

文訊

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The Phantom of Fine Hall

It was some weeks before the announcement of the 1994 Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences. John Forbes Nash Jr., accompanied by his fellow mathematician Harold Kuhn, visited their 90-year-old teacher Albert Tucker at a nursing home near Princeton, New Jersey. During the reunion, Nash had an hour-long private conversation with his tutor on number theory. After Nash walked out of the room, Kuhn secretly told Tucker that the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences was contemplating granting Nash a Nobel for the work he had done 45 years earlier when he was Tucker's student.

As pointed out by Sylvia Nasar in "The Lost Years of a Nobel Laureate", the award held special meaning for the 66-year-old Nash. It was not because, as one of the most influential mathematicians in the post-war era of the last century, he would finally get the long-awaited credit. Nor was it because his winning thesis on game theory had profoundly influenced economics. It was because he, a victim of paranoid schizophrenia, had survived the disease and was well enough to receive the prize in Stockholm after decades of imprisonment in delusion.

Back in 1945, Nash had been studying mathematics at the Carnegie Institute of Technology. Lacking worldliness, he was a loner in the college. Seldom was he invited to concerts or parties. His strange behaviour—playing the same chord on the piano repeatedly and pouting after losing a bridge game—made him unpopular with his peers. Eccentric and socially inept, he was the butt of various jokes. Yet, after a year or so, he became famous for his brilliance. Many students went to him with their homework. He challenged anyone who asked him questions and showed contempt for those who did not measure up to him intellectually.

At 19, Nash already displayed the style of a sophisticated mathematician. He grasped complex theories effortlessly. He attempted to relate things to what he knew about. He was able to reduce abstract ideas to something tangible and solve insoluble problems independently. One of Nash's teachers was so impressed by his ability and craving for difficult problems that he compared him to Gauss, the Prince of Mathematics, in class one day.

However, no one is free from setbacks, not even a genius. One day in March 1947, Nash was outside the mathematics department office, staring at the announcement tacked on the bulletin board with a face full of disappointment. He did not make it to the top five of the William Lowell Putnam Mathematical

Competition, a prestigious national tournament for undergraduates. Nash considered Putnam a golden opportunity for him to establish his rank in the world of mathematics. His dream of rising to fame overnight was shattered.

In the autumn of 1948, Nash, 20 years old then, took up a doctoral programme at Princeton University with a fellowship. The students studying mathematics at Princeton were the crème de la crème, each handpicked, "like a diamond from a heap of coal." Cockier than anyone, Nash seized every opportunity to boast about his talent. He would tell others that he had discovered an original proof of Gauss's proof of the fundamental theorem of algebra when he was an undergraduate. He rarely attended classes. Nor did he read voraciously. "Reading too much second-hand information would stifle creativity," he said.

Nash was weird, often seen absorbed in thinking and shielding himself from the outside world. But he was a focused thinker. His thesis on game theory was finished in his second year at Princeton. The theory—an attempt to derive logical and mathematical rules about rivalries—was invented by his professor John von Neumann. Nash picked a problem that skipped his teacher's notice, and turned it into a potent tool in analysing everything from business competition to trade negotiations.

Nash was only 23 when he became an instructor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he met his future wife Alicia. They were married in 1957. A year later, Alicia was pregnant. Everything seemed so good and so sweet. And yet, at this moment, Nash became sick. He turned into another person. His lectures did not make any sense. He abandoned his classes from time to time and wrote strange letters to public figures. He told people he had received messages from extraterrestrials intent on recruiting him to save outer space. At the age of 30, which is supposed to be the peak of creativity for a mathematician, Nash was admitted to hospital.

What followed was a long period of confinement to a lonely world where Nash, frozen in a dream-like state, was struggling between sense and insanity. In the subsequent two decades, he continued to frequent Princeton and his presence was felt everywhere—a tall, skinny man was seen reading in the library, pacing like a phantom around and around the corridors of Fine Hall, and dashing into empty classrooms to scribble on blackboards. While everyone believed that he would never recover, there came a remission miraculously in the 1970s—Nash could do mathematics again.

After suffering such an ordeal for so many years, most people would lay the blame on fate. But a genius thinks differently. "I think madness can be an escape. If things are not so good, you maybe want to imagine something better," Nash said.



