MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

I am delighted to see that our bulletin is out once gain. Many thanks to Mac and the team members, and to everybody else who have contributed to make this possible. A lot of hard work has gone into this and the rest of us appreciate what has been done. The good thing is that this is a place you can write what you like, you don’t have to worry about the impact factor or about ISI, and you can be confident that what you write will be valued by your colleagues for what it is. So keep sending your contributions in for the next issue.

I wish you all a good break, and to all our Muslim colleagues Selamat Berpuasa dan Selamat Hari Raya. I look forward to seeing you all again after the break, suitably recharged and ready for the new semester.

Zuraidah

from
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FBL Bulletin

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Please send your articles or queries to:
bulletin.fbl@gmail.com or macym@um.edu.my
CONGRATULATIONS!!

Staff in Administrative Positions
- Prof. Dr. Zuraidah Mohd Don (Dean)
- Dr. Jawakhir Mior Jaafar (Deputy Dean, Post-Graduate)
- Associate Prof. Dr. Mohana Nambiar (Deputy Dean, Undergraduate)
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- Dr. Evelyn Khor (Deputy Director, ICR)

New Phds
- Dr. Patricia Nora Riget
- Dr. Rachel Tan Siew Kuang

Promotions
- Abdul Malek Shaari (DG44)
- Chin Yueh Lai (DG48)
- Kiranjeet Kaur (DG52)

Proud Papas & Mamas
- Mr. & Mrs. Yeo Siang Lee (on the birth of their baby boy on 14 May 2011)
- Encik Syed Ghafar Syed Zain (on the birth of his baby boy on 13 July 2011)

WELCOME BACK COLLEAGUES ON SABBATICAL/STUDY LEAVE

Staff back from Sabbatical leave:
- Associate Prof. Dr. Faridah Noor Mohd Noor
- Associate Prof. Dr. Jariah Mohd Jan
- Associate Prof. Dr. Kamila Ghazali

Staff back from Study Leave:
- Cecilia Cheong Yin Mei
- Daniel Chow Ung T’Chiang
- Ruth Ong Lok Tik
- Dr. Patricia Nora Riget
- Siti Rohana Md Thani

Staff on Sabbatical Leave
- Dr. Kulwindr Kaur
- Mac Yin Mee
- Associate Prof. Dr. Stefanie S. Pillai

FAREWELL TO OUR COLLEAGUES

- Brigitte Klopfer
- Dr. Harald Martin Olk
- Mahadhir Mat Lazim
- Dr Mahmud Hassan Khan
- Peter Ng Goon Hoong
- Associate Prof. Dr Sam Mohan Lal
- Associate Prof. Dr Zubaidah Ibrahim-Bell

VISITS

Dr. Hj. Muhammad b. Seman & Dr. Ahmad Fikri Hj. Husin visited Ahmad Dhalan University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (2nd – 7th of July 2011) under the Ministry of Higher Education M.I.T Programme of student exchange.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW COLLEAGUES

- Dr. Siti Hasliza bt. Mat Yusoff (Arabic)
- Zazmin Abu Bakar (Arabic)
- Aimi Nadiah Abdul Ghapor (English)
- Lim Sing Yuing (English)
- Dr Fransisco Perlas Dumanig (Filipino)
- Michel Freutal (German)
- Azni Hj Ahmad (Japanese)
- Rie Kitade (Japanese)
- Mireya Sosa Abella (Spanish)
- Noor Suhaida binti Mahmud (replacing Haji Mat Nasir)

The objective of ELD is to promote better interaction among students and staff. In addition, the students were also assessed for this event by their respective lecturers teaching the English Language Skills courses and Literature course. The assessment was part of the course work.

The Year 1 students presented a play (The Importance of Being Earnest). The year 2 students presented 3 poems (Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, Cinderella, The Wolf meets Red Riding Hood and the Three Little pigs) and Readers’ Theatre (The Miser and The Demon). The 3 year students presented a musical (A Walk through Time) and 2 international students from China sang an English song.

The students worked very hard preparing for the event. They had 2-3 hours rehearsals every week (from weeks 9 to 14). The year 3 students wrote their own script for the play and choral reading, as well as choreographed their dances. Assoc. Professor Dr Susan Philip (Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences), attended one rehearsal where she gave useful tips to the Year 2 and 3 students. Under the guidance of Encik Ramlan, the students designed and made the props for the event.

