The U.S. and China: Enlargement of Convergence
by Wei Zonglei, Deputy Director of the Center of American-European Studies, Chinese Institute of Contemporary International Relations

The Mystery of Japan’s Wartime “Mascot Dolls”
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A Glimpse into Tibetan Reality: A Personal Story of a Tibetan at Brandeis
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Lucky Two-Dollar Bill, Part II (A Fictional Story)
by Lilian Duval
MONSOON WOULD LIKE TO THANK MAI LE, A STUDENT AT BRANDEIS, FOR HER CONTRIBUTION.

“Vietnam: A Farmer and the Countryside”
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**APRIL 2004**

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A Message from Monsoon's Senior Editor for Global Affairs

Monsoon is founded with the goal of bringing to Brandeis University the political, economic, and cultural events of the world from an Asian perspective. This issue contains articles from students and professors from Brandeis and abroad. The editorial board is also proud to present an essay from Wei Zonglei, Deputy Director of the Center of American-European Studies at the Chinese Institute of International Relations. The essays presented in this journal present unique views regarding Asian affairs. The enthusiastic reception we have received both locally and abroad so far does much to show that we are succeeding in our purpose. In this editorial, however, I don’t intend to reiterate the goals of Monsoon. Instead, I wish to address a question I imagine many new readers will ask – what is an Asian perspective, and how does one “qualify” to present such a viewpoint?

I am a Filipino-American. My father was born in the Philippines and emigrated to the United States. As a US citizen, he practiced medicine and raised a loving family. As a Filipino, I know about my father’s history and culture. I know of the country’s heroes, from Emilio Aguinaldo to Corazon Aquino. I have read its folktales, and as a Roman Catholic adopted the religion of many of its citizens. I remember listening to my uncles and aunts of their childhood stories: how they survived the horrors of World War II, how they grew up, and the values they have upheld to this day. I remember visiting the nation as a child, and being amazed by its cultural heritage. I look upon my Filipino heritage with pride.

The more I look back, however, the more I realize that there is still so much that I do not know about the Philippines, and so much more that I never will. I have made little effort in learning the language of the Philippines, other than common words and phrases. I was born in America, and I am an American. In addition, while I respect my father’s heritage, I also value that of my Caucasian mother, who was born and raised in upstate New York. As the child of an interracial couple, I am keenly aware that I straddle two worlds at the same time. In a world where race is often conveniently used to label people with various prejudices and preconceptions, I am a peculiarity to many people.

When I call myself a Filipino-American, I do not deny half of myself and embrace the other. I identify myself as a “whole” person, proud of my diverse origins and experiences. As an editor for Monsoon, I have strived to present my unique perspectives on the world. I can attest that my colleagues have done the same. How does one present an “Asian perspective?” You do not have to come from a special background or even be Asian. The only qualification is that you are interested in the region and its multi-layered impact on the world.

I believe that an “Asian perspective” is ultimately one of many ways of comprehending a complex world. This outlook is difficult to define, but Monsoon is committed to the advancement of this goal not because it is easy, but because it is hard. Asia is a complex entity, and it is only through sharing our thoughts and learning from each others’ experience do we all ultimately benefit. To all current and future readers, I welcome you to enjoy our publication and give us your precious feedback. To all potential contributors, I speak on behalf of the entire Monsoon editorial board that we all look forward to your wonderful articles.

A journey of a thousand miles of discovery does begin with a single step of daring curiosity. We sincerely invite you to join us in this endeavor, for it will continue to be as exciting and rewarding as it always has been.

Elliott Veloso
The U.S. and China: Enlargement of Convergence

- by WEI Zonglei

There are many common interests between China and the United States. However, this does not guarantee cooperation between them. China has traditionally stressed diplomatic cooperation with the U.S. Shackled by an anachronistic Cold War mindset and whose general ignorance of China raises unnecessary fear about the East Asian country, however, the U.S. has instead focused on interfering with China’s domestic affairs and breeding mutual suspicion of each others’ motives. A central feature in Chinese culture is to emphasize commonalities and seek harmony among individuals and groups. When the term “interests” is translated into Chinese, it is interpreted as “liyi,” meaning “profits and goods” in the political and economic sense. Many Chinese find it difficult to understand how the U.S. could reconcile frequent contradictions between promoting “American values” such as ideas of human rights and democracy, and the pursuit of greater economic cooperation – especially with their fast-rising country. Ultimately, “interests” are defined and redefined according to what is at stake between the countries involved. Seen from this light, a solid groundwork is in place for further progression in U.S.-China relations.

As two of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, the U.S. and China share immense responsibilities in global affairs. We share the tasks of sustaining peace and stability around the world by combating terrorism and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We engage in numerous cooperative ventures to address the rapid deterioration of the environment, the epidemic spread of HIV/AIDS, and the swift exhaustion of natural resources. Both countries have a key interest in maintaining the stability of energy supplies from the Middle East and Central Asia, and security in worldwide sea and air transportation. Ever since China joined the UN Human Rights Convention, China has made tremendous strides towards the advancement of domestic human rights and prevention of humanitarian disasters. With the country further opening up after its entry into WTO, China has deepened its interactions with the U.S. economy and that of the world. The coming years will see a growing interdependence of Beijing and Washington, particularly in the fields of commerce. In the meantime, China’s economy is still dependent on American consumption and investment.

Maintaining peace and prosperity throughout Asia is in the core economic and security interests of China and the U.S. America can benefit immensely from China’s constructive engagement in regional security arrangements, such as the current peace diplomacy in the North Korean arena. The two countries also have common interests in ensuring stability across the Taiwan Straits. With global terrorism likely to occupy Washington for the foreseeable future, American interests would be fundamentally harmed if a military showdown between the two countries were to occur over Taiwan. It is true that Beijing and Washington have substantial differences in beliefs and values. Americans must look past ideological blinders, however, to appreciate the fact that a stable China – with over one-quarter of the world’s population – is ultimately beneficial to bilateral relations and beyond. China is one of the oldest civilizations on the planet, and has been one of the most rapidly changing societies over the past two decades. It is simply not possible for the country to introduce Western-style democracy overnight, as many politicians and activists demand.

It is also true that the two nations have fundamental interests in accepting and implementing international norms. Washington makes the most progress when Beijing officially adopts and advocates these rules worldwide. The U.S., through this approach, has achieved considerable progress in areas such as weapon nonproliferation. Less than full compliance on implementation on Beijing’s behalf should not be misinterpreted by Washington as a gesture of insincerity as long as substantial progress is attained. The U.S. should note, though, that America’s often vocal condemnation towards China over issues such as human rights has constantly driven a majority of the Chinese population to view rejection of the aforementioned international standards as an affirmation of national pride. This, in the end, does not serve the interests of either side, as American political capital is needlessly expended and Chinese efforts towards fostering closer cooperation with the U.S. are unnecessarily compromised.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, China has been relegated to a lower level of importance in Washington’s foreign policy. The Tiananmen incident in 1989 drove U.S.-China relations to its lowest point since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1989.
President Bush has reiterated the U.S. commitment to their large Pacific neighbor. It is duly appreciated that actually have substantially positive attitudes towards – especially among Islamic societies – many Chinese to boost U.S.-China relations. In the last two years, as in China's reunification endeavor, this would do much cooperation. If the U.S. could play a constructive role Chinese cannot solve the Taiwan problem without U.S. hand, American policymakers are reassured that the country looks at American policy towards China as a key test of U.S. staying power in the Asia-Pacific and beyond. The U.S. must be prepared to coexist with a rising China.

For Washington, maintaining a constructive relationship with Beijing vastly reduces American costs in pursuing regional interests in Asia. Every Asian country looks at American policy towards China as a key test of U.S. staying power. The U.S. recognizes China’s influence in tackling regional issues that span from the Korean peninsula to Central Asia. On the other hand, American policymakers are reassured that the Chinese cannot solve the Taiwan problem without U.S. cooperation. If the U.S. could play a constructive role in China's reunification endeavor, this would do much to boost U.S.-China relations. In the last two years, as anti-American sentiments are growing around the world – especially among Islamic societies – many Chinese actually have substantially positive attitudes towards their large Pacific neighbor. It is duly appreciated that President Bush has reiterated the U.S. commitment to the “One China” principle not to support Taiwan’s independence.

The U.S.'s policies towards China are pragmatic and opportunistic. When the U.S. is at war and requires Chinese assistance, America will stress cooperation and downplay longstanding issues in China’s domestic affairs. During the Gulf War in 1990, in order to secure Chinese endorsement for American use of force against Iraq, the Bush Administration sent senior officials to Beijing immediately after the Tiananmen incident to lobby for support. Meanwhile, Congress was silent on China's human rights conditions and extended the Most-Favored Nation trade status to China. After the Gulf War, the U.S. threatened to sever trade relations with China, raised a resolution to condemn China in the UN Human Rights Commission for a consecutive seven years, invited Taiwan’s Teng-hui to visit the U.S., and accused China of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

It is observed that Republicans tend to engage in realpolitik policies. Mao Zedong, the founder of the People's Republic of China, once said that he preferred to deal with Republicans for their straightforward and no-nonsense approach towards bilateral relations. The Nixon Administration sought to contain the Soviet Union and embrace China during the Cold War. Republican practical philosophies do not necessarily favor China, however. In the 1990s, it was the Republicans who raised the issue of the “China threat.” Labeling China as a primary rival is the commonly adopted approach for American policy planners in drafting the Nuclear Posture Review Report and the National Security Strategy of the United States. For a long time, the U.S. has been used to dealing with a weaker but predictable China, but now a stronger but seemingly uncertain China has entered the American psyche. The U.S. is fearful of China attempting to exclude American military presence in the Western Pacific and Central Asian regions. Although Chinese officials frequently attempt to dispel such fears, Washington remains suspicious. The U.S. refuses to believe in China’s New Security Concept, which advocates coexistence and cooperative diplomacy. China will certainly redouble its efforts to reassure the U.S., but it seems that the building of mutual trust is not an easy undertaking.