文姬歸漢

東漢末年，歷盡滄桑的才女蔡琰由南匈奴返回中原，想到自己身世坎坷，不禁悲從中來，低聲唱道：“我生之初尚無為，我生之後漢祚衰。天不仁兮降亂離，地不仁兮使我逢此時。”歌聲悽愴，聞者動容。這就是著名的《胡笳十八拍》，全曲共十八段，曲調對比強烈，層次分明。胡笳是少數民族一種吹奏樂器。蔡琰借胡笳的哀聲，寄寓愁懷。

蔡琰為大儒蔡邕女兒，字文姬，天生麗質，博學有才，通音律，工書法，可惜紅顏命途多舛，遭遇堪憐。她十六歲與名門之子衛仲道締結婚盟。夫妻鶼鶼情深，過着如膠似漆的生活。奈何命運播弄，衛氏英年早逝，文姬婚後才一年多便守寡，夫亡無嗣，唯有歸寧娘家。當時佞臣當道，軍閥割據，漢室僅在苟延殘喘。公元一八九年，董卓率兵進佔洛陽，挾持天子，謀害異己。為了建立威信，他邀請名滿洛陽的蔡邕輔助。後來，董卓為屬下大將呂布所殺，曾為他效力的蔡邕自然難逃劫運。蔡邕被捕入獄，最後死於囚牢。慈父亡故，文姬頓失所依，從此顛沛流離，無處為家。

時局不穩，暴亂迭起，匈奴趁機南下搶掠，文姬只好倉皇逃難。自古紅顏多薄命，她逃難時竟被匈奴人擄走。南匈奴左賢王看上她，納之為妾，寵愛有加。可憐弱女身在胡地，舉目無親，天天面對蒼茫大漠，感到無限淒涼孤寂。

“越漢國兮入胡城，亡家失身兮不如無生。氈裘為裳兮骨肉震驚，羯膾為味兮枉過我情。鼙鼓喧兮從夜達明，胡風浩浩兮暗塞營。”匈奴地處蠻荒，文化風俗與中原迥然不同，文姬孤苦伶仃，度日如年。她穿粗糙毛皮做的衣服，吃腥膻難聞的肉食，居無定處，天天在凜凜北風中望着杳無人煙的荒地，精神肉體飽受煎熬。

唱到第八拍，文姬哀聲怨道：“為天有眼兮何不見我獨漂流？為神有靈兮何事處我天南海北頭？我不

負天今天何配我殊匹？我不負神兮神何殛我越荒州？”她自覺身似浮萍，質問老天爺為何那麼殘忍，把她送到胡地，被迫與匈奴人成婚。曲詞字字血淚，道盡文姬心中的悲憤。

時光荏苒，文姬在南匈奴生活了十二年，為左賢王生了兩子。那時，曹操已統一北方。他與蔡邕為莫逆之交，多年來四處打探故人之後的下落，後來得知她身在匈奴，大為驚喜，立即派使者帶備黃金千兩、白璧一雙，前往南匈奴要把文姬贖回。當時南匈奴與東漢關係和好，左賢王縱使對愛妾萬般不捨，但也不敢開罪曹操，只好忍痛割愛，把文姬送回中土。

終於能返回日思夜念的故土，文姬自當高興萬分，但要與愛兒分離，永不相見，她又肝腸寸斷。在離開匈奴當天，馬車嶙嶙前行，她聽到兒子的哭聲，心如刀割。憶記那天情境，她含淚悲唱：“思茫茫，我與兒兮各一方。日東月西兮徒相望，不得相隨兮空斷腸。對萱草兮憂不忘，彈鳴琴兮情何傷！今別子兮歸故鄉，舊怨平兮新怨長！”

文姬重返漢土後，曹操把她許配給屯田都尉董祀。然而，悲慘命運始終纏着這位可憐女子不放。婚後不久，董祀便犯下彌天大罪，按律當誅。文姬為救夫命親自向曹操求情。史書記載，隆冬時分，曹操在王府大宴賓客，文姬“蓬首徒行，叩頭請罪，音辭清辯，旨甚酸哀”。曹操被她真情感動，於是將董祀赦免。據說，後來董祀帶着她逃離紛擾塵世，隱居山林。

在亂世裏，命如草芥，人們想要過安樂生活談何容易，更何況是苦命女子。文姬出身名門，才貌雙全，奈何終身不能自主，一生三嫁，又與骨肉分離。然而，她遭難歷劫，仍堅強不屈，最終得到上天憐憫，讓她在青山綠水間過着平靜的日子。《胡笳十八拍》曲調沉重，細聽之際，彷彿一代才女就在耳畔呢喃，訴說千年淒怨。

