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## Editor's Introduction to the 26th Issue

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## Editor's Introduction to the 26<sup>th</sup> Issue

I write this preface to the 26<sup>th</sup> annual edition of our faculty journal as we enter the 7<sup>th</sup> year of our nation's costly occupation of Iraq. Last year's cover of *Headwaters* featured Anna Lisa Ohm's "Honk for Peace," depicting students demonstrating in opposition to the Iraq war. Thankfully, the worst of the bloodletting in Iraq has abated, though the region remains destabilized and its future uncertain. Meanwhile, the security situation in Afghanistan is in a downward spiral, with a 35 percent increase in U.S. military deaths in 2008. And yet, in the grip of an economic crisis whose depth and abruptness is reminiscent of the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union, those national security challenges have now seemingly receded to a mere footnote in our national consciousness — a dramatic turn of events almost inconceivable just a year ago.

Three years ago, when I accepted the charge to edit this journal, I had a vision of raising the profile of *Headwaters* as a vehicle for faculty to bring their specialized disciplinary knowledge to bear on important questions of our time. It is my hope that this difficult juncture in our nation's history will inspire all of us to explore new frontiers in the broad reach of our richly diverse intellectual domains to grapple with the pressing issues of our day.

This year's cover photograph, "The Great Wall at Badaling," is part of **Bill Lamberts'** chronicle of a study tour for eight students he directed as part of CSB|SJU's Summer Research Exchange Program with Southwest University in Beibei, Chongqing.

The cover photograph sets the tone for the lead article in this year's issue, "Did the Hakka Save China? Ethnicity, Identity, and Minority Status in China's Modern Transformation" by **P. Richard Bohr**. Coincidentally, the connection between the Hakka and the Great Wall couldn't be more dramatic, as the Hakka's original North China homeland — before they were pushed out by invading central Asian tribes, beginning in the 4<sup>th</sup> century — was nestled against the Great Wall. Thus, the wall is a powerful symbol of the Hakka's lost domicile. Indeed, it was the effort to redefine "home" as community rather than native place (the very definition of identity for all other Chinese) that made the Hakka the unique and revolution-prone Han Chinese people Bohr describes in his article.

The theme of "home" or "place" as community — an integral part of our Benedictine heritage — is echoed in **Sophia Geng's** short story "Celery's Dream," which cap-

tures critical moments in the lives of rural Chinese villagers confronting the modern challenges of urbanization and globalization.

Taken together, the contributions of Lamberts, Bohr, and Geng in this issue of *Headwaters* celebrate efforts by CSB|SJU to prepare its students personally and professionally for what Bohr calls the “Asian Century.” For a broad, historical perspective on our Asian Studies program and Asian international education efforts, I’m reprinting an extended excerpt, with minor modifications, from an article Bohr published in the 2006 issue of *Headwaters* under the title “To Asia With Love: Toward Experiential Asian Studies at CSB|SJU.”

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## *The Origins of Asian Studies in America*

By 1900, a handful of U.S. liberal arts colleges began to offer Asian Studies courses to prepare students for service in an Asia plagued by poverty and domestic upheaval. In succeeding years, more colleges added such courses to equip Americans to fight three wars in Asia. In the wake of the Vietnam War, still other schools committed themselves to preparing students for a new Asia that was rapidly integrating itself into the global economy and becoming increasingly prosperous and stable.

CSB|SJU is one such institution. The 2008–09 academic year marks the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its Asian Studies program. Building on a rich legacy of Benedictine involvement in Asia and decades of Asia-related courses and activities on these campuses, the Asian Studies program seeks to prepare our students for personal and professional engagement in and with Asia and Asian America in the newly dawned “Asian Century.”

## *CSB|SJU’s Asia Roots*

Responding to the call of Pope Pius XI, monks from Saint John’s Abbey helped to establish the Catholic University of Peking (known in Chinese as Furen) in 1925. Five years later, six sisters from Saint Benedict’s Monastery arrived to set up a woman’s college at Furen. Later, the sisters established a community and a clinic in central China, where — braving plague, Japanese occupation, and civil war between Chinese Nationalists and Communists — they ministered to refugees, wounded soldiers, and the “poorest of the poor.” After Mao Zedong expelled the missionaries in 1949, Furen was absorbed by Beijing Normal University. The Benedictines relocated to Taiwan, where they rebuilt Furen, and to Japan, where the sisters established a girls’ school in Hokkaido and the monks created Saint Anselm’s Priory in Tokyo (subsequently transferred to Fujimi).

In China, the Benedictines encountered time-honored beliefs that resonated with their Christian convictions, including the Confucian love of learning and an ethical system rooted in family. There was also The Buddha's vision of community immersed in spirituality and compassion and the exhortation to environmental stewardship in Chinese Daoism and Japanese Shinto. Believing the study of Asia supported the Benedictine commitment to the liberal arts as "the center of disciplined inquiry and a rich preparation for the professions, public life, and service to others in many forms of work," several Benedictines returned to CSB|SJU to infuse Asian Studies into our campuses.

