

Issue 03
2019

THE VIGIL



Ceci n'est pas ma voix

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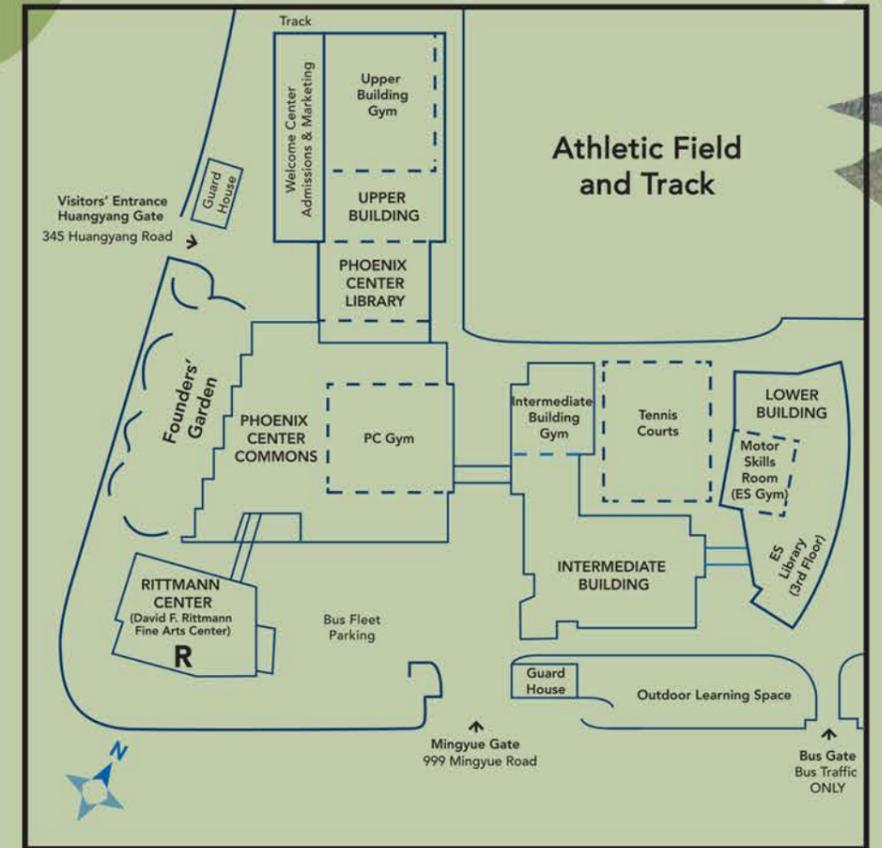
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Statement of Intent

The Vigil is a collaborative student journalism project, created by a diverse group of students from all over the world. The majority of it is designed, written, edited, and published over the three days of the CISSMUN conference every year. As such, efforts are made to include diverse views, analysis, and opinions. The views expressed in each article are those of each respective author, and do not reflect any centralized view of Concordia International School Shanghai. These are the thoughts and views of the student authors, who have worked hard to try to understand and express complicated views and issues in a very compressed time window. It is the expressed opinion of many of their proud teachers (including the Vigil advisor) that the students do a pretty great job. :-)

CAMPUS MAP



PUDONG MAP



A Right to Voice

Since the dawn of the information era decades ago, waves of social media platforms have brought new methods of communication and social awareness to the world. Ideally, the relationship between the user and platform is mutual—meaning the user uploads content without intervention, and the platform distributes the user’s content without impeding upon their essential rights of free speech. However, in recent years, a spread of radical ideologies and propaganda by terrorists, governments, and activists on social media has stirred heated debates and political clashes on these platforms. Naturally, social media companies have since extensively increased regulation to limit the amount of terrorism-incentivized media appearing on their sites. Yet, this all begs a dire question: Has the cost of rigorous censorship achieved by media platforms outweighed its benefit?

Consider this: In response to the 9/11 attacks, many nations began to implement new or bolster pre-existing legislation and policies surrounding anti-terrorism. Since terrorist organizations exploited social media platforms long before the attacks, many of the legislations enacted after 9/11 specifically targeted those organizations by exposing their content to rigorous screening. This enhanced the media platforms’ ability to collect and regulate information. With this in mind, content regulation, specifically concerning the vetting of terrorist content, could be harming freedom of speech more than it’s protecting it.