The U.S. and China differ on the nature of the most critical problem facing the relationship. While Beijing believes that the Taiwan issue is the fundamental obstacle towards a systemic improvement in bilateral relations, the U.S. emphasizes that democracy in China is the only way to normalize the relationship between the two countries. The U.S. must acknowledge and address several mutual contradictions before a long-term constructive cooperation can be achieved. First of
all, cooperation with the U.S. entails challenges with the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) governing position. The Bush administration stresses on the promotion of democracy and pushes for China’s political reform. In the “National Security Strategy of the United States,” Bush criticizes that “China’s leadership has not yet made the next series of fundamental choices about the character of their state.” Washington has substantial doubts on the CCP’s capabilities to carry out smooth power transitions, avoid governance crises and move towards implementing democracy and the rule of law. Some American observers even believe a collapse of China is the major source of the “China threat.” The Bush administration believes that the Chinese authorities have to carry out political reforms in tandem with rapid economic development to avoid a systemic collapse of the country. It is important for the U.S. to constantly prod China’s leaders to adopt the liberalizing reforms they naturally resist, but at a cautious and non-assuming pace for the outcome to be mutually beneficial.

Also, U.S. cooperation entails inherent contradictions with China’s goal for its sovereign and territorial integrity. The U.S. must understand that supporting Taiwanese separatists and use of the island as political leverage will deter America from enjoying full cooperation with China. Meanwhile, signs of cooperation from Beijing are frequently criticized by Chinese nationalists as giving in to constant American pressure and sanctions, especially with regards to Taiwan. Finally, America’s firm policies towards China regarding Beijing’s engagement with “rogue-states” such as Iran, Iraq and Libya have drawn much Chinese frustration. Chinese leaders usually have to make difficult decisions between endorsing U.S. military operations and harming traditional Chinese allies. Washington tends to impose coercive measures upon Beijing on numerous issues. In addition, the U.S. has often given China unfair and insensitive treatment, ranging from the Taiwan issue to the maintainance of large numbers of military bases surrounding China’s borders.

All these are obstacles that must be overcome for the further advancement of bilateral relations. Opportunities for cooperation are plentiful, though. In the end, full diplomatic cooperation between the world’s leading power and the world’s fastest-rising one will depend on the wisdom of current and future American and Chinese leaderships. With the ever-deepening ties between the two nations, one could be guardedly hopeful about the future.

Dr. WEI Zonglei is Deputy Director of the Center of American-European Studies at the Chinese Institute of Contemporary International Relations.

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China, the West and Ethnocentrism
by Kassian POLIN

In 1793, King George III of Britain sent a trade envoy, Lord McCartney, to imperial China in the hopes of expanding diplomatic and commercial ties. The British representative was denied an audience with Emperor Ch’ien Lung, who subsequently told him that China “possesses all things… and has no use for your country’s manufactures.” China, said the emperor, would not entertain England’s desire to acquire the “rudiments of (China’s) civilization… for (England’s) alien soil.” To the Chinese, foreigners – including the British – were “foreign devils.” A powerful country whose Chinese name, Zhong Guo, means “Middle Kingdom,” China in the eyes of its people represented the center of human achievement.

The British, keen to force open the Chinese market for Western economic and cultural penetration, invaded China in the Opium War of 1839-1842. Britain declared that it was its mission to “civilize” the “Chinese barbarians,” starting with the Treaty of Nanjing, which ceded Hong Kong to the British, after the war. This marked the beginning of a 100-year period of disgrace known to the Chinese as the “century of dishonor.” During this period, Western Christian missionaries, businessmen and social elites flocked into China to “uplift and civilize” the Chinese “pagans,” and to introduce harsh measures to “bring the (Chinese) out of their ignorance, conceit and idolatry,” according to S. Wells Williams in 1843. By the late 19th century, a China independent only in name had lost a large measure of political, economic and military control over its territory. The Middle Kingdom, it seemed, no longer represented the center of the civilized world.

The Chinese and Westerners believed that their respective civilizations were better than the other’s, and sought to show superiority over the other. Ethnocentrism, demonstrated by both parties, is the “assumption that one’s own group’s lifestyle, values and patterns of adaptation are superior to all others,” according to Aaron Podolefsky and Peter Brown, professors of anthropology at the University of Northern Iowa and Emory University respectively. This definition, however, does not reveal why the Chinese and Westerners – and by extension mankind – are ethnocentric. To understand why, one simply has to consider a Chinese proverb – “the frog lying at the bottom of the well cannot speak of the sea.” In a nutshell, the West emphasizes rights of the individual and the value of conflict to promote the public good, while China and the East emphasize duties of the citizen and the importance of harmony to maintain
social cohesion and create prosperity.

These are long-cherished values that have underpinned the identities and traditions of the two blocs since the inception of their civilizations, and serve as the cornerstones of their achievements. After all, the Chinese emphasis on social harmony has been one of the main factors that contributed to the country’s 5,000-year unbroken historical heritage, while the West’s focus on competition brought forth tremendous gains in material wealth and standards of living through scientific achievements and military conquest. A Westerner would believe that Western ways are the natural foundation of “reality,” based on having limited experience with non-Western peoples and environments. The reverse holds true for a Chinese. Indeed, the two figurative frogs would have ample justification to point out that the limited worlds within their respective wells are the “best.” That is why the Chinese and Westerners, as well as any rational peoples, are ethnocentric.

The problem with such behavior is that it often leads to misunderstandings between the actors involved. When people view the world through the lens of their own limited experience as “reality,” they tend to lose sight of larger meanings and contexts when dealing with foreign matters. People may simply be acting from their unconscious ignorance, but seemingly well-intentioned motives may inadvertently offend or even harm others. During the many centuries when China was the dominant power in East Asia, the Chinese thought that it was only natural to make tribute bearers acknowledge Chinese superiority by performing the “kowtow,” which was a ritual involving a person knocking his head on his floor before Chinese officials. After China’s defeat in the Opium War, then U.S. president John Quincy Adams denounced the Chinese insistence on the “kowtow” as “an enormous outrage upon the rights of nature,” according to Michael Schaller, professor of history at the University of Arizona and a renowned sinologist. He cheered on British troops as they “advanced righteous Christian precepts” against China’s “insulting and degrading” refusal to adopt Western-style trade and diplomatic treaties.

In the late 19th century, however, the Chinese viewed the Christian movement in their homeland as subversive in nature. For the Chinese peasant, the ancestor and local social leaders were to be revered; for the Christian, the minister or priest commanded the respect of the masses. Only around 2 or 3 percent of Chinese became Christians, while the others viewed the missionaries as “imperialists of righteousness.” The Chinese resistance towards Western religious conversion continued, which culminated in the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. China’s embracing of communism, expulsion of missionaries and persecution of Christians seemed an act of loathsome ingratitude in Western eyes. To many Chinese, however, these acts represented a reassertion of pride.

Ethnocentric clashes between Chinese and Westerners remain plentiful in the modern age. Mao Zedong, the founder of the PRC, revived the idea of “using barbarians to fight barbarians” to play the United States and the Soviet Union against each other at the height of the Cold War. With the rapid integration of China into the global economic system and the country’s political liberalization launched by the late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s, Americans hope that these trends will accelerate China’s evolution towards Western-style democracy. In fact, Schaller believed that “seemingly well-intentioned motives may inadvertently offend or even harm others. During the many centuries when China was the dominant power in East Asia, the Chinese thought that it was only natural to make tribute bearers acknowledge Chinese superiority by performing the “kowtow,” which was a ritual involving a person knocking his head on his floor before Chinese officials. After China’s defeat in the Opium War, then U.S. president John Quincy Adams denounced the Chinese insistence on the “kowtow” as “an enormous outrage upon the rights of nature,” according to Michael Schaller, professor of history at the University of Arizona and a renowned sinologist. He cheered on British troops as they “advanced righteous Christian precepts” against China’s “insulting and degrading” refusal to adopt Western-style trade and diplomatic treaties.

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peoples have the best chance of trying to understand one another while remaining fiercely loyal to their individual ethnocentrism.

Every year, millions of tourists all over the world visit Beijing’s Tiananmen, or the Gate of Heavenly Peace. Its inner sanctums contain the Palace of Heavenly Beauty – the residence of numerous Chinese emperors and the symbolic center of the Chinese universe. In 2000, visitors witnessed another potent symbol – the round logo of Starbucks Coffee, which has opened a shop near the palace. A scene like that would no doubt spark deep emotions among different people, in the same way Ch’ien Lung felt about the “foreign devils” and Adams about the “kowtow.” For better or for worse, a big challenge for humanity in an increasingly small world is to accommodate often contradictory ethnocentrism. Given that the human race living in a shrinking global village has survived numerous specters of self-annihilation throughout its history, one could be cautiously optimistic about the future. Frogs, after all, might have a fair chance of escaping wells when the conditions are ripe.

