

CHALKBOARD

ISSUE 01



RIAC



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FOUNDER'S NOTE

My time at HKU has given me the opportunity to meet students who effortlessly stunned me with their intellectual prowess. Meeting these highly motivated individuals who held the thirst for knowledge motivated me to create Red Ink and Chalk, a platform for these students to come together and feed their fire.

At Red Ink and Chalk, our mission is to cultivate a culture of curiosity, innovation, and excellence among students by promoting and supporting research endeavors. We strive to empower students to explore their academic interests, engage in meaningful research projects, and contribute to the advancement of knowledge within their respective fields. Through mentorship, resources, and a collaborative community, we aim to inspire a lifelong passion for research and scholarship.

As the founder of this student association, I am thrilled to see our vision of promoting student research come to life. Red Ink and Chalk was born out of a shared passion for inquiry, discovery, and academic exploration. Our goal is to create a supportive environment where students can delve into the world of research, develop their skills, and make meaningful contributions to their fields of interest. We also strive to push for bringing out this knowledge among students and eager learners.

I believe that research is not just about finding answers but about asking the right questions. It is about pushing boundaries, challenging assumptions, and paving the way for new knowledge and understanding. With Red Ink and Chalk, we aim to provide the platform and resources for students to embark on this exciting journey of intellectual growth and discovery.

I am truly excited to witness the impact each one of you will make through your research pursuits. Together, let us foster a community that celebrates curiosity, embraces diversity of thought, and encourages collaboration. Your dedication and passion for research will undoubtedly shape the future of our organization and leave a lasting mark on the academic landscape.

Thank you for joining us on this incredible journey. I look forward to seeing the remarkable achievements and breakthroughs that will emerge from our collective efforts at Red Ink and Chalk.

Stay curious,
Vaishali Rathi





INTRO.

Red Ink and Chalk is a research group dedicated to widen the limits of student-led inquiry and accountability in education.

RIAC is a platform for students to explore their passions and research interests, taking teaching and learning one step further. We are a collection of keen researchers and learners who support one another in our mutual endeavours. This is the first of our annual issues documenting the work of our members and the experiences of our workshop participants.



INTRO.



The Four Pillars of RIAC

Research Excellence: Upholding standards of rigorous research and knowledge production.

Inclusivity and Advocacy: Promoting inclusive educational practices and advocating for accessibility.

Collaboration and Partnerships: Fostering collaborative efforts and partnerships to maximise impact.

Capacity Building and Empowerment: Empowering individuals and communities through education and support.

We strive to bring relevant topics to our audience and commit to spreading knowledge as a group.



Meet our team.



founder
&
chair



Vaishali Ranbir Rathi

Year 4 BA & BEd (English Education)

Hi everyone, I'm Vaishali!

I live with books and I always make time for stories. It's helped me grow up and constructed a large part of who I am today. Storytelling opened up new paths for me to explore deep questions like identity and belonging which pushed me to probe the questions I ask today.



vice-
chair



En Yu Yap

Year 3 BSc (Chemistry)

min. European Studies & Geography

Hello, I'm Yap En Yu, a Chemistry major at the Faculty of Science, with minors in European Studies and Geography. My passion lies in exploring the intersection of science and accessibility, particularly in the realm of blind cinema and entertainment accessibility.



editor



Joanna Wang

Year 2 BA (English Studies)
min. Japanese Studies

Hi, I'm Joanna! I'm an avid bibliophile with research interests in postmodern and contemporary English and Japanese literature. I'm fascinated with depictions of illness, identity, and desolation around the world. My current aspirations are mastering *kanji* and writing a novel.



sustain-
ability



Grace Fong

Year 3 BEcon & Fin. & HRM
min. Arabic Studies

Here's Grace, a Year 3 student pursuing two majors in Economics and Finance & Management, also minoring in Arabic Language. I like composing and volunteering. I'm thrilled to be part of this amazing community as the head of sustainability at RIAC.

I'm currently doing research related to ESG. If you're interested in it, keep an eye out for our posts!



finance
officer



Jennifer Qin

Year 3 BBA (Acc&Fin)
min. Information Systems and
Analytics

Hi, I'm Jennifer Qin, a year-3 business student. For academic research, I focus on in financial reporting, corporate governance, and information systems. Outside academics, I'm passionate about drama, playing the piano, and building models.



general
secretary



Linh Nguyen

Year I BBA (ADA)

Hi everyone, I am Linh. My curiosity has led me on a lifelong journey of learning and discovery. Each new experience I encounter, whether it's delving into a complex academic subject or immersing myself in a foreign culture, gives me a sense of wonder and excitement. I approach the world with an open mind, constantly seeking to expand my horizons.

Literature review!

VAISHALI RATHI

TEACHING GUIDE
FOR
INTRODUCTION TO
SOUTH ASIAN
LITERATURE FOR
HIGH SCHOOLS IN
HONG KONG

*Supported by Dr Daniel Elam
Dept of Comparative Literature
The University of Hong Kong
And
Common Core
The University of Hong Kong*



PROJECT SWAYAM

Introduction

Hong Kong has a vastly mixed diaspora and rightly gains its reputation for an international city. But, like most ex-colonies, the legacy of British rule is still present. School curriculums fail to provide adequate representation for minorities as much of the content is derived from the Western world. As of 2016, Hong Kong had a population of over 7.51 million individuals with 8% recorded to be ethnic minorities. This number only increases as time passes. Many migrants left their homelands and came to Hong Kong in an attempt to create a better future for themselves and escape turmoil back home. The hard reality is that ethnic minorities continue to face discrimination and are encumbered while attempting to integrate into society. Feelings of being out of place are not unknown. While these groups have done their best to integrate into the city and earn an honest living, they are othered by society at large.

This guide seeks to create representation at the school level for young learners used to a syllabus lacking contribution from people of colour. By introducing stories from the East, this guide seeks to approach English education with an anti-colonial approach and thereby allowing students to have a more broadened outlook. Changing school syllabi is not what the workshop series intends to achieve but rather to develop an inquisitive nature within students to seek further information about South Asia. They can see that English language learning need not be purely derived from Western contributors. English as an international language opens gateways to cultural rediscovery when many second-generation children lose touch with their native tongue.



Swayam is a Sanskrit word that translates to self. Project Swayam encourages participants to begin an inquiry about their cultural heritage and ancestry. The term *Swa* is a prefix that denotes self and was widely used by M.K. Gandhi, who emphasised the discovery of the true self in his philosophy of the ideal Indian in a free India. Project Swayam seeks to bridge the gap between authenticity and modernity by creating a platform to hold an open conversation about South Asian culture, where Western influence is unpacked and grassroots culture is tapped into. Swayam asks students and children of the modern era to look within and question who they are and what they identify with. Understanding the socio-political ethos of the state and how it came to be, the external and internal factors that moulded society to its present form and personal global identity are some of the main questions which will be answered through these workshops.

This guide outlines a workshop themed on Indian studies for senior secondary school students of Hong Kong schools. It may expand over 10 days with one-hour classes. Two texts taken into consideration are Rabindranath Tagore's *A Home and the World* and R. K. Narayan's *Swami and Friends*. Through these prose, topics of postcolonialism will be introduced. The common political themes of the clash of Western and Indian ideology as a result of colonial rule in the Sub-Continent are to be explained to students. Edward Said's theory of *Orientalism* shall be touched upon in order to begin a discourse on the apparent divide between Eastern and Western worlds. Homi Bhabha's theory of hybridity shall be talked about to unpack multicultural identity aided by his text *Location of Culture*. The formation of national identity will be understood by unpacking Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and understanding how space influences belonging will be dealt with by drawing from Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space*.

General information

Target student group: Form 5 and 6 of HKDSC schools (16 to 18 years of age)

Span of workshop: 2 weeks (10 days)

Number of hours: 35 hours

Dates: May or June

Formative Assessment:

Final project to be a performance piece on any topic from what the students have learnt

Summative Assessment:

Daily rehearsal by the interlinking of topics.

Background

Swami and Friends

Narayan set his story in the fictional town of Malgudi, Karnataka. The etymology of the word is derived from two places in Bengaluru, the capital city of Karnataka- Malleshwaram and Basavangudi. He set the story in 1930, during the British colonial era of India when the Civil Disobedience Movement was prominent. Within the story, one sees numerous instances of interplay between cultures.

Karnataka is a state in Southern India. Around 1831, the British took control of the state of Mysore from the Wodeyar dynasty.

After changing administrations and having a commissioner rule, they divided the state among neighbouring areas. Later they gave back rule to the Mysore Wodeyars and the Independence Movement gained momentum. Karnataka has many noteworthy contributions to the Freedom struggle with it being a centre for protest, Satyagraha, Civil Disobedience and the Quit India movement.

A Home and the World

Tagore set *A Home and the World* in West Bengal during the Swadeshi and Civil Disobedience movements of the twentieth century. This region was a vital place in the Indian Freedom Struggle. Many important thinkers and radical freedom fighters emerged from this part of the country. Ranbindranath Tagore himself hails from the same state.

Bengal is a state laden with rich history. It is located in the North-Western part of the Indian subcontinent and is cradled by the Ganges. The fall of the Sultanate with Siraj ud-Daulah gave rise to British rule there. It gained political importance and even became the capital (until 1911). Bengal underwent much growth and development with the onset of the Bengal Renaissance, which is when the prominent freedom fighter figures emerged, along with Tagore. Subhas Chandra Bose, the father of the Indian Freedom Struggle, came from Bengal. The state faced two famines and two partitions and three migrations which left the state deeply scarred.

Political Background

Swadeshi (Swa- own/ Desh- country) (1905-1911)

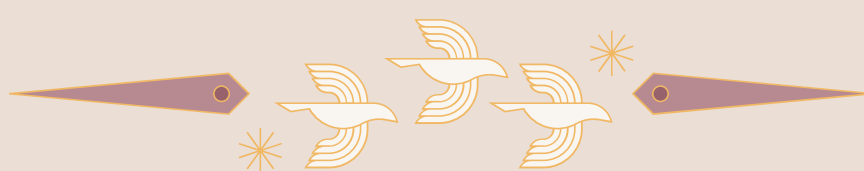
Swadeshi movement was declared on August 7th, 1905. It was seen as a response or rather emanated from the partition of Bengal in 1905 which divided the region into a land for the Hindus and a land for the Muslims. This partition came about by Lord Curzon. The imprisonment of prominent freedom fighter, Lokmanya Tilak and the death sentence of the Chapekar brothers further provided an impetus for this movement to kickstart. The day the partition (implemented on 16th October, 1905) came into effect, a general protest began in Bengal (The Anti- Partition movement) which took place in four phases.



In the first stage, protests were staged where no cooking hearths were lit and people fasted. They took to the streets signing the song “Vande Mataram” and walked barefoot to the Ganges. Hindu women tied threads on the hands of Muslim men as a symbol of *Raksha Bandhan* (a vow of protection). This phase was mostly characterised by protests and strikes.

