

Dear Registrar of Societies,

Please find below a detailed account of the events and activities organized by the students of the English Literary Society for the academic year, 2023-2024.

Thank you and regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Smita Gandotra". The script is cursive and fluid.

Smita Gandotra
Staff Advisor
English Literary Society
April 28, 2024

Society Activity Report 2023-24
English Literary Society

Lecture on "Investigating Episteme : Knowledge Dissemination beyond State Hegemony"

Date : 27th September 2023

Resource persons : Meena Kotwal and Raja Pandey

No. of Participants : 28

The panel discussion was held in collaboration with the Gandhi Ambedkar Study Circle. It took place in the NPLT at 4pm and concluded at 5:45 pm. The one hour discussion was followed by a 45 minute question and answer session between the attendees and the speakers, moderated by Prof. Sneha Sara Felix. After the event, the speakers were hosted by the councils of both the societies at the science dhaba, where they were provided with refreshments.

The speakers, Meena Kotwal and Raja Pandey, discussed the need to locate alternative bodies of knowledge dissemination and resist the wrath of state terror, while also challenging state hegemony on knowledge production and dissemination.

Participants

1. Keerthana Haridas
2. Snigdha Adil
3. Moulishree Jha
4. Sakshi Sinha
5. Himanshu Dutta
6. Hiba Muneer
7. Loraine Joseph
8. Ashwin Thomas
9. Samra Iqbal
10. Pratiksha Kolhe
11. Adon Chabod
12. Chinni Singh
13. Diya Rao Jaini
14. Advait Mishra
15. Saumar Praan Saikia
16. Suyog

17. Vaibhav
 18. Celestia Sangma
 19. Hridya Lenin
 20. Joan Steffi
 21. Tulip
 22. Shivani Mishra
 23. Devika Sapra
 24. Pinju Sanjay
 25. Lavanya Senthil
 26. Anna Benjamin
 27. Prof. Sneha Sara Felix
 28. Prof. Themeem T
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Lecture on “Peddlers of the Book: Missionary Print Colportage in 19th Century Rural India”

Date: 5th October

Resource person(s) : Prof. Ulrike Stark

No. of participants : 44

The lecture was held in collaboration with Bazm-e-adab and Hindi Sahitya Sabha. It took place in the seminar room at 3 pm and concluded at 4:30 pm. The 45 minute lecture was followed by a 45 minute question answer session between the attendees and the speaker. Refreshments were available at the library lawns for the participants following the lecture.

Professor Stark talked about the dissemination of missionary tracts in 19th century rural India. Her research focuses on modern Hindi literature, North Indian intellectual history, and South Asian book history.

Participants

1. Keerthana Haridas
2. Muthara Khan
3. Vidhi Gupta
4. Himanshu Dutta

5. Moulishree Jha
6. Ashwin Thomas
7. Hridya Lenin
8. Joan Steffi
9. Pratuksa Kolhe
10. Celestia Sangma
11. Samra Iqbal
12. Dharmendra
13. Faraz Sarwer
14. Tulip
15. Abigail Ocean
16. Bubble Sharma
17. Salami Vinciya
18. Meghna Singh
19. Samriddhi Jhingan
20. Muteeba Bilal
21. Bhat Gowhar Mubarak
22. Tina Antil
23. Durva
24. Adon Chabod
25. Anuska Roy
26. Mayukhi Ghosh
27. Manya Sharma
28. Aisha Jabeen
29. Theresa Joji
30. Ashmita Aniyam
31. Rachel Tongbram
32. Pakeeza
33. Eric
34. Jeffrey Christopher
35. Abhishek Mishra
36. Raginee Samrah
37. Prof. Smita Gandotra
38. Prof. Themeem T
39. Prof. Pankaj Mishra
40. Prof. Shameem
41. Prof. Naveen Panicker

- 42. Prof. Karen Gabriel
 - 43. Prof. N. P. Ashley
 - 44. Prof. Apoorva Dimri
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Walk to the Partition Museum

Date: 14th October

Resource person(s) :

No. of participants : 26

On the 14th of October, the English Literary Society in collaboration with the History Society organised an education walk to the Partition Museum at Dara Shikoh Library. The participants met at the Vishwavidyalaya Metro Station at 2 p.m. from where they took the Yellow Line to Kashmere Gate. They were accompanied by Prof. Dias Antony. The walk was led by Ashwin Thomas (II English Honours) and Angela Matthew (II History Honours). It attempted to locate the Partition in a history of transnational migration at the fag end of Empire, and explored the politics of history, historiography, and collective memory by looking at marginalised narratives.

