



S.J.S.U. Phyllis F. Simpkins

International House



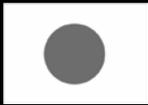
Fall 2001 Newsletter

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25th

**Anniversary Alumni Reunion
in 2003! Details inside.**





For months, we had been composing lists on what we would eat first.

“Tacos, “ I said, “and a real cappuccino.”

Other volunteers talked about Caesar salads, French cheeses, and homemade pies.

Someone even mentioned meat loaf.

We had been living in Southwest China for two years, and had developed a love-hate relationship with the local cuisine. It was deliciously spicy, full of vegetables we had never seen before, and so cheap that McDonald’s is overpriced by comparison. Still, those of us from California missed Mexican, Japanese, Italian, Indian, and a host of other ethnic foods not available where we lived in China.

So, with these expectations, how did I end up eating fourteen meals a week on campus at SJSU?

The answer has to do with baseball and the Middle East.

While living in China, I had an opportunity to look back at the United States. I noticed how the American press sometimes used “the rules of China” instead of “the Chinese government” in news articles. I noticed our national baseball championship series is called “The World Series,” yet I saw no Chinese teams—nor Russian, Spanish, or any other country for that matter—participating. And I was puzzled why friends more than once insisted on asking, “ how’s living in Japan?” in their letters and emails.

The mayor of New York, who had otherwise been an effective spokesman during the recent crisis, said on national TV that “ this was the greatest country in the world.” True, it is a great country, but “greatest in the world?” This sounds a bit arrogant. And calling a national championship a “World Series” does not sound any better. Maybe the combination of living overseas and majoring in linguistics lends me this sensitivity, because when I try to explain these things to American friends, I often get blank stares or wrinkled brows. But I do not mean to say Americans use phrases like these spitefully. I believe we are just culturally deaf now and then.

We are also absurd at times. Ten years ago, there was a popular bumper sticker that read, *Support Our Troops*. This was during the first Gulf War. The slogan was, I believe, associated with those who supported the war. Where did that leave the rest of us? Were the supporters of war implying that wanting war must be synonymous with supporting troops, and therefore those who did not want war did not care about the troops? *Support Our Troops* sounded foolish to me. No American, whether for or against war, wanted harm to come to American troops. Why not produce a *Support Eating* bumper sticker instead? It would have been equally absurd. We all know when we are hungry.

Which brings me back to where I began. The fourteen meal plan was part of the deal when I applied to the I-House. I anticipated a place where different languages were heard at dinner, diverse viewpoints were shared about news programs, and not everyone was a devoted fan of Monday Night Football. At the I-House, I have found a place where a multinational world view is kept well nourished.

And really, the food isn’t that bad. Sometimes you might even see me going up for second helpings, though the rice is never as it was in China.

Colors

Rina Sutaria

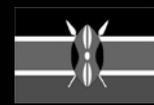
Children come in all the colors of the earth,
In vibrant shades of you and me.

Dark leopard spots, light as sand,
Children glow and giggle with laughter in our lands.

Love comes in cinnamon, walnut, and wheat,
Love is amber and ivory and ginger and sweet.

Like caramel, and chocolate, and the honey of bees,
Their sweetness is present and easy to see.

Children come in all the colors of the earth,
In vibrant shades of you and me.



Wow! Where did those 25 years go? Can you believe that we're going to celebrate our 25th anniversary in 2003?! It's time for an alumni reunion...

For 25 years, our wonderful House has been home to thousands of students from around the world. How many years has it been for you? Do you still miss those unforgettable times and wonderful friends from your days in San José?

Well, your chance to meet up with old friends again is right around the corner, and we'll plan the party for you. All you have to do is come to San José to have the time of your life.

We're searching for the best places and times to meet in San José in June or July, 2003 for a three-day weekend which will include a dinner/dance, brunch at the I-House, trips around the Bay Area, etc.

Plan now to spend your vacation in the U.S. so that you can join the fun. By the Spring '02 newsletter, we'll have all the details for you on the exact dates. Also, by early March '02, we should have reunion information online on our website so check it out: www.sjsu.edu/depts/ihouse

The best way for you to get information about the upcoming alumni reunion is to e-mail us: ihousesjsu@aol.com
Please send us your e-mail address, and the e-mail addresses of any I-House/I-Center alumni you know so that we can spread the word.