Currently, freedom of speech is protected by multiple international agreements and conventions sanctioned by the United Nations. According to Art. 19 in both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), freedom of expression, or the right to voice, "constitutes one of the essential foundations of a democratic society and is as such protected by international human right laws." With this in mind, how can regulation of speech be imposed in such strict and universally accepted laws? Certain caveats exist within these agreements. In the case of the ICCPR, a three-part-test for determining valid regulation was developed that has similar counterparts in the other international treaties: restrictions must be provided by law, serve either of the purposes listed in Art 19, and attend to this purpose.¹ Unfortunately, this system is not foolproof. Anti-terrorism laws contain vague definitions of terrorism in the context of social media. In fact, there is no universally recognized strict definition of terrorist hate speech and propaganda. These definitions blur the line between acts of terrorism and free speech. In addition, since definitions are primarily influenced by unique cultural circumstances, international social media corporations must cater to the individual censoring needs of different nations. This vague terminology has resulted in lackluster rationales for censoring journalistic content reporting on politics or terrorist-behaviour that could be unjustly labeled as "promoting" or "glorifying" acts of terrorism. Considering the already narrow margin between what appropriate and malicious content, the ability for independent media to release information surrounding these topics could be significantly restricted in the future.

The intrinsic value of unrestricted journalism and freedom to voice has undoubtedly proved its worth in the recent era of emerging racial, political, religious diversity. Without it, democratic societies, which thrive upon personal autonomy and free speech, would not exist. The extensive regulation and censorship of malicious content has solved one problem but created another. While freedom of expression can and should be restricted under some circumstances, restrictions must uphold to strictly defined nation-specific parameters. States which support independent media and allow constructive debate are strengthened democratically in an age where countering arguments is more beneficial than forcibly preventing them. The rigorous censorship enacted by social media platforms to eradicate terrorist-content on the cyberspace is a detriment to the public’s freedom of speech.

by Alan Deutsch

¹ The purposes of Art 19. includes “for respect of the rights or reputations of others” or “for the protection of national security or of public order, or of public health or morals.”



People vs. Policy

A CISSMUN Veteran's Perspective on Yemeni Refugees

The Yemeni Civil War is one of the least reported wars of the modern day. The war started in 2015 between Houthis rebels loyal to the old government under ex-President Saleh and those who support the new government under the current President Hadi. The conflict has drawn in multiple parties including the American-supported, Saudi-led coalition backing Hadi and various terrorist groups such as ISIL and AQAP. The war is currently a political jumble, but also a humanitarian disaster; the UN estimates that $\frac{3}{4}$ of Yemen's 28 million people need humanitarian aid, not only because of war but also because of a massive cholera outbreak, famine, and airstrikes along key port cities.

On December 12, 2017, Air Asia opened a direct flight from Malaysia to Jeju Island, a popular holiday destination in the Republic of Korea. Crowds of Yemeni asylum seekers headed to Malaysia because they could stay there temporarily without a visa. However, many had been staying with no guarantee of their status, as Malaysia hasn't signed the UN Convention on Refugees. Once word got around that Jeju offered a tourist-oriented entry policy that guaranteed temporary stay, over 500 Yemenis arrived in Jeju, applied for refugee status, and moved to the mainland. Upon this rapid increase of refugees, the Korean government banned Yemeni asylum seekers from entering mainland Korea on April 30, 2018. Soon after, public opinion and most of the press turned rancorous; a petition called to abolish the Korean Law on Refugees, the non-visa visit policy of Jeju Island, and the granting of refugee status. It gathered 714,875 signatures in one month's time.

On the first of June, the government banned all Yemeni people from entering Jeju without a visa, essentially blocking any Yemenis' entry into Korea. Although numbers have fluctuated due to leaving refugees and application withdrawals, out of around 500 asylum seekers, 2 have been given refugee status, 412 have been given a humanitarian stay permit, and 56 have been rejected by December 2018.

I moved down to Jeju Island to volunteer for the Jeju People's Committee for Refugee Rights, an island-wide alliance of NGOs working together to help Yemeni refugees. After a lifetime of living in expat bubbles and international schools, it was shocking to encounter ultra-nationalistic xenophobia firsthand. Anti-refugee demonstrations filled the streets, with hundreds chanting "Get out, fake refugees!"; the internet was flooded with anti-refugee propaganda, from posts outlining questionable Islamic principles to crimes committed by refugees in Europe. My own friends expressed visible discomfort once I told them that I was helping Yemeni asylum seekers in Jeju. "Uh, be careful," they would say in unison, not hiding their disgust. "Muslims are dangerous. I heard they're out to get young, vulnerable girls like you."