樂天知命，故不憂。

《周易·繫辭上》



A Lost Wallet

On a bone-chilling day in the early 1980s, columnist Arnold Fine found a wallet as he was walking down the street. There were only three dollars and a tattered envelope inside. Hoping to return the wallet to its owner, he opened the envelope and saw a crumpled letter dated 1924. Beautifully handwritten, the letter was sent from a woman named Hannah to a man named Michael. It was a “Dear John” letter. In it, Hannah told Michael that they could not see each other anymore as her mother did not allow it. It broke her heart to say goodbye and she would love him forever.

“Why is there a letter written 60 years ago in the wallet?” Fine asked himself. Out of curiosity, he was more determined than ever to locate the whereabouts of its owner. In an age without Facebook, finding a stranger was like looking for a needle in a haystack. Yet, with a bit of luck and if it is God’s wish, doors will open for you. Fine had another clue—a return address on the envelope. He then called the telephone operator. “Could you help me find the number for an address?” he asked.

The operator passed Fine’s request to her supervisor. “Yes, there’s a number for the address you mentioned. But I can’t give it to you. If the party wants to talk, I will contact you,” the supervisor said. No sooner had Fine hung up than the supervisor called back. He was put through to a woman who told him that she had actually bought her house from a lady called Hannah 30 years before. He asked her how Hannah could be located.

“Hannah’s mother was moved to a nursing home many years ago. Maybe the home could help you track down the daughter,” the woman replied. After a chain of calls, Fine found out that Hannah’s mother had died and Hannah herself, pretty old now, was living in another nursing home. He decided to pay her a visit.

It was ten o’clock in the evening. The director of the nursing home told Fine that Hannah might be sleeping. But Fine still wanted to give it a try. Accompanied by the director and a guard, he went up to the third floor. In a small room he saw a silver-haired lady watching television. It was Hannah. She was an elegant lady with a warm smile and friendly eyes. Fine explained the purpose of his visit and showed her the letter.

“This was the last letter I wrote to Michael,” said Hannah. Then she looked away for a while, and went on in a wistful voice, “I loved him so much. But I was too young, only 16 back then. He’s called Michael Goldstein,” Hannah continued with tearful eyes and a choked utterance, “and if you find him, tell him I still miss him dearly.”

Fine thanked Hannah. As he was about to leave the nursing home, the guard came up to him and asked, “Did the old lady know where the wallet’s owner is?”

“No. But at least I got his last name,” Fine replied while taking out from his pocket a brown leather wallet with red-lanyard lacing. He showed it to the guard.

The guard took a closer look at it and said, “That’s Mr Goldstein’s wallet. He’s always losing it. I recognise the red-lanyard lacing. He’s living on the eighth floor.”

Fine could not believe what he was told. Desperate to see Mr Goldstein, he hurried up to the eighth floor. “I guess he is still reading in the day room,” said the director.

As they entered the day room, an old man came into sight.

“Have you lost your wallet, Mr Goldstein?” the director asked.

The old man then fumbled in his pocket, and said, “Oh my goodness. I’ve lost it again.”

“This gentleman found one. Could this be yours?” The director showed him the wallet.

“Yes, it’s mine. Young man, thank you so much,” said Mr Goldstein.

“Oh, Mr Goldstein,” said Fine, “I must admit that I have opened the envelope and read the letter. And I know where Hannah is.”

Mr Goldstein opened his eyes wide and asked, “Where’s Hannah? How’s she?”

“She’s fine,” said Fine.

“My heart broke when I got the letter. After all these years, I still love her. Please bring me to see her,” Mr Goldstein begged.

The old gentleman, in company with Fine and the director, then took the lift down to the third floor. There, Hannah was still watching television. The director walked to her and asked, “Do you know the old gentleman over there, Hannah?” She pulled down her glasses a bit, gazing at Michael for a moment.

“Hannah, it’s me, Michael. Do you remember?” Mr Goldstein walked slowly to her side. Then the two of them hugged. The director and Fine walked out, both with tears welling in their eyes.

Weeks later, Hannah and Michael tied the knot. This beautiful love story, written by Fine himself, was published in *Reader’s Digest* in the 1980s and has been retold countless times over the years.

