



“The ignorant man is not free, because what confronts him is an alien world, on which he depends. The impulse of curiosity, the pressure for knowledge, comes only from the struggle to cancel this situation of unfreedom and to make the world one's own in one's ideas and thought.”-Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

Dear Readers,

I strongly believe that it is history and the synthesis of opinions which make the world spin. It is the amalgamation of the two that builds the products and services we consume; shapes the media headlines we read and sculpts the art we love.

Instead of sitting back as mute spectators and watching the sands of time sift through our fingers, I suppose, by the means of our opinions we all can be an active part of it. After all, it is our opinions that define us, they are the embodiment of what we believe in, what we are. Ones that can only come from a place of being informed, about the world we live in, and the one our predecessors lived in.

With this issue we seek to inform you, in a way that you can construct a part of your own-self. The articles range from the metamorphosis of a corset into the empowering symbol it now is, to an insight into the lesser-known reason of the hostility between Iran and the United States. You will also find a unique view into the history of nationalism in India, the kind you may otherwise find monotonous in your textbooks, as we unravel how society has notably shaped art.

We hope you are able to gain insight into the workings of the world and form your own opinion, through this lens that we present to you, devoid of bias and coloured with curiosity.

Before you dive into the rich world of history and politics, I would like to make it clear that the views put forth by the writers are their own and are not in any way affiliated with the publication.

Happy reading!

Priyal Mittal

Editor-in-Chief

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A HISTORY OF HOSTILITIES

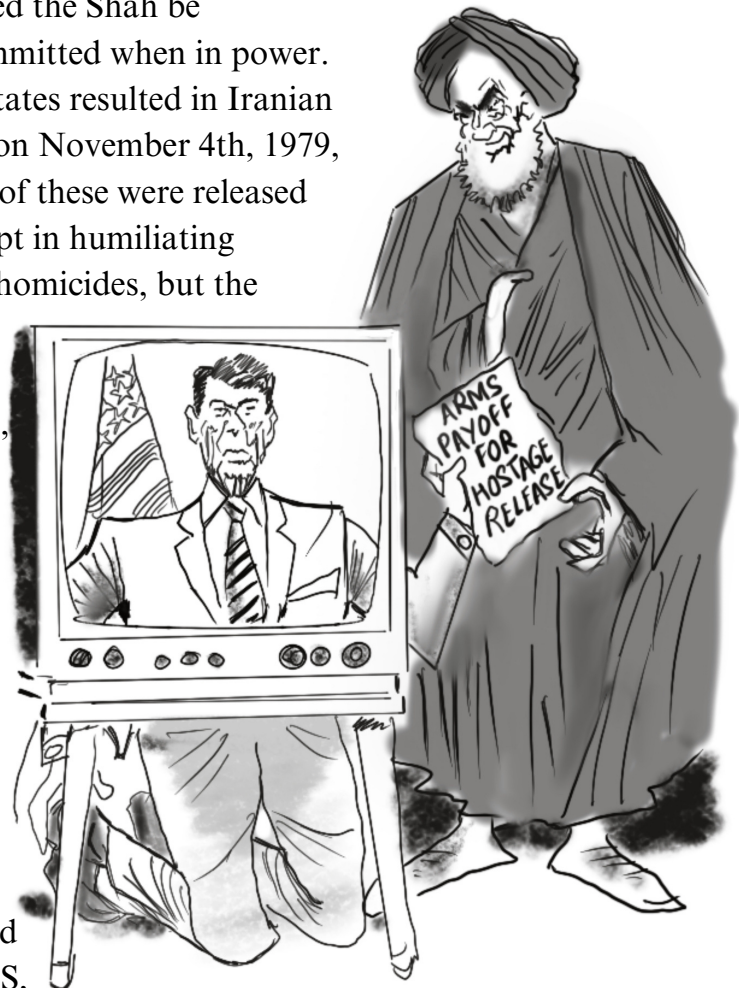
THE REALITY BEHIND STRAINED IRAN-U.S. RELATIONS

The United States of America, the world's biggest capitalist country has had a rich history of commercially fuelled hostilities. One such point of friction was the commercial interests of the US in Iran.

