

E Pluribus Unum

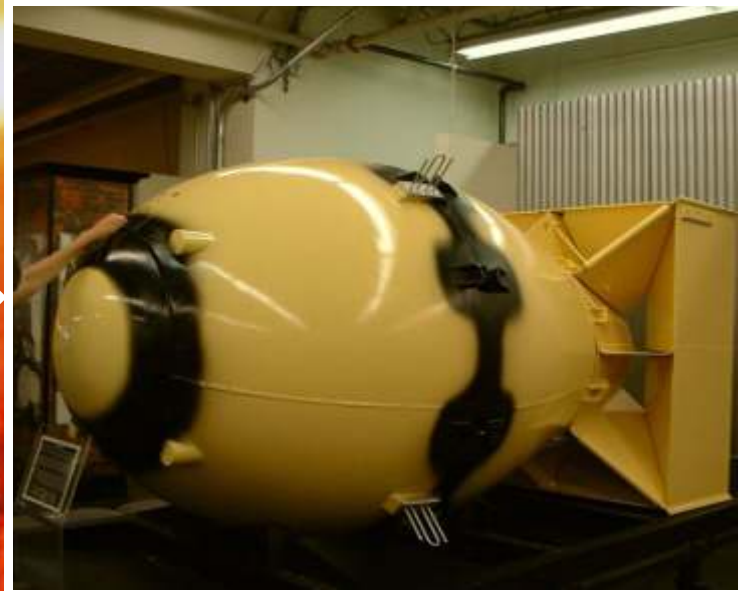
THE MANHATTAN PROJECT



"THE LITTLE BOY"

← ATOMIC BOMB
POWERED BY URANIUM - 235
DROPPED ON HIROSHIMA
6th Aug 1945

"THE FAT MAN"
ATOMIC BOMB
POWERED BY PLUTONIUM
DROPPED ON NAGASAKI
9th Aug 1945



INSIDE

THE MANHATTAN PROJECT
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193 MEMBER STATES <> ONE UNITED NATIONS

The Manhattan Project

-by Jeiya Khurana, Grade XI, SNS Gurugram



August 6, 2020 will mark the 75th anniversary of the bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima followed by August 9th at Nagasaki which had killed 140,000 in Hiroshima and approximately 73,000 people in Nagasaki by the end of 1945.

Through the destructive potential of the atomic bomb the second world war was ended and the nuclear age had commenced. How was this lethal technology discovered? What went in the making of the atomic bomb? What was the legacy of the US government's secret research project, titled as the Manhattan Project?

Discovering Nuclear Fission

German radiochemist **Otto Hahn** and **Fritz Strassman** in December 1938 discovered **nuclear fission** while bombarding **uranium with neutrons**. This discovery made in Berlin; Germany formed the basis of the **atomic bomb**. They perceived that the reaction followed from Albert Einstein's famous equation **$E=mc^2$** and concluded that energy in the form of heat would have been released due to loss of mass from the splitting of the uranium atom.



Otto Hahn

Fritz Strassman

The possibility of creating self-sustaining chain reaction which could be utilized in power plants, and huge explosions of heat and energy using unchecked reaction was uncovered. Soon this discovery backed by the Meitner-Frisch calculations made its way around the globe. Urged by a fellow physicist, **Einstein wrote a letter to President Franklin Roosevelt warning him about the possibility of Nazi Germany reaching closer to building an atomic bomb and suggested that the US initiate research on atomic weapons, though he didn't imply creating and using one against enemies.**

Interestingly, Einstein was denied the security clearance needed to work on the Manhattan project (the American led effort to develop an atomic bomb during WW2) by the US Army Intelligence office due to his left-leaning preferences.

Before the Manhattan Project

Einstein's letter spurred the US government into action. **A Uranium Committee was formed to determine uranium's role as a potential weapon and the feasibility of nuclear reactions.** Based on findings of this committee comprising of top military generals and scientists, the US government began funding **Enrico Fermi's and Leo Szilard's research at Columbia University on separation of radioactive isotopes.**

Under the supervision of LJ Briggs director of the National Bureau of Standards research was funded Franklin Roosevelt government in 1941 who assigned \$6,000 for the same.



Gen. Leslie R. Groves

Over time the US government decided that the Uranium Committee renamed the Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD) in 1941 did not have the resources for full-scale construction. So, in 1942 the project was transformed into a military initiative as the Army Corps of Engineers joined the OSRD and Gen. Leslie R. Groves was assigned charge of all Army activities (chiefly engineering activities) relating to the project.

The Manhattan Project

Since the first offices related to the project of development of the atomic bomb were set up in Manhattan, at 270 Broadway, the project earned its name based on its location. The headquarters were soon moved to Washington DC while facilities were set up in remote locations in New Mexico, Tennessee as well as sites in Canada.

Scientists like Fermi and Szilard at the University of Chicago were engaged in nuclear chain reactions and enrichment of uranium, particularly in producing uranium-235. Moreover, scientist Glenn Seaborg among others produced samples of pure plutonium, another prospective element for construction of the atomic bomb.

Klaus Fuchs: The Spy



Klaus Fuchs was a German born atomic scientist who a devout communist. In December 1943 he reached US on a research mission into atomic energy and was assigned to the Manhattan project. Incidentally he was transferred to the Los Alamos laboratory where he discovered knowledge about the atomic bomb and sent it to the Soviets. At the age of 38 under the Official Secrets Act he was found guilty of leaking atomic secrets to the Soviet Union and was sentenced to 14 years in prison. His espionage profoundly affected Soviet research, saving them a years' worth of research. Moreover, the US accelerated their efforts to build a hydrogen bomb.

Secret Cities

Oak Ridge, Los Alamos and Hanford/Richland were few of the secret cities of the Manhattan project. Though officially they never existed during the war and could not be found on any map, they were well developed cities with **Oak Ridge alone housing 75,000 people.**



The secret cities behind The Atom bomb Manhattan Project

The American Government considered creating comfortable houses for the people working on the Manhattan project. Instead of crating military style barracks when all the people would be cramped, creating of well-planned communities was considered a better option.

In fact, these cities sowed the seed for ideas on town planning, architecture and construction.

Project Y

Los Alamos, New Mexico was the site of the weapons research laboratory. It was formally established in 1943 and its creation was known as Project. **The first atomic bombs were built and tested here.**

It conducted the bulk of research and construction of the bomb under the direction of the **J. Robert Oppenheimer**. **This working site was not depicted on official maps** as was the case with other locations such as Oak Ridge to prevent leaking of information regarding the project. Supplying, supporting and guarding the work done in Los Alamos was the work of the army.

