

TWO ZERO ONE



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ONE YEAR
ANNIVERSARY

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Editors' Notes

The international theme of this issue isn't only relevant to politics and current affairs – as Aled's essay highlights, Bromsgrove is a truly international, multicultural school where diverse students live and work together in harmony. I'm sure you've heard this before, but the magic of a well-written essay, article or interview is its ability to shed new light and insight on a popular subject. Flip through this issue to find essays on globalisation, interviews, and a debate on K-Pop. Of course, we also include the customary Throwback from the Archives, Humans of Bromsgrove, and the latest instalment of The Murder Trail.

Alia Derriey

Here we are with our issue – “International”. In a world where the meaning of this word seems so fragile, we have decided to celebrate it. This doesn't mean that we are putting a veil of cultural awareness on all the things going on in the world. No. “International” is our way of taking a closer look at the world: analysing globalism and inequality, while reminding ourselves of the body of literature around the world; interviewing people who are trying to solve international issues, while also debating international trends

“International” is just a reminder that despite all the uncertainties and changes, we have to continue strengthening the bonds that make our world a united one.

Anamaria Cuza

Magazine Edited by: James Edge

Do you believe

“As you can see the Luckman household believes in Globalisation!”

What were you doing last Sunday evening? In a rare break from homework, I was watching television. On my screen in urban Bromsgrove, I watched enthralled as a jaguar in a remote part of a South American rainforest pounced on a caiman. I put my coffee from Costa Rica down on my table of managed teak from Indonesia, pressed the record button on the remote made in China to view a text on an iPhone run by US software and powered by coltan capacitors mined in the Congo. As you can see the Luckman household believes in Globalisation!

There can be no doubt that the everyday lives of all of us are affected by global issues. That same South American rainforest provides 20% of the air we breathe. A rogue trader flapping his wings in Singapore can cause a hurricane that brings down a major city institution and causes chaos in financial markets. Revolution in faraway places comes to our doorstep in the form of terrorism. And to our doorstep too comes goods from global brands like Samsung delivered through international networks like Amazon. Whether it is environmental, financial, political, social or commercial, in the words of the great philosopher, Mustafa, in the Lion King, we are "all connected in the great circle of life".

The reasons are relatively obvious. First, we share one key feature that binds us - a common humanity - that, despite our sometimes diverse range of views, makes us able at a visceral level

to empathise. Second, we are communicators and the rate of development in media and telecommunication technology means that we can connect globally as quickly - perversely perhaps more quickly - with big events on the other side of the world as we can with our friend next door. Finally, we live in a world of finite elements and resources where, without global cooperation, our societies will fall apart and our future ultimately fizzle out.

Happily, that global outlook, combined with rapid advancements in technology, has been largely a force for good in the world. The world's big killers of famine, disease and war are, despite media images, largely in decline. Band Aid and Live Aid moved our hearts but international aid and cooperation, infrastructure investment, agricultural management and technology have waged war on famine. In 2010, one million people died from famine whereas three million perished from obesity. The World Health Organisation attracted criticism for poor management allowing 30,000 to die in Sierra Leone from Ebola. Without the WHO and international relief, that number would have been in the millions as it was when Spanish 'flu ran riot through Europe after the First World War. Notwithstanding the appalling conflict in Syria, in 2012, more people died globally from suicide and, indeed, from diabetes, than from violent death in war. Mutually assured destruction between global superpowers and the global interdependence of trade has largely put old-style warmongering out of business. We cannot be complacent; a global outlook has significantly increased our understanding of the divide between the "haves" and the "have nots" and flagged up real concerns about our collective impact on the environment. There is much to do. But these global problems are now seen as exactly that, needing global solutions - the only missing piece is global management of the problems.

Except that recently, there has been a mood change. Seismic social and political upheaval has led to a significant increase in parochial

in globalisation?

nationalism. In the UK, we have broken away from a Europe that for the first time in its modern history has been largely conflict free. European-wide ideals are to be subservient to local British interests. The US has followed suit, electing an unrepentant protectionist all-American whose first act of state will be to crater a free trade deal with the Far East and who denies global warming and, as it is in America's interests, is likely to increase it. France and Holland may well follow suit. Russia and China - both recently exposed to the often-long-term harmonising influences of international media and finance - will see us reverting to the rules of the old game, namely those of military might, ring-fencing of resources and financial clout. The local good of the strong will prevail over the global common good of all.

Why has this happened? Somewhere along the way the established political classes whose task it is to manage the big complex problems of the connected world lost touch with the people. The Brexit vote told us that the British public had had enough of unelected politicians in Europe telling them what to do and allowing a European free market in resources and products to compete with British interests. In the US, the Trump victory tells a similar story with nationalistic themes and protectionist policies triumphing over a more internationally engaged and liberal Democrat agenda. The difficulty is that global problems are complex and require complex solutions that are difficult to explain and sell to a broad electorate. In addition, they have the propensity to readjust and upset balances of power that on a nation by nation level are difficult to swallow - reduced dependences on oil, coal and steel may be great for the world environment but catastrophic for the national economic communities that produce it. The result is the race for and retention of power to defend national interests at the expense of greater global good.