The English Language Department (ELD) Extravaganza was held on 15 April 2011 (9 am to 1 pm) in Dewan Angsana, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics (FLL). The organising committee comprised Mac, Dr Krishnavanie, Dr Surinderpal, Dr Kais and Jay Yasodhara. The SMBL students who participated in the event are from Years 1, 2 and 3.
ELD Extravaganza was a huge success and the students and staff enjoyed the event very much. At the end of the event, some students and staff members were moved to tears. The third year students also thanked their respective lecturers by giving them flowers. The feedback from the students was positive. They stated that they learnt many soft skills, for example, critical thinking and problem solving skills, team skills and communication skills. All the students learnt to co-operate and work as one big team to make the event a memorable one. The only complaint was about the lack of technical equipment and a proper stage with lighting.

The organising committee would like to thank Professor Zuraidah (Dean), Dr Tam (Head of English Department), technical and support staff, FLL staff and Encik Ramlan for their help and moral support. The committee hopes that similar events will be held in future.

Mac Yin Mee
Head of organising committee

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**Idaman Ku**

Kuperlukan sebidang tanah - Oh sakthi
Ku perlukan sebidang tanah
Di tengah tapak itu binakanlah bagiku
Sebuah mahligai dengan tiang-tiang tersergam indah
Dan tingkatnya berwarna cerah
Di sebelah perigi kuinginkan
belasan pokok kelapa disisiku
dengan daunnya subur, nyiurnya enak

Ku teringinkan Sinaran bulan bercahakan mutiara
Terbentang luas dihadapanku dan
Kicauan burung kokila mengesel telingaku
Udara nyaman yang sepoi sepoi sambil
Meriangkan jiwa dan ragaku

Ku inginkan Seorang gadis yang idami
Untuk melagukan irama merdu
Dalam kerian bersama kami
Lahirlah puisi yang indah
Oh ibu! Lindungilah ku
Dari segala dugaan di bumi yang terbentang luas ini
Dengan kepintaran puisi
Dapatlah ku menguasai alam ini

*(Malay Translation of the poem 'Kaani nilam veendum' by the great Tamil poet Subramaniya Bharatiar)*

By M. Mannar Mannan

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**Even the soft caresses of the gentle wind when fueled with raging emotions of disquiet grows to be a thundering gale that rips and shreds, spinning and spinning without control- chaos motion and chaos, chaos and motion and yet at the core there is to be found inner peace- no motion, only stillness in the space within. Seek, look; cherish that which is inside you for the storm of chaos is but a veil that shrouds the calmness which is the eye of the storm**

_By Jay_
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TEN SIGNS OF AGING

Assoc. Prof. Dr Kuang Ching Hei
10 June, 2011

“When I was younger, I could remember anything, whether it had happened or not; but my faculties are decaying now and soon I shall be so I cannot remember any but the things that never happened. It is sad to go to pieces like this but we all have to do it.” ~ Mark Twain

Aging is a natural process but most people, especially women, assume that they only hit that jackpot when they stop working or retire although aging can also be synonymous with the children’s growth and development. For example, aging for one can also be a time when one becomes a mother-in-law or when one takes on the status of 'grandmotherhood.'

Hitting the fifties for me was quite an orientation for suddenly I was nailed as middle aged and in the Chinese term ‘old.’ In a way, ‘getting old’ was frightening because as a woman ages, so too does she lose her looks, shape and attractiveness but on the other hand, it was also nice to be thought of as old for ‘old’ is almost synonymous to being ‘wiser’ and ‘more experienced’ and ‘better acquainted with life’ and in the Chinese expression, a ‘kuo lai ren’ (过来人) which means that one who has gone through life. In my experience, aging was quite unexpected because suddenly I was middle aged, menopausal and then I was old. In this essay, I look not for the signs of aging through the physical appearance but rather through the daily events that tell you that age is catching up, so watch out!

First sign of aging: repetition

In second language teaching, repetition is good because through repetitions, students learn to remember words, spelling and grammar. However, in real life especially when you are a parent, you know that you are aging when your son or daughter tells you that you have asked him/her the same question more than twice. “Mom, do you know that you are growing old? You have been asking me the same question three times”. My husband says I do the same to him too!

You are also aging when you tell the same story a few times. I remember once a postgraduate student stood up in my class and said, “Dr Kuang we have heard that story before!”