Eventually the Manhattan Project was pursuing both uranium and plutonium based atomic bomb. Oak Ridge, Tennessee contained uranium enrichment plants and the pilot plutonium production reactor. **Hanford, Washington was the home of full-scale plutonium production plants**. Work was also being done in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Dayton, Ohio etc. **Among the 600, 000 estimated people who worked on this project, the 509th Composite group of the Army Air forces, trained at Wendover Airfield in Utah and in Cuba. They were tasked with future dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan.**

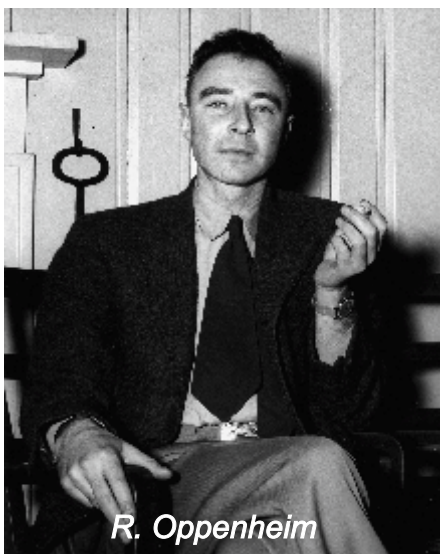


'Calutron Girls' monitoring a mass spectrometer during the Manhattan Project. Gladys Owens, in the foreground, did not know what she was involved with until seeing this picture on a tour fifty years later.

The first successful detonation of the atomic bomb, called the **Trinity Test** occurred on **July 16, 1945** at a site on **Alamogordo air base 120 miles south of Albuquerque, New Mexico**. A mushroom cloud rose extending to 40,000 feet and the bomb generated an explosive power equal to 15,000-20,000 tons of TNT.



Over the following two months scientists under Oppenheim develops two new bombs namely the Little Boy, a uranium-based bomb and the Fat Man, a plutonium-based bomb.



R. Oppenheim



The Potsdam Conference

By 1945, the Germans were nearing surrender owing to their heavy losses in Europe. Among US military leaders there was a consensus that the Japanese would not relent until the bitter end, thus resulting in huge casualties on both sides.

In the Allied- occupied city of Potsdam, Germany the Potsdam Conference was held on July 26, 1945 where the US gave an ultimatum to Japan to surrender and form a democratic government or face consequences. As the terms outlined in the Potsdam Declaration provided no role for the emperor in the future, it was declined.

Consequently, on August 6, 1945, the Enola Gay bomber plane dropped the 'Little Boy' bomb on Hiroshima and on August 9, the 'Fat Man' bomb was dropped on the Japanese city of Nagasaki.



These bombs combinedly killed more than 100,000 people and the radiations released have had lasting effects on the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Japanese formally surrendered on August 14, 1945. Thus, the destructive WW2 was ended with the horrendous bombing of two cities.

Excerpts from letter addressed by:- Einstein to President Roosevelt of USA

2nd August, 1939

To President Roosevelt

"In the course of the last four months it has been made probable through the work of Joliot in France as well as Fermi and Szilard in America that it may become possible to set up a nuclear chain reaction in a large mass of uranium, by which vast amounts of power and large quantities of new radium-like elements would be generated. Now it appears almost certain that this could be achieved in the immediate future.

This new phenomenon would also lead to the construction of bombs, and it is conceivable though much less certain that extremely powerful bombs of a new type may thus be constructed. A single bomb of this type, carried by boat and exploded in a port, might very well destroy the whole port together with some of the surrounding territory. However, such bombs might very well prove to be too heavy for transportation by air."

"I understand that Germany has actually stopped the sale of uranium from the Czechoslovakian mines which she has taken over. That she should have taken such early action might perhaps be understood on the ground that the son of the German Under-Secretary of State, von Weizsacker, is attached to the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut in Berlin where some of the American work on uranium is now being repeated."

Albert Einstein

At the time of the letter, the estimated material necessary for a fission chain reaction was several tons. Seven months later a breakthrough in Britain would estimate the necessary critical mass to be less than 10 kilograms, making delivery of a bomb by air a possibility.

The Pandemic:

Building blocks for International relations

-by Arv Gupta and Bhavani Mishra, Grade X, SNS Noida



Coronavirus has changed the lives of the people.

China is Asia's largest economy and the world's second-biggest with a GDP of about \$13.6 trillion. India is No. 3 in Asia at \$2.7 trillion. From supplying industrial components and raw materials to investments in India's startups and technology firms, China is India's biggest trading partner after the U.S. India and China marked 70 years of diplomatic relations with an exchange of letters between the countries' leaders on 1 April.

Looking back at the past 70 years, China-India relations have moved ahead despite some difficulties and gone through an extraordinary development path.

This year, 2020, marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and China. **It was meant to be a year of celebration. But first the COVID-19 pandemic and now the bloody showdown in Galwan where 20 of Indian Army personnel lost their lives have exposed the tragic irony of those plans.** China faces a slump in both the demand and supply of its goods. With shops shut and businesses stalled in Europe, United States (US) and other parts of the world, the demand for Chinese exports have declined sharply.

Due to Covid-19, various countries have expressed criticism over Beijing's lack of transparency and reluctance to act in the earlier stages. **Hatred towards China has escalated; US President Donald Trump, for instance, he started calling the virus as the "Chinese virus".**

China's efforts at supplying masks and other medical equipment to countries affected have been ridiculed in some quarters as "mask diplomacy". In some cases, China's overtures have even backfired with news of faulty test kits. Thus far, New Delhi has refrained from joining the China "blame game" or the "make China pay" club, but India-China ties are experiencing their own strains of discord under Covid-19. These new and unexpected changes have to be seen in the bigger picture of India-China bilateral relations in the past 70 years. **India's government has announced restrictions on foreign direct investment from countries that share a land boundary with India — a move clearly directed against China.**

Rising tensions over Beijing's accelerating military buildup in the South China Sea are stoking fears of a major power clash between China and the United States — fueling urgent calls for new security talks before the two nations stumble into a shooting war. The U.S.

and its allies have stepped up naval and air patrols over the sea and cancelled joint exercises with Beijing, while China is considering requiring all aircraft flying over the area to first identify themselves — a step that many nations would consider threatening.

Chinese colleagues have said to me explicitly that if the U.S. continues to sail through and over-fly what they see as their waters, China will eventually shoot down the offending aircraft," said Matthew Kroenig, a former CIA analyst and Pentagon strategist. **"Maybe that's just a bluff, but if China shot down a U.S. plane, that would be a scenario ripe for escalation.** It's hard to see President [Donald] Trump or any other U.S. leader backing down from that." **Mistrust and rivalry have been simmering between the US and China for years.**



Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, this has given way to open hostility. A "new Cold War": the loaded term had already been floating in the air for some time, but on May 24 it was first used publicly by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the recent National People's Congress in Beijing. He was reacting to Washington's accusations that China was responsible for the global spread of the coronavirus pandemic. **At a White House event in early May, President Donald Trump called the pandemic the "worst attack" the US had ever experienced and put the blame squarely on China.**

US senator Rick Scott appealed to the Americans not to buy any products that have been manufactured by 'Communist' China. Soon US started the Huawei controversy. It has become more noticeable in the case of Chinese telecommunication giant Huawei, one of the world's leading companies when it comes to 5G networks. "Huawei is the global spearhead of Chinese innovative power and technology policy," said Sebastian Heilmann, a China expert at the University of Trier. **"This means that Huawei has a great significance going beyond the company itself. It is absolutely no wonder that the US is using every means it can at the moment to end Huawei's success story."**

In March, the US ambassador to Germany, Richard Grenell, upped the ante by writing a letter to German Economy Minister Peter Altmaier warning that the US would stop cooperating with German intelligence agencies if Huawei were involved in building 5G networks in Germany. While the hostility has so far been mostly confined to words, there are warning signs the relationship could worsen.

