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Aryaa Naik

People of the Good Faith

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Front Cover Photograph © Adi Patell

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## People of the Good Faith - A brief history of the Parsis Aryaa Naik

Aryaa is currently the Head, Creatives at Gyaan Adab Centre. Her educational qualifications include Bachelors in Philosophy from Ferguson College, Pune, Post Graduate diploma in Social Communications Media from Sophia College, Mumbai and Masters in Gender, Culture and Development Studies from the University of Pune. Her experience includes script writing and feature writing for publications such as Times of India, Femina, Life 365 and Maharashtra Herald. [www.gyaanadab.org](http://www.gyaanadab.org)



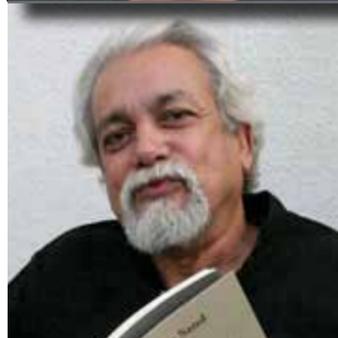
## Parsi Cuisine - Jamva Chalo Ji - Come eat...food is ready! Perinaz Avari

Perinaz (Peri) Avari is a proud Parsi Zoroastrian, native of cosmopolitan Mumbai in India and hospitality professional who's been on many 'food adventures', especially during her 10 years working for the Taj Group of Hotels in India. Now living in America, Peri shares her hospitality wisdom and passion for Parsi and Indian food by creating simple recipes with a global appeal, through her informative articles and world travel adventures on - [Peri's Spice Ladle](#)



## Fall From Grace Adi Patell

Patell is a retired architect/interior designer. After graduating in Bombay with a B.Arch. degree, he completed a year's post-graduation course in Development Planning at University College London. He then worked in London, on several medium-large commercial projects, for fifteen years before returning to India. He has written several short stories, to be published in the near future. Recently, he has taken to writing memoirs and essays.



## Departures - II Randhir Khare

Khare is an award winning author of twenty one volumes of non-fiction, fiction, translation and poetry. Executive Editor of Heritage India, the International Culture Journal, a Director of The Rewachand Bhojwani Academy and Visiting Professor to the Dept Of English, Pune University. Recently he was given The Residency Award by The Sahitya Akademi (India's National Academy of Letters) for his contribution to Indian Literature and the Human Rights Award for his efforts to preserve and celebrate marginal and minority cultures. [www.randhirkhare.in](http://www.randhirkhare.in)



## A Dog's Life - Cassie Speaks Terry McDonagh

Irish poet and dramatist, Terry McDonagh, taught creative writing at the University of Hamburg and was Drama Director at the Int. School Hamburg for 15 years. He now works freelance; has been writer in residence in Europe, Asia, Australia; published 7 poetry collections, book of letters, prose and poetry for young people translated into Indonesian and German, distributed internationally by Syracuse Uni. Press; latest poetry collection Ripple Effect/Arlen House; children's story, Michel the Merman, illustrated by Marc Barnes (NZ). He lives in Hamburg and Ireland. [www.terry-mcdonagh.com](http://www.terry-mcdonagh.com)



## India-China Borderlands - Conversations beyond the Centre Dr Nimmi Kurian

Kurian is Associate Professor at the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, India; and India Representative of the India China Institute (ICI), The New School, New York. Her research interests include border studies, comparative regionalism and transboundary water governance. As an ICI Fellow (2008-2010), her study critically compared the accountability debates in India and China. She has been part of the BCIM Forum (Kunming Initiative) since 1999, an international Track-II initiative to create a bottom-up, inclusive approach to subregional development. [Sage Publications](#)



## Thought and Consequence Tom Kilcourse

Kilcourse spent his career in management development and was widely published in management and academic journals. He appeared in several educational videos produced for the BBC, and has spoken on management in the USA, Europe and the UK. Tom began working life as a manual worker in his native Manchester, before winning a scholarship to study at Ruskin College, Oxford. He later won a State Scholarship to read economics at Hull University. He is now retired. [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)



## China's thinking on peace and security Dr Ola Tunander reprinted by permission of NOREF

Ola Tunander, PhD, after being a senior researcher at the Peace Research Institute Oslo and heading its Foreign and Security Policy Programme, was appointed research professor in 2000. He has contributed to projects for and responded to inquiries from various ministries of foreign affairs and defence, and has participated in Chinese political-military conferences and U.S.-Europe-China talks. He is the author and editor of 12 books on history, geopolitics, political philosophy and military strategy.



## How Billings Fought Only Half Its Hate Natalie Wood

Born in Birmingham, England, U.K., Natalie Wood began working in journalism a month prior to outbreak of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. She remained in regional Jewish journalism for over 20 years, leaving full-time writing to help run a family business and then completed a range of general office work. Wood and her husband, Brian Fink emigrated from Manchester to Israel in March 2010 and live in Karmiel, Galilee. She features in *Smith Magazine's new Six Word Memoirs On Jewish Life* and contributes to *Technorati*, *Blogcritics* and *Live Encounters magazine*. Her stories - [Website](#) and journalism - [Website](#)



## The Lover Archetype Dr. Candess M Campbell

Candess M. Campbell, PhD is the #1 Best-selling author of *12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine*. She is a Blogger, Intuitive Success Coach and International Psychic Medium. She has practiced as a mental health and chemical dependency counselor for over 30 years. [www.12weekstoselfhealing.com](http://www.12weekstoselfhealing.com)

The *Faravahar*, believed to be a depiction of a *Fravashi*, which is the guardian spirit who sends out the soul into the material world to fight the battle of good versus evil. [LINK](#)



## People of the Good Faith A brief history of the Parsis

Aryaa Naik

Head, Creatives, Gyaan Adab Centre

A long long time ago under the reign of King Vishtasp in Persia lived The People of the Good faith, they lived in peace and harmony until the prophecy of the saintly Zatosht that "A Tyrant will appear; three times will the Good Creed be shattered and the People of the Faith ruined and worsted," came true. Sikandar (Alexander the Great), came upon them and unleashed havoc. Scriptures were burnt and virtue was reduced to despair, the Faithful were oppressed.

Nearly 300 years later faith was restored and the good people found voice and power when defender of the faith, Ardeshir from the Sassan family took power. Many of the scattered and destroyed texts which had been preserved orally were written down, translated and compiled. It was at once a brilliant, cultured and luxurious civilisation, an open society that was receptive to foreign influences.

Alas, tragedy struck again. The days assigned to Zartosht by Time (Fate) came to an end and not a vestige of the Good Religion remained, when the Millennium of Zartosht was over, the happy days of the Good Creed also reached their limit.

This is the story of how Parsis came to India, as narrated in *The Qeṣṣa-ye Sanjān* which is an account of the emigration of Zoroastrians from Iran to India. The year of their arrival is still contested; some believe it to be 936 CE and others, 716 CE.

The faith was once again shattered with the arrival of invaders from the deserts of Arabia. The leader of the expedition asked Yazdegard III the young ruler of the land to choose either Islam, or tribute, or war unto death. Yazdegard opted for war and thus The Good Religion or Zoroastrianism was completely routed out from the country of its birth. After the Arab conquest, many embraced Islam, it allowed them to preserve their power and influence. Some converted to avoid the payment of poll-tax and to find relief from the persecution that raged around them. However, a small band of devoted Zoroastrians, set sail and landed in Diu, an island on the west coast of India, off the state of Gujarat. It is believed that this band of Zoroastrians spent nineteen years on the island of Diu, after which they set sail again and landed in Sanjan, Gujarat, India. The ruler of the region, Jadhav Rana who was liberal and wise granted them permission to settle in Sajan. These newly arrived strangers were called Parsis - to denote the region from where they had come - Pars, (Persia).

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It is said that Jadhav Rana laid down four pre-conditions before agreeing to grant the Parsis sanctuary: They should use only the local language, the women should adopt the local dress, they must put down their weapons and vow never to use them and, finally, their marriage ceremonies should be conducted only in the evening. This was agreed upon by the Dastur who, renowned for his learning and prudence had approached Rana, for sanctuary. The Parsis were not asked to forsake any significant aspects of their religion. The priests convinced the king that they would be 'Like sugar in a full cup of milk, adding sweetness but not causing it to overflow.' And so they did, the Parsis seamlessly mixed with the Hindus while earnestly following their religion. *'Zoroastrians of India: Parsis: A Photographic Journey'* by Sooni Taraporevala accounts, 'Though they didn't completely lose touch with the Persian language, Gujarati (their version of it), started to become their mother tongue. They adopted many Hindu customs. Parsi women dressed like their Indian counterparts. They even wore nose rings.' The Parsis adapted Hindu style of dressing, but not without their own interpretive modifications. James Hastings in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Part 18 notes that in the early 20th century, the Parsee men were still faithful to the Gujarati dress by wearing the *angarakha* tunic, but nevertheless replacing the Hindu dhoti with trousers and Indian curved shoes with European shoes. The men further distinguished themselves from Gujarati *Vanias* by wearing a turban called a *pagri* over a skull cap. Hastings elaborates that the men's ceremonial clothing included the jama, a double-breasted tunic or coat as well as a muslin waistband called a *pichori* which made them look 'very becoming and distinguished looking'.





The women wore Parsi *Garas* which resembled a sari but were actually quite distinct. *Garas* were Chinese silk fabrics which came in varieties such as *gaaj*, *paaj*, *crepe* and *ghat*. The embroidery depicted the lifestyles of the days, scenes of royalty, market places, river fishing, flowers and birds. Motifs of Chinese pagodas and characters were also used symbolising the artist's signature.

What distinguished the Parsi clothing from that of the Indians were the garments closest to their hearts, the value-laden *sudreh* (a white vest) and *kusti* (a holy thread tied around the waist). The women, according to Hastings, wore the *Vania* sari and covered their head with a thin white cloth called a *mathabana* tied behind the *chignon* (the knot of hair worn at the nape of the neck).

The women wore Parsi *Garas* which resembled a sari but were actually quite distinct. *Garas* were Chinese silk fabrics which came in varieties such as *gaaj*, *paaj*, *crepe* and *ghat*. The embroidery depicted the lifestyles of the days, scenes of royalty, market places, river fishing, flowers and birds. Motifs of Chinese pagodas and characters were also used symbolising the artist's signature.

The Parsis effortlessly merged into the Indian way of living while carefully safeguarding and practicing their various customs and traditions and celebrating their distinct festivals.

An important Parsi custom is that of *Navjote*, or initiation into the religion, which takes place before puberty between the ages of seven and nine for both boys and girls. It is the first time that the child wears the "armour of the religion": the *sudrah* (shirt) and *kusti*, which should then be worn every day for the rest of his/her life. Zoroastrianism believes that children cannot tell the difference between right and wrong, and therefore cannot sin. Once children freely choose to be initiated, they become adults responsible for their own thoughts, words and deeds, which eventually determines the fate of their souls on judgment day.

In the book *The Parsees: Their History, Manners, Customs and Religion* first published in 1858, Dosabhoy Framjee throws light on the various Parsi festivals:

*Pappati* or New Year – Among festivals observed by the Parsis, the first and universally kept is the *Pappati*, or New Year's Day. This day is celebrated in the honor of Yezdezerd, the last king of the Sassanide dynasty.

*Khordad-Sal* – The second of the Parsi festivals, this day marks the birth anniversary of Prophet Zoroaster, who was born in the city of Rai in the north of Persia, in the reign of Darius Hystaspis, about 520 years before Christ, according to Greek writers.

*Amardad-Sal* – The day following *Khordad-Sal* appears to have no origin in the book of Parsis but is merely kept as a continuation of the festivity and spent in enjoyment.

To Yazd and the twenty-four surrounding villages, these Zoroastrians of Persia are now almost exclusively confined. From accounts furnished to the writer by trustworthy authority, there were in the year 1854, in the above-mentioned city and its surrounding villages, one thousand houses or families, comprising a population of 6658 souls of whom 3310 were males and 3348 females. Of these about twenty or twenty-five were merchants, but by far the larger number gained a poor subsistence as tillers of the soil. A few of the poorest class worked as artisans, bricklayers, carpenters, weavers, or followed other mechanical occupations.

*Furrohurdin Jasan* – This day is set apart for the performance of ceremonies for the dead. The Parsis are enjoined by their religion to preserve the memory of their dead by annual religious ceremonies performed in the house.

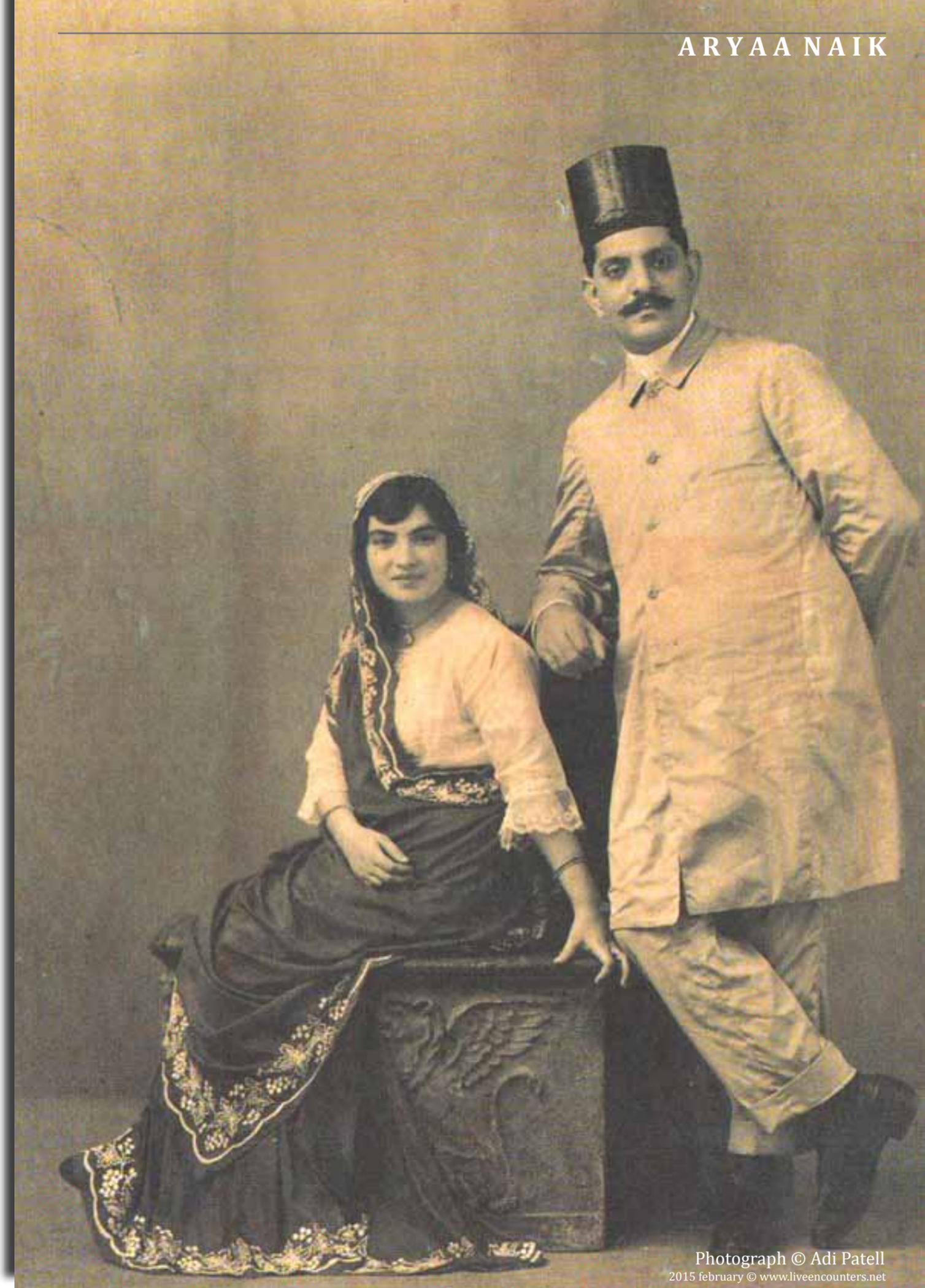
*Ardibehest Jasan* – This festival is maintained in honour of Ardibehest Amsaspund, the controlling angel over the sacred fire; fire being an important element of worship.

