Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies-Technical Campus

(Affiliated to GGSIP University & Recognized by Bar Council of India) Grade 'A++'

Accredited by NAAC, Accredited by NBA for MCA, Recognized under Section 2 (f)

by UGC ISO 9001: 2015 Certified Institution

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Probing Humanities, Positioning Human - [i] - ties: New Paradigms and Shifts in the 21st Century on 26 - 27th February 2026

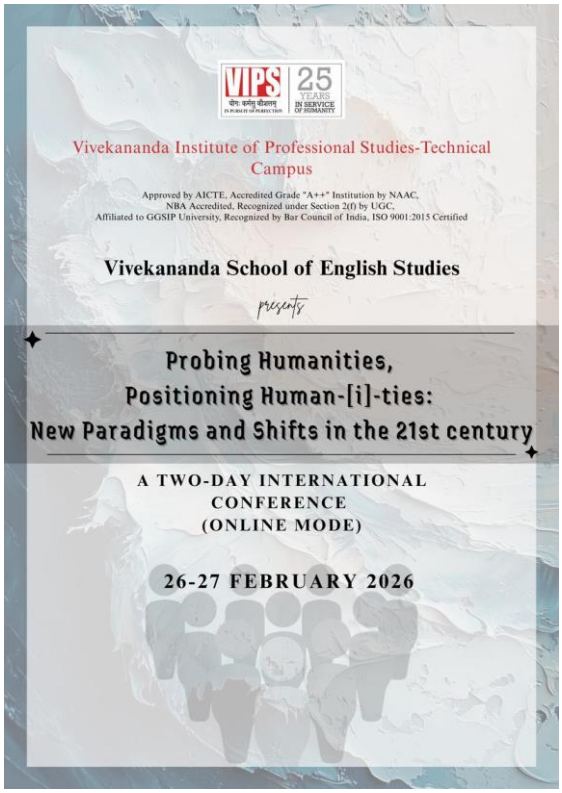
Event Report

• Name of the Organizing Department: Vivekananda School of English Studies

• Type of Activity/Event: International Conference

• Date: 24th – 25th January 2023, 9.30 AM-3.30 PM

• Venue: VIPS GDPI Room A - block and Zoom



Inaugural Session

The inaugural proceedings witnessed its genesis with the traditional lighting of ceremonial lamps and Saraswati Vandana to represent the start of what will now be a two-day international conference. The ceremonial lamp was lit by **Professor (Dr.) Salonee Priya**, Dean of the Vivekananda School of English Studies, as well as by faculty members from the department. This ceremonial lighting was signified the official opening of the international conference and set an inspirational tone for all academic discussions and explorations in the future. Dr. Priya addressed the audience after the ceremonial lamp lighting and announced the conference's theme and intellectual vision; Probing Humanities, Positioning Human-[i]-ties: New Paradigms and Shifts in the 21st Century. She discussed the institutional history of Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies – Technical Campus in her remarks, emphasising its heritage of over 25 years of academic achievement motivated by the vision of its founder, Dr. S. C. Vats. In line with the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, she pointed out that the institution, which started out with programs in law and computer science, has gradually developed into a multidisciplinary academic space that currently consists of several schools dedicated to value-based and holistic education. Professor Priya remarked that, after a successful first edition in 2024, this event is the institution's second international conference. She revealed that over eighty research applications from academics from various universities were received by the conference; forty-seven of them were chosen to be presented across the technical sessions. She observed that modern knowledge generation necessitates meaningful dialogue between conventional humanistic research and rapidly evolving technical paradigms, highlighting the transformational realities of the twenty-first century. She emphasised the significance of promoting inclusive scholarship, connecting theory and practice, and developing new ideas in this setting.



During her opening speech, **Dr. Bhawna Vij Arora** extended a warm welcome to attendees at the conference. She highlighted the pressing need to reassess the humanities in a time characterized by rapid technological advancements, data - centrist knowledge frameworks, and curricula driven by market demands. Stressing the importance of reclaiming intellectual independence, moral grounding, and cultural heritage, she portrayed the conference as a call to action for significant re-calibration. She pointed out that 47 papers were chosen from over 80 submissions for presentation across seven technical sessions, emphasizing the conference's extensive interdisciplinary engagement with current critical issues.

Professor (Dr.) Swati Pal, Principal of Janki Devi Memorial College at the University of Delhi, was formally introduced as the conference's Keynote Speaker. A renowned academic and Charles Wallace Scholar, she is notably the first Asian to receive the John McGrath Theatre Studies Scholarship from the University of Edinburgh. As a prolific author, poet, translator, and columnist, her academic work encompasses performance studies and cultural history. Her speech, enhanced by an engaging and interactive presentation, was divided into six thematic parts.



It commenced with *"From Canon to Critique to Complexity,"* where she outlined the intellectual journey of the humanities from safeguarding traditional canons to critically engaging with modern complexities. The section titled *"Civilisational Shifts: From Dominance to Dialogue"* focused on the shift from Eurocentric knowledge hierarchies to more diverse and dialogic global intellectual interactions. In *"The Digital Condition: Technology and the Reshaping of the Self,"* she explored the ethical and philosophical ramifications of artificial intelligence, algorithmic culture, and digital identity. The section *"The Anthropocene: A Narrative Crisis"* emphasized the humanities' role in interpreting ecological crises beyond mere scientific discourse. She concluded with *"Humanities and Democracy,"* highlighting the significance of interpretive depth, ethical reasoning, and historical insight in maintaining democratic societies.

Throughout these themes, Professor Pal stressed that the humanities serve as essential frameworks that help societies interpret complex systems, challenge entrenched power structures, and foster reflective judgment in an increasingly technological and interconnected world.

Dr. Natasha Anand delivered the closing remarks of the opening session, expressing sincere thanks to the keynote speaker, Professor (Dr.) Swati Pal for her intellectually stimulating and thought-provoking address. She highlighted that the keynote's insights into epistemological, civilizational, digital, ecological, and institutional transformations provided valuable perspectives on re-evaluating the role of the humanities in today's world. Dr. Anand also recognized the unwavering support and guidance from the institutional leadership, including Chairman Dr. S. C. Vats and Vice Chairman Mr. Suneet Vats, in nurturing a vibrant academic atmosphere. She expressed her gratitude to the conference conveners, Dr. Bhawna Vij Arora and Dr. Faizan Moquim, the organizing committee, program coordinator Ms. Gopika Kalra, the technical and photography teams, and the dedicated student volunteers, whose collective efforts ensured the conference's successful execution.



Session 1

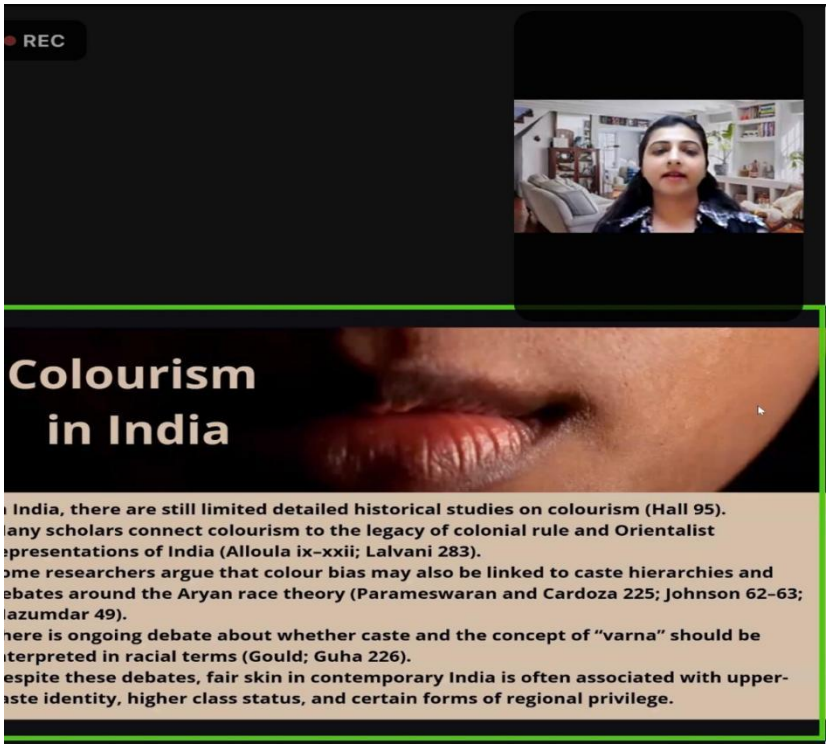
Soon after the inauguration, the first technical session on "**Understanding Memory and Trauma in the 21st Century"** began. It was chaired by **Dr. Divya Madaan**. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of English, Shivaji College, Delhi University. Her research interests span across psychoanalytical theory, literary criticism, Romanticism, Indian Writing in English, and Partition Studies. She has a profound interest in cinema studies and has made contributions through several research presentations in allied interdisciplinary fields. The moderator of the session, Devika Nair, then outlined the session guidelines, informing participants that seven presentations were scheduled, each allotted ten minutes followed by a brief question–answer interaction. It was also announced that the papers would be evaluated by the Chair based on research depth, content, presentation, and overall quality for the Best Paper category.

