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The Agony of Your Stolen Memories

Anibal Ruiz (1st Place)
R/W 2

Cold. I open my eyes and I only feel cold. Grains of sand on my lips. Wherever I look, I can't see a thing. Darkness. My skin and discomfort are all I have.

I try to get up but I can hardly move. Something heavy stops me. Every time I try to free myself, it pushes down harder against me. I can barely breathe.

Suddenly, a white ray of light blinds me. (Extremes.) Anything and everything drives me to the same place: they distort my sight and cloud my mind.

An inner voice whispers my name. Is it you? My intuition tells me it's so. Your most recent glance at our earliest photos--the ones that you hid so well in that trunk stashed in your attic--causes that sudden flash of light. Reflections of secrets only you and I shared. The exclusive instances that your shyness let me capture. Magical moments that now live only in my memories. Why did the flame that you ignited in my heart have to burn out? Our silhouettes fade away and our faces become blurred.

You did not choose this; nor is it coincidence. It is simply the result of bad luck. All of this pain began when he claimed you as his next victim. He has cruelly broken your memories. Only fragments remain. Those that are rebelling in a ruthless storm that ails me over and over, again and again. Infinite grey, like the sand that grazes my face once more. The tide is rising and it threatens our future without knowing whether or not it will be as beautiful as we have dreamt.

Wind distracts me. Perhaps I am on an island. Yes. I am sure it is a far away, isolated location. I am lonelier than ever. I can't interact with anything of the exterior world. I am unable to breathe out the air I have breathed in. Everything depends on me, which helps direct me, choiceless, towards failure and uselessness...and concludes in a thousand and one tears being born with no hope of drying. They flood me.

I am frightened. Our end is mercilessly approaching. Loneliness still consumes me and, despite my devotion to you, incessantly forces me to visualize you, having decided that there is no way other than to accept the excruciating countdown where only one protagonist exists: injustice.

Five...four...three...two...one... he, the tide, reaches for me, so as to drag me into the ocean of indifference. I feel that you are so very far away... I cannot stand it... I am drowning...

Goodbye forever, my love.

P.S. Alzheimer's: you should be the one to forget us. Let me imagine that, if just for one moment.

Guns, Germs and Steel

Nadav Sorek (2nd Place)
R/W 50

On November 15th 1532, Pizarro, the leader of 168 Spanish conquistadors, waged a war against the Inca Empire. He arrived in the holy city Cajamarca, in Peru. Even though his soldiers were exhausted and he fought against a vast army of 80,000 Inca troops, he won an amazing triumph. The web site "Guns, Germs and Steel" describes, "Within just 24 hours, more than 7,000 Inca warriors lie slaughtered; the Emperor languishes in chains; and the victorious Europeans begin a reign of colonial terror which will sweep through the entire American continent" (PBS, 2005, Second Episode). Since this famous battle, the Europeans (the white men) have taken over most of our planet and have established many new countries overseas.

Jared Diamond, the author of "Guns, Germs and Steel", asks in his introduction to his book: Why was the balance of power so unequal between the Old World, and the New World? And he answers that obviously, Europeans have had the advantages of the cargo of: technology and horses, literate societies, centralist governmental systems and germs. But he asks even more basic question: Why did the Europeans have this cargo, which help them to conquer the world? For example, why hadn't the Indians, the Aborigines or the Africans developed this cargo? (Diamond, 1999).

Diamond tries to rebut any kind of racist answer to this question and explains that the Europeans weren't smarter and did not have bigger brains. Diamond explains through his book that the causes and the agents of this European's cargo, which has led them to world domination, have been the geographical and environmental enormous advantages (Diamond, 1999).

The Europeans have had easily conquered other continents, for four main reasons. Those reasons are the four main elements of the cargo that let the Europeans to take over the world: Firstly, they have had vast technological advantage. They had steel swords, guns, horses and overseas ships. With those tools they won easily huge enemies (Diamond, 1999). Secondly, they have had centralist governmental systems, which have made the wars very organized. Thirdly, they have come from literate societies, which helped them to deliver commands, reports from the battle field and knowledge (Diamond, 1999).

Lastly, and probably most important, were the germs the Europeans carried within their body. Throughout many generations, the European's body has developed self immunization to those germs. When they got in touch with the Native Americans, they infected them with horrible diseases,

such as smallpox, and caused death to almost 95% of them during the last 500 years (Diamond, 1999).

Diamond asks: What are the reasons that the Europeans have developed those advantages and not their enemies the Indians and the Aborigines? He claims that those advantages, which help the Europeans in their wars, and created inequality between the New World and the Old one, are just the proximate reasons. It is to say, that those advantages are the final effects of a long process. This long process was based on fundamental resources, which have supplied by the environmental and geographical objective conditions.

Europe is a part of a bigger continent – Eurasia. Eurasia geography has endowed its people with a significant advantage: useful and plentiful flora and fauna resources, which were able to be domesticated. In fact, most of the domesticated plants species are native to Europe and Asia – species like wheat, barley and rice. Furthermore, 13 of the 14 big domesticated mammals known to us today are native to Eurasia (PBS, 2005, Episode Two).