*The Nowroz* – The celebrated Nowroz festival is called by some *Nowroz-i-Jamshid*, or the *Nowroz-i-Sultan*, the king's day. This festival falls generally on the 21st day of March and is coeval with vernal equinox and the Hindu festival of *Makar Sankranti*. The Parsis are required on this day to approach the sea-shore or any stream of water, and chant the prayers which are written in *Zend Avesta* – the sacred book of the Parsis.

*Adar Jasan* – Addar, another synonym for fire, is the name by which the ninth month of the Parsi year is called. This is the most religious of the twelve months, and the ninth day of that month is held in great respect and sanctity. On this day, visits are made to the temple where offerings of sandal wood are made to the fire.

The Parsis adapted a new way of life and prospered in India, but what about their fellow People of the Good Faith who had not left Persia? In *The Parsees: Their History, Manners, Customs, and Religion*, Dosabhoj Framjee gives an account – ‘Two centuries had not elapsed from the invasion, before the greater part of the population was converted to Islamism. In the tenth century of the Christian era, remnants of the Zoroastrian population were to be found only in the provinces of Fars and Kerman, and the reader may form some idea of the rate at which that remnant declined, when it is stated that while it numbered about a hundred years ago, one hundred thousand souls, it does not at present exceed seven thousand.

To Yazd and the twenty-four surrounding villages, these Zoroastrians of Persia are now almost exclusively confined. From accounts furnished to the writer by trustworthy authority, there were in the year 1854, in the above-mentioned city and its surrounding villages, one thousand houses or families, comprising a population of 6658 souls of whom 3310 were males and 3348 females. Of these about twenty or twenty-five were merchants, but by far the larger number gained a poor subsistence as tillers of the soil. A few of the poorest class worked as artisans, bricklayers, carpenters, weavers, or followed other mechanical occupations.





At Kerman the number of Parsees does not exceed four hundred and fifty, while in the capital of Persia (Teheran), there are only about fifty merchants of this race. A small number of the poorer class, are however employed as gardeners in the palace of the Shah, and at Shiraz a few families are found in the grade of shopkeepers.'

This was the case in 1858 when the book was first published. Closer to the time we live in, news of Zoroastrians being subjected to religious discrimination and persecution is not uncommon. An article published in The Guardian in October 2006 reported how Zoroastrians were finding it increasingly difficult to survive in the land of their origin, now the Islamic state of Iran. The article pointed out how Stringent Islamic laws had ensured that the traditional five day pilgrimage at Chak Chak in the central Iranian desert was not left untouched. The unprecedented government attention paid to that year's event, in the form of a visiting delegation sent by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, along with interior and culture ministry officials ensured that the community didn't celebrate the religious festival without watchful eyes. The Guardian mentioned, 'Some 25,000 Zoroastrians live in Iran, and though officially they -- along with Jews and Armenian and Assyrian Christians - are a constitutionally protected religious minority with guaranteed parliamentary representation, complaints of discrimination are widespread. A law awarding Zoroastrians who convert to Islam their entire families' inheritance at the expense of non-converted relatives has caused misery and bitter resentment. Despite legislation decreeing that all religions are entitled to equal blood money (compensation) awards, Zoroastrians say that, in reality, they still receive only half the sums given to Muslims.'

Fox news in January 30, 2013 covered, 'After the 1979 revolution brought in the hardline Islamic religious government, many Zoroastrians emigrated to the U.S., and their festivals were strongly discouraged. About 20,000 Zoroastrians remain today — down from 300,000 in the 1970s, when many emigrated to the United States. They make up part of Iran's small non-Muslim population, including 150,000 Christians and 15,000 Jews.'

It is not just in Iran but all over the world that the number of Zoroastrians, the followers of one of the oldest faiths in the world is diminishing and this time the evil is not personified.



## Jamva Chalo Ji - Come eat...food is ready!

While the Parsi Zoroastrian population in India may be dwindling, the interest and passion for Parsi food continues to grow, instead gaining a global audience, as Parsis migrate and settle around the world. The Parsi cuisine is a unique amalgamation, over the course of more than a thousand years, of classic Indian flavors with large doses of ancient Persian influences. This is no ordinary regional cuisine; Parsi fare is a true example of what we call 'global food' in today's culinary parlance.

### What makes Parsi Food So Unique?

Let's take a close look at a few of the elements, nuances and quirks of this interesting cuisine that truly sets it apart.

### The Dynamic Duo of Cider Vinegar and Jaggery/sugar.

Known among Parsis as the 'khattu mitthu' (sour-sweet) touch to a gravy preparation, Parsi recipes often use a unique balance of acidic tartness from cider vinegar along with jaggery or sugar for sweetness, both added to a dish at the end of the cooking process.

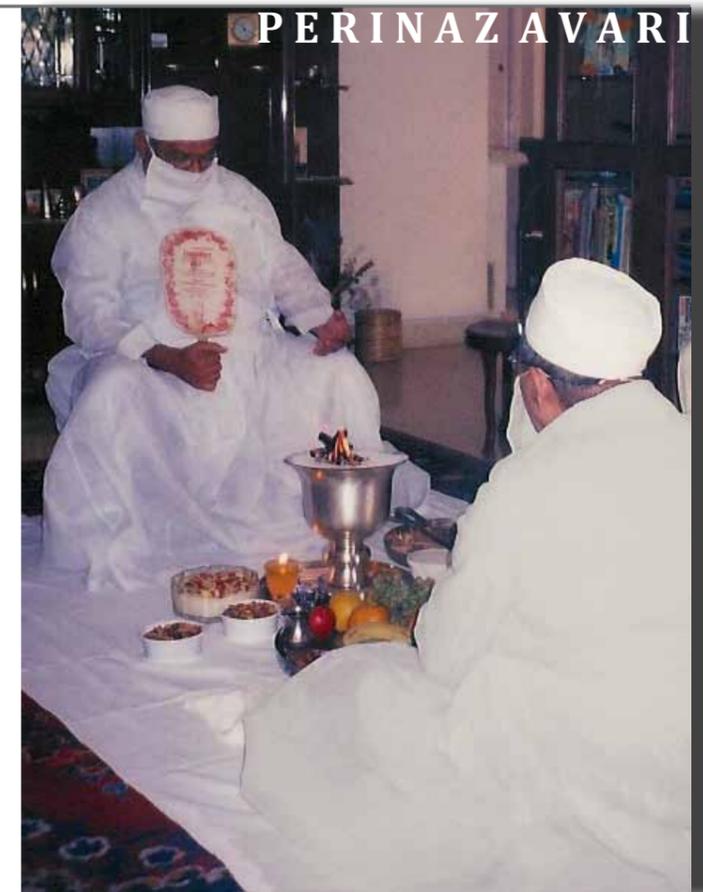
### For the Love of Eggs.

Eggs are almost synonymous with Parsi food. From favorites like the Parsi Omelet and *Akuri* a spiced scrambled eggs preparation, to the often joked about Parsi concept of *Per Enda* which literally translates to 'put an egg on it'; the Parsis know the ubiquitous egg down to a pat. The *Per Enda* concept is an interesting one, wherein a vegetable or meat is prepared in regular Indian spices and aromatics, but finally gets served the Parsi way, which means it's topped frittata-style with a layer of fluffy well-beaten eggs or even an individual sunny-side up egg, and cooked in a pan on the stove top, just prior to serving.

Growing up, I remember many busy weekday meals consisted of an Indian-style sautéed vegetable like okra, beans, tomatoes, potatoes or sometimes a ground meat preparation '*kheemo*'; always served topped with a generous layer of deliciously seasoned frothy eggs over it.



Author's mother, Hilla Avari, in a traditional Parsi Gara - a saree with intricate embroidery. Pic © Perinaz Avari



Parsi Jashan ceremony (in this case, a house blessing) [LINK](#)

### One Pot Meals with Lentils, Meat and Vegetables

Although traditional Indians follow a predominantly vegetarian diet, Parsis show their Persian roots by being a largely meat-eating community, which has led to a unique way of preparing one pot meals, featuring lentils and vegetables with meat added to them.

Home cooked brown lentils-n-mutton favorite *Masoor ma Gosht* and the ever-popular Parsi specialty *Dhansak* made using lentils, meat and vegetables all cooked together in one pot, truly showcase the delightful effect of bringing together Indian lentils with meat.

### Fruity and Nutty Touch to the Meal

Dried fruits like apricots and raisins, as also pistachio, cashew and almond nuts, commonly appear in Parsi dishes like the celebratory 'Sev Dahi', a sweet roasted vermicelli preparation filled with dried fruits and nuts, and 'Jardaloo Salli Boti', a savory dried apricot and tomato-based gravy.

It's not uncommon to find fresh fruits like pomegranate in Parsi gravies and lentil dishes.

### A Look at 5 Mouthwatering Parsi Classics

The Parsi cuisine offers a smorgasbord of delightful servings, and below is a list of five all-time favorites that aptly highlight the uniqueness of this cuisine; I'd say each of these dishes is 'a culinary stalwart in its own right'.

(Opposite Pic : Sev-Dahi, a Parsi Celebratory Serving with Roasted Vermicelli, Dried Fruits and Nuts, Topped with Cardamom Vanilla Yogurt. Pic © Perinaz Avari)



Pic © Perinaz Avari

## Patra ni Macchi

Unique in every way, Patra ni Macchi is a fish preparation, in which fillets of firm white flesh fish like pomfret or tilapia are covered with a thick layer of Parsi-style green coconut chutney, steamed in a banana leaf, and served in its own flavorful juices. This preparation is often part of the menu at events like Parsi weddings and *Navjotes* - a Parsi rite-of-passage tradition for children in the 7-11 age groups.

### Serves 4

1 ½ lbs tilapia fillet (4-5 fillets)  
 2 tablespoons lemon juice  
 ¼ teaspoon salt  
 ½ teaspoon pepper  
 Slices of lemon to top the fish  
 For the Coconut Chutney  
 3 teaspoons cumin seeds  
 9 garlic cloves  
 4 tablespoons coconut flakes/desiccated coconut  
 2 cups cilantro leaves  
 1 cup mint leaves  
 2 Serrano pepper/4 small green chili (reduce for lesser spice)  
 3 teaspoons sugar  
 4 tablespoons white vinegar  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 3 tablespoons lime juice

Wash and clean the tilapia fillets. Cut 3-4 slits on both sides of the fillet, add lemon juice, salt and pepper and refrigerate till the chutney is ready.

A Parsi wedding, 1905 [LINK](#)

In a food processor, blend all the ingredients for the coconut chutney except the lime juice, really well. Use a few teaspoons of water as required to aid the grinding of the chutney. Once you have a fine paste consistency, mix in the lime juice with a spoon.

Cut 4 large squares of heavy duty foil. Place one tilapia fillet in the centre of the foil square and liberally slather the coconut chutney over both sides. Top with a round slice of lemon. Seal the tilapia fillet in the foil. Repeat this step for the other fillets.

Heat an outdoor grill to 350F. Place the fish packets directly on the rack, cook for only 12 minutes. Remove and leave aside for 5 minutes, then check to make sure the fish flakes easily. (You can also make this in an indoor oven at 350F for 12-15 minutes.)

Serve the fish hot along with all its juices from the packet over a bed of Cumin and Cilantro Brown Rice Pulao.

### Cumin and Cilantro Brown Rice

#### Serves 4

2 cups brown rice, cooked and hot  
 2 tablespoon olive oil  
 1 teaspoon cumin seeds  
 ¼ teaspoon salt  
 3 tablespoons chopped cilantro

Heat olive oil in a pan and when it shimmers, turn off the flame and add the cumin seeds. Drizzle this tempering over hot cooked brown rice. Mix the salt and cilantro into the rice using a fork.

Serve hot as a bed for the Grilled Coconut Chutney Tilapia or as a side with any meat, lentils, vegetable preparation of your choice.



Peri's Spice Ladle

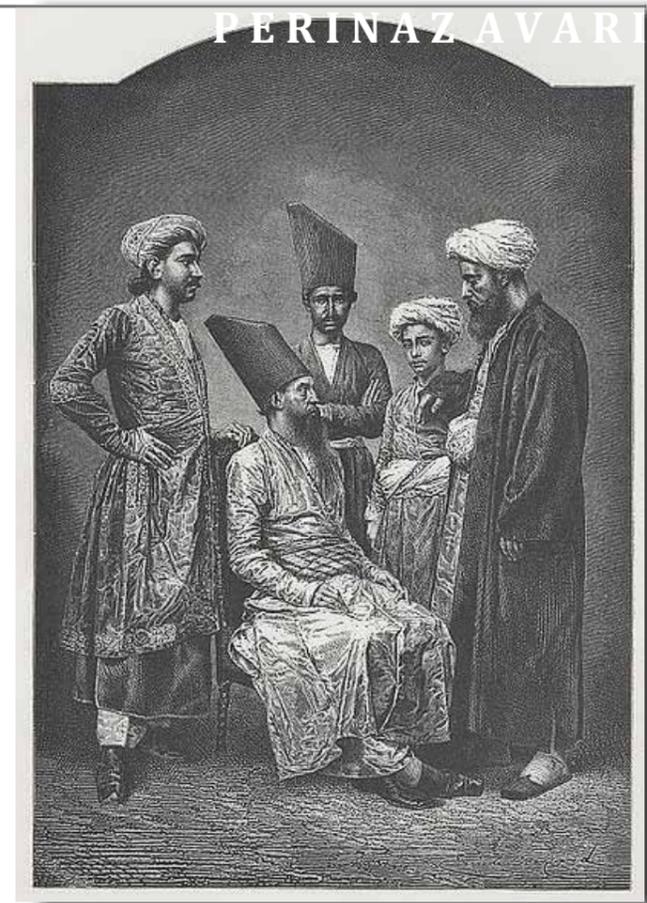
Pic © Perinaz Avari

## Jardaloo Salli Boti

An apricot and tomato based meat-n-gravy preparation; Jardaloo Salli Boti uses the tart-n-sweet 'khattu-mitthu' technique mentioned above, along with dried apricot and meat of choice. This unique dish is a true Parsi cuisine classic, using boneless cubes (boti) of any meat of choice and Persian touches like apricot (jardaloo,) red vinegar and sugar along with a blend of Indian spices and aromatics. It's best served topped with crisp 'Salli' or shoestring potatoes (although a handful of crushed potato chips work well too.)