The session commenced with a paper by Dr. Swarna, Assistant Professor, Department of English, I.N.M. PG College, Meerut, who examined psychological trauma in marital relationships through Kiran Desai's *"The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny."* Drawing upon theories of loneliness, narrative medicine, and phenomenology, the presentation highlighted how emotional estrangement within marriage, particularly in diasporic contexts, reflects deeper gendered and psychological vulnerabilities. Dr. Anjali Dawar, Assistant Professor, Vivekananda School of English Studies, VIPS-TC, GGSIPU, presented a dystopian reading of *Leila*, exploring the complex relationship between nation, state, and humanity. Her analysis foregrounded the metaphor of "walls" as mechanisms of ideological control and examined how surveillance, segregation, and everyday acts of resistance shape marginal solidarities within authoritarian systems.

The joint paper by Ms. Swadha Agrawal, Research Scholar, Durga Mahavidyalaya, Chhattisgarh and Dr. Madhu Kamra, Head Department of English, Durga Mahavidyalaya, Chhattisgarh, analysed Anita Nair's *Lessons in Forgetting*, focusing on the themes of trauma, disability, and moral decay. Through victimisation theories and references to real-life cases such as the Aruna Shanbaug incident, the presenters

highlighted how societal indifference and victim-blaming expose a deeper erosion of ethical values in contemporary society.

Aishwarya Katyal, Research Scholar, School of Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences, Shri Venkateshwara University, co-authoring with Dr. Neha Jain, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Apeejay Stya University, addressed the issue of colourism through Harini Kannan's comic *That's Not Fair*. The paper introduced the concept of "skin-tone trauma," examining how entrenched beauty standards, colonial legacies, and social conditioning perpetuate psychological harm while also giving rise to emerging forms of resistance.



Sanya Wahi, Student-Scholar, Vivekananda School of English Studies, VIPS-TC, GGSIPU, explored selected fairy tales—Snow White, Rapunzel, and Beauty and the Beast—through the frameworks of folk studies and collective memory. Her presentation highlighted how recurring motifs and symbols function as cultural repositories, preserving shared anxieties, ethical lessons, and social values across generations.

Apoorva Bhatia, Research Scholar, Department of English, Shri Venkateshwara University, examined the role of maternal memory in confessional poetry by Kamala Das and her contemporaries. Situating confession as a political and feminist act, the paper demonstrated how poets employ memory, vulnerability, and personal testimony to interrogate patriarchal structures and negotiate identity.

The final presentation by Kiran Yadav, Student-Scholar, Vivekananda School of English Studies, VIPS-TC, GGSIP University, analysed the interplay of romance and tragedy in the songs of Taylor Swift. By situating Swift's lyricism within Romantic and feminist traditions, the paper argued that her songwriting articulates emotional memory, regret, and agency through a distinctly gendered narrative voice.

Collectively, the presentations in this session engaged with a wide spectrum of themes, including psychological trauma, dystopian politics, gendered experiences, cultural memory, and contemporary popular culture. The session fostered meaningful scholarly dialogue on how literature and cultural texts continue to illuminate the complexities of human experience in the 21st century.

Session 2

The second technical session on Day 1 of the conference was titled **"Interrogating Gender Identity in the Contemporary World"**. The proceedings of the session were moderated by Khushi Jain, who commenced the session by warmly welcoming the chairperson for the session **Dr. Meetu Bhatia Kapur**, presenters, faculty members, and participants present for the discussion. Dr. Meetu Bhatia Kapur, Associate Professor of English at Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies, holds a PhD from Rajasthan University on Amitav Ghosh. With 26 years of teaching experience, she has extensive publications and conference participation, and has received awards including recognition from the Prime Minister's Office for her contributions to creative writing.
In her opening remarks, Dr. Bhatia Kapur expressed appreciation for the enthusiastic participation of scholars and highlighted the importance of creating academic spaces where ideas can be shared and critically examined. She emphasized that the theme of

the session was particularly relevant in contemporary times, as discussions on gender identity have become central to many academic disciplines and social debates.

The session featured seven scheduled research presentations, although one presenter was unable to attend due to unavoidable circumstances. Despite this, the session progressed smoothly with the remaining presentations, each of which contributed meaningfully to the thematic focus of the discussion.

The first research presentation was delivered by Arsha A and Saijyothy P, who explored the dynamics of emotional relationships in contemporary society. Their paper examined how emotional connection and communication shape interpersonal relationships, particularly in an era where technological advancements and changing social norms have transformed the ways in which individuals interact with one another. The presenters argued that emotional intimacy often plays a more significant role than physical proximity in sustaining meaningful relationships. Through their analysis, they encouraged the audience to reflect on how modern relationships are influenced by evolving social expectations and changing forms of communication.

The second research presentation was delivered by S. Salini Rajendran, whose paper examined the representation of domestic spaces in literary narratives. The presenter discussed how spaces traditionally associated with domestic labor, such as the kitchen and the home, can also be interpreted as sites of resistance and empowerment. Through her analysis of literary texts, she demonstrated how feminist narratives reinterpret domestic environments as spaces where women negotiate power, assert agency, and challenge patriarchal norms. Her presentation highlighted the symbolic significance of domestic spaces and their role in shaping gendered experiences.

The third presentation was delivered by Mehak Bhalla, whose research addressed the issue of intersectionality and structural inequality. Her paper examined how gender identity intersects with other social categories such as class, culture, and socio-economic background. She argued that gender inequality cannot be understood in isolation, as it is often intertwined with other forms of social marginalization. By emphasizing the role of institutional frameworks and government policies, the presenter

highlighted the importance of inclusive approaches in addressing intersectional inequalities.

The fourth research presentation was delivered by Varnika Murugesh and Dr. Ayesha, who explored the construction of public identity through the lives and narratives of Kamala Das and Mary Kom. Their paper examined how both figures challenge traditional gender expectations through their personal and professional journeys. While Kamala Das used literature as a medium to articulate her experiences and assert her individuality, Mary Kom's achievements in the field of sports challenged societal stereotypes surrounding women and physical strength. Through this comparative analysis, the presenters demonstrated how diverse forms of self-expression can contribute to redefining societal perceptions of gender and identity.

The session continued with additional presentations that further expanded the discussion on gender identity. These papers explored themes such as the role of literature in challenging traditional gender roles, the influence of cultural narratives on identity formation, and the ways in which media and public discourse shape perceptions of gender. By examining these issues from different analytical perspectives, the presenters highlighted the complexity of gender discourse and emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in understanding gender identity.

The session concluded with an engaging interactive segment in which the audience actively participated, enriching the academic discussion. Several questions were raised through the chatbox, allowing presenters to elaborate on their research arguments. A question to Arsha A and Saijyothy P addressed why emotional connection often holds greater significance than physical proximity in relationships; the presenters emphasized the roles of communication, trust, and emotional understanding. S. Salini Rajendran responded to a question on how literary texts transform domestic spaces into arenas of resistance, explaining how feminist literature foregrounds women's agency within domestic environments. Mehak Bhalla addressed a query on the role of government policies and institutions in tackling intersectional inequality, highlighting the need to recognise overlapping social factors. Varnika Murugesh and Dr. Ayesha discussed how Kamala Das and Mary Kom construct public identities through personal achievements. Additionally, Prof. Faizan Moquim posed analytical questions regarding the print era,

elite leadership, the concept of the public self, and the theoretical framework guiding the research, prompting deeper methodological reflection.

As the session ended, Dr. Bhatia Kapur offered her observations and constructive feedback on the research presentations. She appreciated the presenters' efforts in addressing complex themes related to gender identity and acknowledged the depth of research demonstrated in their work. She encouraged the scholars to further strengthen their studies by incorporating diverse regional perspectives from across India, thereby broadening the cultural scope of their analyses.