The next phase was called the “Aatma Sakti” or Self Help movement where leaders like Rabindranath Tagore and Ashwini Kumar Dutta appealed to countrymen to start constructive activities, such as vernacular education, social reform and organization of villages and towns rather than appealing to the British Authority. Satish Chandra Mukherjee founded the Dawn Society to give birth to the idea of national education and Ashwini Kumar Dutta founded the Braja Mohan College at Barishal (in present Bangladesh).

In the third stage, the protest became a passive resistance movement with the Swadeshi and Boycott. This movement was characterised by a boycott of British goods and a promotion of self-sufficiency within the nation; thus, it was also an economic protest and boycott of goods and commodities. The failure of the Moderate line of protest brought in a form of action beginning with Krishna Kumar Mitra, the editor of Sanjivani who suggested in his journal the boycott of British goods and all schools and colleges founded by the government. Lal Mohan Ghosh wrote in the Amrita Bazar Patrika hoping that this would tip the cotton mills in England. Other papers like the Bande Mataram, Sandhya and Yugantar supported this proposal and finally, the proposal was accepted in Calcutta.



The fourth phase had the implementation of the Swadeshi movement. Student volunteers took the lead and began picketing shops. Disciplinary action was taken and students were either fined or expelled from schools and colleges. Many faced lathi charges as well. Alongside this, it also had a front which involved the celebration of Indian arts, culture and heritage. But the combination of Swadeshi with the boycott added new zeal, and its emergence around the time of the Non- Cooperation movement made this a rather aggressive movement. The Bengali intelligentsia was initially not in favour of this movement, but as it spread (where even large industries joined in the economic boycott) a larger part of the Bengali population threw their weight behind the protest. At this juncture, the partition of Bengal was completed and the movement got radicalised. Nevertheless, while the movement gradually dissipated, it laid the foundation for further Gandhian movements like the Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience movement.

Civil Disobedience (1930-1934) and Salt Satyagraha (12th March- 6th April, 1930):

The Civil Disobedience movement was kickstarted by Salt Satyagraha. This protest was a march undertaken by Gandhi and his followers (popularly referred to as the Dandi March) directed to the high taxes on salt and the unfair salt laws that the British placed upon the market. He led the crowd from the Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat to Dandi, a coastal region near Surat. This can be seen as part of the mass Civil Disobedience movement. Gandhi informed Lord Irwin of this plan, but seeing that he was indifferent to this information he led the group to the coast to make their own salt out of seawater. By doing so, they broke the salt laws. This movement has its own significance by bringing the Indian Freedom struggle into the western limelight. Women and the depressed class also took part and proved that non-violent protest was an effective manner of fighting colonisers. Retaliation to the salt monopoly of the British was shaken.

This movement spread rapidly among the masses. Soon, people in Maharashtra, Karnataka and central provinces joined by refusal to pay taxes. Across the nation, people observed hartals (protests) and began picketing shops that sold foreign foods. The British Administration retaliated heavily with lathi charges and mass imprisonment of protestors. The Congress was declared illegal and censorship of the news impeded communication to the public. Finally, the British attempted to negotiate with the Congress at the First Round Table conference in London which the Congress boycotted. After a settlement was reached between Lord Irwin and Gandhi, the British agreed to release prisoners who were non violent. The Congress agreed to take part in the Second Round table conference. This movement accomplished what the non cooperation movement failed to achieve and further instilled a sense of political consciousness among people.

Background of the Author

R. K. Narayan

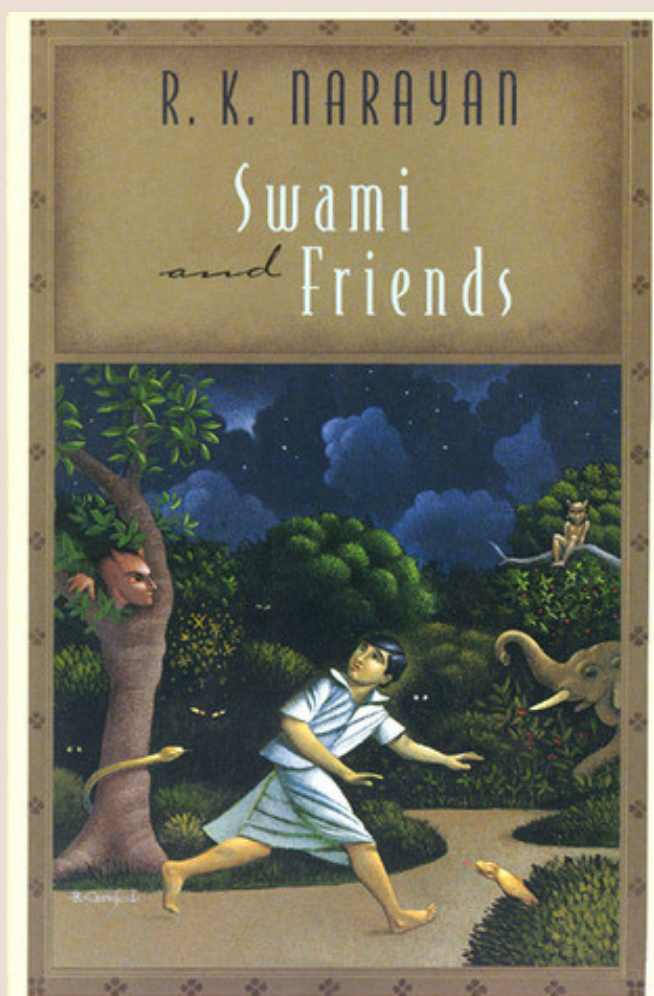
Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanaswami is a well-celebrated, prominent Indian author. Born in Madras in 1906, he lived there for most of his life. He completed his schooling in 1930 and served as a teacher until he decided to devote himself to writing. While writing in English, he goes beyond stereotypical boundaries and elaborates on Indian living by drawing heavily from Indian culture and setting. Salman Rushdie referred to Narayan as a “comic genius” and lauded him for his descriptive writing style which brings to life a fictional village like Malgudi. Some of his best-known works are *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955), *The Guide* (1958) and short stories like “A Horse and Two Goats and Other Stories” (1970), “Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories” (1985) and others. Narayan was awarded prestigious titles like the Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan. He passed away in 2001 in Chennai.

Rabindranath Tagore

One of the most prominent writers from India, Tagore was born in Bengal. He was mostly homeschooled but was sent to England to complete his higher education. Tagore studied law and returned home where he married and ultimately became a key contributor to leading Bengali journals. He founded Shantiniketan in 1901, a school which blended Western and Eastern ideologies towards education. With the Nobel prize won in 1913, he gained more capital to funnel into this unique educational set-up. He played a role in the Indian national movement by writing moving works of poetry able to sensitise the public to the plight of the nation. While mostly recognised as a poet, he ventured into all literary forms. Some of his acclaimed works are *Gitanjali* (1910), *Manasi* (1890), and *Gitmala* (1914).

SWAMI AND FRIENDS

Swami and Friends introduces a young boy, Swami, who lives in a small town called Malgudi. The novel outlines his activities with his friends and how he navigates around the simple daily issues a boy his age would face at the time. At first glance, it seems like a fairly innocent tale about a schoolboy. But, with careful attention paid to Narayan's writing style, one notes multiple instances of the interplay between coloniser influence and traditional Indian culture.



The primary clash can be seen between Swami, Mani and Rajam. Mani plays the role of a friend in Swami's group who is a sort of bully. Rajam is a new addition to Malgudi who comes from a wealthy family and is the son of a superintendent. These two represent their own versions of power. Their interactions of tension and how they coalesce with Swami as the intermediary will be a useful method of probing into the deep-set western influence through an interesting binary of characters unbeknownst to what they represent. The fact that children are the ones delivering the story shifts the onus of the political upheaval happening in the background from them. It is very evident that they play simple pawns of layman life. Nevertheless, they are a product of their time and, as children, learn from and reflect on their environment.

The story can be highlighted through instances like Ebenezer's insistence on Christian supremacy, the showdown between Mani and Rajam, the breaking of Gandhi's statue, the boycott of goods and vandalising of Swami's school missionary school, and the final cricket match.

Discussion questions:

1. Why do you think Narayan chooses Malgudi as the setting for his story?
2. What was the point of casting children? What do they represent?



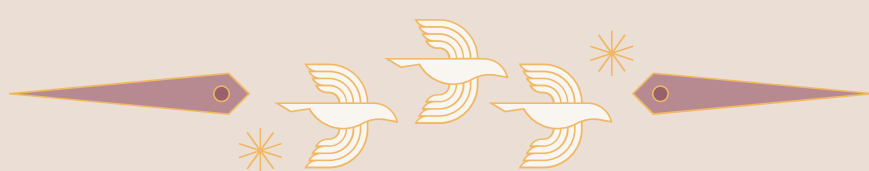
A HOME AND THE WORLD

A Home and the World revolves around the interactions between three characters: Nikhilesh, a landowner, his wife, Bimala, and Sandip, Nikhilesh's friend who is also a radical and zealous man.

This story involves the clash between Eastern and Western ideologies in a more ostensible manner. Similar to *Swami and Friends*, where there are two opposing players with one caught in the crossfire, Bimala can take the centre party role. The binary here is formed with Nikhilesh upholding Tagore's ideal form of Swadeshi and Sandip who approaches the freedom struggle with a nationalistic view. Their inherent back and forth is an argument where traditionalism and modernism presents themselves multiple times through the dialogue between two friends. Moreover, the internal tumult Bimala faces which allows her to buy into Sandip's carefully worded cajoling must be addressed. The emphasis of sentimental cues like Durga Devi, which were directed towards Bimala, shed light on the role religion played at the time. Sandip's exposure to Western education enabled him to constantly stand against oppressive practises. He seemed to understand Swadeshi for what it truly was by using Indian-made appliances in his household, yet continued to give his wife western attire as gifts. Thus, the true ideal for what each character can grow to be ambiguous and remains an open-ended question.

Discussion questions:

1. Think about some keywords or phrases (no more than 5 words) that come to your mind when you think of the East and West respectively.
2. If Nikhilesh and Jayanth were to be adapted to modern-day Hong Kong, what do you think their roles would be? Who would they be and what would they be like?



TEXTS AND THEORIES

Nation Building

Benedict Anderson, in *Imagined Communities*, describes nationalism as a bonding agent derived from a cultural construct and shared history rather than descriptors like race, language or religion. He illustrates how “nationalism” differs from other ideologies due to the effect it has on the masses. He studies this unifying factor that holds people together and in some cases begets violence towards war. Reading this text will show readers how the spread of information across a group of people can stir up feelings of nationalism and be the impetus national movements. Understanding nationalism as a form of “self-sacrificing love” for a nation is tough since the definition of nationalism differs from person to person. This book constructs arguments based on historical events like wars and transitions from eras.

To further understand this theory, one can look into first-generation immigrants who have settled in Hong Kong. Many refuse to let go of their passports and claim a Hong Kong passport, stating that by doing so they will let go of their national identity. This group of people, though unknown to one another, are held together by a feeling of possessing the same identity demarcated by the act of holding onto their country's passport.

Discussion questions:

1. What is shared between you and the average Hong Konger? What is common between you and the average person from your homeland?
2. How does multiculturalism affect national identity?



