

*Seeing History Transformed into Literature:
Nilufer Bharucha at the Contemporary Writers' Forum*

Reading short stories is exciting and great fun. Meeting a short story writer, however, exceeds all expectations. To some passionate readers it may be one of the greatest experiences they have ever made in their lives. Some students of the Fachbereich 3 at the University Siegen were fortunate to be part of the "Contemporary Writers' Forum." This year's guest speaker was Prof. Nilufer Bharucha from University of Mumbai.

Professor Bharucha has been a talented writer since she was a young student. However, during the past decade, other major projects have prevented her from putting her ideas into words creatively and producing short stories. For the occasion of the Contemporary Writers' Forum, however, she enjoyed re-writing one of her trademark stories, "The Benediction."

As a Parsi Indian, she is one of the "last witness writers," as she calls them. Bharucha belongs to the Parsi community, which is an ethno-religious group originating in southern Iran. The Parsis used to be a colonial elite but their community is "dying out nowadays." That may be one reason why her stories mainly deal with the ethnological marks of history and the Parsi belief in its god Ahura Mazda.

It is exciting to be part of the process when history is transformed into literature, as when Prof. Bharucha writes her stories. The Forum did not only offer her a place to share her thoughts and experiences but also created room for the students to gain a better understanding of the complex and fascinating Indian culture.

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