There is an understandable tendency to distinguish "global" from "individual". Global issues are seen as incomprehensible - too complex and difficult to handle, especially by

inept politicians. As individuals, we might be passionate about global topics but doubtful about our ability directly or otherwise to fully comprehend or influence matters. But I ask, if not you, then who? If you do not start to believe and push a global agenda, then others will push their own less inclusive agendas. And to be clear, if their agenda is not global, you might be on the wrong side of their profit and loss account. We are pupils in a school comprising some forty nationalities. We live and work in harmony (most of the time!). We are young at a time when, more than at any time in history, we are critically aware that our recent past has benefited from a general increase in global understanding and cooperation but that our parents, our mother countries and our future generations are still at threat from complex global issues that affect us all. If we do not stand up for the common interests and the common humanity that bind us together, then there will be little hope. The strong may survive for a little longer but some global calamity will get them in the end - only together are our chances of global survival at their greatest. If you remember our School motto, we pledge to serve our neighbour ("*vicino*"). We are each neighbour to each other so, believe in Globalisation, and start to save our world by building trust and friendship here at Bromsgrove one new friend at a time.

Aled Luckman

Do you believe

After being given the difficult task of answering the question “Do you believe in globalisation?”, I first needed to find out what “globalisation” actually meant. Wikipedia told me that globalisation is the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas, and other aspects of culture. This may look like a confusing jumble of words vaguely resembling a sentence (like much of Wikipedia’s content); in simple terms, the word refers to the way countries interact with each other, and how this advances the globe. For instance, mobile phones are made and shipped out to the whole planet. Transport between countries (e.g. the Eurostar), whether for trade, business or travel, is another prime example. To a great extent, war can be a consequence of globalisation when taken to the extreme.

So the question is, do I believe in globalisation?

I don’t think there’s any way NOT to believe in it. It is happening all the time. New products developed in far-off lands are being shipped to us in pristine packaging and mint condition as you read this. Globalisation has enabled us to experience new technological advancements from all ‘corners’ of the Earth; without it, the precious iPhone 6S+ clutched in your hands like a new-born baby wouldn’t even be in this country. Without globalisation, our own Bromsgrove School would have fewer international students, or maybe none at all. Immigration is an effect of globalisation, without which we would all be in our native countries, never exploring and experiencing other cultures. Of course these are the good things; globalisation can reduce prices on foreign goods and change the economy for the better. But where are the negatives? We all

know there is no such thing as a free lunch. Some believe that the immigration as result of it is has negative impacts - although it enriches and diversifies our school, on a country-wide scale, the repercussions can include fewer jobs, over-crowding, racism: all things irrelevant in our “Bromsgrove bubble” but heavily present in the UK. Was Brexit, our decision to leave the EU, a consequence of globalisation gone wrong? Did we get too comfy with globalisation, and it became too much for us? Globalisation can even be blamed for wars in the world - countries interfering in others’ business causes conflict.

Globalisation impacts everyone regardless of where or who they are. All people will encounter different cultures and ways of life from all over the globe. All people will be affected by all countries’ interactions with one another. We’ve got technology from American and China to appreciate, but we also have thousands of immigrants eager to enter our country as a result too. Globalisation is what you make it - you either love it and accept the consequences, or hate it and ignore the benefits. In honesty, there’s little chance that globalisation is ever going away. Until all land mass congeals into one massive country, we will always be interacting with foreign lands as humans are inclined to do. Hopefully in the future there will be more positive interactions than negative, but I guess we’ll have to wait and see what happens.

By William Hallows

in globalisation?

Thanks to politicians around the world, the word “globalisation” is being mentioned increasingly by the public. People with various occupations, wealth, and educational backgrounds have learned this word via mass media, and have started regarding it as an inevitable development of human society. However, is it actually necessary and possible for everyone in the world to accept information and cultures which differ greatly from their original understanding of everything? In other words, what kind of threat can globalisation bring?

Throughout the world, globalisation has brought more competition for both top university entrances and job vacancies. It is hard to say if this is positive or not, since more competition will enhance the initial quality of the selected people. Of course, this may also cause a problem: if people from a specific region are far more competitive than their counterparts, they may seize opportunities from the weak, breaking an initial balance.

It cannot be denied that globalisation has brought a huge benefit: worldwide accessibility to information and knowledge. The Internet, which has played an important role in publicising the latest news in every part of the world, has enabled any person to reach anything online. Compare this to our grandparents’ generation: people today have broader horizons and richer experiences. Easy access to knowledge encourages technology development and art inspiration.

Interestingly, however, we don’t feel like we know more about nature or the universe. Although it is hard to comment about art, there has been no significant progress in science (like the invention of the light bulb or the discovery of electricity) in which new thoughts can be