She also emphasized the importance of clarity, coherence, and focus on academic research, advising presenters to refine their research questions and support their arguments with strong theoretical frameworks and relevant scholarly literature. She urged participants to present their ideas with confidence and to continue exploring new perspectives within gender studies. Reflecting on the session, she remarked that the exchange of ideas had been intellectually stimulating and enriching, and that the discussion had meaningfully expanded the discourse around the theme "Interrogating Gender Identity in the Contemporary World," highlighting the importance of such dialogues in advancing scholarship within the humanities.

Session 3

Session 3 titled **Reading Space, Environment and the Anthropocene**, chaired by **Dr. Nikita Agarwal** and moderated by Khushi Pandey, explored the intersections of literature, ecology, spatial imagination, and environmental ethics within the framework of the Anthropocene. The session brought together seven scheduled presentations, of which six were presented and one presenter was absent. The papers collectively examined human–nonhuman relationships, ecological crisis, environmental justice, and the role of literature in interpreting planetary transformations.

The session began with Dr. Amit Yograj Kapoor, Department Head (English), Shree Jayendrapuri Arts and Science College, whose paper on *The Emergence of Blue Humanities in World Literature* examined the growing significance of oceanic spaces in literary studies. He argued that seas and oceans must be understood not merely as geographical backdrops but as dynamic sites of memory, migration, and ecological

crisis. Drawing on examples from the Atlantic, Indian, Pacific, and Arctic oceans, he highlighted how Blue Humanities encourages a "transoceanic imagination" that rethinks world literature through fluidity, movement, and interconnected histories.

The second presentation by Amit Mandal, Senior Research Fellow Department of English, University of Delh, analysed the film *Elysium* (2013) as an allegory of ecological inequality in the Anthropocene. The paper argued that environmental crisis reflects the logic of the "Capitalocene," where wealth and technological privilege determine access to clean environments and healthcare. Through concepts such as Rob Nixon's "slow violence," the presentation emphasized the unequal distribution of ecological harm and reframed environmental crisis as a question of justice and political power.

Riya Bhatia and Suhani Sablok, Student-Scholars, Maharaja Surajmal Institute, GGSIPU, presented an ecocritical reading of Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement* and *The Hungry Tide*. Their paper argued that climate change represents not only a scientific challenge but also a crisis of narrative imagination. The discussion highlighted how Ghosh's works call for new literary forms capable of representing environmental catastrophe while also foregrounding the ecological vulnerability of marginal communities living in fragile landscapes such as the Sundarbans.

In his presentation, Shubham Yadav, Research Scholar, Department of English & Modern European Languages, University of Lucknow, explored questions of animal agency and environmental ethics in contemporary fiction. Drawing on Critical Animal Studies, the paper analysed works such as *We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves* and *The Evolution of Bruno Littlemore* to demonstrate how literature can challenge species hierarchies and expand moral imagination. The study positioned literature as an "ethical laboratory" that fosters empathy toward non-human life.

The paper by Avnish Tyagi, Research Scholar, Department of English, BML Munjal University, Dr. Nandita Choudhury, Professor, Department of English, BML Munjal University, Gurugram and Jindagi Kumari, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Maharaja Surajmal Institute of Technology, Delhi, examined the polluted Yamuna River in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* as both ecological reality

and cultural metaphor. The presenters discussed the river as a site of "slow violence" and environmental neglect, contrasting mythological notions of purification with contemporary ecological degradation. The paper emphasized the need for collective responsibility toward environmental preservation.

Dhruvika Chugh, Student-Scholar, Vivekananda School of English Studies, VIPS-TC, GGSIPU, offered an ecocritical reading of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, arguing that the forest functions as an active ecological force rather than a passive backdrop. By examining the interplay between human characters and fairy figures, the paper demonstrated how ecological imbalance disrupts social order, suggesting that harmony between humans and nature is essential for social stability.

The final presentation by Farhana Jasmin P, Student-Scholar, PSMO College, Tirurangadi, analysed the Sundarbans in The Hungry Tide as an amphibious ecological space shaped by tides, mangroves, and fragile coastal livelihoods. The paper highlighted how environmental vulnerability intersects with social marginalization, emphasizing that ecological sustainability and social justice are deeply interconnected.

The session concluded with an engaging discussion. Dr. Nikita Agarwal, the Chair, appreciated the conceptual coherence of the papers and encouraged presenters to further refine their arguments through clearer methodological framing and stronger textual analysis. It was wrapped up with an engaging Question and Answer segment, offering the audience a chance to delve deeper into the presenters' arguments and theoretical frameworks. The Head Rapporteur initiated the discussion by asking Swadha about her application of Melvin Lerner's "Just World Hypothesis." The inquiry focused on whether the novel she examined ultimately supports or challenges the notion that people get what they deserve. Swadha responded by stating that the interpretation largely hinges on the reader's viewpoint. Some might perceive the story through the "just world" belief, while others could see it as a critique of such ideas. She also highlighted that the character *Smriti* exhibits agency and resilience, preserving her individuality despite societal pressures, which keeps the narrative open to various interpretations. Another audience member questioned Aishwarya Katyal and Neha Jain on how the comic analyzed in their paper turns personal emotional suffering into a systemic critique of colorism and patriarchy. The presenters clarified that the comic uses abstraction, a

common technique in graphic narratives. This stylistic choice fosters reader identification, allowing audiences to project their own experiences onto the characters and recognize broader social patterns.

The discussion enriched the session by promoting critical dialogue on narrative interpretation, visual storytelling, and the social implications of literary and cultural texts. It underscored the importance of humanities scholarship in addressing ecological crisis, environmental justice, and human–nonhuman interdependence in the contemporary world.