Second sign of aging: forgetfulness

Forgetfulness is common in human beings but it is a daily event in an aging person. You know that age is catching up when you forget where you put the file you were ‘just holding’ in your hands a few minutes ago. You also know that you are aging when you cannot remember the telephone numbers of your own house or your own mobile number. Worst of all, you cannot remember where you just parked your car whether in One-Utama’s shopping mall, Sunway Pyramid or Mid Valley. I had experienced this more than once.

Third sign of aging: your weight won’t budge

You will certainly know that age is catching up when your weighing machine keeps telling you that you weigh 67 kilos even though you have not been eating ‘nasi lemak’ or ‘cucuk udang’ for the past month and that you have substituted your Nescafe with water for several months. Aging slows down your metabolism and reducing weight (if you have to) becomes a real challenge.

Fourth sign of aging: your legs hurt

You realize that as you climb the steps on the staircase, you have to move one foot at a time so that the pain is bearable. Yes, aging makes you lose cartilage and arthritis becomes a common ailment.

Fifth sign of aging: eat early, sleep early and wake up early

Yes, even though the children have grown up, you realize that your digestive system is less active so you need to eat earlier to make sure that the stomach can digest the food before you go to bed at 9 pm in order to wake up at 5 am. What a boring life!

Sixth sign of aging: when people ‘aunty’ you

That’s right, not just your children’s friends will ‘aunty’ you, sales persons, hawkers, officers in the immigration department or police station began to address you as ‘Aunty, can I help you?’

Seventh sign of aging: drive before seven in the evening

Aging takes away your vision so you cannot see well in the dusk. Thus, you show preference to drive only during the day time or preferably before 7 pm.

Eighth sign of aging: watching Oprah Winfrey on weekends

When you age, your nightlife and social activities also diminish. You no longer meet up with friends in clubs or even ‘mamak’ stalls. Your social life is focused on being at home (alone mostly) watching Oprah Winfrey and Martha Stewart during weekends.

Ninth sign of aging: you wear the same non-iron clothes every week

As age catches up, people can also become lazy and one sign of laziness is to avoid ironing clothes. Inadvertently, you choose to wear clothes which you can just wash, dry and wear again the next day and preferably in black so that the dirt does not show! When you do, that you know for sure that you are aging.

Tenth sign of aging: you are chauffeur driven

Although being chauffeur driven is a privilege not everybody gets such a privilege unless it is conferred by your social or financial status. When people...
SHARIK

Di halaman kita, seorang budak membela seekor anjing bernama Sharik: sejak masih kecil, Sharik sudah pun ditambat dengan rantai. Pada suatu hari aku membawa kepandanya tulang ayam, masih panas dan berbau sedap dan kebetulan pada masa itu budak tadi melepaskan anjing daripada rantainya supaya anjing itu berlari-lari sesuasanya. Salji di halaman empuk, lebat, maka Sharik pun melonjat mundur mandir dari satu sudut halaman ke sudut halaman lain seperti seekor arnab, kadang-kadang dengan kaki belakang, kadang-kadang dengan kaki hadapan dan sewaktu-waktu muncungnya menjurus ke salji. Akhirnya si kusut masai itu mendekatiku, melonjat-lonjak sekitar aku, mencium tulang-tulang yang aku berikan kepadanya dan lari nyah daripada aku dengan meluncur perutnya pada salji! Seakan-akan nak berkata: tak mahu tulang-tulang itu, berikan aku kebebasan sahaja!

TIRAI GELAP

Penyakit jantung sama seperti pola hidup kita: penyakit itu berlangsung dengan penuh kegelapan dan kita tidak tahu tarih pemergian: mungkin kita sudah di ambangnya, mungkin jangka hayat masih panjang.

Jikalau barah tumbuh dengan ganas maka kita boleh - sekeriakan tidak menipu diri sendiri - menghitung jangka masa hidup yang masih tinggal. Tetapi jika kita ada penyakit jantung maka sering pada zahirnya kita seakan-akan segar bugar, mesra diri sihat seperti sedia kala, padahal tidak tahu-tenahu bahawa pemerger sebenarnya sudah dekat.

Oh, ketidaktahuan dalam hal itu ialah rahmat. Itu anugerah yang tidak terhingga nilainya.

Tetapi pada tahap takutkan penyakit jantung itu, keadaan sama seperti dalam sel banduan yang dihukum mati. Setiap malam kamu menunggu langkah Sang Maut. Mungkin aku akan dibawa? Dan sebaliknya, setiap pagi kamu bernafas lega: satu hari lagi dianugerahi Tuhan. Angkahan banyak yang boleh kita alami dan lakukan selama satu hari sahaja!

