

**Philosophical Society St. Stephen's College**  
**Annual Report 2021-22**

The first half of the society events were mostly confined to talks and reading club sessions. The first society event organised was a reading club session on the 7th of August, 2021. The text was the introduction of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. We chose this text in light of the current socio-political issues and the prevalence of imperial gaze in politics.

On the 8th of September, 2021, we invited Dr. Soumyabrata Choudhury for a lecture on the topic *The Idea of Terror and the Thought of Terrorist Government(ality): Emergent Puzzles for the Free World*. Dr. Choudhury is a faculty member of JNU's School of Arts and Aesthetics. The session was extremely relevant as we discussed the emergence of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

We had a reading club session on the 11th of September, 2021, of the short story *The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas* by Ursula Guin. The short story was a compelling thought experiment on privilege and the distancing we experience from oppression.

We had another reading club session on the 18th of September, 2022, of the short story *Borges and I* by the Spanish writer Jorge Luis Borges.

We then had two consecutive lectures on Noam Chomsky's influential work *Language and Problems of Knowledge* on the 24th of September 2021 and 1st of October 2021. For the lectures we invited Dr. Nilanjan Bhowmick, assistant professor from the University of Delhi, who was an ardent researcher of Chomsky and analytical philosophy.

Between those two lectures, we also invited Prof. Tomy Chirathalackal for a lecture session on *Kant's Ontological Status of Time* on the 28th of September, 2021. Prof. Chirathalackal is the Head of the Department of Philosophy, at the acclaimed University of Hyderabad. He specialises in the Philosophy of Mind, Metaphysics, and Kantian studies, amongst other fields.

On the 9th of October 2021, we had a reading session of the *Library of Babel* by Jorge Luis Borges.

We had a lecture next by Dr. Navneet Chopra on the 23rd of October, 2021. The topic was *Human Cognitive Sciences: Some Themes*. Dr Chopra is an assistant professor at the Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi, specializing in the fields such as Philosophy of Cognitive Science, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Language, Phenomenology and Existentialism.

For the last event of the semester, we had a reading club session of A. K. Ramanujan's *Is There an Indian Way of Thinking?* on the 6th of November, 2021. The text was supplemented by a short summary written by Tanmay Chindaliya, B. A. Hons. Philosophy III.

We also invited design entries for the merchandise with the deadline of 7th January, 2022. The design selected for the hoodie was made by Ayushi Gupta from B. A. Hons. Philosophy III and the design selected for the tshirt was made by Anu Migom Panging from B. A. Hons. Philosophy II. We released our merchandise for order on the 5th of March, 2022.

We also participated in the Alumni Annual Meet 2021 on the 12th of December, 2021 by setting up a stall to represent our society. The stall was set up by Avanish Vats and Preksha Gopal from B. A. Hons. Philosophy I and Parmeet Singh Majethiya and Anu Migom Panging from B. A. Hons. Philosophy II.

In the meantime, we also invited entries for our annual journal *Kosmos* and set up at deadline of 31st of January, 2022. We released our official journal blog *Smrti*, in the same time frame, releasing the first article on the 11th of January, 2022.

On the occasion of *Azadi ka Amrut Mahotsav*, we invited Prof. Sarover Zaidi to speak on *Political Independence and Intellectual Swaraj*, Prof. Zaidi teaches in the Jindal School of Art and Architecture (JSAA). Her teaching and research interests consists of various topics including material culture studies, anthropology of architecture, religion, science and technology studies,

design theory, semiotics, continental philosophy, art and aesthetics, Indian philosophy, post-structuralism, and so on.

We then had a paper presentation by Varun Keshab Goswami, B. A. LLB. Hons. II from Symbiosis Law School, Pune and Anu Migom Panging, B. A. Hons. Philosophy II from St. Stephen's College on the 12th of February, 2022. The title of the paper was *Understanding Subjective Rights Through the Case of the Speluncean Explorers*.

As a pre-Prasna event, the society organised a a trip to Adhyatma Sadhana Kendra, Chhatarpur, on the 16th of March, where we interacted with the monks and nuns about the Doctrine of Anekāntavāda in Jainism.

For the Mental Health initiative by the college, our society collaborated with the Poetry Society of St. Stephen's College to host an open mic poetry competition on the theme of Dread, Existential Angst and the Pandemic. The winning entry was by Prajna Lama from B. A. Hons. Philosophy II. We organised the open mic on the 4th of March, 2022.

We held one more pre-Prasna event on the 28th of March, 2022, inviting Nivedita Chaturvedi to present a paper titled *Thinking Inter-Textually and Comparatively Through Kumārila's Saṃprayoga in Indriya Pratyakṣa*. Nivedita Chaturvedi is a faculty member of the Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi.

For the final event, we had Prasna, the annual fest of the Department of Philosophy from 12 - 13 April, 2022. On the first day, we invited Dr. Nivedita Menon to deliver a lecture on *The Critical Pedagogy of the Global South*. For the second event of the first day, we had a paper presentation competition. The competition was won by Nanda Harish from Lady Shri Ram College for Women, B. A. Hons. Philosophy III, the paper titled *Cosmetic Panopticon and the "War Against Obesity": Situating Gendered Fatness in Biopolitics*. On the second day, we had a talk by Dr. Nilanjan Bhowmick on *The Plumber's Tale* where he talked about the various problem solving aspects of philosophy, referring to it as a "plumbing job". We finished the fest off with a Philosophical Quiz competition, ending our academic year.