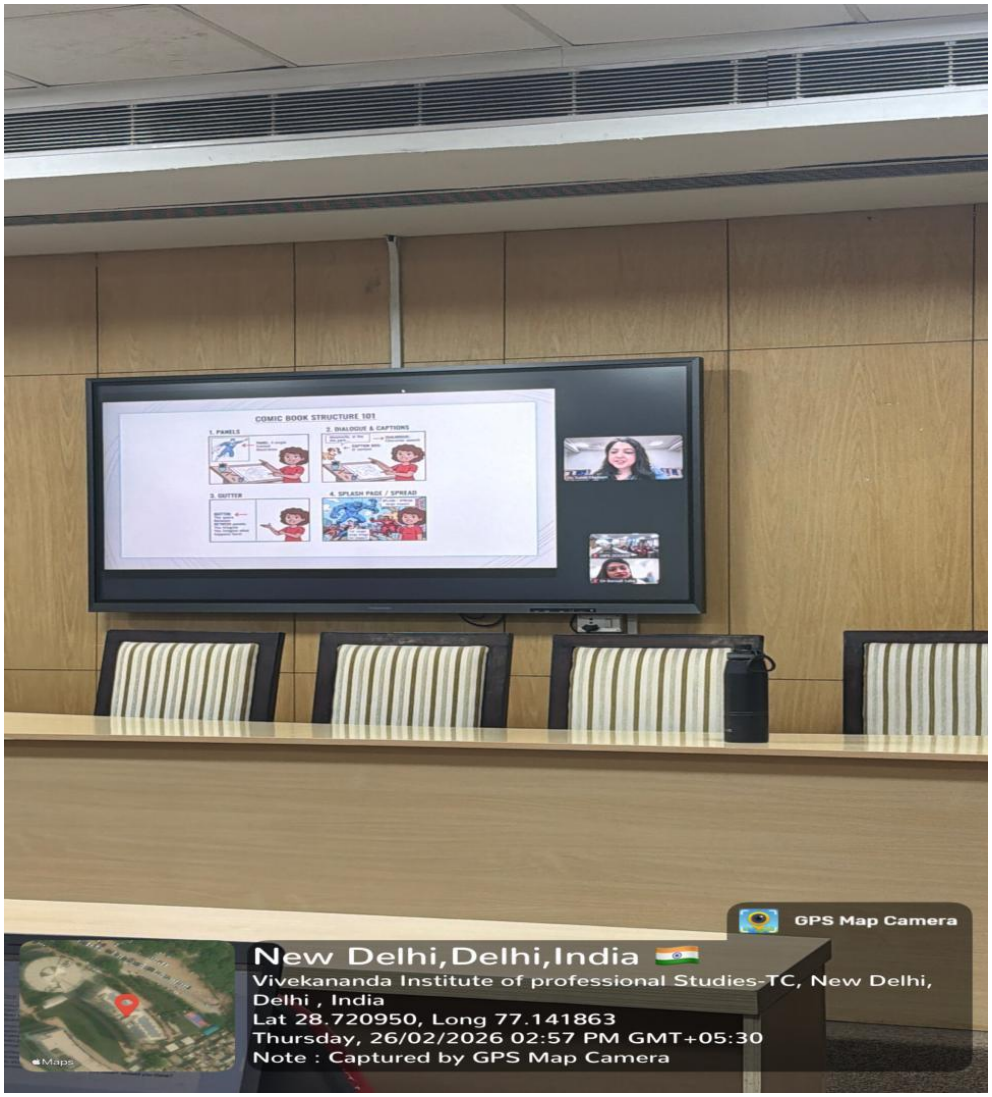
Session 4

The fourth technical session, titled **"Encountering Digital World and Artificial Intelligence: New Directions for the Future,"** examined the transformative impact of digital technologies and artificial intelligence on literary production, cultural expression, and humanities scholarship. The session commenced with Yukti Sharma, the moderator, who welcomed the presenters, faculty members, and participants attending both in person and virtually. She then introduced the rapporteur, Aditi Tiwari, a fourth-semester student, responsible for documenting the proceedings, and formally presented the Chairperson, **Dr. Shikha Sharma**, acknowledging her academic expertise. Dr. Shikha Dutt Sharma serves as Senior Assistant Professor in the School of Liberal Arts and IQAC Coordinator at K.R. Mangalam University, Gurugram. With over eight years of teaching and research experience, she specializes in English literature, psychoanalytic studies, and higher education governance, and has received multiple national and international awards for academic leadership and pedagogy.

The moderator outlined the structure and guidelines of the session, specifying an 8–10-minute time limit for each presentation, with an eighth-minute reminder, and explained the evaluation parameters, including clarity of argument, originality, theoretical grounding, and engagement with contemporary debates.

In her opening remarks, Dr. Shikha Sharma reflected on the growing influence of artificial intelligence as a defining development of the twenty-first century and encouraged presenters to engage in thoughtful academic dialogue.

The session featured seven scheduled presentations, with one participant absent, addressing diverse themes such as AI ethics, machine-generated creativity, algorithmic influence on digital identities and literary production, the transformation of literary culture through digital media, and the future of academic research in an AI-assisted world. Collectively, the papers examined how technological advancements are reshaping both the methods and epistemologies of knowledge production within the humanities.



The first presentation was delivered by Dr. Suniti Madaan, Assistant Professor, Vivekananda School of English Studies, VIPS-TC, GGSIPU, whose research examined the complex relationship between artificial intelligence, creativity, and intellectual production. Her paper explored the concept of "productive failure" in the context of AI-driven innovation. She argued that technological systems, particularly artificial intelligence, often evolve through processes of experimentation, error, and revision.

Rather than viewing failure as a negative outcome, she suggested that it can serve as a catalyst for new forms of knowledge and creativity.

Dr. Madaan discussed how AI technologies are increasingly being used in creative fields such as literature, art, and media production. She highlighted that while these technologies offer powerful tools for experimentation and efficiency, they also challenge traditional ideas about authorship and originality. According to her, the emergence of AI-generated content raises important philosophical questions about whether creativity can truly be replicated by machines or whether it remains a fundamentally human capacity. She further reflected on the ethical implications of artificial intelligence, particularly in relation to bias and representation. AI systems, she explained, often reflect the biases present in the datasets used to train them. As a result, the outputs generated by these systems may reinforce existing social inequalities or cultural stereotypes. Dr. Madaan emphasized the importance of developing critical awareness and ethical frameworks to ensure responsible use of artificial intelligence in academic and creative contexts. Her presentation encouraged the audience to reconsider the relationship between human intellect and technological innovation, suggesting that the future of creativity may lie in collaborative interactions between humans and intelligent machines.

The second presentation was delivered by Ananya Das, Student-Scholar, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University, who examined the phenomenon of fan-fiction and its transformation into commercially successful literary works in the digital era. Her paper explored how digital platforms and social media have fundamentally reshaped literary culture by enabling readers and fans to become active creators. Ananya Das argued that fan-fiction communities represent a powerful example of participatory culture in the digital age. Through online platforms, readers can reinterpret, extend, and re-imagine existing narratives, often creating entirely new storylines and character developments. She highlighted that these communities blur the traditional boundaries between readers and authors, creating new forms of collaborative storytelling. The presenter also discussed the growing trend of fanfiction works evolving into commercially successful novels. She examined how certain texts that originate within fan communities eventually gain mainstream popularity and are published in traditional book markets. This development raises important questions

about literary legitimacy—whether the value of a literary work should be determined by its artistic merit or its commercial success.

Furthermore, Ananya Das analyzed the role of social media algorithms in shaping literary visibility and popularity. She argued that digital platforms often influence which texts gain attention and circulation, thereby affecting readers' perceptions of aesthetic value. Her paper encouraged the audience to reflect on how digital technologies are transforming both the production and consumption of literature.

The third presentation was delivered by Ramesh Chandra Pradhani, Assistant Professor and Head, Department of English, P S D College, Deogaon Balangir, whose research focused on artificial intelligence and literary translation. His paper explored the possibilities and limitations of AI-assisted translation technologies in the context of cross-cultural literary communication. Dr. Pradhani began by discussing how machine translation systems have significantly improved in recent years, enabling faster and more efficient translation across languages. These technologies, he noted, have the potential to expand access to literary works and promote global cultural exchange. However, he also emphasized that literary translation involves more than simply converting words from one language to another. Literary texts often contain complex cultural references, metaphors, idioms, and emotional nuances that require deep contextual understanding. He argued that while AI systems may be capable of processing linguistic structures, they may struggle to capture the subtle cultural meanings embedded within literary language. His presentation highlighted the importance of human translators as cultural interpreters, capable of navigating the delicate balance between linguistic accuracy and artistic expression. He suggested that AI technologies should be viewed not as replacements for human translators but as tools that can assist and enhance the translation process.

The fourth presentation was delivered by Pratiti Saha, Research Scholar, Department of English and Cultural Studies, Christ University, whose research examined the emerging field of AI-generated poetry and digital creativity. Her paper explored whether AI poetry represents a continuation of earlier media transformations or whether it signifies a fundamentally new paradigm in literary production. She discussed how generative AI systems are increasingly capable of producing poetic texts that mimic human writing styles. These systems analyze vast datasets of literary works to generate

new compositions that resemble traditional poetry in form and structure. While such technologies demonstrate remarkable technical capabilities, they also raise questions about the nature of artistic expression. She explored the concept of algorithmic identity, explaining how algorithms shape the ways individuals interact with digital content and construct their online identities. According to her, the digital environment is not a neutral space but one shaped by complex systems of data collection and algorithmic decision-making. The presenter also analyzed the poetry and performances of Alok Vaid-Menon, discussing how vulnerability and emotional expression function as stylistic elements within contemporary digital poetry. Her paper highlighted the intersection of technology, identity, and artistic experimentation
in the digital age.

The fifth presentation was delivered by Udhav Surekha, Assistant Professor, Hindu Studies, School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, CSMU, who examined the growing reliance on artificial intelligence in academic research and knowledge production. His paper raised important questions about the potential impact of AI tools on intellectual creativity and critical thinking. Surekha discussed how AI-based tools are increasingly being used to assist researchers in generating ideas, summarizing texts, and organizing information. While these tools can improve efficiency and accessibility, they also raise concerns about the possibility of intellectual stagnation. He argued that excessive dependence on AI-generated content may discourage independent thinking and originality in academic research. However, he also acknowledged that artificial intelligence can serve as a valuable research assistant when used responsibly. The presenter suggested that scholars should approach AI as a supportive tool rather than a replacement for human intellectual effort. By maintaining a critical and reflective approach, researchers can benefit from technological advancements while preserving the creative and analytical foundations of scholarly work.

The final presentation of the session was delivered by Dr. Sakshi Sundaram, Assistant Professor at the Vivekananda School of English Studies, VIPS-TC, GGSIPU, whose paper titled “Human-I-ties in the Age of AI: The Way Forward” examined the evolving relationship between human intelligence and artificial intelligence in the contemporary digital landscape. She discussed how AI technologies have become deeply integrated into everyday life, influencing communication, creativity, and knowledge production.