SEMAHAYANG ARWAH

Kebiasaan itu kita warisi dengan kearifan besar daripada nenek moyang yang hidup suci. Memahami maknanya tidak mungkin pada masa muda yang penuh gembara apabila kita di tengah-tengah keluarga, handai taulan dan sahabat.

Hanya kemudian, pemahaman betul-betul datang.

Itu bapa sudah pergi, kawan sebaya pergi satu persatu. Ke mana pergiannya?

Pada zahirnya, kita kira tidak boleh tahu. Tetapi melalui kegelapan, nampak sinar sebagai tanda bahawa mereka tidak hilang.

Itu sahaja, hal lain kita tidak boleh tahu selagi berhayat.

Tetapi sembahyang arwah seakan-akan merentangkan titian berskala jagat raya antara kita dan mereka, titian yang tidak boleh dilihat tetapi dirasakan berada teramat dekat sahaja.

Inilah mereka, hampir boleh disentuh.

Mereka sudah lain dan bersamaan itu seperti dahulu kala. Tetapi mereka sudah lambat menurut kiraan tahun: ada yang dahulu lebih tua sekarang sudah lebih muda.

Kalau kita menumpukan perhatian, mungkin kita boleh merasai sahutan mereka, bahkan peringatan tertentu.

Dan kita sebagai balasan menyampaikan kemesraan kepada mereka: mungkin kita dengan ini boleh menolong mereka juga?

Dan janji berjumpa nanti.
presentation of results is only the tip of the research iceberg. As Huff (1999:1) rightly points out, all research begins with a conversation. She cites Thomas Kuhn, who makes the point that research is a product of interaction within a scientific community. After reflecting on the topics and areas that the presentations made at this conference contributed to, one may ask a somewhat general question: Do we have a scientific community in which we can learn about the content of our scholarship from other scholars? In Japanese, we say ‘石の上にも三年’ (literally: ‘three years even on stones’), which means that we need to sit on cold stones for three years to make them warm (and therefore comfortable to sit on). A phrase in English with a similar meaning is ‘Patience is a virtue’. The connotation of this proverb is that we should not quit, particularly when we need a long period of time to achieve something (I shall leave it to the readers to decide what exactly this ‘something’ is!). I am sure we will all look forward to next year’s conference, which is likely to be even more challenging.

On behalf of RePP
Toshiko Yamaguchi


VISIT TO SOOCHOW UNIVERSITY (SUDA), CHINA

(15 – 20 MARCH 2011)

On the 15th of March 2011, the Head of Malaysian Languages and Applied Linguistics Department, Puan Chong Siew Ling and I left for Shanghai on the first leg of the journey to SUDA. The purpose of our visit is to discuss collaborations in the following areas:

- Joint Master’s programme in Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language
- Staff and student exchange
- Research and publication

We arrived at Pudong International Airport, Shanghai late afternoon and embarked on hour drive to Suzhou. We stayed in the hotel, within the University Conference Center. That evening, Puan Chong who has been to China several times, took first time visitor me around nearby places of interest and I had my first taste of the infamous ‘stinking tofu’. First hit and I was hooked! In case you are wondering, yes, it does stink and the stink is in the taste as well, BUT, I couldn’t enough of it, and I had it over the next 3 days, until Siew Ling stopped me as she was concerned about my health.

The next morning after the meeting where we presented and agreed to the details of the collaboration and responsibilities, the professors took us on a walking tour of the university grounds – beautiful old brick buildings with state of the art equipment and interior. We also visited their museum which housed many artefacts from centuries ago. For lunch, we were brought to one of the restaurants on campus and we were feted with the best – among the dishes are 10 tortoises with shell and heads on arranged proudly in a circle, dried duck beaks sticking out their tongues at us, frogs’ legs, deer meat, local shrimps, the wildest of mushrooms and tofu (unfortunately not the stinky kind). For dinner, the Dean took us out for more of the same exotic food. The next morning, we had more discussions on the MoA and other details of the collaborations. Later that day, we were taken to see the Soochow University branch campus, some 2 hours away from Suzhou. This is where the Sciences programmes are housed. We had a final discussion session in the morning the next day, focusing mainly on the MQA, MQF forms. In the afternoon, the professors rewarded our hard work with a visit to the Retired Ministers Garden – a famous, very old and still magnificent park in Suzhou.

