

PAGE TWO

IN YOUR WORDS

U.S. strikes ISIS targets in Syria
It's easy to blame the United States for the birth, growth and reign of the Islamic State but no one, not even Muslim hard-liners and much less the Americans, could have foreseen the organization's evolution into the barbaric entity it now is. The total eradication of this inhuman terrorist collective is the only solution. . . . Thankfully, even the oppressive rulers of the Gulf states understand why this mission is important and necessary.

B.N.C., SINGAPORE

There can be no airstrikes without killing civilians. That's the reason those I.S. fighters did everything they could to provoke this response. Probably, there are many of them yearning for martyrdom soon. They know more airstrikes equals innocent deaths equals more support and more recruits for them. That's the tragic part.

DANIEL, AUSTRIA

Testing genes for clues on cancer
More data is good. More people that come across new data without committing to understand it is bad. More data that leads people to make rash decisions that aren't supported by that data is worse. Even if the people in question are physicians. . . . It isn't progress to remove a healthy person's stomach because of a correlation that isn't completely understood, that's idiocy. Additional testing, such as Jennifer's endoscopic evaluations, makes sense. Turning our back on new data because some aren't disciplined enough to deal with it responsibly does not.

G. ARMOUR VAN HORN, WHIDBEY ISLAND, WASH.

These tests are wonderful news for the "health" industry. Skip them. Just assume you have several genes that increase your risk of cancer. As this article points out, you probably do.

SUZANNE, DENVER

See what readers are talking about and leave your own comments at nyt.com

IN OUR PAGES

International Herald Tribune

1889 Pining for Italian Annexation
SUAQIN Owing to the unjust policy alleged to be pursued by the Egyptian officers, the inhabitants of Agig have petitioned the Italian authorities in East Africa to annex that place. If the Italians should take Agig, there is no doubt that English commercial prospects in that quarter will be adversely affected. Some dervishes made a raid yesterday upon cattle near Suakin, but a body of native cavalry recovered possession of the animals. A sure sign of the peaceful intentions of most of the natives of the Eastern Soudan is furnished by the fact that the inhabitants of Tokar, Khor, Arbat and Odrus intend to grow cotton this season.

1914 Prussian Women in Resistance
PETROGRAD The "Army Gazette" has information that the Austro-German General Staff is now engaged in the formation of purely German and Hungarian regiments from the Landwehr and Landsturm, in order to counteract and outnumber the Slav regiments. A correspondent of the Retch declares that there are many women among the prisoners from the East Prussian frontier, captured for taking part in fighting.

Find a retrospective of news from 1887 to 2013 at iht-retrospective.blogs.nytimes.com

Black fatherhood revisited



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZUN LEE

NEW PERSPECTIVES
In his book "Father Figure: Exploring Alternate Notions of Black Fatherhood" (Ceiba), Zun Lee, a photographer based in Toronto, seeks to counter the image

of African-American fatherhood as a wasteland of irresponsibility. Mr. Lee's own history informs the project: In his 30s, his Korean mother told him that his father

was a black man whom she briefly knew. Mr. Lee writes that he was disheartened by the way his past echoed "the stereotypical black absentee father narrative."



PERSONAL TOUCH
Top, a rooftop game of hide-and-seek for Jerrell Willis and his son Fidel, also seen at left; center left, Guy Miller and his daughter Lanae at home; and above, Carlos and Selah Richardson at an aquarium in Atlanta. Mr. Lee writes, "My work is not about

showing the limited range of 'good' black fathers that society tends to use as antidotes to the negativity. It became about depicting the everyday, untold stories that we collectively know exist but are not part of the media landscape." More photos at lens.blogs.nytimes.com

LONGCHAMP
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Yoshiko Yamaguchi, film star, dies at 94

BY PAUL VITELLO

Yoshiko Yamaguchi, a singer and actress who starred in Japanese propaganda films during Japan's brutal military occupation of China in the 1930s and '40s and who, after narrowly escaping execution by the Chinese after the war, helped

OBITUARY

normalize relations between the nations, died on Sept. 7 in Tokyo. She was 94.

Her death was announced by a family spokesman, according to the Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun.

Ms. Yamaguchi's life was marked by a series of self-reinventions, most of them forced on her by the same historic events that changed the face of Asia in the 20th century. In recent years, her story became a touchstone for film histories, television dramas, a novel and an opera — all in some way exploring national identity in Asia.

Beginning in 1938, when she was 18, she was a movie star known in China as Li Xianglan, the Chinese pseudonym she assumed to hide her Japanese identity in films promoting Japanese occupation. After the war, she lived as an exile from China, the country of her birth; acted in 1950s Hollywood B-movies under the

name Shirley Yamaguchi; and became a voice for Chinese-Japanese détente in the Japanese Parliament.

In the United States, Ms. Yamaguchi had starring roles in King Vidor's "Japanese War Bride," a 1952 film co-starring Don Taylor; "House of Bamboo," a 1955 film noir directed by Samuel Fuller and co-starring Robert Stack; and a short-lived 1956 Broadway musical, "Shangri-La," based on the James Hilton novel "Lost Horizon."

She played her major roles, on and off the screen, in Asia.

