The Camel, Ship of the Desert... by Mahmoud Aljdawi, Libya

Libyans, especially those who lived in the desert, loved camels. There was a very strong relationship between them. There are many poems in the Libyan culture describing camels and how they saved people’s lives. Many Libyans lost their lives when they were protecting their camels from thieves because camels were the most important things in the Bedouins’ life. There are three important factors that made Libyans prefer camels to other animals.

First, Libyans who lived in the desert could not survive the hard desert life without having camels. The camels’ milk was their basic meal. It helped them to stay alive in the very hard conditions of the desert. They also ate camel meat. They were drying and eating it for many months. Desert residents also used camels’ skins to build their tents that protected them from the very hot sunlight during the summer and from the very cold weather during the winter’s nights. In addition, Libyans used camels to cross the arid desert for many years to stay in contact with their relatives who lived in different parts of the desert, and also to deliver different types of goods, such as dates and clothes. They would not be able to do all these activities that were very important for their everyday life without using camels. During a specific period of the Libyan history, Libyans used camels to escape from the Italian occupation to the nearby countries such as Chad and Niger.

Moreover, the camel is a symbol of patience in the Libyan culture. It can live for many days without eating and drinking, and it can also carry a big amount of loads for long distances. Camels can also live in very hard conditions that other animals cannot. The features that camels have make them able to live in these conditions. Their thick skins protect them from the hot and the cool weather that the desert has, and their flat feet help them to walk on the desert sand. They also can save a big amount of water in their bodies for many days. According to Jean Larson and

(cont. on p. 2)
Judith Ho in their online article "Information Resources on Old World Camels: Arabian and Bactrian 1941-2004." the camel is the only animal that can stay alive with losing a quarter of its weight when it does not drink for many days, and it also can restore this weight directly after it drinks. The hard life of the desert was reflected also in the people who live there. They are very patient because they were accustomed to live in this hard environment. They do not speak a lot and they do not complain when they face hard times like city people do. They look like their camels in some ways. In fact, there is a famous saying in Libya, especially in the south where the desert is, "He or she is as patient as a camel."

Finally, camels’ milk is the most expensive type of milk in Libya. Libyans believe that it makes people who drink it healthy and protects them from many diseases. People who drink it everyday are very healthy. In my hometown, I have neighbors who own camels on their farm, and they drink their milk everyday. This family’s members are very healthy, and their bodies are very strong. I do not remember that I saw or heard that any of them was ever sick. Libyans also think that the reason their president, Moamar Alkadafi, is a very strong person and never gets sick is that he keeps many female camels in his palace’s garden, and he drinks from their milk every morning. Many Libyans who live in the cities have relatives who live in the desert. They usually visit them to spend some time in the clear and healthy environment that they have and to enjoy drinking the camels’ milk.

In summary, I think there are not many kinds of animals that people take care of like Libyans do with camels. They name them and treat them like their children. There are many people who do not eat camel meat because they believe that it is treason to kill the animals that have saved their lives for many years. I think if Libyans would put some symbol on their one color flag, they should put the camel there to remind the next generations what this animal has done for their ancestors.

Work Cited:

Three Values in the U.S. and Vietnam…by Tuyen Doan

Do you know some of the values of the Vietnamese? Few people know the values of other countries because each country has a unique culture and different values. There are three values of Vietnam that are very different from U.S. values, and they are time, individualism, and equality.

Time is money, but you can’t buy time. Americans are very busy and even twenty-four hours for them is not enough. Sometimes they can’t do anything for a day. For example, my aunts and uncles, who don’t have enough time for me and their children, are very busy. On the other hand, in my country I have a lot of time to talk with my family. I spend a lot of time with them watching TV and eating together. Death can come anytime to everyone, so we don’t know what time we may die. We should do everything we think is right, so we don’t regret it in the end.