I, much like you, was an avid MUNer back in high school. The European refugee crisis took place right when my MUN career began blossoming, meaning that those four years were peppered with motions about refugees. By the end of those years, I was at the point where I could draft up a resolution about refugee protection and rights in five minutes with my eyes closed. Perhaps this was why I was so surprised when I came in contact with actual refugees: I realized that while I thought I knew so much about the issue, I was only at the tip of the iceberg. I can't go into much detail for security reasons, but everything they revealed opened my eyes to what I hadn't been seeing before from a "policymaker" point of view. This is why I gathered questions from MUN delegates in high school and conducted interviews with Yemeni asylum seekers on their behalf: to give more aspiring policymakers a chance to see what would otherwise remain in the shadows of international politics. I remember my resolutions often suggested language instruction classes for refugees to facilitate integration. But when I began teaching them myself, I came across many who said they couldn't attend classes because they couldn't afford to take time off from work when I actually faced sixteen-year-olds crying that they needed to make quick money to support their families back in Yemen, the words didn't come so easily anymore.

One of my biggest takeaways is that things don't always turn out the way we expect them to. By "expect", I don't mean random stabbing in the dark--I mean developed policies that make sense in theory but go awry once implemented. For instance, a missionary in Korea enacted the popular MUN clause that wanted to create a secluded community of refugees by building massive complexes reserved for them. I had written clauses suggesting such solutions as a delegate; I had reasoned that this would be a good temporary solution, as it created a comfortable community for asylum seekers while also solving problems of food and shelter. In reality, it backfired. It turned out that locals actually

preferred seeing asylum seekers scattered around town rather than seeing a convergence all living in one corner of the neighborhood. The ambitious project fell apart within half a year due to a flood of local complaints.

Even more important is the human consequence of policy. I'm obviously frustrated at countries shutting their borders to desperate asylum seekers, but I do understand that taking in masses of people hastily can have dangerous repercussions. The current refugee system, made immediately after WWII, is outdated; it must change to account for refugee populations today. It is a dilemma I've grappled with throughout my entire volunteering experience, and one I'd like each of you to think about during this conference and onwards. Each story is heart-wrenching, but realistically, we cannot take into consideration every single individual person's circumstances. How do we balance the lives of impacted individuals and other, more macro-level concerns such as national security or order? Where do we draw the line? Does it make us better or worse policymakers if we start trying to look out for each and every person affected by our policies?

I hope these interviews help shed a light to those blind spots, and stimulate conversation during this conference and beyond your paths to becoming the next generation of policymakers.

Kris Jeong
International School of Kuala Lumpur, Class of 2018

Interview Highlights

1. Why did you leave Yemen?

Interview 1: "All aspects of living conditions are deplorable (no clean water available; shortages of fuel, electricity, and medical supplies; most infrastructure has been destroyed, including airports (only 2 out of 7 airports are operating), electricity plants, roads & bridges, factories, and food warehouses)."

2. Were there any problems on the route you took from Yemen to Jeju Island?

Interview 1: "The journey starts from the northern areas to the far East or South (where the last 2 airports are still, albeit in a limited fashion, operating). This journey takes around 18 to 24 hours (which used to take 6 to 9 hours before the war)... During this trip, you have to pass by around [80] military checkpoints [belonging to both the Houthis and the pro-government militia]. You would be lucky if you are not arrested during the trip because of your family name or the mood of the soldiers at the checkpoints. However, you may also die if a fight erupts during your trip when you pass by war zones due to random bullets or airstrikes at that time."

3. Did you receive any aid or support from international organizations such as the UNHCR?

Interview 2: "I received absolutely nothing from the UNHCR thus far. All the help I got was from the Naomi Center in terms of food, housing, jobs, etc.... I don't really care about the UN helping us as refugees. The one thing I wish they could do is stop the war in Yemen and resolve the conflict there, along with other conflicts that make refugees (such as the Syrian war)."

4. What do you think can improve the social acceptance of refugees in Korea?

Interview 1: "The media kept reporting fake news about Yemenis and Islam which increased Islamophobia. This has negatively affected refugees and also Korean society, as refugees started feeling the hatred against them and Koreans started living in fear."

5. What do you think prevents you from integrating into Korean society? May I ask in what instances you have felt discrimination?

Interview 2: "I remember once, someone shouted at me something along the lines of "Why can't you speak Korean?" and "Go back to where you came from!" in Korean.... However, as I mentioned before, I've noticed that locals generally become kinder as they get to know us better, so I haven't felt discriminated against recently."

6. Where would you like to live permanently?

Interview 1: "One's home country is totally different, as it is where I grew up and lived for most of my life, and it is my beloved country. I cannot express this feeling in words, but I would love to go back when it becomes safe and I can live in peace there again."