### Serves 4

1 lb boneless meat of choice like chicken thighs/mutton/lamb cut in 1 inch cubes  
 1 tablespoon ginger garlic paste (4-5 garlic cloves & ½ inch ginger, grated)  
 ½ teaspoon each, salt & cracked black pepper  
 2 tablespoons canola oil  
 2 cups finely chopped onion  
 ½ teaspoon ground red chili or Cayenne pepper  
 ½ teaspoon ground turmeric  
 ½ teaspoon ground cumin  
 ¼ teaspoon ground coriander  
 ¼ teaspoon Garam Masala  
 1 ½ teaspoon sugar or 1 teaspoon jaggery  
 3 medium tomatoes, finely chopped (about 1 ½ cups)  
 2 cups chicken broth or water  
 5 dried apricots (see note below)  
 ½ teaspoon salt (to taste)  
 2 tablespoon cider vinegar  
 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro  
 Salli or shoestring potatoes or crushed potato chips, as a topping



"Parsis of Bombay" a wood engraving, 1878 [LINK](#)

In a bowl, bring the cubes of boneless meat together with grated ginger and garlic (ginger garlic paste) and salt/pepper. Let the meat marinade refrigerated for at least 2 hours or even overnight, especially if using mutton or lamb.

Heat canola oil in a large pan and add the chopped onions. Fry to a light brown on a medium flame. Mix the marinated meat into the onions, sauté together till meat is coated with the aromatics (in mom's words: 'let your nose guide you'.)

Next, sprinkle the dry spices and jaggery or sugar and sauté for 5-7 minutes. If you feel the spices sticking to the bottom of the pan, add a few tablespoons of broth/water to help it cook.

Add the diced tomatoes, apricot, salt and 2 cups of chicken broth (you can adjust the broth to the desired consistency of the gravy.) Bring this mixture to a boil and cook covered for 10-12 minutes till the broth is absorbed, and the meat and tomatoes are cooked through.

Taste for salt and add cider vinegar, chopped cilantro to the preparation, simmer for another 3-4 minutes for the flavors to blend together.

Serve Jardaloo Salli Boti hot, topped with Salli or shoestring potatoes (a handful of crushed potatoes chips will work as a substitute) alongside warm Indian bread like roti-chapati, naan or steaming basmati rice.

### Note

Dried apricots can be used un-pitted since the apricot will soften and blend into the gravy, pits can be removed prior to serving or while eating.

The dried golden apricots available in Western countries are generally sold pitted and work just as well for this preparation, offering a slightly tangier albeit equally delicious taste.



Pic © Perinaz Avari

## Parsi Okra Frittata (Bhinda per eedu)

This recipe for stove-top okra frittata is yet another classic Parsi-style take on eggs as a meal option; better known in Parsi circles as 'Bhinda per Eedu' translating to 'eggs on okra.' Okra or ladyfingers (Bhindi) are cooked well, Parsi-style, in Indian spices and aromatics. Right before the dish is served, the okra is topped with a generous layer of seasoned and well-beaten eggs – or whole sunny-side-up eggs can be used, for a heartier serving. This frittata makes a light weekday meal or a unique brunch serving.

**Serves 4-6**

### Ingredients

1 lb okra or ladyfingers or Bhindi, cut in 1 inch pieces  
 1 tablespoon canola oil  
 1 teaspoon whole cumin seeds  
 ½ cup finely chopped red onion  
 1 teaspoon finely chopped Thai or Serrano green chili pepper (optional, for a spice kick)  
 2 teaspoons ginger garlic paste (or 1 teaspoon each, minced garlic and ginger)  
 1 teaspoon ground red chili pepper or Cayenne pepper  
 ½ teaspoon ground coriander  
 1 teaspoon salt (or to taste)  
 ½ cup finely chopped tomatoes  
 1 teaspoon white refined sugar  
 ½ teaspoon Garam Masala (optional)  
 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

### For the Egg Topping

4 eggs, 2 tablespoons milk, ¼ teaspoon each ground nutmeg, salt and cracked black pepper



Pic © Perinaz Avari

### Directions

1. Heat canola oil in a sauté pan. Add cumin seeds, chopped onion and green chili pepper (if using) to the oil. Brown the onion for a couple of minutes.
2. Stir in the ginger garlic paste, red chili, coriander and salt. Let the spices cook together for 3-4 minutes, adding only a drop or two of water if they stick to the bottom of the pan.
3. Next, add the cut okra and stir gently; reduce the flame to medium-low, cover and cook for about 5 minutes, till they soften.
4. Then, mix in the chopped tomatoes, sugar and Garam Masala (if using), and cook covered on a medium-low flame, for another 5-7 minutes.
5. While the okra cooks, in a separate bowl - beat the eggs, milk, nutmeg, salt and cracked black pepper till they are well-blended.
6. Use the back of your spoon to even out the cooked okra in the pan, so that you have a flat base to layer the eggs. Reduce the flame to low.
7. Spread a layer of the seasoned eggs over the okra mixture in the pan. Great Idea: Sometimes, I like to crack whole eggs, sunny-side-up, over the okra to create a more wholesome meal. If you plan to try this technique, don't add milk, and season the eggs with salt and black pepper after they've been cracked over the vegetable.
8. Cover and let the eggs cook through on a low flame for about 10 minutes, till they are done. Leave covered till ready to serve. Tip: Cooking the eggs on a low flame is important, so that the okra doesn't burn at the bottom of the pan.
9. Serve the frittata as a weekday meal with bread of choice. Alternately, okra frittata makes an interesting brunch serving.



Pic © Perinaz Avari

## The Incredible Parsi Dhansak with Caramelized Basmati Rice and Kachumber salad

### Homemade-from-Scratch 'Dhansak Masala' Spice Blend

#### Ingredients

2 cinnamon sticks, two inches each  
 ½ tablespoon each of green and black cardamom, or 1 tablespoon of either  
 1 tablespoon black peppercorn  
 2 teaspoons whole cloves  
 2 medium bayleaf  
 2 star anise  
 ½ teaspoon fenugreek seeds  
 1 teaspoon fennel seeds  
 1 small whole nutmeg, cracked open  
 1 tablespoon coriander seeds  
 1 teaspoon cumin seeds  
 1½ teaspoon Shah Jeera (smaller more fragrant cumin seeds, can be replaced with regular cumin)  
 1 teaspoon mustard seeds  
 1 teaspoon til seeds (optional)

#### Directions

Grind all the spices in a spice grinder (I've been using this Krups grinder for ages.)  
 Mix all the ground spices together in a big tray and fill the Dhansak spice blend in a glass bottle to be used as required in the Parsi Dhansak recipe below.  
 The spice blend can be stored for 6-9 months.

If it were better known globally, 'Dhansak' a Parsi Cuisine specialty of lentils, vegetables and meat would easily win the award for *'Incredible One Pot Wonder.'* Classic Parsi Dhansak flavored with Indian spices and inspired by ancient Persian cooking methods brings together hearty vegetables, meat of choice and wholesome lentils in one delicious pot of goodness. Classic Parsi Dhansak Daal brings together hearty vegetables, meat of choice and wholesome lentils in one delicious pot of goodness. And the two traditional accompaniments to the worthy Dhansak Daal are long grain rice like Basmati cooked in caramelized oil with whole spices, and a Kachumber salad (which will remind you of Mexican 'Pico de Gallo' with cucumber and a dressing of red vinegar in place of lemon.)

#### Serves 4

#### Ingredients

Dhansak Tempering Base or 'Vaghar' (as us Parsis call it)  
 1 tablespoon canola oil  
 ½ cup chopped onion  
 1 tablespoon ginger garlic paste  
 4 tablespoons Dhansak Masala Spice Blend, homemade as per recipe above or store bought  
 1½ teaspoon ground red chili or Cayenne pepper (Note: Don't add if store-bought blend already has this ingredient)  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 ¼ cup jaggery (or 2 tablespoon sugar)  
 2 tablespoons tamarind paste (or 2 teaspoons amchur/ground dry mango or ¼ cup lime juice)  
 2 cups chicken stock or water  
 2 tablespoon cider (red) vinegar  
 1 lb chicken thighs or mutton/lamb, cut in large chunks  
 Chopped cilantro, for garnish

#### Dhansak Lentil and Vegetable Preparation

1 cup toor lentil or yellow pigeon peas  
 ½ cup split yellow moong lentils (can be replaced with toor lentils)  
 ½ cup chopped red onion  
 1 cup or 1 large potato, cut in cubes (see notes)  
 1 cup chopped spinach leaves (see notes)  
 1 cup butternut squash or pumpkin, cut in cubes (see notes)  
 ½ teaspoon ground turmeric  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 5 cups chicken stock or water



Pic © Perinaz Avari

**Directions****Slow Cooker Method**

Wash the lentils and add them to a slow cooker insert. Chop and add all the vegetables, ground turmeric and salt to the lentils, along with the stock or water. Cook on a high setting for 2-3 hours.

Use a hand blender or a large spoon to blend the slow-cooked vegetables and lentils, making sure there are no chunks left.

On the stove, heat oil in a pan. Fry onion and ginger garlic paste till the onion is brown.

Add homemade (as per recipe above) or store-bought Dhansak masala, ground red chili or Cayenne pepper and salt, along with jaggery/sugar. Add ½ cup of stock or water to cook the spices well for 3-5 minutes.

Then add the meat, tamarind paste/amchur/lime juice and red vinegar along with the remaining 1½ cups of stock or water. Cook for a couple of minutes and add this tempered base or 'vaghar' to the blended lentils and vegetables in the slow cooker.

Slow-cook for another 2 hours on high setting till the meat is done. Check for salt, adding more if required. The final consistency of Dhansak is like thick 'Daal' with a rich chocolate brown color. Sprinkle with chopped cilantro and serve Parsi Dhansak steaming hot over caramelized Basmati rice with a Kachumber salad.

**Traditional Pressure Cooker Method**

Wash the lentils and add them to the pressure cooker bowl. Chop and add all the vegetables, ground turmeric and salt to the lentils, along with the stock or water.

Countless tryouts and many Dhansak meals later (no complains!) here it is, an ode to my ancestors ready for public consumption.

Cook on a high flame for two pressure whistles, reduce the flame to low and cook for 15 minutes. Let it stand till pressure is released.

Using a hand blender or a large spoon blend until vegetables and lentils are smooth with no chunks.

Heat oil in a large stock pot. Fry onion and ginger garlic paste till the onion is brown.

Add homemade (as per recipe above) or store-bought Dhansak masala-spice blend, ground red chili or Cayenne pepper and salt, along with the jaggery/sugar. Add ½ cup of stock or water to cook the spices well for 3-5 minutes.

Then add the meat, tamarind paste/amchur/lime juice and red vinegar with the remaining 1½ cup of stock or water. Mix the blended lentils and vegetables from the pressure cooker into the tempered base or 'vaghar' in the stock pot.

Cook covered, adding water or stock as required, until the meat is done. Check for salt, adding more if required. The final consistency of Parsi Dhansak is like thick 'Daal' with a rich chocolate brown color.

Sprinkle with chopped cilantro and serve Parsi Dhansak hot over steaming caramelized rice and Kachumber salad.

**Note on Vegetables**

Dhansak is versatile in its use of vegetables. The above vegetables can be replaced with your choice of 3 cups vegetables like eggplant, zucchini, kale, any hard squash, fresh fenugreek leaves and sweet potatoes.



Pic © Perinaz Avari

## Caramelized Basmati Rice

### Ingredients

1 tablespoon canola oil  
 1½ tablespoon sugar  
 2 stick cinnamon, 2-inches each  
 4-5 whole cardamom  
 6-8 whole cloves  
 10-12 whole black peppercorns  
 1 star anise  
 1 medium bay leaf  
 2 cups long grain Basmati rice, washed and drained  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 4 cups water

### Directions

Heat the oil in a sauté pan with a tight fitting lid. Add sugar and once it starts turning light brown, add the spices (make sure the spices are measured and ready to go, before turning on the flame.) In about one minute or sooner, the sugar will turn dark brown and you'll get the aroma of whole spices. Add the washed and drained rice, salt and 4 cups of water. Bring the water to a boil, cover with a tight fitting lid and cook the rice on a low flame for 15 minutes (set the timer if required.)

Turn off the flame and do not uncover the rice, leaving it to cook further in its steam.

After 15-20 minutes, uncover and fluff the rice with a fork and discard the whole spices, as desired. Serve fresh caramelized Basmati rice as a base for Parsi Dhansak with Kachumber salad or side to any of your favorite meat or vegetable.



Pic © Perinaz Avari

## Kachumber Salad

Kachumber salad made with raw onion, cucumber, tomatoes and cilantro along with the spice kick of green chilies, in red vinegar dressing is a traditional accompaniment to the Parsi Dhansak, and side salad to many other Indian preparations.

### Ingredients

1½ cups chopped red onion  
 1 cup diced cucumber  
 1 cup diced tomatoes, seeds removed  
 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro  
 1 small Thai chili/ ½ Serrano pepper, finely chopped (optional for a spicy kick)  
 ¼ cup cider (red) vinegar  
 ½ teaspoon each salt and pepper

### Directions

Bring all the ingredients together in a serving bowl. Keep refrigerated for at least 2 hours for the flavors to blend, prior to serving along with Parsi Dhansak and caramelized Basmati rice, or with your favorite meat or vegetable.