Individualism is important to any country. Americans love individualism. They teach their children how to realize individualism when their children are small. They can choose something good for them. For example, when their children want to buy something, they give them a choice. Then they can choose the thing that they have enough money for. In Vietnam, on the other hand, we don’t teach our children like that because we don’t value individualism. Parents always think they are right, so they make choices for their children even if their children don’t agree with them.

Moreover, equality is very important in every country. Americans are very equal. Whatever men can do, women do it too. For example, everyone can vote and women can become President. “One person, one vote.” In my country, they like men more than women for such positions, and they don’t understand or know about equality. For example, a woman cannot become a president of Vietnam.

In conclusion, each country has its own values. Americans respect their values, and Vietnamese respect theirs. However, some values should change to become better. I love my country, but I hope one value that will be taken from the U.S. in the future will be equality for women.
Why Is Nonverbal Communication So Important?
by Erika Restropo, Colombia

Nonverbal communication is an important way of expressing feelings or simply saying what you want without words. When you talk or say something, you can complement what you mean with gestures and facial expressions. Also, you can show how important the topic is by using eye contact. There are important forms of nonverbal communication. First of all, facial expression and gestures are important when you are talking to someone.

For example, if you are doing a presentation in a classroom for many students and your facial expression appears bored, nobody will be interested in your topic. In a presentation, you have to use gestures to make it interesting; in other words, you need to move around and show with your hands what you mean. If you are like a statue in front of the people, you will look as though you really don't know anything about the topic and the presentation will be really boring.

Second, eye contact is an important form of nonverbal communication. When we talk to people, we can show how interested we are in the topic just by looking at their eyes. For example, when you're talking to someone and this person is looking up at the sky, you realize that the person is not paying attention to you or thinking about other things. Immediately you're going to stop the conversation and go away because you feel uncomfortable.

Of these three ways to communicate nonverbally, the most important is eye contact. We use eye contact many times throughout the day. We talk uncountable times a day with people and we have to use our eyes to show that we're interested in the conversation. Also, with our eye contact, we make others comfortable.

Indeed, nonverbal communication is very important. In this way, we can talk without words. We can make something interesting. We even can make that person feel comfortable talking with us. It is why we have to use our body language, not just words when we want to communicate something. Our body is wonderful, and we can do wonderful things using it.

Saudi Arabian Culture and Nonverbal Communication
by May Alessa

Have you ever thought about non-verbal behavior in a country you want to travel to? In my opinion, visitors should know about this behavior because it will keep them from misunderstanding the culture and will prevent problems with others. As for visitors to my country, Saudi Arabia, they should know about the three most important areas of nonverbal communication: eye contact, touching, and facial expressions.

First, eye contact is the most important nonverbal communication that visitors to my country should know about. In my country, men to men and women to women have direct eye contact with each other, and they respect that because it makes them feel what they say or listen to is important, and it is part of respecting the person in front of them. On the other hand, the direct eye contact might be rude when it is between men and women. Therefore, some women visitors do not know that when they have direct eye contact with men, they may see some surprising expressions.

Furthermore, another important nonverbal communication is touching. In my country, most people do not like touching others, especially strangers. For instance, when people walk in public places such as parks, streets or malls, they avoid touching passersby. The reason is that touching makes them uncomfortable and frightened. They might think when a person walks close to them that he or she will do something bad, such as stealing.

In addition to eye contact and touching, knowing facial expressions is helpful for visitors in their dealings with others. For example, smiling between men or between women when they do not know each other is an unusual expression. They only smile when they know each other or they want a favor from each other. In contrast, smiling between men and women is impolite and strange behavior.

As you can see, knowing about eye contact, touching, and facial expressions is very beneficial. These are the most important parts of nonverbal communication. From my point of view, acknowledging nonverbal behaviors is an essential aspect of our lives.
A Lesson in Honesty… by Salah Jabar, Libya

He was about 70 years old, and he lived in a beautiful village with his family, which I belong to. This village is name Timmisa, and is located in the middle of Libya. The man I am speaking of is my father, whose name is Ali. He has taught me a big important lesson.