ABOUT GIN

Global Issues Network is an international organization that campaigns for global change and empowers youth to take a role in universal issues. It was founded in 2003 when educators at the International School of Luxembourg saw themselves looking to their students for the energy and passion to create change. They realized the only way to solve global issues is through global cooperation and asked other international schools across the world to cooperate in their efforts. GIN was created to be flexible and collaborative to facilitate progress beyond the problematic delays of bureaucracy.



GIN came to Concordia in 2008, when Mr. Carter decided to sponsor a student after she tried to raise the money herself to go to GIN Asia's first conference. It started with a project to preserve a rare species of alligator at one of Shanghai's zoos. The species is now thriving!

THE GIN MARKETPLACE

January 19

On Saturday of CISSMUN X, the Global Issues Network hosted a marketplace to educate attendees about the projects run by GIN Shanghai. Among these charities was Bye Bye Plastic Bags - Shanghai, Heart-to-Heart, and Hands Off Our Elephants. They sold a variety of wares such as t-shirts, stuffed animals, and stickers. The student merchants were excited to inform passersby about their projects. Many groups played videos, which described their work.



GIN FEATURE

by Hayley Szymanek

EXCERPT FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. KAHUMBU

Dr. Kahumbu, who spoke on January 19 at CISSMUN X, is a wildlife conservationist and CEO of WildLife Direct. She directs the Hands Off Our Elephants campaign to stop the ivory trade.

Q: Why do you believe conservation issues are just as if not more important than dire political issues, such as refugee crises?

A: "Condition of our environment is culture. Everything. Think of all the world's conflicts that are going on today. A lot of it is over resources. Those resources are things as simple as water. So, protecting natural environment is vital. It's protecting our own peace and well-being. There is something about nature that we are innately affected by. If we lose that, we lose something that actually gives us grounding and a sense of peace. So, I think nature is vital. It's something we've never quantified as human beings."



"My sophomore year, I wanted to do something more. I wasn't much of an MUN person, and I knew a few people in GIN, so I [decided to] give it a try, and I really found passion once I started GIN."

-Hoony Kim, a student leader of GIN Concordia





DAILY REPORTS



by Ping Tsai and Emilie Zhang

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

This committee debated how countries should reduce carbon emissions and if they should place taxes on automobiles. There was strong tension in the room, with delegates clashing over opposing opinions. One delegate argued that public transportation should be promoted and remain untaxed, stating, "green transportation is possible with public transportation." Another delegate immediately objected with the claim, "does the delegate realize that public transportation emits greenhouse gases like private transportation?" We are excited to see if the delegates will compromise and come to a consensus in the remainder of the CISSMUN conference.



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

The topics debated in this Committee include the economic and social advantages and disadvantages regarding the consumption of GMOs. The committee considered the GMOs impacts on the citizen's health, the environment, and world starvation. Two delegates argued for the usage of GMOs. They claimed that negative impacts on health were minimal and that they are still investigating ways to plant more GMOs in their country.



6TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

One topic debated in this Committee was the reformation of the Sharia Law. One delegate contended that this set of laws naturally discriminates against women. She stated, "I agree that a lot of times it is culture versus human rights and that culture should never have to compromise." In addition, she argued that the Sharia Law should be reformed to extend protection over the rights of women. When asked about her experience with CISSMUN, she exclaimed, "CISSMUN will always be one of my favorite conferences...it's really well organized...our entire group is very knowledgeable, and I always have a good time here."



4TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

One topic debated in this committee was how to solve politically motivated violence in West Africa. One delegate argued that countries in the eurozone that have more political dominance have a responsibility to aid and help solve the refugee problem in Africa. There was a large amount of disagreement in the committee that ended when a delegate finally exclaimed, "sovereignty should be protected above all others" and "a government should be able to approve or disapprove certain news or certain news sources". Let's see if they'll come to a consensus.



UN PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION

Delegates in the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission were engaged in a debate to resolve the tension between the Central African Republic government and the Seleka. One delegate proposed an amendment, the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSCA), in the Central African Republic to capture all members of the rebel group. Nonetheless, another delegate expressed that aggressive actions suggested in the amendment will "dicot the peaceful nature of the resolution." All in all, delegates in this committee were extremely proactive in preserving peace and resolving open conflicts.



SPECIAL CONFERENCE

The Special Conference successfully passed a resolution to grant journalists free speech. The President recounted the past session, "They tried to use a merit system for journalists (for telling the truth). However, this was unethical so it was stricken." The second issue this committee debated on was the question of rebuilding the Zimbabwean government. One delegate claimed that replacing the Zimbabwean currency with US dollars will "solve inflation and make the economy stable," while another delegate argued that the Zimbabwean currency itself is "self-sustaining". One delegate contended that "democracy within the new system with President Erdogan on the helm of all operations as experience of [this delegate] is beyond grateful and most generous." The Chair complimented him on his bravery.