Pic © Perinaz Avari

## Parsi Omelet

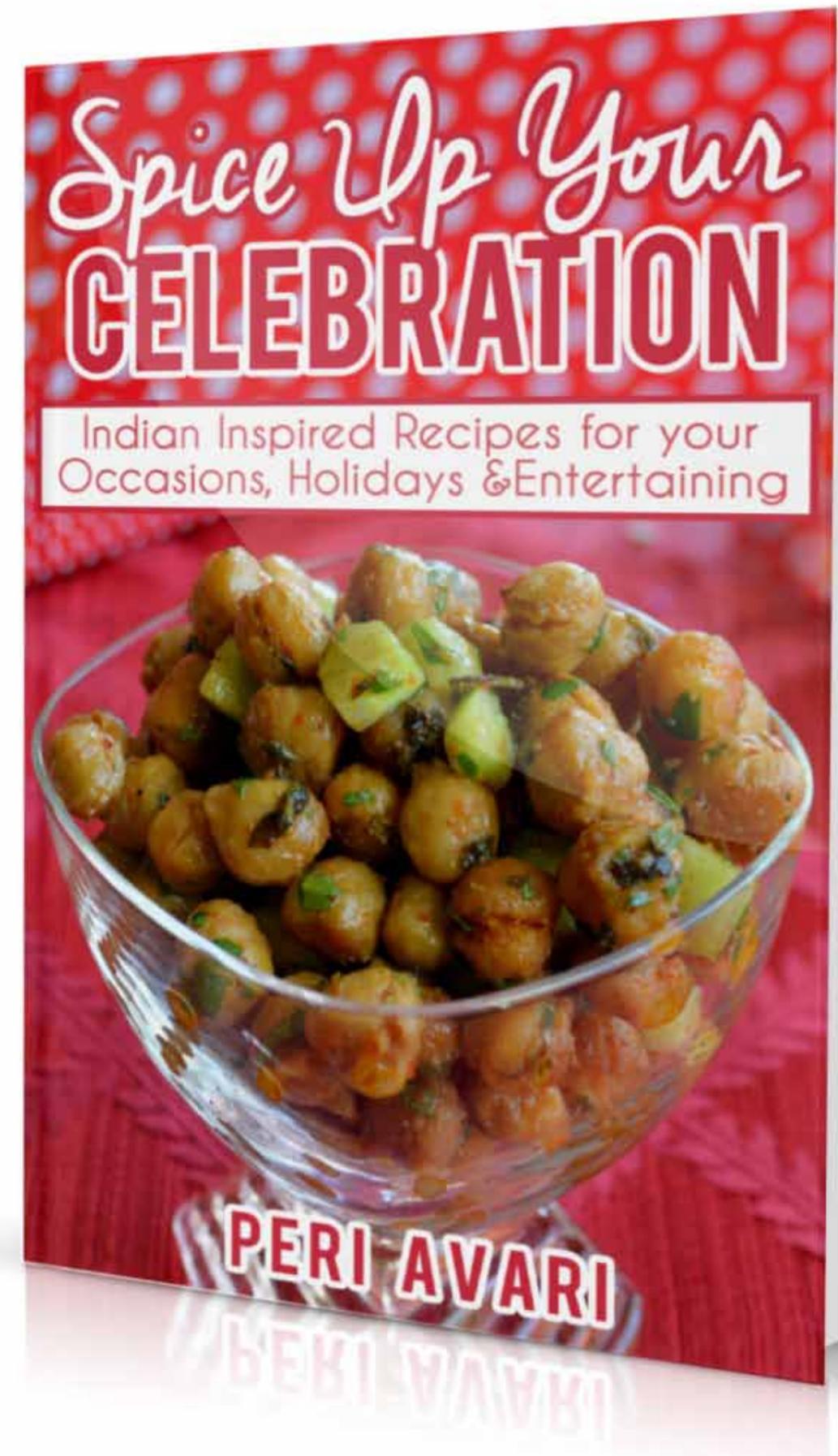
**Serves 4-6** • Hands-on time 10-15 minutes

4 eggs  
 1 medium onion, finely chopped  
 1 medium tomato, chopped  
 ½ teaspoon ginger garlic paste (or 1 minced garlic clove/¼ inch grated ginger)  
 1 Serrano pepper, minced (optional)  
 1-2 tablespoons raw mangoes, finely chopped (only if you have them on hand)  
 ½ teaspoon each: chili powder, cumin powder, turmeric and ground black pepper  
 ¾ teaspoon salt  
 1 tablespoon chickpea flour/gram flour\*  
 2 tablespoons cilantro/coriander leaves  
 1 tablespoon mint leaves  
 Canola oil to cook omelets  
 Juice of half a lemon

\*Chickpea flour or gram flour is available in the bulk section of most grocery stores or sold at ethnic stores as besan/channa flour. If you need to make it at home- lightly roast dried chickpeas and grind them in a food processor to a flour consistency.

In a large bowl, mix onion, tomatoes, Serrano peppers, raw mangoes, spices & seasonings, chickpea flour, cilantro and mint. Add the eggs to the bowl and mix well.

On a medium flame, heat an omelet pan with some canola oil. When the pan and oil are hot, spoon 3-4 tablespoons of the egg batter into the pan (make sure you spread the vegetables out so they don't heap in the middle of the omelet.) Cook each side of the omelet for 3-4 minutes. Repeat till all the batter is used up, you should get 4-5 omelets. Serve hot with a dash of lemon juice and a warm crusty buttered bread.



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## Fall from grace

We *Parsis* have an unfortunate appetite for navel-gazing. Our heydays are over. Since then, we have witnessed a steep, steady decline in our numbers, and our wealth. The constant emotive harping on an irretrievable golden past and the bemoaning of our fall from grace, so to speak, is undignified and serves no useful purpose. This article is by way of soul-searching upon why we have fallen from grace, in a more philosophical and equimanous light.. It is by way of a journey by a lay, (neither priest nor scholar) concerned Parsi who has gradually drifted away from his faith, traditions and customs. Now, in retired life, he feels this deep, inexplicable urge to rediscover his roots.

We begin our journey with a purview of some of the fundamental spiritual laws of human nature. These pertain to the metaphysical world, the world of living animate beings, in much the same way as the laws of physics govern the behaviour of inanimate physical objects. All living entities, the single and collective, such as communities and races are subject to this law. One such law is the *law of impermanence*. It states that all entities, that are subject to birth and death are also subject to change. Life is inherently cyclical. It has its ups and downs. All of us have experienced purple patches and brick walls in the course of our lives. Sometimes life is "like a walk in the park." At other times we feel like we are up against some great wall of china. Life is a state of constant flux; scientists increasingly refer to this as a state of entropy. Viewed in this light, we can look upon our glorious past in a more philosophical light. Life, in the real-world, is changeable and unpredictable. Another such law, the *law of opposites* further helps us to understand our present imbroglio. Without black, we would not know what white is. Without evil, we would not know what good is. These seemingly intractable opposites are intended to help us grasp a subtle fundamental truth. Words alone, can only give us superficial glimpses of life. We best learn experientially. Unless we have failed we, could not know the thrill of success. Moreover, unless we have tasted success we could not know the heartbreak of failure. We now begin to see that our relative decline is of no greater import than an ebbing tide. The world is but a stage, and we are but actors in an endless drama: as the great bard said.

The singular stain, swept under the carpet, on our otherwise exemplary achievements was our aiding and abetting in the notorious opium trade. The legendary likes of *Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy* and *David Sassoon*, of Jewish descent, earned a good measure of their fortunes this way. Both redeemed themselves, at least in my eyes, by exemplary philanthropy.

The exceptional history of this miniscule community, its meteoric rise and its equally steep decline is due in large part, in my humble opinion, to unique historical circumstances. Outstanding individuals and communities take root and blossom in particular times. The arrival of the British, who famously came to trade but then stayed to conquer, was a boon for us. Our far-sighted forefathers saw a window of opportunity and seized it. The rest, as they say, is history. We had precious little to trade, so we became middle-men.

We bought from others what our new masters needed and supplied it to them. It was a quid-pro-quo, a master-stroke that paid rich dividends. From such modest beginnings, we went on to become pioneers in many different fields. We became wealthy, sufficient to earn the sobriquet: "the Jews of India." The singular stain, swept under the carpet, on our otherwise exemplary achievements was our aiding and abetting in the notorious opium trade. The legendary likes of *Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy* and *David Sassoon*, of Jewish descent, earned a good measure of their fortunes this way. Both redeemed themselves, at least in my eyes, by exemplary philanthropy.

As the sun set over Her Majesty's Empire, colonialism having run its course and become passé post WW2, our fortunes began to turn. Bereft of patronage and faced with a level playing-field in post-independent India, we started to lose our high ground. We chose to rest on our laurels and eschew risky businesses; the cornerstone of our success story. Instead, we drifted towards the safer, newly emerging professions for which we were eminently suited, by virtue of our college degrees and diplomas. The Parsi community was quick to see the benefits of a Western-style universal education; for boys and girls. Whilst it kept us ahead of the more numerous packs behind us, it unwittingly led to an erosion of our identity. For it empowered us to think for ourselves, to eschew blind faith and dogmas, and to question the wisdom of our customs and traditions. Our belief in our religion was strong, but our priests were never a learned lot and did not command respect. They merely recited prayers by heart and attended to various rituals. On the social and cultural front, we began to adopt both the majority Hindu and the new European customs, customs we deemed to be superior.

This assimilation, which was to transform our community and our fate, took place in two contrasting waves. First, we adopted many Hindu customs, mainly of a ritualistic nature. Post-colonisation, many felt we had adapted too many Hindu customs, and so we changed course and began to court European ways. We started to dress like them, eat like them, and hob knobbed with them to further our prestige within the community. We abandoned joint families in favour of small, nuclear families; exercised our new-found freedoms to remain single or to marry those of other faiths- once akin to a cardinal sin. Post-independence, many chose to emigrate to the West, anticipating a backlash in lieu of our pro-British sympathies. In courting Western liberalism, we unwittingly, sowed the seeds for our eventual decline. The corner-stone of such freedom is universal values No bad thing; per se; but profoundly subversive for minorities, for their unique identities are based on historical customs and traditions.

To conclude, what lessons might we learn from our unique history? We Parsis are, in many ways, the forerunners for what may lie in store for other minorities, such as the *Sindhis*. We need to ask ourselves whether there is a tipping point, the proverbial thin-red-line, which if crossed by way of assimilation and reform endangers the sustainability of minorities as unique social, cultural and religious entities?

It would appear that a miniscule minority such as ours simply cannot survive such a dramatic change of attitudes as we have witnessed, of late. Those who doubt that we are in terminal decline would do well to read historian and Harvard scholar, Dinyar Patel's, masterly research paper on this subject.

It would appear further that what is good for the individual is a death-wish for the community. It is an ironic case of individual freedoms- the option to remain single, to intermarry and to remain celibate or childless – being inimical to the sustainability of the community. It is a painful pill for this author, a staunch liberal, to swallow. To conclude, what lessons might we learn from our unique history? We Parsis are, in many ways, the forerunners for what may lie in store for other minorities, such as the *Sindhis*. We need to ask ourselves whether there is a tipping point, the proverbial thin-red-line, which if crossed by way of assimilation and reform endangers the sustainability of minorities as unique social, cultural and religious entities? If so, how might such a point be determined? Moreover then, might it only cause further controversy? Something our boisterous and inalcitrant community- bitterly divided between liberals and conservatives- needs, like a hole in the head!

## Epilogue

The history of the Parsis and that of the British run parallel. Whilst the Raj was taking root and spreading its wings, we piggy-backed on the gravy train and prospered. Later, when it began to totter and ultimately gave way to *Swarajya*, we were a bemused and confused lot. Many left these shores for greener pastures, to join our masters of yore in the land of hope and glory. The Raj, now looks less like a providential boon for us Parsis, and more like a mixed-blessing

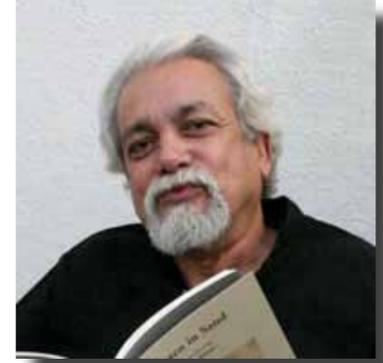
Today, just as we look back, nostalgically, upon our golden past in *Mother India*, the English are coming to terms with their fall from grace; post Rule Britannia. Their unique English identity is seen, by them, as being under siege by a wave of immigration from the Commonwealth. The newly arrived minorities equally fear their loss of identity, on account of assimilation by the majority. A supreme irony is it not? The minorities, as well as the majority, perceive one another as potential threats to their future well-being. The mighty elephant fears the army of ants crawling into its ear. The army of ants fears being stamped upon by the mighty elephant!

Is there some truth here, or simply mind-games? Notions and beliefs are primarily no more than concepts, which aid our comprehension. They are often, inadvertently or by design, mistaken for truths! I would suggest that we can no more reasonably cling to a rigid identity in a rapidly changing world, than hope to remain numero uno, forever, in a fiercely competitive world.

I posit, the only truth - is change!

The cyclic experience of departing and arriving and departing again works like the rising and falling of tides within us all. This new cycle of poems by the renowned poet Randhir Khare explores the shifting waters within in achingly beautiful cadences, which create moments of finding and losing in epiphanies of dark and light.

The first part of *Departures* has been published in Volume Three of the December 2014 Issue of Live Encounters [LINK](#)



## DEPARTURES – II

### **The Space Between**

Between the memory of rain and the forgetful sun  
Falls the knife of silence

Between footprints in the sand and the sleeping oasis  
An endless sonata jewelled with long dead stars

Between the open road and the dry river bed  
Larks serenade the middle path thorn-laden and forgiving

Between questions and answers  
Stammers the enlightened one unable to fly

Between land and water  
Is the miracle of birth pure as first fruit

Between all that we have and all we have lost  
Time stands like a pillar of salt waiting for Gomorrah

Between you and me is a smear of vermillion  
Frozen in love

**Colour Me**

The lamp within is flickering  
     As the dark ripples with breeze  
 And every moment finds me  
 Head sunk between my knees.

So colour me with rainbows  
 That my body becomes sky  
 And my tattered thoughts turn feathers  
 Form wings, begin to fly.

When I have flown beyond the edge  
     Of my deepest fears  
 I trust the wind will carry me  
 Beyond the realm of tears.

I'll be ready for the journey  
     When dark dissolves in light  
 And my head heavy with dreaming  
 Burns with the wax of night.

So colour me with rainbows  
     That I may climb the air  
 And float along the seams of dreams  
 Away from my despair.

**Piece By Piece**

Piece by piece  
 The year has fallen away  
 Seconds minutes hours days weeks months  
 Crumbling in the palms of the seasons  
 Drifting away down flues of forgetfulness  
 Leaving me standing here on this shrinking island  
 Crusoe, feet sunk in sand  
 Sea about my ears singing with gull voices  
 Of freedom.