The USA has historically controlled Iranian petroleum reserves for decades and benefitted greatly from its monetary gains until 1953 when Prime Minister Mohammed Mosaddegh declared Iranian intentions of nationalizing the oil industry, which in turn threatened US interests. Thus, in 1953 the CIA and British Intelligence orchestrated a coup against him and put Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in power. The Shah was a great US ally and was publicly hated for the same. His unpopularity reached its peak in 1979 when he was deposed and forced to leave the country with his family under the pretext of a 'vacation'. Thus, began the Iranian Revolution, and by March 1979 religious leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, replacing the Shah, took power and established a new Islamic Republic government.

Meanwhile, Iran's former Prime Minister was diagnosed with cancer and went to the US under the Carter administration to receive treatment. This angered the Iranian revolutionaries who resented US involvement in Iranian matters and demanded the Shah be returned to Iran to be tried for the crimes he committed when in power. Non-acceptance of this demand by the United States resulted in Iranian protesters attacking the US Embassy in Tehran on November 4th, 1979, and taking 66 people hostage. Over a period, 14 of these were released for several reasons but the remaining 52 were kept in humiliating conditions for the next 444 days. There were no homicides, but the embassy employees and other diplomats were subjected to tortures like being hung over elevator shafts and paraded for mock executions, etc. in their 14 months of captivity. Although President Jimmy Carter endeavoured to free his citizens through economic sanctions, negotiations, and military operations, none were successful, and his inadequacy resulted in him losing his Presidency in 1981 to Ronald Reagan. After intense negotiations, the hostages were released in 1981 on January 20th when President Ronald Reagan took his oath of office.

This crisis has left behind a legacy of mistrust and animosity between the nations of Iran and the US, the aftershocks of which reverberate even today, after decades.



-Chitragada Tiwari (Class 12)

FREEBIES: PROSPERITY OR PROPAGANDA?

In India, freebies have long been used as a tool of political propaganda. From providing free electricity, water, and healthcare to promising free laptops and smartphones, politicians have been using these giveaways to win the popular vote. By providing these benefits, politicians create a sense of goodwill among the public. However, as their popularity has grown in politics, so have the criticisms.

As the use of freebies as tools of propaganda is developing, some argue that such giveaways create a culture of entitlement among the masses, who come to expect handouts from the government without making any effort to improve their own lives. Moreover, freebies aren't exactly "free" - someone's paying for it, namely the taxpayer, therefore, putting a strain on the country's finances and being detrimental to economic growth. This implies that the money that could have been spent on improving infrastructure, education, and healthcare is diverted towards funding freebies that may not have any lasting impact on the lives of

the people. Another issue with the use of freebies is that they are often not sustainable. As the old saying goes, "If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. If you teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime."

Similarly, distributing free laptops or smartphones may provide temporary relief to students, but it may not address the underlying problems of the education system, such as the lack of quality teachers and infrastructure.

Furthermore, it may encourage corruption and

misuse of public funds, as politicians and bureaucrats seek to profit from the distribution of these goods and services. This also gives rise to the question whether freebies are same as welfare plans and even though there are no watertight categories differentiating them, economists often distinguish between "merit goods" - such as healthcare and education, where public benefit exceeds the individual benefit - and "non-merit" goods. But such distinctions are not easy to decide. Distributing bicycles - as some state government and political parties have done - may seem like an election stunt. But for millions of young girls living in India's vast rural hinterland, where public transport is a huge problem, it could be a means of attending school or college. In fact many crucial welfare schemes actually started out as so-called freebies.

For instance, a Tamil Nadu government scheme to provide free midday meals to children in government schools was expanded to other states and later, nationally, after it was found to improve enrolment and attendance.

In conclusion freebies and social welfare schemes that subsidise the populace are a universal phenomenon. While genuine welfare schemes need to find a place in the election manifestos, reckless freebies can bankrupt the states and the country. What is essential is a balance between these, as well as fiscal prudence. Only then can India achieve long-term prosperity and welfare for its citizens.



-Mahika Arya (Class 12)

THE STROKES OF INDIAN HISTORY

unfolding nationalism through an artist's brush

Art is as ancient as civilization itself. Throughout history, art has been a vehicle of communication, education and reflection of society. It evokes moments of bygone era and past civilizations. It has been a subtle yet powerful medium of expressing ideas, feelings, emotions through the ages. The study of art of a region or a place is a window to its culture, history and its uniqueness. These visual representations of the past are authentic historical evidence of all aspects of a society be it governance, scientific progress, education and culture.

