

## MEDIA

## The Best Newspapers Relate Directly to Their Readers

Charles W. Corey writes from Washington

THE best newspapers and magazines are not sensationalist in their approach to readers, but address issues that affect their daily lives.

USA Today Page One Editor Monte Loret and Phil Merrill, publisher of Washingtonian Magazine and a chain of city newspapers, made that point in a June 6 US. Information Agency Worldnet broadcast to Dar es Salaam, Accra, and Abidjan.

"We don't try to be sensationalist. That is the last thing we want to be," Loret stressed. "We want to present a face that reflects the news.... What we do try to do in our news feature pieces.... we do try to have the headline address the reader. We ask... a question" that will get the reader's attention.

Loret cited a recent USA Today article on retirement that stressed in a headline that readers will need \$1 million minimum to retire in the United States with a reasonable degree of financial security. "That spoke to readers. Readers could relate to that. Hopefully, that headline pulled readers into buying the

cover, piquing the readers' interest, giving them additional reasons to buy the product.

Asked if there is a future for newspapers in this increasingly electronic day and age, Loret said, "I think USA Today is a good example of why [there is a future for newspapers]. It is providing people something that they don't get from television or from computers.

"What newspapers try to do — or at least they are leaning toward doing — is providing some analysis and context as to what the day's news is. TV news, for instance, gives you may be 90 seconds of a story. It does not give you a lot of context. It does not give you what the reaction to a particular story is. Newspapers can step back and do that."

Also, "with a TV image, you see it and it is gone... What we try to do as a colour newspaper... is to find photographs that you can study, that tell you more than just a fleeting image on a TV screen."

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(Cable News Network television) and USA Today cater only to about one per cent of the US market. "That is very different from... the rest of the American press — where [local papers] have a very strong percentage of the market."

As an example, he cited his newspaper's circulation in nearby Annapolis (the capital city of Maryland), "where nine out of 10 households get our newspaper." Most homes in the Washington metropolitan area also subscribe at least to the Sunday Washington Post, he added, providing "very complete coverage."

The print media in the United States are here to stay, Merrill predicted. "Newspapers generate more revenue, including advertising, than radio, television, and all other forms of media in the United States combined. They are the third largest single industry in the United States. What newspapers and magazines together have is portability and scannability," he explained.

Asked about possible threats to the impartiality of USA Today's news division when it covers stories that could cause problems for the newspaper's big advertisers, Loret said for professional journalists, that presents no problem. "We will take on [confront] our advertisers," if it is the public interest. "We have done that before," reporting about airlines or tobacco companies who may become the subject in investigative stories.

Charles W. Corey is a USIA Staff Writer.

AT the time when the Maharajahs of India reigned, conspicuous lifestyle for these superwealthy Indians was more the rule than the exception. They lived luxuriously, spent lavishly and loved endlessly.

They were besotted with wealth, wine and women. They thought nothing of building palaces left and right, buying fabulous pieces of jewellery every fortnight and indulging in the luxurious life in European and other continental watering holes.

Of course, such want on living had its commencement, and it came with independence when the British left. The once mighty royal families suddenly found themselves poor. Not finding it necessary during their time to hold jobs or get an education for their future, the sudden tumble to destitute living forced the princely families to beg, borrow or sell heirlooms, valuable furniture or works of old masters to survive.

And when these saleable commodities finally were disposed of, hundreds of former maharajahs turned to the only items left at the bottom of the barrel — their vintage cars.

Collecting cars had been a common hobby of the Maharajahs, especially the "playboys" among them. Today, these vintage automobiles have proved of invaluable help to the impoverished royal families. They are fetching hundreds of thousands of dollars in the international market.

Government officials lament that many of these automobiles have reached lands beyond the reach of India's Customs and excise machin-



## Rich Men's Toys

Some of the cars were shipped out as personal effects of many Maharajahs and Maharanis, who bought mansions in the United Kingdom, Australia, even America, to get away from the rigours of democratic India, which they just could not stand.

