Global vs. Local

You don’t care about this newsletter full of global topics? You think the U.S. doesn’t need all this international crap and has enough to offer on its own? Well, you’re lucky, because you can’t read this without considering the global stuff. It starts with the reports that consist of letters of the Roman alphabet. The screen you’re reading this newsletter on belongs to a computer that was invented by a German in the early 20th century. Even if you decide to print a document, you would maybe do that with your Japanese Canon printer. Probably on paper that was originally papyrus from Egypt several thousands of years ago. And finally you’d use ink, produced in India. You’re lucky that you don’t care about the global stuff. So delete this newsletter, lay back and breathe your clean U.S. air. But make sure that you don’t get a sniff of that global Canadian air accidentally.

- Carolina Biebrach

Editors’ Notes

When I was nine, my teacher made my class read Cinderella. This is not unusual - including fiction in a curriculum. However, we didn’t read just one version. We read about twelve. They came from different countries, with different names and different arrangements. But they all had the same basic structure and the same ending. Her point was that not every fairy tale comes from Disney, however the bigger picture was that fundamentally we have the ability for inter-cultural communication. Different cultures may have different takes on the world, but there are always common themes. With the rise of the hyper-local it can be easy to forget this simple truth. However, it can be countered with communication. The world is no longer an isolated place. Just as my class of nine-year-olds learned that the stories of other cultures were our stories too, can we not learn that events in other countries are local?

- Aerio Curtis

Congo

drum up unheard voices

by Veronica Norton

It all started with rumba. The percussive rhythms, stylized piano and innovative dance; it was only a matter of time before the music made famous in Cuba swept through Africa and perched itself in the heart of it all - the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Of course, the Congolese adapted the rumba to a new style. Guitars took the place of piano and the polyrhythmic backbone of Congo music infiltrated the Latin sound to form soukous - the style that thrust the DRC into the limelight of world music.

Originally the name of a popular dance, soukous became the Congolese staple of the 1960s. Big bands of sometimes 30 or more colored with brass, strings, percussion and voice packed dance halls and invigorated a region. “It’s simply wonderful music, full of life and joy with stunning guitar, sophisticated horns, and soulful singing; one of the great classic forms of popular music that appear every so often around the world to lift our spirits and bind us together as humans,” says DJ Jack Daw, a popular European musician and dedicated soukous fan.

It’s that innate joy and bond with the music that can bring the powerful together, including politicians. Franco, the leader of beloved landmark OK Jazz, was a personal favorite of President Mobutu during his rise to power in the 60s. According to band mate Simaro Lutumba, “the president had told him to stay at his side. ‘With me in power, you will go far. I will have need of you.’” Music has always been an outlet for the oppressed and a means of protest, but in the case of soukous, the government used the music to propagate publicity and garner affection, almost “fandom” from citizens.

“Today, the new Congolese musicians are calling upon this influence to educate and spread awareness. Werra Son is the name in Congolese music today. He plays a form of soukous that has progressed into using synthesizers and electric instruments that call upon the earlier sounds of rock n’ roll in the west. “With us, there’s been a change in the mentality,” he says, “there are love songs, educative songs, songs for children... there’s a song for peace...we are there to educate the masses.”

Musicians stand at the apex of society; they come from the community and rise above to speak for their neighbors whose voices cannot be heard. It is a great responsibility that musicians take on to take lyrical protest from the ground to the government. For many years while soukous was emerging, the government was censoring everything around it, but because the music remained fairly apolitical, it was left untouched until now.

With a strong hand of oppression garnering great minds, leaders and liberators from freedom of speech, it is now the musicians who are, as Werra Son put it, choosing to educate. Protest music has always been prevalent, soulful African melodies have haunted listeners long before gospel and blues, but it is this unique outlet of protest music that is slipping past governmental oppressors and rallying the world. Werra is selling out in Paris and London and influencing street performers in New York. He just won the Kora award for Best Central African Artist and Best Male Artist for all of Africa; there is a change in the mentality, a change towards moving forward.

“Yesterday is not today. Yesterday was yesterday. Today is today. We must progress. We can’t just live in the past,” says Papa Wemba, an innovator to rumba style. The lyrical style in Congolese music today is to draw from the past but write for the future; always moving forward.)
The building rises out of the bay, its presence a striking statement of the region's cultural and architectural significance. The Museum of Islamic Art, Doha Harbor, because Pei and Davis, the American architect I.M. Pei and the American artist Philip Young, were the architects of this grand venture, it represents not only a change in the aesthetic and cultural landscape of the Middle East but also a significant advancement in the preservation and display of Islamic art and culture at the same time.