One such school of art emerged, in India during the early 20th century, which first appeared in Bengal under the painter, Abanindranath Tagore. This was considered as modern Indian art. It was not only an expression of nationalism, but a modernist approach that promoted other genres of new Indian art, combining both religious and secular elements. These modern artists saw themselves as avant garde or at the frontier of change from tradition to modernity.

ABANINDRANATH TAGORE

The leader of the Swadeshi movement in art was Abanindranath Tagore, who also led the Bengal school of Art, which sought to establish a distinctly Indian art that celebrated an indigenous cultural heritage rather than

Western art and culture. To oppose the partition of Bengal, he painted the Banga Mata in 1906, which later changed to Bharat Mata. Bharat Mata personified a Bengali woman as a deity who was the mother of the nation. He painted her with four attributes that were seen as objects of nationalist goals. These were food, a piece of cloth, learning and spiritual knowledge.



Bharat Mata (1906)

RAJA RAVI VARMA

Labelled by art historian Geeta Kapur as the "father of modern Indian Art", Raja Ravi Varma is best-known for his paintings and prints that exquisitely render Indian subjects using European technique

In music, there is harmony; there is unity. This is emphasized in Raja Ravi Varma's famous painting, "Galaxy of Musicians."



Galaxy of Musicians (1889)

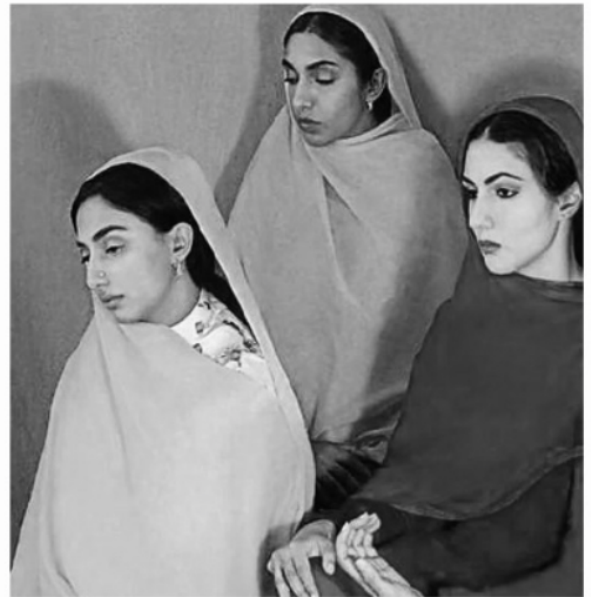
The painting is an allegory of a nation based upon the gendering of the nation as female. It features a group of women musicians from various Indian groups, each representing their culture and tradition, as represented by the musical instruments they're playing and their dresses and adornments they're wearing: from the Muslim courtesan to the Nair woman. These women may have come from different groups with different beliefs, tradition and culture, but they are united in music.



AMRITA SHER-GILL

A woman artist who attempted to re-construct the imagery of women during the nationalist era was Amrita Sher-Gil. She was the first professionally trained woman artist who took up art as a profession. Her style was truly modern and free from the Victorian and colonial baggage. Her women exhibited both freedom and a myriad of emotions.

“Three Girls”, is a painting by her, which depicts Indian women as they were: a symbol of patience and submission to a rather masculine culture and tradition, their silence and plight. In this painting, the artist portrays the three women in deep thought, contemplating the destiny they could not change.



Three Women (1935)



NANDALAL BOSE

The spirit of nationalist fervour was instilled in the disciples of Abanindranath as well. Nandalal Bose was one of his pupils who imbibed the spirit of swadeshi in his art. Nandalal used handmade paper to produce scenes from the lives of indigenous people. Tiller of the Soil was a panel painted by Nandalal Bose in 1938 as part of the ‘Haripura Posters’ requested by Mahatma Gandhi for the Congress session at Haripura. Through this poster, he attempts to convey Gandhi’s idea of a village, where even an ordinary man contributes to nation building through his daily activities. In this particular panel, he painted the everyday activity of a farmer ploughing his field with bulls. It represented Mahatma Gandhi’s vision where the marginalised and common people were central to the exercise of nation-building.



Tiller Of The Soil (1938)

SWEET KISS OF DEATH

To swim in a chocolate river or experience candy rain is a rather common wish amongst most children.

For some, this dream did become a reality, but it wasn't as joyous as it might have been believed to be.