10 YEARS

Thank You, Secretaries General!



Himmy Lo (CISSMUN I):
"Back in 2010, I never would have imagined that CISSMUN would grow from a primarily internal event at Concordia to a full conference drawing delegations from multiple continents."

Heesu Jang (CISSMUN II):
"I think I really missed being a delegate, being able to discuss, negotiate, and learn from one another ... Don't take for granted this wonderful opportunity you have..."



Katie Klammer (CISSMUN III):
"This conference is a breeding ground for crazy, world-changing ideas. [We saw] the world's problems from a youthful perspective..."



Steven Pan (CISSMUN VI):
"I honestly miss being a delegate in the GA's more than I miss any other role in MUN; the best part is you get to roam free in the GA's and actively partake in a productive debate."



Shannon Hwang (CISSMUN VII):
"I have a better understanding of current international issues and more insight into how to organize large events and quantities of people. I also made friends that I still talk to today."



Emily Leng (CISSMUN VIII):
"The friendships that I made and the skills that I gained have stayed with me long after high school."



Allen Wang (CISSMUN V):
"[The conference] really brought out the best in me and my peers."



Jonathan Tan (CISSMUN IV):
"Working with the team into the early hours of the morning ... was memorable and definitely paid off - though seeing the conference come to a successful close was also a bittersweet moment"



OF CISSMUN



Erik Paulson (CISSMUN Director)
"I do CISSMUN every year because it makes my students even more crazy-amazing than they already are. If that's even possible."

On behalf of the secretariat, I would like to express our most sincere gratitude to our MUN director Mr. Paulson, not only for his assistance during our preparation, but also for his sarcasm and extremely generous support. We would also like to express our thankfulness to all the administrative staff and Concordia faculty who dedicated strenuous amounts of time and effort into making this conference a reality. Lastly, we hope to thank all the participating schools. Thank you for allowing us to see the purpose in all the months we dedicated into preparing for this conference.

While you are still here, I encourage you to truly devote yourselves to the discussions in your committees and beyond. Only then will you depart on Sunday having grown a meaningfully and a genuine understanding of your role in significant change. I also encourage you to stay in touch with your peers, for they might prove to be some of the most valuable assets in your life. I hope CISSMUN X has been a worthwhile experience for everyone involved and that you had a great time :)

-Anna Wei, CISSMUN X Secretary General



LOOK BESIDE YOU,

Based on true events

by Claire Hou

The Shanghai summer heat is sweltering. Swarms of people amble along the battered cobblestone path—students savoring the scant few days left of break, joggers drenched in sweat, men and women dressed in suits far too constricting for the humidity. A businessman's armful of Starbucks tips sideways precariously as he bends to open the door of his taxi.

Occasionally, one or two people pause, if only for a second, to put small bits of spare change in a little boy's bowl. He doesn't speak, or even look up—he just bows his head, meekly, whenever he hears the clink of a coin. He is skinny, so skinny that the vertebrae of his back are visible through his thin t-shirt, and an old man sits a short distance behind him, arms crossed and eyes fixed on the boy.

Nobody pays them much mind. Beggars, even around affluent residential areas like Jinqiao, are not uncommon. The only notable thing the scene offers is a sickly sheen to the boy's skin, and the harrowing image he casts amongst the otherwise picturesque street corner. But for a moment it is as if a veil has been placed between him and the rest of the world, rendering him invisible; nobody reacts when he tips sideways and begins to seize violently, not even the old man behind him. The boy so clearly does not belong here, where the sky is cast a rare blue and the sweet scent of coffee permeates the air. His place is elsewhere—a hospital, where he can get the treatment he needs.

He remains unnoticed for several more weeks. By the time somebody finally cares to help, it is because the image he presents is too grating to ignore any longer—frothing at the mouth, sores covering his body, and barely able to remain upright. A group of concerned onlookers gradually gather, and when someone steps forward to help, the poker-faced old man finally moves.

"Get away from my grandson!" He screeches, shrill, too loud.

"I'm very sorry, but he needs medical attention," a woman, plastic bag of groceries dangling from her arm, explains. "We would like to help him."

"No. He's fine." The old man replies brusquely. "Get up, get up!" He says to the boy urgently underneath his breath, pulling him to his feet with rough movements. The old man looks up, gesturing to the boy with a glare, "See? He can stand."

