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# SHAKESPEARE IS REDUNDANT... NOT!

-Mr. Shantam Basu, Department of English

Before you set your expectations too high regarding this treatise that I've formulated over 5 cups of hot coffee, a beverage that even the old bard drank while composing his works, you should know that the things you are about to read are just the rants of a fanboy that takes his Shakespeare a little too seriously.

So, is Shakespeare redundant? Hmm... Have you ever wondered why Shakespeare was canonised? Why classrooms across the world still echo with the words of Mark Antony, Macbeth, and Jaques? Why English teachers like myself still go that extra mile to teach you

*“Shakespeare’s work will continue to reshape, readapt, and assimilate to the changing times, and while doing so, remain relevant.”*

Shakespeare over other things? No, it's not because Shakespeare's plays were top of the line in terms of technicality, like that of Christopher Marlowe's or Ben Johnson's, but it is because they are relatable and relevant even after four and a half centuries.

Thomas De Quincey, in one of his essays, had compared a cookery book with Milton's Paradise Lost. He very fairly and squarely inferred that one can learn a lot from cookery books but nothing at all from Milton's great epic and categorised the former as the literature of power and the latter as the literature of knowledge. Taking a leaf out of his essay, it is easy to figure why most of us will not be able to relate to a minimalist white painting by Robert Rauschenberg and find one of Alan Moore's

work quite invigorating.

You see, Shakespeare is like water. The vessels might change with every passing age, but Shakespeare's work will continue to reshape, readapt, and assimilate to the changing times, and while doing so, remain relevant. That is the reason Shakespeare is everywhere even today. From BBC's Shakespeare: The Animated Tales to groundbreaking adaptations in Indian cinema like Maqbool where Macbeth plots to kill the kingpin of Mumbai's underbelly and Haider where Hamlet tries to seek closure in respect of his father's death in a bedevilled and insurgent Kashmir, the Bard of Avon has proven time and again that his legacy is as malleable as gold. Also, the fact that for someone who died three centuries before feature films were invented and to have been credited with more than a thousand such movie adaptations, is proof enough that Shakespeare is and will always remain relevant. A true master of rhyme and metaphors, Shakespeare's works have even made rappers imbibe the iambic pentameter, a trend that has given birth to something as remarkable as The Hip-Hop Shakespeare Company and their grime beat rendition of Sonnet 18, among others.

Moreover, you cannot downplay the only playwright in history capable of creating a 3500-line tragedy like Antony and Cleopatra from Plutarch's 80-page essay on Mark Antony. However, his greatness should not only be defined by his versatility of having written history plays, tragedies, and comedies, but by his undeniable contributions to the world of art and literature. The Hogarth Shakespeare project is something that bears

witness to his contributions. He has given us timeless and identifiable characters like the fiendishly manipulative Lady Macbeth and Prospero to the sexually ambiguous Viola, the astute Shylock, and atypical star-crossed lovers like Romeo and Juliet. He has given the world imperishable idioms and phrases that we quote every

so often like “The devil incarnate”, “Heart of gold”, “Wild-goose chase”, “What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other word would smell as sweet” and many, many others. So, to call the most quoted, most adapted, and one of the most translated playwrights of all times redundant, is a load of codswallop.

# A FINAL SALUTE

-Donovan Figg, XI

*“Dying is a wild night and a new road.” – Emily Dickinson*  
HRH Prince Philip was a man who continued to make waves long after he left the royal navy. His death on April 9 marked the end of 73 years of his marriage to Queen Elizabeth II, the longest reigning monarch in history. The Queen called him her “Strength and Stay”. He said “In the event that I am reincarnated, I would like to return as a deadly virus, to contribute something to solving overpopulation.” Prince Philip regularly entertained the public with gaffes such as these, rather publicly at that. Philip’s coffin was carried to the chapel on a Land Rover Defender that the Prince himself helped to design. This is the story of the world’s most famous couple.

Prince Philip’s life in Buckingham started with an orange box. He was born in 1922 to Prince Andrew of Greece, making him heir to the kingdom – but the following year, his family was banished due to a coup. The family was moved to Italy on a British warship with baby Philip dozing in a makeshift crib, fashioned out of an orange box. He went to a Scottish boarding school, where he was taught by the legendary Kurt Hahn, a key figure in the development of progressive education models like Round Square.