Participants

1. Vidhi Gupta
2. Ashwin Thomas
3. Pratiksha Kolhe
4. Anuska Roy
5. Aisha Jabeen
6. Angela Matthew
7. Diya Rao Jaini
8. Anirudh Singh
9. Elba Joseph
10. Ann Korah
11. Maria Celestina Fernandes
12. Christina Sabu
13. Alissa

14. Vasushree Prasad
 15. Yashvardhan Singh
 16. Bhoomika Pagare
 17. Annett Thomas
 18. Abhinav Parewa
 19. Prisha Pant
 20. Urishita Singh Pawar
 21. Thasneem Shajahan
 22. Anshu Ranjan
 23. Drishty Juneja
 24. Anjali
 25. Kunal
 26. Prof. Dias Antony
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Reading Club session on Kanafani's "The Land of Sad Oranges"

Date: 19th October

Resource person(s) :

No. of participants : 11

The session was held at 4 p.m. at the Library Lawns. The reading for the session was the short story "The Land of Sad Oranges" by Ghassan Kanafani. Sections of the story were read out by the participants and discussed in the session.

Oranges are especially significant to Palestinians because they are their national fruit. Oranges for them, denote a time of economic and social fecundity; a time of peace and serenity. In the story however, as the narrator-protagonist leaves for Ras Naquora he is also leaving behind the land of oranges. The next time his family encounters the oranges, their eyes would be brimming over as they feel the intensity of the loss that they are about to experience. Migration is a continuous process; there is no point at which a migrant can confidently say "I am a refugee" — they are in a constant state of becoming.

Participants

1. Keerthana Haridas
2. Vidhi Gupta
3. Himanshu Dutta
4. Ashwin Thomas

5. Hridya Lenin
 6. Pratiksha Kolhe
 7. Samra Iqbal
 8. Adon Chabod
 9. Tanya
 10. Urishita
 11. Arihant
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Dramatised Reading Session and Discussion

Date: 25 October 2023

No. of participants: 16

On the 25th of October, the English Literary Society organised a dramatised reading session and discussion moderated by Dr. N P Ashley on various literary texts that included works like by *Reflections On Exile* by Edward Said, *The Earth Is Closing On Us* by Mahmoud Darwish, *We Swallowed An Air Like Earth* by Marianna Kiyanovska, *On Evil* by Hannah Arendt and so on. The event was held in collaboration with the IQAC in order to commemorate Disarmament Week.

The participants sat in a circle and read sections of the poems out loud while being mindful of the the context of the Russia-Ukraine war and Israel-Palestine genocide in the world of Kiyanovska and Darwish respectively. The participants recited certain verses of each of the two poems simultaneously which created the illusion that the two were in fact the same work of art. Despite being rooted in two entirely different spatio-temporal contexts, the two poets seemed to be in dialogue with one another.

Much of the discussion was centred around the politics of war, why it happens and who profits from it. And while Palestine-Israel and Russia-Ukraine are locked in violent conflict, it becomes even more important for us to remember why the idea of disarmament is so significant. As citizens of India, we cannot simply wash our hands off of the conflict by claiming to be neutral onlookers. In times of such suffering and turmoil, it becomes our responsibility as human beings to be cognizant of war, violence and its politics. Literature is an excellent window through which such conversations can be initiated.

Names of participants:

Samra Iqbal
Moulishree Jha
Mishka Garg
Keerthana Haridas
Juhi Verma
Adon Chabod
Pratiksha Kolhe
Joan Steffi
Sonalika Aggarwal

Hridya Lenin
Arihant
Siya Dulari
Mishka Lepps
Ashwin Thomas
Sukanya
Maria

Lecture on 'Machines Reading Culture'

Date: 5th April, 2023

Resource person(s): Dr. Arjun Ghosh

No. of participants: 30

Brief description of the event:

The English Literary Society held a talk with Professor Arjun Ghosh on the topic "Machines Reading Culture". Professor Ghosh teaches in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Delhi. Dr. Ghosh specialises in Performance Studies, Culture Studies, and Digital Humanities, the last of which was the main focus of the lecture. Professor Ghosh elaborated on the implications of mixing AI technology with literary studies, navigating the differences in the humanities of the pen, the print, and the digital. After some initial remarks about the nature of digital humanities in the West and India, Professor Ghosh demonstrated the use of tools such as Voyant which can survey any given corpus. He focused on computational humanities for this presentation, citing examples of various studies undertaken at Yale and Harvard using digital means, inaugurating new methodologies in historiography and media research. Professor Ghosh concluded with some thoughts on analog and digital technologies, and the work of the scholar and the coder in developing innovative modes of close and distant readings.