This variety of domesticated resources brought about the development of sophisticated agriculture systems in Eurasia. The societies in the Fertile Crescent (the Middle East) were the first in 8500 B.C to transform from hunters-gathers societies to farmers. They were the first to domesticate animal and plant species and to develop first agriculture systems. This knowledge, which firstly has been developed in the Fertile Crescent, has spread rapidly toward all Eurasia through a relatively short term (PBS, 2005, Episode One).

Eurasia's geographic shape has permitted this rapid distribution of knowledge and agricultural systems. Eurasia has an east-west axis, with the same range of latitudes that provides similar climates. Therefore, same crops could be grown in many portions of Eurasia, due to the same length of daylight and seasons, and same amount of precipitates. That has facilitated societies to immigrate to new areas, to continue growing crops with the same systems, and to bring with them their knowledge. In addition, neighbor societies could adopt easily this knowledge. Therefore, similar climates caused rapid spreading of knowledge and agricultural systems, from the Fertile Crescent toward west and east, especially toward Europe.

This spread of knowledge has caused agriculture revolution all over Europe (Diamond, 1999). The wide transition to agriculture has created several critical changes in the European human societies. Agriculture has provided food surplus, which caused drastic population growth. The reserves of food facilitated new occupations and skills. The web site "Guns, Germs and Steel" explains, "Successful farming provides a food surplus, and allows some people to leave the farm behind and develop specialized skills – such as metal-working, writing, trade, politics, and war-making" (PBS, 2005, Episode Two).

Those results of agriculture development brought about the causes of European world's don: technology, literate societies, centralist governmental systems and germs.

At the technological level, weapons, such as steel swords and guns, were created. New ships were built which could help to explore other places overseas. The domestication

of the animals provided an important war vehicle such as horses.

In the governmental systems aspect, the large population required new systems of governmental control. Societies were divided to castes, and the regimes built sophisticated systems of control. Those helped them to established big armies, collecting taxes easily, etc.

In the educational level, literacy was an important conquering tool. Commands and orders of kings and merchants were delivered by writing. The ships navigated with maps, which were written by previous expeditions. Script descriptions prepared new conquerors for their battles by telling them what to expect. Finally, the new empires that were built overseas were controlled by writing (Diamond, 1999).

At the medical level, the diseases which were brought by the Europeans almost devastated the entire society of their enemies. The Europeans have been leaving for centuries in crowded settlements. In addition, they were in contact with their domesticated animals. Those two have led to many epidemical diseases in Europe during the years. The population that survived those epidemics has developed self immunization to those diseases. Finally, when they got in touch with their non-Eurasian enemies they infected them and it caused great devastation. For example, the accumulated mortality caused by the Eurasian germs among nations such as the Australian Aborigines and the Pacific Ocean islands inhabitants was from 50% to 100% (Diamond, 1999).

In conclusion, the technology and the weapons, literacy, the governmental organization, and the germs have marched together as modern conqueror agents. Those agents were the result of long processes caused by a social transformation from hunter-gather societies to farmers. Most of the European's enemies didn't have high level of technology, they didn't know to read, the political organizations were usually backward, and they didn't develop immunization to harsh germs. The reasons that these developments took place in Europe and usually not in America, Australia, or the Pacific Ocean Islands were environmental and geographical conditions. Indeed, Jared Diamond successfully managed to disprove any kind of racist reason to this gap between the New World and the Old World. References

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How to Teach the Korean Language

Euk Hwan Kim

R/W 50

(Editor's note: This paragraph was written to practice conditionals. Can you find all of the "if . . . , [then] . . . " structures?)

It is very difficult to teach the Korean language because Korean is composed of many different vocabularies and complicated grammar. For this reason, teaching Korean requires a skillful teacher. If I had to teach Korean to a person who knew nothing at all about Korean, I would start with some Korean popular songs. There are several reasons for doing this. First of all, singing a song makes people happy. Thus, this might be a good way to make contact with Koreans easily. If I were a foreigner who wanted to learn Korean, I would enjoy singing Korean popular songs. Moreover, popular songs reflect trends in society. Therefore, foreigners who don't know about Korea can understand Korean people's emotions through Korean popular songs. If foreigners practice Korean music, they will be able to empathize with the Korean people. Finally, many Korean people like to sing songs. In other words, a song might be a proper way to make friends. I know an Argentine person who has been in Korea to study. If this person had not taken lessons in Korean music, he couldn't have come into close association with Korean people. In conclusion, singing Korean popular songs is the first step for a person who wants to learn Korean. If I were a Korean language teacher for foreigners, I would spend much time teaching Korean popular songs.

Taiwan's Changes in Politics

Hsueh-Chun (Cindy)

R/W 60

This year has not been an easy year. From July to November a battery of scandals related to the First Family which includes the president's son-in-law and the First Lady, Mrs. Wu Shu-Jan. Two hundred thousand people protested in main roads of Taipei Metropolis and surrounded the Capitol, which caused the international press such as CNN, BBC's notice. However, the president said calmly and unhurriedly, "Since Taiwan is a democratic country, we have to tolerate different opinions."