It was rather calamitous. After the First World War, a massive molasses vat in Boston burst, wreaking havoc and unleashing the longest legal battle in the history of the city. (Molasses is a primary source used to sweeten and flavor foods, a major constituent of fine commercial brown sugar and candies.)

The Great Molasses Flood, commonly referred to as the Boston Molasses Disaster, was a catastrophe that occurred on January 15, 1919, in Boston, Massachusetts's North End. The previous day, a ship had delivered a fresh load of molasses that had been warmed to reduce its viscosity for transfer. On January 15, 1919, temperatures in Boston had risen beyond 40°F, a sharp and rapid rise from the brutally cold temperatures of the days prior. The tank imploded approximately around 12:30 p.m., presumably as a result of the older, cooler molasses inside the tank expanding thermally. The resultant wave of molasses rushed through the streets at an estimated 56 kilometres per hour, killing 21 people and injuring 150. Several dead people were so glazed over in molasses that they were hard to recognize, while there were others who swept into Boston Harbor and were found three to four months after the disaster. Boston allegedly smelled like molasses even decades after clean-up efforts concluded, which itself reportedly took months. Numerous lawsuits were filed in the wake of the disaster, against the United States Industrial Alcohol Company (USIA), which owned the vat as a part of their distilling unit. Ultimately, the company was held accountable for the structural failure of the tank that had collapsed, and liable to pay monetary damages.

The flood may seem strange and insignificant in comparison to other disasters, such as the horrific losses of the Great War that the world had just suffered in 1918.

However, it is the response that the accident evoked, which makes it of great importance. The verdict caught the business world by surprise, establishing the serious need for regulation and reiterating how gross negligence would in fact incur stiff financial penalties. The City of Boston began to demand that all engineering plans and blueprints be filed and reviewed by professionals before permits would be issued. What began in Boston spread throughout the United States, resulting in a new policy that held individuals and corporations responsible if negligence resulted in death, ushering in a new era of modern regulation for U.S. public policy.

-Yashita Jain(Class 9)

THE DINNER PARTY

THE ART OF FEMINISM

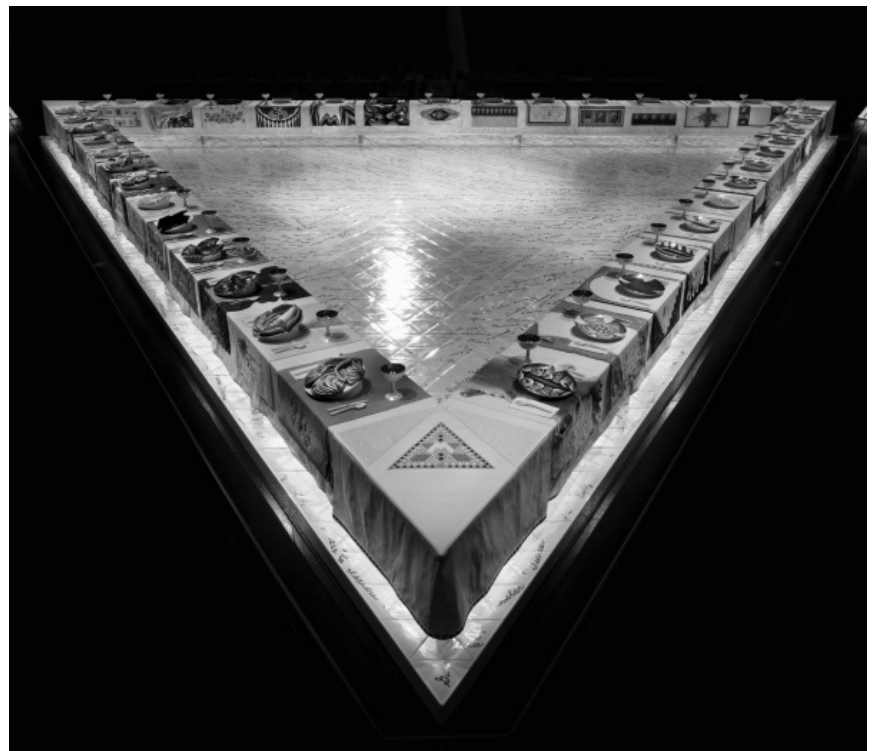
The Dinner Party is one of the most remarkable artworks that contributed to the second wave of the feminist movement, created by Judy Chicago in the 1970s. It is a massive triangular table—measuring 48 feet on each side—with thirty-nine place settings dedicated to prominent women throughout history and an additional 999 names are inscribed on the table's glazed porcelain brick base. Among those immortalized with ceramic plates are ancient Greek poet Sappho, Benedictine abbess Bingen, astronomer Caroline Herschel, women's rights activist Susan B. Anthony, and painter Georgia O'Keeffe.