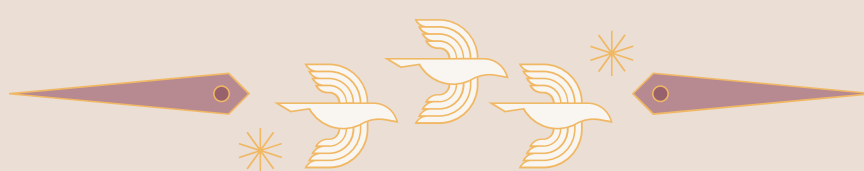
Theorising Space

Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* is the text that this section draws inspiration from. *The Production of Space* sheds light on the perception of the world and how it creates a sense of belonging. It analyses the role of politics in belonging and how our environment gets shaped around us. Lessons shall also involve discussion on gendered spaces where the notion of living space, environment and surroundings is understood through gender and roles with respect to cultural influence. How individuals fall back to certain places as a safety set and where they find their worth are some questions that will be asked through this portion.

A very common example to understand this idea would be to understand why certain ethnic communities of Hong Kong (namely South Asian and black people) group towards living in areas like Tsim Sha Tsui and Jordan. On a microscale, it would involve unpacking the roles of male and female individuals in a household. Pondering where they frequent will help understand this concept of “gendered spaces”.

Discussion questions:

1. What is the point of having shared community space and community gatherings?
2. Where do you find your parents frequent in your house? Where does your mother spend most of her time and why is that so? Where does your father spend most of his time and why is that so?



Orientalism

Written by Edward Said in 1978 is one of the foundational documents of post-colonial studies. This book talks about the creation of “the East” through the eyes of the “West”. The relationship between the two geographic entities has been drawn up such that the East has been made out to be a land of mystery, exoticism, lawlessness and the uncivilized and the West appears as the perfect foil. This belief is used as justification for colonization.

The image of the East remains fixed and unchanged over time in the eyes of the West. Pop cultural references of various ethnicities in Western media have remained the same over time. From Apu from *The Simpsons* to Aladdin and Jasmine from Disney’s *Aladdin*, the same stereotypes are propagated. Over time, the same representation of what it means to originate from Eastern heritage is the same. NBC’s sitcom *Outsourced* has been called out multiple times for its problematic representations of Indians and India as a country. India is seen as a dirty, poor land where culture is backward. The show feeds on derogatory stereotypes as a form of humour to appeal to a Western audience.

Discussion questions

1. Think about some popular representations of your culture. Have they changed overtime? Are they accurate?
2. What are some stereotypes of the Orient and the Occident that you are aware of?



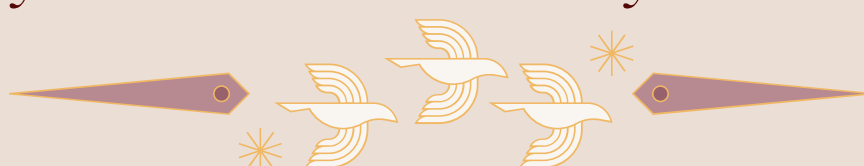
Hybridity

The purpose of bringing in Homi Bhabha's idea of hybridity is to allow students to understand the intermingling of colonial influences on personal indigenous (melange - it is an ongoing mixture of intersecting things) hotchpotch of cultural traditions. Hybridity is seen as a non purity that exists between entities. It is a non-definite definition of culture that encompasses the plurality of origin and influence that exists within a nation's people owing to colonisation. It highlights the mimicry of powerplay that takes place when the colonised, over time, adopt the coloniser's culture and the hierarchy of purity gets challenged.

To further illustrate, I will cite an example from my life. I was born in Hong Kong but primarily raised in the south of India. One of my parents is from the south of India while the other is from the north. Both places hold their own unique set of cultures and traditions united by the umbrella term "Indian national". But, while in the south, I was perceived too north Indian, and in the north I came off as too southern. In Hong Kong, I would be too Indian to fully integrate into society. This leaves me, and multiple mixed-race children, immigrants and other individuals who permanently assimilate into foreign society a perpetual conundrum. Questions like "where are you from?" become difficult to answer in a straightforward manner and one's sense of identity is permanently challenged.

Discussion questions:

1. Do you think places like Hong Kong and America have a different idea of nationalism than places that are more culturally homogenous?
2. Think about how you are hybrid? What makes you hybrid or what makes you not?



TEACHING METHODOLOGY

These texts are to be taught with the main focus being cultural expository to students. As the structure of these one-hour classes are to be accomplished over the course of one week (5 hours in total), not all themes can be touched upon. The primary narrative remains that students will gain a window into India and Indian society while broadening their theoretical knowledge of the history of the land. Lesson activities and assessment will be catered to accordingly and content must be relevant to the age group taught.

Teachers must bear in mind that covering the theoretical texts in depth will not entirely be possible during the course of the workshop. It is advised that teachers input the main theory with a few excerpts from the text and draw connections with the original text to create reference. This workshop must be taught with the understanding that students who enrol for the lessons are from mixed ethnic groups and all must be treated equally. Some may be more familiar with their native cultural history than others and this must be catered to. The outcome of these lessons must allow students to generate enquiry from within and form a deeper and better connection with South Asian heritage.

Learner outcome:

By the end of this workshop, students should be able to

- Analyse the role of significant events which shaped Indian history
- Identify the smaller nuances of colonisation and understand the need for decolonisation
- Form a better relationship with their past root culture



Final project:

Students are expected to either work in groups or individually (depending on their chosen activity). They must come up with a creative ten minute presentation of any topic of their choice from the contents that discussed in the workshop.

Aim:

- Students are expected to display understanding of the content discussed in previous classes.
- They must include a personal stake or show that they were able to see the deeper nuances of the stories at hand.
- Creativity of students must be applied in order to make sure that the students push themselves to engage with the concepts introduced with out-of-box thinking.
- Understanding that History is a multidimensional study and beginning discourse about the impact of events in the past on the present.
- Fostering a sense of Historical continuity

Materials:

Teachers may provide materials that best suit their students, thereby personalising to their learners. It is advised that teachers provide the students with summaries of stories chapter-wise in order to ensure that detailed nuances of each theme coinciding with other texts mentioned are covered and students are able to make mental connections.

For offline lectures, teachers may provide their students with handouts of sections of the book worth highlighting. Workshops may include online tools like Google Jamboard for collaborative learning and use platforms like Padlet and Mentimeter for collecting responses from students.

Daily Breakdown

Lesson	MORNING SESSION (10 - 12)	AFTERNOON SESSION (13 - 14:30)
Day 1	<p>Introduction and icebreaker <i>The following will be discussed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the instructor • Purpose of the workshop • Full workshop plan • Student introduction • Ice breaker • Student background sharing <p>By the end of this session, the teacher must have created a light, amicable and free environment. Students must feel that they have the autonomy to express their opinion, share their experiences and connect with material. General background sharing is appreciated from which the instructor can understand the student's background.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Aim:</i></p> <p>To allow students a chance to warm up to the lesson and get used to a new instructor. By this, the instructor will familiarise themselves with the students background, thus enabling a better teaching experience.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Indian History</p> <p>Students will be given an introduction to the basic historical background of both texts. Swadeshi and boycott movement along with the non cooperation movement will be covered with their significance and impact.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Aim:</i></p> <p>To provide students with adequate background knowledge on setting of books</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Activity:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Introduce a timeline with images and ask students to place the images on the appropriate section in the correct order of events.
Day 2	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Swami and Friends</i> Chapters 1-6 (teaching)</p> <p>Discussion will be on Orientalism</p>	<p><i>Swami and Friends: interactive activity</i></p> <p><u>Character journal:</u> Choose a character and imagine they kept a diary for the span of these chapters. What would they have written about their experiences?</p> <p><u>Format:</u> Group work</p> <p><u>Interaction:</u> T-SS; SS-SS; SS-T</p>

<p>Day 3</p>	<p><i>Swami and Friends</i> Chapter 7-12 (teaching)</p> <p>Discussion will be on Hybridity</p>	<p><i>Swami and Friends</i> (video screening)</p> <p>+ Introduction to the final task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction will involve giving examples of what could be possible task outputs (poetry reading, essay writing and structure, skit performance). • Explain goals of the output and expected outcomes. • Ensure adequate scaffolding is provided to students. <p>Video screening Episode: 1, 12, 17, 19 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEjffHVoYbII&list=PL_c7L8RcICKpLCrTT_ZlyBlooup2aHBjT&index=1</p> <p>Discussion after each video:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summarizing task 2. Exposing the core theme 3. Personal emotional elicitation
<p>Day 4</p>	<p><i>Swami and Friends</i> Chapter 12-19 (teaching)</p> <p>Discussion on Orientalism and Hybridit</p>	<p><i>Swami and Friends</i> interactive activity</p> <p>Understanding identity: Discussion-based activity to understand what different areas inside the text speak of colonial influence. The instructor must remember to link to day-to-day life of students.</p> <p>Format: Group work</p> <p>Interaction: T-SS; SS-SS; SS-T</p> <p>Potential questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where in your daily life do you feel the loss of your own cultural identity? 2. Do you feel displeasure towards your native culture? Did this originate within yourself or is this inherited?

<p>Day 5</p>	<p>Watching Gandhi (Attenborough, 1982)</p>	<p>Discussing Gandhi - Brief introduction into Gandhian ideologies and his influence during the freedom struggle.</p> <p>Focus on 5 major principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satyagraha • Swadeshi • Anti-violence/ Ahimsa • Swaraj • Sarvodaya <p>Potential questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does Gandhi's inclusion of these new terms influence readers? 2. Why does Gandhi talk about ahimsa and not shanti? 3. What are possible interpretations of satyagraha?
<p>Day 6</p>	<p><i>Home in the World</i> Chapter 1-5 (teaching)</p> <p>Discussion on gendered spaces</p>	<p><i>A Home in the World</i> interactive activity</p> <p>Discussion based on understanding culture</p> <p>Potential questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does it mean to be a Hong Konger? Do you feel aligned with this label? If so, why? If not, why? <p>Format: Class discussion</p> <p>Interaction: T-SS; SS-T</p>
<p>Day 7</p>	<p><i>Home in the World</i> Chapter 6-10 (teaching)</p> <p>Discussion on nation building</p>	<p>Presentation support and guide</p> <p>Students are expected to submit a draft of their final assignment. They shall receive feedback for their task and further suggestions for improvement.</p>

<p>Day 8</p>	<p><i>A Home in the World</i> Chapter 11-15 (teaching)</p> <p>Discussion on nation building and spaces</p>	<p><i>A Home in the World</i> (video screening)</p> <p>Screening Ghare Baire, Satyajit Ray 1984</p> <p>Presentation support and guide</p>
<p>Day 9</p>	<p><i>A Home in the World</i> Chapters 15-18 (teaching)</p> <p>Discussion on nation building and spaces</p>	<p><i>A Home in the World</i> interactive activity</p> <p>Answering the question of where your home in this world is.</p> <p>Potential question:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What constitutes a home? Does displacement occur within a region of one's native origin? 2. How do you think first generation immigrants into Hong Kong define home? Can you give examples from your family? <p>Format: Class discussion</p> <p>Interaction: T-SS; SS-T</p>
<p>Day 10</p>	<p><i>Final Presentation</i></p>	<p><i>Final Presentation</i></p>

Potential Teaching Tools

1. Classroom ticket: At the beginning of each class, hand the student two cards. On one, they are expected to write what they are already aware of once the topic is introduced. At the end of the class, they are to summarise key learning areas.
2. Sketching: Using sketching to depict what they have learnt or to represent scenes that stood out to them. Encourage students to use a quote from the text with the sketch.
3. Discussion shuffle: Divide students into odd and even numbers. Allow students with the same number to be in one group. Assign each group a specific prompt and after discussion, the students have to be shuffled such that the even numbers get shuffled within that number group and the same for odd (eg: students from Group 2 go to Group 4, 6, 8 etc. Students from Group 1 go to Group 3, 5, 7 and so on).
4. Slow Looking: Showing students images that are representative of the topic at hand and asking them what they see, think and wonder. They can also create a sensible narrative from the story at hand by guessing what the people in the image represent.
5. Post-it jamboard: Using post-its to ask the students to write key words or opinions and organising it on the board.