Taiwan, a tiny, 95-year-old island, is too young to understand the connotation of democracy, so the political improvement is still moving forward. A heavy, five-thousand-year imperialism has made the people get used to being obedient instead of striving for freedom. The long-term struggle makes people hope to figure out what's the status we are in now, especially between the terms of the emperor and president. In the ninety-five years of the newborn Taiwanese government, the politics have undergone three main periods of time—post-revolution from the Chin dynasty which lasted thirty-four years (1911-1949), the move to Taiwan by the Chiangs' family (1950-1988), and the post-Chiang era when the democracy was truly developed (1989-present).

The reason the Chinese government moved to Taiwan from Mainland China is complicated. 1911 is the most important year in Chinese history because Dr. Sun Yat-Sen overthrew the Chin dynasty and established the Republic of China in 1912. Five thousand years of imperialism was ended. However, there was much turmoil at the beginning of the new era. Some warlords wanted to be new kings to rule the new China; therefore, China was split into several regions and the government army, especially Kuo-Min Tang (KMT, the main party which replaced the government army at the time) was busy suppressing the split. In 1921, under the influence of Russian Communism, the Chinese Communist Party was established. Unfortunately, the new Chinese government had to deal with not only internal chaos but also invasion by Japan from 1937 to 1945. During the eight years, the government army put effort into resisting Japan's aggression. It was the well-known "The Eight-Year War". Although Japan surrendered finally in August of 1945, the Chinese government did not get the peace time that it should have had. In the eight-year year, the Chinese Communist Party only gave 30% of their attention to help the government army fight back Japan; in addition, the rest of the 70% of their efforts were used to hold the KMT back and make itself stronger. Consequently, the economy underwent huge inflation and a lot of poor people joined the Chinese Communist Party. Moreover, they received the weapons left by Japan and became stronger. In 1949, the KMT government army couldn't resist anymore and was forced to move to Taiwan.

After KMT moved to Taiwan, it was called "the Chiangs' Era" which was led mainly by Mr. Chiang Kai-Shek. Although in the beginning of the new government, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen set up the new constitution and positioned the new Chinese government as a democratic country, Mr. Chiang Kai-Shek announced the order of martial law (Period of mobilization for the suppression of communist) in order to suppress the pandemonium in the beginning of the move to Taiwan. The content raised the power of the president and froze most parts of constitution. Moreover, he forbade the freedom of reporting and publishing, the freedom of forming political party, and all important decisions must be made only by the KMT. In other words, KMT monopolized Taiwan's politics, and Mr. Chiang Kai-Shek represented the KMT and all of Taiwan. In 1971, he announced the vital decision which influenced Taiwan's international relationship in the future: Taiwan would leave the United Nations because he thought we could not share the same stand with the Chinese Communist Party. He was elected by Assembly members who were brought by him from Mainland China and became Taiwan's president for twenty one years (1954-1975) until he passed away.

However, the Chiangs' Era was not ended by his death. His son, Mr. Chiang Ching-Kuo, continued to be the next president. In Taiwan's history, Mr. Ching-Kuo was an amiable and reputable president. He promoted "The Ten Constructions" such as the first high-way which crossed all of Taiwan from north to south and the first international airport when he was the premier. The constructions laid a good foundation for Taiwan's economy. At the time, a group of people felt unsatisfied by KMT's autocracy; they formed a secret but illegal party—the

Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). It seemed a small step but important to Taiwan's politic future. In 1987, due to the tendency of Taiwanese to be democratic, Mr. Ching-Kuo removed the ban on reporting, publishing and forming political party. Unfortunately, he passed away in 1988 suddenly and that was the end of the Chiang's Era. Actually, the father and son didn't operate Taiwan with all their strength. For them, Taiwan was just a station for fighting back Mainland China someday.

After Mr. Chiang Ching-Kuo passed away, the next president was Mr. Lee Teng-Hui and Mr. Chen Shui-Bian. Originally, Mr. Lee was the vice president of Mr. Ching-Kuo. Because Mr. Ching-Kuo passed away suddenly, Mr. Lee succeeded to the position and became the next president. After two years, he was voted by the Assembly members and became the formal 8th term president. He continued to push forward various democratic reforms. For example, he announced the end of the Period of Mobilization for the Suppression of Communist Rebellion in his term in 1991. Furthermore, Taiwanese revolted the National Assembly because the group had been brought from China and had never changed for forty years. The new National Assembly adopted some changes in the constitution. The most significant was "the president and the vice president should be elected by all citizens directly." Just like that, on March 21st, 1996, Mr. Lee became the first-ever voted president as 9th term. Taiwan entered a new epoch from this moment. Finally, the Taiwanese can make the important decision on their own.