Attendance List

1. Zeenat
2. Adon
3. Christina
4. Devapriya
5. Manisha
6. Yashika
7. Priyal
8. Mridul
9. Steffi
10. Padmanabha
11. Samridhdhi
12. Moulishree
13. Keerthana
14. Prataksha
15. Celestia
16. Avijit

17. Arihant
 18. Sufia
 19. Ritika
 20. Vidhi
 21. Samra
 22. Muthara
 23. Hridya
 24. Stuti
 25. Shubhangi
 26. Mr. Abhinav
 27. Ms. Ann Susan
 28. Dr. Smita Gandotra
 29. Dr. Silika Mohapatra
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Walk to the National Museum

Date: 01 December 2023

Resource person(s): Ms. Pooja Thakur

No. of participants: 34

On the 1st of December, the English Literary Society in collaboration with the History Society organised a walk to the National Museum, Janpath, New Delhi. The participants met at the Udyog Bhawan metro station at 2:10 PM from where they walked to the National Museum. They were accompanied by Ms. Pooja Thakur (Department of History). The walk was led by Ashwin Thomas (B.A. English Honours II), Angela Matthew (B.A. History Honours II) and Justin Santosh (B.A. History Honours III). In light of the impending demolition of the Museum, and it being closed for researchers and visitors from December 2023 onwards, the walk attempted to contextualise the Museum's history. We visited the Indus Valley Civilisation Gallery, Pre-Mauryan, Mauryan Shunga and so on, the Gupta period, and the Bronzes. We noted certain changes in the museum post-2014 and how the space within the museum works as well. Finally, we concluded, remembering Walter Benjamin – "Do not build on the good old days, but on the bad new ones." – as a trailer of boxed artefacts passed by. We clicked a group picture and signed off as a group.

Participants:

1. Anjali Susan Abraham
2. Elba Joseph Vazhappilly
3. Annah Thankam Mathew
4. Shaerika Singh
5. Rehmat Arora
6. Kaviya
7. Poorti
8. Hiba Muneer
9. Eva Tevary
10. Tina Antil
11. Himakshi Vinay

12. Abigail Ocean
13. Alwins K Wilson
14. Avantika Vivek
15. Himangi
16. Novelle
17. Angela
18. Keerthana
19. Moulishree Jha
20. Tasneem
21. Joan Steffi
22. Ashwin Thomas
23. Annu
24. Saumar
25. Diya
26. Pinju
27. Anushka
28. Himanshu Dutta
29. Mishka L
30. Loraine J
31. Nivedita
32. Prataksha
33. Anna Paul
34. Justin

Reading Club Session on Perumal Murugan's 'Musical Chairs'

Date: 8th February, 2024

Resource person(s)

No. of participants: 6

Brief description of the event:

Sections of Perumal Murugan's short story 'Musical Chairs' were read and discussed by the participants. The story is about a couple who move to a new apartment and form a unique relationship with an elegant, dusty chair that they find there. They compete with each other about who gets to sit on the chair, thus eliciting the title of the story. The story opened up dialogue about the participants' respective mother tongues and their proficiency or lack thereof in their native languages.

Attendance List

1. Keerthana Haridas
2. Himanshu Dutta
3. Ashwin Thomas
4. Vidhi Gupta
5. Cristeena
6. Avaantika Vivek

7. Urishita

Lecture on 'Sprouting Corpses: Death, Disease and Contagion in Pandemic Poetry'

Date: 2nd April, 2024

Resource person(s): Dr. Ira Raja, Dr. Smita Gandotra

No. of participants: 26

Brief description of the event:

The English Literary Society held a talk with Professor Ira Raja on the topic "Sprouting Corpses: Death, Disease and Contagion" as part of the annual fest Logos '24 on the theme "Textual Pathologies and the Word: Death and Disease in Literary and Cultural Studies". Professor Raja teaches at the Department of English, University of Delhi. Her areas of research include ageing, intimacy, care, colonialism, friendship, memory, objects, nation states, amongst others. Professor Raja's talk focussed on poetry written during the time of the pandemic. Many of the poems used in the lecture were translated from the Hindi by Dr. Raja and her colleague Somya Choudhary; moreover many of these poems were first published in an online medium. She recontextualised Achilles Mbembe's idea of "necropolitics" within the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic in India. Through the poems, she attempted to show how necropolitics could also take the form of the state's active intervention on behalf of certain sections of the population while pushing others in the line of harm.