Inside the Museum, one visitor claims that the opening of MIA marks a significant moment in the world of art. "We obviously cannot compare the achievements of Islam and Christianity, but it is a moment when the Muslim and Christian worlds come together in a meaningful way," she calls it. The opening of MIA could mean more people will get to experience the rich and diverse heritage of Islamic art and culture, and it represents not only a change in the aesthetic and cultural landscape of the Middle East but also a significant advancement in the preservation and display of Islamic art and culture at the same time. The Museum of Islamic Art, Doha Harbor, because Pei and Davis, the American architect I.M. Pei and the American artist Philip Young, were the architects of this grand venture, it represents not only a change in the aesthetic and cultural landscape of the Middle East but also a significant advancement in the preservation and display of Islamic art and culture at the same time.

The development of a positive sentiment toward the mafia can partially and justifiably be attributed to the popular lifestyle through television and film. American creations such as The Godfather trilogy and The Sopranos emphasize the aesthetic elements of organized crime and mob bosses. These portrayals of the Mafia have seeped into the Italian media as well, particularly by way of the television miniseries, "Toto Riina, the Real Boss of Bosses," which aired on and off Facebook. The Museum of Islamic Art, Doha Harbor, because Pei and Davis, the American architect I.M. Pei and the American artist Philip Young, were the architects of this grand venture, it represents not only a change in the aesthetic and cultural landscape of the Middle East but also a significant advancement in the preservation and display of Islamic art and culture at the same time. The opening of MIA could mean more people will get to experience the rich and diverse heritage of Islamic art and culture, and it represents not only a change in the aesthetic and cultural landscape of the Middle East but also a significant advancement in the preservation and display of Islamic art and culture at the same time.

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One of my favorite pieces is a picture of the Virgin Mary with Arabic Calligraphy written on the top: "There is No God but God." Beck says. There's speculation that this is meant to simplify the relationship between Islam and Christianity. The opening of MIA could mean more people will get to experience the rich and diverse heritage of Islamic art and culture, and it represents not only a change in the aesthetic and cultural landscape of the Middle East but also a significant advancement in the preservation and display of Islamic art and culture at the same time. The Museum of Islamic Art, Doha Harbor, because Pei and Davis, the American architect I.M. Pei and the American artist Philip Young, were the architects of this grand venture, it represents not only a change in the aesthetic and cultural landscape of the Middle East but also a significant advancement in the preservation and display of Islamic art and culture at the same time.

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Where does anti-American sentiment come from?

Journalism students respond.

Media coverage of anti-Americanism isn’t lacking in superﬁcial acknowledgement. Americans are inundated with videos of protestors burning American ﬂags and effigies in perfidious acknowledgment; Americans are inundated with to eliminate misunderstandings and work with the rest of the world toward a people have the right to be well-informed and decide what to do independently of what is going on in their country, government or culture. Patriotism shouldn’t blind a journalist from wanting to know the answers to those questions.

-Michael Bonajo

I feel that the United States has placed itself on a pedestal claiming a position of world power which no other country dare touch. The resentment which has resulted can be attributed to the anti-Americanism that is found in many countries, as well as events such as 9/11. With this tragedy, the United States was forced to acknowledge its global reputation and ﬁnally address the question: “Why do they hate us?”

-Jeff Bennett

While it’s certainly not true of every U.S. citizen, much of the population knows and cares to know little about the rest of the world. People visit foreign countries with ignorance about the different customs of the country they are visiting. Rather than thinking about their way of behaving as just one among many hundreds, they view their way—the American way—as the only correct way.

-Taylor M. Anderson

Americans are proud of themselves and for what they have achieved. To some cultures Americans therefore might seem self-centered. The US is one of the largest consumers in the world; it also envies and vengefully grasps at proﬁts. Some other countries may simply not agree with the American way of life.

-Carolin Briebich

It may have started a long time ago, the ﬁrst Gulf war did little to increase love for America. The US changed its political policy approach of being the city upon the hill, which with missionary zeal wants to spread its own brand of happiness, featured by democracy, capitalism, and consumerism culture, which might not be reverberated positively with cultures in which happiness is deﬁned otherwise.

-Shine Eckert

After Sept. 11, I think the media deﬁnitely addressed the idea that many countries hate us. There was some speculation about why people might hate us, but for the most part I don’t think many media organizations truly addressed the question or found many honest answers. I think many people asked this question in the sense of “how could anyone hate us?” rather than actually looking for an explanation.