By the time I graduated from university, I had started planning to buy a car because I wanted to look for a job in the city that requires a car to get there. Although I needed to buy a car, I did not have enough money. I had only half of the money, which was 4,500 Libyan Dinars (LD). I said to myself, “Who is the person that can lend me the other 4,500 LD to buy this car?”

One night I discussed this problem with my Mother, and she said, “You have a good father to borrow this money from, don’t you?”

“Do you know if he has the amount or not?” I asked.

“You just ask him yourself,” she advised.

On the second day in the morning, I went to my father’s farm where he usually stays because he is retired. When I arrived, I greeted him politely and kissed his hand and his head. While we were talking about the farm, he asked me, “What are your plans for getting a job?”

I responded, “I had better buy a car before that.”

“Do you have money for that?” he replied.

“I just have 4500 LD, and I need you to lend me the remainder, which is another 4500 LD,” I said.

“I will think that over,” he answered.

In the evening we usually met for dinner. After dinner, I went to my room and said to myself, “Will my father lend me the money?” My father knocked on the door of my room, and as soon as he came into the room, he said, “I will lend you the money, but I want one requirement.”

“What is it?” I asked.

He said, “I want you to pay me back when you get a job.”

“That’s right, and I promise you I will return your money as soon as I collect it.”

I took the money and bought a car. After I got a job and collected the money, I took it to my father. Even though I offered it to him, he did not take it.

He said, “Thank you my son, you are a true blue person, and I don’t want the money, but I wanted to know whether you were honest or not.”

In conclusion, I love my father more than before, and my respect for him increased because he taught me a lesson in honesty that I have never forgotten in my life. Also, I will teach my children a similar lesson when they are ready.

Poverty in the World … by Otman B. Ilgadi, Libya

Why should the wealthy countries help poor countries? Why do I consider wealthy countries to be one of the main causes of poverty in the world?

First of all, I attribute the main reason for poverty in poor countries to rich countries’ bad use of power. As it is known historically, big countries with money and power were the main source of the most destructive weapons, and they still are. These weapons were used to occupy weaker countries, such as Arabic and African countries. Therefore, some of these countries are still suffering from the occupation and war that happened to them and caused lack of development.

As we have seen, the wrong use of power by bombing of cities and villages has resulted in poor countries spending most of their income to buy different weapons that cost a lot of money instead of focusing on changing from poor positions to better ones. Furthermore, the wrong use of power has caused pollution and destroyed the environment.

A pure environment can help those poor people to acquire clean and cheap food, but they will not be able to mend or plant the destroyed lands because the wealthy countries will not help by loaning them money, which would be returned many times. We are all human and share the same resources on the earth. We have the same abilities and more than that, we have intelligent minds. Even though we have different religions, they all invite people to deal with the values of kindness and generosity as basic rules, and overall to show justice that is respected in both rich and poor countries. However, many of these countries don’t apply justice in their relations with the weaker and poorer of the world.

In conclusion, I think for the reasons mentioned above, that big, rich countries have to help the people who are still suffering from poverty and, especially those people who cannot find anything to eat or even to drink.
Life is a great school. We learn lessons every day of this life. Easy or hard lessons, small and big lessons, they always affect our lives. You don’t have to be a main character of the incident to get the lesson. Maybe you are a secondary character but the situation forces you to be a part of the circumstances. The incident I will describe affected my life; it has changed my mind and my way of thinking.

I still remember the place and time, six years ago. I still remember December 28, 2002, at the Homeless Shelter in Tripoli, Libya. I was a member of the Red Crescent and Red Cross Association in Libya, and as part of our activities, we visited the homeless shelter. There I found an old man at a corner of a room. He looked very sad. I went to him and I introduced myself. He was sad and frowned, and he was looking at me with a very sad eyes. I talked with him about several things and his answers were very short. I decided to ask him, “Why are you here?” After I had asked this question, he turned his head to me, looked into my eyes deeply, and didn’t answer me. After a while, I repeated my question two or three times because I was curious. Finally, he answered me

“You want to know why I am here? I am here because my son put me here. He expelled me from his house. I didn’t do anything to him. I lived with them but his wife didn’t like me, so he expelled me. Do you know I did the same thing to my mother? I expelled her out of my house for the same reason. Now you know why I am here, I am here because God is punishing me.”