Discussion questions:

1. Is the depiction of history through stories educational? What kind of influence does this have on readers and content consumers?
2. Swami and his friends were products of his time. What do you think they would look like in today's scenario in Hong Kong?
3. Is the answer to decolonization the complete wiping out of western influence?
4. Cultural preservation is important but many practices are outdated and irrelevant to today's day and age. Should they still be preserved as they are part of culture?
5. How does the concept of space matter to your identity formation?
6. Why do Indian authors still write in English? Is English an Indian language now?

Grading Rubric for Final Task

	Topic Comprehension	Coherency	Productive Analysis
A	The student has displayed a clear understanding of the topic taught and has applied it correctly to their chosen presentation idea.	The student's presentation has followed a completely logical flow and their argument is clear.	The student has displayed clear out-of-box thinking and has creatively managed to put forward their ideas.
B	The student has mostly understood the topics but failed to clearly and correctly correlate it to their presentation idea.	The student's presentation has structured arguments but lacks a clear logical flow or vice versa.	The student has shown some amount of creativity and has made a clear effort to present uniquely.
C	The student has a confused idea about what the topics taught entail and have incorrectly applied it in their presentation.	The student's presentation lacks a logical flow and they have failed to produce a clear argument.	The student has not displayed any creativity.
D	Absent / no submission	Absent / no submission	Absent / no submission

Additional Readings

1. Ambedkar, B.R. *Annihilation of Caste*. Navayana Press, 2016 [1990.]
2. Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Verso, 1991.
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7. Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of the Maladies*. Houghton Mifflin, 1999.
8. Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Blackwell, 1991 [1974].
9. Masuzawa, Tomoko. *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*. University of Chicago Press, 2005.
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12. Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. Pantheon Books, 1978.
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14. Tagore, Rabindranath. *Chokher Bali*. Translated by Radha Chakravarty, Vintage Classics, 2012 [1916].
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EN YU YAP

BLIND CINEMA AND ACCESSIBLE TECHNOLOGIES

Blind cinema, a pioneering field within inclusive filmmaking, has gained substantial attention and recognition in recent years. Its primary objective is to ensure that individuals with visual impairments can fully participate in the cinematic experience. Accessibility technologies play a pivotal role, offering innovative solutions that bridge the sensory gap and enhance the understanding and enjoyment of films.

This literature review aims to explore existing research and publications within the domain of blind cinema and accessibility technologies, identify gaps in knowledge, and highlight potential areas for future exploration.



Blind cinema fundamentally redefines traditional film viewing by leveraging various accessibility technologies.

Accessibility Technologies in Blind Cinema

Audio Description and Its Impact:

Audio description significantly enhances the understanding and enjoyment of films by those with visual impairments. Maszerowska, Matamala and Orero (2014) highlight how audio descriptions (where visual elements of a movie are narrated to provide context and detail) evoke rich mental imagery and emotional engagement when well-crafted and synchronised with the narrative. However, studies on audio descriptions' standardisation and quality assessment still need to be expanded.

Tactile Experiences:

Tactile cinema emerged as a novel technique, allowing visually impaired audiences to engage with movies physically. This approach utilises 3D-printed models and haptic feedback devices to create a tactile experience. To date, the literature offers insights into its potential but needs a more extensive evaluation of its impact on understanding and immersion.



JENNIFER QIN

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

CONTENT

1. Corporate governance mechanisms and creative accounting practices: the role of accounting regulation (Olojede, P., & Erin, O. (2021))
2. Analysis of Quality of Management Accounting Information System to Improve the Implementation of Good Corporate Governance Principles (Case of Sharia Commercial Banks in Bandung City) (Lestari, R. (2020))
3. Management accounting practices of SMEs: The impact of organizational DNA, business potential and operational technology (Azudin, A., & Mansor, N. (2018))
4. Impact of the Accounting Information System on Corporate Governance: Evidence from Turkish Non-Listed Companies (Uyar, A., Gungormus, A. H., & Kuzey, C. (2017))



Corporate governance mechanisms and creative accounting practices: the role of accounting regulation

Paul Olojede, Olayinka Erin

Olojede, P., & Erin, O. (2021). Corporate governance mechanisms and creative accounting practices: the role of accounting regulation. *International Journal of Disclosure and Governance*, 18(3), 207–222. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41310-021-00106-4>.

Research question:

Impact of corporate governance mechanisms on creative accounting practices in Nigeria following the enactment of Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN) Act 2011

Importance:

- Rising cases of high profile corporate failures in recent years are a source of concern to all stakeholders
- The public are more critical about the effectiveness of corporate governance mechanisms in reducing creative accounting practices

Hypothesis:

Corporate governance mechanisms have no significant impact on creative accounting practices since the enactment of the FRCN Act, 2011.

Sample:

70 firms selected from a population of one hundred and sixty-six (166) companies listed in the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) as at 31 December 2017

Methods:

- Regression
- Difference-in-differences estimator

Finding:

- Effectiveness of corporate governance mechanisms in reducing creative accounting practices significantly improved with the enactment of FRCN Act 2011
- Regulatory intervention contributes to effective corporate governance mechanism which invariably minimizes creative accounting practices

Contribution:

- Growing literature in corporate governance, creative accounting and regulation at the firm level in emerging economies with Nigeria as a focus
- Added to extant knowledge by examining how activities of regulatory agencies influenced creative accounting practices in Nigeria

Policy implications:

- Role of regulators cannot be undermined in corporate governance activities
- Corporate organizations intensify effort to uphold corporate and financial integrity once there is effective regulatory authorities to enforce compliance
- Non-compliance with corporate governance codes by corporate organizations may have adverse effect on corporate growth, sustainability and reputation in the long run

Further research:

- Effectiveness of corporate governance and creative accounting practices in different regulatory environment
- Corporate governance and creative accounting practices in other emerging (especially African) countries

Analysis of Quality of Management Accounting Information System to Improve the Implementation of Good Corporate Governance Principles (Case of Sharia Commercial Banks in Bandung City)

Rini Lestari

Lestari, R. (2020). Analysis of Quality of Management Accounting Information System to Improve the Implementation of Good Corporate Governance Principles (Case of Sharia Commercial Banks in Bandung City). *Research Journal of Finance and Accounting*, 11(6), 85-89.

Research question:

Impact of corporate governance mechanisms on creative accounting practices in Nigeria following the enactment of Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN) Act 2011

Importance:

- Rising cases of high profile corporate failures in recent years have been a source of concern to all stakeholders
- The public have become more critical about the effectiveness of corporate governance mechanisms in reducing creative accounting practices

Hypothesis:

Corporate governance mechanisms have no significant impact on creative accounting practices since the enactment of the FRCN Act, 2011.

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Management accounting practices of SMEs: The impact of organizational DNA, business potential and operational technology

Afirah Azudin, Noorhayati Mansor

Azudin, A., & Mansor, N. (2018). Management accounting practices of SMEs: The impact of organizational DNA, business potential and operational technology. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 23(3), 222-226.

Objectives:

- (i) to examine current stage of MAPs among Malaysian SMEs
- (ii) to determine the impact of organizational DNA, business potential and operational technology on MAPs

Research question:

- 1) What is the extent of MAPs practiced by Malaysian SMEs?
- 2) What is the impact of organisational DNA (size, competitive strategy and decentralization) on the MAPs?
- 3) What is the impact of business potential (customer power, technology advancement and market competition) on the MAPs?
- 4) What is the impact of operational technology (complexity of processing systems, advanced manufacturing technology and total quality management) on the MAPs?

Importance:

- 1. SMEs play a crucial role in the economic growth in both developing and developed countries. Globally, SMEs represent 99% of the business population. As for Malaysia, SMEs represent 97.3% of its registered businesses and contributing 36% of the nation's gross domestic product.
- 2. The existence of SMEs plays a significant role in the economic development in most countries.
- 3. To thrive, businesses must consider both financial and non-financial data. Management Accounting (MA) is a valuable tool for SMEs, enhancing managerial functions by integrating these two types of information.

Hypothesis:

H1. Organisational DNA has positive impact on MAPs.

H2. Business potential has positive impact on MAPs.

H3. Operational technology has positive impact on MAPs.

Data:

Survey questionnaire

Population:

SMEs on the east coast of Malaysia represented by three states:

(i) Kelantan; (ii) Terengganu; and (iii) Pahang

Analysis techniques:

1. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

2. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

102 sets of the surveyed data were used

Table 2
Population and sample size.

No.	Region	Population		Sample
1	Terengganu	812	38.60%	126
2	Kelantan	734	34.88%	114
3	Pahang	558	26.52%	87
Total		2104	100%	327

Note: The total number of sample size is taken from the table suggested by [Sekaran and Bougie \(2010\)](#).

Finding:

1. The majority of SMEs in Malaysia are still practicing the traditional MAPs.
2. The use of advanced MAPs in developing countries is still very low, probably due to the lack of knowledge on the benefits of MAPs in businesses.
3. Forward looking MAPs (which basically looks at the financial information only; i.e., Stage 1 and 2) is adopted more than the financial monitoring practices (which looks at both the financial and non-financial aspect; i.e., Stage 3 and Stage 4).

Table 1
The evolution of MA.

Stage	Focus and Techniques or Tools
Stage 1 (Drifting MA)	Focus: Management and control decision through the use of actual costing and past financial data. Techniques or Tools: Financial ratios and comparative business analysis.
Stage 2 (Traditional MA)	Focus: Efficient MA through the utilization of scientific management. Techniques or Tools: Cost-Volume-Profit (CVP) and responsibility accounting.
Stage 3 (Quantitative MA)	Focus: Controlling the planning process and forecasting the business future. Techniques or Tools: Economic Order Quantity (EOQ) and inventory management.
Stage 4 (Integrated MA)	Focus: Integration of management accounting and organizational management. Techniques or Tools: Target costing and lean production.

4. Flexibility of MAPs implementation where in using the MAPs: it is not necessary for organizations to follow the MAPs sequence of development.