Still, the democratic reforms did not stop. Next year, the government abolished the "Taiwan province" title; the transformation made the central government work not only faster but more like a nation. In addition, the next presidential election in 2000 was an intense transform. There was a party transition in the government. Mr. Chen Shui-Bian, who was nominated by Democratic Progressive Party, was Taiwan's new president. As of now is he still the president of Taiwan because he also won the election in 2004.

It's still a long distance to achieve true democracy. However, Taiwanese are still making an effort to let people in the world know their existence, and develop their own political orientation. From only one KMT autocracy to party transition of the DPP, It's hard to judge who is right or wrong because every policy definitely has its own reason according to the background. Taiwanese experienced a lot of protests to fight for their own authorities and enjoy the results of freedom now.

There will be many challenges in the future. The most important one will be integrating with China without losing Taiwan's status. In 1988, for the first time, the government permitted Taiwanese to visit family that lived in mainland China after their moving to Taiwan in 1949, and they realized the necessity of being reunited someday. Moreover, in the past ten years, China's economy launched high-speed and influenced Taiwan's economy, too. For these reasons, the reunion will be the only solution between the two-sided deadlock. However, the two-sided political positions are so different that Taiwan only can try little by little to make a breakthrough. Therefore, Taiwanese need a turning point and leader of wisdom to bring them create a different new age.

Life in the Army

Hyungjin Cho

R/W 50

There are so many ways to live in the world. As time goes by, a lot of people suffer corpulence. On the other hand, 17 percent of people who live in the world don't even have water do drink. In S. Korea, every man has to go to the army for 2 years. So I have experience not only in army life but also general society. There are lots of differences between soldier and a general public.

One evident difference is relationship. When you quarrel with someone and hate him in normal society, you can avoid him and just meet people whom you want to meet. In contrast, you must live with your platoon. Some of them treat you nicely but the others want to be dictators. Let me take my experience as an example. As I served in the army I have a superior who was my fellow student from middle school. His attitude toward subordinates was terribly strict. I had heard abusive words from him so many times. Every time when I met him, I felt like living in hell. So after I discharged from the army, we have never met again.

Other areas of difference between life as a soldier and as a general public include secrecy. As a general public, I can say anything that I want to tell. Whereas as a soldier I'm not able to say many things related to my mission to my family and friends through telephone or letter. I had protected the DMZ, which is the border between N. Korea and S. Korea. Nobody except permitted soldiers can come in and go out there because there are a great deal of mines and blind shells and technically we are still in war. So we always were careful for wiretapping. This is why I can't say anything to my family and friends.

The last difference is a sense of loneliness. In society, I'm capable of meeting people and taking a rest during a weekend or a vacation. While I had protected the border for a year, I had only met just 30 people who are my platoon. There were only trees, iron railings, as you see in news, and my platoon members. Unlike general society, it is hard to take a vacation and somebody can't find shelter, like a good relationship or hobby; so some of them commit suicide or desert from their barracks.

We can look for differences between army life and ordinary society. As a soldier, I should meet people whom I don't want to meet and it's discouraged to tell about my mission to my acquaintance. In addition, it's unavoidable to feel loneliness.

(Editor's note: Students in R/W 10 read a book titled Les Miserable by Victor Hugo. Here are some reaction paragraphs and some sentence practice they did.)

Les Miserables--My Opinion of Jean Valjean

Mashaer Sheikhoon
R/W 10

Jean Valjean, the main character in Les Miserables, is a good man, but he has a hard life. He was in prison; then he becomes rich; then his life changes. He is unlucky because Javert, the policeman, always watches him and he wants to arrest him. Although his life changes in good ways, he doesn't have safety because of Javert. He really wants a safe life with Cosette, his adopted daughter. Jean Valjean is a good man because when he becomes rich he helps the poor people. He likes to help everyone anyway he can. He is really a noble man but his life is hard.

Les Miserables--My Opinion

Bruna Cavalcanti
R/W 10

If someone asks me about a good book to read, I will say: Les Miserables! Even though this edition of this famous book is for children, it is fantastic! It has a lot of difficult words and this is a great way to learn more vocabulary. The idea to read this book is very nice, especially when the choice of the book is a great choice like this one. Les Miserables is an interesting story. Whoever reads this story won't stop reading it. The reader becomes more and more curious about what will happen. I think this activity helps me in reading, writing, vocabulary, listening, speaking, grammar and pronunciation. I think when I learn English very well I will try to read the original version of the same book for adults.

The Enemies of Jean Valjean

Bruna Cavalcanti
RW10

Jean Valjean, the main character in Les Miserables, has many enemies in the book. The first of Jean Valjean's enemies is Javert because he believes in justice. Because Valjean is an ex-convict, Javert thinks Valjean is a bad man and he always wants to put Jean Valjean in jail. The second enemy is Thenardier because he is bad with Cosette and always wants more money for her care. After Cosette has gone with Jean Valjean, Thenardier makes a trap for Valjean because he wants his money. Finally, Marius was a kind of enemy because he loves Cosette. Jean Valjean didn't like that because he didn't want to lose her, the love of his life, the young orphan he raised like a daughter. All those listed above are Jean Valjean's enemies. They were important for this book, Les Miserables. These enemies make the book interesting!