"With all due respect, sir, I've seen him around multiple times already and he doesn't seem to be getting better." A teacher working at a nearby school steps forward. "He needs to go to the hospital."

"This is none of your business." The old man's glare turns even flintier at the sight of a foreigner.

"I can personally pay for everything, he just needs a doctor." The teacher doesn't back down.

"Money isn't the issue here." The old man replies rudely. He startles, as if suddenly noticing the growing crowd, some filming with their cellphones out. "What are you looking at?" He barks, repeating, "This is none of your business!"

"No," the teacher insists loudly, volume rising to match his, "This is inhumane! You're— you're abusing him, he needs help!"

The old man scowls vehemently. He opens his mouth, but his scathing reply is cut off by the sound of tires screeching to a stop against the asphalt. Ambulance doors swing open, and paramedics come rushing out with a stretcher. The old man whips his head around furiously;

"Who called an ambulance?" He asks, voice hard and accusing.

"I did," the woman from before says, unapologetic. "We told you. He needs help."

"He's completely fine!" The old man shrieks again, while the paramedics shoulder their way through the crowd of onlookers, many of whom only swarm closer in curiosity. When they attempt to lift the boy onto the stretcher, the old man blocks them with his own body.

"He is fine! This is all a mistake, he doesn't need to go to the hospital."

It is a blatant and completely transparent lie. The boy is far from "fine;" the only reason he is still upright is the old man's white-knuckled grip on his shoulders.

THEY MAY NOT BE WHO YOU THINK THEY ARE

The pallor of the uninflamed parts of his skin looks morbid under broad daylight, but luckily the old man's resistance is no match as the paramedics power forward, prying the boy away.

"Are you related to him?" One of the them asks impatiently.

The old man sends him a dirty look, sensing his defeat. "I'm his grandfather."

"Great, let's go." The paramedic says.

The crowd parts like the red sea this time, and soon the only evidence they were even there is the faint smell of gasoline in the air.

Later, at the hospital, the old man seems surprised to see the woman and the teacher again, though he masks it quickly with a distrustful scowl. The teacher lifts her chin before he can speak, "I said I would pay for everything, didn't I?"

He considers her for a moment, before unexpectedly shrugging in acquiescence. "Fine, fine," he says. His tone isn't hostile (but not kind, either, though), "But I just spoke to the doctor, and they refuse to release him for at least a couple more days. Just send me the money and I can pay for everything when he's discharged, that way you don't have to come back here."

The teacher doesn't think too much of it, and concedes easily enough. "Alright," she says, "How much do you need?"

The old man rattles off a number, and it doesn't take long to wire the money. "Can I see him?" The teacher asks, and the old man gestures to the curtain behind him. "The far right side, near the door." He says, "I'm going to the bathroom."

Neither of the women pay him any mind as he leaves, although maybe they should— because he walks right past the bathroom on his way down the corridor. They don't notice his absence until a nurse speaks up hesitantly later.

"The man that was with you guys earlier, the boy's grandfather? I think he just left in a taxi."

"Oh," the teacher says, startled. She forces a laugh. "I'm sure he'll be back in a few days..." She trails off.

"Okay," the nurse looks at her doubtfully. "Sorry to bother you."

The teacher ignores the cold sinking feeling in her stomach, and exchanges a look with the woman beside her. The understanding they share is wordless and the realization gradual, but both are deafening in their clarity.

The "neglectful but penniless old grandfather" jig is up.

They stare at the boy in silence. He has hunched into himself unconsciously in his sleep, the tan of his skin stark and the sores on his body ghastly next to the sterile white of the hospital bedding. There is still dirt and dry mud matted in his hair, and he looks light years beyond his age.

He sighs softly as he shifts in the bed, wincing with the movement but not waking up. The women wince in tandem with him, and mourn for how young and how unfortunate he is. Because it's unmistakable, now.

He has just been abandoned, not by his grandfather, but worse— by his trafficker.

Every year, 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders, of which half are children. Exploitation and abuse of those in vulnerable positions are unfortunately common in the world around us, and could be happening right underneath our noses.

In our debates at MUN, it is important to remember the complexity, pain, and brutal realities of the difficult issues we are arguing. The scenes depicted in this piece of realistic fiction are based on a very disturbing reality that may be closer to us than we think.