Born to Japanese parents in Manchuria, the northeast region of China that was invaded by the Japanese in 1931 and held at a cost of hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilian lives over the next 14 years, Ms. Yamaguchi was an 18-year-old Mandarin speaker when the Manchurian Film Association cast her in the first of a series of Chinese-language propaganda films.

At the time, she wrote in "My Life as Li Xianglan," her 2004 autobiography, she did not understand the not-too-subtle message in the melodramatic romances she made, like "Honeymoon Express" (1938), "China Nights" (1940) and "Song of the White Orchid" (1942).

In each film Ms. Yamaguchi played essentially the same role: a downtrod-

den but beautiful Chinese woman who initially spurns help from a handsome Japanese sailor or soldier, then falls in love with him. The Japanese owners of the film studio knew that Ms. Yamaguchi was Japanese, and a Japanese citizen, but presented her as Chinese to suit the underlying allegory of the films: An oppressed China, resisting the occupation at first, soon embraces Japan as its rescuer.

After Japan's defeat, the Chinese authorities arrested her for treason amid calls for her execution. As Nationalist and Communist forces fought in China's civil war, she spent nine months in prison before she could produce a copy of her birth certificate, proving she was not Chinese but Japanese.

Ms. Yamaguchi, who settled in Japan in 1946, openly apologized for what she said had been her unwitting role as a propaganda tool during the war. And she was one of the first prominent Japanese citizens to acknowledge the history of Japanese brutality during the occupation, an episode for which many Japanese nationalists still refuse to apologize.

As "Ri Koran," a Japanization of Li Xianglan, Ms. Yamaguchi began re-establishing her film career in Hong Kong and Japan in the late 1940s. She appeared in a dozen Japanese films.

The Scots reinvigorate democracy



Katrin Bennhold

LETTER FROM EUROPE

GLASGOW George Washington is said to have cherished a wood snuff box from a tree that hid William Wallace from the English during the wars of independence, which eventually ended in victory for the Scots at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

About half the signatories on America's Declaration of Independence had Scottish ancestry, and many took inspiration from Scottish Enlightenment thinkers like David Hume, who wrote on Oct. 27, 1775: "I am an American in my principles, and wish we would let them alone to govern or misgovern themselves as they think proper."

As the Scottish actor Brian Cox put it before last week's failed bid for independence: "Scotland was indirectly responsible for the American Revolution."

Scotland may not quite have invented democracy, but might it earn a place in the history books for reinventing it?

"Forget Bannockburn or the Scottish Enlightenment, the Scots have just re-invented and re-established the idea of true democracy," the Scottish writer Irvine Welsh wrote. "This — one more — glorious failure might also, paradoxically, be their finest hour."

A whiff of Scottish spring was certainly in the September air as a record 97 percent of residents registered to vote and 85 percent cast their ballots.

At a time when less than 60 percent of Americans vote in presidential elections and scarcely more than four in 10 Europeans bother with elections for the European Parliament, a generation in Scotland was inspired and politicized.

The energy was palpable during two years of town hall meetings and Facebook debates, and outside polling stations in Glasgow last week. "I felt it was my responsibility to vote," said Angus Cole, a 35-year-old mechanic who had never cast a ballot before. He voted no to independence.

"Making that cross felt important," Sarah Robertson, a 22-year-old medical student, said about voting. "It gave me goose bumps." She voted yes.

The people power behind the yes vote, which ballooned from about 30 percent two years ago to 45 percent last Thursday, has been all the more striking because opposition to independence was almost unanimous among the main political parties, business leaders and the news media. Surely, if this happened in another country, Suzanne Moore recently wrote in The Guardian, "we would be calling it a velvet revolution and marveling at democracy in action."

Instead, the governing pro-independence Scottish National Party has been accused of populism and is routinely cited in the same breath as unsavory nationalist fringe movements.

Niall Ferguson, a Scottish historian who teaches at Harvard University, wrote in The Financial Times on Monday that "we have witnessed another defeat for populism at the hands of the emergent Europe-wide grand coalition."

"Populism has been popping up all over Europe since the financial crisis," Mr. Ferguson continued, before listing a number of mostly far-right anti-immigration movements.

Over the past week, membership in the Scottish National Party has surged by almost 17,000 to 42,336, and polls suggest it could increase its majority in the Scottish Parliament further in the next election.

Popular does not necessarily mean populist and nationalism is not synonymous with immigrant-hating euro-skepticism, said Mr. Cox, himself a longstanding member of the Labour Party who backed independence: "The S.N.P. has been the protector of social democracy in Scotland, that's why people are voting for them."

Indeed, the Scottish brand of a pro-European nationalism looks very different from the right-wing varieties blossoming elsewhere in Europe. Rather than exclusiveness, nationalists in Scotland pride themselves on American-style hyphenated identities. Everyone registered as a resident in Scotland could vote in the referendum, British citizen or not, while Scots living outside Scotland could not. There were Asian-Scots and Polish-Scots campaigning on both sides of the divide.

"This is civic nationalism, not ethnic nationalism," explained Humza Yousaf, a Glaswegian of Pakistani descent and external affairs minister for the Scottish government.

"We have shown that this country needs to rethink politics," he told The New York Times earlier this year. "It makes me proud to be Scottish."

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