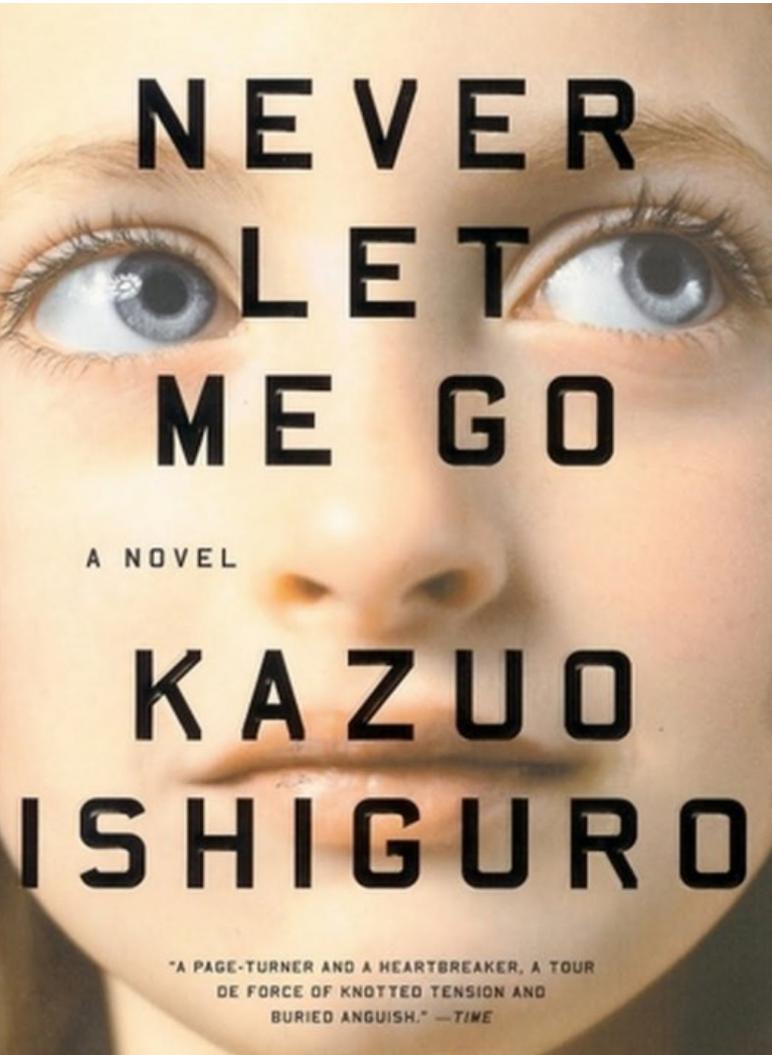
easily shared and discussed, as perhaps there should have been. It seems as if the mix of cultures and information is making everything similar, rather than fostering new ideas. Big cities, especially, which are the most “globalised” and “international”, look very much alike: shopping malls, skyscrapers, luxurious cars... If televisions and the internet were invented and popularised hundreds of years ago, would the world look the same from north to south, east to west, today?

Another problem, linked to the previous, is that local culture is holding less and less grasp on people’s lives. We call this “culture invasion”. Some people may argue that this is not a problem, since the old is inevitably replaced by the new. Still, there is no difference between the extinction of a culture and a species. It is a pity. People are losing their cultural roots which once brought them a sense of belonging to a place.

It is hard to say whether globalisation is a good or bad thing: human behaviour is so random that no one can know which side will dominate in the future.

By Sophia Wang





Book Review: *Never Let Me Go* – By Kazuo Ishiguro

Alia Derriey

I was around two-thirds of the way through *Frankenstein* when I realised I had barely read in a week. I'd enjoyed the book up until halfway, at which point I often found myself re-reading the same paragraphs, forcing myself to go on. I was in a rut. Whether this was due to the book or my state of mind I'm not sure, but I wanted to get out of it. Looking up at my stack of books for inspiration, I realised almost immediately what I should read. I'd bought *Never Let Me Go* a while ago after hearing about the book and the even more popular film. It'd been sitting on my shelf for a while, and for no particular reason, I had never got around to reading it. And what better time to read (and review) the book – written by a Japanese-British author – than for 201's international issue?

Never Let Me Go is set in a darkly distorted version of our present – too familiar to be dystopian, but not quite true-to-life enough to be realistic fiction. The book centres on three students' childhood in a picturesque boarding school and their lives after leaving, following their friendships and romances. Written from the near future, the narrative meanders spontaneously as Kathy H, the narrator, recalls memories from her past. It reminds me of a diary – descriptive, but not boring; somewhat digressive, with one anecdote leading on to the next, but not difficult to follow. Although it's hard to put my finger on how, the book is definitely well written whilst also remaining highly readable – a rare feat.

Before starting the book, I read the cover's review excerpts; one described the novel's subject as 'ourselves, seen through a glass, darkly.' (Margaret Atwood, *Slate.com*) When I began reading, however, I was confused – I struggled to recognise any of our society reflected in the book's skewed world. It was only as more details were revealed, near the end of the book, that the setting stopped being a distant horrific fantasy, but became conceivable, something that I could imagine happening. I was left with a scary thought, a dismal vision for the world's future.

Overall, *Never Let Me Go* is a fantastic book – readable, well-written, and a familiar narrative with thought-provoking themes running beneath the surface. I would recommend the book to those who enjoy books largely about relationships; it is also great for people who like dark, somewhat dystopian stories.



Globalisation: Stuff you should know

Inspired by the heated debates on globalisation and its impact on our modern society, as well as current political and economic developments, I have managed to have an enthralling interview with Dr. Whitbread on this intriguing phenomenon. I hope you enjoy reading it and gain a greater insight to help you stay a responsible citizen of the world.



What are some Dos and Don'ts in the globalised society?

“Do

-Be careful and thoughtful about the countries you target to encourage a globalised economy. Look for countries that have something to offer in reciprocal relationships with your own. It would be damaging, both to the people and your target economy if you invested in the country with, for example, a poor human rights record, as this might seem to prop up an unethical economic environment.

-Merge economic globalisation with an element of political globalisation. Then you can use your desire to globalise to encourage other countries to alter their working conditions or to put pressure on the private companies to do so. Otherwise, you don't necessarily solve the problem of more economically developed countries dominating the economy. Instead, you widen the gap.

Don't

-Dictate other countries to such an extent, that you are effectively bribing them with your trade to alter their political systems too much. You can choose your trade partners carefully, but you can't seek to intervene too much in their political systems.”

What is your view on globalisation? Are there any aspects of globalisation dynamics that you find unsatisfactory? What are some benefits of globalisation overlooked by many?

“Globalisation itself can have both benefits and problems.

It gives a lot of benefits to the individual countries which use markets in the developing world

to sell their products. This, in turn, benefits private companies and national governments. I also think there are benefits for the developing economies as they have much larger globalised markets, rather than relying on the citizens of their own country.