Piece by piece  
 I learn to let go of all that I was, prepare to drown

**The Only Way**

The only way out of this dusty darkness  
 Creaking with a disabled fan  
 Is through the mirror on the wall  
 Is through an imitation Dali hanging from a rusty nail  
 Is speaking the word clothed in silence  
 Is opening the lock for which there is no key  
 Is crawling out of the skylight clogged with the moon  
 Is the way of the skater walking on water's skin  
 Is through the rainbow's arc of dreaming

The only way out of this dusty darkness  
 Is through the hole in your head  
 From which memories emerge like meteorites

**Purple**

Mine is the moment before glass sheets of dawn crash  
 Into splinters  
 And night herons rise squawking over still jheels  
 Aromatic with wilderness

Mine is the moment before cock-crows slide  
 Along air tunnels  
 And flow over sleeping fields and homes  
 Warm with sleep

Mine is the moment before the old clear their throats  
 Spit out nightmares  
 Thick with fear and open their eyes to another day  
 Surprised to be alive

Mine is the purple moment when the past dissolves  
 Into a fugue of change  
 And that which was no more becomes what is  
 Throbbing like the chest of a new born sparrow.

Purple is my moment of awakening

**No, Not Now**

Jasmine fills the air with its breath  
 Koels drink moonlight  
 The road wanders past my gate  
 Searching for a traveller  
 Sea-voices return to mouths of shells  
 In a blue glass bowl

No, not now

Dew walks across the lawn  
 On little wet feet  
 A snail with a glowing shell  
 Glides along the path  
 Worms sing of the embrace of roots  
 In the forgiving earth

No, not now

No not now, not ever  
 I embrace the night with all my life  
 Sing with the chorus of shadows  
 Sing with all that is unseen  
 Sing with the orchestra of maggots  
 Waiting to be born  
 Sing with the jasmine ache in my head  
 Sing with drunken koels  
 Sing with the road in search of a traveller  
 Sing sea songs with shells  
 Sing with an armful of sky  
 Sing to go on...

No, not now.

**When The Lights Go Out**

When the lights go out  
 Dark fills my mouth  
 Words float on breath  
 As I search for you  
 My albatross

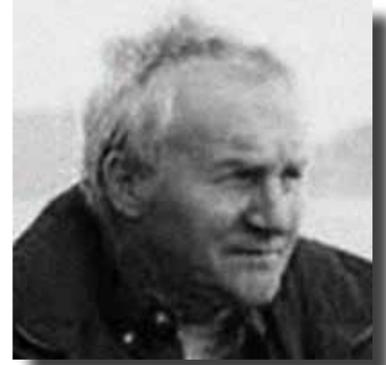
You move endlessly  
 In a void  
 Dense with memory  
 Free from the past  
 Free from the future  
 Great wheels of solitude

How I strive to attain  
 Your clean detachment  
 Wings slicing the dark  
 Swooping, soaring, gliding,  
 Rain-damp and singing

When the lights go out  
 Be my guide  
 As I move through the realms  
 Of my nothingness  
 Searching for freedom

Give me the courage  
 To snap my moorings  
 See the blueness in the black  
 And learn to accept  
 All that I am not

Great bird of foreverness  
 Teach me the art of sweeping  
 Time with my wings  
 Till my path is clear  
 And the wind lifts me beyond  
 When the lights go out.



When living in Ireland last year, our son, Matthew pleaded with us to have a dog. We visited the local ISPCA and were lucky enough to become the proud owners of Cassie, a very pleasant border collie. She now lives in Hamburg with us and I am in the process of completing a manuscript entitled, *Lady Cassie Peregrina*. This poem is from Cassie's perspective.

#### A Dog's Life – Cassie Speaks

I've got eyes and when I look at people in heels,  
no heels, two legs and artificial faces, I am happy  
with my bowl of food and water. I cannot articulate,

write or use a mobile phone, thank todoG, though  
I'm well able to leather out vigorous yelps  
when leaping and barking at the seashore. Beware:

I am a hedonist who knows how to indulge in  
the glow of honeysuckle and in the taste of  
turf magic in my silken frolics on the bog road.

I feel lucky that I have the sun, moon and raindrops  
as constant companions – when reaching for the stars  
I lie on my back and poke my four legs in the air.



## Dr Nimmi Kurian

Associate Professor at the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, India.  
India Representative of the India China Institute (ICI), The New School, New York

Author of **India-China Borderlands - Conversations beyond the Centre** (*Sage Publications*) speaks to Mark Ulyseas

### Why did you write this book and what do you hope to achieve with it?

An intriguing puzzle at the heart of India-China relations got me interested in the topic. I was curious as to why despite the compelling immediacy of a 4,056 km long border, when we think of India and China we typically think of New Delhi and Beijing and not locations along this long shared border. Not unlike the elephant in the room, more than visible yet never acknowledged. This incongruity becomes sharper when one recalls that the borderlands of India and China have always looked outwards, the ethnic makeup of its peoples reflecting centuries-old processes of co-mingling and migrations.

Recall the romanticism of Silk Road lore of sinuous tracks that carried goods, peoples, ideas, customs, religions and languages. Yet the fact remains that today the India-China border regions and cross-cultural signposts such as Shigatse, Jelep La, Lohit, Chengdu, Ledo and Dali hardly figure in the mainstream policy and research consciousness. Much of this cosmopolitan slice of social, economic and cultural history today remains sadly forgotten. This seemed not unlike a Matryoshka challenge, nesting one fascinating layer within another. The book is a small step towards unpacking this interesting conundrum.

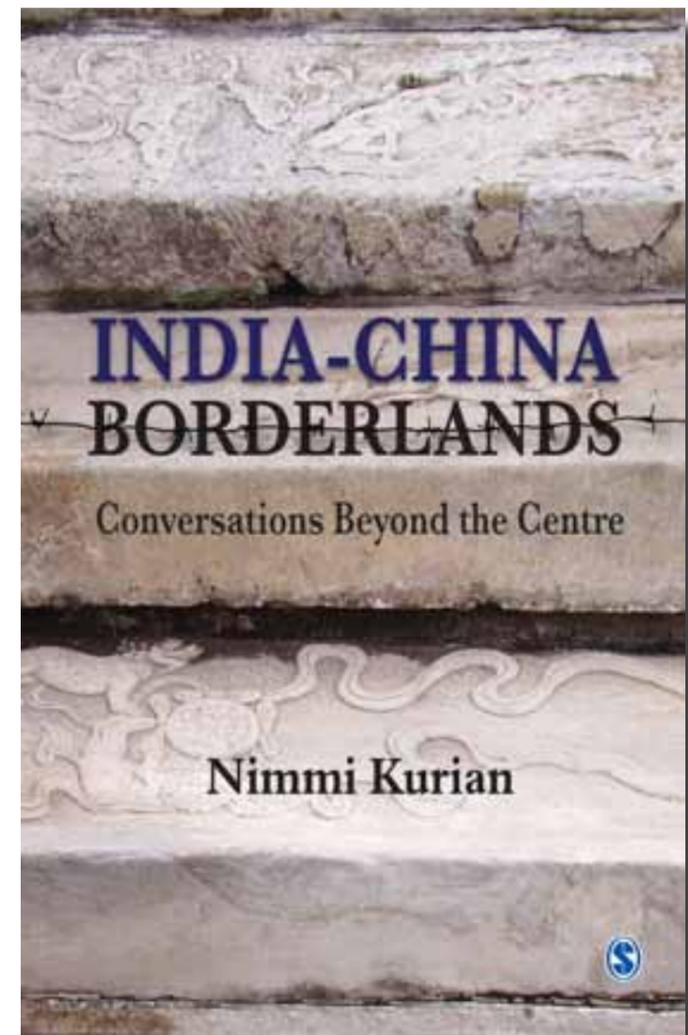
The book attempts to fill this gap by arguing for the need to reclaim these cosmopolitan histories and the manner in which these have shaped the daily lives of people who lived across these borders. These are the residents of Asia's highlands, a corner of the world little known and even less understood. The region presents a picture postcard collage with its rich fare of festivals, monasteries, temples and churches, verdant tea gardens, mighty rivers, deep forests, diverse ecological zones and even more diverse peoples.

The eight states that constitute Northeast India account for 8 per cent of the total geographical area of the country, with a population of 44 million that makes up less than 4 per cent of the country's population and home to immense ethnic diversity with hundreds of tribal and sub-tribal groupings. China's western region too has a high degree of ethnic diversity largely concentrated in its 12 western border provinces. The 55 officially recognised ethnic minority groups make up over 8 per cent of the population but the small percentage makes up for a substantial presence geographically inhabiting 64 per cent of the country's total area, mostly along international borders.

Its demographic presence is also substantial, making up 113.8 million. The critical challenge for public action in both countries will be to sustain rapid growth and to make this growth inclusive across these remote border regions, with their accompanying low levels of economic development.

Some of these concerns led me to be closely involved in an international Track-II initiative aimed at strengthening regional cooperation among the contiguous regions of India's North-east, China's Southwest, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

As part of the team of scholars, which conceptualised the idea in Kunming, capital of China's south-western border province of Yunnan in 1999, I have been an active participant in successive rounds where we came up with actionable ideas that would create a bottom-up, inclusive approach to study regional development. I am also exploring an alternative analytic framework within which India and China can engage each other on a range of public goods such as water management issues as well as those relating to the management of the ecosystem and biodiversity affecting the extended neighbourhood. Perhaps a clear indication that this is an idea whose time has come is the fact that Indian and Chinese governments have begun officially backing some of these ideas.



The book offers a comparative perspective on the consecutive moves being initiated by India and China and looks specifically at the implications the shifting border discourse holds for the periphery in whose name this development is being initiated and whether it will be in a position to benefit from these interventions. As rising powers cohabiting a shared geopolitical space, it is natural that both countries will find that their paths will tend to frequently intersect in the future. The question that arises is whether these are likely to be characterised by competition or by co-operation.

### Could you give us a detailed overview of the book ?

The book looks at the evolving dynamics of India-China relations within the rubric of the massive state-led developmental thrust that India's Northeast and China's Western border regions are currently witnessing. In particular, it critically examines the transformational potential of transborder linkages in trade, tourism and transport that both countries have been underscoring. The talk of reopening borders is misleading for it conveys the impression that one is talking of reopening a dormant border. Far from it. Today, economic forces are in fact building on complex histories of transnational social and cultural exchanges that have operated above and below the national level. There are interesting similarities between India's Look East policy, which was initiated in 1991 and China's Western Development Strategy, which commenced in 1999. For instance, both programmes place a strong accent on reducing regional disparities and raising the socio-economic profile of the respective border regions. But by and large, India and China's parallel moves in the subregion have tended to be studied as isolated cases. This has been a curious omission at a time when political sensibilities of the day in both countries are in the process of reimagining borders less as barriers and more as bridges. The book offers a comparative perspective on the consecutive moves being initiated by India and China and looks specifically at the implications the shifting border discourse holds for the periphery in whose name this development is being initiated and whether it will be in a position to benefit from these interventions.

As India and China make moves to redefine their land borders as bridges that are effective bearers of their influence across the region, the critical question that needs to be asked is whether their respective visions are likely to coincide or not. As rising powers cohabiting a shared geopolitical space, it is natural that both countries will find that their paths will tend to frequently intersect in the future. The question that arises is whether these are likely to be characterised by competition or by cooperation. Seen through the realist interpretive lens, the future trajectory of India-China relations is likely to be marked by rising tensions and rivalry. The pessimistic scenario is offered on account of the parallel moves by both countries for regional and global influence, which by its very logic is said to stoke competitive elements. Even as their interactions have scaled impressive heights, why has it curiously not taken much for India-China conversations to break down? This could well be a problem of not knowing what the problem is. This could be because by and large, India and China's confidence building measures have aimed at conflict prevention, which can at best only imitate conditions of peace but can seldom become a durable basis for one. Breaking out of this warp would call for a redefinition of the problem beyond conflict prevention to conflict transformation. Such a reconceptualisation would mean appreciating that there is more to borders than lines of control or establishing hotlines and holding flag meetings. Sub-regional futures need to be subnational futures that bring people back into these visions. If creatively reimagined, the borderlands can be at the centre of a promising regional conversation of change that India and China have the potential to initiate.

My exchanges with Chinese academics over the years have convinced me that we have reached the basic comfort levels to now go into specifics, since the devil lies in the details. In my sustained interactions with policy makers in India, I am beginning to get the sense that a more nuanced understanding of problems is evolving and there is a greater willingness to take incremental steps to think out of the 'security box'. Although this should still be treated as work-in-progress, I do feel that we are reaching an interesting juncture where we can now start connecting the dots for the big picture to emerge.

There are of course no silver bullet solutions possible to tackle a complex subject such as this. But perhaps this is what makes it such an interesting intellectual challenge too. My exchanges with Chinese academics over the years have convinced me that we have reached the basic comfort levels to now go into specifics, since the devil lies in the details. In my sustained interactions with policy makers in India, I am beginning to get the sense that a more nuanced understanding of problems is evolving and there is a greater willingness to take incremental steps to think out of the 'security box'. Although this should still be treated as work-in-progress, I do feel that we are reaching an interesting juncture where we can now start connecting the dots for the big picture to emerge.

### Would you be so kind as to give us a glimpse of your life and work?

Looking back, I trace my eclecticism, a liberal disposition and an enquiring mind to my growing up years in a university residential campus. I rate these as critical formative influences which moulded me into the individual I am today. I see these as gifting me with three invaluable gifts that I treasure highly. Firstly, these instilled in me from very early on to learn to pursue a creative idea with rigour and an open-minded scholarly enquiry. The vibrant intellectual atmosphere also prepared me to expect not just two sides to any argument but between these to find a third, probably a fourth one. Secondly, growing up in a home that spilled over with books, books and more books gave me what I perhaps value most: an abiding love for the word. The third value that I imbibed has been perhaps more subtle but equally strong. Our home on campus was a refuge for students who dropped by at all possible hours to discuss a paper or unburden their worries, or to simply have a meal when they felt homesick. The way I saw my parents deal with them helped me hone my social skills and to build and retain long-standing friendships.

An abiding influence has definitely been the institute where I work, the Centre for Policy. I could not have asked for a better platform from which to start and build a career. I count as a strong asset the experience and insights I have gained in the process of strengthening the interface with key policy actors and the media. I have always seen CPR's enabling environment as a sort of intellectual incubator where I have enjoyed floating new ideas, defending them and the satisfaction of passing the test of rigour. As a scholar, I have always attempted to push the envelope by asking new questions, keeping Einstein's take on problems as a sort of evergreen maxim: 'You cannot solve a problem with the same thinking that caused the problem.' Such a maxim, I believe can help one think out of set positions and to leave the comfort of conventional modes of enquiry. Such open-minded enquiry is absolutely essential for the success of any exciting intellectual project. It makes one not only curious as to where such intellectual meanderings would lead to, but also more receptive to expect the unexpected as far as research questions are concerned.