My Opinion About Jean Valjean's Good Work

Meshal Ajohani
R/W 10

1) Jean Valjean builds some buildings in Montreuil such as a hospital, a school, and an old people's home because he wants to help every person. I think he does a good job to change his life.

2) Jean Valjean helps Fantine when Javert wants to take Fantine to prison because he has a good heart and he later helps Fantine with her daughter. He sends a lot of money to the money-loving Thenardiers. I think he does a good job to help Fantine because this is a job no one else can do like this.

3) Police Inspector Javert goes to court because he wants punishment for Jean Valjean, but the Paris police say there is a man already in prison who is Jean Valjean. So, the true Jean Valjean goes to court and says the truth. I think Jean Valjean cares more about truth. He does not care about his own comfort.

4) Jean Valjean does a good job when he helps Marius at the barricade. He goes to the barricade to find Marius but one soldier wants to kill Marius. Jean Valjean does not kill the soldier. This is a good job because Jean Valjean does not want to kill any one.

Les Miserables--Jean Valjean, the Ex-Convict Who is a Good Man

Mohammed Bahudhailah
R/W 10

These are examples of Jean Valjean's good actions:

1) Jean Valjean likes the truth. He doesn't like lies.

2) Jean Valjean doesn't want to kill. (When he is at the barricade, he doesn't kill the soldier or Javert.)

3) Jean Valjean likes to help people, especially poor people, because his daily life is the same and he feels how the poor people work and live.

4) Jean Valjean is quiet but he is strong.

5) Jean Valjean likes justice and he doesn't like to cause pain or injury.

6) Jean Valjean likes to rescue people. (When he is on the warship, he rescues a sailor.)

7) Jean Valjean likes to help orphans, like his daughter, Cosette.

Les Miserables--Jean Valjean: A Good Man

Kamoltip Norrasing
R/W 10

Jean Valjean, the main character in Les Miserables, is a good man.

- 1) Jean Valjean never commits another crime.
- 2) Jean Valjean becomes a rich man and he saves the old man.
- 3) Jean Valjean wants to help Fantine and takes care of Fantine's daughter, Cosette.
- 4) Jean Valjean loves Cosette and she becomes his daughter.
- 5) Jean Valjean gives a beggar some money.
- 6) Jean Valjean likes to help people.
- 7) If somebody has trouble and needs help, Jean Valjean helps him.

Moqueca of Tilapia--A Recipe (an original Brazilian dish)

*Bruna Cavalcanti & Stephania Lucia Alvarez (her
Conversation Partner)*
R/W 10

Ingredients

- 1 to 2 pounds shrimps (shelled and deveined)
- 8 fillets tilapia (cut in half lengthwise)
- Salt and black pepper (to taste)
- Juice of 2 lemons (to taste)
- Olive and palm oils (for frying)
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 onion (½ finely chopped, ½ sliced)
- 1 green bell pepper (½ chopped, ½ sliced)
- 1 red bell pepper (½ chopped, ½ sliced)
- 1 yellow bell pepper (½ chopped, ½ sliced)
- Fresh cilantro, parsley and scallions, chopped (to taste)
- 1 can coconut milk
- 1 to 2 cups water
- 2 medium tomatoes, sliced
- Cooked rice and/or mashed potatoes

How to make

- First of all, place 1-2 pounds shrimp on one plate and 8 fillets of tilapia on another plate.
- Put salt, freshly squeezed lemon juice, and black pepper, to taste, on both shrimp and fish. Let marinate for 2 minutes.
- Heat a thin coating of olive oil and *dende* (palm oil) in a medium sized pot. Add garlic, and the following chopped ingredients: onion; green, red, and yellow bell peppers; cilantro; parsley; and scallions. Saute 2 minutes. Add the fish; cook 1 minute. Add shrimp and ½ can of coconut milk. (If more liquid is desired for broth, add 1 to 2 cups of water.) Cook 3 minutes.
- Next add the sliced onions and the green, red, yellow bell peppers.

Cover and let simmer for 5 minutes. Then add sliced tomatoes, and season with salt. Add coarsely chopped cilantro, coarsely chopped scallions, coarsely chopped parsley, and the ½ remaining can of coconut milk.

- Serve immediately with cooked rice and mashed potatoes.
- Enjoy with Bruna's company and have a big appetite. Bom appetite!

Acknowledgement:

Bruna is grateful to Lucimar Souza Lima (RW 41), who taught her how to cook this dish.

The True Artist

Jeeyeon Ha
R/W 60

Artists are the people who create some works by displaying their professional techniques and using them as media for communicating with the masses.

They try to express their own creative definition through works unlike craftsmen and artisans who produce practical objects.

One of the several attributes of artists is that they are not only professional for utilizing the tools and materials, but they are expert in conveying their thoughts by using the raw materials. Also, they have special perspective to interpret the outer world and express how they think about it. Artists interact with their audience about wordly interests through their work.

Everyone who has originative viewpoint and skilled techniques can be artists.