The trade truce that Mr. Trump and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, reached in January could fall apart, despite recent pledges to keep to its terms. Other tensions, including those over Taiwan and the South China Sea, are also flaring.

"After the pandemic, the international political landscape will totally change," Wu Shicun, president of the National Institute for South China Sea Studies, said in a telephone interview. **"The confrontation between China and the United States — in terms of trade, technology, the Taiwan issue, the South China Sea issue — will be a bigger problem."**

What seemed to be an innocuous virus with low kill probability rate has brought all activities to a grinding halt. **The global and domestic stock markets took a hit and wealth vanished, the rich survive while the middle class and the low-income group are worried about the future.**

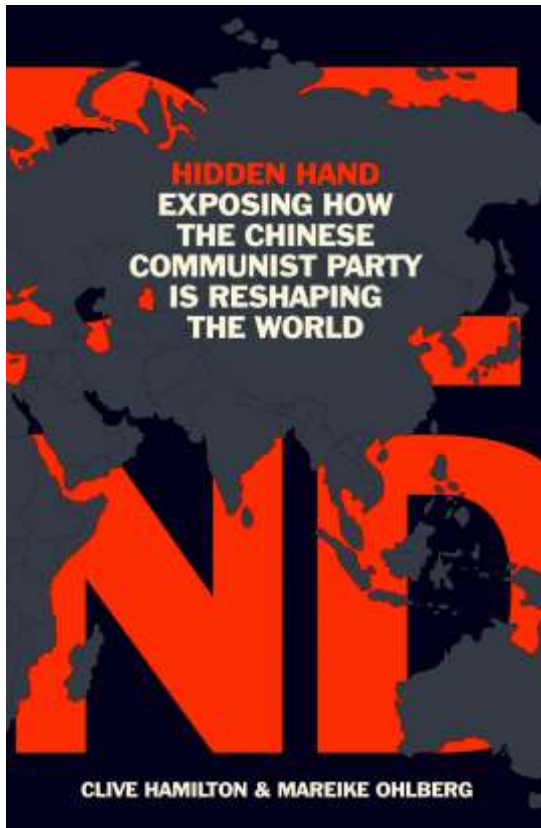
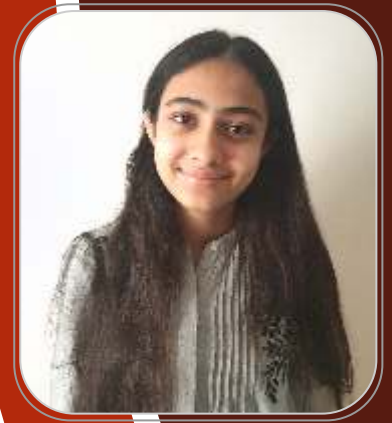
This is the time when international relationships will be reset. While the US is reportedly paying for its manufacturing industry to shift base back to the US, **India needs to step up its diplomatic efforts in reaching out to Germany, USA, Japan and South Korea as a viable alternative to China with a minimum cost of relocation.** The naval forces of the region to include India, Japan, Australia and New Zealand along with the US needs to create a viable challenge to Chinese domination.



Hidden Hand:

The book that uncovered the unknown

-by Mehar Gaba, Grade IX, SNS Gurugram



In the succeeding book to the bestseller book the Silent Invasion, hidden hand explains how the Chinese government is acting as a threat to democracy all over the world. **The Chinese Communist Party is adamant to reform the current state of affairs. This party believes in anarchy, the absolute opposite of democracy.**

This enlightening book throws light on the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its intentions to reshape the world. **As stated in the book 'the world's largest factory and second-biggest economy, China has been a magnet for Western businesses and many Western politicians. Some industries are heavily dependent on access to China's huge market, and Beijing is willing to use this dependence as a political weapon.'**

The book is co-authored by **Clive Hamilton and Mareike Ohlberg**. Clive Hamilton is an Australian professor and author. His recent book, *Silent Invasions* was a bestseller across Australia. This book launched him into the center of the china debate. Mareike Ohlberg's articles have been published in *The New York Times*, *Foreign Affairs* and *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. She previously worked at the Mercator Institute for China Studies.

.The authors explain in a detailed manner, the Chinese influence on many aspects across the western world. Some of these include- Business, Governance, Education, Media and many global conventions such as the UN itself. As mentioned in the book **'Ideas are more powerful than guns. We would not let our enemies have guns, why should we let them have ideas?'** The book includes anecdotes, news reports and conflicts too. Meticulously explained the text also gives us insides on how the civilians in China too are being suppressed.

With the rise of the party, the downfall of democracy begins. The party has used various methods of getting their way. One such way Expressed in the book is **"One of the Chinese Party-state's favourite rhetorical tools to deflect criticism is to accuse its opponents of 'McCarthyism' or having a 'Cold War mindset'"**.

The Chinese Communist Party is trying its best to introduce 'Democracy with Chinese Characteristics' in the whole world. Addressed in the book **"Brexit and the election of Donald Trump in 2016 were both seized on to support the claim that democracy inevitably results in chaos and inefficiency"** By using points like this China propagates communism. The Communist Party is trying its best to decrease the efficiency of democracy and implement ideals of

governance that are against the very principle of democracy. The Chinese Communist Party has spies and sources just around everywhere. **The US Department of Justice claims that China was involved in 90 per cent of economic espionage cases between 2011 and 2018.**

The people in mainland China are worst affected by all that the Chinese government does. They have absolutely no rights. If they raise a voice against the government they are immediately imprisoned to set an example to the rest of the people.

The book equally explains the strifes of Chinese people. As mentioned in the book- **'In the early 1990s the CCP embarked on an aggressive mission to promote its own concept of human rights—namely, that the 'right to development' trumps all other rights.'**

'The Chinese Communist Party has a long history of cultivating friendly relations with political parties abroad, beginning with its membership of the Soviet Union's Communist International; the latter had helped found the CCP in 1921.'- By using friendly relations the CCP is also poking its nose in the middle of politics all over mainland Europe.