When King George the VI visited Britannia Royal Naval College in 1939, Philip was tasked with entertaining his two daughters, Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret. Prince Philip served with distinction in World War II, becoming one of the navy’s youngest ever First Lieutenants at 21. The Queen and Prince Philip kept in touch via letters despite naysayers warning her that Philip was “rough, uneducated and ill-mannered.” After the Christmas of 1943, when Philip had been invited to stay over with the royal family, a photo of him conspicuously appeared on Elizabeth’s bedside table. It was a decisive gesture from a reserved but determined

young woman. One of his most enduring legacies as the Duke of Edinburgh was to instating the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award in the year 1956. Participants aged 14-25 can gain awards by doing volunteer work, learning physical activities and skills, and undertaking an expedition like a mountain trek or a sailing trip. In 2016, almost 1.3 million young people took part in the scheme in across 130 countries and territories worldwide.

“If you can get young people to succeed in any area of activity,” its founder told the BBC, “that sensation of success will spread over into a lot of others.”

The Royal Couple married in 1947, and had two children before 1952, when it was announced that King George VI had died. The Duke of Edinburgh’s primary function now was to support his wife – curbing his naval ambitions. Their 73 years of marriage were not without their rows – a particularly famous one occurred when the Queen was persuaded to name her children Windsor instead of Mountbatten. At his funeral, Queen Elizabeth left a handwritten note on his coffin, signed “Lilibet”, a name only he was allowed to use. The note was titled “In Loving Memory” although its contents were not divulged, being of a personal nature. HRH Prince Philip was buried with his admiral’s hat and sword, in full dress blues. The Royal Family only has a fraction of a budget that Netflix’s *The Crown* has, but the royal family did justice to the word austerity, right from the lone piper following the coffin, to the handmade white wreath buried with the Duke.

Prince Philip will be privately interred in the Royal Vault at St. George’s Chapel, but this will not be his final resting place. When the Queen is no more, his remains will be transferred to the church’s King George VI memorial chapel to rest alongside his wife of 73 years, so that “They may be United in Death as they were in Life.”



# Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

Roald Dahl was actually right when he predicted:

“They sit and stare and stare and sit  
Until they’re hypnotized by it.”

This prediction has come true when you see students constantly on their devices, pointing to the nosedive of the reading culture at AVS. Even people who visit the library are drawn towards it mostly by the air conditioning rather than the stacks over stacks of adventure on pages. Most remain on their devices or read magazines perfunctorily.

We should rekindle the spirit of reading by instituting book clubs that encourages and engages readers not only to read but share their review of it. Whenever someone reads a good book, a new door opens up to them. Reading stimulates the imagination, and over prolonged periods of time, it fosters creativity in individuals.

Reading is a reflection of characters and the School’s library ought to be the place for them to build on it.

Readers are rare; but so are diamonds.

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Dear Reader

We appreciate your valuable proposition. We agree that there is a certain satisfaction in watching students engrossed in pages bound by a book. In today’s world of technology, reading seems to be relegated to those who seek the quiet than the fast lanes of the constantly changing. Can book clubs bring back the joy of books? Will it become the conscious battle of those in the Library Committee to explore ways and means to make reading a little more fetching? Beyond the stipulated aegis of an activity, reading cannot be forced nor taught. It must be discovered. While steps to encourage and promote reading as a culture must be explored, it only really takes a curious mind to find a friend in a book. Then, it is a relation forever. Always.



# TRADITION OF PRIDE

-Dikshita Bhuyan, XII

Someone I know once asked me, "What is WMH to you?" Let me rephrase it. They asked me what The Williamson Magor Hall was to me. Notice how we put more meaning and purpose into it just by writing it in its official form? It is, after all, always meant to be said with dignity and respect. However, that is just something we have been told. Looking into the realities of it, what I really find myself pondering over is: Do we still hold the majestic approach to the very hall that carries the Tradition Of Pride?

The school has passed on a number of traditions over the last twenty five years. Today, almost all of them are still alive. However, as I put emphasis on "almost", it does give out the idea that many traditions, for better or for worse, are forgotten. One of them, I would say, is keeping up the traditions of the WMH. I would refrain from calling it "WMH

Decorum" because "decorum" does not give it its deserved distinction as the word "tradition" does. The latter brings more life into it. Now, what of the traditions? For some, it is wearing proper uniform inside the hall, for others it is maintaining silence and behaving properly. But in reality it's so much more than that; it's the pride we hold the moment we step on the stage for awards, the joy we take in performing in the limelight, or even the goosebumps we get while singing the school song.

We must realize the importance of the hall. The WMH has been hosting events since its inception. It has historical moments attached to it. It has seen the school grow more than most of us. We must treat it with respect and hold on to the pride.

If we do not value the yesteryears it has seen, we would never be able to envision the future of our institution.