It can have political benefits as well. If you have more globalisation in economics terms, you generally get more international agreements, making international conflicts less likely because governments are dependent on peace in order to encourage trade.

However, there are problems as well. The first one has to be the environmental impact of transporting and selling a vast number of goods globally. Getting those goods, currently created in China and emergent economies in the Far East, to EU and America, results in an enormous economic impact in terms of shipping and transporting. It means that individual economies are heavily dependent on the economies of other countries.

I think whilst there are myriads of benefits to globalisation, it has to be approached with an amount of care, to make sure that there are safeguards in place that protect the environment and the global economies.”

Is globalisation a tool or a weapon?

“Globalisation is a tool more than anything, but a tool that we need to be careful about using all the time. I think, for more economically developed countries, it can be a tool to open emergent markets. Britain, for example, is going to have to make use of it on Brexit, as the EU market is going to decline, and it will have to increase its global standing somehow. That may well be by using increased globalization with the Middle East, especially with the Far East, by trying to access the Indian market.

At the same time, it also needs to be treated with a bit of respect. It can be seen as a weapon, in the hands of someone who treated it like this. It is very dangerous to talk about the lack of political globalisation: politicians like Donald Trump promoting increased American isolationism, whilst still remaining involved and dependent on globalised economies. It is very difficult to separate politics and economics in this way. If America is cutting itself politically from the situation then it may find itself increasingly economically cut off as well. It is certainly questionable whether America can afford to do so with economies like China and India. However, in a few years, America may well find itself a long way down the pecking order in terms of its economic and global position.”

Could you describe globalisation in three words?

“Promising, balancing, future.”

By Diana Saakyan

K-Pop: A Worldwide Phenomenon

South Korea has become the world's coolest brand. From K-pop to kimchi, the K-wave is a worldwide phenomenon. Otherwise known as the K-wave, "hallyu" is the Korean term for the popularity of South Korean pop-culture abroad, which continues to boost fashion and tourism industries. South Korea's compelling rise from one of the world's poorest, war-torn countries to the economic and cultural powerhouse it is today has been closely followed by other small Asian nations hoping to replicate its success.

Three years ago, *Time* magazine called K-pop South Korea's greatest export. At the time, this raised eyebrows - it was common knowledge that brands like *Samsung* and *Hyundai* transformed the country into one of the world's major economies, but the idea of a cultural K-wave sounded a little far-fetched. That was, until a middle-aged Korean produced a song which became the biggest track of the year, an internet sensation: *Gangnam Style* is now the most watched video on the internet with over two billion views.

That phenomenon was decades in the making. Even the Korean government have caught on to the potential gold mine they are sitting on, spending millions of tax dollars translating K-dramas into other languages. "Korea is throwing all of its weight and billions of dollars into making itself the number one exporter of pop culture in the world," says Euny Hong, a journalist and author. "The idea is that if you create the supply, the demand will follow. That's not an intuitive sales model." Korea is deliberately staking its future prosperity on the export of its culture, television, music and the likes of *Hangover* and *Gangnam Style*.

But is this really surprising? After all, we have seen this before. Post WW2, western Europe became obsessed with all things American: James Dean movies and rock 'n' roll. It is now Asia's turn and who better to step up than South Korea, a country which produces easy-to-access entertainment with a "non-confrontational image ... whereas with brands like the U.S., Russia and China, you have immediate polarization."

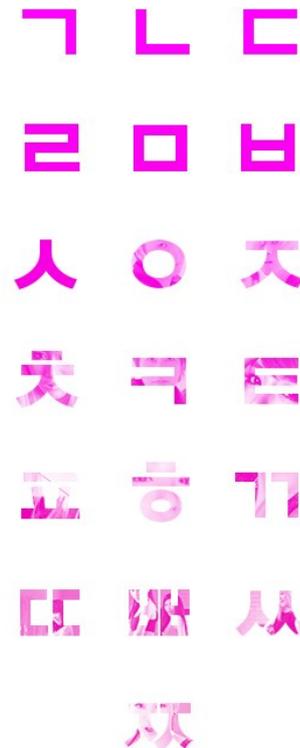
Korean culture was a mystery to me until I stumbled upon it accidentally and became somewhat addicted. From apps, which allow me to stream thousands of Korean dramas, to my love of the k-pop septet BTS, it has taken over my life, so much so that I have even begun to learn the

language. The greatest part of it all, however, has been discovering that I am not alone in my love of all things Korean. Attending Bromsgrove, I lived side by side with this fascinating community and yet never noticed it before. Now, I have become fully immersed in the school's subculture, taking part in lively debates on the tennis courts about the greatest Korean dramas of all time and even making plans to travel to Korea with friends, post GCSEs. It has become the foundation of the unlikeliest of friendships and I have even introduced it to a few more skeptical peers who I have watched become as obsessed with this world as I am.

The impact this sudden boom has had on Korean markets and stocks has been unprecedented. You only have to look to our cinemas and runways to see that the K-wave is here to stay, and if you have not experienced it yet – you will do.

행운을 빌어요 저항 하려고.

By Hannah Jones



K-Pop: What's All the Hype About?

I guarantee that you've heard a Korean pop song before, or at least witnessed a girl swooning about K-pop stars. If you haven't, I envy you wholeheartedly. Perhaps you remember the 2011 song *Gangnam Style* by Psy - a perfect example of K-pop and probably the most well-known song of its genre to date. K-pop isn't all that different to 'rest-of-the-world' pop, except the songs must be sung by incredibly attractive individuals and the lyrics must be as cringe-worthy as possible. In all honesty, I don't see what drives the excessive enthusiasm. Apart from being sung in another language (making it almost impossible to understand and therefore difficult to relate to), K-pop is no different - and certainly not superior - to other music.