Till now it has been incredibly successful in doing so. **One of the various ways in which the Chinese government does so is by funding European businesses and politicians.** It doesn't stop at funding. All the details of the carefully structured plan of the party are immaculately explained in the book.

Aiming to be the most technologically advanced country by 2025 China is ready to use that too as an invitation to preach 'Chinese Democracy' to several other people.

Not only this, as mentioned in the book '**China's enormous appetite for other countries' technology obtained legally or otherwise is satisfied by a number of means.** At the heart of defense technology transfer is the State Administration for Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense, 'a veritable "intelligence vacuum cleaner"'.

This is not it, The book explains the involvement of various other parties from different places across the world. From Europe to Korea the Chinese have influencers and silent supporters everywhere.

The amount of detail and effort that would have gone into this book is remarkable. Hidden hand was released on the 7th May 2020 and it is now available for anybody to read.

This unprecedented book can only be read when one has a full presence of mind. **I was astounded to read about so much corruption and crime being promoted by such an extensive country's administration.**

This book is far from a storybook, it is reality.

Why Environment Education

Is Important in Times Of COVID-19?

-by Raghav Mathur, Grade X, SNS Noida



Fear of COVID-19 is deadlier than the VIRUS--these are the words of Dr Gulleria, Director of AIIMS, patients delay coming forward to the hospital and this increases the mortality rate.

Therefore, it is important to teach Environment Education to students so that they are made aware of the environmental issues faced by human beings especially the COVID-19 PANDEMIC..

Lady BUSH wife of President of US once said, "Environment after all is where we all live, where we all meet, we have mutual interests and it is one thing we all share."

Students, at the grassroots level should be made to understand the importance of Nature, Environment and Mother Earth, because it is their young minds who will find solutions to the problems being faced by the humans and other species on the earth. We are waiting for the vaccine / medicine to be discovered for Covid 19, and this is possible by the younger generation.

By studying Environment Education, students will be made aware that during the lock down of Covid-19, lot of changes are seen around the world - wildlife returns to the cities, as humans stay indoors. We have seen peacocks dancing on the road, monkeys, deer, lions \ out of the jungles on the roads.. Thick smog reduced, due to closure of factories, no transport on the roads, Water is blue and clean in canals, rivers, people are able to breathe properly, birds can be heard now, these are the positive effects of the Covid-19.



Clean Yamuna

30th May was death anniversary of Shri Amit Agrawal, founder of Centre for Science and Environment and Down to earth magazine.

He wrote in an article few years back that **Environment Education should be made compulsory in schools so that students know about Global warming, global climate changing, burning of fossil fuels and it's effect on Earth's ecological systems**, make lives of people miserable and difficult. Heavy rain fall - floods, more cyclones, tsunamis, extreme dryness - droughts. Global warming will melt glaciers, rise in sea levels and much more.

By studying environment, they will know that how clean and green everything around the world has become due to lock down days because of Covid-19. But it has not affected every one in the same way, to understand the consequences and predict how this pandemic affects differently with people in various places and what steps are being taken by the Government.

Students can help in sensitizing people on how to make a mask, how to wear a mask, how to use sanitizers, stop use or minimise use of plastic etc on social media as the younger generation is very tech savvy and good in social media.

Within few months the whole world has changed, thousands have deceased, hundreds & thousands have been infected and the rest who have not been affected their entire life has been changed by this virus Though the good side of the virus is for the NATURE but very bad for the ECONOMY as all factories, big industries, hotel industry, flights, etc are closed, people loosing their jobs, very sad state for children, they are house bound, no school or college, can't enjoy school/college life, no sports

Extremely sad status for the daily wage labourer,, no jobs for them, no house to live in, now they want to go to their villages, they don't know how to go? Some going on foot, with no transport and will small children and old parents.

**THIS IS NOT NATURE'S REVENGE
WE DID IT OURSELVES.**



Therefore, we want the young generation to become more conscious and find out new ways, techniques and inventions of how to stop unnecessary polluting our Mother Earth and our only one Planet. **And not get punished by floods, drought, tsunamis and epidemics like Covid-19.**

Life is a game, so play well

-by Yashaswini Singh, Grade IX, SNS Faridabad



Our life is full of challenges; at every corner, hurdles will try to block our path. But a brave man possesses the capability to face the challenges of life with his head held high and body erect. Whatever the result is we must be hopeful. **A brave man lives his life calmly but when a challenge knocks at his door he faces it with all his courage, he is always ready and prepared.**

But what about those people who fear before even trying once. Nelson Mandela said **"Courage is not the absence of fear but the triumph over fear."** One thing should be clear in our minds that success comes only to those who dare and act. Living a life with the fear of death is deadly itself. Such a man lives like a coward.

Who dies every day, every minute and every second. As Caesar said, "cowards die many times before their deaths, the valiant never taste of death but once".

Life always offers us a second chance. Every day is a new day, a harbinger of a second chance for us. If we learn to overcome our fears then there is nothing that can stop us from reaching our goal. **Encountering failure on our way is also a lesson learnt and should not be considered a deterrent.**



The Golden Age of Misinformation: When People Can't Trust News...

-by Rishabh Chaturvedi, Grade X, SNS Noida



Imagine walking into a library and instead of having shelves of organized books, there were millions of pages scattered about the floor. You grab one, but you don't know who wrote it, who financed it, is it legitimate or illegitimate; that's the internet.

Researchers define misinformation as information that is false and is perpetuated with sincerity by a person who believes it is true. Disinformation on the other hand is shared with the deliberate intent to deceive. Meanwhile, propaganda as a concept emerges at the very beginning of discussions of democratic political philosophy. In war time, propaganda is always needed to demonize the enemy. The problem of propaganda has always been central to any discussion of democracy because democracy allows people to say what they want

Plato, in book eight of *The Republic*, said, "Democracy will lead immediately to tyranny because it has at its core freedom of speech. Democracy as a concept can not exist without freedom of speech. This is the central problem of democracy." Decades ago, we could trust what was told to us by news anchors on nationally televised news but with the rise of social media and the internet where anyone can create a social footprint that mirrors that of a media organization, the ability to trust the information is almost completely nullified. **As tech giants fight over the control of the 24-hour cycle, local newspapers and journalism remain the most trusted source of information.**

It seems hard to imagine that democracy can function that well when there is widespread disagreement on basic facts. **Daily news from websites, social media, and cable news is full of reports that look real but are actually jokes, hoaxes, or even propaganda.** Given the volume of news available, how does the average person separate fact from fiction?

Misinformation and disinformation related to Kashmir is widely prevalent. There have been multiple instances wherein pictures of the Syrian and the Iraqi civil wars were being passed off as conflicts in Kashmir with the intention of fueling unrest and backing insurgencies.

As misinformation and fake news continues to be rapidly distributed on the internet, our reality has become increasingly shaped by false information. Discussions of democracy and discussions of propaganda have always paired together. **In the environment we live in today, the breaking news cycle is thriving and tech companies control how we receive and share information.**

Why is it that people come to believe such information? Shouldn't our reasoning abilities allow us to see that this content is not true?