On the 19th, Siew Ling and I, returned to Shanghai to catch our plane back to KL the next day. This visit to China was successful as we managed to accomplish what we came to do and our Chinese counterparts were very happy with the results. On a personal note, I really enjoyed China. It is such an enchanting country with landscapes that are really different from what I am used to as far as foreign countries are concerned. Everywhere Siew Ling took me, we interacted with such warm and genuine locals. Siew Ling did most of the talking of course, although at all the university events, I was given a student interpreter – she was sweet, but had a tough time trying to catch up with my loose tongue on an express train! All in all, a wonderful trip, brilliant fellow academics, well orchestrated meet- ings, unbelievable landscapes steep with history, eye opening feasts and the stinkiest tofu.

(By Dr Jawakhir Mior Jaafar)
My trip to Bangkok as one of UM’s representatives for the IDPP Inaugural Annual Meeting.

The Institute on Disability and Public Policy (IDPP) for ASEAN is a virtual and networked organization which analyzes and advises on public policy that pertains to disability rights and inclusive development. On April 4, 2011, Mahidol University, National Technical Institute of the Deaf (Rochester Institute of Technology), International Council for the Education of Persons with Visual Impairment, The Nippon Foundation, The Foundation of the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability, The Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (National University of Singapore), met as signatories in a signing ceremony which officially launched the IDPP. The four key objectives within the mandate of the IDPP are:

1. Master of Arts Degree,
2. Executive and Continuing Education,
3. Outreach and Capacity Building, and
4. Collaborative Research

The IDPP’s master’s program is being offered in collaboration with the International Communication Program in the School of International Service (American University, Washington). The new Master’s of International Affairs in Comparative and International Disability Policy (CIDP) at American University is the first of its kind, focusing on Southeast Asia and offered through a cyber-learning approach.

On June 23, 2011, the IDPP delegation of four led by Dr Derrick Cogburn, visited the University of Malaya to brief us on the activities of IDPP and to invite us to join this collaboration. Dr Evelyn Khor of ICR chaired the meeting and Dr Zubaidah Ibrahim-Bell and I represented the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics (by invitation from ICR). Dr Zubaidah and I were quite impressed by the objectives and mandate of the IDPP. We voiced our keen interest to participate in the collaboration which resulted in us being invited to the Inaugural Annual Meeting in Bangkok.
This book is an inquiry into values. It has been described as a profoundly important work of art, original, deeply moving, challenging and disturbing. Interestingly enough, some hailed Robert Pirsig's work as a brilliant treatment of Zen for the Western mind, however; the man himself said that it is not about Zen and neither it is very informative about motorcycle maintenance.

Anyway, as one colleague to another, I highly recommend it (along with titles like Flow – single-minded immersion and the nature of happiness, and documentaries like “What the Bleeb Do We Know..” – on spiritual connection between quantum physics and consciousness) not just to be read but to be experienced and contemplated upon. No doubt there are many controversial issues highlighted but controversy is part and parcel of education. Education should prepare individuals to absorb and analyze differences, to integrate and formulate them into something acceptable and meaningful. Differences are not something to be avoided or rejected, as they are part of life’s realities.

A note of reminder though, be prepared to consult a dictionary of philosophy, both Eastern and Western, in order to appreciate the writer’s arguments. Briefly, what he sought to explore is this perennial question of what is Truth? Along with such questions as ‘How do you know it when you have it (the Truth)?’; ‘Is there an “I” or a “soul”. ‘What is thought?’; ‘Is reality basically changing or is it fixed and permanent?’; ‘What is Quality and its relationship to Reality, Truth, the Good and God?’

There were three phases to his inquiry as I see it. The first was during his teaching years in a university where he taught rhetoric. Startling discoveries were made. When his students could not write an essay, they were not being lazy or dull but they were influenced by a ‘slave-mentality” – too bothered by established rules, patterns, styles of rhetoric, all of which blocked their creativity. He urged them to look freshly at whatever it was they were supposed to write about (no matter how outrageous) before writing. Eventually, one girl came up with 5,000 word essay on “The front of an Opera House” whereas before ‘looking’ she kept handing in blank papers. Students were obviously catching on to the idea for when they were told to write about the Back of their Thumb, they asked “Do we have to write about both sides?”

It was a confidence-building assignment. They began to ‘see’ directly for themselves for the first time and there was no limit to the things they could say. The real evil, the author says, was imitation of someone else’s thoughts and style. And that was what he thought education is doing to young people – insisting that they imitate someone else’s thought as perfectly as possible (and get good grades for it too!).