Kassian POLIN (‘05) is a third year student at Brandeis University majoring in Economics and International and Global Studies.

The Mystery of Japan’s Wartime “Mascot Dolls”

-by Ellen SCHATTSCHNEIDER
(Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Brandeis University)

Introduction

During my current year of research in Japan, I have become fascinated by the small figures known as “mascot dolls” (masukotto ningyo) or “keepsake dolls” (imon ningyo) during the Asia-Pacific war, as World War II is known in Japan. Many thousands of these dolls were made by women in Japan from the late 1930s (perhaps earlier) until August 1945, and given to servicemen in the Imperial Japanese Army and Imperial Japanese Navy. Initially, these small cloth dolls, nearly always depicting a female figure, were sent to soldiers serving in China. They became especially popular during 1944-45, when many tokkotai (“kamikaze”) carried the dolls on their final missions.

My interest in these dolls developed out my research as a cultural anthropologist on special ceremonies in present-day northeastern Japan, in which the soul of a person who has died unmarried is married, in effect, to a beautiful bride doll (hanayome ningyo). This practice apparently developed soon after the war, as families grieved for young men who died in battle. (Thousands of bride dolls have been dedicated at temples and religious sites in far northern Honshu, and hundreds more have been dedicated by families to soldiers at Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo.) I began to wonder if the giving of “mascot dolls” during the war to soldiers may have contributed to the rise of this special way of remembering and honoring loved ones who died in military service.

The Idea of “Mascots” (Masukotto)

The mascot dolls themselves may have developed, in part, from the amulets (omamori) carried by samurai in earlier years. This appears to be an example of the widespread belief in Japan that dolls have a kind of soul (“tamashi”) and can carry the identity or essence of a person who has made or owned them. Interestingly, the word “mascot” comes from the old provincial French word “mascotte” (lucky charm) made popular by the 1880 French opera, “La Mascotte,” which was performed in Paris, London, and eventually in Tokyo. By the early 20th century, the term “masukotto” in Japan came to be used for small dolls or objects given to bring luck to people; gradually, dolls came to be a common gift to soldiers departing for the front.

Mascot Dolls and the War

From c. 1936–1945, Japanese women’s and girls’ magazines often featured instructions on how to make these small dolls for soldiers. Mothers made them for their sons, sisters for their brothers, wives for their husbands, and girlfriends for their boyfriends. In many cases, home economics teachers instructed their students in how to make the dolls, which would be sent to serving solders in various theatres of war. The dolls often were made of scraps of kimono or other spare items of cloth. Sometimes the dolls wore dresses, and often they wore the monpe trousers favored by many women on the home front during the war. Sometimes the dolls depicted komori (nursemaids), holding a tiny baby. Often, the name and address (or school) of the woman who made the doll was appended to it, on a strip of paper. The dolls were often included in the “imonbukuro” (the keepsake or care bags) sent by women and families to soldiers on the front, along with items of clothing, postcards, and so forth.

The Dolls and the Tokkotai

I am especially fascinated by the use of these
mascot dolls by tokkotai/kamikaze. A number of surviving former tokkotai have told me that they received many of these dolls and that they carried them on their bodies, usually hanging from cords around their necks or their hips. Most of the time, when official photographs were taken, the soldiers would place the dolls under their uniforms; but I have come across at least twenty photographs of tokkotai in which the dolls are clearly visible. Many people have told me that the dolls were given to keep the tokkotai company during their terribly lonely final journeys. In some cases, I have been told, mothers, sisters, and lovers wanted to “be with” the pilot during his final moments, and that the dolls allowed this special closeness.

**The Fate of the Dolls**

Most of these dolls were of course destroyed during the war, but a few have survived. In some cases, tokkotai/kamikaze gave one of their mascot dolls to relatives or friends, as “katami” (remembrances), just before their final mission. Such dolls are displayed in a number of Japanese museums, including the Yushukan military history museum at Yasukuni (Tokyo) and in the Chiran Peace Museum, the Kanoya naval aviation museum, and the Kaseda Peace Museum in Kagoshima (southern Kyushu). One mascot doll, given by its IJN owner to family members soon before he died in action in a kaiten (special attack submarine or “human torpedo”) is now on display at the Kaiten museum in Yamaguchi Prefecture. Remarkably, this doll has recently been traced back to the woman who made it as a teenage girl during the war. I recently had a long talk with her and she recalls making such dolls with her mother in 1944 and 1945.

I also recently spoke with a group of women (in the organization “Nadeshikokai”) who as high school students helped take care of young tokkotai pilots stationed in Chiran in 1945. In some cases, they explained, a pilot would ask a girl to make him a special mascot doll. One woman recalled a pilot in April 1945 asking her to make him two dolls, one for him and one for his airplane. Some kamikaze pilots, she explained, would hang a doll from their instrument panel, and talk to it in flight. Looking into the faces of the dolls, she said, they would see the faces of their mothers, their sisters, their wives...

I am continuing to research the history and legacies of these fascinating dolls, and look forward to sharing my findings with students and colleagues when I return to Brandeis in Fall 2004!

**Dr. Schattschneider, an Assistant Professor of Anthropology, is the author of the book, “Immortal Wishes: Labor and Transcendence on a Sacred Japanese Mountain” (Duke University Press, 2003). During 2003-04 she is a Fulbright Research Fellow in Japan and is completing her next book, “Facing the Dead: Japan and its Dolls in the Mirror of War.”**

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**Did you know......**

The Kamikaze Corp, founded by Admiral Takijiro Onishi, conducted their first attacks during the fighting for Luzon in the Philippines on January 4th, 1945.

*Source: Encarta Online, [http://encarta.msn.com](http://encarta.msn.com). Keyword: Kamikaze*

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**Exceptional but Not Atypical**

- by **Nidhiya MENON** (Professor of Economics, IBS, Brandeis University)

Stereotypes rule, when it comes to Indian women, in the western world. For every cliché that the bandit queen, Phoolan Devi, blasted out of existence from the barrel of a shotgun, a new one has sprouted. For every formidable political mind like Indira Gandhi and Jayalalitha – women who stood, and in the latter case, still stand, alone on the stage in their own right, a new “model” has emerged, weak and simple. To be sure, India is still a patriarchal society in which male children are favored over female, resulting in high rates of female infanticide in some states. It is still a place where women are often ill treated in the household. Yes, a disproportionate number of girls are not sent to school, particularly in rural areas, and yes, the custom of paying dowries is pervasive despite a law that made the practice illegal. And Bollywood, India’s large film industry, continually spins out blockbusters in which stories revolve around characters who are little more than reticent, sari-clad dolls.

Yet, like everything about India, the picture is more complex. For every suffering Sita, there is a Shakthi, goddess of strength. These are women who have moved on, who have broken age-old traditions...
and taboos to follow their hearts and dreams. There are countless such women, but a glimpse at three of them might offer a hint as to the characters of all.

Koneru Humpy plays chess. In fact, she plays the game so well that she is Asia’s youngest International Master, an accolade she earned in 2000 when she was only twelve years and four months old. Since then, she has gone on to set a new world record by becoming the youngest-ever woman to gain the Grand Master title. She was a little over fifteen years old at that time. Koneru lives in Guntur, a semi-rural, non-glamorous city in Karnataka. She is blessed in having progressive parents (her coach is her father) who encourage her in a sport that has traditionally been considered too “cerebral” for women.

The importance of a supportive family cannot be over-emphasized in this context. In fact, Kiran Bedi, the first woman in India to join the Indian Police Service (which she did in 1972), also credits her parents for her success. The second of four daughters, she worked her way up from being the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic) to the Inspector General of Police (Chandigarh, Punjab). One of her most demanding assignments was taking charge of New Delhi’s notorious Tihar jail (Asia’s largest prison). Her innovative approach in that and other jobs won her several international awards including the Ramon Magsaysay Award for government service (often considered the Asian Nobel peace prize). Oh, and before Kiran Bedi joined the Police Service, she was the Asian Junior Tennis Champion! She currently serves as the Civilian Police Advisor in the United Nations.

The women discussed above are not as much of an exception as one may believe. Several Indian women have challenged conventional thought from the very beginning, and dearth of space prevents me from chronicling their achievements. I hope that the above examples will make you think twice when you come across generalizations of Indian women as being “…cowed and meek, who see the world’s great anguish and its wrong, yet dare not speak.”

Did you know......

“The women’s movement in India is a rich and vibrant movement which has taken different forms in different parts of the country. Urvashi Butalia contends that the absence of a single cohesive movement, rather than being a source of weakness, may be one of the strengths of the movement. Although scattered and fragmented, it is a strong and plural movement.”

*Source: www.twnside.org.sg/title/india1-cn.htm*

Professor Nidhiya MENON, an Associate Professor of Economics, is a researcher at the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, and a consultant with the Development Economics Research Group and the Economics and Development Institute of the World Bank.