The Illusory Truth Effect is popular in cognitive psychology, which is to say that just by hearing a statement again and again, makes it seem more plausible and increases its chances of being true.



This image shows how the bi-partisan system in America reacts to 'Covfefe', commonly referred to as 'coverage' by the President of the United States, Donal J. Trump.

It is not that the ability to reason is being affected in some way, it's just that people aren't bothered enough to reason the news they come across. People usually go with an instinctive response to determine the plausibility of information they come by on social media and the internet. One perspective of misinformation when it comes to democracy is that it's just about electoral manipulation and trying to steal the elections. **Fake news and its effects are powerful but also much more sophisticated and a little bit subtler.**

Given the architecture of the internet, so-called reporters are making more money as outrage influencers than they would as legitimate local news reporting organizations.

more money as outrage influencers than they would as legitimate local news reporting organizations. It's not actually about the news anymore, it's stripped of any essence of sympathy, empathy, and a cognitive understanding about how things happened, but an alternate framing of the event in a way that fits the influencer's world view.

The digital space, in general, has undergone a massive change; Social media changes things even more in the sense that there is a lot that people can come by chance and even more by it being shared by others. People tend to be grouped and connected with people with similar interests and that can lead to polarization.

The division between the idea of secular democracy, where diversity and democracy are celebrated, and Hindutva nationalism, which is promoting monolithic identity and cultural nationalism, is more pronounced in India. Political polarization in the current context has been abetted by digital media where reactionary voices are using the tactics of intimidation to silence and marginalize the moderate voices.

We need to ask ourselves "What does it mean to be a literate citizen in today's world" and from my perspective, the answer to that very question would be Media Literacy.

The concept of digital citizenship has become an important area of educational knowledge around the world. The general definition of digital learning is any type of learning that incorporates technology within it. Older people are vulnerable to the internet, specifically the information they come across. This does not mean that they do not understand it, this happens because they are

targeted repeatedly. Older people share more fake news than anybody else. This is due to them growing up in a time where if you have read it, it's true. This also brings up a rather unknown and unspoken issue that goes by the term Ageism.



This image shows how tech companies propagate, and worse, profit off of Fake News and Disinformation

We as a society perceive printed information to be more reliable than information found online in the digital environment. One of the reasons is the process of which an article that is printed includes many people taking a look over and over again to further refine the article or soon to be published material.

Even in a perfect world where all the misinformation and disinformation is magically removed from social media, the internet and everywhere else; we would still need media literacy as at its core, it's something that will need to be established so that all of society can actually use the internet with better understanding. Such an

understanding will help people to have a more productive and enriching time on the internet.

In the age of misinformation, we as individuals have to be careful about the way we experience information. **Does the headline support the facts? Is the story legitimate? We have to ask first what is the source of this information, whether it sounds exaggerated or not and then look for a little bit more regarding the issue and think critically about all the information we have come across.** Although it may seem to be tedious and time consuming, this is the only way to know for sure that what we read is actually the truth.

As **President Obama** said during a press conference in Germany, **"If we are not serious about facts and what's true and what's not, if we can't discriminate between serious arguments and propaganda, then we have problems."**



Clothes and Appearances:

A story based in the times of industrial revolution

-by Rashmita Gadhi, Grade IX, SNS Faridabad



It was a pleasant evening. The skies were a soft blue, the fringes of clouds tinted a fiery orange similar to the fluttering silk fabrics of my dress. It was an unusually...clean sky, without black smoke belching in the sky, a rare sight. I imagined the cottony clouds catching fire, ash fluttering down. The faint smell of grilled meat reinforced the thought in my mind – or so I thought.

I was prone to daydreaming on a regular day. That day I was unable to keep my thoughts from wandering; merely a glance was enough to get carried away. The dresses I and Yvonne wore were practically irresistible to look at; my own a sunny yellow and my younger sister's a rusty orange, matching her ginger hair. **My own hair was dyed a comparable shade to my sister's, courtesy our mother.**

Though we had common features, we seldom looked similar enough to be sisters. We both have sunny dispositions. I had bright amber eyes, dirty blonde hair and light brown skin, almost fair. Yvonne, on the other hand, had hazel eyes (with green as the dominant colour, alas), straight ginger blond hair and bronze skin. While my own skin was a natural hue, Yvonne's was the result of her outdoorsy nature, a fact that had mother scolding me to go outdoors. I was saved doing so by father occasionally, who calmed mother by some or the other excuse.

Mother snapped at me to stop staring at the sky and I was startled out of my reverie. I jumped and squeezed Yvonne's hand, feeling embarrassed. Yvonne squeezed back. I glanced at Yvonne, aloof and graceful and perfect as always; even the few strands pulled out of her elegant updo looked purposeful and did not come in her face, unlike my own which I now tried to spit out of my mouth in a graceful manner. **I envied Yvonne's qualities. I did not however envy my sister, who was impossible to hold a grudge against.**

We had travelled for hours on their horses, and then showered at an inn, changing clothes and appearances from peasant girls to ladies. The inn was empty except for a dozing man who waved a lazy hand at us to allow us in before dozing off again.

We were not con women, though I often felt like it. We ourselves were middle-class folk, a rare breed, making our way through the recent Industrialis Mutatio, the industrial change some were flourishing in, while some were ruined. We were one of the few peasants left. **We had to however attend the irregular parties that mother's sister, Ann, kept inviting us to, as if to show us the pleasures of joining her nefarios coetus** (All of these terms were Latin, by the

way. Mother taught us a lot of Latin because: “Radicibus Servare” meaning “preserve our roots”, as she liked to say. It's kind of our motive).

We made our way now across the pavement to the entrance lavish with fresh flowers. **On closer inspection it was all roses; white, and blood red and pink and lilac and yellow, so beautiful that I had to blink away tears discreetly.** They must have been imported from far and wide.

We entered. The party was grand like all the others we went to, tables adorned with silk cloth and overflowing vases of flowers. I hated to see such unappreciated beauty. Yvonne agreed with me, but I knew Yvonne enjoyed the parties nonetheless. Well, especially the food.

I hated the parties for another reason; boredom. Yvonne might be entertained, but there was no one my age looking for company, instead I had to keep smiling at the grownups and responding to painful small talk. I hated small talk.

That day, however, I spotted a table-full of kids chattering away, and felt a smile blooming. I scrubbed any hopes and smiles visible on my face with my palm. The kids were probably spoiled brats. They would probably tease me and mock me, the way grownups did to mother. **Despite these thoughts, I could not imagine such cruelty from such content faces.**

In the end I was not able to summon the courage to go there, and instead went to the dessert stall, where sweet comfort awaited me. I piled brownies and cakes on my plate, and ate while standing,

since all the tables were full. "Hey," A voice behind me said. I jerked around to find an odd kid maybe a year younger than me wearing a suit. And she was a girl. I stared unabashedly at the girl's sharp features. She was a raven beauty, black suit to match her black hair and eyes and complement pale skin. Her long lashes swept over her eyes. She was not wearing makeup, but she didn't need it; her angular beauty was enough. "You need a table?" **I tried that in Latin: Angulares Pulchritudo. It was a suitable title**, something I would write as a subtitle under her name in my journal, the way I did for everyone.