Fairfax Lutheran High School

Nadi International School

Privatissimo Sanku Lora Per

Manzoumeh Kheyrol Mohitabeh

American Community School of North Doha
American School of Dubai

ALS Cape Town

Dalian American Int'l School
United World College
Dulwich Suzhou
Suzhou Singapore Int'l School
U-link College Suzhou
Shu Tin College

Renanshan College
Kiangsu-Chekiang College
Kelly Yang Project

Yanong International School
Ais Guangzhou

Gamban European School Singapore
Overseas Family School

The British School of Beijing
Int'l School of Beijing

Int'l School of Tianjin
Tianjin International School

Qingdao Int'l School
Qingdao Int'l School

Seyun Int'l School
Amer. School in Japan

Yokobama International School
Canadian Academy Kobe

Brent Int'l School Bangkok
Brent Int'l School Manila

Asia American Int'l Acad.

Townsville School Cluster
Sydney PLC

German School SH.
SAS Puxi

SAS Pudong
SCIS

Shanghai Singapore Int'l School
SMIC

Lycée Français de Shanghai
YK Pao School

Yew Chung International School - Puxi
Yew Chung International School - Pudong

CISSMUN FLIGHT MAP

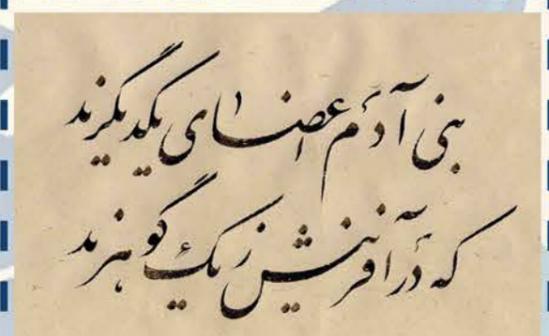
Perceptions of Iran



By: Nikoo Mesdaghi

Everybody has a different view of Iran and often these views fail to represent the incredible reality. Too many people think that Iranians are terrorists, or that Iran is not a safe country, but anyone who has a chance to come to Iran knows that it is a very safe place to travel and that there are many beautiful sights. They also get to see the true life of an Iranian. Over one million people came to Iran in the first three months of 2018, but because of political issues, someone who wants to travel to Iran cannot receive accurate and reliable information through the media. Because of this, people misunderstand Iran greatly. Visitors who come to Iran often make some shocking realizations. Nonetheless, the majority of visitors have wonderful and unique experiences. In Iran, you can go skiing during the winter, or enjoy a vacation on the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea beach in the summer. Yet the main reason that people visit Iran is because of its rich culture and history. Other than the big, modern cities like Tehran (the capital), Esfahan, Shiraz, and Tabriz, there are also many interesting historical and ecotourism sites like Matinabad Eco Camp, a huge, sustainable desert camp. This diversity attracts many people with different interests to visit Iran. The diversity of Iran's wildlife also attracts many visitors. Along with the green forests and wide seas, they can enjoy desert views. Some cities, like Yazd and Kashan in the center of Iran are directly located in deserts. The view of Iran in the news is very specific, but someone who has visited Iran understands the hospitality and warmth of Iranian culture. Most of the Iranian people have extended family life, and meet with friends and family on a regular basis for large gatherings. They have many national ceremonies like Norooz (the first day of spring and our new year) and Yalda (the longest night of the year). There are always special traditions for these celebrations. For example, for Norooz and Yalda night, we have a special table and the oldest person in the ceremony reads the Hafez horoscope.

Something else that surprises tourists is women's engagement in social activities. Traditional attitudes cannot restrict them. They can have effective roles in society since so many of them have higher degrees and professional careers. There are many women working as teachers, scientists, doctors, engineers, lawyers, etc. The Persian language is also interesting for foreign tourists. Before travelling to Iran, most of them think Iranian people speak Arabic. While Persian (Farsi) may contain some Arabic words, Farsi is a completely different language, with thousands of years of poetry and storytelling. Additionally, many Iranian people also speak English as a foreign language. Despite its dark portrayal in the media, Iran is a safe place for tourists to explore its beauty, culture, and history.



Translation:
 All human beings are limbs of each other, having been created of one essence when the calmity of time affects one limb, the other limb cannot remain at rest if you have no sympathy for the troubles of others, you are unworthy to be called human

Bani Adam («Children of Adam») is a poem by Iranian poet Saadi Shirazi. The poem, which calls for breaking down of barriers, was quoted by former U.S. President Barack Obama in a meeting with Iranian leaders.



The Cause of Freedom. This year's CISSMUN theme is particularly relevant to us as members of the press. We chose to focus on the idea of *voice*: how each individual expresses their freedom. We further chose to emphasize classical art as a means of making one's voice heard, opening conversations and invoking varied responses among diverse audiences.