The Korean Fight for Independence

- by Lisa KIM

“We hereby proclaim the independence of Korea and the liberty of the Korean people. We announce this to the nations of the world in order to manifest the principle of the equality of man, and we pass it onto our posterity in order to preserve forever our people’s just right to self-preservation as their inherent right....” Choe Nam-son, March 1, 1919, the Korean Declaration of Independence.

From 1910 to 1945, the Korean peninsula endured a period of harsh Japanese imperialist rule. As a Japanese colony, Korea was deprived of its law enforcement and judiciary powers, while freedom of press, speech, assembly, and association were non-existent. Students were beaten for speaking Korean in school, and citizens were arrested for displaying the Korean flag. All colonial subjects were forced to acquire Japanese names, speak Japanese, worship the Japanese emperor, and sever all cultural and political ties to their national Korean identity. Korean land rights and the currency system were eliminated in order to jump-start the peninsula’s new existence as a Japanese colony.
Korean industries were taken over solely to provide cheap goods for the Japanese market as Koreans were forced to provide intensive labor for sporadic pay. A great chunk of the annual harvest in Korea was shipped to Japanese homes, which left multitudes of Koreans in perpetual starvation.

The Sam-il (March 1st) Independence Movement in 1919 was a milestone in Korea’s fight for liberation from Japanese rule. This peaceful resistance movement was inspired by President Woodrow Wilson’s Principle of Self-Determination of Nations, articulated at the Paris Peace Conference following World War I. Although Wilson did not include the future of non-European nations within his scope, Koreans understood the political implications of the world’s superpowers which acknowledged the importance of national sovereignty. Kim Kyu-sik, an American-educated Korean activist, traveled to Paris to directly ask Wilson for assistance in regaining Korean independence.

Although Kim’s pleas fell on deaf ears, Korean intellectual and political leaders were determined to use the Wilsonian doctrine to fight for Korean sovereignty on a global level. Supporting these efforts, Korean students studying in Tokyo organized to publish a statement demanding Korea’s independence from Japan based on the principles of self-determination. These combined efforts served as a spark for the self-determination movement in Korea. Secret plans were spread through underground networks all the way to the countryside, urging fellow countrymen to rise up on March 1, two days before the funeral of Korean emperor Kojung. To many Koreans, this represented not only the end of the Yi dynasty but possibly the end of Korea’s national existence.

On March 1, 1919, a core group of 33 patriotic leaders gathered in front of a huge crowd at the Pagoda Park in downtown Seoul and read aloud Korea’s Declaration of Independence. Masses of Korean citizens raised the Korean flag high and marched into the streets of Seoul crying “Daehan Tongnip Manseh” (Long Live Korean Independence). Villagers in remote towns and exiled patriots in Manchuria, Siberia, Shanghai and the United States all joined in this spontaneous nationwide movement. Koreans abroad also appealed to the governments of their host countries to assist in Korea’s efforts towards independence.

The Japanese police, however, arrested and executed many of the movement’s leaders who marched in peaceful procession. A total of 49,811 Koreans were arrested, 45,562 Koreans were wounded, and 7,645 Korean lives perished. Nevertheless, during a month after the first outbursts of the independence movements in Seoul, more than two million people participated in 1,500 demonstrations in 211 counties. The movement led to the establishment of the exile Provisional Government to carry on the fight for independence in Shanghai.

The greater March First Movement – known in Korean as Samil – ultimately failed due to brutal Japanese suppression. Although Korean independence was not immediately won, the momentum generated went beyond the peninsula. The Samil movement greatly contributed to the spread of national independence movements throughout Asia. Upon hearing the news of Samil, China also rose up in its May 4th Movement. Similar movements also sprang up in India and many other nations in Southwest Asia.

Nevertheless, an international response to the March 1st independence movement was virtually non-existent. Nationalists learned from the Samil movement that they ultimately needed to rely on their own efforts. Regardless of grand declarations of universal rights, developed countries could not be trusted to back their declarations with action. The strong patriotism and determination of the Korean people has shown the world instead that its Samil movement is one of the most extraordinary examples of peaceful resistance to foreign domination in history.

**Did you know......**

Article V of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points declares that “A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.”

*Source: [http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1918/14points.html](http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1918/14points.html)*

Lisa KIM ('06) is a second year student at Brandeis University majoring in Politics.
Too Much Silence and Trash Talk: The Unproductive Political Culture of Hong Kong
- by Tak-Hin Benjamin NGAN

Perhaps the people in Hong Kong spent too much time under the colonial rule of the British – now that they finally got a chance to work out their own politics, they don’t know how.

The political and social tensions in Hong Kong have never been higher than they were in the past few months. On July 1, 2003, nearly half a million of demonstrators filled every inch of many narrow streets in the already-packed city to protest against the government’s intention to implement the now infamous Article 23 National Security Bill, which proposes the prohibition of “any act of treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People’s Government, or theft of state secrets.” Whilst the intended goal of enacting Article 23 was based on the concerns of national security, the pro-democratic groups instead viewed the National Security Bill more of an abuse of individual rights and freedom than a law that aims at safe-guarding national security.

Even though the Hong Kong government took a step back in the end and stopped pursuing the enactment of Article 23, “the bill, however,” according to Gordon Chang, “was only the triggering event” which awakens the Hong Kong people to their desires of democracy. On January 1, 2004, yet another large-scale demonstration broke out in Hong Kong with ten thousand demonstrators demanding universal suffrage elections for the next Chief Executive by 2007. Tensions have tightened, and most scholars and politicians from outside of China viewed the circumstances in Hong Kong as a battle between a government supported by an “authoritarian regime” and the call for democracy. To be more exact, however, politics in Hong Kong has simply turned into a meaningless battleground between silence and trash-talk.

It is undeniable that a significant number of Hong Kong people, even though they may not resemble a majority, want democracy. But it is one thing to be pro-democratic, and another to be anti-government. In fact, the pro-democratic faction in Hong Kong has demonstrated over the years, implicitly or explicitly, that they are playing the role of the “protestor” who stands in the opposite end of the political spectrum to both the Hong Kong government under Chief Executive Tung Chee Hwa as well as the Chinese government under the Chinese Communist Party. Eventually, a phrase that people use to describe these pro-democratic politicians has gained more and more credibility – that the pro-democratic faction of Hong Kong comprises mostly the politicians who “oppose by default everything from the Chinese government.” More specifically, instead of a quest for democracy, politics in Hong Kong is simply a battle between the government and the anti-government politicians.

This rivalry is becoming increasingly hostile as time progresses, and is in fact becoming more and more meaningless in the sense that it is not providing the Hong Kong society with much positive contribution. One main problem with this rivalry is that these so-called pro-democratic politicians seemed to have lost focus to their agendas. Instead of focusing on their roles as elected counselors in the Legislative Council, many of them apparently paid more attention to attacking the government verbally and action-wise. Be it a tactic of gaining popularity or a relentless attempt to remove Tung Chee Hwa from his post, these pro-democratic politicians have provided less and less actual, solid, and positive contribution to the society.

During meetings of the Legislative Council, it has become more or less a pattern that all pro-democratic counselors would, by default, attribute every single problem of the society to the “misrule of the Chief Executive,” and the removal of Tung Chee Hwa from his post would always be the “urgent” solution that they list on their agendas. Instead of engaging productive dialogues with their colleagues, these pro-democratic politicians would rather spend their time on meaningless verbal attacks of Tung and the government instead of attempting to compromise with policies that are suggested and supported by the so-called “left-wingers” or those who favors the policies proposed by the government. In one of the Legislative Council meetings that was held last summer, Szeto Wah, a representative of the Democratic Party, criticized Chief Executive Tung of “imitating the Chinese President

Did you know......

Chief Executive Tung Chee Hwa believes that the National Security Bill should still be passed someday in Hong Kong. “Hong Kong really has this obligation, this constitutional obligation,” he said. “Being a Chinese national, a citizen, I do believe we should legislate.”

*Source: The New York Times*

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Jiang Zimen’s usage of the English adjective naïve during a news conference” so as to “demonstrate” that the Chief Executive was only a “rubber-seal” of the central government. And this is just one of the many examples of how the pro-democratic politicians would spend their time as the representative of the voters to engage government officials with meaningless topics and hence providing the politics of Hong Kong with nothing but unproductive and annoying disturbances.

While the pro-democratic faction of Hong Kong is becoming less and less productive, the Hong Kong government in itself is not doing any better. As the anti-government politicians are over-doing their trash-talk, the officials of the Hong Kong government are too often silent in return. Not too soon after the demonstration demanding a popular and universal election of the succeeding Chief Executive, Tung Chee Hwa responded by promising that he will “pay close attention” to the demonstrators’ demand and no further action was being taken thereafter. Just as the anti-government politicians have developed their “tactics” to play against the government, government officials also have their own “working habits” – settling for silence in the face of the people’s demands and complaints.

Without mentioning the inefficiency and faultiness of Hong Kong’s infant and inexperienced regime, the government’s irresponsiveness to the public’s demands has increasing become a big concern of the Hong Kong society. The government’s officials work within their own circle that would hardly provides opportunities for voices that are different than theirs. In fact, that was exactly why the July 1 protest was created in the first place as the government insisted that the enactment of Article 23 was based on “popular support” and neglected the significant mess of people who stood against the bill. In the end, it took half a million people’s voice to raise the attention of Tung Chee Hwa and his cabinet.