"I get that stare a lot," I flushed, staring at my feet. "No, no, keep looking, by all means. I am an interesting specimen." She bowed with a flourish. Her short hair – another oddity of messiness that looked deliberate – flopped in her eyes. She didn't brush it away. I seemed to like her immediately, I thought, and was intrigued to find it was true. She was danger. But my life was sorely lacking in danger.

"So, you need a table?" She pointed with a thumb over her shoulder at a corner table. It wasn't really a table for guests and didn't have chairs, but that didn't seem to stop the few scattered kids sitting on it, food beside them. **No one seemed to be talking. "I'm Asra." "I'm Birgitta."** We didn't shake hands. It was unnecessary, and anyway; shaking hands was a formality, something only done to make acquaintances, not friends.

We chattered while walking to the tables. Asra claimed to attend such parties every week, discreetly changing out of rubbish garments into her suits. Her parents were owners of enormous steel factories. **She said she was going to run away to the countryside and ride horses. "That's unthinkable! Like something from a story. But then, you are like someone from some story."**

"I believe that's a compliment?" she asked.

"Yes, it is."

I hate to see mother being bullied, because I can't help her. I feel useless, and guilty for thinking all the nasty thoughts I do about her. But that day I didn't have to. And Asra was the most delightful companion. We stuck flowers in our hair, played pranks on the elders (not too upscale, so as to not attract attention) and ate together. A lot.

"Hello, dreamy." I gave Asra a bashful smile. "You have an entire universe holed up in there, don't you?" She taught me to look at life from a new angle.

Like something from a story indeed, she was. We promised to meet again. We never did. Yet for some reason I wasn't upset. We weren't meant to know each other any more than that, I think. But what I got was enough. **Asra had taught me to be a bright light in someone else's life**, and I realized we are never truly exempt from the travails of life.

We are one of the thousands of gears in life, and I was happy just to know that. Happy to know that there was someone, beneath appearances, who could light up the day if only you let them.



Feminism Today

-by Ishaan Vermani, Grade X, SNS Noida



“Women earn on an average 9% less than men.”

“One out of three women have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetime.”

“Even in the 10 top paying jobs for women, females earn less than men.”

Feminism is basically an idea that suggests equality between men and women. This is discernible because women are inferior to men in society. **This belief has been prevailing in several communities for centuries, where women are belittled without any rational reason.** Such principles of equality have incited several movements and struggles by women and a few male advocates of equal rights, demanding the liberation of women from oppression and social disparity.

To all intents and purposes, the condition of women has ameliorated over years and their social life has been evidently better. Surprisingly, the gist of feminism has gradually evolved. **People have developed their own notions of feminism, which are biased and unhealthy.**

The term has unfolded as a weapon. Throughout the course of this article, I'll put forth statements that will make you cognizant of the present situation of women, biased notions, and as said earlier, the evolution of the term 'Feminism'.

As the terminology suggests, feminism means equal treatment of men and women. Men have arguably been harsh and dominating over the years passed by. They have been continually instilled with the idea of toxic masculinity, which irrationally equates to being domineering and assertive to women. **This is toxic, 'very toxic'.** The character "Kabir Singh", which became an overnight sensation for the youth of our country, was loved due to its bold, aggressive and stubborn nature.

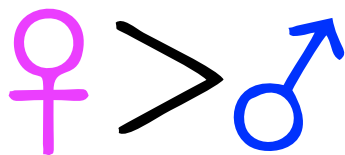
That is cool as far as it is fiction, but which principle or fundamental states that it is okay for a dominating and violent man named Kabir to slap his naive partner named Preeti? **Being a man is not about clamping down on a woman's emotions, it is about treating them with respect and dignity as one would do with a man. Women are not subordinate to men, they are the same earthlings as men are.** Over the years, we have unlearned this biased and stereotypical ideology as we have been more clued up about the concept of equality, social emancipation, and of course, feminism. Social maturity to some extent is apparent.

Esteem for women has been substantially enriched and in today's world, there are in fact a considerable number of feminists still fighting for equal rights and justice. The question here is, who is a feminist? **A feminist is an individual who believes men and women should lead a life with equal social status. That is reasonable. However, it nowhere says that feminism is hating men.**

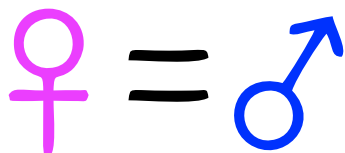
Yes, that is how one aspect of feminism has emerged. Feminism is equality. It's not struggling for one's rights and at the same time being unfavorable to another. Most of you might and might not be familiar with the radical feminist **Valerie Solana, who is best known for her SCUM manifesto**. Bizarrely, her manifesto entirely emphasizes that men have destroyed the world, and that the responsibility of fixing the damage caused by men is on women. Published in 1968, one of its editions of 1983 states "The male is completely egocentric, trapped inside himself, incapable of empathizing or identifying with others, or love, friendship, affection or tenderness.

He is a completely isolated unit, incapable of rapport with anyone." Had it been stated today, it would have undoubtedly sparked a lot of controversy. **Another instance Feminism is not about having a sexist or biased opinion against men. Feminism is about holding any person accountable for having a sexist opinion that hinders the progress of our society.**

This is **NOT** feminism



This is feminism

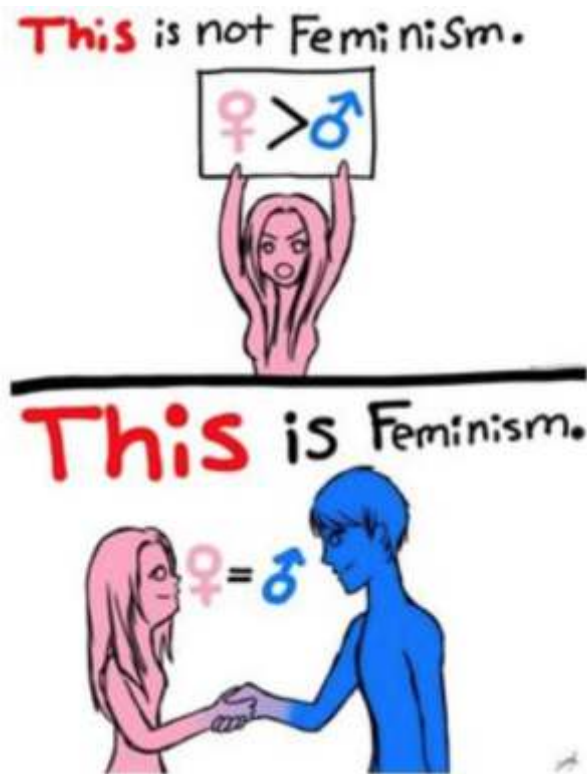


I believe the entire community should not be pinned if a handful of people are responsible for some contemptuous deeds. There are feminists who despise the entire gender. They believe hating men is one of the rules of feminism. Let me bring another term into the picture - misandry. **Misandry is the hatred some individuals have towards men. People who endorse misandry are called misandrists. So technically, a feminist and a misandrist are two different words with different meanings.**