Then he began inquiring into what is Quality in Thought and Statement. Since he felt that Quality was being sacrificed for grade, he abolished the grading system for his course much to the frustrations of his students and colleagues. The students felt very insecure, a sense of not having direction. However the situation gradually changed. The originally good students turn up in class as usual and began to be more discursive and friendly. As a result there was lively participation in class. The average students began to see these changes and they too started to join in. However, the mediocre students continued to be absent from class. Their final school grades reflected their achievements – with one difference: they did not learn to get good grades, but they learned what true education really is.

The second phase of his search led to some tragic and painful results, though definitely not fruitless. His pursuit of the meaning of ‘Quality’ progressively took control over his life. It especially put him in a bitter conflict between Quality, Truth, which is indefinable and can only be reached by non-rational means, and academic tradition of logic, reason, and rationalization. At one point he came up with a new meaning of the Holy Trinity. There is mind and matter, subject and object relationship but there is a third entity – Quality, which is independent of both. Later he shifted to a belief in the Absolute: Quality is the Source and substance of everything.

It is extremely interesting to see his reasoning in reaching these conclusions albeit complex and lengthy.

The classical Greek thought of “mythos over logos” has contributed fundamentally to man’s present thought and reason. There is a powerful influence of mythos over logos in that it is presumed in everything there is a strong subject-object differentiation (in fact the present concept of Grammar is a Greek heritage). This has become so accepted as ‘natural’ or ‘real’ that anyone who goes outside this mythos is considered insane. However, to the author, insanity is the belief that forms of the world are real and Quality is unreal.
The mark of a brilliant person, apart from other things, is his intensity over his pursuit. What to you and me seem to be something we discuss at the breakfast table, such as, what is subjective and what is objective, to him is a matter of utmost importance, more than anything else in life, an evil of a dilemma that must be resolved with the whole of his being. Perhaps due to this and other mountainous questions, his ‘sanity’ finally gave in. He was later admitted to a mental hospital and given electric-shock treatments after which he seemed to be dissociated from this part of himself.

The third search came in the form of a “Chautauqua” – philosophical discussions, while on a motorcycle journey with two of his friends and his 12 year-old son, Chris. He wanted to trace all the questions about Quality and to bury the ‘ghost of reason’. Not without sympathy and understanding, he tried to find out what went wrong with Phaedrus – the name he gave to his ‘former self’. He did manage to piece together the great jigsaw puzzle of his past with the help of his son.

The problems and crises in the world according to him have their origins in the way of looking at things which are not only different but opposed to one another. People can look, see, think and talk about the same thing but each sees it from a completely different perspective, i.e. there are conflicting visions of Reality. The author used the terms classical thinking versus romantic thinking, theoretic versus aesthetic, square versus hip, art versus technology, reason versus feeling and hence, labeling, dividing, naming are opposed to intuition and contemplation.

In analyzing this phenomenon, he used the motorcycle to illustrate his points. Take his friend John for example (a romantic who is put off by technology), implicit in his mind is – ‘Here is the machine, isolated in time and space from everything else in the universe’. He has no relationship to it other than to turn some switches on etc. It was the same with the mechanics who repaired his motorcycle. They may call themselves technologists. But with their ‘uninvolved’ attitude (like working while listening to the radio), they had no ‘I am a mechanic’ kind of attitude. This attitude is the key to our problems. The strange separation between what man is and what man does is the clue to what has gone wrong with the twentieth century.

This is where, I think, Zen enters into the picture. “Zen”, in Japanese, comes from “Chan”, in Chinese, which is their word for Sanskrit “Dhyana” – meaning Wisdom. In Hindu–Buddhist philosophy great value is placed on “Thou Art That” (Tat Tvam Asi)*. It is a method of non-defining and non-rationalizing in which one is to realize through a personal experience that there is no separation between subject and object. The separation that one sees is the result of illusion (Maya). Illusion is to be removed by elimination of physical, mental and emotional activity. In other words it is to be still.

Thus, if one is the mechanic, being in the right mind, one is also the motorcycle. Repairing it will entail no problems because one knows instinctively what to do. Zen talks about “just sitting” - a meditative practice in which the idea of duality of self and object does not dominate one’s consciousness. Similarly in motorcycle maintenance, there is just fixing. And when a person is not dominated by the concept of duality, he can be said to “care”. It is a feeling of identification with what one is doing. This is Quality.