He said, “I didn’t tell anybody here about that, and I don’t know why I told you, but I feel that I have to tell somebody.”

I was shocked for a while. I started thinking about this catastrophe. The man whom I was talking with started crying. I tried to comfort him, but I could not.

He started screaming, “I hope God forgives me. Don’t do that, my son. Take care of your family, and take care of your parents. There is a God in this life. God punishes us for every wrong thing we do. Don’t do what I did.”

The man seemed crazy and so nervous. For this reason, I went to call the doctor. However, when we returned, we found him dead. “He passed away from heart attack.” the doctor said.

I was shocked and dazed about what had happened. I started thinking that my questions had killed him. Why did I do that? Really, I was afraid and I had not seen someone die in front of my eyes before. After some time, I got my balance back. I started thinking about why he had talked to me and why he had told me about his life. He said, “I didn’t tell anybody before.” He felt that he would die soon; for this reason he talked to me and told me his story. He wanted to advise and to teach me the lesson that he had learned in his life.

As you can see, I am not the main character of this incident, but I felt everything in it; maybe the soul of this man transferred something to me. I imagined what he did and what happened to him in detail. What he did to his mother and what his son did to him are just small examples, but the meaning is wider. I learned that life is a circle that starts from one point and finishes at the same point. If you do something wrong, you have to wait for the reaction, the punishment, and you have to know that what you did someday will come back to you. This is the wisdom of God. You are a point on the circumference, and the circle of life will pass you more than one time. This is math and logic. This is a fact.

Should We Regulate Drugs in Sporting Events… Gian Luigi, Italy

Last August, during Beijing’s Olympic games, a lot of world records were broken. Athletes made performances that a few days before were world records, even though those were not enough even for a bronze medal. Rumors said that the controls were just for the old generation of drugs; thus a small number of athletes were found positive. Can we find a solution? Is it possible to regulate drugs in sporting events?

Olympic Games and other important sporting events move a giant, enormous quantity of money; a gold medal won at the Olympics often represents wealth for many competitors. Of course, it is not the medal’s worth that changes life but the money that sponsors invest in the winner’s image. Simply, without doping it is not possible to win. Although taking drugs is forbidden and tests are given in every sporting event, the intake of drugs will continue forever. By the time controllers have figured out how to find the presence of one drug, there are already two or three new drugs. When athletes like Marion Jones or Ben Johnson were found positive and their medals were taken back, public opinion seemed to be that this was a triumph of justice. It was just the punishment of somebody that paid for everybody.

Even though the right amount of exercise gives us a lot of benefits, it is not proven that athletes who reach the limit of their capabilities during their sporting career get any advantage in living longer than other people who have never been athletes. Moreover, it is suspicious that Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, a sickness that harms the motor system, reaches the highest ration in soccer players.

The only solution is to quit any controls because they cost a lot of money and so far we have not seen any significant results. Besides, the age limit in international competitions might be raised to 18 years, so whoever wants to risk his life has the knowledge, maybe, to do it.
SYMBOLS OF OUR COUNTRIES

The White Gold of Uzbekistan…by Sino Niyazkhodjayev

Every country has its own symbol. Uzbekistan's famous symbol is "white gold." What do you think this "white gold" is? When I see "white gold" his symbol on TV, I proudly say to my American and international friends that this is our symbol. Our "white gold" is cotton, which is the pride of Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan has real white gold, which is important for our farming society. The reason we call cotton white gold is that cotton has shown our farming society to the entire world. Many businessmen come to Uzbekistan to get our white gold. When Uzbekistan became independent, it was introduced by white gold. Cotton brought us a big opportunity for our economy. In 1992, my president explained why cotton was our symbol. He said, "Our ways are as white as cotton. Our future economy and lives will be white and beautiful like white gold. Cotton is our face. We have to show our face to the world that Uzbek people are as nice as cotton."