A feminist is bound to support equality, whereas a misandrist is someone who denigrates men. So how come anti-men sentiments are present within feminists? **The idea of man hating is brought into the feminist community by some misandrists,** which subsequently results in the propagation of that belief so swiftly that people get provoked, and it hence leads the entire feminist com to be surrounded by the idea of hating men. The aftermath of such a situation could be suppression of men's emotions and feelings. To be more precise, a single individual must not be criticized for the sins of their fellow com members. For example, you won't pin any random German for being harsh to Jews in the past, or you won't lay the blame of a history of oppression against blacks on a random white American. **Similarly, not all men are the same or as a radical feminist would say, 'not all men are dogs'.**

Let me cite another example here. A former footballer, Brian Banks, was sent to jail for 11 years on a false rape allegation. His high school acquaintance, Wanetta Gibson, accused Banks of raping her at school. After spending 11 years of his life in jail, Banks' conviction was reversed after Gibson ultimately admitted that she had made up the story, and she was thereby ordered to pay \$2.6M.

What gives you the right to exploit the laws that have been made for your protection to ruin a man's life? Ali Zafar, a renown Pakistani pop singer and actor, had met with a similar fate when a Pakistani actor Meesha Shafi falsely accused him of sexual harassment. On what basis shall we call this Feminism?



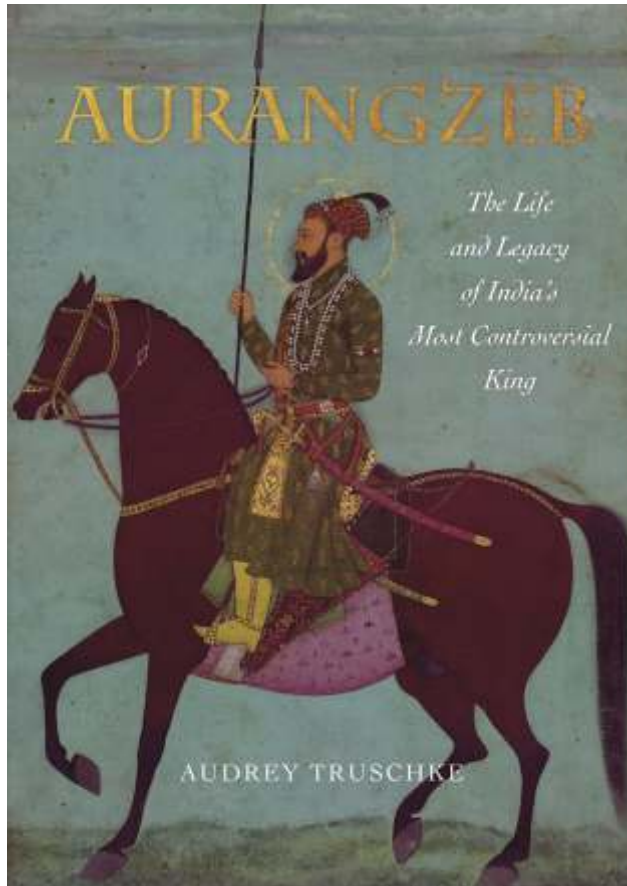
In conclusion, I would like to contend that I strongly agree with the fact that women are obscenely objectified till date, and in fact in some regions they are ostracised from larger groups, which certainly emphasises the need to fight for such issues in order to expunge such primitive norms from our society.

On the other hand, one must not ridicule the entire male gender for being harsh and obnoxious, because apparently not all men are like that. There are men who preserve the values of chivalry and gallantry. One must lead a life wherein the environment which surrounds them endorses equal respect for both women, as well as men.

Aurangzeb:

The Life and Legacy of India's most Controversial King

-by Aaryan Sridharan, Grade XII, SNS Gurugram



*'I came as a stranger, and I leave as a stranger.'
- Aurangzeb, a letter written on the verge of death*

Aurangzeb Alamgir or, the 'World Seizer' ruled from 1658 to 1707 and is one of the most **hated men in Indian history**. Widely reviled as a religious fanatic who sought to violently oppress Hindus, he is even blamed by some for setting into motion, conflicts that would result in the partition between India and Pakistan.

He believed that he had sinned terribly and was awaiting punishment at the **hands of god**. Though the last of 'The Grand Mughals', his final wish was to be interred at an unmarked grave in the Chishti Sufi shrine of Zaynuddin Shirazi in Khuldabad,

Maharashtra. While Aurangzeb wanted to be forgotten by the world, the world hasn't forgotten him yet.

In her lively overview of his life and influence, Audrey Truschke offers a clear-eyed perspective on the debate over Aurangzeb and makes the case for why his legacy deserves to be reassessed. **Aurangzeb was arguably the most powerful and wealthiest ruler of his day and achieved the feat no other empire could- uniting the Indian subcontinent under a single banner.**

From communalism to political parties, he has profoundly impacted the political landscape of modern India, and his legacy real and imagined looms over a large part of India and Pakistan today (plays like 'Dara' which portray Aurangzeb as a vicious brother). Truschke evaluates Aurangzeb not by modern standards but according to the traditions and values of his own time, portrays Aurangzeb as a complex figure **whose relationship with his religion and his empire was dynamic, strategic, and sometimes contradictory.**

Through this book, one gets a deep insight into the structure of the Mughal empire, like the Persian proverb: '**Ya Takht Ya Tabut**' (Either the throne or the grave) which defined the war of succession in the Mughal empire and even shaped Aurangzeb as a leader and king.

While this book chronologically gives us a detailed description of the significant events during Aurangzeb's reign it also gives the readers the broad outline of the events which ensued after **Aurangzeb's death in 1707** (Decline of the Mughal Empire).

It also compels us to understand the true nature of Aurangzeb's relation with Hinduism, which unlike modern folklore-which describes it as the subjugation of Hindus(which is a Persian term given by Islamic invaders; during the Mughal era, those who followed Hindu beliefs did not refer to themselves as Hindus.), was quite flexible. **Even Aurangzeb did not prefer demolishing temples**(he used as a last resort to establish a firm grip on the region), in fact, protected them because he respected religious institutions.

My learning from this book aside from its historical aspects is that dictated facts must be reassessed generation by generation to uncover the missing pieces of history and that, the dictated facts that we as a society digest, may not always be right.