To be sure, the trend of Hong Kong’s political culture is obvious: there is no productive interaction in the politics of Hong Kong. The pro-democratic politicians are providing no ground to compromise with the government, whereas the government would not even take a step forward to engage those people who hold different opinions. This battle of silence versus trash-talk is bounded to becoming more severe if none of the two parties would attempt to leave their positions at the extremes and start learning the virtues of productive cooperation. Instead of wasting their time discussing the usage of an English adjective in a Legislative Council meeting, perhaps, they may well just all go home and pray that “Politics for Dummies” will be next in the publication series.

In Hong Kong, we always boast about our freedom of expression and sometimes even the excess of it. We rank high in it comparing to our Asian counterparts like Singapore and Malaysia. We pride ourselves as free individuals, each capable of making a noise and having a say in a diverse society. Is that so?

Last year, during the Australasian Debating Tournament 2003 held in Malaysian Multimedia University in July, freedom of expression was challenged and deprived. One outstanding debater from Singapore delivered a humorous, pointed, but nowhere seditious speech regarding the current political situation of the Singaporean government. His instructor, who was alleged to have political affiliations back in her country, reported this to the school authority and the whole team of debaters were forced to withdraw from the competition immediately and without further delay. Not even the tournament committee could have prevented the team of debaters from being “deported” back by the threat of expulsion. All they could do was to guarantee no further disciplinary action by the school authority that might have otherwise be implemented.

People in Hong Kong might still want to point a finger to Singapore’s autocracy like they used to, yet and unfortunately, parallels of such attacks on freedom of expression is happening in Hong Kong as well. For example, one of the most prestigious academic leadership programs in Hong Kong is facing such challenges as political self-censorship and suppression of autonomy, when the symposium of this program, to be held in Hong Kong in March, is to be scrapped of politically sensitive topics by its biggest sponsors.

Although the incident had been peacefully resolved, the propensity of the incident itself is a rampant and outrageous violation of academic freedom and integrity. All the universities represented in this program have gained accolade and recognition internationally by the virtue of their excellence in academic research, and such excellence is achieved because of the common understanding that academic pursuit is yet to be stained by any external pressures tampering with liberty to express opinions however incompatible with societal

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No Price for Democracy: Freedom of Expression Eroding in Hong Kong

- by Ka Wing Karen CHAN

In Hong Kong, we always boast about our freedom of expression and sometimes even the excess of it. We rank high in it comparing to our Asian counterparts like Singapore and Malaysia. We pride ourselves as free individuals, each capable of making a noise and having a say in a diverse society. Is that so?

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opinions, be it political preferences. Such understanding has been staunchly advocated in Hong Kong before 1997. After 1997, however, the incident of Dr. Robert Chung has alarmed us of possible consequences of suppression of freedom of expression in academia. It takes time for the University of Hong Kong to regain international recognition. The aforementioned shameful incident, if ever to happen in March during the symposium of the academic leadership program, will be a disgrace of Hong Kong. For this symposium, to be handicapped by self-censorship and preponderance of political correctness, further signifies Hong Kong’s political regression apart from incessant failures in governance, absence of official accountability, and social unrest.

Laugh not at our Asian counterparts for their tyrannies. We never have had any true democracy in Hong Kong. Under British rule, we are subjects, not sovereign joint-owners of our homeland. Yet, a little taste of democracy is, ironically, granted to us under a seemingly oppressive rule of a foreign empire. We yearned for democracy. We voted for the Democratic Party in the 90s' elections. We asked for more. It is under such alien rule that we see our place and our value in the political system, as people who have a voice and a ballot sheet to change the course of political action.

This tinge of yearning has been subtly stamped out, ironically again, when we finally became part of a sovereign country, our motherland. Now, we do not even have that sense of feeling alien to remind us that we need democracy anymore. We have this grotesque creation of a politician by the Chinese government who ruined HK economy and, in turn, ripped us from political freedom that is, according to Locke and Hobbes and Mill and Rousseau and so many others, our natural rights, “so that the economic environment will be stable and thus better restored.” That, in principle, is no different from a thief who steals your possession and asks you to redeem it with your money. The government tells us that we have to make sacrifices if we want a better life. What a joke. Political right can never be traded off for anything. And if it ever is, the society cannot fully function as a political entity.

Hong Kong has been dysfunctional for long. Political haphazard, societal disintegration, and most importantly, loss in credibility and reputation has tainted the once “Pearl of the Orient.” All these have been happening, not even the massive street demonstration on July 1, 2003 can change it.

This subtle autocracy in the form of infringement on freedom of expression is looming over Hong Kong’s seemingly, and apparently less than before, open and tolerant political climate. If Hong Kong no longer speaks the language of personal liberty and freedom of expression, but that of businessmen who are interested only in making more money in a stable economic climate aligns with the doctrine of “no politics but economy” by the government, then Hong Kong will be turned into a market machinery manipulated and haunted by unspeakable fears for the Chinese government’s predominance. There will be no Hong Kong if we allow more people like the Singaporean debater to be sacrificed and more non-provocative symposiums to be silenced. Acquiescence, in this case, is a heinous crime.

Freedom of expression and personal liberty is our last stronghold. This frontier has already suffered attacks and cannot afford to be attacked further. It takes only a small crack in the wall to cause damage beyond repair. In the face of this, we cannot remain silent, otherwise we will remain silent forever.

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Manglish, Anyone?
- - co-authored by Hoong-Chuin LIM and Srinivasan Rao ERRAKIAH

In a Malaysian elementary school classroom...

Ali : teacher, teacher, you see Kiat, he put his pencil in my tupperwear.
Kiat: weargot, i never do like that wan. You simply bluffing oni.
Ali : don't play the fool with me. Afturds i really shout, then teacher scold you wan.
Kiat: want to shout, shout-lah, you thing teacher care-ah?
Ali : you sobadwan, i don fren you anymore.
Kiat: nemmain, i never fren you oso. I only bluff-bluff fren you wan.
Did Ali and Kiat confuse you with their language? "Don worry ah," there is no problem with your command in English at all. This is Manglish – a form of colloquial English spoken and used by Malaysians in their daily conversations on the internet, on the phone, and even when communicating face to face. Manglish is heavily influenced by the other languages spoken in Malaysia. Woven into the “language” itself is a blend of languages which is an assimilation of the cultures of Malaysia’s multi-ethnicity and multilingual social fabric. Besides incorporating such Chinese suffixes as lah, mah, liao, and ah, sentence structures in Manglish, for the most part, are influenced by the Chinese language too. For instance, “want to shout, shout lah” adopts the syntax of “xiang jiao jiu jiao ba,” its counterpart in Mandarin. Manglish also involves using certain words from the Malay language interchangeably with English (for example, “Pergi” in replacement of “go”, “teh” in replacement of “tea”).

Of course, not every single Malaysian speaks Manglish. Even if they do, they do not speak the “language” all the time. According to the article Differences in British and Malaysian English (www.nationmaster.com), “one has to make a distinction between Manglish and the English spoken by Malaysians speaking so-called proper English.” Despite deviations in terms of intonations, accents and word-choices, proper English is “merely a normal variation in the way English is spoken and does not deviate significantly from common English. It is intelligible to most English-speaking peoples around the world.” For Malaysians, communicating in Manglish not only permit “violations” in the usage of grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary and even spelling, but also gives the user the freedom of choosing from a vast selection of words from different languages to develop an effective, efficient, and friendly conversation.

The “official” English that is spoken in Malaysia is by and large based on British English and British spelling. It has been noted, however, that American English, which prevalently spread its influence through the entertainment industry, has started to gain importance in Malaysia. English was used vastly as the medium of instruction in the Malaysian education system when Malaysia achieved its independence from the British in 1957. This inheritance has given birth to a generation with excellent command in English. Thirty years ago, however, the Malay language replaced English as the medium of instruction in Malaysian public schools for the purposes of establishing a unified lingua franca amongst Malaysians as well as building a national identity for the multi-racial society. However, the increasing literacy and appreciation of the Malay language have been made at the expense of a declining command of English in the younger generation.

Some are worried that the culture of speaking Manglish is an obstacle in improving the people’s command of the English language. To prepare its people for globalization, the Malaysian government has proposed that English be made the medium of instruction for all science and mathematic subjects as an effort to further increase the standard of English in the country. When speaking Manglish, people disregard not only the correct usage of grammar and sentence structures but also abbreviate syllabuses of the wordings when speaking or writing (for example, “ade” or “adi” stands for “already”). Continuous usage of Manglish, especially among the teenagers, inevitably poses a threat towards the effort of improving the standard of English in this country.

It may seem natural for Malaysians to converse with each other in Manglish, but the “side-effects” of this practice must not be neglected. Extensive usage of Manglish, if not dealt with appropriately, may lead to a decline in fluency of proper English in Malaysia. This could mean trouble because Malaysia is well known as a hot spot for tourists – the Petronas Twin Towers, the Formula One Grand Prix at the Sepang Circuit and its ever shining tropical sun are just some of the many attractions of Malaysia. Since English is widely spoken in Malaysia, it provides an edge for the tourism industry over its counterparts in many of Malaysia’s neighboring countries. Therefore, one cannot possibly emphasize enough the potential negative impact of the continuous and widespread usage of Manglish to the tourism industry of the country. Apart from that, no Malaysian could ever imagine a future Prime Minister giving a speech in Manglish in an international conference.