When you see cotton, it is so simple. On the other hand, cotton is a strong and important material. We cannot imagine our lives without cotton. You can get oil for cooking and weaving for clothes from cotton. We sell our cotton to many countries for good money. For example, specialists say that Uzbek cotton is one of the best because of its quality features. Uzbekistan has achieved great results in the development of the cotton industry in recent years. This is why our entrepreneurs are planning to significantly increase the purchase of Uzbek cotton fiber. As a result, they are at the first rank. According to information in 2006, Bangladesh bought 450,000 tons of cotton fiber from Uzbekistan, but only 50,000 tons of it were direct supplies. This approach is not beneficial to either side. This is why our businessmen from the textile and other industries are interested in getting closely acquainted with Uzbek colleagues and purchasing fiber on direct contracts.

The hard-working Uzbek nation works even harder during cotton season. Consequently, our cotton is of high quality. We don’t use any technical machines to get the cotton. We work with our hands so hard that it makes the cotton clean and of high quality. During cotton-picking time, every student goes out to pick the cotton to help the farmers. The students say that is a lot of fun being in the fields. In addition, you can earn money. If you work with your friends and roommates, you can always enjoy your time with them.

As you can see, Uzbek’s favorite symbol is cotton. If we didn’t have cotton, our economy would be so poor. However, our economy is pretty bad. Anyway, we have to take care of our cotton and our economy. Furthermore, we have to be clever and smart like the Chinese people, our president says. Our mission is to put our country first, like John McCain says, and then we can get good success in our lives.

The Olive Tree, Symbol of My Town…by Khaled Ramadan

According to Noah’s story, the first thing brought by the dove after the huge flood was a branch of the olive tree. Noah knew that there was life on the land, so the olive tree has been known from pre-history as a symbol of life and peace. The olive tree means a lot to the people who live in my hometown, Alzentan, Libya. It meant a lot for them in the past and it also means a lot in the present and in the future. My hometown has a lot of olive trees growing there; there are more than a thousand trees. I have chosen this symbol to represent something else. The olive tree means life, treatment, and wealth in my hometown of Alzentan.

First of all, the olive trees have a longer life than other trees. Some of them in my town are called (Continued on p. 7)
The Olive Tree (Cont. from p. 6)

Aliromani because the people who planted these trees were Romans who came to Libya in old times. My townpeople believe that the olive tree has a longer life than anything, and they love this tree as much as their families. My own family has more than 100 olive trees; all of them are more than 200 years old. When you talk with anyone who lives in my town about his olive trees, he’ll tell you a lot about them. The people there know everything about their trees, like who planted them, how old they are, and stories about every single tree. They have a deep feeling about their trees because it means life for them. For example, I remember one day when my brother built his house and asked my father to give him more acres for the building. The problem was my brother must cut three olive trees to start. I saw a deep expression in my father’s face. Directly, I understood what it meant. It was mixed feeling. On the one hand, there were three olive trees that would die; on the other hand, a new life would start.

People in my hometown like to use everything natural, and that is why they are very healthy. Olive trees have oil, which is used as treatment for a lot of diseases. Olive oil has been used to relieve the common cold, stomachaches and headaches. So, it is useful as a medical treatment. Also, according to scientists’ research, olive oil has been used to treat many kinds of diseases like heart disease and colon cancer. The people in my town must five a tenth of their crop of oil to charity. This step is very important, and they do it before using the oil for their health. The purpose of this requirement is to help poor people; it is one of the five pillars in the Islamic religion.