Our destiny is frequently met in the very paths we take to avoid it.

Jean de La Fontaine (*Fables - Book VIII*)



Everyone or Every One

Can you tell the difference between **everyone** and **every one**? We use **everyone** to refer to all people in a particular group: *Everyone should come at 8 a.m. sharp tomorrow.* **Every one** means each individual person or thing: *I love each and every one of you. Mary bought ten oranges, and every one was fresh.* Traditionally, we use **his**, the third-person singular masculine pronoun, after **everyone**: *Everyone has his own dream.* Nowadays, when gender equality is taken seriously, we may say: *Everyone has his or her own dream.* But this is rather clumsy. It is therefore increasingly common to use **their** instead: *Everyone has their own dream.*

Are these three adjectives—**unsociable**, **anti-social** and **unsocial**—the same in meaning? Well, there are some overlaps in their use, but each has its distinct meaning. Someone who is **unsociable** does not enjoy the company of others: *They poured him a beer, which he forced down, not wishing to appear unsociable.* **Anti-social** people commit acts that are “contrary to the laws and customs of society”: *Young people are inclined to anti-social behaviour.* In British English, **unsocial** is used to refer to “hours falling outside the normal working day”: *The workers of this company are expected to work unsocial hours without any premium payment.*

Do you know when to use **may** and when to use **might**? In talking about possibility, **may** and **might** are commonly used: *Peter may pass the exam/Peter might pass the exam.* Both sentences mean Peter is likely to pass the exam. There is, however, a tendency to use **might** if you are less certain about something: *Mary might go, but I'm not sure.* You can use either **may** or **might** when referring to the present or future: *Lucy may/might not be interested in this.* But **might** is used when you talk about the past: *June said that she might migrate to Canada. The Smiths wanted to know if their children might come home during the summer holiday.*

We use the structure **as...as** to make comparisons: *We are as poor as they are. I am not as clever as he is.* People may shorten this to *We are as poor as they* and *I am not as clever as he*. Sometimes, after **as**, people use objective pronouns instead of subjective pronouns, and this is becoming more widespread: *We are as poor as them. I am not as clever as him.* The **as...as** construction can also cause confusion in meaning: *I hope you don't hate me as much as Paul.* This may mean “Paul hates me more than you hate me” or “You hate Paul more than you hate me”. To avoid ambiguity, we had better rephrase it.



疑問逐一解(五)

- 問：“規定”還是“規訂”？

答：正確寫法是“規定”。“規定”用作動詞時，指預先對事物在方式、方法、數量、質量等方面提出要求、作出決定；用作名詞時，指所規定的內容。至於“規訂”一詞，辭書未見收錄。
- 問：“覆核”還是“復核”？

答：“覆”可解作“翻轉”、“遮蓋”、“再次”等。“復”可解作“返回”、“再次”等。

“覆”和“復”都可解作“再次”，因此，審核之後再次審查，寫作“覆核”或“復核”均可，兩個寫法都有辭書收錄。不過，在香港“覆核”遠較“復核”常見，法例亦多用“覆核”。
- 問：“時移世易”還是“時移勢易”？

答：大部分辭典只收“時移世易”，意指時日變遷，世事隨之改變。《漢語成語辭海》兩詞兼收，指“時移世易”亦作“時移勢易”；《漢語大詞典》亦兩詞兼收，其中“時移勢易”解作“時異勢殊”，即時代、情勢等都起了變化。綜上所述，寫“時移世易”或“時移勢易”均可。
- 問：“共渡時艱”還是“共度時艱”？“共渡美好時光”還是“共度美好時光”？

答：“渡”和“度”都有由此到彼的意思，但配詞的性質有別。“渡”多與“江”、“河”、“湖”、“海”搭配，意謂由此岸到達彼岸，例如“渡海”、“遠渡重洋”，而在引伸指抽象的事物時，亦與“困難”、“危機”、“難關”等詞語搭配。“度”則多與表示時間的詞語搭配，例如“度假”、“虛度年華”、“歡度佳節”等。因此，應寫“共渡時艱”和“共度美好時光”。
- 問：“九秩晉一”和“九秩開一”所指的歲數為何？

答：十年為一秩，“晉”是增加的意思，所以“九秩晉一”是指九十一歲。“開”有“邁向”、“將要開始”的意思，“九秩開一”是指踏進第九個十年的第一年，即八十一歲。
- 問：“不知所終”、“不知所蹤”還是“不知所踪”？