Should we then banish the use of Manglish? It is obvious that Manglish does pose a threat to the English standard amongst Malaysians, but wiping out Manglish may after all provide little, if not any help in elevating the command of English amongst Malaysians. Rather, formulating a more interactive English class that encourages Malaysian students to speak more, write more, and read more of proper English, especially form an early age will be far more effective in attaining the aim. Manglish could remain as a special flavor of Malaysian culture, which could at the same time

Teh Tarik [ teh ta-rik ]
Literally meaning “pull tea”, the drink is prepared using out-stretched hands to pour piping hot tea from a mug into a glass.
become a tourist attraction and ultimately an identity of the country. Speaking Manglish is like savoring a cup of Teh Tarik during tea break at a roadside mamak (a slang which refer to Malay-Indians) stall. It sets one free from the limits of the linguistic aspects of English and therefore focuses on the effectiveness in conveying messages in the similar fashion that drinking tea at a mamak stall frees one from having to abide by the rigid table manner in a high-end expensive tea house. Most importantly, it is a powerful and friendly tool to strengthen relationships among the people of different races and ethnicity in Malaysia. However, one has to be strict in making sure that no Manglish is allowed in academic writing, publication and formal correspondence. Most importantly, Malaysians should assiduously try to learn and master the English language in order to keep up and compete in today’s growing information technology.

So, after all, what were Ali and Kiat talking about? ...
Ali: Sir, look at kiat. He put his pencil into my lunch box.
Kiat: No, I never did that. You are a liar.
Ali: Admit it or I will start shouting and get the teacher’s attention.
Kiat: If you feel like shouting, please go ahead. Do you think the teacher will care about this?
Ali: You are very mean. From now onwards, I do not want to befriend you.
Kiat: I do not mind. I never wanted to be your friend in the first place. I was just pretending to be your friend.

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A Glimpse into Tibetan Reality:
A Personal Story of a Tibetan at Brandeis

- by Kalsang Yangzom TASHI

I grew up in a small Tibetan community in northern India. Little did I understand the reality of our displacement as refugees. Life was simple. My parents ran a small tea shop where my sisters and I took turns to help before and after school. The only time that our parents closed the tea shop was during the Tibetan New Year. It was also the only time of the year when we had new clothes to wear. New Year celebrations would generally go on for a week in India and other Tibetan exiled communities. I remember being told that in some regions of Tibet, people celebrated the New Year for a whole month. That had made me envy children of my age growing up in Tibet. Nevertheless, that envy did not stay for too long as I started to learn the common reality for all Tibetans, especially for those in occupied Tibet.

At the outskirt of my hometown was a school exclusively built for incoming Tibetan adults fleeing from repression in Tibet. My oldest sister who taught them English often remarked at their diligence as students. They had left behind everything – their families and friends – just like my grandparents and parents did four decades ago. Not having your own country is starting your life twice and from scratch. I cannot begin to imagine what it would mean to give up the hope of seeing your family ever again. I wish there were no occupations and separations but only freedom and family reunions.

I learned more about my people’s history at school than I did at home. School simply opened me up to a world of various learning opportunities: language (Tibetan, English, Hindi), public speaking (elocution, debate and plays), music (traditional Tibetan instruments) and sports. While I would turn into a sloth at home, school disciplined me into being the best student that I could be. When I was in ninth grade, the Education Minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile introduced me to an angelic American woman, Susan Whitman, who was eager to sponsor the education of a Tibetan child. I started as a sophomore at Woodstock International School. Before I knew it, Susan had opened my door to one of the best universities in

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*Source: http://www.tibet-society.org.uk/facts.html*
It has been one great opportunity after another. I could not be any happier or luckier. I also realize that with great power and opportunity come great responsibilities. I hope I can go to Tibet one day with my own Tibetan passport, reunite with Tibetan families and celebrate New Year for as long as I want.

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The Partitioner: Mohammed Ali Jinnah
- by Ammad BAHALIM

Mohammed Ali Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League and founder father of Pakistan, is an Asian legend. The demands of Jinnah did not necessarily entail the partition of India. In the proceedings of the All Parties National Convention, Jinnah presses that "Hindu-Muslim Settlement should be reached, and that all communities should live in a friendly and harmonious spirit in this vast country of ours," according to Stephen Hay’s Sources of Indian Tradition. Clearly, the notion of partition is not ingrained in the fabric of Jinnah's being or his discourse on Muslims in India. This "ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity" – as described by none other than Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India – would not gleefully seek the partition of a country he thought was of his own.

Jinnah's cause for concern was the application of the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy to India. Muslims, as a numerical minority, would therefore fail to garner enough political power to address their concerns. To give Muslims political weight, a resolution endorsing the idea of Muslims as a nation was passed at the Lahore meeting of the Muslim League in 1929. Using this as a ploy, Jinnah demanded that "all future constitutional arrangements be considered 'de novo' because Indian Muslims were a nation entitled to equal treatment with a Hindu ‘nation’,” according to Ayesha Jalal’s The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the Demand for Pakistan. The 1937 elections were ultimately an embarrassment for the League. Congress lost the need to either negotiate, form stable ministries or other commonly held political endeavors with the League. Punjab and Bengal allowed Jinnah to speak for them at the center, on the Unionist condition that the League would have no say in Punjabi affairs.

Ever the varying politician, Jinnah consolidated the Muslim vote by declaring that any Muslim that accepted the League's "Creed, Policy, and Programme" vote solidly for the League,” according to Ayesha Jalal’s The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the Demand for Pakistan. The 1937 elections were ultimately an embarrassment for the League. Congress lost the need to either negotiate, form stable ministries or other commonly held political endeavors with the League. Punjab and Bengal allowed Jinnah to speak for them at the center, on the Unionist condition that the League would have no say in Punjabi affairs.

Did you know......

Pakistan's religious population is 97% Muslim (Sunnī 77%, Shi‘a 20%) and 3% Christian, Hindu, and other, while its ethnic groups are Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun (Pathan), Baloch, and Muhajir (immigrants from India at the time of partition and their descendants).

-CIA Fact book 2002
Congress responded to the declaration by speaking for all of India. The British acknowledged the League as another voice to counter Congress. The League then emerged as a credible alternative to Congress as the premier nationalist party. In 1940, Jinnah, through the League, called for two separate states on the grounds that the Muslim presence constituted a nation. There was little concern about the exact determinants of sovereignty and autonomy. The Cripps Mission of 1942 placed a glaring contradiction in the open, as the League could not serve both at the Indian national level when provinces were allowed to withdraw from the Indian union. Jinnah's advocating for Muslims ultimately resulted in partition, but the elements involved are far more complex than commonly imagined.

The Muslim claims to nationhood were grandiose but the substance of statehood happened to be quite different. Jinnah was forced to accept what he once referred to as "maimed, mutilated, and moth-eaten" for his Pakistan. The claim of nationhood as demonstrated earlier, was for power at the all India center. Partition and the creation of Pakistan as a separate state meant that the "old unitary centre of British India had to be replaced by two distinct and separate political entities." Statehood meant the creation of a new center at the Pakistani national level, and not the within the Indian arena.

The claims for political power and autonomy as a nation were met through statehood. They were met, however, in a manner that was detrimental to the interests of those in minority provinces and in the mutilated portions of majority provinces. This demonstrates that Muslim interests in India were both pluralistic and lacked representation through the League. In assessing the worth of pursuing Pakistani statehood, one must first determine the nature of Muslim interest in the enterprise. If Muslim interests were plural, then statehood left many in the "Muslim nation" disenfranchised from the Indian motherland. If the League's representation of Muslim interests as singular was accurate, statehood would have realized the claims of nationhood.

Jinnah's demand for Pakistan led to many things, and not necessarily the creation of the nation he imagined. Partition's effects have been the focus of over fifty years of conflict between India and Pakistan. Perhaps the League should have reconsidered when given the choice to partition. Nonetheless, Jinnah's role as a shrewd politician made him a legendary Muslim advocate, and created history in the process as well.

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Unity in Our Times
- by Mu ZHOU

On December 3rd 2000, a proposal was made in the State Great Hural (parliament) of Mongolia. Vigorous debates were held on whether the Republic of Mongolia should become a federal state of the People's Republic of China. This was not the first time Mongolia contemplated unification with China. Back in 1995, a senator from the State Great Hural made such a proposal. However, due to intense domestic political pressures, the proposal was not discussed.

In recent years, the Mongolian government is facing sharp criticism for the underdevelopment of the economy. People are amazed to see the sharp contrast between the living standards of inner Mongols, who live in China, and their outer brethren who do not. As a World Journal article Outer Mongolia depicts, "when outer Mongols travel to the border city of Erenhot to conduct business or visit family and friends, they are astounded by the prosperity and the wealth of the people. When they go further to the interior of China, they marvel at the splendor of Huhhot, Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong, who race to outperform each other in grand spectacle."

"Over the past decade, with joint effort from both sides, Sino-Mongolian relations have made rapid progress," said Wei, a member of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee. He conveyed Chinese President Jiang Zemin's warm regards to his Mongolian counterpart, Bagaband. The amicable relationship between Mongolia and China stems from several factors. As Wei explained, "China has become the biggest investor in Mongolia and its biggest trade partner." Mongolia needs capital for development, a large market to trade its goods, and access to warm water ports, all of which Russia could hardly provide but well within Chinese capabilities. The nation also relies on generous Chinese economic aid. Finally, Mongolia has close cultural ties to China for centuries. After all, it was within China's borders for at least two dynasties – the Yuan and the Qing.