While acknowledging the possibilities of efficiency and innovation enabled by AI, Dr. Sundaram highlighted concerns regarding human identity, agency, and ethical responsibility in an increasingly automated world. Drawing on perspectives from the humanities, she emphasized the importance of empathy, critical thinking, and ethical reflection in guiding technological development. She proposed the concept of "Human-I-ties" as a collaborative relationship between human and artificial intelligence, arguing that AI should function as a tool that enhances human potential rather than replacing it. She concluded by stressing the need for interdisciplinary collaboration between technologists, scholars, and humanists to ensure that technological advancement remains aligned with human values and social well-being.

Following the presentations, the session transitioned into a lively question-and-answer discussion. The audience actively engaged with the presenters by posing thoughtful questions through the chat box. Several questions were directed toward Ananya Das, particularly regarding the relationship between commercial success and literary legitimacy in fan-fiction-derived novels. Audience members also raised questions about the commodification of literature in digital and offline markets and the influence of social media algorithms on aesthetic values. A question directed toward Ramesh Chandra Pradhani addressed whether artificial intelligence could ever truly grasp cultural nuance in literary translation. This sparked a broader discussion about the limitations of machine learning systems in understanding cultural contexts. Participants also raised questions for Udhav Surekha about the ethical use of AI tools in academic research and whether overreliance on such technologies might lead to a decline in originality and intellectual rigor. Additionally, Dr. Prof. Faizan Moquim posed critical questions to several presenters, particularly regarding stylistic interpretation, the historical emergence of the humanities as a discipline, and the ethical dimensions of technological development. The presenters responded thoughtfully to these queries, creating an engaging and intellectually stimulating dialogue that enriched the session.

At the end of the session, Dr. Shikha Sharma shared her concluding remarks. She expressed her appreciation for the presenters and commended them for their insightful contributions to the conference theme. She highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary dialogue in addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by

artificial intelligence and digital technologies. Sharma also offered constructive suggestions for further research, encouraging presenters to continue exploring the ethical, philosophical, and cultural implications of technological change.

The session concluded with Moderator Yukti Sharma expressing gratitude to the presenters, audience members, and faculty participants for their active engagement and thoughtful discussions. She acknowledged that the collective contributions of all participants had made the session both intellectually enriching and highly productive.

The session ended on a reflective note, emphasizing that while artificial intelligence continues to transform the landscape of knowledge and creativity, the humanities remain essential for critically examining the social, cultural, and ethical dimensions of technological progress.

DAY 2

Session 5

Session 5 was titled **"Contesting Marginality – Narratives of Disability and Caste"** and explored how life writing, and literary narratives engage with the intersections of caste, gender, disability, and power, rethinking marginality, representation, and agency within contemporary humanities discourse. Bhuvi Kataria, the moderator for the session commenced the proceedings by introducing the chair, **Dr. Suniti Madaan**. She is an Assistant Professor at VIPS-TC in the school of English Studies with a total teaching experience of over 8 years. She received her doctorate from JNU, CES, in comic studies. She has published papers in international journals of repute and read her papers in international conferences such as ACLA, Comics Studies Society, International Graphic Narratives and Comics, IACLALS, and more. She is also a widely published translator, translating from Hindi to English. Her translations can be read in Sahitya Akademi and Two Lines Press. Her areas of interest are comics and graphic narratives, childhood studies, and time and space studies.

The first presentation was delivered by Shalini Singh, Faculty, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Technical University, Uttar Pradesh, who examined Sumitra Mehrol's autobiography Toote Pankhon Se Parwaz Tak. Her paper conceptualised caste as a form of "social disability", drawing upon the Social Model of Disability, Kimberlé Crenshaw's

Intersectionality, Dalit Feminism, and Crip Theory. Singh highlighted the triple marginalisation of caste, gender, and disability, while emphasising education as a critical tool of resistance and empowerment.

The second paper was presented by Swastika Muduli, Research Scholar, Department of English, Sri Sri University, Odisha, who analysed Malini Chib's autobiography One Little Finger. Her study explored feminist disability and the social construction of impairment, demonstrating how inaccessible infrastructure and rigid cultural attitudes intensify marginalisation. The paper also addressed the double exclusion experienced by disabled women, while interpreting Chib's narrative as a reclamation of agency, dignity, and subjectivity.

The third presentation was delivered by Anupama Andrew, Research Scholar, Department of English, All Saints' College, University of Kerala, who examined disability representation in the Netflix series Mismatched. Drawing on Crip Theory and Post-humanism, the paper analysed the "Betterverse" gaming universe as a space where disabled identities are digitally re-scripted, while simultaneously exposing the persistent architectural and social barriers of the physical world.

The fourth presenter, Amisa Mahato, Research Scholar, Banaras Hindu University, Uttar Pradesh, was requested by the chair to discontinue the presentation as she appeared unprepared.

The fifth paper was presented by Ritanshi Gaur, Research Scholar, Galgotias University, Uttar Pradesh, who analysed Dalit women's autobiographical narratives such as Kaushalya Baisantri's Dohra Abhishap and Urmila Pawar's The Weave of My Life. Using an intersectional framework, the paper examined caste- and gender-based marginalisation while highlighting autobiographical writing as a counter-hegemonic space of resistance and cultural assertion.

The sixth presentation was delivered by Rima Bhattacharya, Assistant Professor, Department of English and Cultural Studies, Christ University, Karnataka, who explored caste, class, and gender politics in Vijay Tendulkar's plays Ghashiram Kotwal and Silence! The Court is in Session. Her paper demonstrated how Tendulkar's

dramatic narratives critique institutional power, patriarchal structures, and social inequality.

The final presentation was delivered by Lovely Bhatia, Research Scholar, Department of English, Himachal Pradesh University, and Dr. Deepali Dhaur, Associate Professor, Department of English, Himachal Pradesh University, Himachal Pradesh, who analysed Ajay Navaria's Unclaimed Terrain. Their study examined urban Dalit experience through Dalit aesthetics, intersectionality, and spatial critique, highlighting how caste discrimination persists in subtle forms within modern urban spaces despite education and professional mobility.

Collectively, the session foregrounded how Dalit and disability narratives continue to challenge structures of exclusion while reclaiming identity, dignity, and agency through literature and life writing.

Dr. Suniti Madaan, the chair of this session emphasized that the critical examination of the autobiographical past must be firmly rooted in a systemic critique of the structures of oppression, specifically focusing on the intersections of Brahmanical patriarchy, capitalism, and patriarchy. By invoking the "autobiographical pact," the discourse moves beyond mere storytelling to establish an ethical engagement with the "conditioned reader" particularly those who are not Dalit utilizing the "everyday" lived reality of caste as a primary entry point for deeper understanding. Drawing upon the theoretical frameworks of Gopal Guru and Sarukkai, the Chair notes that the selection of language, mode, and narrative techniques serves as a vital tool for self-articulation and resistance against the dominance of cultural power. This methodological approach facilitates a crucial transition from the individual "I" to a collective "we," fostering a sense of solidarity across individual lines. Ultimately, these remarks highlight the necessity of translating personal testimony into a broader platform for transformational praxis, ensuring that the narrative acts as a direct challenge to hegemonic social framework.

Session 6

Session 6 was on **"New Contours in Education"**, moderated by Ritika Khatter. she warmly welcomed the audience, faculty, presenters and the chair for the session, Dr. Anajli Dawar. **Dr. Anjali Dawa**r is Assistant Professor of English at Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies – Technical Campus (VIPS-TC), affiliated with Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi. She holds a Ph.D. in English and has taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses in English literature and communication at University of Delhi and Indira Gandhi National Open University. Her areas of interest include postcolonial studies, gender discourse, and contemporary Indian writing in English.
Before entering academia, she worked in media with Discovery Channel, India Today Group Digital, Hindustan Times, and All India Radio, contributing in editorial, programming, and broadcast roles.