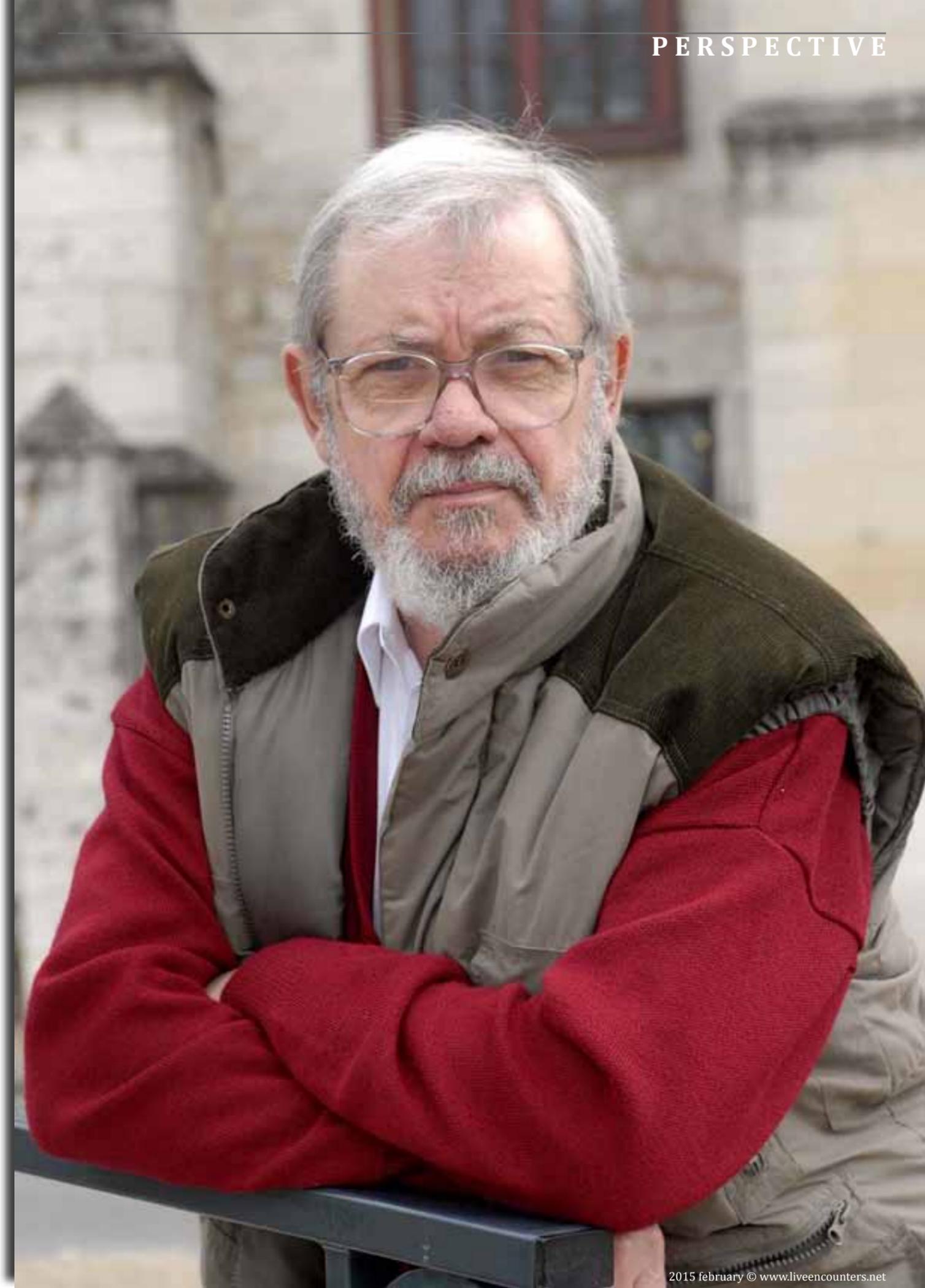
Kilcourse has published two short-story collections, *The Human Circus* and *More Short Stories*, four novels, *The Great Collapse*, *Who Killed Clarissa?*, *A Deadly Deception*, *A Phantom Madman*, and *The Great Collapse*, in which he weaves social commentary into mysteries, a short autobiography *It's Only Me* and a book on management development. He writes essays on politics and economics and continues to be published in journals. [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

## THOUGHT AND CONSEQUENCE

We should never doubt the power of ideas to shape the world we live in. This is no less true in the field of economics than in technological development. The thoughts of Karl Marx were used, perhaps abused, to place many millions of people under Communist governments and to bring the human race to the brink of nuclear war. Today, we are subject to a different economic philosophy, one that has been around for a long time, but came into ascendancy late in the twentieth century.

The notion that the market mechanism can be trusted to produce wealth and reach some benign equilibrium without political interference has a long history. Its emergence today would be less consequential perhaps were it not for a parallel development in economics, the idea that the discipline is a science, and can be regarded in isolation from its political and philosophical roots.

While confined to the campus the treatment of economics as a separate discipline, and the attempt to give it scientific credibility through the extensive use of mathematical models, could be considered harmless perhaps. However, such equanimity disregards the fact that the product of the campus, students, may take up positions in the outside world as 'economists'. In consequence, we now have major institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, as well as key posts in various governments, occupied by people whose education in economics was extremely narrow. Some recent economics graduates from a British university claimed not to know who J. M. Keynes was.



Not a single major economy has reached that status on the basis of free-trade. Had post-war Japan accepted American advice to stick to rice production, it would not have become the second largest economy on the planet. The country grew because the Japanese government created the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), a hands-on government department that controlled trade and ensured industrial development through inter-company collaboration.

Through a combination of excessive use of mathematical modelling and a jargon filled lexicon these people have convinced others, notably politicians, that they are masters of a science beyond laymen's understanding. Despite the failure of most economists to foresee the disaster of 2008, politicians appear to have accepted this nonsense to the extent that they refuse to make a decision without economic advice. Sadly, the advice they receive is grounded in a single, narrow economic philosophy: do not interfere with market forces.

The consequences of this misunderstanding are at least as profound, and conceivably more dangerous for the world, than was the emergence of Communism on the back of Marx's theories. In surrendering to the blind, amoral force of markets our politicians have removed regulations, in such areas as finance and housing, that provided years of stability. By doing so, they opened their electorates to the uncertainties of globalisation. They have bought into the mythology of 'free trade' and invariably confuse economics with commerce, which are not synonymous.

Since the 1980s there has been a general consensus in British political circles that the economy is best served by removing barriers to the commercial imperative and that government involvement in economic matters should be kept to a minimum. This belief persists despite evidence that many of today's problems have their roots in earlier efforts to release the energy of the market. As in the USA, Britain's financial crisis can be traced back to deregulation of financial services, and Britain's housing crisis owes much to Prime Minister Thatcher's removal of controls with her 'right to buy' policy in social housing.

It appears to me bizarre that our elected politicians appear not to understand that the interests of commercial organisations, singularly or collectively, do not necessarily correspond with the best interests of the nation. That remains the case whether or not the corporation is foreign or nominally British. Yet how else can we explain the enthusiasm with which politicians appear ready to give commercial interests a free hand, reducing protection for employees in an effort to compete with cheap labour in Asia.

South Korea is another country that dragged itself out of poverty through government directed industrialisation programmes. I now drive a Korean car because that country's leaders took the economy by the scruff of the neck and dragged it into the modern age.

Though employment levels have risen, many of those finding work are forced to accept zero-hours contracts whereby they have no assurance of work from one day to the next. Many have to accept such contracts from more than one employer in order to make ends meet.

The belief that economics is entirely distinct from politics enables politicians to claim that economic necessity leaves them with no choice in such matters as employment. They shun the introduction of tighter regulation in a number of areas, arguing that commercial organisations would move elsewhere. This argument has been used most forcefully in relation to banks. Yet the environment that enables corporations to threaten flight is a political creation. Globalisation is a political construct satisfying commercial aims rather than economic need, and it was built on a myth: that free-trade promotes economic growth.

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Growth in other countries has also depended on government action, although not so evident and forceful as that of Korea, and the list includes Britain and America, thought to be champions of free trade. The internet may now be dominated by a handful of American companies, but the original stimulus came from research in government laboratories.

In some cases whole industries have been transferred abroad, while in others the industry remained home based, but outsourced much of its work overseas. This outsourcing process has gone so far in some cases that skills have been lost domestically and companies have become dependent on foreign suppliers for their survival.

In Britain and America alike much of the growth attributed to private enterprise was enabled by government investment, most notably military spending. Ironically, the British government's efforts to cut its debt deprives commercial companies of opportunities. Last year British spending on the infrastructure was £20bn less than in 2009/10.

The notion that free-trade benefits everyone goes back to the nineteenth century, to Ricardo and his theory of comparative advantage. That theory suggested that countries should produce and export those goods in which they had the greatest advantage. For instance, though England could produce wine, it could only do so at greater cost than could the French, so England should leave wine production to the French while concentrating on, say, producing wool. The theory was first explained to me as a student by reference to two people who work together, a doctor and a secretary. The doctor may be a better typist than the secretary who, in turn, knows first-aid. However, though better at typing, the doctor leaves all typing to the secretary because doing it himself would distract him from that in which his advantage is greater, treating patients.

One occasionally sees the term 'comparative advantage' used today, but it has been made redundant by something that Ricardo took no account of: international capital movement. There is nothing new in capital transfers abroad. Britain has invested overseas for many years, but the nature of the investment has changed. Whereas in the past funds were used to buy such things as rubber plantations or other sources of material for British industry, today's capital has been invested in building industrial capacity to compete with Britain's domestic production.

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America has lost its technological leadership, western economies in general are in jeopardy, and many developing nations are denied the right to build industries behind protective barriers. All this is the consequence of ideas that should have remained on the campus.

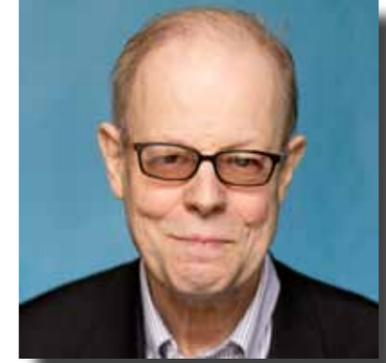
This has happened even in the defence industry to the extent that one commentator claims that "Thanks to nearly two decades of such policies, the US is now unable to put a single military aircraft into the sky without using components made by potential adversaries." (Ian Fletcher 'Free Trade Doesn't Work') Yet western governments persist in believing that what is good for commercial companies is necessarily good for the country.

Because of this persistent belief in free-trade, free movement of capital (but perversely, not necessarily of labour) and the reduction of state 'interference', manufacturing in Britain now accounts for no more than 10% of Gross Domestic Product, while services account for 80%. Faced with such figures the Chancellor's claim to be building a balanced economy appears satirical. It is little wonder that the British deficit on current account stands at a record 6% of GDP, nor should we be surprised that political rhetoric refers now only to GDP, which is growing, due largely to a number of unsustainable factors, while the balance of payments is never mentioned.

Decline is not confined to Britain, of course.

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The Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF) is a resource centre integrating knowledge and experience to strengthen peacebuilding policy and practice. Established in 2008, it collaborates and promotes collaboration with a wide network of researchers, policymakers and practitioners in Norway and abroad.



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Julie Lunde Lilleæter

## China's thinking on peace and security



### Dr Ola Tunander

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#### Executive summary

This report is based on informal interviews and conversations with Chinese officials with access to cabinet ministers. China's rapid economic growth has been based on peaceful relations with major powers and neighbouring states, and on a common understanding of the UN Security Council as the guardian of peace and security. In 2009 Japan's Democratic Party government led by Fukio Hatoyama opted for closer ties with China, which was unacceptable to a U.S.-Japanese elite seeking to keep the U.S. alliance as Japan's primary relationship. By playing the territory card, i.e. by triggering a territorial conflict, they were able to calibrate the level of tension so as to bring about regime change in Japan and reset East Asian geopolitics. This coincided with China's fundamental loss of trust in the U.S. after the events in Libya and Syria, and with Russia's turn to China after the events in Ukraine. The new Asian geopolitics, the rise of the BRICS, and the loss of trust in the U.S. and Britain have forced China to develop closer ties with Russia. This does not indicate a new bipolar order, and China tries to maintain a pragmatic relationship of mutual respect with all the great powers, but it does indicate a new geopolitics characterised by fundamental distrust among the permanent members of the UN Security Council.

This report will examine the views of the new leadership in Beijing, i.e. President Xi Jinping, Prime Minister Li Keqiang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. It is based on informal interviews and conversations with Chinese officials and scholars with access to the country's cabinet ministers. It will deal with China as a global actor and "responsible stakeholder" in relation to the U.S., its collaboration with the BRICS countries (not least with Russia), and its understanding of peace and security.

## Introduction

Some scholars have argued that China's policy of "harmony and peace" with neighbouring states has changed after President Xi Jinping succeeded President Hu Jintao in 2013, but this change may not have been provoked by the change of leadership. In 2005 Hu presented his theory of the "three harmonies": *he ping*, *he jie* and *he xie* ("peace", "peaceful solutions" and "harmony"). Instead of confrontation, Chinese leaders spoke about peaceful dialogue, and, if a diplomatic solution was not viable, about United Nations (UN) operations. A unilateral Chinese military operation was only acceptable in defence of the Chinese homeland. China's deputy chief of staff, General Zhang Qingsheng, explained the precise meaning of the concept of "harmony" to the military forces by referring to (1) "common security", (2) "confidence-building measures", (3) "peaceful dialogue" and (4) "UN operations" (Xiangshan Forum, 2006) – in short, the traditional security policy of Nordic Social Democracy. This was stated, not as support for the Nordic view, but as a message to neighbouring countries and to the U.S. Seemingly China was supporting a peaceful "Nordic security policy" not because the country is small, like the Nordic ones, but because it is very large and wanted to reassure its neighbours. Since 2000 China has emphasised international law, the UN and a multipolar world (comprising the European Union, the U.S., Russia, China, Brazil, Japan and India), with the UN Security Council as a supreme entity. The question is whether this approach has essentially changed in recent years or whether China has modified its policy because of external pressure.

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## The making of the Sino-Japanese territorial dispute

Deng Xiaoping's leadership of China from 1978 prioritised economic development. There was no interest in engaging in a conflict on the country's sea borders, which would be difficult to resolve and could easily be detrimental to economic ties. The 1978 Sino-Japanese Treaty stated that the two sides shall "settle all disputes by peaceful means and shall refrain from the use or threat of force" (China-Japan, 1978). Territorial issues were raised, but put aside to avoid tension. During our conversations senior Chinese officials argued that there was an agreement "not to agree", that no one should make a unilateral move and that differences should be dealt with diplomatically. But recently something has changed.

In 2009 Japan's Yukio Hatoyama government, the first government to be formed by the Democratic Party (Japan's more left-wing party), announced closer ties to China, including an agreement to "deepen defence relations" (VNA, 2009), i.e. Japan would rely less on its ties with the U.S. The Hatoyama government supported the demand of the people of Okinawa to close down the U.S. military base on the island, one of the largest in the western Pacific. Prime Minister Hatoyama was not trusted in the U.S. He had to resign in June 2010 after being unable to move or close down the Okinawa base.