Historical records in ancient China shows that back in the 5th century BC, there were already nomadic settlers in Mongolia. Two centuries later, two ethnic groups – the Hun and the Eastern Hu – formed a tribal alliance. The Eastern Hu is believed to be the earliest ancestors of the Mongols. One of the Hu's descendants was the Xianbei (Sienpi) group, whose customs and language were of the same origin as the Mongols. The Xianbei, who inhabited in areas in present northwest China and Inner Mongolia, learned much from Chinese culture. They established the Northern Wei, Northern Qi and Northern Zhou dynasties successively between the
4th and 6th centuries BC, adopted Chinese customs and institutions, and merged with the different nationalities within the region. The Mongols, who populated the south of the Ergun River (in present day Heilongjiang Province) at the time, were a small tribe in the Xianbei Empire. It was not until the beginning of the 12th century AD did they emerge as a unified nation that soon spread the flames of war to neighboring countries.

Originally, Mongolia and Southern Song (1127-1280) of China were allies against the Jin Empire (1115-1234). After Mongol warriors overran the Jin in 1234, they destroyed the Song as well. In 1271, Kublai Khan of Mongolia called the newly created Mongol Empire "Yuan," which is known as the Yuan dynasty (1206-1368). The Yuan dynasty was structured along the lines of its Chinese predecessors, as the Mongols adopted Chinese laws and used Chinese officials to consolidate their rule. Although the Chinese were somewhat discriminated in the new empire, intermarriage in general was not forbidden. By the fall of the Yuan, the Mongol emperor was quite indistinguishable from his Chinese equivalent.

Inner Mongolia and Outer Mongolia were split after the fall of the Yuan, when the Ming Chinese (1368-1644) permitted Mongol residents to live with the Chinese to the north of the Great Wall. The descendants of the Yuan dynasty controlled Outer Mongolia. In the 17th century, Mongolia was again unified under the banner of the Qing (1644-1911). Before then, conflicts erupted between Khalkha and the Jüün Ghar, the two royal families which ruled Mongolia. In 1688, Galdan, the chief of Jüün Ghar, invaded and occupied Khalkha while it was paying tribute to the Qing dynasty. The Khalkha royal families embarked upon an arduous journey across the Gobi desert to seek help from the Qing emperor. In 1696, Emperor Kangxi led a campaign to the north and eventually defeated Galdan. The whole of Mongolia was thus under the administration of the Qing government.

Mongolia was part of China for centuries until the early 20th century, when foreign powers scrambled to secure concessions from the weak Qing. In 1912, after the fall of the Qing, Outer Mongolia declared its independence with Russian support. However, its independence at that time was not internationally recognized, including the newly founded People’s Republic of China. In 1917, under Soviet acquiescence, Duan Qirui (Tuan Chi-jui), the ruling warlord in Beijing, organized a successful military occupation of Outer Mongolia. In 1921, after the fall of Duan, Mongol soldiers expelled the Chinese troops with Soviet aid. An economically underdeveloped China abandoned all plans for a reacquisition of Outer Mongolia.

China has enjoyed relative peace with Mongolia throughout most of their history. Bitter conflicts from time to time prompted people to wonder whether the Mongols had anything to do with the Chinese at all, though. The famous iconoclastic Chinese writer Lu Xun made a sarcastic comment on the "appropriation" of Chinggis Khan as a Chinese hero. Historian Uradyn E. Bulag quotes his writing in The Mongols at China’s Edge:

"At the age of 20, I heard that "our" Chinggis Khan conquered Europe, and it was "our" most glorious era. Only when I reached 25 did I learn that "our" glorious era was nothing but when Mongols conquered China. We became lackeys. And not until August this year…did I realize that Mongol conquest of "Russia," invasion of Hungary and Austria preceded their conquest of the whole of China, and Chinggis Khan at that time was not yet our Khan. Rather the Russians had longer credentials for being enslaved, and it is they who should say, "Our Chinggis Khan conquered China, and it was our most glorious era."

Lu is probably right in saying that the Mongols had a different culture than the Chinese. However, it is also certain that Mongolia had much closer cultural ties with China in the past than Japan did. The Mongols had their roots in Manchuria, which was in northeastern China. It is unfortunate that Lu did not live long enough to see the vastly improved relations between the two peoples today. Indeed, a unification of the two nations may serve to be the culmination of the precious bonds that tie the Mongols and Chinese together.

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Lucky Two-Dollar Bill (Part II)

About the Author

Lilian Duval is a technical writer, a 9/11 survivor, and a former software developer. She lives with her husband George, a native of Singapore, in Ridgewood, New Jersey, and writes fiction in her spare time.

Synopsis: Lucky Two-Dollar Bill (Fiction)

Conrad, an Asian-American university professor, is nervous when he goes to visit his old guardian, Gee Kim, in his native Singapore. He hasn’t seen her since he was a boy, and she’s near the end of her life. He brings along his daughter Lexie, a college sophomore, who doesn’t see eye-to-eye with her Dad. The visit changes the way they view their two cultures and each other.

Escape was what he wanted to do. Gee Kim would not be lucid. He should have sent her a letter instead. Now he would have to listen to Lexie’s grievances for the rest of the week. She was already appalled at her bird’s-eye view of Singapore. “You can’t jaywalk, Dad. You get a ticket for jaywalking,” she’d told him while they were gift-shopping along Orchard Street. Even before they’d boarded the plane in San Francisco, she’d been turned against the place. “If they find drugs in your luggage, even if you didn’t put them in there yourself, you know what happens? You die. You’re put to death, no questions asked.” She’d slept most of the way on the plane, or at least had feigned sleep behind her blindfold.

Their first night in the hotel, Conrad took her to an upscale restaurant – a vegetarian place, of all things in a city where nothing that walked, flew, or crawled was exempt from the skillet. She devoured a man-sized plate of noodles without commenting, instead reading the Straits Times at the table.

As a rule, Lexie didn’t thank her father for anything; he regarded this as her “I didn’t ask to be born” attitude. Even so, he’d had few complaints about her until she rebelled at a later age than most teenagers. She’d ruined two Thanksgivings in a row: one year, blaming her mother for everything wrong with her life (Conrad couldn’t see anything at all wrong with her life), and the next year, blaming him. Conrad blamed the high school psychologist for meddling with his family and fueling Lexie’s rebellion.

As he watched her gorge herself, he pondered how her five-foot-two, hundred-pound frame could process all those calories. He was debating whether to reprimand her for reading through dinner when she folded the newspaper lengthwise and thrust it at him without a word.

He felt the ovals of his reading glasses through his interior jacket pocket. “I left my glasses in the hotel room,” he told her.

“Do you have state-sponsored censorship here?” she demanded. She flicked her chopsticks into her empty bowl.

“Do I –” He was no longer a citizen of Singapore; he was an American.

“This guy is saying it’s regrettable that the number of traffic offences punishable by caning has been increased from four to six.” She dropped the linen napkin on the table.

“Caning?” he asked.

She leaned over the table and lowered her voice, speaking twice as slowly as before. “This. Is. What. He’s. Saying,” she chanted. “That it’s wrong to smash people with bamboo canes for two more traffic offences than before. Not that caning has no place in a civilized society. The guy can’t even write what he thinks on the Op-Ed page, for crying out loud. What good’s a newspaper in a place like this.”

Conrad clenched his jaw and narrowed his eyes. People would stare at them. “How do you know what he thinks?”

She straightened up and raised her voice. “Don’t you get it, Dad?” The waiter came race-walking over and started stacking their dishes.

But now she was perched demurely on a flowered cushion in Gee Kim’s living room, slim legs crossed at the ankle, politely
refusing Pamela’s cookies. Gee Kim was halfway down the steps. Conrad started for the stairs.

Pamela skipped in front of him. “No, no, she does everything by herself,” she said. “She is very independent.”

Lexie rose and stood next to him. At the bottom of the stairs, Gee Kim wiggled her wizened, bare feet into a pair of children’s terry-cloth slippers. As she shuffled toward them, her neck trembled like a reed in the breeze.

Conrad’s eyes filled, but he blinked them a few times and smiled broadly and spoke in a resonant voice. “Auntie Gee Kim, it’s me, Conrad, come to see you.” He half-squatted to get her face at his eye level. Her shoulders under his fingers felt flimsy, like a structure of popsicle sticks. She wore no eyeglasses. Her eyes, dark and blank, wandered up to his face for a moment. Then the parchment of her face rearranged itself into a smile, and her eyes drilled deep behind his pupils. He let go of her and stood up straight.

“Welcome, Conrad, what a handsome, tall gentleman you’ve become.” Her voice seemed that of a majestic, robust woman hidden somewhere inside her minuscule body. He did, in fact, feel overly tall in her presence, although he was only five foot eight. She reached up to grasp his hand.

“And congratulations are in order,” she announced, as she swept her twig of an arm to indicate Conrad, Lexie, Pamela, the student sitting cross-legged under the near piano, and the dogs panting and drooling under the far piano. “Now we have a department chairman in the family,” she said. “I always knew you would do well.” She shook her three-footed cane at the long sofa. “Now sit down.” Pamela scurried to shift some piles of newspapers to the floor.