答：辭書只收錄“不知所終”。“終”可解作“結局”、“下落”。“不知所終”指“不知道去了哪裏、結局如何”。“不知所蹤”和“不知所踪”是同音誤寫。



命運悲歌

小小的酒館，只有數張桌子，不到晚上十時已擠滿了人，好不熱鬧。燈光漸暗，客人紛紛靜下來，凝神定睛看着前面的小舞台。此刻，台上響起一段吉他前奏，音韻柔和細膩。接着聽到一把低沉嘶啞的聲音，幽幽唱道：“……愛與嫉妒，灰燼與火焰，痛苦與罪惡，這一切的存在，全都令人哀傷，這就是命運之歌……。”歌聲如怨如慕，扣人心弦，彷彿把聽眾帶進另一國度。一曲終了，全場鴉雀無聲，大家仍沉醉在葡萄牙悲歌“法多”(Fado)的餘韻中，數秒後才報以陣陣熱烈掌聲。

法多是葡萄牙的民俗音樂。“Fado”一字源於拉丁文，是宿命之意，歌曲大多慨嘆世事無常，禍福難料，縱有百折不撓的意志，也無法逃避變化莫測的命運。生活的點點滴滴皆可入曲：人情冷暖，愛恨情仇，生離死別，貧病交迫……全都是人生可能遇上的悲苦、辛酸。葡萄牙人就是喜歡藉法多嗟嘆世事，化解悲傷。

掌聲退去，拿着十二弦梨形葡萄牙吉他的樂師再次撥弦，吉他音色明亮獨特，節奏和曲調雖然較上一曲輕快，但依舊帶着點點唏噓無奈。此時，坐在另一旁的樂師提起手中的古典吉他，徐徐彈起伴奏來，有了這些中低音點綴，樂曲倍添憂愁。

站在舞台中央的女歌者，穿着黑裙，圍着黑披肩，閉上眼睛，靜心聽着憂怨的前奏，準備獻唱。據說這身黑衣打扮背後也有段感人故事。十九世紀初，有一名叫做瑪麗亞·塞薇拉(Maria Severa)的妓女，在里斯本與母親一起經營小酒館，還在店內演唱法多。她出眾的歌藝深深迷倒一名伯爵，可惜二人身分懸殊，注定無法共

諧連理。他們分手後，瑪麗亞每次演出都會穿得黑沉沉像烏鴉似的，藉此表達內心的悲痛。這個可憐的多情姑娘只活了二十六個年頭便離開人世。為了懷念她，後來法多歌者表演時也會穿着黑衣。看到台上女歌者的服飾，不禁讓人想起這段淒楚的愛情故事。

幽怨的旋律在空氣中盪漾，歌者凝神佇立，調整思緒後開始低吟慢唱。“……媽媽，我歌唱夜，因為白日懲罰我。媽媽，我哭泣夜……因為我生命的話語，已別無可存活的世界……。”她顰眉蹙額，時而翹首，時而垂頭，全情投入於歌曲中，即使不諳葡語也能感受箇中苦痛。她的唱腔不算柔美圓潤，卻流露出真摯情感，或許只有這副沉鬱嗓子，才能唱出生命的苦澀和惆悵。

法多雖是悲歌，但歌詞仍流露希望。每首歌曲交織着失落與盼望、痛苦與快樂，對失去或無法得到的人和物寄予絲絲憧憬、幻想。台上的歌者繼續低聲唱着：“……我以前因見不到你而哭，而今我哭因為見到你。我哭，因為我時時刻刻想見到你……。”優美的旋律配合充滿詩意的歌詞，就像在萬籟無聲的深夜裏聽到夜鶯鳴唱。

席上的聽眾細意傾聽，慢慢咀嚼歌詞的含意，若有所思。“……時光飛旋而逝，你說話，我傾聽，在我們生命的時光中，每一個小時短似一分鐘，緊緊靠近我，不要離去……”。幽婉的歌聲讓眾人憶起自身的經歷，曲詞勾起的淡淡哀愁久久不散。

人生歷練越多，越能領略悲歌的真諦。在這小小的酒館內，命運悲歌不斷迴盪。法多歌者藉着哀怨的歌聲，唱出自己對人生的體會，每段歌詞、每顆音符輕輕敲着聽眾的心坎，叫他們反思生命的本質，默想命運的安排。

自知者不怨人，知命者不怨天；
怨人者窮，怨天者無志。

《荀子·榮辱》



DESTINY

Do you believe in fate? Is love the greatest of all things that can overcome everything? Master German film director Fritz Lang attempted to find an answer to these questions in his 1921 *Der müde Tod* (“Weary Death”), a tragic silent film about love, death and destiny.