The author’s message is clear, that amidst all the technology, there is such a thing as Quality in the world; it encompasses both intuition and rationality.

In conclusion, allow me to share my personal observation with you. And that is, not only are we unaware of the urgent need to be non-dual, we complacently dwell in our fragmented and limited world. It is comparable to living in a mansion and opening merely one window to the world, and based on that scene, we observe, analyze, discriminate, philosophize, and form judgments, values, beliefs and these then become the ‘Truth’ (sectarian Truth) and sometimes a matter of life and death to us. Quality is above all this, and I believe one way to arrive at It is to be inward looking, kindly but firmly and honestly.

Zubaidah Bell
2011

*Thou art That: the Self in its original pure state is identical with the Ultimate Reality that is the foundation and the origin of all phenomena.
吃过苦的人

只有穷过的人才知道什么叫苦。

念小学的时候，我的家境并不好。每一餐桌上只有一两碟菜肴，有时甚至一餐当两餐吃，那时我很少吃到正餐以外的零食。有时，爸爸买了一片西瓜，还要分成四份，我们兄弟姐妹四人，每人得一小片。那一刻，我会很珍惜这一小口慢慢吃，有时还真希望那一小片的西瓜永远吃不完。西瓜汁流到指头上，我还会用舌头去舔它。

有的时候，母亲只煮了一锅鸡脚汤，没有外加其它菜肴。听婆婆和大姑说，吃了鸡脚会手抖，不能把字写好。于是，我只好委屈自己不吃鸡脚，只是把鸡脚汤淋在饭上，配上几枚香菇，就是一餐。当时，我没有埋怨，只是觉得淋上鸡脚汤的白饭也非常好吃。这造成日后的我对吃没有什么要求。跟朋友外出吃东西，我总是最后吃完的那个，一来我吃东西比别人慢，二来我总是努力地把桌上的食物吃完。一个曾经苦过的人或多或少都懂得惜福。

上了中学后，家境还是没有好转。那时，我连一条像样的牛仔裤都没有。记得念中五那年，我跟同学去参加派对，家境不错的同学都穿着最时髦的衣裤出席，有的还穿上名牌的牛仔裤出来秀。我呢，我当时穿的是一条深青色的校裤。有一名同学开眼镜店的同学语带讥笑地问我：你家真的没有一条像样的裤吗？怎么穿校裤出来？他那句有心的话害我一整晚都闷闷不乐。

没有牛仔裤又怎么样？没有名牌的童年又怎么样？这些我都不稀罕。令我感到安慰的是，我的父母都健在，他们陪伴着我长大。我已感到心满意足了。虽然爸妈无法满足我物质上的需求，可是他们对我和弟妹的爱却是无微不至的。爸爸总是风雨不改地开着他的旧车送我和弟妹去上学，放学后他又把我们载回家。母亲也常为她的儿女忙出病来。他们为我付出的关爱，已弥补了我童年的缺憾。

升上大学先修班，我知道父母没有能力供我念私立学院。于是，我便很用心地准备大马高级教育文凭试，势必要考入本地国立大学。最终，我如愿考入马来亚大学中文系。念大学的那段日子，我靠那份鸡肋般的助学金过活。

钱不够用的时候，我常常伴室友睡着后，摸黑坐上了大巴士，到了寂静的空地处开始爬格子。那时我的文章产量惊人，一星期有三四篇文章见报。朋友都说我是个名人，可是，他们不知道我写稿得来的稿费都成了支撑着我念完大学的生活费。当时，我打从心底感谢各中文报的编辑，要不是他们慈悲让我文章见报，我真的不知道该靠什么来度过我的大学经济危机。

在念大学的岁月里，挤巴士的日子也是苦涩的。当年，我跟几个同学在校外的十七区租了一间房子。每天，我必须乘搭马大巴士去上课，然后再坐马大巴士回家。有时，上一趟该来的巴士懒懒没来，所有的学生都争着搭下一次的巴士回家。巴士一到，苦学子们都争先恐后地挤上巴士，结果把车内的全挤掉。上了巴士，放眼望去，位子都给坐满了，我只好无奈地站着，一手抱着文件夹，一手紧握着吊环。就这样摇摇晃晃地回家。有好几次，司机突然紧急刹车，我差点连人带书包扑倒在地。