One's individual preference affects the value of art, and an ordinary person may have potentiality to be an artist.

Music Impression

Jeeyeon Ha
R/W 60

Although to get up early morning is always hard for me, special morning activities in reading and writing class help us to start a day vigorously. On Monday of the final week in October, we had a joyful activity during which we shared a description of our impressions with classmates after listening to music. After I listened to music for several minutes, I shared my impression with Fabiana.

While the music made me relaxed and peaceful, Fabiana was depressed by the music. When I listened to the music, I felt placed in a jazz bar with the sound of rain. The whole mood of the music was placid and calm because the stringed instrument's sound is very stable and minor keys were partially used. Although the calm mood of the music soothed me, Fabiana felt sad because the 50's mood made her recall the dear memories of her grandmother. Also, when Fabiana listened to the music, she imagined the jazz bar with back dancers wearing old fashioned costumes. She was filled with nostalgia while listening to the music.

Unlike me, Fabiana prefers to listen to loud music such as rock and reggae. But because Fabiana and I like the sound of a guitar, we had fun with the music. The staccato melody of the guitar like raindrops awakened my sleepy morning. As the old saying goes, "Music is the universal language of mankind." Despite our different tastes in music, we loved the sound of the stringed instrument and the experience of sharing our feeling was interesting.

A More Diversified Economy in Saudi Arabia

Ali Alameer
R/W 31

Do Saudi citizens feel more comfortable and reassured about the future? if the price of oil is high, and their country is still the leading exporter of oil in the world for a long time; however, should Saudi Arabia seek to diversify its economy, even if it's keeping its position of the world's largest oil reserves, the world's largest exporter having that ability to keep pumping oil for the next 70 years, as well as the largest economy in the Middle East.

Of course, Saudi Arabia should be aware of another outlooks to income money as soon as possible, even the oil is still booming that means not fear from the vacillation price of oil, or even the price go collapsing, only that to raise economic more and more to fellow developed countries to be on the top of the economic world in the future.

In general, Saudi Arabia must improve and seek for a more diversified economy by investments in key sectors from the public to private sector, such as technology, petrochemicals, natural gas, tourism, desalination, power generation, and railways, and developing other sectors, such as service, tourism, the private sector; in addition, it has considerable for agricultural with traditional industry occupations development.

First of all, Saudi Arabia should be concerned about traditional income to improve that kind of economy to get the benefit and balance from each sector such as agriculture, fishing and shrimp catching and hatchery, because Saudi Arabia possess an area consists of fertile plains, forests, and mountains, for example, the Jazan region is one of Saudi Arabia's richest agricultural region and is notable for its production of coffee, beans, grain crops (barley, millet and wheat, rice), and fruit (apples, bananas, grapes, lemons, mangoes, oranges, papayas, plums, and tamarinds), truly if they are concerned to improve that important sectors, eventually, it will be the target to export for many European countries and another counters close to the border or far way from it.

Equally important, Saudi Arabia has very large deposits of minerals that are expected to economic creations of mining and associated processing industries, such as in, Jazan the region which extends some 300 kilometers along the Red Sea of it is known to possess many kind of minerals including limestone, dolomite, marble, basalt, silica and gypsum, these are advantages conditional enterprises for industry sector in Saudi Arabia specially in the heavy industry and petrochemicals industry, that it will be a great target for any investors or

companies that will be treasures for the economy of Saudi Arabia if they want to attract investments.

Recently, the Saudi government's desire to break away from dependence on oil and nurture other industries, they have plans to attracting investment into the country after they made various studies. Forever, Saudi Arabia has had a natural advantage for more resources, and in its efforts to press ahead with ambitious developments, the kingdom has encouraged involvement in the private sector. Recently, the total cost of ongoing projects is estimated at \$283 billion, with up to \$700 billion in investments planned over the next 20 years. The largest private sector project is the King Abdullah Economic City, with investment set at \$26.7 billion over the course of several years.

In fact, the diversification of our national income and our economy away from oil is key to our well being. Recently, Saudi Arabia is also opening itself to real competition. It joined the World Trade Organization on last year after 12 years of negotiations, a move that is expected to give a powerful push to the country's private sector.

One of that successful for a more diversified Economy in Saudi Arabia, the Saudi stock market has become one of the world's top performers, and growth in its market value for the year 2005 was about twice as large as the country's oil revenues.

Finally, Saudi Arabia has many great chooses for its economic to increase the income of economy from a lot of fresh sectors, however, they have many aims to achieve the target, such as encouraged the non-oil local industry, also encourage international investments by showing them unique opportunities and environments in its area, however, the various components include transport & logistics, down stream industries, mining, agriculture and food industries, infrastructure, education city, tourism development and housing, with many projects will be a next generation center of finance, healthcare, and technological development. Also many projects offer the largest investment opportunity such as the petrochemicals sector telecommunications, tourism, natural gas, information technology and industrial conglomerates. Saudi Arabia will be on the top of the economic world in the future.