Conrad laughed and tugged at the knot in his tie. He put his arm around Lexie, who towered over her great aunt. “Auntie, this is my daughter. Alexandra. She’s –”

“Ah then? This is the sophomore at Stanford,” Gee Kim said. Pamela was trying to settle her mother on the sofa, but Gee Kim managed it herself. “You’re studying psychology, my dear?”

Lexie tucked some stray strands of hair under her headband, but the fan kept blowing them around her face and neck like a corona. “Yes, actually, counseling.” She leaned forward and down a little, trying to get to Gee Kim’s level. “My major is, well, there’s a concentration in conflict resolution –”

“That’s extraordinary,” Gee Kim said. Her papery skin cracked into a delighted smile. Conrad recalled her smile as a young woman, and how he had groomed his behavior so as to bask under that smile.

“Alexandra – Lexie, is it? Lovely – that’s your nickname, isn’t it?”

“Yes.” A smile that didn’t fade was lighting Lexie’s face. She tilted her head to one side and looked evenly into the old woman’s eyes.

“Oh, Lexie. Now I’m sure you’re my grand-niece. Can you imagine the coincidence? Can you believe I have audited most of the modules in the Department of Social Work and Psychology at the National University of Singapore?”

“Audited?” Lexie said. “Recently?” Her eyes didn’t leave Gee Kim’s.

Gee Kim laughed. “Oh, recently and not so – for a decade, and until around a year ago. Now, as for conflict resolution – you were saying – they had one module taught in the School of Social Work. This was ‘Interpersonal Conflict Resolution.’ The point of view was transactional.”

Lexie nodded, keeping her eyes on Gee Kim.

“We studied methods of conflict resolution within the cultural context – between people, in groups, in families, between married couples, children and parents. We practiced intervention skills in our seminar groups.”

“Oh, wow, Auntie, that’s just awesome, phenomenal,” Lexie said. “I knew you’d been a piano teacher; I didn’t know you took all those courses and even put up with kids my age and –”

“Oh, sure, I’m no ya ya papaya! But enough about me, I wanted to –”

“Ya ya?” Lexie said, laughing.
“We have our own slang over here, you know,” Gee Kim said. “It’s Singapore English. We call it Singlish. *Ya ya papaya* – that just means a snooty person.” She spat out the “t” in “snooty” like a smack on a snare drum. Leaning toward Lexie, she stage-whispered, “You know what? The Singapore Broadcast Authority censors these phrases out of its radio programs. We’ll keep our discussion within four walls!”

Lexie and Conrad laughed. They talked about academic life, passing from Lexie’s studies to the highlights of Conrad’s career. Pamela brought tea with sweet coconut rice balls and pandan sponge cake on a ceramic tray. The piano student’s mother came to the door to retrieve her son, and Pamela stepped outside with them. There were no breaks in the conversation. When one of the mutts sniffed his feet, Conrad noticed that the odor in the house had diminished; or perhaps he’d grown accustomed to it. He was just becoming aware of how much he was enjoying himself when Gee Kim asked him the time.

“Nine thirty, Auntie.” It was inconceivable that they’d been there for two hours.

“Close to my bedtime. I’m not young any more,” she said, without self-pity or bitterness.

Conrad felt his facial muscles droop. He had to fight gravity in order to maintain a pleasant expression. If only, in all those years, he had taken time to make the trip, to take a sabbatical, to halt his incessant, frenetic activity, to acknowledge the past, he could have –

“So Lexie, did you go Orchard and *kai kai*?” Gee Kim asked.

Lexie chortled as if she were gossiping with her college roommate. “*Kai kai?* Now what’s that, Auntie?”

“Ah then? You’re not here long enough to learn your Singlish. You’ll be coming back again, then. I mean, have you gone to Orchard Road to walk about and window-shop?”

Gee Kim put both hands on her three-legged cane to pull herself up. Conrad stepped in front of her and hugged and lifted her at the same time. He had to squeeze his eyelids firmly to keep his composure.

Lexie jumped to Gee Kim’s side to brace her bony shoulder.

“No, darling. I’m quite all right. Let me give you something lucky before you go.” Gee Kim limped and shuffled to an armoire and opened one of its ancient drawers. She rifled through a cigar box stuffed with letters and envelopes until she found the prize. “Here, Lexie, take this and it will bring you good fortune,” she said, holding a multicolored two-dollar Singapore bill out to Lexie in her unsteady hand.

“Thank you, Auntie,” Lexie said, and opened her handbag to get out her wallet.

“Be careful now, Lexie,” Gee Kim said. “You mustn’t mix this bill with the others. This is a special lucky bill that I have been saving only for you. Tomorrow, take this money to the lottery window and buy a two-dollar ticket. Use this bill to pay for it.” She paused and looked sharply at Lexie.

“Yes, I will, Auntie.” Lexie was serious. She folded the worn bill in fourths and slipped it into her wallet behind her Visa card and driver’s license.

“And maybe you’ll win, and then you’ll have money for your fare and you can come back and visit me again. And bring your father as well, won’t you?”

“Yes, Auntie, we will.” She was holding Gee Kim’s hand.

Conrad was sick with regret, contrition, and grief. If he said a single word, he was going to blubber and burst into tears, like a child. Lexie was silent and somber. Gee Kim was ebullient and chatted as if the visit were but one in a series of many to come. They walked haltingly outside to the pathway, keeping pace with Gee Kim’s cane.

Conrad breathed deeply four or five times and said in a rush, “Auntie Gee Kim, please forgive me for staying away all these years. I would do anything to go back and do it again, and do it right this time.” He inhaled again, deeply. It was imperative that he not cry in front of her.

“I catch no ball!” Gee Kim said in her incongruously strong, clear voice, and giggled.

“What say?” Conrad asked. Lexie was staring at him, not coldly.
“I catch no ball leh!” she said. “That means, ‘I don’t get you.’”

“More Singlish, Auntie?” Lexie said.

“Yes, dear.” She stopped walking to catch her breath.

“Auntie. I’m going to really miss you,” Lexie said, and then began to cry all at once. Tears poured down her face and she hid them behind her hands. Conrad embraced her and she continued to weep, shuddering on his shoulder. He patted her back and shoulders, thankful that she was the one weeping; soothing her helped him assuage his own sorrow.

Gee Kim lifted one shaky hand up to both of them. “Now don’t cry any more, dears, there’s absolutely nothing to cry over,” she said.

Conrad could see Pamela coming toward them from the circular driveway.

“Let’s not say goodbye, then,” Gee Kim said, smiling. “Instead, just say: see you!”

“See you, Auntie,” Conrad said. He felt as if he were having a heart attack inside his throat.

Pamela was standing next to her mother, ready to walk her back inside.

Lexie raised her head from Conrad’s wet shoulder. “See you, Auntie Gee Kim,” she murmured in a little girl’s voice.

“Buy that ticket tomorrow!” Gee Kim practically shouted as they walked down the driveway. “And then buy a plane ticket to come see me again.”

“We will, Auntie,” they promised her, and waved.

Pamela supported Gee Kim from behind so she could wave to them until they disappeared around the bushes.

The next day, Lexie bought a lottery ticket with the lucky two-dollar bill. The day after that, she looked up the ticket number in the Straits Times, but it hadn’t come up a winner. They didn’t discuss the lottery, and spent their last day admiring the creatures in the Jurong Bird Park.

At the exchange bureau in the airport, Lexie emptied her wallet of colorful Singaporean currency. She handed over all except a new two-dollar bill, which she folded in fourths and tucked behind her credit cards. She had the habit of saving ticket stubs, foreign coins, and playbills, and Conrad made no comment.

When they’d reached cruising altitude, Lexie reclined her seat and arranged her pillow and blanket. She put her blindfold around her neck and clicked off the overhead light. “Dad.”

“Yes.” He frowned at her. The trip was over and there was nothing left to argue about. Then she said something that he couldn’t hear over the noise of the motors.

“What was that?”

Lexie smiled and repeated, “I have something little for you. Something lucky. Close your eyes.”

She placed the folded two-dollar bill in his palm. When he opened his eyes, she already had her blindfold on. Conrad unfolded the bill. She’d written a message on it in dark ink, in the space to the right of the ship sailing into the rising sun, between “Singapore $2” and This note is legal tender.

“To Dad,” she had written in condensed letters of her clean, well-formed script. “For your memories. Thanks for this trip, and for everything you’ve done. With love, Lexie.”

Conrad folded the bill carefully and put it in his wallet, behind a laminated photo of Lexie at graduation. He turned off his reading light and dried his face with a bunch of airplane napkins. No one heard him sobbing over the din of the engines as he flew home with his daughter to America.

The End
**What is the Hewlett Pluralism Alliance?**

The Hewlett Pluralism Alliance (HPA) aims:

- To create opportunities for a large cross-section of students to question identity and community at a deeper level, and to reach a more thoughtful and enduring understanding of these issues.

- To create alliances among different campus groups addressing issues of pluralism and unity.

- To foster networking, communication, and coalition building (e.g., having two or more clubs or organizations co-sponsor a project).

- To provide funds for creative new pluralism and unity programming involving students and faculty.

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