And so they took away with them priceless furniture, jewellery and, of course, cars. Actually, majority of the princes stayed and adapted to a democratic regime. Then the late Indira Gandhi, as Prime Minister, upset their peaceful existence, cancelling their privy purses and giving them instead a lump sum.

So they started selling their vintage cars, which became the rage among the new rich and the powerful.

Many serious collectors search the countryside looking for relics which they can restore and put on parade at vintage car rallies held in major cities. In one such rally held in Delhi recently, some 100 of these old beauties had to drive to a picnic spot some 60 kilometres away without a breakdown on the way. Efficiency was the main criterion, not speed.

Some inevitably broke down by the roadside. One avid motor enthusiast spotted a 1919 Citroen in a garage in Shillong, eastern India, used as a retreat by British officers.

He restored it to its original glory and was a major attraction at the vintage car rally organized by the Calcutta newspaper "The Statesman."

Rakesh Jain, a local industrialist, has proved himself to be the top vintage car collector. The lucky Mr Jain found a forgotten 1919 Willy's Overland Tourer under a collapsed garage in Rajasthan and restored it.

Some of the real stars in vintage car shows are the magnificent six and eight-cylinder Rolls Royces, Daimlers, Bentleys, Packards and Cadillacs imported by the former Maharajahs before World War II.

After the ruling nobility in Gwallior imported a Rolls Royce in 1908, rival Maharajahs bought up another 700 in the vintage period. Most of them were built to exact specifications.

According to American collector Sam Sharman, "If it was not for the patronage of the lavish-spending Indian princes, many of America's great automobiles would never have been built."

The Maharajahs liked most the powerful 36-horsepower Straight-Eight Packard 443, built in the late 1920s, which they used to hunt tigers and deer accompanied by their wives and their retinues. This was the age when there were no jeeps and four-wheel cars

In fact, some cars were built specifically for hunting expeditions only. They had racks for ready-loaded rifles and wide-running boards for beaters and attendants.

One can imagine the hustle and bustle that accompanied such hunting expeditions, which undoubtedly contributed to the near-extinction of tigers.

Some cars were built and designed exclusively for the Maharajahs. Those had feminine accessories. Elephants were abandoned and cars became the hot favourites for royal rides.

You also cannot beat a Maharaja in arrogance and eccentricity. When an Indian Maharaja visited a London car showroom to buy a Rolls Royce, a rude salesman asked whether he could really afford it.

The prince had only one answer. He wrote a cheque to buy the showroom's entire stock then, according to legend, he consigned one of the cars to haul garbage in his state. Such was his contempt for British car manufacturers.

Indian artisans also distinguished themselves about this time by building in 1903 the country's first locally built car, which was steam-driven. These skills are now much in demand for the restoration of vintage models since spare parts for the old cars are difficult to come by even in the countries of origin.

Today, the rising cost of spares and maintenance has kept these vintage cars, once affordable only to the super rich, still the prized toys of the truly wealthy and beyond the reach of ordinary mortals.

— Depthnews Asia

## CULTURE

## International Conference on Relations between European and Islamic Cultures

Sweden is holding a three-day major international conference on Islam, beginning June 15, in the capital Stockholm, says a Press release.

The conference is being held as part of the government's Islam initiative and more than seventy leading scholars, academics, writers, legal experts and journalists who have developed expertise on Islamic affairs are participating.

Although the conference is being sponsored by the Swedish government, the participants have been chosen in their personal capacities from some thirty countries, including about twenty from the Muslim world.

Renowned lawyers, Dr Kamal Hussein, and Mrs Salma Sobhan, a women rights activist and a leading member of the "Ain-o-Salish Kendra", represent Bangladesh in the conference.

As part of a political initiative, the conference is aimed at seeking ways to allay misunderstandings between European and Islamic cultures and suggest various confidence-building measures that can help build trust and harmony between the Muslim immigrants and the peoples of

their host countries in Europe.