Olive trees have been wealth for thousands of years. In the past, people in my hometown used olive oil as money. They used it for trade in a local market. They used the wood of olive trees to trade too. Now olive oil has reached a high price in Libya. It has become like gas prices in the U.S. In addition, the olive trees in my town save the land from erosion. No one in Alzentan who has olive trees is poor.

If someday you visit my town, you will notice how much the people love these trees, and how they mean life, treatment, and wealth for them.

The Lion of the Desert…by Nasser Bireni

Who is the famous man who has a statue in Solog, Libya? Why does the Libyan government show his face on the Libyan 10 Dinar bill? What was his story? What did he do for Libya? And how do Libyan people consider him?

Omar Al Mukhtar is the Lion of the Desert, as many people call him. He was an old teacher who was born in 1862 in Eastern Libya. In 1911, when Italian colonialists attacked Libya, he changed his job to lead groups of guerrillas on their horses against Italian occupation. On September 16th, 1931, an Italian army captured him and hanged him in a public place after 20 years of struggle. According to "Omar Mukhtar," an internet article, when the Italian army asked him if he wished to say any last words, he replied with the Qur’anic phrase: "From Allah we have come, and to Allah we will return."

The lion of the desert is the biggest symbol for Libyan people. On the other hand, he isn’t only a martyr of Libya, but he is also the martyr of all the Arab nation. He is a symbol of steadfastness in the same way as Muammar Al Gadafi is currently a symbol of steadfastness.

There are many traits that Libyan people have learned from Omar Al Mukhtar, who grew up in a desert area. The Libyan people learned how to love the land and the desert. Libya has a wide desert area. Some Libyan people have cattle, sheep, goats, and camels, and others are farmers. Libya has many attractive areas such as Gebel Akdar (the green mountain) in eastern Libya, an old city in Godames in western Libya, the green Alsaria, Lubdh, and Subrath in northern Libya, and Gaber Aon (Grave of Aon), and the Akakos mountains in southern Libya. Today most Libyan people like to drive their cars and go hunting in the desert to have many adventures. Some of them like to ride horses and camels there and sleep in Libyan tents. They camp there without electricity, bathroom, Internet, and cell phones to run away from the city life.

All Libyan generations know this man because all parents tell their children his story. Besides that, students have to study his story at primary school to know how this man fought Italian colonization for 20 years until the Italian army hanged him. In addition, all Libyan people learned from him how to be brave, and how they have to defend Libya until they win or die.

If you ever visit Libya, you should visit the Omar Al Mukhtar Museum and his statue to know more about his life. Libyan people say, "We are the grandchildren of Omar Al Mukhtar," because he represents many of the finest characteristics of the Libyan people.


"Menageria" and the Responsibilities of Freedom

by Abdullah Khouri, United Arab Emirates

Menageria, which means Zoo Park, is the place my fable starts. Fables have meanings and lessons or values, which is the conclusion of the fable. "Menageria" was first published in 1984. I learned this fable in school, and I have read it four times, yet each time I read it I have learned some other values from people’s experience. This fable has serious problems that are in our social life and each character represents some people or experience we have encountered in our lives. (Continued on p.8)
Menageria (cont. from p. 7)

This fable takes place in a pet store. In this pet store, there is a watchdog whose name is Berkeley, the owner of this store has confidence in Berkeley, and he is proud of his work in the shop. One day, the owner disappears from the shop, and he does not show up for some days. Berkeley is worried, and all the animals in the pet store are crying because they have no food. Berkeley, who was the only boss in the shop, worried about them. Then some animals concluded that the owner of the shop had died. After that, one of the animals said, “All animals are equal. We must live outside these cages. The monkey convinced the dog and said, “Open the cages and let everyone free to feed himself.”

Berkely opened the cage, but he was indecisive. At first, the animals came out and they wanted to eat. Then some animals became greedy and did not care of the other animals got enough food or not. The animals that had power were aggressive toward the weaker animals. For example, the fish and birds were eaten by the predatory animals, the frog got ill, and the cat ate the rabbits.