Der müde Tod, also known as *Destiny*, opens with a happy young couple riding in a carriage along a tranquil country path on a windy autumn day. At the crossroads, a man wearing a black hat asks them if they can offer him a ride to town. The couple politely let him get into the carriage. With a chalk-white face, the stranger remains silent during the journey.

As soon as they arrive in town, the stranger goes to the council office, from which he buys a piece of land adjoining the town cemetery. Around his garden, he builds a mysterious gigantic wall. Later, he and the young couple meet again at a local tavern. When the woman returns after a brief absence from the room, her fiancé and the stranger have vanished. Puzzled and desperate, she seeks her love in all the lanes until she comes to the cemetery. There, she weeps and sees dozens of ghosts lurking in the twilight. The last among them is her fiancé, who, despite her protests, just joins the other dead souls and walks through the huge wall.

The woman is so sad that she attempts to end it all by taking a vial of poison. She feels light-headed, and soon finds herself standing at the entrance of the mysterious wall. She climbs up a long flight of stairs, and sees the ghost-like stranger again. He is Death, sent by God to take away human lives when their numbers are up.

Believing that love triumphs over death, the woman begs the doomsayer to bring her fiancé back to life. Death then leads her into a room where countless candles—the whole, the burning and extinguished—are placed, each representing a single human life. Weary of his divine role as the messenger of death, he decides to give the woman a chance to prove her belief. He points to three candles in the room, which are flickering on the verge of extinguishment, and says, “If you can save one of these three lives, I’ll let your lover go.”

Death then takes the young woman to three different countries in three different eras, where she must save an incarnation of her love from death. The first story takes place in a “Middle Eastern” kingdom during the holy month of Ramadan. There, she becomes Princess Zobeide, the Caliph’s sister, in love with an infidel young man; this relationship is forbidden by her brother. One night, the young man sneaks into the palace to have a rendezvous with Zobeide but he is arrested and sentenced

by the Caliph to be buried alive. Seeing her lover’s life hanging in the balance, the tearful princess cannot do anything to save him. At this juncture, Death shows up. The first candle burns out.

Then, the woman appears in Venice. This time, she becomes a noblewoman called Monna Fiametta, who has a fiancé and a lover. Her fiancé Girolamo is a powerful member of the Council of Fourteen and her lover Gianfrancesco a middle-class merchant. Insanely jealous of Monna’s passion for her lover, Girolamo tells her that he will have Gianfrancesco executed by the Council. Monna is furious and therefore concocts a plan to kill her fiancé. Yet, by a twist of fate, her lover is killed by her instead. Crying frantically over the dead body of Gianfrancesco, the woman sees Death again. The second candle is extinguished.

The woman has only one chance left. She is brought to ancient China, where she, known as Tiao Tsien, and her lover Liang work for a magician called A Hi. One day, the Emperor asks them to perform magic for him. When the Emperor sees Tiao Tsien, he is smitten with her and asks A Hi to give her to him as a gift. Tiao Tsien refuses and plans to escape with Liang. Unfortunately, they are captured and Liang is imprisoned. During a heated quarrel with A Hi, who wants Tiao Tsien to submit herself to the Emperor, she seizes his magic wand and turns A Hi into a cactus. Using the wand, she breaks Liang out of his cell. Yet during their escape, Liang is killed by the Emperor’s archer. Death turns up to claim Liang’s soul, and the last of the three candles is snuffed out.

Death wins their bet. But taking pity on the woman, he promises he will restore her lover’s life if she can find another soul to replace him. Yet no one is willing to help her. At this moment, a fire breaks out in a building. Her chance comes. She runs into the building and finds a baby there. Death then arrives, ready to take the baby away. But through the window the woman sees the baby’s mother crying for her child. Not wanting the mother to experience the pangs of loss as she does, she hands the baby over to her. She then surrenders her own soul to Death and walks through the huge wall happily to join her lover.



Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.