5. Only operational technology has a significant positive impact on the MAPs. Both organizational DNA and business potential show an insignificant negative impact on the MAPs.

6. SMEs increase the use of operational technology in their operation, the need to have sophisticated costing practices also increases. Implementing improved operational technology produced increased efficiency through improved costing system and thus, MAPs.

Contribution:

Add more empirical evidence on MA from developing countries to close the gap which had been highlighted by Lavia Lopez and Hiebl (2015)

Future research:

- Further explore the MAPs issues within the Nishimura (2003) framework among SMEs in the Asian region
- Examine the impact of the age of SMEs and the MAPs (how sophisticated MA had been practiced in order to move towards ensuring business sustainability in this rapidly growing business of SMEs)



Impact of the Accounting Information System on Corporate Governance: Evidence from Turkish Non-Listed Companies

Ali Uyar, Ali Haydar Gungormus and Cemil Kuzey

Uyar, A., Gungormus, A. H., & Kuzey, C. (2017). Impact of the accounting information system on corporate governance: Evidence from Turkish non-listed companies. *Australasian Accounting, Business and Finance Journal*, 11(1), 9-27.

Research question:

What is the association between the accounting information system (i.e. bookkeeping, financial reporting, the Turkish Accounting/Financial Reporting Standards, and budgeting system) and corporate governance?

Importance:

- To avoid future scandals
- Enhance good corporate governance created by the accounting function of business organizations

Hypothesis:

- H1. The effective use of the bookkeeping system impacts corporate governance positively.
- H2. The effective use of financial reporting in decision-making impacts corporate governance positively.
- H3. The use of TAS/TFRS impacts corporate governance positively.
- H4. The efficacy of the budgeting system impacts corporate governance positively.

Sample:

400 firms operating in Istanbul, out of which 142 responded to the survey, yielding a response rate of 35.5%

Data collection:

1. Direct interviews with the managers
2. Online survey
3. Telephoning firms whose addresses were retrieved from business associations

Questionnaire setting:

1. Demographics
2. Accounting information system
3. Corporate governance

Methods:

1. Simple random sampling method
2. Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)
3. Confirmatory factor analysis (by maximum likelihood method): test the construct validity and the model fit of the research model

Goodness of fit:

Chi-square/df

Comparative fit index (CFI)

Goodness of fit index (GFI)

Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)

Standardized root mean square residual (SRMR)

Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)

Finding:

Bookkeeping system, efficacy of financial reporting, and efficacy of the budgeting system have a positive impact on the corporate governance level, whereas the mere adoption of Turkish Accounting/Financial Reporting Standards do not.

Contribution:

Enhancement of good corporate governance that alleviates agency problems in business organizations.

Board Members:

- Establishing corporate governance mechanisms and resolving agency issues
- Support managers and help them design an accounting information system
- Foster the employment of corporate governance mechanisms
- Give emphasis to management accounting practices, such as budgeting, to ensure internal monitoring practices, together with external reporting and monitoring (significant effect of the budgeting system on corporate governance)

Managers:

- Establish internal reporting procedures, and internal control and monitoring devices before inviting external control through independent auditing
- Ensure the delivery of quality financial information to their stakeholders

Academic implications

Prior study:

- role of financial reporting and auditing in corporate governance

More studies required:

- Utilization of management accounting practices in strategic governance
- Influence of management accounting practices on corporate governance

TRORRSTOR.



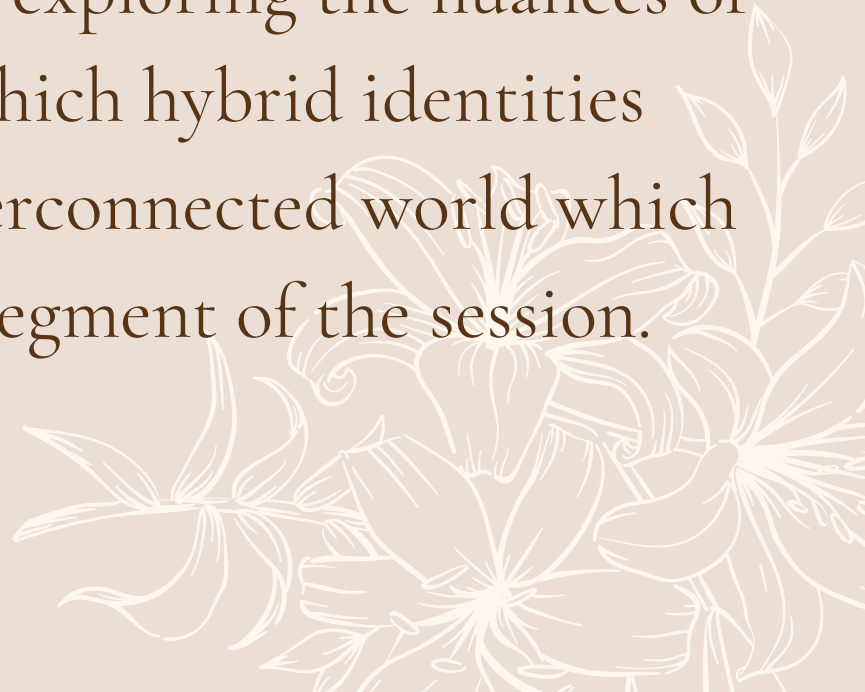
Creative Writing Workshop

from: Vaishali

The writing workshop commenced with an insightful introduction delving into Homi Bhabha's seminal work, "The Location of Culture," which explores the complex interplay of culture, identity, and power dynamics. The discussion centered around hybridity in identity, a concept that challenges traditional notions of fixed identities and emphasizes the fluid and dynamic nature of cultural formations.

Participants engaged in a thought-provoking dialogue on how hybridity manifests in contemporary society, shaping individual and collective identities. Drawing from Bhabha's theories, the session explored how cultural boundaries blur, leading to the emergence of new and diverse forms of expression and selfhood. By unpacking Bhabha's ideas on cultural hybridity, participants gained a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in identity construction and representation.

The session served as a springboard for exploring the nuances of cultural diversity and the ways in which hybrid identities contribute to a more inclusive and interconnected world which seamlessly translated into the next segment of the session.

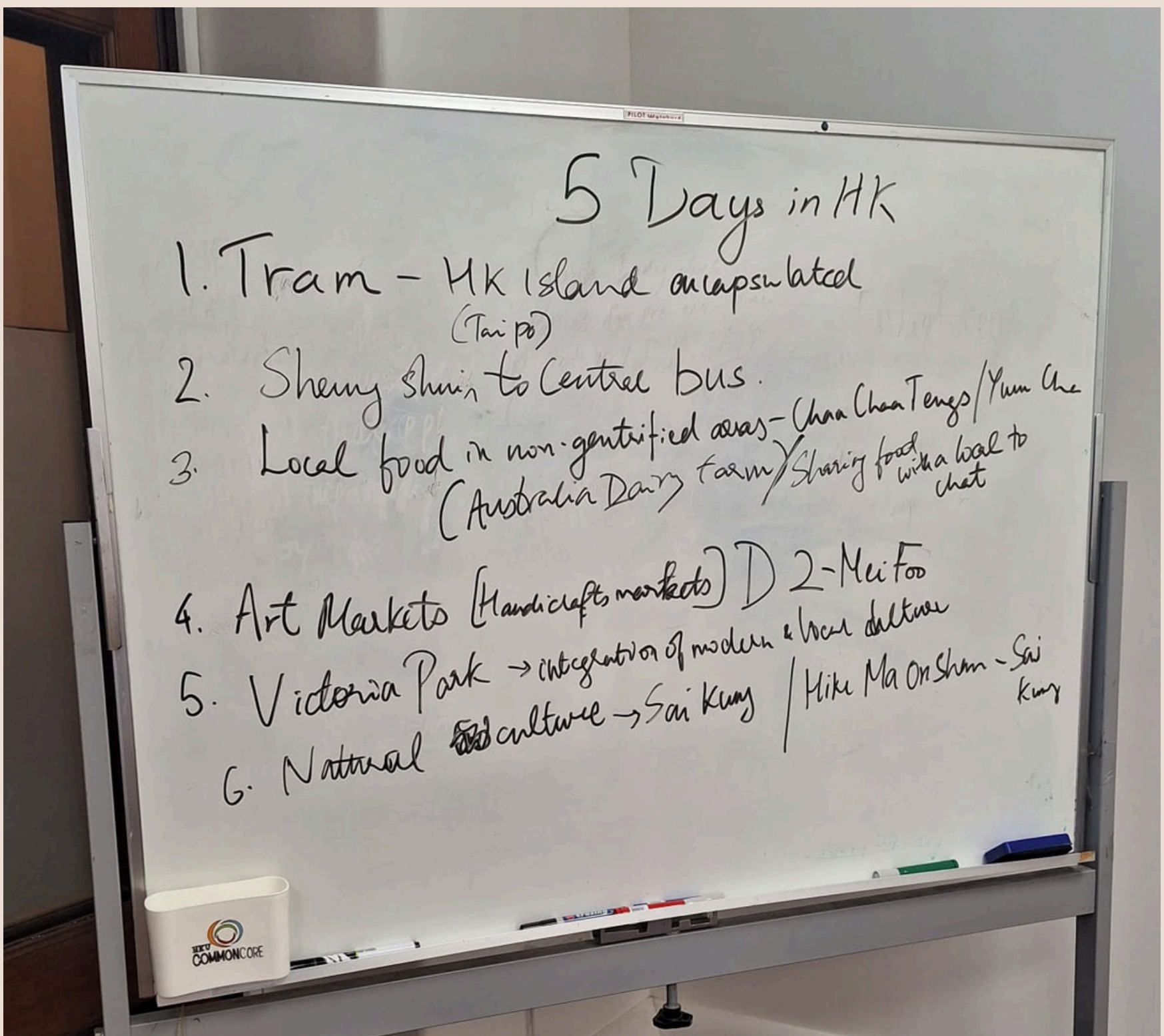


Overall, the introduction set a thought-provoking tone for the writing workshop, prompting participants to reflect on the multifaceted nature of identity and the dynamic interplay of cultures in shaping personal narratives and creative expressions.

Following the engaging discussion on cultural hybridity inspired by Homi Bhabha's work, participants in the writing workshop embarked on a creative journey to explore their ideal trip around Hong Kong as a reflection of the city's essence and symbolism.

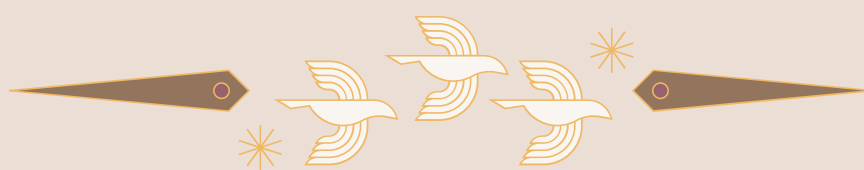


Immersed in the vibrant imagery and rich cultural tapestry of Hong Kong, participants unleashed their creativity through descriptive narratives that captured the city's dynamic spirit, juxtaposing traditional elements with modern influences. By envisioning their ideal tour around Hong Kong, participants crafted narratives that served as a microcosm of the city's diverse identity, blending historical landmarks, culinary delights, bustling markets, and panoramic views into a vivid tapestry of experiences.