"We're living in a world of greater contacts and increasing interdependence", stated Foreign Minister, Mrs Hjelm-Wallen, in the invitations to the participants. Nevertheless, she added, "misunderstanding and distrust between Islam and Europe have probably never been as great as they are today. Notions of an imminent clash of civilizations, primarily between the Christian and the Islamic worlds, are spreading."

Of late, in Europe, extreme manifestations by certain groups of Muslims seem to paint a gruesome and misleading picture of Muslims as a uniform, fanatical, and uncontrollable mass. Certain news media, in particular, are to blame for spreading this malicious propaganda, in which extremism is taken to be the cardinal feature of Islam.

Likewise, in the Muslim world, many view western civilization from the perspective of the intolerance of the Crusades, colonialism and, most recently, the atrocities perpetrated in Bosnia.

At the same time, the Foreign Minister stated that even as this mutual distrust appears

to be growing, large-scale immigration from the Muslim world to western Europe is taking place.

Sweden's population of nine million already includes about 200,000 persons with a Muslim background.

Against this backdrop the conference focuses on such themes as:

- What is the best way to meet the challenges of mutual threats and hostilities and how can a true and reciprocal exchange of views and cultures be achieved.
- what can the people in Europe learn today from the historical experience of multi-cultural societies such as the Ottoman Empire and Moorish Spain with special emphasis on Malaysia and Indonesia — the two multicultural societies in East Asia.
- how to assimilate Muslim communities living in ghettos into the mainstream European population, and ensure that they contribute to the cultural diversity in the respective European countries they live in;
- and what is the best way to create a trusting and fruitful triangular relationship between Muslim immigrants, their new home countries and their countries of origin.

## Ancient Egypt

Continued from page 13

nasty, the first dynasty of the New Kingdom. His son Amenhotep I succeeded him on his death. During his reign, Amun-Ra, a deity, was recognised as the state-god, and the construction of the temple of god Amun began at Karnak. The rise of Theban dynasty was apparently responsible for the promotion of Theban god Amun throughout the kingdom.

The memory of Hyksos domination of Egypt turned out to be responsible for shaping the policy of the New Kingdom. Egypt gradually took up the policy of an expansionist power. By the year 1500 BC, it became world's greatest power, expanding its rule from the present day Syria to the southern part of Sudan.

After the death of childless Amenhotep I, Thutmose I, who happened to be his next of kin, succeeded to the throne. In accordance with Egyptian custom regarding marriage in the royal family, Thutmose I married his sister but the marriage produced only one surviving daughter, named Hatshepsut. As a consequence, he was succeeded by Thutmose II, his son by a minor wife. Thutmose II married his half-sister Hatshepsut, as she was the senior royal princess. But she, too, apparently gave birth only to a daughter.

Thutmose III, the successor and son of Thutmose II was conceived by Thutmose II's minor concubine, named Isis. She was in fact a slave girl. As a young boy, Thutmose III was placed in the service of god Amun. During one ceremonial procession of the divine image which was carried by the priests in presence of Pharaoh Thutmose II and his chief officials, the god is said to have promised the throne of Egypt to the young Thutmose. Perhaps, the ceremony was staged by Thutmose II in order to recognize his only surviving son, although illegitimate, formally as his destined successor.

However, the succession was not easy. Queen Hatshepsut exercised enormous power by virtue of the fact, which she always emphasised, that she was the only one in her time with pure royal blood. She was an ambitious lady. On Thutmose II's death, she became the first lady in history of Egypt to ascend the throne. But the fact is, she just usurped the power. Thutmose III developed sufficient connections with well placed men and capitalizing on god Amun as well as Thutmose II's wishes he only succeeded in becoming Hatshepsut's co-regent. However, the queen kept him in the shadows and continued with her reign for 20 years. She

built a temple in her name at Deir-el-Bahri in Sinai. She sent numerous trading expeditions through the land and waterways as well. And interestingly, she portrayed herself as a man in various reliefs and paintings.