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In 2010, however, representatives of China's Defence Ministry and State Council (Prime Minister's Office) stated at a China Association Military Science Conference that neither the Japanese nor Chinese government wanted to make an issue of it (Xiangshan Forum, 2010). Let us look into this in some detail.

At a Sino-Japanese defence ministers' meeting in October 2010 both sides agreed that this incident should not disturb relations between China and Japan, but the media whipped up nationalist hysteria and turned the two countries against each other. U.S. secretary of state Hillary Clinton added fuel to the conflict by confirming that the islands fell under the U.S. Security Treaty for the defence of Japan, which the U.S. had not stated previously (Fu, 2012; Manyin, 2013). Advisers to China's prime minister and defence minister discussed this problem at the 2010 Xiangshan Forum in terms of a "trap". Chinese leaders felt that they had to respond to the Japanese provocation and defend the sovereignty of China, but by raising this issue a confrontation with Japan was unavoidable, which would destroy the closer relations developed during the Hatoyama era. Both sides reluctantly fell into the trap. There were no longer significant Japanese demands for moving the U.S. military base from Okinawa and the Japanese rapprochement with China was over.

The new Democratic Party prime minister, Naoto Kan, and his successor, Yoshihiko Noda, were unable to stop this development. Japanese politics moved in a nationalist direction, which opened the door for Shinzo Abe of the Liberal Democratic Party (Japan's conservative party) to become prime minister in December 2012. In two years Japan's traditional conflict with China and its firm ties with the U.S. were re-established by U.S. and Japanese stakeholders who had effectively instigated a territorial conflict that allowed them to calibrate the level of tension between China and Japan and thus reset East Asian geopolitics.

Senior Chinese officials interviewed in 2014 who were close to the prime minister, the Foreign Ministry and the chief of military intelligence argued that there had been no change in Chinese foreign policy as a consequence of the transition from President Hu Jintao to President Xi Jinping and from Prime Minister Wen Jiabao to Prime Minister Li Keqiang. What had changed had been U.S. policy on East Asia, which provoked or opened up the opportunity for Japanese and Philippine nationalist forces to make territorial claims, which forced the Chinese to make counterclaims...

### **The U.S. pivot to Asia and the use of the Japanese territory card**

With the U.S. turn to East Asia from early 2010 (Ross, 2012) and with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's and President Obama's official launch of the "pivot" in 2011 (Clinton, 2011; Obama, 2011), U.S. allies made territorial claims in the East and South China Seas. In 2010 the Philippines awarded an Anglo-Filipino consortium a licence to explore for gas on Reed Bank, but drilling stalled in 2012 because of the presence of Chinese ships (Reuters, 2013). In Japan, the Kurihara family claimed the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands (bought in the 1970s from the Koga family, who claimed to have bought them in the 1930s). In May 2012 nationalist governor of Tokyo Shintaro Ishihara stated that he wanted to buy three of the islands to "shake up Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations" (Ito, 2012). When a private individual claimed to own the disputed islands, this did not disturb the 1978 Sino-Japanese treaty, but when the Japanese government or local administration unilaterally took control of the islands, this was in breach of the treaty, Chinese officials argued. In September 2012 media hysteria and nationalist sentiment made the weak prime minister Yoshihiko Noda try to ride the wave of nationalism by "buying" the islands, allegedly to prevent them from falling into the hands of Ishihara in order to fend off the radical nationalists' attempt to use them for propaganda purposes (Japan Times, 2012; McCurry, 2012). But this immediately raised the issue of sovereignty, and the Japanese measures were not acceptable to Beijing. Prime Minister Noda may have been tricked into taking such measures and may have been unaware of their potential consequences. In retrospect, it appears that Noda had fallen into a trap set by the radical nationalists and some U.S. actors who wanted to weaken Japan's Democratic Party government and stop its turn to China and its decision to force the U.S. out of Okinawa.

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The views of some academics were coloured by their own wishful thinking and by their hopes for closer Sino-U.S. ties. They did not see the real significance of the U.S.-Japanese agreement. This means that President Obama's meeting with the Dalai Lama in February 2014 may rather be interpreted as a public U.S. signal to China not to encourage any Chinese misreading of U.S. intentions. The meeting was a demonstration of U.S. loyalties, which could not be misunderstood in China.

exploit China's weak point. When China and Japan established closer ties in 2009 this was unacceptable to certain forces in Japan and the U.S. They responded by playing the territory card to increase Sino-Japanese tension in order to guarantee that the Japanese-U.S. alliance was kept as Japan's primary relationship.

### **Escalation, nuclear temptation and the calibration of tension**

Neither the advisers to Prime Minister Li nor the most senior officials from the Chinese Foreign Ministry and military intelligence believed that China would go to war with Japan, while some academics did not exclude the possibility of a war and even believed that the U.S. would stay out of such a war to avoid a nuclear exchange. The recent talk about a Sino-U.S. partnership, the elevation of China to the position of a "responsible stakeholder", and the relaxed meeting between President Obama and President Xi had made senior academics believe that the U.S. would stay neutral in an East Asian conflict. These academics (particularly in Shanghai) mentioned the example of France under President de Gaulle not trusting U.S. nuclear guarantees. The U.S. would not save Marseilles if it stood to lose New York, De Gaulle had said, and the same could be said of Tokyo and New York, one academic argued. Such a risky game was never mentioned at higher levels in Beijing.

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Chinese scholars said that they had studied European history before the First World War, noting Germany's role as a rising power and its naval build-up that challenged British naval hegemony and was one of the causes of the First World War. In 2006 Chinese officials consulted by the author argued that China was well aware of this problem and would avoid a corresponding build-up that would challenge U.S. naval hegemony. China's economic development depends on global stability and trust between it and its neighbours.

### China's historical experience and perception of its territory

Its experiences in the 19th and 20th centuries have taught China that wars are a result of weakness in the face of foreign aggression, as illustrated by Western colonial rule and Japanese invasions in that period. China's way of learning from these experiences and avoiding war is to arm itself. The country's military budget represents 5.3% of the total budget (Perlo-Freeman, 2014), but the radically increased costs of military pensions is also part of this high figure. The combined forces of the U.S. and Japan are several times larger than China's. In addition, China's rearmament is not combined with an aggressive rhetoric. Historically speaking, China has tended to maintain the status quo. It has not tried to occupy territories outside its historical empire and it has no real offensive capabilities; for example, it will be decades before China has a genuine aircraft carrier capability (Till & Bratton, 2012).

Chinese scholars said that they had studied European history before the First World War, noting Germany's role as a rising power and its naval build-up that challenged British naval hegemony and was one of the causes of the First World War. In 2006 Chinese officials consulted by the author argued that China was well aware of this problem and would avoid a corresponding build-up that would challenge U.S. naval hegemony. China's economic development depends on global stability and trust between it and its neighbours. Some scholars leaned more towards belief in a multipolar world order, while others believed that for the foreseeable future China would have to accept U.S. hegemony and a unipolar world. China alone is not likely to challenge the U.S. in any part of the world as long as the U.S. does not threaten China's territorial integrity.

A more problematic aspect of Chinese security thinking is the understanding of China's territory as something given and unchanging over the centuries. The relative historical stability of East Asian borders has shaped a perception of the Chinese state as an entity with a clearly defined territory. In contrast to the European understanding of national territory as something constructed over the centuries with new states and new borders redefined by wars, the Chinese territory has been understood as fixed. External forces have conquered China and founded new dynasties, but Chinese territory has been relatively stable, shaped by Chinese civilisation. Civil wars and attacks by foreign aggressors have never been able to alter this perception. Both Beijing and Taipei have a common understanding of what "China" is, but not of who the legitimate ruler of that country is. This means that Chinese territory, including its historical islands, is perceived to constitute the "essence of China", which is a weak point that others seek to exploit. This is obvious in the South China Sea, where China claims reefs close to the Philippines and Vietnam (analogous to the Greek sea border close to Turkey). The Diaoyu/Senkaku islands conflict is different. Here China's claims are motivated not only by historical ties, but also by the fact that the islands are located close to Taiwan. They belong to China because they are part of Taiwan, the Chinese argue.

Japan has never admitted to its brutal past and its killing of millions of Chinese and hundreds of thousands of people in biological weapons attacks in Manchuria. The Japanese opened the living bodies of targeted Chinese to study the effect of their biological weapons. After the Second World War central Japanese figures like Lieutenant General Ishii Shiro were recruited to the U.S. biological weapons programme, whose weapons were used during the Korean War in attacks inside Manchuria, as if the Korean War were nothing but a continuation of the Japanese imperial war of the 1940s.

Norway found a pragmatic solution to its sea-border dispute with Russia, but this is more difficult in the Sino-Japanese case. The issue is not just about state interests, but about the "essence of the state". When U.S. and Japanese elites wanted to end the Sino-Japanese rapprochement and guarantee the primacy of Japanese-U.S. ties, they exploited this weak point by playing the territory card. By triggering a territorial conflict they were able to calibrate the level of tension and reset East Asian geopolitics, triggering regime change in Japan and increasing Sino-Japanese tensions in order to weaken China's influence in East Asia. It was that simple.

### East Asia vs the European theatre

All the Chinese consulted for this report argued that people in the West do not understand the difference between post-war Germany and post-war Japan. In Europe, Germany has become the state that is least willing to participate in military campaigns, while, unlike Germany, Japan has never admitted to its brutal past and its killing of millions of Chinese and hundreds of thousands of people in biological weapons attacks in Manchuria. The Japanese opened the living bodies of targeted Chinese to study the effect of their biological weapons (Endicott & Hagerman, 1998). After the Second World War central Japanese figures like Lieutenant General Ishii Shiro were recruited to the U.S. biological weapons programme, whose weapons were used during the Korean War in attacks inside Manchuria, as if the Korean War were nothing but a continuation of the Japanese imperial war of the 1940s (Endicott & Hagerman, 1998). The very fact that the Second World War war criminal Nobusuke Kishi, the minister for munitions who was responsible for the Manchurian war that killed hundreds of thousands of Chinese, became prime minister of post-war Japan, and the fact that his grandson, Shinzo Abe, is currently prime minister of Japan and honours the war criminals of the past indicate that the East Asian theatre is different from the European one. The day after Abe visited the Yasukuni shrine to honour the men who died in the war against the U.S., he announced the agreement with the U.S. on the Okinawa base, which was appreciated by the U.S. In May 2014 an advisory panel appointed by Abe proposed a change in the Japanese constitution to allow Japan's "self-defence forces" to act overseas (The Economist, 2014). On July 1st Abe "approved [such a] constitutional reinterpretation" (DefenseNews, 2014).

### Trust, great power policy and China's closer ties to Russia

In April 2014 U.S. secretary of defence Chuck Hagel compared the Diaoyu/Senkaku conflict with the ongoing events in Crimea. He warned China about a "Crimea scenario" with China creating a fait accompli regarding the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands similar to Russia's actions in Crimea (AP, 2014). This would be totally unacceptable, he said, but he was unaware that he had put Russia and China in the same basket.

China is trying to develop closer ties with both Europe and the U.S. according to China's model for great power relationships: (1) no conflict, (2) mutual respect, and (3) win-win relationships. The idea is to work towards cooperation, not conflict, and to maintain a pragmatic relationship. In practice, however, there are differences, and according to a recent Chinese Gallup poll, there is a strong interest in the U.S. vision of the world among middle-level officials in China, while there is much more trust in Europe – or, rather, in Germany – among top-level officials.

### Trust, great power policy and China's closer ties to Russia contd...

The wars in Libya and Syria and the conflict in Ukraine have made China and Russia move closer together and form a more trustful relationship, which on May 21st 2014 was cemented with a \$400 billion gas deal signed at the meeting in Shanghai between President Vladimir Putin and President Xi Jinping. In terms of the deal Russia will provide China with natural gas for 30 years, linking the two states much more closely (Anishchuk, 2014). A deal has been made between Russia and China on harbour facilities in northern Siberia for the future use of the northern sea route, which will become accessible as a consequence of global warming (Staalesen, 2010). This route will reduce the distance between Europe and China by more than a third, but will not be commercially viable in the near future, several officials argued. Overall, Russia and China are now closer than ever: (1) the Libya and Syria crises have forced Russia and China together (see below); (2) U.S. "rebalancing" in the Pacific has had the same effect; (3) economic compatibilities (raw materials and industry) underlined by the Ukraine events and the Beijing-Moscow gas agreement have also tied them together; while (4) both China and Russia are labelled "non-democratic", i.e. the media campaign and external pressure have put them in the same boat. Putin obtained support from China and Brazil to escape Western sanctions over Crimea. The export of gas to China makes Russia less dependent on its European markets. China has developed closer ties to other BRICS members as the other side of the G-20 coin and in 2014 the BRICS established the New Development Bank with \$100 billion of initial capital as an alternative to the World Bank, but Chinese ties to Russia have been given primacy and have also been expressed in common naval exercises. The first meeting between Xi and Putin lasted for 7 hours and 45 minutes, and in two years they have had eight meetings. This does not mean that we will see a China-Russia bloc and the new relationship does not point to a new bipolar world order, but it does mean that there is more real trust between the two countries. There have been informal meetings between President Obama and President Xi, but no sense of trust has been established.

China is trying to develop closer ties with both Europe and the U.S. according to China's model for great power relationships: (1) no conflict, (2) mutual respect, and (3) win-win relationships. The idea is to work towards cooperation, not conflict, and to maintain a pragmatic relationship. In practice, however, there are differences, and according to a recent Chinese Gallup poll, there is a strong interest in the U.S. vision of the world among middle-level officials in China, while there is much more trust in Europe – or, rather, in Germany – among top-level officials. Top Chinese leaders, including provincial leaders, prefer a German-European welfare state and Europe's domestic focus rather than the global power projection of the U.S., while leaders at the middle level may have studied in the U.S. and been influenced by that country (although they have less experience of U.S. politics and wars; see below). This Gallup pool included the Western powers, not Russia or other BRICS members.

Russian prime minister Dmitry Medvedev said about Libya that the West "kept telling us there would be no military operation, no intervention, but eventually they started a full-blown war that claimed many lives" (Russia Today, 2012). The president of the China Institute of International Studies, Qu Xing (2012), said that "Security Council authorisation had been abused". He spoke about "at least 25,000" killed.

### The wars in Libya and Syria and the new geopolitical shift

In 2012 South African president Jacob Zuma said at the UN that the "AU's plan [for Libya] was completely ignored in favor of bombing Libya by NATO forces ... it is the view of the AU that the 1973 Resolution of the UN Security Council was largely abused". NATO should be held "accountable", he said (Zuma, 2012). Russia and China held a similar view and have accordingly been vetoing any resolution on Syria similar to the Libyan one.

