings for leisure.



A Sebastian Curi illustration sourced from sebastiancuri.com

Thus, while the gallery life and finances may have seen a downfall in commercial art, the societal connection to art has significantly increased. As the popular philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche puts it, "The world is a work of art that gives birth to itself." He held that "art enables the transcendence of nature" which we have witnessed in the pandemic. The number of poets, artists, and chefs that have emerged out of this global outbreak has been groundbreaking in itself. Many people found the much required time with themselves and pursued hobbies they could never manage to accommodate in their busy schedules. Others saw art as a distraction, a means to cut off from the external world ailing from the coronavirus. As Nietzsche said, "In art, man enjoys himself as perfection". Since the current situation is far from what one would consider "normal", art became a medium to release the pain, anxiety, and mental distress. Art was thus finally viewed beyond the capitalist ideals that it is now expected to uphold. Although pandemic did bring a decline in commercial art and loss to many established artists, it offered them some inspiration. Many artists, poets, and writers were inspired to envision a world without people or from a different perspective altogether. Some of them also voiced their political opinions through their artwork on topics like the politicization of medical care, unemployment, poverty, and other social issues triggered by the pandemic. This shows how swiftly humans adapt to changes as a society. The pandemic has also taught us the strength of being unified and has taught us both adaptation and hygiene. Thus, the Coronavirus pandemic, although a bane we never wish upon the world again, has been a boon in disguise.



A Sebastian Curi illustration sourced from sebastiancuri.com

BEST

Have you ever looked for the meaning of life?

Well, the dictionary describes it as a quality possessed by a creature when it's not dead.

But is it really that simple?

If we all are living different lives, can the meaning of our lives be the same?

Your ideal life will be different from others and probably that is what makes it yours.

But even though it is yours are you really happy with it? We tend to love the things that belong to us but do we embrace our life and value it like ours?

The question of meaning or purpose of our life comes to our mind when we are sad or when we know that we are not living the best of our life but can we ever feel content?

OUR

How do we know we will feel better after knowing the meaning of our life and if the purpose of our life will match with what we actually want to do before we die?

There are a lot of things we don't know about our lives but what we do know is, we are living and how we live our life is in our hands well, at least to some extent. So why not choose the meaning and the purpose of our lives ourselves. We can only make the best of our lives with the life we have, experience our own adventure, build a world of our dreams, and live in it while we can before we are done with it. Spend every moment living the best way and we never know we might find the meaning of our life which may be different from what we expected but makes it worth a life to live for.

- Hemakshi Suneja
(Year 2)

LIVES

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And to everyone, who submitted the articles or the artwork, for their contribution.

Thank you for taking out the time to read this newsletter and we hope it delivered a creative and an intellectual insight during this pandemic.



Painting made by Tanya Kapoor, Year 1