A celebration of female accomplishment, the Dinner Party operates on multiple levels. Along with being an ode to the unsung women in the pantheon of history, it argues for the importance of traditionally feminine artistic practices that were previously disregarded.

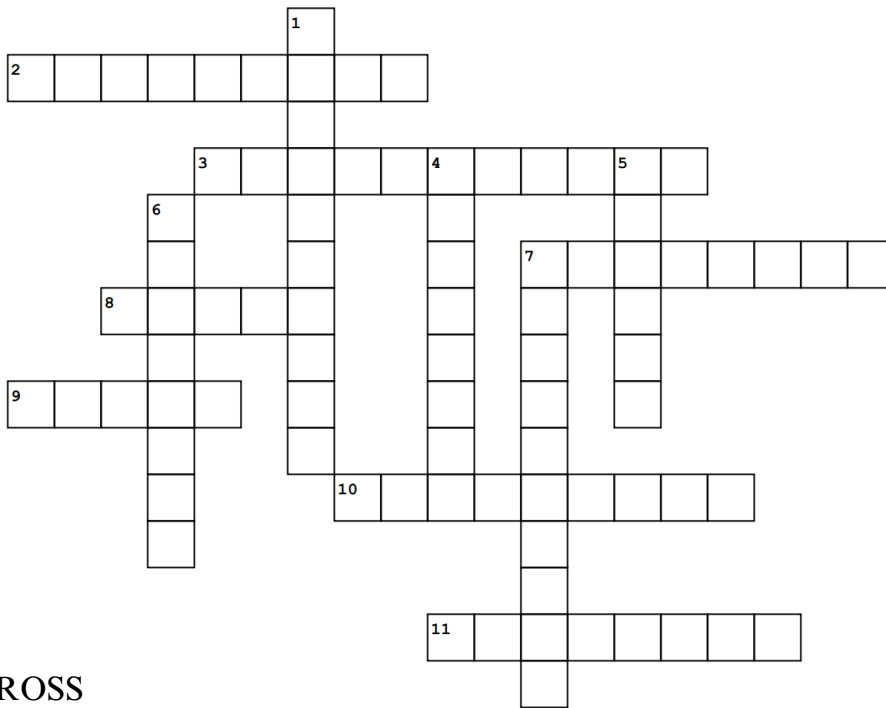
The Dinner Party is most notable for its reclaiming of the feminine body.

Celebrating a woman's strength and beauty with a sense of pride for her body. In contrast to the overwhelming male predominance in the society, it acknowledges feminine eroticism and fertility.

The piece was first exhibited at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1979, and was met with both wild enthusiasm for asserting female "herstory", and also vigorous backlash for its supposedly pornographic imagery. However, this art piece continues to stand the test of time and is more prevalent today than ever as the feminist movements peak. Judy Chicago wrote, "The Dinner Party is intended as a symbol of women's history. As such, it merely suggests the thousands of untold stories and unsung heroines who deserve attention, honour, and a place at the table." And it is these very stories that stand as a hallmark in the history of gender equality.



-Ishaani Bhatia (Class 12)



CROSSWORD

DOWN

- 1. Majority party in Karnataka after latest elections
- 3. The movie based on the mission to assassinate Hitler
- 4. The United States bought Alaska from this country
- 5. Recently coronated monarch
- 7. "At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom." The famous lines were said by-?
- 9. The name 'India' originates from?

ACROSS

- 2. Former PM of a south Asian country, currently in a lawsuit due to corruption accusations
- 5. "Ukraine Sets World Safety Standard"- a rhetoric to one of the worst nuclear disasters in history
- 6. Founder of the Indian National Congress
- 8. The infamous wall was known as the "Anti-Fascist Protective Wall". "Checkpoint Charlie" was the name given to this popular crossing between East and West Berlin.
- 10. The movie recently banned by the West Bengal government.
- 11. Which infamous prison was stormed on July 14th, 1789 in Paris, France?

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