The reason of death of Queen Hatshepsut is obscure. Her tomb was desecrated by the thieves and her royal mummy was never to be found. However, some scholars believe, she had been killed through intrigues associated with the lobby led by Thutmose III. After her death, efforts were made to wipe her name off the face of Egyptian soil, but it was not a total success. On the walls of her temple she inscribed a frank, touching self-eulogy which also was a joyous affirmation of her immortality and it stands even today: "... I bear the white crown, I am a diadem with the red crown... I rule over this land like the son of Isis, I am mighty like the son of Nu... I shall be for ever like the star which changes not."

After Hatshepsut's death, Thutmose III became the indisputable Pharaoh. Today, he is known as the Napoleon of Egypt. He led his army in all directions from Egypt and led sea warfare as well, thereby invading Cyprus and Crete. In 1475 BC he conquered Palestine. The monarch of Mesopotamia paid him annual tributes. He redesigned a former Chapel of Hatshepsut into a Hall of Anns on whose walls were inscribed the history of his conquests. He married his half-sister Nefere, who also was the daughter of Hatshepsut. Moreover, he married three others in succession who came from ordinary backgrounds. His 4th and last wife Maryre Hatshepsut bore him a son, Amenhotep, who survived to become his successor.

Pharaoh Amenhotep II's reign from 1459-1420 BC is known as the golden age of Egypt. He hastened the process of consolidation which had been initiated by his father. An initial phase of plunder and pillage of conquered lands was followed in the north, by establishment of vassal rulers and the imposition of tributes. In the south, Nubia was exploited directly under the viceroy or 'King's son'. Wealth poured into the coffers of Amenhotep II not only from Egypt's vassals but also by diplomatic exchange with the Hittites (in Anatolia), Mittany (present day Syria), Assyria, Babylon and rulers of the Greek isles. Amenhotep II was a great builder. The temple of Luxor is his most famous construction which was built in 1430 BC.

About 1425 BC, Thutmose

IV, son from minor wife of Amenhotep II, on a hunting trip, discovered the enormous head of Sphinx rising from the sand. By that time 1100 years had passed since the Sphinx was built by Khafre's men and over this period, the young Thutmose stopped his hunting party and while he napped under its chin, the sphinx appeared in his dream, speaking as both the sun god and the god of kingship, Hor-em-akhet, that Thutmose would be made king if he freed the god from the sand.

Thutmose uncovered the statue, encased its weathered body with limestone blocks and pointed it blue, yellow and red. And he erected a statue of his father in front of the Sphinx's chest, symbolizing the pharaoh's emergence from Hor-em-akhet.

When Thutmose became king, he inscribed his dream on a tall granite stela which became the centerpiece of an open-air shrine below the statue.

When Amenhotep III, son of Thutmose IV, came to the throne, Egypt was at the centre of world stage. As the diplomatic correspondence found at el-Amarna reveals — during 37 years of his reign, Amenhotep III and his influential queen Tiye, reaped in full the benefit of an empire stable and at peace. Great building works were undertaken, including a new palace complex with a vast man-made lake at Thebes, and temples and shrines and other structures at Luxor, Karnak and elsewhere with generous application of gold and silver, wherever they would fit. Egypt during the reign of Amenhotep III was a nation at the height of its power and prestige.

Amenhotep, younger son of Amenhotep III and Tiye, gained the throne in 1353 BC, as heir-apparent Thutmose met with a premature death. He took the name of Akhenaten within two years of his reign. He and his elegant wife Nefertiti struggled to overthrow Amun, the state god, and his powerful priesthood. They replaced them with the worship of a mystical force embodied in the light from the sun, Aten, who had already gained some prominence under Thutmose III and Amenhotep II. Akhenaten had a fanatical personal devotion to Aten and as its consequence, he introduced monotheism for the first time in Egypt. The royal couple transformed Egyptian art, introducing a fresh and loving depiction of nature and familial bliss. They moved the religious capital from Thebes to a new city in the desert, known today as Amarna.