William Jennings Bryan



發現敵人的哨
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從漢語的歧義、形合談起

今年六月，公務員事務局法定語文事務部假香港中央圖書館演講廳舉行專題講座。香港大學中文學院副教授謝耀基博士應邀主講，題為“明確與簡潔——從漢語的歧義、形合談起”，探討漢語歧義、形合的現象，並通過例子，帶出寫作公文時對明確、簡潔這兩個表達要求的考慮和處理。

何謂歧義？謝博士表示，學者有不同定義。聯繫到語言環境對語意理解的影響，歧義可說是一個句子在交際使用時，在一定語言環境下同時有超過一個理解的言語現象。從直接產生的原因和相對應的類型看，由詞語形、音、義引起的，是詞彙歧義；由詞語組合引起的，是語法歧義；由言語交際時語言環境引起的，是語用歧義。從語言表達形式看，便有書面語歧義、口語歧義。

寫作容易出現書面語歧義，必須注意，例如，“頭髮長了許多”的“長”，詞語同形異音異義，是指生長的“長”還是長短的“長”？“公園裏有很多杜鵑”的“杜鵑”，詞語同形同音多義，可以是花，可以是鳥。書面語缺乏口語特有的語音手段（如停頓、輕重），較易出現不同結構分析的語法歧義；例如“老師最想教好學生”中“好”可以同“教”組成中補結構，也可與“學生”組成定中結構。另外，語義關係不明確的歧義也往往被人忽略，如施動、受動兩可的“關心的是媽媽”，動作語義指向方位還是支配對象的“他在火車上貼海報”，領屬關係與修飾關係兩可的“這是哥哥的照片”。

如何消除歧義？增刪或更換詞語、調整語序、變換句式、利用標點符號、增加上下文提示或制約等都是常用的方法。從修辭看，故意製造歧義（如文藝語體），是可增加語言表達效果的。不過，歧義影響了語言表達、理解的準確性，對首重表達明確的語體（如法律語體、新聞語體、事務語體）來說，一般須避免、消除。例如公函寫作，“倘持牌人違反任何一般或特別條件，當局可立即撤銷牌照，無須發給補償或發還已繳付的費用”，“無須”是否涵蓋修飾“發還”，便會引起誤解，需要更正。

談到意合、形合，謝博士表示，漢語語句，只要語義搭配得到，為羣眾理解並且接受，便可直接組合，以語意連接，不依靠語法形式標誌，不注重語法

形式的完整，句子成分可省則省。隨着社會的發展和表達的需要，漢語使用形合的手段有說越見普遍，即語句組合時使用語法形式標誌，例如結構助詞“的、地、得”、動態助詞“了、着、過”、複量助詞“們”、連詞“和”、介詞“當、在、關於”，以及連接分句或上下文的關聯詞語、表示被動的“被”等。

形合可使語句結構嚴密，句子成分經得起分析，語意明確，但往往會削弱漢語的意合性、簡潔性。寫作公文，要求簡潔、明確，使用意合還是形合，適宜一併考慮。舉例來說，有些情況，使用關聯詞是需要的：“由於署長當晚有公務在身，無法出席，至感抱歉。”刪去“由於”，致歉的便是署長，並非發文者。再舉一例：“由於時間緊迫，盼能早日回覆，以便安排。”分句與分句之間的語義關係，若較易判斷（如因果、假設關係），關聯詞語可用（明確）、可以不用（簡潔）。較為複雜的語義關係（如條件關係），使用形合手段，可使語意表達清楚、準確，例如：“除非你在上述期限內糾正違例事項，否則本署會考慮採取管制行動。”刪去“除非”、“否則”，句意截然不同。“在這次事件中，你表現出色，為部門同事樹立良好榜樣。”加上“在……中”，句子結構、意思完整、精確，但從意合、簡潔着眼，是否可省則省？另外，表示被動，可以不用受動標誌（如“被”、“獲”、“受”），通過邏輯、常理，便意會得到，例如“申請表須放入限閱文件信封，並密封”。不過，也要小心會否造成語意表達問題：“需要部門事先批准的事項，必須盡早提出申請。”根據原文，這句主語應該是省略了的“你”，但“事項”讀來便容易使人意會為受動主語。