So why is it so popular in foreign countries? There's no significant features that stand out at first glance. I have the greatest pleasure (not) of having many female friends that believe Korean music is the best thing since Beethoven, and just to add to the pain my girlfriend herself becomes giddy at the thought of an attractive Korean singer. Many a GOT7 (an iconic Korean band) song has been blasted down my ear canal while I'm trying to relax in an otherwise hectic week of school. Although I don't have a traditional taste in music, I'm a great fan of instrumental glitch/dance music so I can appreciate a pop song even if it isn't of my particular taste. However, when it comes to our Korean counterparts, I struggle to understand the cause for the ecstatic hyperventilation many teenage girls demonstrate every time a new song is released.

Having listened to the tracks by GOT7, as recommended to me, I recognise that K-pop is considerably more electronic than our pop. It is more populated by subtle computerised instruments than the loud, banging components in other pop. Interestingly, the lyrics are usually half-Korean, half-English, setting it apart from other music.

I am of course reviewing the music, rather than how attractive the singers are, as I believe producing music is for the sake of music and not just to woo young women. Other than unfamiliar words and slightly different instruments, K-Pop has no real charm. People enjoy the music as exotic, from a far corner of the globe; the whole sub-genre is often popular simply for its novelty. Regardless of the specialty of Korean music, I doubt it's going away anytime soon, so for now it looks like I'll be dealing with a K-pop fan as my partner for a long time.

By William Hallows

서 태 지
보 A 소
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Top Five Books from Around the World

In keeping with the international theme of this issue, I thought I would share some of my favourite books from around the world.

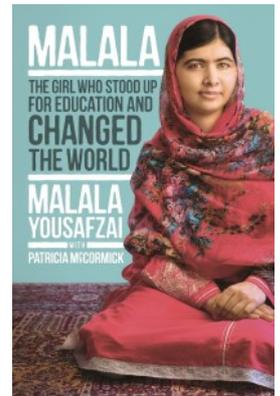


1. Uganda: *Crossroads* – By Christopher Conte

Crossroads is a collection of autobiographical essays written by Ugandan women. They describe their lives and the difficulties they have encountered, discussing a broad selection of topics relating to both 'Ugandan' issues and universal ones – from sex, sexuality and gender roles to NGOs, torture and corporal punishment. The women, living in modern Uganda, insightfully describe Western influences versus traditional customs, exploring their benefits and drawbacks. A largely unknown book, *Crossroads* is perfect if you are interested in Ugandan life and stories about women's coming-of-age.

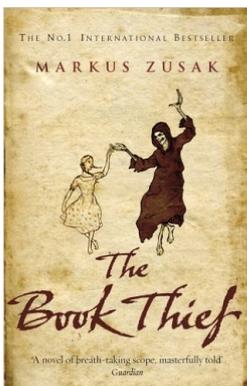
2. Pakistan: *Malala, The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Changed the World* – By Malala Yousafzai

It's likely that you already know her story – the girl who was shot in the head by the Taliban for going to school. Malala's memoir offers valuable context to her experience: her father ran the local girls' school, so growing up, she had always been an eager student. As the Taliban gained influence in the Swat Valley and Pakistan as a whole, she increasingly became an international spokeswoman for girls' rights to learn. Unlike many men in Pakistan, her father encouraged her wholeheartedly, despite fearing her safety all the time. This book is inspiring; I would highly recommend it to anyone interested in Malala's story and what's happening with the Taliban in Pakistan now.



3. Germany: *The Book Thief* – By Markus Zusak

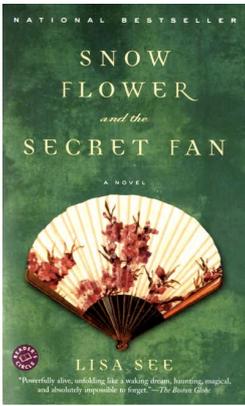
The Book Thief is a book (and celebrated film) about Liesel Meminger, a young girl living in WW2 Germany. After her brother's death, she goes to live with foster parents Hans and Rosa Hubermann. Whilst Hans becomes a father-figure, teaching her to read and encouraging her passion for writing, Rosa takes a sterner approach, but is nonetheless caring and protective over her foster daughter. Liesel becomes great friends with a local boy, Rudy, who falls in love with her. The girl gradually learns more about the war, realising that the Nazis persecuted her parents for being Communists. Her devastating and sometimes extraordinary experiences shape her as a strong-minded, somewhat rebellious young woman. Like many people I know, I loved reading this book, and would recommend it for people looking for readable, relatable historical fiction.



4. United States: *The Help* – By Kathryn Stockett

The Help, set in the early 1960's in Jackson, Mississippi, recounts the lives of three women: Skeeter Phelan, an aspiring writer, Aibileen, a caring, loving maid who is raising her 17th white child, and Minny, an angry, outspoken maid who is fired for giving her employer a piece of her mind. Skeeter decides to write a highly controversial book that accounts the lives of maids in Jackson, describing their female bosses, for better or for worse. Aibileen is the first of the maids to agree to tell her story to Skeeter, and helps her in the making of the book; she is the driving force in encouraging the other maids to write about their lives. Read *The Help* if you are interested in segregation in the South, but want to learn about it in an easy and accessible way.