Akhenaten and Nefertiti

had six daughters. However, Akhenaten had a son, Tutankhamun, from a minor wife named Kiye. He was only 9-year-old when he was enthroned in 1331 BC. Perhaps, the people of his time wanted to have a Pharaoh with right descendency, after all. He ruled Egypt for ten years, but unlike his father, he never involved himself with any controversial religious issues. He duly married Nefertiti's third daughter, Ankhesenpaaten, who was the most senior eligible princess of his time. But he died at his young age of 19 out of mysterious circumstances with a blunt wound at the back of his head and this happened before he could produce any royal heir.

During the New Kingdom period the embalmers perfected their skills in mummification of the royal corpses. Mummification and burial rites of the pharaohs took traditionally 70 days. Embalmers removed internal organs, placing the liver, lungs, stomach and intestine in sacred jars and left the heart sealed in the body. Egyptians believed that it was the source of intellect as well as all the feelings and would be required for the final judgement. Egyptians did not appreciate brain. The embalmers drew it out through the nose and threw it away.

After they dried the corpse with natron salt, the embalmers washed the body and coated it with preserving resins. Finally they wrapped it in hundreds of yards of linen.

Aye succeeded to the throne after Tutankhamun's death. He was the principal member of Tutankhamun's inner circle and was the father of Nefertiti and thus the step-grandfather to the young Pharaoh himself. By virtue of his position as advisor to Tutankhamun, controlling access to and influencing his ward, a great deal of power was concentrated in Aye's hand. Following the Pharaoh's untimely death, Aye, presumably by virtue of his links to the line, succeeded in ruling Egypt as a Pharaoh in his own right.

Aye died on the fourth year of his enthroning. After his death, Horemheb, Commander-in-Chief of Egyptian Army and deputy to the Pharaoh came to power. Within a short time, by force of arms, Horemheb was able to reassert Egyptian suzerainty abroad and ensure the continuation of tribute from her northern and southern neighbours. Horemheb was childless and he died in 1307 after twelve years of successful reign.

In that year, the crown was passed to yet another commoner who had risen through the bureaucratic hierarchy to become the vizier, the second most important post in the realm. This was Pramesse, who inaugurated Dynasty XIX as Ramses I. He ruled for a

brief period of 16 months before his son, Seti, a great warrior, assumed the crown.

Seti began making annual incursions into Syria to reclaim lost lands. He wished to recapture the city of Kadesh which guarded his trade routes to the east, from Hittite. He named his son Rames, a formidable fighter, the Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian Army, when he was only 10 years old. However, he was allowed to join his father at about 14 in fighting in Libya. Seti also depended on his son to oversee his construction programmes.

When Seti died at about the age of 50, Ramses still in his 20s became the Pharaoh. He reigned for more than 60 years, fathered at least 90 children, brought prosperity and peace to his empire, built more colossal structures and had his name carved on more stones than any other Pharaoh.

Ramses II outlived many of his children and died at the age of 90. Under his successors, Egypt entered a long phase of decline. His 3rd son from Istnofret, Mentuhotep, succeeded him to the throne. He defeated the Israelites at Canaan in 1232 BC and 20th dynasty pharaoh Ramses III repulsed Lybians and in 1179 BC defeated the confederation of Philistines, Greek, Sicilians and Sardinians, who were known as sea people.

During the 25th dynasty rule, Egypt was taken over by Nubian pharaohs in 746 BC. Their involvement in the affair of Palestine led to invasion by Assyria and finally to an attack upon Thebes which was plundered.

The Assyrian king had appointed vassals loyal to him but as Assyria's power declined, Egypt regained its independence in 650 BC under a dynasty from the Delta. Under this strong XXVth dynasty Pharaohs, the country was reunited and enjoyed the last period of splendour.