Furthermore, the workshop culminated in a collaborative exercise where participants engaged with provided prompts, channeling their newfound insights into structured writing prompts that challenged them to explore different facets of storytelling, character development, and narrative arcs.

Through these creative exercises, participants honed their writing skills, delving deeper into the intricacies of storytelling and narrative construction while drawing inspiration from the cultural mosaic of Hong Kong. The workshop provided a platform for participants to experiment with new perspectives, refine their writing techniques, and cultivate a deeper appreciation for the art of storytelling in the context of cultural hybridity and identity exploration.



POEMS.



I remember waiting for home

Diaries scattered, ink blotted over paintings,
pressed neat on stacks of still memories,
I find him standing there in front of the mirror whispering 'home'.
Scripted teen gossip morphed into
college to-do lists, chores and tasks unfinished,
I find him kneeling in front of the mirror whispering 'Home'
Conversations slipped from nonchalant teases to appeasing the masses,
I find him on the floor in front of the mirror whispering 'home'.

I remember when 'home' was force-fed
to me by henna-smothered hands,
Soft, unstoried fingers of mine
mimicking the arthritic cries of a colonized life.

Delicately plucking moringa leaves off its stems,
then fed to my goats for Qurbani
I remember home like water rivulets snaking down spines
that break apart from heavy burden.
I remember home in ways that made my voice
larger than the room I was standing in.

Their hair flows like rivers while yours
is that which the sea breaks against
letting your mind wander in waves that lap back and forth
but come to no resolution
What made you think home was here?
But I remember when home told me to be patient.

I'm still waiting.

Yusuf Mohideen





The Destruction of Home

It should be a universal truth that home is wherever you feel safest and most protected, or whoever you feel the safest and most protected with.

I sat comfortably in my room, typing away at my computer to reply to messages while watching a video. My parents were outside in the living room, Mom watching shortform videos on her phone as always while Dad worked, studying his university texts. I could go to them whenever I needed just to feel safer and comforted.

My parents were my home.

A rumbling caught my attention. It started out imperceptible, then grew louder. I peered beyond my monitors— and my eyes widened.

Missiles were approaching like shooting stars. Instead of carrying the hopes and wishes of the people, they were coming to annihilate them.


“MOM!! DAD!!” I cried out as I rushed out to the living room. “We need to—”

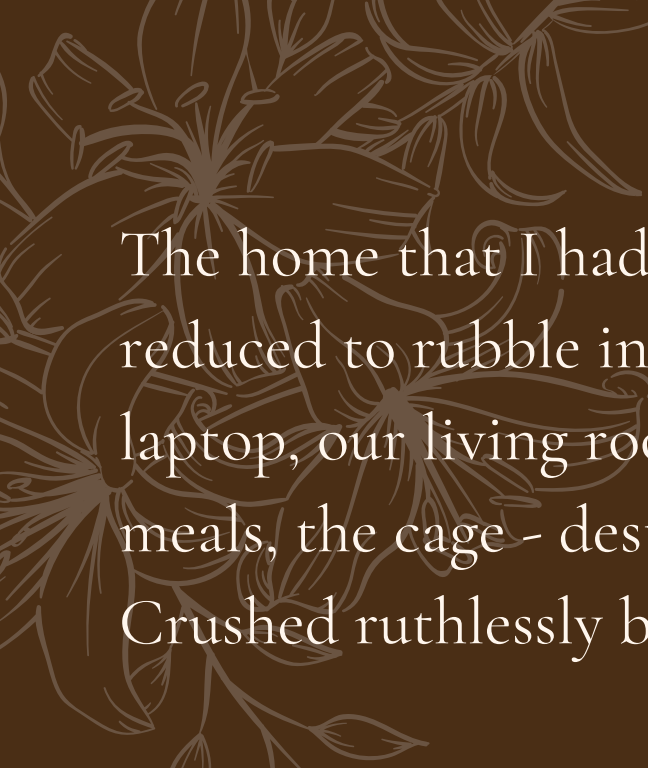
I was lying in darkness. There’s a weight on top of me. Something heavy, and sharp, and wet with blood.

I pushed it aside and with all my strength until I could feel the sun. Grunting, I managed to pull my lower body out from under what I now could see was a pile of rubble. I glanced around.

My eyes widen into saucers.

The very air itself was filled with ash and the smell of rusted metal. Where there used to be a line of old cream-coloured and reddish brown buildings and a bustling wet market- only piles upon piles of rubble remained.





The home that I had been living in for more than the past decade was reduced to rubble in a matter of minutes. All of my books, my room, my laptop, our living room, our kitchen, the dining table where we had our meals, the cage - destroyed, and my memories with them along with it. Crushed ruthlessly by emotionless bombs.

Tears streamed down my face, but my cries were stuck in my throat. All I could do was heave and pant. My sadness and grief slowly morphed into rage.

Who sent these bombs? Who could be so heartless as to destroy the memories of thousands of families like ours? How can we make them pay for what they've done?

Just then, I heard a weak groan from underneath the rubble- Mom! It had to be! She was still alive, somehow!

I dug through the rubble until I saw her teal cotton shirt. My hands ached, but I refused to pause in any way, shape or form.

My hands flew to my mouth.


Mom's previously pale body was red with blood and blackened with burnt skin, her clothes torn and ashen.

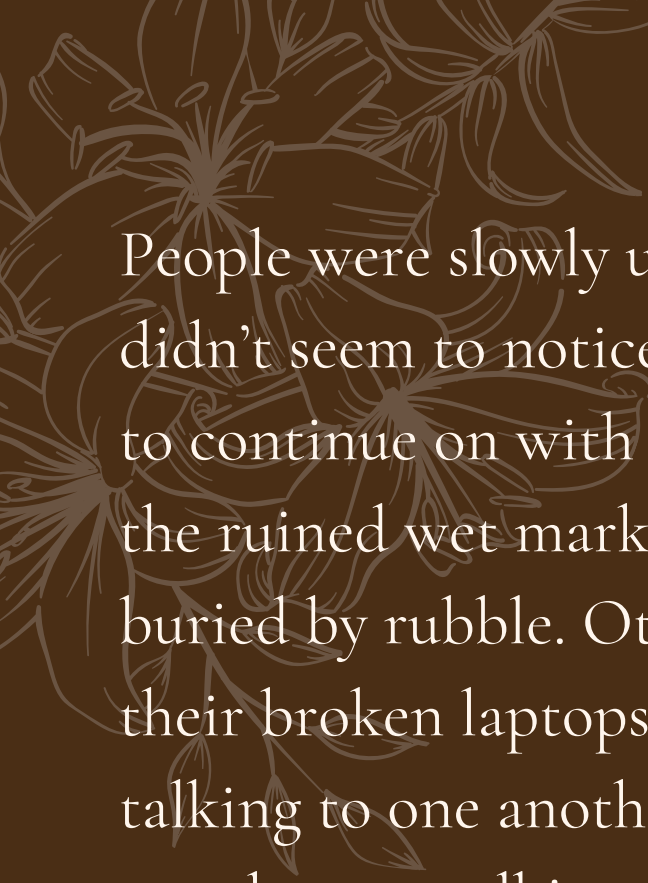
Only a burnt neck stump remained where her head used to be.

Before I could react any more, Mom- or what remained of her- turned to me.

"Charmaine...look at this...." She held up the pieces of her broken phone. "Isn't this Olympic candidate so cool?"

I turned my head away, unable to bear looking at her anymore- yet I couldn't look away from the strange scene.





People were slowly unearthing themselves from the rubble, but they didn't seem to notice the destruction around them. Instead, they seemed to continue on with their lives as usual. There were people walking along the ruined wet market and reaching for pieces of fruit and vegetables buried by rubble. Others simply sat on top of the rubble, clicking away at their broken laptops or phones, reading books half burnt to a crisp, or talking to one another. A chill ran down my spine as I noticed that some people were talking to headless bodies, or bodies with limbs missing.

Was I just hallucinating and being delirious? I wasn't sure.

I couldn't help but let loose a scream.

“CAN'T YOU ALL SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING?” I cried out.

“Charmaine? Wake up...”

“YOU'RE ALL DEAD! YOUR HOMES HAVE ALL BEEN DESTROYED! AREN'T YOU ANGRY? AREN'T YOU UPSET? WAKE THE FUCK UP!”

“Charmaine!”

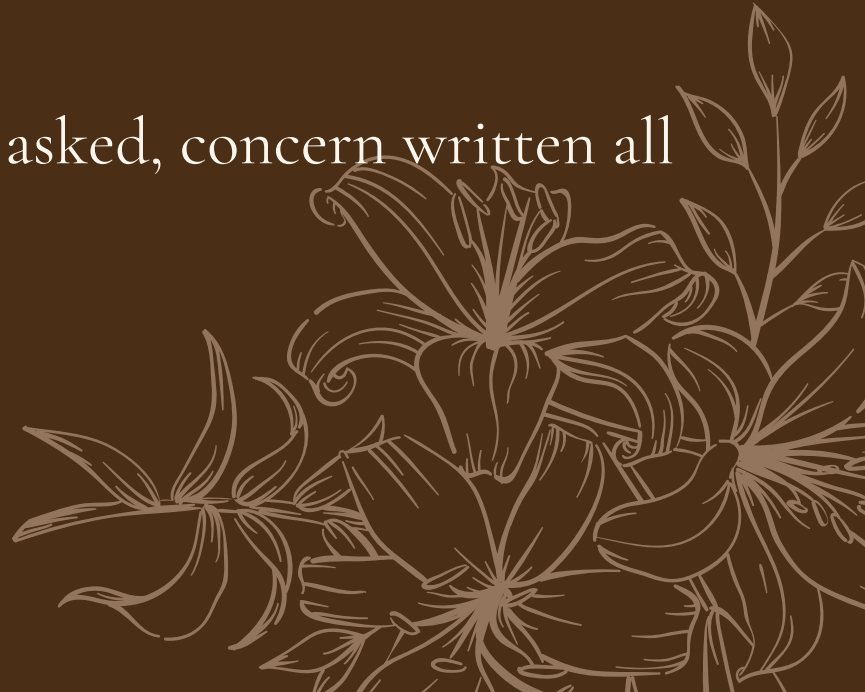
I screamed again- until I realised that I was back in my room.