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Some Elements Which Prevent the Education of Girls

Ali Alameer
R/W 31

Educating girls has a great impact on the community of a country. Nations are able to fight poverty, create balance, and abolish the imbalance of human society; however, the prevention of girls from attending school some factors could be, school fees, cost of books, requirement of a uniform. This is a cause of foil poor families from sending many children to school because they cannot afford each of these.

In addition, many schools do not have enough female teachers. Also, facilities are rare in school. On the other hand, sexual harassment such as rape inside schools makes many parents reluctant to send their daughters to school. In the same way the parents are concerned about the safety and feeling of their daughter so they keep the girls at home so that the school has a mix between girls and boys, since both have different personalities and behaviors.

At last, there are more and more things that are reasons or factors to prevent the education of girls worldwide.

Stranger Falsehood

Ali Alameer
R/W 31

In the south coast of Saudi Arabia, one of many villages are there. I was born and grew up in this village. My village has a simple lifestyle; moreover, there are a lot of farms, where one of those farm's family house has been standing. In fact, that period of time was a spectacular time, because I lived with a large family, it was a great moment when I stayed with them, usually I did not try to remember that time in my life from the sweet to hurtful times, because I get immediately homesick.

Naturally, in the beginning of my life, I was tiresome for my parents, in that I had been a child hoodlum, my parents couldn't stop me anyways. However, one day, was a halloween day, when I was eleven years old at that time, my family were together; and the residents of village were also celebrating that day; all people were happy at that time, because it was the celebration of "Eid Al Fatter" in the country.

Suddenly, inside the happiness of "Eid Al Fatter"; on the side of my grandfather's farm a fire started burning, moved to another sides, and quickly burned all farms, it was dangerous for other houses in my village, exactly for anyone close to the farm. Firstly, my family is house, it was a horrible time; everything changed that day in our village, from celebration to emergency. So everybody woke up from their business once the emergency started and firemen were trying to squelch the fire, and people hurried to see, what had happened in our village.

On the other side, my friend and I were played with some fireworks, I was the leader of the group, we were closed to scene, so it was a great moment for us, we didn't care about anything, just having fun. When we were playing, I was behind

the farm, so I hadn't seen anything, but one of my friends said "Ali look at your grandfather's farm, there is a huge fire, and it was moving fast. However, when I saw the grandfather's farm burned, I could not believe what had happened there.

Equally important, I was thinking for sometimes about it, and I decided to let my grandfather know firstly. I ran to him and gave him the information, when I told him he got so angry that his face changed horribly. He scolded me, and asked me who did make it, of course, he never minded about me, because I was the one who told, but he was shocked about the event. In addition, I said to him I thought my friends were playing with fire works, and they were close to your farm, I think they did that, but I am not sure about them. You can go to find out, I had confidence in myself, so that, he trusted me.

Next, he stood up to follow his farm in the scene time in the village. But was there no evidence to indicate who did it. From day to day, they found out about it, the police officer made an investigated and people talked every time and everywhere about the scene, many questions were asked about what happened in our village, and who did it. So it was an important event in our village. But they could not figure out the mystery.

Finally, I was trying to explain what I really had done to my closest brother to approach the fact to my father to reduce the punishment that I might have. I explained what was happened undercover from one to one, as result of I was chilled for what I had been done, as well as what I made a stranger falsehood for my entire village, I didn't do it on purpose what I did on the farm, however, it's expanded undercover the story fact of the event. Finally, they discovered the truth from I, and I surrendered. Lately, I took a great deal of sharp hitting because I made a stranger falsehood from my father and a huge slap for what I had done from grandfather. I am sure; I won't forget my great deal.

Superstition

Ali Alameer
R/W 31

In general, different cultures, religions, traditions, and thinking, as well as education, each of these contributes superstition in life. It is a belief and practice some objects or actions are lucky and some are unlucky. However, does superstition affect life? Is it fact or fiction? Should or could be faith superstition?

At first, superstition has exist real whereby dissimilar in our communities, mostly each of societies have a lot of common Superstitions. For example a common superstition in the middle Ages was that the devil could enter a person during vulnerable moment when that person was sneezing. This could be avoided if anyone present immediately appealed to the name of God. The tradition of saying "God bless you" when someone sneezes still remains today.

Again, irrational beliefs and practices resulted from naïve people who created them in the past, so superstitions grew up inside the communities till they became more interesting for people to believe them.

In addition, superstitions occur in their life for because of difficult experience, so they could be a product of their existence, moreover, superstitions was effect their decision at the same time. In fact, in many of societies, superstitions have become habits rather than beliefs, but the rest of them still remain today.

As for my opinion, I don't believe in superstitions for several reasons. Superstition the religion of feeble minds is an unreasoning fear of God, where there is no indication of any evidence, there are secret ways, so they are acts of God, who only know it, and he controls it, also there is not any basis for these superstitions, what the origin of them are. Naturally, superstitions could be based on belief in the power of charms and witchcraft, or such invisible forces as demons. It is not something based on fact; however, some people take them seriously. There is no factual evidence that anything will happen to us. In fact, God is the master everything, he knows it. We can not imagine that because, things are controlled by him at all time.