### *Asian Studies Begin at CSB|SJU*

In 1969, with support from the legacy of Minnesota railroad pioneer James J. Hill, CSB and SJU, along with St. Cloud State College, created the Tri-College East Asian Studies Program to promote shared faculty, curricular, and library development. In the process, CSB and SJU became the first of Minnesota's private colleges to offer an individualized East Asian Studies major. After the Hill grant expired in 1977, the Tri-College program was disbanded. Fortunately, CSB|SJU continued to offer courses on Asia, including Chinese and Japanese language, and to utilize the resources of the Midwest China Center (a consortium of academic, church, foundation, civic, arts, and business institutions dedicated to public education on China). Coursework was supplemented by Asia-focused January Term offerings.

### *East Asia Takes Off*

Meanwhile, East–West interchange was exploding. Thanks to three decades of regional stability under America's military umbrella, Asia's leaders had begun to supplant war and revolution with economic development. By emulating Japan's export-driven economic surge of the 1970s, the "Four Tigers" of South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore began taking off during the following decade. Throughout Asia, people were working hard on behalf of family and state, achieving educational excellence and high literacy rates, promoting public–private partnerships, attaining the world's highest savings rates, and integrating raw materials, capital, technology, and management skills into a global economic juggernaut. Advances in jumbo jets, supertankers, and container ships were fast transforming the "Far East" into America's "Near West." The U.S. expanded its export of capital goods and services to Asia, which returned to America technological innovations, financial investment, and management innovations.

By 1995, Asia's income had surpassed that of America and Europe combined. This development had profound consequences for the United States. With more than 70 percent of America's global business centered in Asia — one-third more than with Europe — and with 2.5 million American jobs tied to Asia, the region was now America's largest trading partner.

Then came China. Thanks to Deng Xiaoping's successful crusade to transform socialism into market economics and to integrate the People's Republic of China (PRC) with the global economy, the country's boundless supply of inexpensive labor and raw materials was attracting so much investment from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and millions of overseas Chinese that the PRC is now the world's second-largest trading nation and its fastest-growing economy. China is projected to soon supplant Japan as the world's second-largest economy, behind the U.S. as number one (for now!). This reality, coupled with India's economic surge — creating a blockbuster economic fusion which economists now call "Chindia" — further strengthens the claim that the 21<sup>st</sup> century is indeed the "Asian Century."

### *Minnesota's Stake in the "Asian Century"*

In 1883, railroad-builder Hill, envisioning a trans-Pacific trading empire, connected Minnesota with China and Japan by rail and ship. Regarding global commerce as an exchange of cultures, Hill — along with the Pillsburys, Daytons, and other first families of Minnesota business — began collecting Asian art for public display in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA). And immediately following World War II, Minnesota-based Northwest Orient Airlines pioneered a shorter, polar route to Asia.

Export-dependent Minnesota is the beneficiary of Asia's economic boom. When Richard Bohr was Minnesota's Deputy Commissioner of Trade and Economic Development/Executive Director of the Minnesota Trade Office under Governor Rudy Perpich, he never ceased reminding people that every one billion dollars in exports creates 23,000 Minnesota jobs and that 33% of Minnesota farm profits and 12% of factory wages come from foreign sales. Unlike most other states, he points out, Minnesota continues to enjoy a global trade surplus, because its well-diversified economy produces so much of what Asia needs, including supercomputing and food processing as well as medical, electronic, information, scientific, environmental, and educational technology and services. By the mid-1990s, Asia had become Minnesota's largest trading partner, receiving 30 percent of the state's manufactured goods and 40 percent of its agricultural exports.

## *The Importance of Asian-America/Asian-Minnesota*

In the past decade, Asian America has become an evermore visible community within an increasingly diverse America. Fleeing upheaval in their homeland and persecution in the American West, Minnesota's first Chinese family arrived in 1876 to set up shop in St. Paul. Other Asians soon followed, convinced the state's commitment to education and public services would prepare them for a stake in the American dream. Northwest Airlines has brought thousands of Korean children to join Minnesota families. Discovering the convergence of Asian and Minnesota values — diligence, hard work, and compassion — the new Minnesotans have opened small businesses, entered the professions, and flourished. And they have been a crucial bridge to their Asian homelands.

According to the 2000 census, Asian Minnesotans now number 166,217 (among 10 million Asian Americans) — up from 98,000 in 1990, with 230,000 projected for 2005 — second only to Latinos as the state's fastest-growing ethnic minority. (Minnesota is also home to the highest concentration of Hmong people and the second-largest Tibetan community in the United States.) Asian Minnesotans are a significant consumer base, contributing hundreds of millions to the state's tax rolls.

## *Expanding Asian Studies at CSB|SJU*

Clearly, a rising Asia and Asian America require a growing body of young American "Asia Hands" in every field of endeavor, from education and journalism to business, diplomacy, and law. To prepare our students for unprecedented opportunities for personal and professional engagement with these two Asias on both sides of the Pacific, CSB|SJU created, in 1994, the Asian Studies minor (the individualized major remaining in force) and, in 1995, the Asian Studies program, one of eight interdisciplinary and pre-professional programs on these campuses.