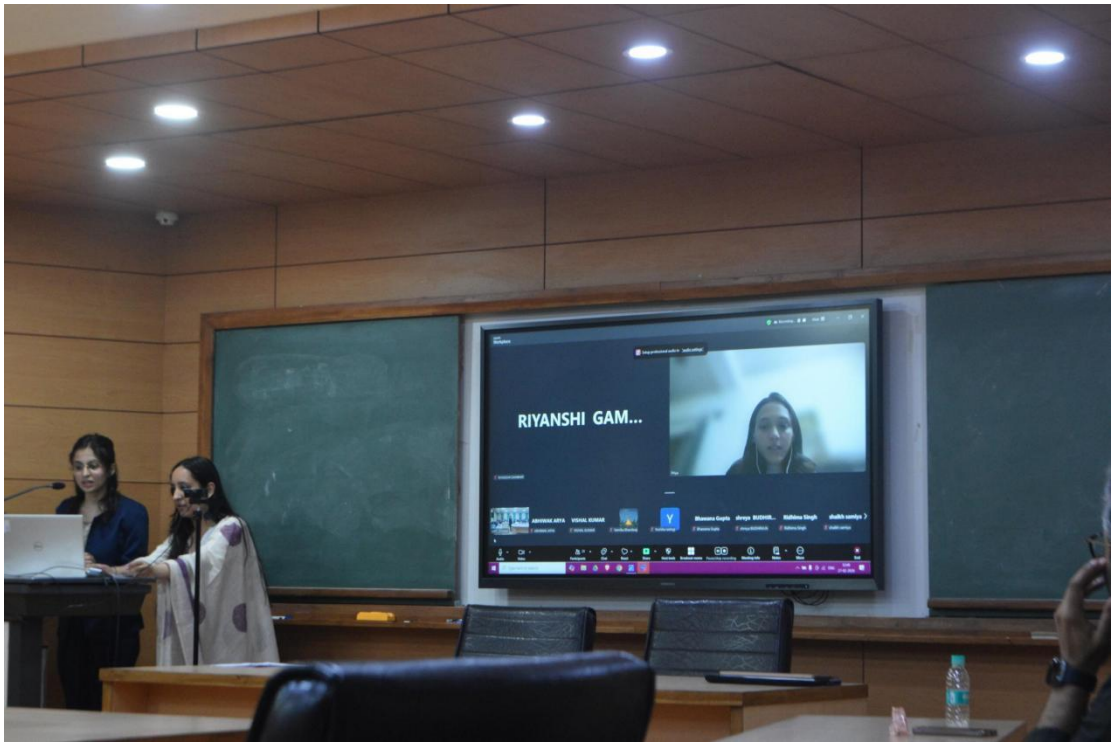
Dr. Dawar, after thanking the institution for inviting her to chair this session, open the floor for the presentations to begin.

Recognizing the critical need for English communication skills in achieving academic success and global competency, Vishal Kumar's (Research Scholar, Galgotias University) presentation highlighted that despite formal education, many undergraduate students, especially in technical fields, lack fluency and confidence. He pointed out one of the causes being the traditional, grammar-focused pedagogical methods of language acquiring that leaves students as passive learners. In his paper, he instead proposes that, for practical implication of language learning, that is, English, short videos such as Ted Talks and BBC 6 Minutes could be employed. His methodology employed a mixed-method research design to evaluate the effectiveness of using multimedia resources, such as short videos, as supplementary tools for learning. For the research, an observation was conducted for three months, wherein, at the end of the assumed timeline, quantitative data was assessed through tests and questionnaires. The study analysed 77 responses, out of which, 54.5% of participants reported a direct improvement in their speaking skills due to the videos provided, while 37.7% noted a better ability to identify certain concepts and terminologies after watching the videos.

The presenter concluded that diverse video materials help learners understand natural speech and improve pronunciation. It was highlighted that integrating these tools with interactive classroom activities, such as role-plays and discussions, effectively bridge the gap between passive and active language acquiring. The presenter ended the presentation on the note that multimedia resources can leveraged to foster cognitive development to acquire English listening and speaking skills. The presentation was met with various diverse questions from the chair as well as the participants and the audience.

Adopting University Design as an intellectual and ideological 'text', Abhiwak Arya's (Research Scholar, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University) presentation examines the growing contrast between infrastructural modernisation and the preservation of cultural and aesthetic identity within higher education institutions. He highlighted the growing conflict between operational efficiency and the sociocultural role of the university as an epistemic space. He pointed out that university infrastructure acts as a symbolic apparatus shaping institutional values. He focuses on the question of how infrastructural choice contributes towards the reshaping of the academic meaning and student experience. He terms the standardized architectural design in the modern era as 'non-places' which erase unique institutional identities and transforms students from community members to transient users. Arya highlights how increased surveillance in modern infrastructures can induce self-regulation among students, fostering a culture of compliance rather than intellectual exploration. He presents a comparative analysis of modern and heritage infrastructural frameworks, pointing out that while the former prioritize digital connectivity and surveillance-ready layouts, the latter utilises regional materials and human-scaled forms that encourage community interaction. He argues that the removal of historical markers and the prioritization of 'corporate-aesthetics' often disconnect the student from the university's legacy. The presenter concludes the presentation by providing certain points which balance the binary of modern and heritage infrastructural design highlighting how participatory planning in the architectural design can contribute in integrating ethical and pedagogical dimensions in campus design, to re-imagine universities as 'living pedagogical ecosystems' where modernisation is combined with cultural history ensuring continuity and preservation amidst technological change. The presentation received valuable remarks from the Chair, and questions from the participants and the audience.

Recognising the growing integration of digital connectivity in 21st century, Riyanshi Gambhir (Research Scholar, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University) highlights the need for ethics education in school-level institutions evaluating how it can foster safe and responsible online engagement. She points out how responsible digital citizenship is a vital modern requirement taking in consideration the rise of cyberbullying, misinformation, and data privacy breaches, and argues that it necessitates a move beyond mindless acquisition of technical skills and towards moral reasoning. She evaluates the role of schools in fostering digital responsibility through structured ethical frameworks. She adopts various sources for her research such as NEP 2020, peer-reviewed research articles, school-level initiatives, and case studies. Through her research, Gambhir underlines various gaps in current practices of Ethics education such as the treatment of Ethics as supplementary rather than a central component of the curriculum, the lack of structured guidelines, and inconsistent teacher training. In order to bridge these gaps, she proposes a shift towards value-based and experiential pedagogy. She recommends the employment of scenario-based discussions and role-playing regarding digital dilemmas. She further recommends the use of digital reflection journals to track ethical decision-making. She adds on by emphasizing the integration of ethics across all subjects instead of keeping it as a standalone- module. She also puts forth the need for continuous professional development for teachers to act as ethical role-models. The presenter concludes with the argument that Ethics education is not an 'add-on' but a core requirement for empowered digital citizenship and the aligning of classroom practices with the vision of NEP 2020 through school initiatives ensuring that learners are not just digitally literate, but morally guided. The presentation ended with valuable remarks as well as questions from the chair, participants, and audience.



The paper undertakes the idea of heritage as a living cultural capital. To consider heritage as a part of pedagogical practices is said to be a transformative aspect which is capable of recognising local knowledge and craft as legitimate academic knowledge. The presenter, Priya Saxena (Research Scholar, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University) derives the idea from "Indian classrooms which reflect urban - centric curricula" and the way "students remain disconnected from their lived cultural world". She also recognises the NEP 2020 which calls for arts, culture, and local knowledge integration into educational institutions. Her study seeks to address the lack of empirical evidence connecting heritage-based learning with social equity and employability, and the absence of a systematic framework guiding educators and policymakers. Her study followed a qualitative design. A pilot intervention was conducted in a peri - urban school in Delhi, targeting Grade 4 students. The findings were analyzed thematically to identify patterns related to equity, identity, and skill recognition. She recognised heritage as a pedagogical framework to help skill recognition, cultural integration, cultural equity, inter-generational learning, and employability linkages. She further explains the impact through a table where she takes the child, the teacher, the community and the system into consideration. Some suggestions for heritage based learning models were: Language Learning - Use folk tales and local narratives for language acquisition and cultural connection, Mathematical Patterns - Explore math

concepts through weaving patterns and kolam symmetry in traditional designs, Science Through Ecology - Learn science through local ecology projects and traditional environmental knowledge, and Inter-generational Learning - Elder-child dialogues and learning sessions with community artisans and knowledge keepers. Other such suggestions were to imbed local art in the curriculum, to try rural knowledge systems and such. Some implications advised by Priya focused on teachers, curriculum developers, and researchers. For teachers she recommended bridging classroom knowledge with local contexts, by designing experiential lessons that draw from folk arts, oral traditions, and local ecology by engaging community experts (artisans, elders, storytellers) as co-educators. For curriculum developers she suggested embedding heritage-based learning outcomes within curriculum frameworks and textbooks, including place-based examples and regional content banks to reflect India's diversity by aligning heritage learning with competency-based and multidisciplinary goals of NEP 2020. And for researchers she talked about the need to generate empirical evidence on how heritage-integrated learning impacts engagement, inclusion, and employability, by exploring comparative studies across regions and pedagogical models and by developing frameworks for evaluating cultural learning and teacher preparedness. The presentation concluded with some insightful follow up questions by the chair and the attendees.