Emigration, a Change in El Salvador

Natalia Reyes

R/W 60

Emigration out of El Salvador has been a phenomenon since the middle of the 19th century. 2.3 million Salvadorians live in the Unites States and in other countries around the world, the majority of emigrants fled because of the armed conflict in the past which El Salvador suffered during 1980 - 1992. Now emigration continues because there are no job opportunities. Emigrants travel to the United States in search of health, security, good jobs and good salaries. Most emigrants travel illegally to the United States because they don't have enough money to pay the airplane, passport, visa, etc. Most of these people come from the eastern providence of San Miguel, and the province of Las Cabañas. Emigrating illegally put emigrant's life in danger, and causes a big impact in his family.

The lack of job opportunities is the main reason why Salvadorians are emigrating, and Juan Perez is a great example of Salvadorian emigrants. He was a 35 year old Salvadorian man who lived with his wife and his two children. Juan is an accountant by profession and was unemployed for three months because all the jobs that were hiring were requesting people between the ages of 22 to 30. He didn't fit in that category. The labor market in El Salvador is awful. Most of the companies are searching for experienced and professional people, and just offering salaries of \$154 to \$400 monthly. While work opportunities are lower every day, the living cost in El Salvador increases. Juan Perez had to emigrate in search of a job because his family couldn't live anymore without an income. He had to abandon his family and put his life in danger just to search for the so called "American Dream".

Emigration affects not just emigrants; in fact, it affects the entire emigrant's family, since the emigrant leaves his family alone. Such is the case of Estela. She is a Salvadorian woman with two children, Jorge, 11 years old, and Lupe, 13 years old. Estela works in a radio station as a speaker. She is a

hard working woman, but does not get paid enough to sustain her family; she just earns \$80 per month. Her husband left her alone because he needed to go and find a job where most Salvadorian emigrants go, the United States. In the United States, he got remarried and stopped sending money to his family in El Salvador, but that was not the entire problem. "I don't want his money." Estela has said. "Money can't replace a father. My children hardly know him. Jorge often refuses to speak with them on the phone when he calls." The disintegration of families is the main effect of emigration. In a recent UN Development Program (UNDP) study, it was reported that in 30 out of 100 Salvadorian homes, women are the head of families, and that 80% of women in El Salvador are single mothers.

Emigrating illegally is a dangerous thing to do; people are often robbed and exposed to scary and weird situations with people they don't even know. Such is the experience of Kyle de Beausset, a Salvadorian student at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Kyle was interested in how illegal emigration worked out in El Salvador, and wanted to see how illegal emigrants suffer, walking in their shoes whenever possible to experience what they experience. He got involved in illegal emigration without even noticing. Kyle contacted a coyote – a guy that emigrants pay to help them cross the border illegally. The coyote took him to the city of Altar in Mexico. He went with a group of people that wanted to cross the border between the United States. The bus left them at 3 am in the morning and all the people that were with him got into a taxi, and he was left alone. Not knowing what else to do, he got into a green van. The driver seemed a little bit nervous, and spoke unfocusedly. He started asking Kyle questions about how much money he carried and whether he had a camera. After that he was left in a guest house, where he was reunited with 20 more people. They slept on carpeted bunks three rows high.

The next day another car arrived with a different driver promising to carry Kyle to a regular hotel. He never got into a regular hotel, the driver was cheating him, because the driver made signs to Kyle at lights marking were he was about to stop, and he never stopped. The same happened with two more lights, until he decided to jump out of the van. Kyle went back to Mexico on foot for three hours, until he arrived at a friend's house. "The biggest thing [I accomplished] was just quantifying the personal suffering that they experience," de Beausset said. "Here you work abstractly, you talk about ideas. ... The most important thing is to broaden our understanding, realize what's happening, and keep in mind the suffering." (www.news.harvard.edu).

Emigration is bringing good consequences too. Official data indicates that in 2004 alone \$2 billion entered the country as remittances, small checks sent to Salvadoran families by their emigrant families abroad. This amount, along with the economy of the "maquila", low-wage factories owned by multinational corporations operating outside of the country, has been converted into the most important base of the economy. Many say that without this remittance from brothers and sisters abroad, Salvadorians would not be able to survive. According to the UNDP, a third of the rural population survives thanks to the remittances, which have also caused a reduction of dependence

on local agricultural production.

Emigration in El Salvador has two faces, one is good and the other does not help in anything. The good thing about emigration is remittances because they help the economy to stay where it is, remittances do not increase the economy, but it prevents it from going down. The bad thing is what emigration causes to families and to the emigrant himself. In El Salvador emigration is a necessary issue for most of the people, mostly for people who live in rural areas. It is stated "Los hombres, no cambiarían su patria por una tierra extraña, si la patria le da posibilidad de vivir, desahogadamente" which means "Men and Women would not exchange their country for a foreign land if their country would give them the possibility to live, with the relief of new opportunities" (www.thewitness.org).

Thanks from the Editor

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