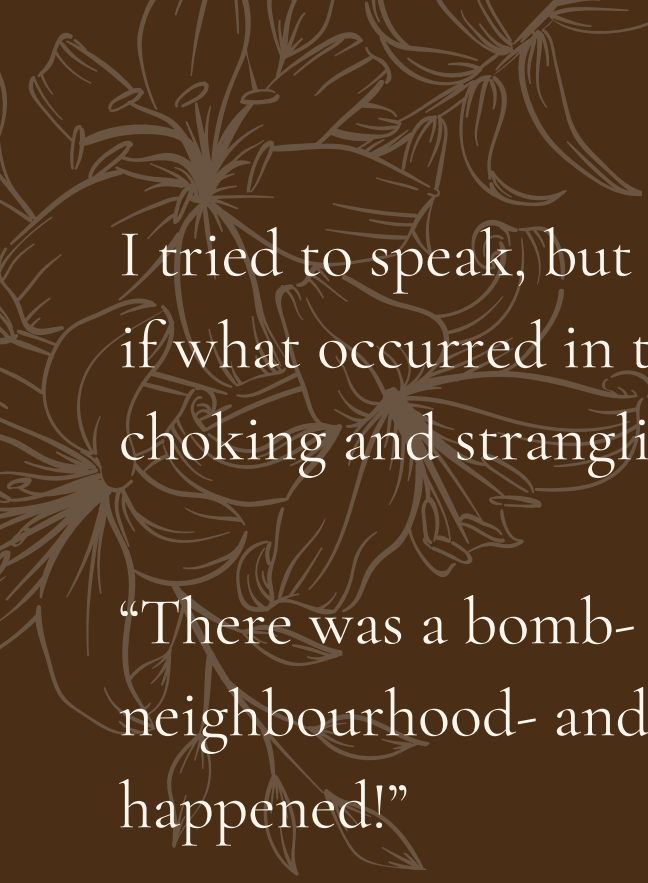
Back in my chair, back in front of my computer.

Safe, and sound.

Home.

“What's wrong, why are you screaming?” Dad asked, concern written all over his expression.





I tried to speak, but all I could do was open and close my mouth. It was as if what occurred in the past hour was still floating in the air like dust, choking and strangling me.

“There was a bomb- it bombed our house, and the rest of our neighbourhood- and you and dad- our neighbours too- acted like nothing happened!”

Dad sighed, smiling exasperatedly as he glanced toward my monitor, where a video played of a bomb falling on an apartment building, causing a cloud of smoke to rise from the wreckage. The video then cut to an ashen-faced man crying, before Dad clicked away.

“It’s alright, my dear girl. It’s just a nightmare. You’ve got to stop watching these kinds of videos. Besides, if a bomb really did fall on our house, we’d be dead. And we wouldn’t be able to do anything about it, right?”

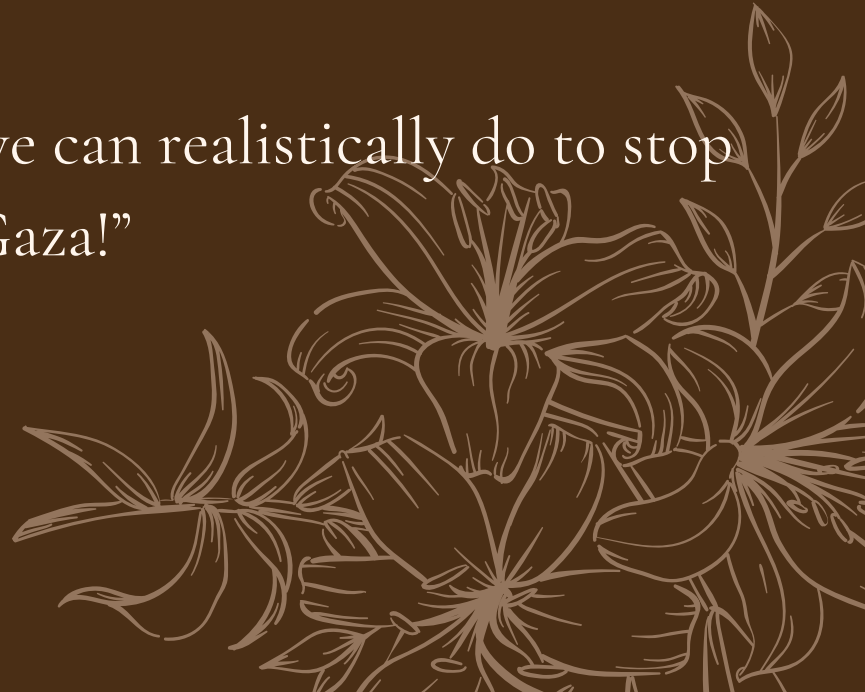
A chill ran down my spine. The same thing mom told me earlier, word for word- smiling the same smile while lying amongst the rubble.

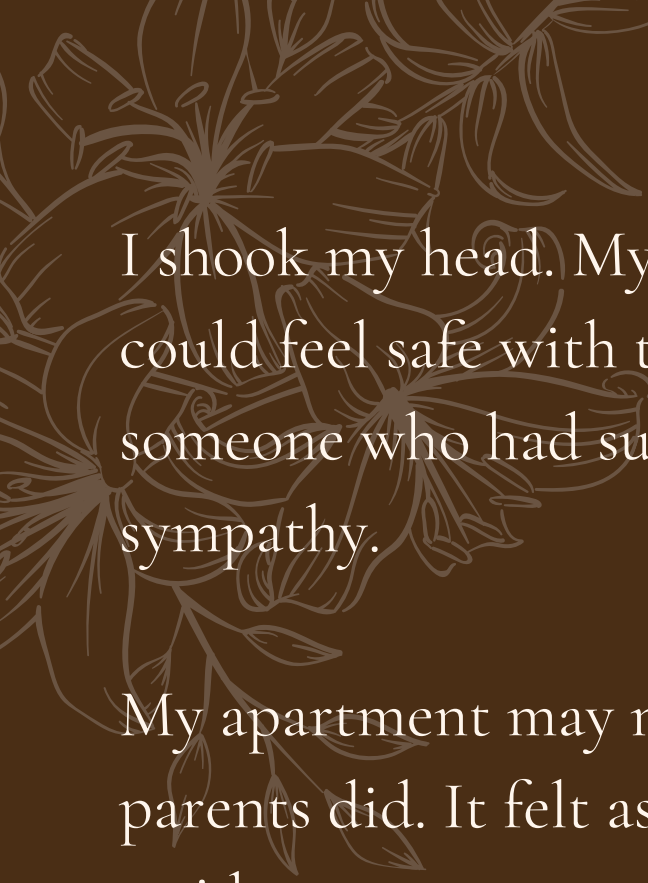
“No, we’ve got to do something! There has to be something we can do! Would you care if it was our house that was bombed-”

“Charmaine Wong! Calm down! What’s gotten into you?!” Mom snapped from outside in the living room. “You can’t just let this take over your life!”

“What do you mean?! That’s their home being bombed and destroyed! Their lives are being ruined in an instant! Families are being wiped out by bombs! And you’re saying you don’t care?! What if it’s our homes being destroyed?! Wouldn’t you want other people to care?”

“Of course I do! It’s sad, but there’s nothing we can realistically do to stop it! Your home is here in Hong Kong- not in Gaza!”





I shook my head. My parents used to be my home, in the sense that I could feel safe with them. But I could never truly feel safe again with someone who had such callous disregard for humanity beyond a detached sympathy.

My apartment may not have turned into rubble, but my trust for my parents did. It felt as if my heart no longer had a place where it would reside.

Charmaine Wong





Naming Those Well-Tended Gravestones

So he called it “the naming of cats”, or at least that’s what I remember. Back damp against the bench, facing a circle of bushes stirred into a spiral, his voice pushed through swaddled sun. The clouds dappled three names: the dignified, the everyday, and the concealed. Three identities, three faces, three lives.

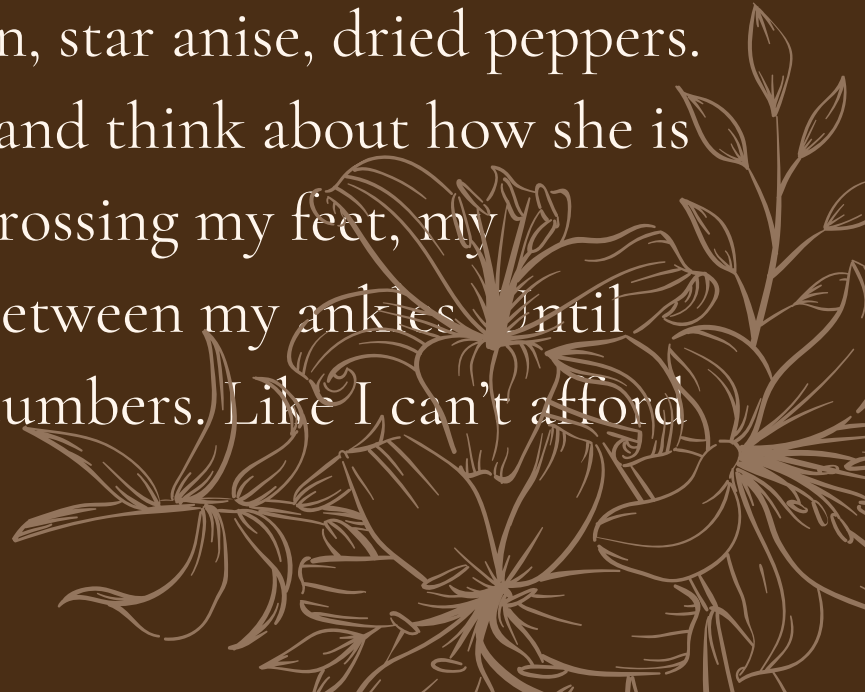
Three deaths, only a generous slice out of a cat’s pie, but ineffability on my part and on the small metal dome at the eye of the maze. A gravestone. A round, shiny mirror trapping blanketed sky behind round, shiny eyes. Death, an effable, ineffable madness.

One of Those Deaths

The aromas of the kitchen come back to me. Peanuts popping in a burnt pan. Lard in metal bowls matted with grease. A plastic bag, weathered like my mother’s palm, traps a soup spoon of red snowflakes. Since the funeral, I dare not take more than what fits between two fingertips in the fear that she may have one more thing to worry about.

We don’t cook the same. Her recipe, hasty with wrong characters, tastes like a second dying. A squeezed tissue speckles scarlet when I’d forgotten the safest way to use a knife is to guide it with my wrist. The cucumbers are expensive today but maybe that will make all the difference. Maybe. But I cannot eat the chilli flakes. Hope is such a dangerous thing.

By the time winter lines its shoes outside my door a thin layer of dust will have gathered on the bag’s weathered surface. In that hopeful tomorrow my mother will have returned and settled in a month entire. Shells of sunflower seeds. Blackened Asics. Jackets from the hospital that need washing. Chilli flakes and Chinese peppercorn, star anise, dried peppers. At the dining table, I’ll eat stir-fried chicken and think about how she is my whole world and how she just lost hers. Crossing my feet, my heartbeat will flutter, like stuttered coughs, between my ankles. Until then, I’ll put away the chilli and forgo the cucumbers. Like I can’t afford it.



To You, an Elegy.