Attendance List

1. Himanshu
2. Ashwin
3. Keerthana
4. Moulishree
5. Pratiksha
6. Samra
7. Muthara
8. Celestia
9. Steffi
10. Mr. Abhinav Bhardwaj
11. Hridya
12. Adon
13. Maurya
14. Vedant
15. Mariam
16. Pemchoc
17. Savant
18. Sudipto
19. Smera
20. Sradithi
21. Alekhya
22. Aru
23. Pratap

24. Sufiya
 25. Muskan
 26. Shivani
 27. Shefali
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Student Paper Presentations

Date: 2nd April, 2024

Resource person(s): Ms. Apoorva Dimri, Mr. Vaibhav Dwivedi

No. of participants: 22

Brief description of the event:

The English Literary Society held Student Paper Presentations as part of the annual fest Logos '24 on the theme "Textual Pathologies and the Word: Death and Disease in Literary and Cultural Studies". The judges were competition were Mr. Vaibhav Dwivedi and Ms. Apoorva Dimri both of whom teach at the Department of English, St. Stephen's College. Pragya Dhiman's paper titled "Gruesome Representations of the Imagined Brutality of Death in Flanagan and Fimognari's The Fall of the House of Usher" won first place, Shefali Kohli's "Death Beyond Finality: A Postmodernist Reading of Marquez's Love in the Time of Cholera" won second place and Nitiksha Tyagi's "Illness and Nothingness of Being in The Death of Ivan Ilyich" won third place.

Attendance List

1. Nitiksha
 2. Pragya
 3. Shefali
 4. Tunvey
 5. Verite
 6. Aayat
 7. Ilma
 8. Harsh
 9. Hafsa
 10. Zainab
 11. Keerthana
 12. Himanshu
 13. Muthara
 14. Steffi
 15. Ashwin
 16. Hridya
 17. Celestia
 18. Samra
 19. Pratuksa
 20. Moulisree
 21. Adon
 22. Dr. Smita Gandotra
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Lecture on "Memories Remembered and Forgotten"

Date: 3rd April, 2024

Resource person(s): Dr. Simona Sawhney, Mr. Naveen Panicker

No. of participants: 42

Brief description of the event:

The English Literary Society held a talk with Professor Simona Sawhney on the topic "Memories Remembered and Forgotten" as part of the annual fest Logos '24 on the theme "Textual Pathologies and the Word: Death and Disease in Literary and Cultural Studies". Professor Sawhney teaches at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT-Delhi. Her areas of research include Indian literature and political thought. Prof. Sawhney draws various literary connections between memory and mortality including Homer's The Odyssey, Bilhana's Caurapancasika and Freud's Beyond the Pleasure Principle. She puts forward the argument that memories that we forget are the ones that tend to affect us the most, putting forward several real world examples to support her argument.

Attendance List

1. Himanshu
2. Ashwin
3. Keerthana
4. Moulishree
5. Prataksha
6. Samra
7. Muthara
8. Celestia
9. Steffi
10. Leah
11. Hridya
12. Adon
13. Saransh Nagare
14. Mishka
15. Shrimukh
16. Bubble
17. Sayankrita
18. Harsh
19. Ilma
20. Akshita
21. Aryan
22. Abhay
23. Anshu
24. Poorti
25. Divya
26. Khushi
27. Priya
28. Daniya
29. Prakash

30. Binish
 31. Saaramath
 32. Deepshika
 33. Hema
 34. Priyanshi
 35. Mridum
 36. Muskan
 37. Vennel
 38. Mr. Abhinav Bhardwaj
 39. Mr. Vaibhav Dwivedi
 40. Ms. Apoorva Dimri
 41. Mr. Nobby Uttam
 42. Dr. Smita Gandotra
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Screening of "Lynch Nation" followed by a discussion

Date: 3rd April, 2024

Resource person(s): Dr. Themeem T.

No. of participants: 15

Brief description of the event:

The English Literary Society held a screening of the documentary film "Lynch Nation" by Shaheen Ahmed and Ashaque EJ s part of the annual fest Logos '24 on the theme "Textual Pathologies and the Word: Death and Disease in Literary and Cultural Studies". The film documents the aftermath of a spate of mob-lynching of minority communities at a time of rising cow vigilantism and Hindu nationalism in India. The screening of the film was followed by a discussion moderated by Dr. Themeem T. where the ethics and relevance of screening the film in an academic setting, the cinematic techniques utilised in the film and its significance in the current socio political climate was discussed.

Attendance List

1. Himanshu
2. Ashwin
3. Keerthana
4. Moulishree
5. Prataksha
6. Samra
7. Muthara
8. Celestia
9. Steffi
10. Leah
11. Hridya
12. Adon
13. Saransh Nagare
14. Cristina

15. Mariam

15. Dr. Smita Gandotra

Book Sale in association with the NGO Goonj

Date: 2nd and 3rd April, 2024

Resource person(s):

No. of participants:

Brief description of the event:

The English Literary Society held a book sale in collaboration with the NGO Goonj as part of the annual fest Logos '24 on the theme "Textual Pathologies and the Word: Death and Disease in Literary and Cultural Studies". The wide variety of books at the book sale were chosen from the collection at Goonj's storehouse. The book sale raised around 9000 rupees for the organisation.