Our three issue covers represent different stages of the assertion of one's voice. On our first cover, the use of Artemisia Gentileschi's *Susanna and the Elders* depicts a prima facie view of self will: the woman, threatened by the menacing men looming over her, is frightened and submissive. This is set to the backdrop of Fragonard's *The Swing*, further underlining the oppressive tone. Yet the modern x-ray reveals an inner, almost secret identity—a depiction of will-power hidden within. To us, this piece of art represents voices suppressed, but never gone, persisting despite pressure.

On our second cover, Delacroix's personification of Liberty leads everyday individuals to overturn the status quo. Although this painting is an iconic representation of freedom, we used it to show the power of social movements. Moreover, as the frame, which restricts the power of the artist's voice, begins to crack and come apart, our own identities emerge from the confines of paint and canvas in the form of a performance art by Ulay: *How I Stole a Painting*. Not only did Ulay intend to show contempt for discrimination in the realm of art, we also used it to express our voices emerging from a lofty, two-dimensional space into our everyday world.

Finally, our third issue uses Manet's contentious *Olympia*. Her intense gaze was especially controversial during her time because of how unapologetic she was of her status and identity. We chose to underscore this idea of challenging norms and intentionally exposing ourselves to discomfort. As the frame splinters into pieces, the art itself seems about ready to escape the confines of the magazine. Our line "*Ceci n'est pas ma voix*", referencing Magritte's *The Treachery of Images*, further emphasizes this: just as the line "*Ceci n'est pas une pipe*" suggests that a drawing does not embody the physical object, even if we write about our opinions, that does not mean that we create our voice directly. We can develop it through articles and resolutions, but *this is not my voice*. Our real voices reside in reality, in the tangible actions we take to influence others every day.





Flying Fish pt. 3

a short story by Emilie Zhang



Tuesday, May 22, 2015

The four foreigners are frantically throwing their personal belongings into bags of all shapes and sizes. “Where’s my book” and “who took my shorts” and “mama I want hug!” and “why isn’t anything ready yet?” A synchronized city circus, touring the countryside.

She shuffles into the kitchen. She still isn’t getting the hang of the whole electricity thing but she is too old to cut firewood anymore. Ah well. She is old, and once they are gone, she only has to make two meals a day. Maybe only one.

“Who the hell touched my briefcase?” Her son thunders. He turns on her and she freezes, shrinking in size to minimize her presence. “Did you touch it? Ma, everything in there is important! It’s not like,” he pauses, face mutilated in fury, and then sweeps his hand across the room, “here!”

“Dad!” Wen says, but the volume is indeterminable. The old woman wants to say it was a scream. That her granddaughter is screaming for her. But really, it lay somewhere between a whisper and a funeral conversation. It must be her ears. Her son isn’t done. “What? What if she took it and burned it up in her pile of firewood? She’s illiterate. She can’t tell the damn difference between Greek and Chinese and you expect anything from her?”

When her son came back home a week ago, she cried. Like a symmetrical tunnel of time, tears roll in her eyes now and she blinks, leaving two trails of water down her leathery face.

Everything is quiet. Mei Mei is only four but even she knows to hide under the bed when daddy is angry. It is a simple rule of survival in the household and she’s a quick learner.

Her son doesn’t see the tears. Maybe all middle-aged men are blind. She knows this because regardless of...everything, he gives the final blow. “Look at you. You don’t even know your name.”

Seventy percent of one’s body is water but women are water and she is a water woman, leaking from a puncture somewhere deep, dark, and unbelievably rotten. No one has drawn from this well in too long. Meters deep and miles wide, it overflows the banks of an old, Chinese woman and drowns her. But rotten can only stay rotten for so long. Someday or another, it is eaten by vultures or devoured by insects and owned by crawlers or eventually, eventually, decomposes by itself. She was waiting for the latter. She decides, now, to unleash the former.

Friday, January 1, 2019

I am seventeen. Grandma is dead. She died yesterday and was cremated the day of. There was no funeral. Dad didn’t cry. It started raining so they all left. I am the only one still standing at her gravestone.

I have had four years to ruminate on the week spent here an eternity ago and I think, now, I know more than what I started with.

Grandma was the kite. A fish swimming in the canvas called sky, riding on summer’s first breath. She looked desperately for another fish, but people don’t attach wings to fins.

People don’t like flying fish. So they reel them in, cut the string, snap the wooden frames and push them to the ground. Somehow, a crawling fish looks better to them than a fish with dreams.

Dad loved that slippery, golden koi. He wasn’t supposed to. He tried not to.

I look around at the cemetery and every gravestone says “so-and-so, mother of whoever, grandfather of anyone” except my grandmother’s. My grandmother’s gravestone has only three characters.

Her name.