But in 525 BC the Persian empire invaded and absorbed Egypt as a Persian province. In 332 BC, Alexander the Great invaded Egypt and the Persian rulers surrendered without resistance. He was welcomed by the Egyptians and accepted as Pharaoh. At his death, his general Ptolemy took control of the country (305-285 BC).

His son, Ptolemy II ruled Egypt from 285 to 248 BC.

These Ptolemies founded a line of kings who ruled Egypt for three hundred years. The last in this line, Cleopatra, who unlike her predecessors, was an Egyptian at heart, secured the throne with the help of Julius Caesar during 51-49 BC and again during 48-38 BC with the help of mark Antony, Caesar's best known general. Cleopatra committed suicide in 30 BC and Egypt became a province of Roman empire.

## Bertolt Brecht

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to testify about his affiliation with the communist party before McCarthy's House Un-American Activities Committee. He evaded the committee's questions and in November 1947 flew to Switzerland without waiting for the opening of Galileo in New York. A year later he settled in East Germany.

I referred a little while ago about the increasing recognition of Brecht as one of the greatest playwrights of the twentieth century. He is now admired more for the artistic elements in his works, the rich inimitable flavor of his language, his irony and robust humour, his multipronged satire, his dialectical presentation and his deliberate avoidance of absolutes and less for his political stance or ideas. And, I think, that is as it should be. Now hardly a season passes without some play of Brecht being presented either in New York or Calcutta or Dhaka, in London or Paris or Berlin or Madrid, in Tokyo or Zurich or Oslo or in some other capital of the world.

In spite of all this, however, opposition to and scurrilous allegations against Brecht have not completely ceased. Curiously enough one of the allegations is connected with Brecht's collaborations and adaptations. Recently one John Fuegi has published a

book called The Life and Lies of Bertolt Brecht (Harper Collins, July 1994) where he alleges that many of Brecht's most famous works are not really written by Brecht himself but mostly by his lady collaborators and lovers.

Fuegi says that a great deal of what passes under Brecht's name was actually written by Elisabeth Hauptmann, Margarete Steffin and Ruth Berlau, his three intimate collaborators. He goes on to add that these women were his lovers and that they supplied the central women's roles for which Brecht's plays are famous. John Willett, a well-known authority on Brecht disagrees and draws our attention to several interesting things. Willett reminds us that John Fuegi published a book called The Essential Brecht in 1972, based on his 1967 doctoral dissertation in Comparative Literature at the University of Southern California, which ran to over 300 pages and dealt with eight Brecht plays, but he did not mention there Margarete Steffin or Ruth Berlau even once.

Elisabeth Hauptmann was cited five times but only as a source of information and no more. Willett further points out that The Essential Brecht was written sixteen years after Mother Courage had made theatre history in Paris and London. By that time it was widely known that those three women had collabo-

rated more or less creatively on many of Brecht's plays and that their names had appeared on the published editions.

Fuegi could not have been unaware of all this. There was also much gossip about Brecht's love affairs but no one suggested that he had stolen the work of his collaborators and passed them off as his own. Why has Professor Fuegi come up now in mid-1994 with his unsavoury charges? Are his motives political? Has he a craving for making headlines in newspapers? Do organized vilification campaign and money play any role in the matter? You never can tell. John Willett says that Fuegi's attack is at once political-the demolition of Brecht as a socialist icon, and feminist. According to Fuegi Brecht misappropriated the contribution of his three women collaborators, denied them credit, and pocketed the proceeds.

John Willett is not impressed by Fuegi's evidence and arguments. They are unsubstantiated, flimsy, circumstantial, without any solid foundation. I think all impartial students of Brecht will agree, by and large, with Willett.

From time to time ugly attacks may be hurled at Brecht from the road-side, but it seems to me that the triumphant march of the Brechtian caravan will go on for many decades to come.