Asian Studies has grown from nine faculty teaching 17 courses across seven departments in 1994–95 to 14 faculty teaching 24 cross-listed courses among ten departments today. In addition, a number of Asia-centered experiential components have been added, including expanded exchange and study abroad programs as well as May Terms, service learning-, internship-, and teaching opportunities in Asia.

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As a political psychologist concerned about national security issues, I have a special interest in the extent to which China will ultimately rival the U.S. as a global superpower. In particular, I wonder about the extent to which we have become a

debtor nation to China. When I raised this issue with Bohr, he quipped that he calls it “mutually-assured blackmail” — a clever word play on the “mutually assured destruction” of the Cold War-era U.S.–Soviet Union superpower rivalry. China, Bohr told me, invests a billion dollars a day (\$1.5 trillion to date) in U.S. treasury notes in return for the U.S. to keep its markets open to Chinese exports. Most assuredly, our fate is intertwined with China’s.

Consonant with the mission of *Headwaters* under my editorship to bring colleagues’ diverse disciplinary knowledge to bear on pressing issues of our time, **Bruce Campbell**, in “Truth, Justice, and the Critique of Globalization in a Mexican Superhero Parody,” explores the comic-book superhero genre in sociohistoric and cross-cultural context, touching, in the process, on institutional failures such as public corruption, government inaction in the face of poverty, and unethical private enterprise; U.S. intervention in international conflicts, imperialism, and human rights abuses; the globalized economy, unemployment, and declining wages; and illegal immigration.

Contributing to the theme of international education in this issue of *Headwaters*, **Michael J. Borka**, in “Culture: Conversations and Questions,” reflects on insights gained on a faculty development trip to New Zealand, including a more acute awareness of how tradition, language, and culture shape the individual and how teachers might support the diverse voices these individuals bring to today’s classrooms.

Echoing Borka’s cultural theme — and demonstrating that native people here at home can teach us some of the same lessons as the Māori of New Zealand — **Lynn Moore**, in “Red Lake Revisited,” recounts her experiences with American Indian children in Red Lake spanning 40 years, lessons learned about the critical role of community, tradition, and oral language in education, and, ultimately, the realization that “to teach is to listen.”

In “Tongues of Fire,” **Ozzie Mayers** adds an interesting perspective to the cross-cultural insights provided by Borka and Moore. Returning to the small Cajun town in Louisiana that he left 35 years ago, Mayers deepens his understanding of how confronting his own past informs his teaching of literary analysis. Indeed, as Mayers concludes, “for me and for those who are willing to listen closely enough, the tongues of our past keep revealing to us the stories of our lives.”

**Jean Keller**, in her essay “25 Years of Care Ethics: A Personal Retrospective,” also takes an autobiographical approach to understanding her academic discipline. Claiming that “care ethics and I literally grew up together,” she uses her personal story as a way to reflect on care ethics, its development, and its critical reception over the past quarter century.

The life story of Robert L. Spaeth Teacher of Distinction Award winner **Mark Thamert**, OSB, as recounted in his SJU convocation address to the class of 2012 in “Wean Yourself,” bears further testimony to the deeper truth that past is prologue. But Fr. Mark takes that truth to a new level, namely, that to become all you can be, it is necessary from time to time to lay down one’s old life, as it were, and to create a new one; to free oneself from one concept of self and enter another that means more, that is closer to one’s passion, closer to what one can do in the world.

Inspired by his passion for the St. John’s maple syrup operation, Sister Mary Grell Teacher of Distinction Award winner **Stephen G. Saupe**, in his CSB convocation address, “Find Your Sugar Shack,” invites the class of 2012 “to become deeply involved in some aspect of the academic, spiritual, or social life of the college,” because “whatever it is that turns you on and connects you to the heart of our institutions” will change them as persons — as it changed him — and profoundly link them to our Benedictine heritage.

In “Uncovering Issues with Coordination and the Impact on Mission Implementation,” **Carie A. Braun** and **Philip I. Kramer** explore issues surrounding the coordinate relationship of St. Ben’s and St. John’s. They conclude that being coordinate is not our mission, but that conducting the mission in cooperation is instrumental to achieving our fundamental mission, the essential elements of which they capture with the terms *very best, residential, liberal arts, education, and Catholic university tradition*.

Following an interlude of three poems by **Will Marwitz**, the current issue of *Headwaters* concludes with a detailed, illustrated historiography of “Mary Anning of Lyme Regis: 19<sup>th</sup> Century Pioneer in British Palaeontology” by **Larry E. Davis**. In the context of Jean Keller’s essay on feminist “care ethics” in this issue of *Headwaters*, I was struck by the suggestion in Davis’ essay that paleontology was one of the first geosciences in which women enjoyed some standing, because in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain it was consistent with the perceived role of women as “caretakers of life.”

Finally, as we close the book on another academic year, we honor the memory of our colleague Br. Dietrich Reinhart, OSB.

*I’m glad to be part of something that tries to make a difference in the world; that tries to be of service. ... Saint John’s is a place of hope. ... And everything I’ve seen says your best days are yet to come. That’s my mantra for Saint John’s — “Our Best Days Are Yet to Come.”*

— Br. Dietrich Reinhart, OSB, December 10, 2008