*Anonymously yours*

Traditions can be dangerous precedents depending on the reasoning that establish them in the first place. Traditions are a cultural reflection and like all things cannot be static in nature. The world that we live in, the societies that we inhabit, they are perpetually changing and this change necessitates that we evolve with it. There are practices set in an oligarchical manner for the affectation and entertainment of a specific set that remain embedded in the system in the name of tradition. The Change in Break as a practice has seen many changes over the years. From being a corrective tool, it took the shape of becoming one that was loosely used to entertain a few. The very form of entertainment soon became subjective and we witnessed a spectrum of commands raining down that catapulted from the bizarre to the inferior. The café lawns would turn into a colosseum as a hoard of warriours would descend upon it like a macabre flight of crazed

birds wrapped in less than what piqued the imagination. The notion that the School stands as two very different entities on either side of the LOC is evident nowhere more clearly than on this particular day where peculiar is the notion that fuels Murong. We like to believe that we are a liberal school that promotes ideas and propagates 21st century values and therefore has a progressive culture that allows dissent to exist. Yet practices that fester in the name of liberalism use these very characteristics to whiplash at the fabric of community life, subjecting it to actions all in the name of 'tradition' that never was. If we value our freedom of speech, we must then be accountable also of our actions. What we practice today will become the notion of those who come after us tomorrow. It is imperative that as a young aspirational school, we choose with care what we enshrine in the book of tradition. Let the entertainment of few not mar the possibilities of generations to come.

## ERRATUM: ISSUE 68.

This is to rectify the error in issue 68 of AVE- the best speaker was Humraj S. Jassal; not Naviya Chamariya.

We regret the error, and wish to extend heartiest congratulations to the winner.

# CAMPUS NEWS

## Coup De Maître

DPS, Numaligarh, 12-14 March 2021: We are glad to share that AVS Equestrian Team participated in the Assam State Equestrian Championship and DPS, Numaligarh Horse Show, 2021 from 12th to 14th March, 2021 at DPS Numaligarh.

**Achievements are as follows:**

**Arjun Aryan Chaliha (Riding Captain Boys, 2021):**

- Gold in Junior Show Jumping
- Silver in Junior Dressage.

**Saumya Jindal (Riding Captain Girls, Head Girl, 2021):**

- Gold in Ladies Hacks
- Bronze in Open Hacks

**Kavya Bagrodia: (Lohit House Prefect, 2021)**

- Gold in Junior Dressage
- Silver in Junior Show Jumping

-Bronze in Junior Show Jumping

**Achievements of our former students:**

**Nammier Ahmed (House Captain Dhansiri, 2019):**

- Gold in Show Jumping Open
- Gold in Dressage Open
- Gold in Fault and Out
- Gold in Hunter Trials
- Best Rider Trophy

**Nummeir Ahmed (Riding Captain, 2015)**

- Silver in Show Jumping Open
- Silver in Top Score.
- Silver in Hunter Trials

**Angad Sekhon (Riding Captain, 2019)**

- Gold in Tent Pegging
- Gold in Top Score
- Bronze in Hunter Trial



## Padmanabha

The school sees another sculpture installation crafted and designed by Nilay Dhakal, batch of 2021 under the guidance of Mr. Tapan Barui.

A symbolic gesture in these difficult days, the sculpture stands for inner peace, meditation and spirituality.

The sculpture remains reflective of the artist and his personal journey through the year of the pandemic.



## Woman Of Culture

Sriparna Gogoi, an alumna of The Assam Valley School (2016), Lady Shri Ram College for Women (2019) and St. Xavier's College (2021) has been chosen as a ThinkSwiss Research fellow and ambassador for the year 2021. The ThinkSwiss Research fellowship is funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) under the Swiss Consulate General. In the light of this, she has been invited as a Guest Researcher to work on a cross-cultural psychological study in the Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Winterthur. She will be working in the second of 2021 with Dr. Daniel Süß, director of the Psychological Institute at the university.




## Ripple #158

-Neelabh Kashyap, XII

*Drenched in the blood of  
the enemy soldiers,  
He continued to swing his  
great sword mercilessly;  
And his foes continued to  
fall like dominoes.  
Just as he was two steps  
away from death,  
He heard, "Cut!"*

## Tongue Of Slip!!

1. "I'll give you a juice of glass" - Mr. Devesh Prajapati (*That's hard to swallow, sir.*)
2. "Write it more bigly" - Marwati Imsong, XII (*Your vocabulary needs enlargement*)
3. "I have magic of power" - Manlee Angh, XII (*But not the magic of grammar*)
4. "At least give us a participate of certification" - Neelabh Kashyap, XII (*You should get one for your grammar*)
5. "I had Tezpur today" - Rotozo Tetseo, XII (*Was it tasty?*)
6. "You Google on Reddit" - Donovan Figg, XI (*The search engine just crashed*)



**Keep It Reel!**

*Blue me away*

- Mahita Jindal, X

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