The paper proposes the challenge faced in traditional bilingual pedagogy which lacks focus upon dyslexic learners and how they experience several difficulties in encoding, decoding and processing knowledge that is imparted to them. The paper focuses on integrating a specific multi-modal framework, limited to the Visual, Verbal, Gestural framework (VVG) which is designed to reduce the cognitive load and enhance accessibility and engagement for dyslexic learners. To start with, Muskan Joshi (PhD Scholar, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University) talks about the conceptual anchors of the study. She mentions cognitive load theory, translanguaging, and neurodiversity and inclusion. The presentation mentions that Cognitive Load Theory explains that learning is constrained by limited working memory, and reducing unnecessary instructional load is essential for meaningful learning, especially for dyslexic learners. The cognitive load faced by dyslexic learners is understood to be a combination of intrinsic and extraneous elements. Hence, digital learning environments

can both reduce social-emotional demands and increase cognitive burden when materials are overly complex. The presentation also mentions that neurodiversity frames dyslexia as a natural cognitive variation, requiring flexible, multi-sensory, and equitable instructional practices, which is why there is a need for such practices. Translanguaging challenges strict separation between languages to foster multilingual awareness in education. Research suggests this practice supports bi-literacy and conceptual understanding by leveraging both planned and spontaneous language use. Muskan discusses studies on dyslexia in multilingual contexts, highlighting challenges in decoding and literacy development. It emphasizes the necessity for individualized instructional strategies and improved teacher preparation to support multilingual learners effectively. Her study outlines research gaps identifying the need for a multi-modal framework implemented via translanguaging pedagogy to support diverse learners. The importance of translanguaging as a teaching strategy for learners with dyslexia. She outlines key benefits, including improved access to the curriculum, the valuing of linguistic diversity, and the promotion of inclusion. Additionally, the approach requires intentional planning to integrate multiple forms of support and foster a respectful multilingual environment. The Visual Verbal Gesture Framework integrates visual supports, strategic translanguaging, and embodied, multi-sensory techniques to reduce cognitive load. Some ways to implement the same in the classroom are: adopting Competency-Based Assessment, implementing Multimodal Expression (UDL), allowing Flexible Bilingual Responses, and integrating Translanguaging in Curriculum. The research concludes with future directions including empirical testing of the framework's impact on learning, designing inclusive assessment tools beyond traditional monolingual norms, and creating professional development programs for teachers to use these inclusive pedagogies. The presentation is followed up by a discussion on the same.

The paper explores cybersecurity as a new dimension of digital divide by highlighting how learners' trust, protection and privacy shape access to online education. The study is based on secondary sources including government policies, EdTech platforms guidelines and institutional case studies. The study contributes to a nuanced understanding of equity in online and distance education, framing cybersecurity as an important factor in fostering learner engagement, participation and confidence in digital

education. The presentation by Yoshita Rastogi and Neha Singh PhD Research Scholars, University School of Education, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University) starts with an introduction, tracing back the use of distance education (especially during the Covid-19 pandemic) and the risk of cyber threats and data privacy breaches. The presentation gives insights on digital divide and cybersecurity followed up with a review of related literature where they synthesise that literature shows that cybersecurity is now central to trust, equity, and inclusion in online and distance education, redefining the digital divide. The objective aim of the research is to identify key challenges like malware and phishing, analyze relevant government policies, and understand how security measures impact learner trust and participation. The study employs a qualitative and analytical methodology based on secondary data analysis. It utilizes various sources, including research articles, government policy documents, and cybersecurity reports to examine challenges in online education. The research focuses on policy measures and their impact on trust and digital inclusion. They find that educational institutions in India face a high frequency of cyber-attacks, with reports indicating over 8000 cyber-attacks per week, where malware, phishing and ransomware are the most common threats and advanced cybersecurity measures being adopted by many institutions. The presentation mentions government initiatives and policy frameworks including Indian Computer Emergency Response Team, National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre, Information Technology Act, Digital Personal Data Protection Act, and Cyber Swachhta Kendra & Cyber Jagrukta Divas targeting various threats and spreading awareness. They discuss "Cybersecurity is not merely a technical issue but directly influences trust, participation, and digital inclusion in online and distance education." The presenter recommends improving digital education systems, focusing on strengthening cybersecurity infrastructure, promoting digital literacy, and ensuring data protection. It emphasizes developing inclusive security frameworks to build trust within educational environments. The presentation concluded with highlights on the critical role of cybersecurity in online education. It states that frequent cyber-attacks threaten student privacy and institutional credibility, positioning cybersecurity as a new aspect of the digital divide. The presentation is followed up by a question-and-answer round among the audience.

The question-and-answer segment of Session 6 witnessed a strong critical intervention by Prof. Dr. Salonee Priya regarding the paper presented by Muskan Joshi on dyslexia.

Dr. Priya acknowledged the relevance of the topic, noting that learning disabilities such as dyslexia affect a significant number of children and remain an important area of educational research. However, she expressed concern regarding the presenter's claim that only one study on translanguaging and dyslexia had been conducted in India, specifically in Hyderabad.

Drawing on her expertise in linguistics, Dr. Priya clarified that there exists extensive research on dyslexia and translanguaging practices in India. She highlighted the work of the National Brain Research Centre (NBRC) in Manesar, which has developed the DALI (Dyslexia Assessment for Languages of India) tool designed to assess dyslexia across multiple Indian languages, including Hindi, Marathi, Kannada, and English. Emphasizing the importance of scholarly accuracy, Dr. Priya urged presenters to conduct thorough literature surveys before making definitive claims, stressing that careful engagement with existing research is essential for maintaining academic rigor and credibility.

In her concluding remarks, the Chair of the session, Dr. Anjali Dawar, reflected on several key themes that emerged from the presentations and encouraged the presenters to address them while refining their final papers. She identified three critical tensions highlighted during the session. First, she discussed the "literacy–technology paradox," noting that while innovations such as translanguaging aim to support learners, particularly those with dyslexia, scholars must critically examine whether reducing cognitive load might unintentionally weaken deeper cognitive engagement.

Second, she addressed the tension between placeless university spaces and rural heritage pedagogy, cautioning researchers against romanticizing traditional models of learning. While cultural and aesthetic aspects are valuable, she emphasized that educational infrastructure and curricula must remain functional, scalable, and accessible to all learners.

Finally, Dr. Dawar highlighted the issue of uneven implementation of progressive policies, such as those related to digital citizenship, cybersecurity, and transgender inclusion under NEP 2020. She concluded by urging scholars to move beyond awareness-based discussions and instead focus on accountability, measurable outcomes, and sustainable institutional frameworks that can respond effectively to contemporary social and educational challenges.

Session 7

Session 7 titled **"Making Sense of Ethics and Values in the 21st Century"** explored the evolving nature of ethics and values in a rapidly changing technological and social landscape. The session examined how digital systems, surveillance cultures, and shifting social structures are reshaping moral judgment, agency, and responsibility in contemporary society.

The session was moderated by Geetanshi Puri and chaired by **Dr. Anshu Gagal** of the Vivekananda School of English Studies (VSES). Dr. Anshu Gagal is Assistant Professor in the Department of English Studies at Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies, New Delhi. With a Ph.D. from Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, she specializes in ecocriticism, ecofeminism, gender studies, Dalit literature, folklore, and cultural studies, and has published widely while actively contributing to national and international academic discourse.
The rapporteurs for the session were Akhil and Kiran.

The first presentation, titled "*Prevalence of Honour Killing in Nadia Hashmi's A House Without Windows,"* was delivered by Chehak Arora, PhD Scholar at The NorthCap University, Gurgaon, under the supervision of Dr. Shrutimita Mehta and Dr. Payal Khurana. The paper examined the representation of honour and honour-based violence within Afghan patriarchal society as depicted in Hashmi's novel. Focusing on the characters of Zeba and Nafisa, the study demonstrated how women's identities and freedoms are regulated through patriarchal notions of honour tied to family reputation. Through a feminist analytical framework, the presentation explored how social surveillance, institutional structures, and cultural norms sustain gender oppression. The paper also expanded the discussion to similar honour-based practices in South Asian societies such as India and Pakistan, emphasizing the broader cultural pattern of honour-related violence. Dr. Anshu Gagal appreciated the structured analysis and its insightful textual engagement, particularly the discussion of honour as a mechanism of social control.