-Jacqueline Beat

I feel that “why they hate us” is the wrong question, just as “I don’t blame you for hating us” is irresponsible. 9/11 saw the worst attack on innocent civilian life in American history. Why are we expecting that there’s a rational explanation for those terrorists’ actions? Asking “why they hate us” is ignoring our responsibility. 9/11 saw the worst attack on innocent civilian life in American history. Why are we expecting that there’s a rational explanation for those terrorists’ actions? Asking “why they hate us” is ignoring our responsibility.

-Maria Fisher

Yes, it is very challenging to be an international correspondent that reports on culture back to his/her own country. We have to help the audience in our own country to understand the foreign culture with respect.

-Yilei Cheng

Instead of focusing as heavily on news reporting regarding military and governmental actions in the Middle East, I think it’s important for reporters to stay in touch with how U.S. foreign policy affects the regular people in these countries, not just how it affects U.S. interests.

-Megan Momonaro

There is a vast difference between the politics and policies of two cans, hold and those of more conservative groups, saying that some who are opposed believe the Free Trade Agreement outweighs the cons? It may depend on who you ask, and what national interests are at hand. Gomez’s own model of thought shows that an increase in income, employment, and social development would all be positive impacts on the people and economies of the U.S. and Colombia. This benevolent attitude is countered by activists such as Caeñas, who says that accepting the pact would be “suicide” for the Colombian economy and prolong the U.S. economic recession. One thing is for sure, though. The costs and beneﬁts for the people of each country and weighed by not just those who will be subject to the FTA, but by those who have the power to enforce it, as well.

-Michael Hess

CRADLE of SERBIA

The hundreds of year, the region of Kosovo-Metohija has been a hot topic for the Serbian people. The issue remains relevant today as the Serbs ﬁght for “The Cradle of Serbia”.

The Cradle of Serbia is home to Serbian Orthodox monasteries, and a slew of Orthodox Christian religious monuments, or what’s left of them. In 1999, Bishop Artemije of the Gracanica-Metohija-Monastery in Kosovo-Metohija wrote a letter to former United States President Bush.

“You have carried the heaviest of crosses: the leadership not only of the United States but of the whole civilized world in the global struggle against illad terrorism, which threatens not just America but peaceful people of all races and nationalities. That is why we who live in the Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohija ﬁnd it difﬁcult to understand why so many voices of opposition in Washington, including some in your own Administration, support a course of action that is deadly for Serbia and the peoples ﬁghting in the ﬁelds a terrible victory in Europe.” Bush chose to ignore the bishop’s plea for help and in February 2008, Kosovo-Metohija received recognition as an independent nation-state from the United States and many of its Western allies.

Read more of this story and others at http://scrippsiij.blogspot.com/
Cambodia sits at the brink of financial gain so significant that it could revitalize the entire country. The war-torn country has overcome many hurdles before a stabilization project of diamond resources reached a head. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF), formed to fight political corruption, forced the recruitment of thousands of child soldiers.

In 2001, Sierra Leone President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo is eager to avoid a repeat of his predecessor's misfortune. He has been handling international donors, negotiating agreements for his country's oil revenues, and setting up a system of checks and balances to prevent the misuse of funds. The government is working to ensure that the oil revenue will benefit the entire country and not just a few influential individuals. The president has appointed a special committee to monitor the oil revenue and ensure that it is used for the benefit of the people. The government is also investing in education, health, and infrastructure to improve the lives of the people. The country is working to overcome the problems of the past and build a brighter future for the next generation. 

But Beah's story is unique. Many child soldiers were instructed to shoot machine guns. Beah and others like him were conditioned to think I was only capable of killing. Beah repeatedly visits Sierra Leone and promotes the need for education and the importance of learning. Beah said. And it became a way to be a fighter, a soldier.

In 2008, Beah released his book, "A Long Walk to Freedom," which tells the story of his experiences as a child soldier. The book became a bestseller and was adapted into a movie. Beah continues to speak about his experiences and to promote the need for education. He is also involved in various organizations that work to help child soldiers and former combatants.

Sierra Leone's brutal civil war for nearly a decade ended in January 2002, when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a permanent arm of the United Nations (UNICEF), a permanent arm of the

In addition to the corruption in the country, Cambodia is still recovering from its not so distant past. The Cambodian people have lived through many tears and are still dealing with the aftermath of their civil war. Another American citizen, Rachel Brugg, also lives in Cambodia and works in Cambodian. Beah and others like him were conditioned to think I was only capable of killing. Beah repeatedly visits Sierra Leone and promotes the need for education and the importance of learning. Beah said. And it became a way to be a fighter, a soldier.