At the same time that all this disarray was happening, Berkely got tired of keeping them in control. He went to sleep and dreamed that the owner came back. During his dream, Berkely was awakened by a parrot. He saw that the monkey was holding a gun. In order to protect the other animals, Berkely jumped at the monkey, but the monkey shot him in his chest. Then a fire started in another room. At the end of the story, all of the animals were killed by the fire.

This fable has many lessons that we can learn from the characters’ mistakes, and how they solved their problems when they got in trouble. For example, when the animals wanted food, they shouted at Berkely to open the cage. This put Berkely under pressure to open the cages. Even if what they did was wrong, they go what they needed. The fable teaches something about humans. When they are under pressure, they make decisions without planning or thinking, especially when they are in trouble like what happened to Berkely. Cheating is one of the behaviors that some people use. This behavior happens in any society. Also it represents how some people plan behind others’ backs, like what happened when the Monkey asked Berkely to open the cages. The monkey was really plotting something without Berkely’s knowledge. In addition, the other lesson is about freedom when the animals said “All animals are equal” and they asked the dog to open the cages. This shows what can happen if there is freedom with no control.

The second theme is democracy. It shows the change in the story from an oppressive to a democratic society. The last theme is about war and peace. Once all the animals asked for release and were released, they thought it was best for them to be out of the cages, but it was the opposite, because it changed to chaos and death. In my opinion, this fable should teach adults not children because of the adult themes about society.

In conclusion, anyone who reads this fable will recognize that it talks about serious problems that societies and people have in their lives. I hope that people will learn from this fable to evaluate how their lives are going and to correct their mistakes.

The Boy Who Became a Cow…by Jong In Kim, Korea

Fables and their morals reflect a country’s cultural and traditional values. Even if we have never heard about a country, we can guess about it through its fables. In the past, many countries were agricultural societies, and so was Korea. For that reason Korea has fables that point to hard work and duty toward parents. These days, Korea is an industrial country, but it still needs the morals engendered in the following fable.

This interesting story starts like many other fables. Once upon a time, there was a lazy boy who lived in a town with his parents. He was so lazy that he had never helped his parents with their farm work. All he did was eat and sleep, therefore, his parents worked more than they should have. One day his father went to a famous fortune-teller and asked how to change his son. The next day, while the father was working, the boy was sleeping under a tree. He dreamed that the fortune-teller put cow’s leather on his body. When he woke up, the boy had become a cow. His father came to him and pushed him to work. He did not know that the cow was his son. The boy worked with his father all day. That night the boy cried bitterly because the work was very hard, and he realized his old parents had to do that everyday. While he was crying, his father shouted, “Wake up, son! It’s time to go home.” At that moment, he found that everything was a dream, and he decided to help his parents every day.

This story gives us the idea to be diligent and help our parents. Even though the system of Korea has changed, these ideas still work. The reason is based on agricultural values, that the family group is more important than the individual. Koreans also believe that a person who works with sincerity for his or her country is one of the best resources for the country.

The idea of this story can be applicable to my life. My family wants to emigrate to Colorado, so I have to follow my family’s wishes. The first time I came here, I felt spiteful toward my family. I soon realized, however, if I kept this feeling, I couldn’t adjust to any part of Korea or the US. I changed my mind to do my duty for my parents and decided to do whatever I could do in this situation. Also, I realized my parents have had a hard time adapting to this culture. What I can do is help them and support them in my way, like my family has done for me in the past.

If I were an American, I wouldn’t make the same decision about supporting my family. On the other hand, Koreans think it is important and natural to belong to a family, to be dutiful to our parents, and to show them every attention. This fable reflects parts of these values and teaches children how to be responsible in a family. These values remain in Korea. However, it has started to change slowly, so some day in the future, these values may not be important in Korea. Nevertheless, I hope people keep the principles and values of this fable.

Spring Views is published five times a year to showcase the writing of international students of English as a Second Language. Editor: Connie Shoemaker, Arapahoe Community College, Littleton, Colorado.