5.China: Snow Flower and The Secret Fan – By Lisa See

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan is set in a remote area in Hunan province in nineteenth-century China. At seven years of age, a “so-so” girl named Lily is paired with a well-educated girl as a laotong, or “old same”, to be emotionally matched and friends for life. The laotong, Snow Flower, introduces herself by sending Lily a token of her hopes for their relationship in the future in the form of a silk fan. On the fan she writes a poetic greeting in nu shu, an exclusive, ancient language that Chinese women created to communicate in secret, away from the domination of men. Most girls at her age are part of sworn sisterhoods until marriage, but Lily and Snow Flower maintain a relationship for many years, sharing their hopes, dreams, and accomplishments through sending messages on the fan and composing stories on handkerchiefs. Both heart-warming and educational, this book is a must for people who like coming-of-age novels or historical fiction.

By Alia Derriey

HUMANS OF BROMSGROVE

By Oleksii Moskalevskyi



What is your favourite national dish?

My favourite one is called Beshbarmak, which means “5 fingers”. The name is due to it usually being eaten with hands. The main ingredients are horse meat, dough, and onions along with a choice of sides. It is a celebratory dish and is usually cooked for a lot of people.

What is only celebrated in your country?

St David’s is celebrated in Wales on the 1st of March, in honour of the Patron Saint of Wales. In schools, girls dress in traditional costumes and boys dress up as miners or rugby players. However, the best part of the day is getting to eat Welsh cakes.



If you had the chance to go to any country, where would you go?

I would definitely go to Croatia, because of its beautiful nature and warm climate. Furthermore, the people are all very nice and talkative.

Around the World: Thoughts and Discussions on Inequality

By Ana Cuza

Politics is changing. It sometimes feels as if a lot of us blinked the moment these changes started occurring and we are now trying to grasp what happened in that second when we had our eyes closed. The rise of inequality seems to be a good answer.

But here is the conundrum: inequality didn't just suddenly happen. Since 1980, the share of total income going to the top 1% has been constantly rising in many developed countries, like the UK and US, going back to the level experienced in the pre-war period. We failed to see that, even though inequality between countries was being reduced, as global economic activity was becoming increasingly dispersed, the inequality within countries was rising at a terrifying speed.

In 2002, the UN started their Millennium Goals Campaign. The very first task on the list? Eradicating extreme poverty. But as 2015 came, the UN came up with a new list of Sustainable Goals: tackling poverty is still there, but this time reducing inequality has become a primary goal as well. It

seems as if we have only started noticing inequality in the past few years, when it's not only numbers that talk, but the changes in the political environment that constantly shout that there is something wrong.

In the wake of the rising inequality, we decided for this issue to have a discussion with Ella Cardinali, an Old Bromsgrovian. She is one of the people who have decided to tackle this problem one step at a time. After volunteering in Bangladesh, she was accepted into Merit360, a program which encourages young people to develop projects around the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. During the program she created and pitched to the UN the concept of Equalify Hubs - a physical space that connects people to services that cater to social and economic requirements in their area. This summer, the first Equalify Hub will be implemented in Birmingham, enabling communities to run initiatives to meet their own needs, and hopefully in the following years the project will be scaled up to a global level.

Interview with Ella



Lets start with the basics: How did your Merit360 journey begin?

“A few years ago, I was involved in the European Youth Parliament. At one of the competitions we had Chris Arnold as a guest speaker, who talked to us about his organisation: World Merit. The idea behind his organisation, simply recognising and rewarding acts of merit, inspired me. I reached out to Chris on social media and expressed my interest in the program. Chris responded that there were places left, so I went through the application process and luckily was successful.”

What was your work focused on, during the project?

“The programme had three goals: finding a way to ensure every young person on the planet knows about the SDGs, looking into organisations already working towards the SDGs and potential partnerships, and pitching our own ideas to the United Nations.”

You chose to work on SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities. What made you choose this goal?



“I had recently been working in Bangladesh with the International Citizen Service (ICS) and in Birmingham with the National Citizen Service (NCS), so the Sustainable Development Goals were fresh in my mind. The two locations are thousands of miles apart, but I experienced similar issues: a lack of social inclusion, no voice for the young, and general segregation between people. The inequality I witnessed in both areas is something that I work on improving. Inequality is such an important issue to tackle, as it is normally experienced by the most vulnerable groups in society; people that we should protect and help, not discriminate against.”

How did you find the process of coming up with an idea for tackling such a complex issue?

“Inequality encompasses so many different areas of life that our team found it challenging to come up with a final project. We recognised that current inequality related projects only work on reducing one specific inequality within one specific demographic or region, i.e. working in churches, schools or leisure centres. However, we looked at working cross-laterally to remove these barriers. While it is really important to look at other projects for ideas, you have to consider what is not being done.

When tackling complex issues people need to push the boundaries, to be innovative and accept potential failure. But keep on making new mistakes because they will lead you to the solution.

I found it difficult to accept that this project might not solve all the inequality. In the end, though, it is better to really focus on an area that can really benefit from what you are doing. Start small, learn everything you can from that experience and apply it elsewhere.”

How did you find the experience of presenting your project at UN?

“The pitch at the UN was a mixture of sheer panic and emancipation. The room was filled with people who work everyday for human rights, the environment, education and who spent a lot of time and energy on these projects. Being in that room motivated me so much to create our Equalify Hubs. It also made me feel quite impatient: the time it takes to create a project, scale it and obtain investors is very long and demanding. This is an issue we need to tackle now.”

How did your opinion on inequality change throughout the project?