The second scheduled presenter was absent, and the session proceeded to the next presentation.

The third presentation, *"Children as Caregivers: Navigating Vulnerability and Agency in Crisis,"* was delivered by Latika from the University of London. The paper examined how children assume caregiving roles during moments of systemic collapse, focusing on the 1947 Partition of India while drawing comparative insights from Akiyuki Nosaka's Grave of the Fireflies set during World War II Japan. Using texts such as Urvashi Butalia's *The Other Side of Silence* and Amrita Pritam's *Pinjar*, the presentation highlighted how children are often represented as passive victims in historical narratives, whereas literary testimonies reveal their active roles as caregivers and moral agents. The theoretical framework combined feminist ethics of care (Virginia Held, Joan Tronto, Berenice Fisher, and Peta Bowden) with Martin Heidegger's concept of 'Sorge' (care) to examine caregiving as both ethical labour and a condition of human relationality. The chair commended the presentation for its innovative theoretical integration and its shift from narratives of victimhood to agency.

The fourth presentation, "*Mahabharata Through Ages: A Comparative Study between Vyasa's Epic, AI-Generated Narrative and Star Plus Television Adaptation,"* was delivered by Priyanshi Bhatla, Student Scholar from the Department of Education, Maharaja Surajmal Institute, and Muskan Gandhi, Student Scholar from the Department of English, VIPS-TC, GGSIPU. The paper argued that the *Mahabharata* functions as a dynamic narrative that evolves across time while retaining its philosophical core. Drawing on Marshall McLuhan's concept that "the medium is the message," the presenters explored how adaptations across television and AI-generated narratives reshape interpretive emphasis. While the original epic foregrounds ethical complexity and philosophical inquiry, visual and digital adaptations tend to emphasize spectacle and emotional drama.

The fifth presentation, *"Surveillance Capitalism and Carceral Vision: Reimagining Discipline and Civil Liberties in the Age of Digitalization,"* was delivered by S. Arya Menon, Research Scholar. Drawing on Michel Foucault's theory of disciplinary power and Shoshana Zuboff's concept of surveillance capitalism, the presentation explored how contemporary power operates through digital platforms, algorithmic governance,

and data extraction. Literary references such as Dave Eggers' *The Circle* and *The Every* illustrated how surveillance evolves from voluntary participation into an inevitable condition of digital life. The paper concluded that literature serves as an important space of critique against the reduction of human identity into data-driven systems. The chair moderately appreciated the presentation, though some remarks were unclear due to technical issues.

The sixth scheduled presentation by Debanshu Ghosh, titled *"A Better Ending: Tracing Narrative Imagination in Haruki Murakami's Honey Pie,"* did not take place as the presenter had withdrawn from the conference.

The paper titled *"Mahabharata Through Ages: A Comparative Study between Vyasa's Epic, AI-Generated Narrative and Star Plus Television Adaptation"* generated significant critical discussion during the session. Dr. Sunit Madaan raised important theoretical questions regarding the concept of authenticity in relation to the Mahabharata. She pointed out that most contemporary scholars rely on translated versions of Vyasa's text, since reading the original requires proficiency in Sanskrit. She emphasized that Indian epics historically exist in multiple regional and oral traditions, referencing A. K. Ramanujan's idea of "many Ramayanas" to suggest that the Mahabharata too has numerous narrative variations. Consequently, she encouraged the presenters to reconsider the assumption that authenticity must be defined through textual fidelity, noting that such concerns often emerge from Western critical frameworks rather than indigenous narrative traditions.

Building on this critique, Dr. Salonee Priya raised ethical concerns about the research methodology. She observed that claiming to analyze "Vyasa's Mahabharata" without engaging with the primary text raises questions about academic rigor and research ethics. She stressed the importance of grounding scholarly work in primary sources and consulting faculty guidance before developing research arguments.

The session chair, Dr. Anshu Gagal, further advised the presenters to narrow the scope of their analysis, noting that comparing textual, television, and AI interpretations requires a stronger theoretical framework and clearer methodological focus.

Overall, the session provided a diverse exploration of ethics, power, surveillance, gender, and care, demonstrating how literary studies continue to interrogate evolving moral questions in the twenty-first century.



Valedictory Session

The second day of the conference concluded with Session 7, followed by the Valedictory Session, during which the winners of the Best Paper Awards were scheduled to be announced. The session was moderated by Yuvna Tandon, who formally introduced the keynote speaker, **Prof. Dr. Timothy Shary**, invited to deliver the closing address.

Before the keynote, **Dr. Faizan Moquim**, one of the faculty conveners of the conference, presented an overall report summarizing the proceedings of the two-day event, highlighting the diverse themes, interdisciplinary discussions, and active participation of scholars and students across sessions.

Prof. Dr.Shary then delivered an extensive closing address, reflecting on the intellectual engagements of the conference and the broader significance of contemporary humanities research. In his address, he presented a historical overview of teen representation in American cinema, examining how films about adolescents reflect broader cultural anxieties, aspirations, and social transformations.

Tracing the development of youth representation from the early twentieth century to the present, he explained that early cinema largely centered on adults, while young performers in the silent era were typically children rather than teenagers. The emergence of adolescence as a social and psychological category during the early twentieth century gradually encouraged filmmakers to depict teenage experiences, particularly in response to concerns about youth behaviour during the Great Depression and post-war social changes. He highlighted the rise of the juvenile delinquent narrative in the 1950s, exemplified by films such as Rebel Without a Cause and Blackboard Jungle, which reflected anxieties surrounding teenage rebellion and generational conflict. In subsequent decades, teen cinema evolved through multiple cycles, including nostalgic portrayals of youth in the 1970s, the commercial boom of teen films in the 1980s, and the emergence of socially conscious narratives in the 1990s addressing race, gender, and youth marginalization.

Dr. Shary further discussed how contemporary teen films increasingly explore issues such as sexual identity, social inequality, mental health, and technological change, while also reflecting the influence of digital media, streaming platforms, and global youth culture. He noted that modern narratives frequently depict dystopian futures and uncertain social conditions, mirroring the concerns of younger generations confronting climate change, technological disruption, and political instability.

In his concluding remarks, he emphasized that cinematic representations of youth are not merely entertainment but function as cultural texts that shape and reflect society's understanding of identity, belonging, and generational experience. He argued that responsible and diverse representations of adolescents are essential, as young people will ultimately shape the future of society.

Following the lecture, Dr. Salonee Priya, Dean of the department, expressed gratitude to Dr. Shary for his insightful address and highlighted the importance of his analysis in connecting film studies with broader humanities discourse. The session concluded with an interactive question-and-answer segment, during which participants raised questions

regarding topics such as slow cinema, nostalgia in youth narratives, dystopian teen films, media influence on youth consciousness, and the representation of gender and sexuality in contemporary cinema.

In the concluding segment of the valedictory session, **Dr. Faizan Moquim** announced the Best Paper Awards, noting that all research papers had been carefully evaluated by the session chairs. The evaluation process was conducted using specific parameters, including research depth and content, clarity of presentation, analytical insight, and overall academic quality.

Based on these criteria, the **Second-Best Paper Award** was presented to **Uddav Surekha** for the paper titled ***"Perfection Utility: The Paradox of Artificial Intelligence."*** Dr. Moquim congratulated the presenter and appreciated the insightful way the paper examined the paradoxical dimensions of artificial intelligence. He also informed the awardee that the organizing team would subsequently coordinate the formal documentation and certification.

The **First Best Paper Award** was awarded to **Latika** for the paper titled ***"Children as Caregivers During Conflict: A Comparative Literary and Humanities Perspective,"*** presented in Session 7. Dr. Moquim commended the paper for its engaging analysis and thoughtful exploration of children's agency during moments of historical crisis.

Following the address, **Dr. Faizan Moquim** expressed gratitude to all those who contributed to the successful organization of the event, including the co-conveners, student organizers, the Darpan - photography team, technical staff, and institutional leadership, notably Dean of VSES **Prof. Dr. Salonee Priya**, the instituitional leadership - Chairperson of VIPS **Dr. S. C. Vats**, Vice-Chairperson **Mr. Suneet Vats**, and **Prof. Dr. Timothy Shary,** acknowledging their collective contribution to the successful completion of the conference.