意合、形合在一種語言中應該可以並存。以意合表達，可使語言簡潔含蓄，留有想像空間；以形合表達，可使語意明確，信息準確傳遞。意合隱含，形合明示，各有優點，互補不足。漢語重意合，尚簡潔，使用形合手段，雖然或會造成詞語可省不省而令語意流於外露，甚至累贅，但往往可以減少因意合而引起語意不清、不夠精確的問題，例如“我要詳細報告”，在“詳細”後加上結構助詞“的”、“地”，就可把歧義消除。若能聯繫表達需要和目的、語體、語言環境各方面，考慮意合、形合的運用，當能充分發揮兩者優點。



命由誰定



有人說命由天定，也有人說性格左右命運。哪句話才對，恐無答案。人生旅途變化萬千，拐個彎是康莊大道，還是崎嶇小徑，誰也難料。人間故事個個不同，有精彩，有平淡，有歡樂，有悲哀，大家對以下名人的經歷又知多少？

- 宋代詞人蘇東坡性格剛直，不畏強禦，敢於直言，飽歷宦海浮沉。神宗熙寧年間，他因反對宰相推行新法而被貶。當時為相者何人？_____
- 他是五四新文化領袖之一，小時候，母親常囑咐他用功讀書。有一次，鄰居搬家，打算廉價出售《古今圖書集成》。母親知道他十分喜歡這部書，便向親戚借錢把書買給他。他是誰？_____
- 小時候機緣巧合，唐代畫家吳道子向某寺廟的老和尚拜師習畫。老和尚要在寺廟牆上繪一幅畫，但畫了多遍仍不滿意。師徒於是四處遊歷，增廣見聞。三年後回到寺廟，道子代師完成心願，作品栩栩如生，深受讚賞。他畫了什麼？_____
- 他是清代人，出身貴胄世家，詞風清麗飄逸，是詞壇奇葩，被王國維評為“北宋以來，一人而已”。他天生多情，常受情傷，生如夏花，璀璨而短暫，三十一歲因寒疾而終。這位詞人是誰？_____
- 明代徐霞客熱愛遊歷，勇於冒險，遇到困阻不會輕言放棄，足跡遍及全國。有一天，他來到溫州某名山，聽說那裏有個大湖，便攀上頂峯尋找，險些命斷山崖。他攀上哪座山？_____
- 他的家族在康熙年代顯赫一時，後遭政治鬥爭牽連，從此一蹶不振。飽經變遷，他懷着一腔悲憤埋首創作文學巨著，可惜不到五十歲便辭世。他遺下的鴻篇巨製被譽為章回小說巔峯之作。他是誰？_____
- 南唐君主李煜優柔寡斷，不恤政事。亡國被俘後仍終日藉詞曲緬懷故國風光歲月，令宋太宗不滿，遂於某節日把他毒死。他於哪節日被殺？_____
- 她是西漢人，貌美如花，十六歲嫁人，幾年後丈夫死去。某天，她聽到某男子在宴席中彈奏一曲《鳳求凰》，琴藝出眾，讓她芳心大動。宴席結束，該男子向她表達愛意，二人立即私奔。這對男女是誰？_____

請在二零一七年十一月十七日前，把答案連同下列個人資料寄回“香港金鐘道66號金鐘道政府合署高座2310室公務員事務局法定語文事務部《文訊》編輯委員會”。答對問題者可獲書券一張，名額五個。答案及得獎者名單將於下期公布（答案以《文訊》公布者為準）。

姓名：_____ 先生／女士（請刪去不適用者）
 部門：_____

職位：_____ 電話：_____

辦事處地址：_____



Not-a-Mindboggler

Solution of Issue No. 68

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. void | 7. idle |
| 2. unproductive | 8. body |
| 3. exhausting | 9. focus |
| 4. array | 10. relaxed |
| 5. produce | 11. quiets |
| 6. boosting | 12. way |

The following winners will be notified individually by post:

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Leung So-mei	Transport Department
Natalie Ng	Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
Pun Wai-shing, Thomas	Department of Health
Wong Cheuk-ying, Cherry	Education Bureau
Yu Chiu-lai	Education Bureau

Issue No. 70 (December 2017) : Taste and Spice

二零一七年十二月第七十期主題：甜酸苦辣

Issue No. 71 (March 2018) : New and Old

二零一八年三月第七十一期主題：新與舊

Contributions from colleagues are welcome. Please refer to Issue No. 42 for details.

歡迎同事投稿，細則請參閱第四十二期。

中文顧問 樊善標教授

英文顧問 Prof. Jason Gleckman

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