“I realised that the majority of people will experience inequality throughout their lifetime. Hearing the stories of so many people, made me realise that humans are really strong. You can take your experience and use it for good, as a motivation to improve things, the way so many people I met were doing.”

When discussing inequality, are there any points that should be, in your opinion, more emphasised?

“I feel that there is a strong Eurocentric presence, and an individual’s understanding of inequality will vary depending on their experience in life. I think the main element of inequality that has to be discussed more is how our actions affect other countries. For example, the waste we generate is often sold to other countries, which leads to reduced standards of living in the recipient country. Even though we have the means to recycle, we continue producing most of the waste in the world.”

What is, in your opinion, one step that should be taken to reduce inequality?

“Communities need to come together and support one another. The sense of community I felt in Bangladesh is something that we have lost. I once asked a volunteer where he lives, when the rains come and his house floods. He replied ‘not to worry, we are all family here’. Acceptance and understanding in society ebbs and flows over time, yet it should be omnipresent.”



The Murder Trail – Part 4:

Car Talk

By Jagveer Uppal

Artwork By

Anya Butler and June Iec

Cab journeys are awkward; any mildly sociable person would agree. Being in an enclosed space, traveling at speed, with a complete stranger, you eventually feel the urge to strike up a conversation. Perhaps engage in some type of small talk that never really means anything, littered with shrugs and approving nods to pass the time. In a long journey you run out of topics, the chitchat becomes stale and the air slumps into a kind of bearable silence. Occasionally there are moments when something of note happens, like the passing of a land mark or famous restaurant, and this is acknowledged briefly before the quiet swallows the vehicle again, like it is itself an overtaking motor. Over time, it feels striking a second conversation would be even more uncomfortable than keeping silent, as it would highlight the length of time in which you said nothing. An incongruous thing to do, in any social affair.

This was not the case for John. Concern over the awkwardness of conference would have been a deep relief compared to his inset fear of what his passenger would say. In the car with him sat a long, gangly gentleman in a striped prison jump suit and a pair of glasses which made his eyes bulge, moving in magnification behind the lens like liquid. The eyes alone were enough to make a person cringe with discomfort, and the fact that John had freshly plucked this man from a mental asylum didn't help.

'Chris,' muttered the man. For the past few hours he'd been grinning at nothing, whispering to himself like a person deep in thought. 'Chris,' he said again, slightly louder for John to join the conversation.

'What?' John spat in a voice like he'd just woken up with a sour taste on his lips.

'My name. My name is Christopher Rypitic. But, you'll call me Chris.' He sounded like a man making a decision - firm and absolute. This was unnerving. John had been driving the car; had ushered Rypitic rather forcefully from his previous holding; and was, realistically, considerably bigger than him. In no way was John a behemoth of a person, but stocky yet well built, he could have easily relieved the lunatic of his consciousness and left him on a street corner somewhere bewildered, hunted and alone. Couldn't he have?

So why did the prisoner feel more confident than him?

An aggravating, cocky smirk remained plastered to his face. The whole time, he was relaxed and slumped back in his chair. John seemed more like the help, perhaps a chauffeur. Chris had now propped his feet up on the dash board and begun to recline.

'Do you know why you've come to collect me?' John said nothing. 'No?' It was condescendingly rhetorical. 'Right. Your boss, Mistress Moody, is a member of a Mafioso family. The Moody's have been rivals to a second family for a good... oh how long has it been? Twenty years. It's fine to admit you don't know, you don't have to be so taciturn.' That (the passive aggressive remark along with John's confusion at the word 'taciturn') was enough. Within a breath the car wrenched to the side of the road and burst through a row of trees lining its edge, in a field just behind. They halted with a jerk and a scraping sound of arcane suspension. Now, having reached for the gun wedged in the back of his trousers John pointed it at Rypitic's head.

'Are you going to shoot me?' he said with a raised eyebrow, 'In which case, go for the eye. It'll make more of a mess.' Rypitic adjusted the barrel accordingly with an expectant grin. Doing his best to remember the lad's insanity, John tried to hide the fact that he was taken aback.

'No?' The prisoner covered his mouth and faked an overly surprised look, before taking a moment to let loose a manic chuckle. 'There are two reasons that you can't shoot me, you know.'

'Are there?' replied John, relinquishing any hope of turning the situation back under his control but instead expressing a fed-up sarcasm.

'Yes. Good - you're finally paying attention. Well done. Firstly, you're ignorant and I can enlighten you... I see you're confused. Right, well, you know nothing about Moody. I do. I can tell you, and I'm likely the only one who will. Secondly, you'd be a terrible delivery man if you gave Moody a damaged package. A dead one is all well, mind you.' John mulled this over, returning to the irritating, recurring feeling of stupidity as he did so.

'Ok, Chris. Tell me a story.' He lowered his gun and was ready to finally hear what the mad man was on about. Rypitic spoke briskly and ended his sentences with brash pauses, but at this point John's nerves were too worn-out to care. He licked his pasty lips and began.



‘Approximately twenty years ago there were two families: The Moody’s and the Rattigan’s. They hated each other. Both of the ‘Dons’ of the families used to try to provoke the other. Eventually the inevitable happened and a gang war broke out. Kidnappings, bomb-blasts, drug runs, murder of widows, burning of orphans, cats and dogs marrying-’

‘Chris!’