Russian prime minister Dmitry Medvedev said about Libya that the West "kept telling us there would be no military operation, no intervention, but eventually they started a full-blown war that claimed many lives" (Russia Today, 2012). The president of the China Institute of International Studies, Qu Xing (2012), said that "Security Council authorisation had been abused". He spoke about "at least 25,000" killed. All top-level officials in China consulted for this report had a similar view. Qu and his predecessor, Ma Zhengang, and top officials from the Foreign Ministry, the State Council and military intelligence said they "were totally fooled in Libya" and that "this had consequences for our policy towards Syria". Such a "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P) operation will never happen again, they said. China will not accept that the UN Security Council becomes a mechanism to legitimise regime change and geopolitical shifts in the name of R2P or "humanitarian interventions". Western "states involve themselves in country after country to support the opposition to take down governments", they said. "Russia and China will not accept this policy any longer." Military intelligence officials argued:

We didn't believe they would bomb. We lost a lot in Libya [China had large investments and 30,000 people working in Libya], but the U.S. lost more, because they lost a large part of the world [many African, Latin American and Asian countries].

This U.S. loss of influence was illustrated by President Obama's 180-degree turnaround after he announced missile strikes against Syria in August 2013. The U.S. retreat did not just reflect a dissenting view within the U.S. intelligence community (Hersh, 2014); it was a remarkable event pointing to a geopolitical shift, Ma said.

Top Chinese officials argue that Western states had supported armed rebels in the name of "humanitarian interventions" in order to engineer regime change in oil-rich countries: the former U.S. supreme Allied commander in Europe, General Wesley Clark (2007a; 2007b), said that in 2001 the U.S. had already decided to go to war against the regimes in Iraq, Sudan, Libya, Iran, Syria and Lebanon. This would allow it to control the oil-rich Middle East, not for the purposes of U.S. consumption, a U.S. document said, but to control an oil-dependent future rival, i.e. China (Burr, 2008). To China this policy of regime change is unacceptable.

The size of China's economy matters, but this does not mean that China can influence the world, and the idea of a "G-2" (Zoellick, 2009) comprising only China and the U.S. was rejected by the Chinese side. Senior Chinese officials are cautious and will not let the U.S. seduce them to accept an inferior "No. 2" position. They are well aware of China's weaknesses compared to other countries. China is perhaps No. 4, No. 5 or No. 6, to quote former vice foreign minister Fu Ying (2010) during her visit to Oslo.

### **The wars in Libya and Syria and the new geopolitical shift contd...**

In Geneva on June 30th 2012 the five permanent members of the Security Council (the U.S., France, Britain, Russia and China) agreed to a solution to the Syrian crisis with a transitional government and the maintenance of the country's security forces to avoid chaos. But, according to Kofi Annan (2012), at the following meeting in New York where the details were to be worked out, the Western states decided to opt out of this agreement and go for a Chapter VII operation, which they knew that China and Russia would never accept. They had been very clear on that in Geneva, Annan said. After consultations at home, the U.S., Britain and France used Chapter VII to justify a continued war in the hope of a rebel victory; this war has taken more than 100,000 lives and is still in progress. To the Chinese, the Libyan and Syrian wars taught lessons that led to "zero trust" towards the U.S. and Britain.

### **China as a global power, diplomat and power broker**

Some Chinese scholars have opted for closer Sino-U.S. ties. They have underlined China's role as a "responsible stakeholder", to quote the former U.S. deputy secretary of state Robert Zoellick (2005). The influence of China as the world's second-largest economy will make China into a special U.S. partner that brings the two states closer together, they argue. Many U.S. officials have started to treat China as "No. 2" to the U.S. China overtook Japan's position in GDP ranking in 2010, and Timothy Geithner and the U.S. Congress put pressure on China to allow its currency to appreciate in value. Ding Yifan immediately warned Washington that the U.S. may lose a trade war with China (Eckert, 2010). China could start selling its holdings of U.S. debt (estimated at \$1.5 trillion). The U.S. debt to China appears as a form of civilian "nuclear option" that could create a situation of Sino-U.S. "mutual assured destruction".

The size of China's economy matters, but this does not mean that China can influence the world, and the idea of a "G-2" (Zoellick, 2009) comprising only China and the U.S. was rejected by the Chinese side. Senior Chinese officials are cautious and will not let the U.S. seduce them to accept an inferior "No. 2" position. They are well aware of China's weaknesses compared to other countries. China is perhaps No. 4, No. 5 or No. 6, to quote former vice foreign minister Fu Ying (2010) during her visit to Oslo. But Chinese leaders will not let China play the second violin in a U.S. orchestra. China may accept a position as a "responsible stakeholder", but not the role of a U.S. "assistant". In athletics, to be "No. 2" is fine, but in politics the "No. 2" may develop into a convenient enemy. The Chinese leadership still follows the words of Deng Xiaoping: "you should feel the stones while crossing the river." Radical change is not a Chinese choice.

China's strong economy and relatively weak military capability also constitute an argument for more civilised behaviour, and China certainly prefers peaceful dialogue, UN operations and confidence-building measures, to quote General Zhang Qinsheng. The new, more assertive policy of President Xi and Prime Minister Li from 2013 onwards should rather be understood as a response to the U.S. attempt to reset East Asian geopolitics and to guarantee the primacy of U.S.-Japanese relations.

Nonetheless, 10% growth for three decades has made China into an example to many poor countries. The size of the economy and its recent modernisation cannot be ignored. It has given China the strength to modernise its armed forces, but the main focus has always been on the domestic scene, i.e. on stability and welfare. There is no ambition to defend Chinese investments abroad. In Libya, China lost major investments, but the use of military force was never on the table. However, China has become a global player, and economies like the German one will be seriously affected if China's economy were to slow down (Ding et al., 2014). China is unlikely to confront the U.S., but it is recognised as following a relatively independent and pragmatic foreign policy.

From the late 1970s under Deng Xiaoping, China has favoured economic ties before ideological friendship. Different from the U.S. and many European states, China does not put conditions on various development projects and insists on the principle of non-interference, which means that many African states have preferred to work with China, which has assisted with infrastructure projects that have had an important economic impact on these states. Its trade with African states increased from \$10 billion in 2001 to \$150 billion in 2011 (Gamache et al., 2013). Its pragmatic relationship with various states has opened up the opportunity for China to become a power broker.

For pragmatic reasons China has close ties to both Iran and Israel. Its pragmatic and non-ideological approach has been acceptable to both sides, and China has facilitated back-channel talks between the two countries (with a delegation headed by former head of military intelligence General Huang Baifu) (Matthews, 2013). China's strong economy and relatively weak military capability also constitute an argument for more civilised behaviour, and China certainly prefers peaceful dialogue, UN operations and confidence-building measures, to quote General Zhang Qinsheng. The new, more assertive policy of President Xi and Prime Minister Li from 2013 onwards should rather be understood as a response to the U.S. attempt to reset East Asian geopolitics and to guarantee the primacy of U.S.-Japanese relations.

References : [LINK](#)



Former Billings resident Tammie Schnitzer speaks to a crowd outside the Yellowstone County Courthouse on Jan. 21, 2008 during a service and march recognizing hate crimes. Schnitzer was a victim of a hate crime while living in Billings in 1993.

([Billings Gazette/ Paul Ruhter](#)) [LINK](#)

## How Billings Fought Only Half Its Hate

I had never heard of Billings, Montana until late December last year and had to search for its location on a map.

My interest in the north-western American city was sparked by the re-telling of a once well-known story about a spate of anti-Jewish [attacks](#) there during Chanukah, 1993. But the tale of hate and redress is not nearly as straightforward as it first appears. Different reports estimate that in the early 90s no more than fifty Jewish families lived in Billings. Moreover, while Montana Jewry had thrived during the 19th century gold rush and the development of the railway, the population had since dwindled and barely 1,000 Jewish people lived throughout the entire state. But none of this prevented white supremacist thugs breaking widows in private homes and committing other [hate-inspired vandalism](#) on any targets daring either to display a menorah - Chanukah candelabrum - or to support the Jewish community in other ways. Still, other local citizens were not prepared to let this go unanswered and a smashed window at the house of convert to Judaism, [Tammy Schnitzer](#) and her then-infant children, Isaac and Rachel, triggered a huge wave of sympathy.

It started with a feisty editorial in the local [Billings Gazette](#) which also published an image of a menorah for readers to cut out and stick on their own windows in solidarity with their Jewish neighbours. Then came an avalanche of help from many different individuals in the wider community and the attendant publicity included a picture spread in Life magazine and two documentary films. *Not in Our Town* by Californians, Patrice O'Neill and Rhian Miller won a prize and the two films together produced similar inter-community tolerance campaigns in many other American cities. Further, Billings' city fathers were honoured at the White House while the city itself received awards from major Jewish organisations. Then there was the now celebrated book and children's play based on the incident by psychotherapist, [Janice I Cohn](#). Indeed, it was her story that I heard during Chanukah last year and which led me to research this piece.

Twenty-one years – almost a generation – have passed since the above events occurred so I decided to examine the 'back story'. Superficially, it was a heart-warming tale of seasonal goodwill. But why did it happen during a time of generally little anti-Jewish activity? And why, apart from Cohn's play, has it been largely forgotten?

The truth is that the Jewish community was only one minority community targeted; that the racists behind the outrages also victimised local black and Native American homes and that about 10,000 Native Americans then lived in Billings against a Jewish community of only several hundred. So the campaign started by and then promoted on behalf of the Jewish minority was successful largely because its members were perceived as attractive, articulate and educated - similar to the surrounding white non-Jewish majority population. The other minorities were not so well-organised; became somehow excluded and this was discomfiting for the campaigners.

Indeed, in 2008 when Billings people renewed their anti-hate initiative for the 15th anniversary of the national tolerance campaign that had started in the town, the [Jewish Telegraphic Agency](#) reported that it was planned and held with very little Jewish input. It was said that Jewish residents had become media shy and that anyway, isolated Jewish communities generally preferred to blend into surrounding American society. Tammy Schnitzer had meanwhile moved far away to South Carolina and returned to her old town just for the anniversary. A seasoned human rights campaigner, she agreed that her candour had unsettled her family. She admitted that she had always felt uneasy with the way the attack on her home was presented solely as a Jewish concern. "It was an ... issue that left behind a lot of inconvenient truths ... I lost friends, people judged my motives. I wish others in the Jewish community had stepped in a little more quickly", she said.

So I'll give the final word to [Uri Barnea](#), an Israeli-born rabbi and musician who has become a US citizen and was conducting the Billings Symphony Orchestra when the attacks began in November 1993. He has also since moved from Billings but reveals that he suffered harassment, including death threats, when his background became known. Eventually he won an out-of-court settlement against the white supremacists who were ordered to leave town. However, the harassment did not cease until some years later. "If I'd decided not to (report) it because of the danger", he told the JTA, "I'd give strength to the perpetrators. "You can't prove it, but to a certain extent the town's reaction had something to do with the slowing down of attacks".



## The Lover Archetype

The creativity of your subconscious mind not only shows up in dreams, but also shows up as archetypes in your life. Archetypes are overlying patterns that show up in all cultures that are seeded in the psyche. Some examples of archetypes are mother, judge, teacher and healer. Today we will explore the Lover. When you begin to look at these patterns in your life, you can unleash your creative energy. You can access your natural path and move toward your Divine Soul purpose.

Leonard Cohen's song *Lover, Lover, Lover*, rings in my ears as I explore the Lover Archetype in this series on archetypes.

"May the spirit of this song, may it rise up pure and free. May it be a shield for you, a shield against the enemy," Cohen purrs. Love, being in love, being a lover brings forth not only the purity, freedom, passion, but also the enemy within: the jealousy, possessiveness, control and codependency. These are the sun and the shadow sides of the Lover archetype.

If your creative energy is connected to the Lover archetype, you may find that you sacrifice much for your ideals. It may be that others think you don't live in reality, or that your view of the world through the lens of your heart is not realistic.

We all have an aspect of the lover archetype within, but I imagine when you think of your friends and loved ones, someone who embodies this archetype comes to mind. Whether they are passionate about life, about their relationships, or have a great passion for music, art or gardening, you can identify them right away.

If your creative energy is connected to the Lover archetype, you may find that you sacrifice much for your ideals. It may be that others think you don't live in reality, or that your view of the world through the lens of your heart is not realistic. The lover may characterize you as genuine, happy and giving to others. The shadow side could manifest as obsessive, possessive and scary.

There is also something about the Lover archetype that draws us deep into a sense of suffering. Think about the suffering artist, the struggling musician, and the one who gave up everything for love.

As morose as it may seem, my favorite song, another of Cohen's greats, is Joan of Arc. Cohen is a contemporary musician who clearly understands passion.

It was deep into his fiery heart  
he took the dust of Joan of Arc,  
and then she clearly understood  
if he was fire, oh then she must be wood.  
I saw her wince, I saw her cry,  
I saw the glory in her eye.  
Myself I long for love and light,  
but must it come so cruel, and oh so bright?

It was Carl Gustav Jung, who was the father of analytical psychology who gave us the concepts of the archetypes, as well as the collective unconscious and the understanding of introversion and extroversion. He identified the shadow side of the archetype as the part that was relegated to the subconscious because, due to its negative qualities, it was not easily integrated into the personality. In psychoanalytic therapy and in dream work, it is important to access the shadow and bring it into the light so that it does not gain power and cause you to subconsciously behave in ways that can be self-defeating or damaging to others.

Some of our greatest discoveries have come from those who gave their lives to find a cure, understand a formula, and take a passionate stand. In today's world, workaholicism can show up as an expression of the lover archetype. Creativity abounds when you love what you do!

We know of many instances where the shadow side of love has been destructive. One example would be of Guinevere and Lancelot. Guinevere was married to King Arthur and had an affair with Sir Lancelot. Lancelot was a knight, one of King Arthur's favorites. This indiscretion leads to the undoing of the Round Table.

What about one's love for their country? This can also be an outpour of the Lover Archetype. With this strong passion, one can get caught up in an uprising that can end up in disaster or war. The obsessiveness of the shadow side of love can be all encompassing.

Some of our greatest discoveries have come from those who gave their lives to find a cure, understand a formula, and take a passionate stand. In today's world, workaholicism can show up as an expression of the lover archetype. Creativity abounds when you love what you do! The shadow side of this may be neglected relationships or declining health.

It is time to examine your own life and find what stokes your fire. For whom or what would you be willing to give up everything? Whether you actually do it or not, what do you love to do the most? When you look back over your life, where has passion been the driving force behind your choices? Who makes you angry? What would you fight for? Where do you find your bliss?

The Lover may or may not be a significant archetypal pattern for you. As you reflect, take notes on other archetypes you identify. Think about how others see you. Is your career representative of one of your archetypes? For example a strong archetype for me is the Teacher. Interwoven in my life and career is being a Spiritual Teacher. It comes natural to me. What would you do with your time if you had unlimited resources and freedom. What is your natural path? What is your Divine Soul Purpose?

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