本科毕业后，我和同学们都投入职场。不打算在家乡发展的我选择在吉隆坡的中华独中教书。当时，我看着家境不错的同学开车去上班，心里头总是有股酸溜溜在翻腾，很不是味道。当年我是坐巴士去上班的。每天清晨五点半，我就得出门，步行到离住家颇远的巴士站等12号巴士。走在静悄悄的路上，路灯把我单薄的身影拉成长长的孤单。晨风迎面吹来，一阵阵凉意提醒我该咬紧牙根坚强地走下去。

巴士到了，我往往是第一个下车的乘客。在车上，我会乘机闭目养神片刻。巴士到了富都车站那一带，我又得转搭另一辆巴士前往怡保路。到了学校，我就得走上一段十分钟的路程，才抵达中华独中的校门。到了办公室，我已累得不想说话了。休息了一会儿，我便开始投入我的工作，忙着上课和批改学生的作业。

放学后，有些时候我坐朋友的顺风车回家，有的时候她提早回家或留校补课，我只好顶着烈日或冒着恶雨，步行到校门外等巴士。一等就是半小时，往往把我的心力给磨尽。上了巴士，我累得倒头大睡，有好几次到了终点站还未察觉，被检票员摇醒后才惊觉已错过了站。

若能够重新选择，我还是会选择过当年自己所过的日子。不是我矫情，我只是坚信，如果没有过去的我，现在的我是不可能存在的。其实，在过去二十多年的岁月里，苦涩只是占了我人生的一小部分，大部分的日子我还是过得很快乐的。爸妈对我的关爱、手足亲情和珍贵的友情都纷纷把苦化为甘甜。感谢我生命中爱我疼我的人，也感谢曾看不起我，让我难过的人，没有你们，我不可能成长，而吃过的苦让我更懂得感恩惜福。

刘树佳 (LAU SU KIA)
Unit Bahasa Tamil, Jabatan Bahasa-Bahasa Malaysia dan Linguistik Terapan FBL dengan kerjasama Persatuan Guru-guru Kesusasteraan Tamil Malaysia telah berjaya menganjurkan Simposium Linguistik dan Kesusasteraan Tamil dari 28 Mei hingga 1 Jun 2011 di Fakulti undang-undang, Universiti Malaya.

Simposium ini dikendalikan oleh 7 orang Pensyarah dari Universiti Tamil Tanjavuur, Tamil Nadu dan 5 orang pensyarah Unit Bahasa Tamil, Jabatan Bahasa-Bahasa Malaysia dan Linguistik Terapan FBL. Seramai 203 peserta yang merupakan guru-guru sekolah Rendah dan Menengah dari seluruh semananjung menghadiri symposium ini.

Simposium ini dirasmikan oleh Menteri Sumber Manusia Datuk Dr. Subramaniam. Timbalan Naib Canselor, Prof. Dr. Gurunathan Ratnavelu, Dekan FBL Prof. Dr. Zuraidah Mohd Don, Timbalan Dekan FBL Dr. Jawakhir Mior Jaafar; ketua-ketua Jabatan Pensyarah-pensyarah FBL dan tetamu jemputan mengadiri upacara Perasmian. Menteri Sumber Manusia Datuk Dr. Subramaniam turut melancarkan sebuah buku akademik bertajuk ‘Tamil in Multilingual Malaysia’ terbitan Jabatan Bahasa-Bahasa Malaysia dan Linguistik Terapan FBL. Perasmian penutup simposium ini dilakukan oleh Timbalan Menteri Wilayah Persekutuan dan kesejahteraan bandar Datuk M.Saravanan.

SPORTS ...SUKAN...SPORTS.... SUKAN

Congratulations to Dr Wong Ngan Ling for winning in the 36th SUKUM (Sukan Staff Universiti Malaysia). She won two bronzes: Javelin (1) and 4x100 m (1).

The University of Malaya won 1 silver and 5 bronzes in athletics which was held on July 9 & 10, 2011 at UTem, Malacca.

Johan karom lelaki dan karom wanita (2 pingat emas)
(Pengurus pasukan lelaki dan wanita: En Hamid Mohamed, Unit Media)


Sukan antara Staf Universiti Awam Malaysia yg ke 36, 2011 wakil dari FBL (8-18 Julai, 2011)

1) Hamid Mohamed (Pengurus karom) - 2 pingat emas
2) Ramlan Sulaiman (Pengurus dan Peserta olahraga)
3) Mohd Faiz pemain - Bola sepak senior
4) Azhar Mohd Yunus - Bola sepak senior
5) Dr Wong Ngan Ling - Olahraga