‘Just a lot of bad stuff, right. Until eventually: dum da da dum!’ He mimed a trumpet being sounded by cupping his hands around his mouth, ‘Don’ Moody suggested a peace treaty and the other ‘Don’ agreed. Neither side was getting anywhere, families were dying; it made sense. Turfs were divided and areas were segregated, as they usually are. But, ‘Don’ Rattigan had a son who was not happy about this. He thought the Moody tribe were a conniving bunch. They set up their store houses in churches, involving kids in the movement of particular products (most of which had a tendency to launch several thousands of lead projectiles into a body in a very small amount of time). They stooped to levels low even for a mafia family. This son, he was a real arrogant kind of guy - high class with a golden spoon shoved up his rear end. I liked him; he had his goals in order.’ John rolled his eyes and silently wished the man would reach the end already, preferably before his tolerance ran so low that he might need to re-position the gun at a different person’s eye.

‘He wanted to go ‘legit’, to run a legal, big-time armament company, but he needed to gain the trust of local authorities for permits and so forth. And... he did. He basically snatched out the Moody clan’s operations and was declared a local hero. Thousands upon thousands of them were put away - some to jails up and down the county, but most were given the electric chair. Except one.’ The realisation hit John; he found himself sharing a smile with a psychopath for a few seconds, before his thoughts returned to reality and he realised what he was doing. For a second he felt uplifted; he was no longer in utter incomprehension...not that he had the stomach to thank Rypitic for this. ‘The next night the Rattigan family met for a celebratory dinner in an Italian place a few streets down from the Moodys’ church. Conveniently, the place burned down killing everyone inside.’

‘Just like that?’

‘Well if forensics had looked a little closer they might have noticed a couple of feral stab and exit wounds, but who looks for a bullet hole in a crispy corpse?’ He asked like the answer was obvious. ‘Funny thing though, the son survived and so did the girl who evaded the police. However, the poor Rattigan kid actually emerged several months later, all shrivelled and crooked looking. Like he’d been turned into a little troll-type creature. Doctors said every bone in his body must have been broken so many times that he just didn’t have it left in him to fully heal anymore. Someone must have taken out some serious aggression on him.’ He paused slightly longer and for a moment John thought he’d finished. He hadn’t; that was annoying. ‘And the funniest thing is he did go ‘clean’ in the end. Started working for a company that Moody just so happens to have big shares in, dealing weapons globally.’

‘He worked for Moody?’

‘He was Moody’s slave. She forced him. His little ugly trustworthy face means she yanks his strings like a puppet to work on any level, legal or...less legal.’

‘Why are you telling me this?’ By now John understood enough to realise that Rypitic must have something in this that could benefit him. Though Rypitic had spent time with psychiatrists to make him a more generous, considerate member of society, there was a niggling feeling in the back of John’s skull that wondered if therapy had actually worked on a man like him.

‘Because I have a feeling I might need you, and you might need a little more information to keep you...less dead in the future.’ The way Rypitic said ‘need’ reminded John of the way a greedy child might ‘need’ a bar of chocolate rather than an escaped mental patient might ‘need’ a friend.

‘What about the psychiatric home?’

‘You’ll see why I’m here when we get to Moody’s. Now drive!’ Back in his overly governing voice, he gestured to the wheel and John set off, a little more willingly than he had before.

Throwback from the Archives

By Alia Derriey

After we decided on the issue's International theme, I thought it would be interesting to research the first international students who studied at Bromsgrove. I expected the date to be in the 1980s or '90s, and was stunned to learn that a number of Thai (formerly Siamese) students attended the school from as early as 1919. I don't know if they were the first, but they are certainly some of the earliest.

The research process was an arduous yet ultimately rewarding experience – after flipping through several battered copies of the Bromsgrovian and a mammoth School Register (handwritten, of course), I was directed towards to the Elmshurst Register from the same period. Here, I found extensive information on each student, including listings of around six Siamese students between 1919 and 1950.

One name stuck out to me: Chai Saeng-Xuto (later changed to Luang Chai Asvaraks). Born in 1904, he joined the school in September 1919, in Elmshurst House, as part of the Army Class.

After leaving Bromsgrove, he studied for a veterinary degree and gained membership of the Royal College



of Veterinary Surgeons. Lt.Col.Prof. Dr. Luang Chai Asvaraks became the first head of the Department of Veterinary Medicine at the Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. As a significant figure in the Veterinary field, he attended and even chaired international conferences including that of the esteemed Office International des Epizooties (currently known as the World Organisation for Animal Health). Later in life, he became Director of the Animal Husbandry Department at the Ministry of

Agriculture, and Senator in the Upper House of Parliament, Thailand. The man had a formidable career, and it all started here at Bromsgrove.

NUMBER	NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	PARENT OR GUARDIAN and HOME ADDRESS	PREPARATORY SCHOOL	SCHOOL HISTORY
37	Wood, Frank Bryan	25 November 1905	Charles Wood 79 Oxford Road Mossley W.Lam.	Elmshurst House School, Tisbury Rd Bromsgrove W.Lam.	September 1919. U.III. House XV Col. Feb. 1923.
38	Charuchinda, Parabun	April 29 1904	c/o A.C. Carter Esq, Siamese Legation 21 Ashbur Place S.W.4.		September 1919. July 1923. U.R. Army Class.
39	Saeng-Xuto, Chai <i>later changed name to Luang (illo) Chai Asvarak</i>	March 1904	c/o A.C. Carter Esq, Siamese Legation 21 Ashbur Place S.W.4.		September 1919. Army Class. M.C.V.S. Professor, Chulalongkorn Univ. Bangkok 1953. Director Gen Animal Husbandry Department, Min of Agriculture. Senator, Upper House of Parliament
40	Beach, John Leslie	5 June 1906	S. J. Gethin Yvescot Chaddesley Corbett	Palace School Woolshed.	January 1920. July 1920.