Jawahar Lal Nehru once famously described Aurangzeb as "The last of the so-called "Grand Mughals," Aurungzeb, tried to put back the clock, and in this attempt stopped it and broke it up."(From Discovery of India, by Jawahar Lal Nehru). Reading a reassessment of Aurangzeb's life proves otherwise.

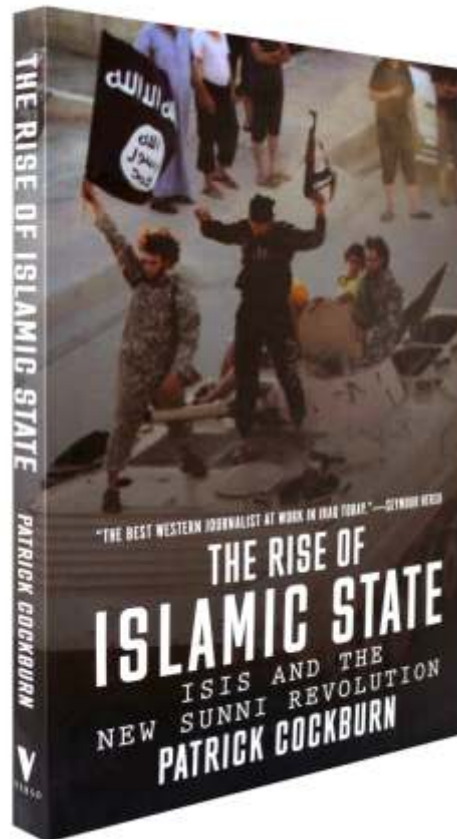
Or as Aurangzeb would have justified his actions "**An emperor ought to stand midway between gentleness and severity**"



The Rise of the Islamic State

An investigation of the chaos in Iraq and Syria

-by Jiya Gaur, Grade IX, SNS Gurugram



The Rise of Islamic State: ISIS and the New Sunni Revolution.
By Patrick Cockburn. Verso, London, 2015. 110 pp

An award-winning Journalist, Patrick Cockburn has worked as a correspondent for world leading publications like the Independent and the Financial Times and has extensively covered the Middle East and its conflicts.

The Rise of Islamic State: ISIS and the New Sunni Revolution is a firsthand account of the conflict which besieges the Middle East more particularly Iraq and Syria. **ISIS owes its genesis to the disintegration of Iraq and Syria as the communities therein** i.e. Shia, Sunni, Kurds, Alwawites and Christians were always in a conflict which struck at the very

roots of their existence.

In 2011, the pro-democracy movement in Syria can be considered to be the beginning of the end of peace in Syria and the start of violence in the Middle East. The abduction and killing of students and the violent quelling of pro-democracy protests against the autocratic Assad Government was the flashpoint which fanned the fire and this subsequently led to the rise of ISIS in the region.

The book extensively relies on interactions and interviews in the conflict-ridden areas of Iraq and Syria between Patrick and the ISIS fighters, Iraqi Intelligence officials and militia.

It captures and traces the events leading to the creation of ISIS, the people who fight in it, the calculated political moves, financing the operations of the ISIS, role played by prominent countries of the World in fanning the fire spread by ISIS, rise of Wahabism and the permanence of change in geographical boundaries of Iraq and Syria.

A prominent aspect of the book is the endless strife between the Shia and Sunni communities in Iraq post the US invasion of Iraq and establishment of a Shia majority democratically elected government, the insecurities created with the installation of the government by US post Gulf war made the Sunni population even more insecure and provided the emergence of largely Sunni dominated ISIS in Iraq.

Iran and Syria which were sympathetic to the Iraqi government due to Shia domination proved to be a boon to fuel the ISIS fire. A critical role was played by the Saudi Kingdom in financing

and supporting the ISIS fighters.

The Saudi Arabia itself was witnessing the tentacles of Wahhabism spread like a cancerous growth. **“Wahhabism” is a more conservative form of Islam practiced exclusively by the Sunni's.**

The United States also played a prominent role in spread of ISIS in Iraq and Syria as it failed to rein in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, who were the main instigators and hot bed for the ideology of ISIS. The Author has brought to the fore chronologically, the narration of facts which led to the disintegration of Iraq and Syria.

The role played by Russia, Iran, Lebanon on the one side and United States of America, Saudi Arab Emirates and Pakistan on the other side has caused huge devastation, the cost of which is being paid by the people of Iraq and Syria.

The Human suffering is immeasurable and irreversible and the damage permanent. What these Nations have done as a matter of political calculations and in the name of religion is incapable of comprehension.

Taking sides in the name of religion, region and factions and in the wake causing incalculable human loss and suffering is unpardonable.

The book is a constant and complex maze of facts, dates and figures, which often breaks the chain of thought while reading, the book is also interspersed with opinion of the author for the rise of ISIS, which are based largely on superficial facts.

In as much as I would have liked to read more about ISIS, its ideology and its operations, the book **disappoints and diverges from a more focused description of ISIS.**

It's a compilation of a lot of information in too small a frame and does not make for a flowing and engrossing read, however its perhaps an accurate and to the point account of ISIS and the trail of destruction created by it and a rather pointless conflict to establish the supremacy of religion.



My Idea of a Nation

-by Reya Verma, Grade X, SNS Noida



My nation was born on a train in 1947, painted red with the blood of innocence dressed in saffron. This is a nation where a community retaliates through vandalizing another community's worship place, simply because they believe their god reigns supreme over "their" god.

I live in a nation where citizens collect 120 crores to safeguard their existing homes and livelihood from being commandeered by the islamophobic government and not for development. A nation where people hold one religion responsible for the spread of a deadly pandemic and endorse the national leader's actions to isolate this community through detention camps.

What great a nation this is **where insightful citizens who express concern for their children due to their religion are typecasted as anti-nationals at a stroke.** Here, the residents elect an illiterate government where ministers claim homosexuality to be a genetic disorder, disregarding all scientific studies; while another calls for research on cow dung which is considered 'cure-it-all' by his religion.

A nation of people with no qualms in electing such candidates as their representatives, who are facing the highest number of cases for crimes against women. Its leaders ask the citizens to wed frogs to please the "rain god" for the betterment of the environment, instead of making amends in their policies. I inhabit a nation with 13 of the 20 most polluted cities in the world.

A nation where the opposition is allowed to make absurd promises about inventing machines that convert potatoes to gold instead of criticizing the government for the advancement of the economy. **My idea of a nation is one where patriarchy, misogyny, homophobia, and islamophobia are endorsed.**

However, is this the nation where I want to live? Does its ideology align with what its guiding document, the constitution, says? Is there harmony in the words and actions of my leaders? Do all the genders, religions, and communities feel safe and connected to this nation and amongst themselves?

Though arduous, still not impossible, with the sheer strength of will, we could march to utopia.

E Pluribus Unum



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