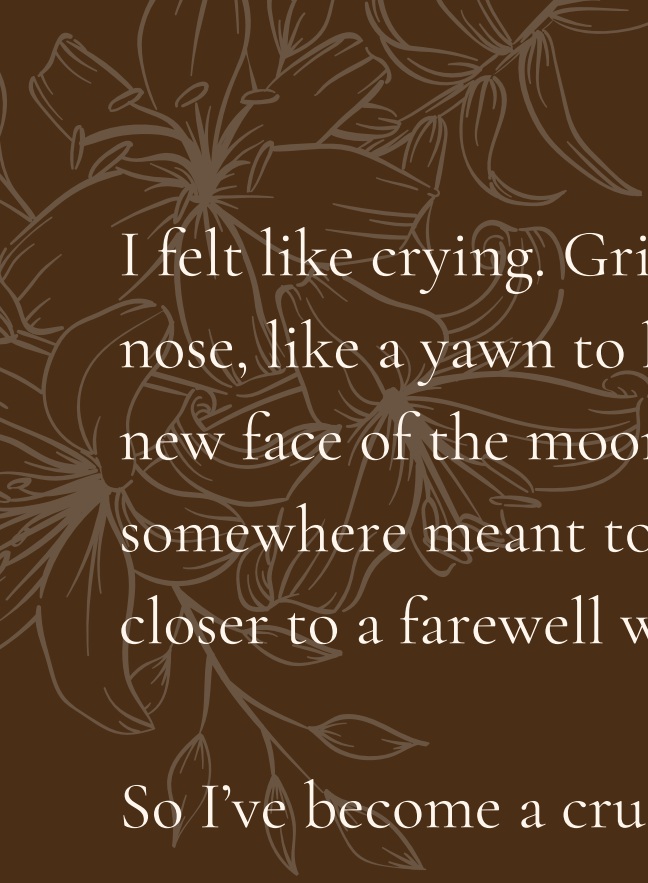
Where bed meets wall sits a Winnie the Pooh older than words themselves, a weathered yellow more mustard than yolk. The small tag bears only memory of his washing instructions. He was not a gift but a demand, the first I wanted before I could understand the meaning of desire. Under Walmart's grey-green lights, on a rack of pink towels, I squeezed my fingers around his hands. Tucked my chin over his head, clutched my fingers tightly over his stomach, and wielded my wanton greed, pushing my round, stubborn eyes into slits. My mother's irritation fuelled a rebellion. The first instance of my possession.

First companion. First friend, until I gave that name to the girl with chin-length hair and butterfly dresses in the apartment below. She studies in Xi'an now so there will never be more than our yellowed picture but even then I chained his stuffed paws to my hands as if there was no me without him. As if.

Kuwait. Boston. Chicago. Hong Kong. I took him everywhere until I didn't, until his space was spent on makeup, blouses, space for gifts. Now he guards the tight constraint where bed meets wall, more green than yellow, Kunming's Walmart long faded from thousands of detergents, thousands of renewals. Twenty years after I last fold my wrists over his heart, I pull him from his post. He is so small. My elbows barely itch of weathered fur. There's no dent on the bed, as if he is still waiting for some other adventure. Even though.

There's Someone to Watch Over You

One April, in the haziness between spring and summer, I pushed my cheek against the windowpane and looked over Alaska. The sky evaporated white and below lay vast snow untouched by human hands, languid cocoon mountaintops. No buildings, no cars, no ships, no people. Only the stranger's reclined seat, his wife's cheap instant ramen, and my mother's glasses hanging on her nose. No signs of life and it was lovely, not the machines but the absence of them, how easy it is for the world to forget we were here, and I'd always believed in God but then I did more strongly, if even for just a second.



I felt like crying. Grief's long fingers tapped the door twice. Tingling my nose, like a yawn to hide my sadness, it was impossible to forget that each new face of the moon meant we're headed closer to the end. Today's somewhere meant tomorrow's one day older, one day shorter, one day closer to a farewell we can't afford.

So I've become a cruel person. Above this erasing world, the end is not my own.

Dance, Dance, Dance!

So it brings me back to the beginning, to the naming of cats— or, rather, to tonight, where there are four butterflies drowning. Wingspans wide as palms, beige hemispheres curled into grins, June evening chains their feet down. Ma On Shan's sky is more sweat than air, a thickness like tar, and one butterfly pushes its little legs against the cement, breaking the currents with damp wings before waltzing one step closer to the railing. I reach to push it towards the grass but its wings jerk a terrified isolation. The evening's heaving cripples him. A drowning on land.

On the track, two other butterflies are dying. One more pirouettes a crooked S before falling, its brown wings gasping above dozens of rushing shoes, smiling eyes on race track. The butterfly lands underneath the railing and my eyes focus on its powdered wings.

They were no butterflies but moths, palm-sized *Samia wangi* with so many smiles. The moth by the railing winks, flamboyant brown costume, endless eyes only a part of its endless faces. The joyous parade only a half-laugh, because nothing laughs when it dies.

A million halves, then, a million half-deaths and half-lives and half-truths and half-lies. A million half-wings, half-*Samia wangi*, a potpourri of the beautiful ugly, an oxymoronic aubade. Facing myself and the flurry of smiling eyes. The final step of this *pas de deux*.

Joanna Xiaoqiao Wang



prompt: home

Some people take their home for granted
Others still find home amongst the rubble.

They say we belong to the state
as if we were its properties
to unbelong is to refuse to be tamed
to unbelong is to ~~not~~ carve out our own space
to unbelong is to ~~free ourselves of~~ 'get rid of the chains

Foreign soil, distant land
Yet on this diamond, kindred band
Softball sisters, bonded tight
Dugout hearth burns warm, bright

praying to God brings home to me every time, although I seldom pray
and I'm not religious (at 9/11), whenever I pray I speak to
God & if we're really close and most times I feel like
I'm a burden off my shoulders cause I get to share & talk
huge
good and bad news, and somehow I get comforted cause
I know I'm not being judged.

"Left HK; moved to Canada"
"Left HK; studying in Germany"

Curled up deep within my thick quilts I sighed
in resignation as the notification appeared on my
screen, ^{consequently}, momentarily lighting up my dark
room.

For twelve portraits I lined each strand of hair, brightened every iris, and
smoothed the wrinkles from their clothing. I washed them in teal shadows
and pink blushes, casted melted soda blues and orange sunsets on their shoulders,
and when I was done I signed my possession in gold, white, and silver. To be
mine is to be theirs, and to be theirs is to be best.

My dear mom,
anywhere with you is home.
If I was at home without you, it's not a home anymore.
You went back your home a lot,
mom needs mom.
But my dear mom,
You still have me.

as selfish as it sounds, I may have brought home to myself.
Home is comfort, is unapologetic, home is naked truth. In
the realities of finding home, I just had to stand still,
look at the mirror and smile back at home. He was
there all along and he always will be. The one constant,
routine and unbroken promise.



Letters Headed Home

transcribed

Some people take their home for granted.
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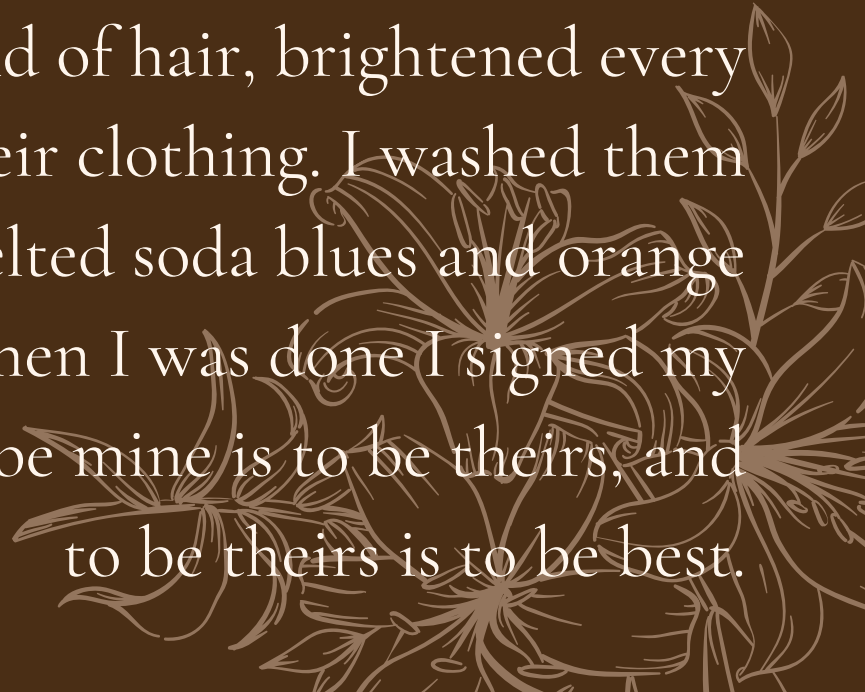
Praying to God brings home to me every time, although I seldom pray and I'm not religious (at all). Whenever I pray I speak to God as if we're really close and most times I feel like a huge burden off my shoulders cause I get to share both good and bad news, and somehow I get comforted cause I know I'm not being judged.

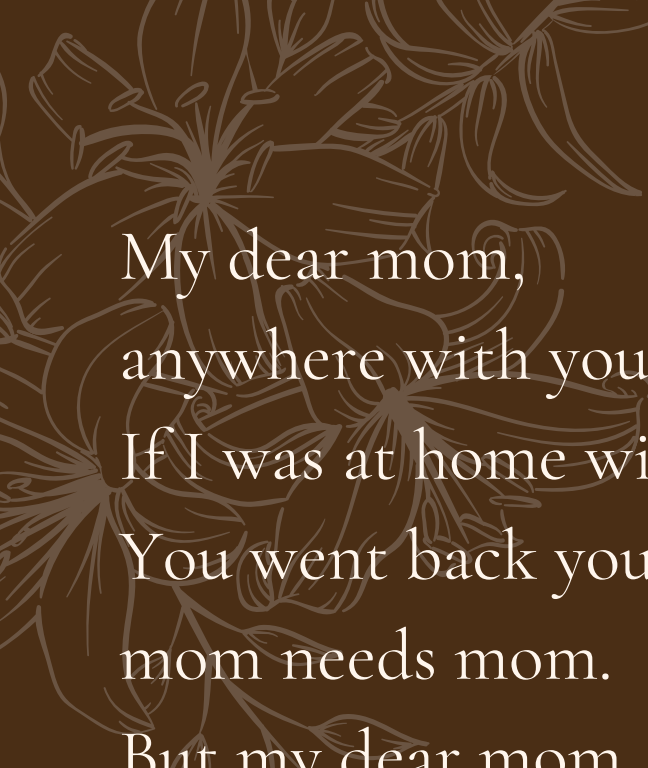
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Collected excerpts from poems by workshop participants



Blind Cinema Screening

from: En Yu

My research focuses on blind cinema and entertainment accessibility, a fascinating field that combines technology, creativity, and social inclusion. This interest was sparked after watching a documentary about the declining blind cinema industry in China, which highlighted the global challenge of making entertainment accessible to all. The realization that the world hasn't fully embraced accessible entertainment motivated me to delve deeper into this area.





My current work centers on blind cinema, exploring techniques like audio description and tactile elements to enhance the cinematic experience for visually impaired individuals. Looking ahead, I'm interested in expanding my research to include other forms of entertainment accessibility. A promising direction for future study could be the realm of accessible gaming. This could involve investigating adaptive controllers, audio-based gameplay, and the development of games specifically designed for visually impaired players. By bridging the gap between technology and inclusivity, I hope to contribute to a more accessible and enjoyable entertainment landscape for all.