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UGANDA

NEW FEARS:

Uganda’s fight against AIDS

By Ellen Schnier

The number of new HIV infections worldwide in 2007 was 2.7 million people, and of those, 1.9 million live in Sub-Saharan Africa, according to the UNAIDS Outlook Report for 2009. Two thirds of all people living with AIDS are in Africa. The crisis in Uganda reaches nearly every family and orphan children. AIDS is responsible for more deaths each year than war, famine, and any other disease. After aggressive efforts to address the disease, Ugandan officials have been hailed for their success in reducing the infection rate in Uganda from 30% in the 1980s and ’90s to around 6%.

Sandra Kiapi, Executive Director of the Action Group for Health, Human Rights, and HIV/AIDS (AGHA), says the government sponsored a massive campaign through the media and in schools to educate people about how HIV is contracted and to promote behavioral change and abstinence. One of the reasons Uganda has been successful, she suggests, is because some people living with AIDS came out openly, declared their status and served as a living example. Kiapi says, “If the public is aware about the facts, they will know how to deal with it.”

According to Dr. David Serwadda, Dean of Makarere University School of Public Health in Kampala and specialist in AIDS research, political leadership has been the key to Uganda’s success. Other countries have not been as successful without the commitment of the government to reach all four corners of the nation.

Weary of seeing many people infected, Kiapi says, “We need to ensure that future generations are HIV free.” While HIV/AIDS is a relatively new disease, young people in Uganda have been touched by the virus their whole lives. They cannot remember a time when there wasn’t AIDS. To eradicate the deadly virus, messages of prevention target the younger generation.

Seth Kibet Kigen, a Kenyan who studies Computer Science at Makarere University, says there are several tactics aimed only at young people. Organizations use peer counseling groups because young people are more receptive to their peers. Government-sponsored sporting events reach out to the youth to educate them about the virus, and some music and films encourage young people to practice ABC (Abstinence, Be faithful, and use a Condom).

When HIV became an epidemic, the demographic with the highest infection rate was single adults. In the past few years, the pendulum has swung, and the prevalence of new infections of HIV is highest for married couples and people in long-term relationships. According to the Uganda AIDS Commission, approximately 43% of new infections are occurring in these groups, which were once considered “low risk.”

Dr. Serwadda says this is rooted in the cultural expectation that married couples will be unfaithful, and this demographic is not being targeted with educational messages. “The messages and the programs are not keeping pace with the changes, and in the process, a lot of people are getting infected.”

There is a stigma associated with contracting HIV, according to Florence Ntakarutimana, who counsels East African women with AIDS with the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI). Many people have fear to do the blood test because once they are known as HIV positive, they are rejected by their families, communities, and jobs. They are hated.” Even married people shy away from being tested, for fear of the implications of their results.

Awareness campaigns have been extremely successful in reducing the infection rate of HIV in Uganda. There are new fears, however; that the virus could become more widespread. With the development of antiretroviral drugs (ARVs), people who contract HIV live longer and much more comfortably. The drugs are now widely available in Uganda and other African countries, meanwhile decreasing some of the fear associated with getting AIDS.

“[Fear] was one of the factors that contributed to the reduction of the infection rate because people were frightened by the effects of the disease,” says Kigen. Without that fear, many Ugandans have relaxed their practices of prevention.

“There are people who say HIV is no longer a problem since there are the ARVs. They say to have HIV is a way of being rich,” comments Ntakarutimana. The health care system in Uganda is insufficient, and many people cannot afford to get treatment. People with HIV, however, receive basic care (along with AIDS treatment) from aid associations.

In addition to the increased use of ARVs, the message of prevention has been replaced by information about getting tested and treated. Dr. Serwadda says, “As more financial resources have become available [from the United States and other nations] to treat HIV, less is available for HIV prevention.” The focus of the message has shifted, which leaves many fearful there will be a new surge of infections. Without the knowledge of how HIV is contracted and effective measures of prevention, Ugandans are at greater risk of infection.

Many point to political intervention as an explanation for this shift in focus. For example, PEPFAR, The U.S. President’s Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief, was established in 2003 and is the largest monetary commitment by any nation to combat a single disease. This money has been used very successfully to treat people living with AIDS, including access to ARVs. Specific funds, however, are specifically allocated to promote abstinence, and some fear the message of prevention has suffered.

HIV/AIDS is still a very serious health risk in Uganda, and most people who research or treat those infected believe the government has weakened their message of prevention. This could reverse the current trend. In continuing to lead other Sub-Saharan nations in their fight against AIDS, Ugandan officials must refocus their efforts on reducing the number of people infected.