Alumni from around the world have already told me that they plan to attend our reunion. I hope that you will be here too! The more, the merrier...



There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.- Ecclesiastes 3:1

Evening had bathed the woods in a warm yellow light, adding a rich golden hue to the orange autumn landscape. The nearly bare branches let the sunset stream through them in subtle reds and yellows, glinting against the remaining hints of leafy crests. Below, leafy copper colored halos surrounded the tree trunks. A squirrel scurried through the leaves to one big tree, an acorn clenched in his teeth. With his red fur, he was barely visible in the shadows; he scurried along a clear, leafless path leading to the tree, well worn by his many acorn-gathering trips.

Suddenly, the PLOP of an acorn hitting the ground near the squirrel made him stop short. And then another. "AARRGGH!!" PLOP! If you've never seen a squirrel before, they're like quick-tempered balls of energy cooped up in deceptively tiny, furry packages, and though they seem tireless as they gather acorns year in year out, – PLOP – they sometimes get to a point... "The NERVE of these...these," Bob spat, "stupid little..." snatched one acorn up with both hands, "...damned...DAMNED..." then lifted it high above his ears, hadn't noticed a thin mist descending, curling itself together close to the tree. The squirrel stopped cursing as the mist slowly drew itself together to form a fairly solid human form, but massive, with wisps of the mist rising from it. There was a thundering rumble, which gradually started to sound like...

"Something wrong, Bob?"

The squirrel was, oddly, calm. He'd seen this before. "Why do I have to slave every fall to gather acorns when you could've easily made them stay on the trees? I hate this! So bloody unf...!"

"Geez, Bob!" The rumble now sounded more like a deep voice. "That's how it works; gotta give to receive, gotta let go to reach." Bob kicked a leaf off the ground. "Wow. Ok, Bob. Sit." The squirrel reluctantly sat on one of the tree's huge worm-like roots, scorning like a spoiled child, preparing for another lecture from God. God walked to Bob's side. Then, with a swift, casual – but commanding – wave of his wispy arm, a loud POP startled the squirrel, who clung to the root with his claws, his bushy tail stock still and erect, twitching only on its end. A huge black TV materialized, floating a few inches above the leafy ground. It was at least 80 inches across, wide-screen – God loved melodrama. Bob gaped wide-eyed at the shiny monument of technology levitating before him for a few long seconds. Then a cloud of red leaves and dust rose with a THUD as whatever was holding the TV let it fall to the ground, rocking threateningly back and forth before settling.

"Sorry. Just thought I should keep this as inconspicuous as possible," God said, with a dismiss-

ing wave of his hand. "No floating thingy."

Bob had just turned to look at God with a cocked eyebrow when music jolted his attention back to the TV. Two humans, holding each other, were twisting and letting go, then smashing into each other, waving their arms and legs about, sometimes to catch each other as they each 'almost fell' every now and then. "It's called 'Ballet'", God told Bob, who was by now relaxed, but still staring at the TV. "Carefully coordinated movements executed with captivating grace – much like life. There. Look how she bends gracefully back to lean on him." There was a shuffle of feet and Bob turned to see God settling down heavily on another root with a low groan. "Been working all day. Look. Now she'll run and jump into his arms... And now he's lifting her...look at his balance." Bob, staring at the TV again, though lost, could tell that God thoroughly enjoyed this. "Life's like that," God continued. "Those two have rehearsed for days, weeks, so that nothing goes wrong. Though it could, in which case, they'll rehearse some more, and do it again, or even do something different entirely." He paused. "But, if nothing goes wrong with this dance, there will be fame and fortune. Both of these ends are good, but they lead to more hard work to make the different job successful or the next dance even more stunning. From this, more fame and fortune, more practice and so on. Ups and downs then ups then downs." It sounded like he sang that. The dancers disappeared as the scene changed from one to the other, like someone was surfing channels. "And they're everywhere, Bob – love, war, science, evolution, light waves..." God shifted uncomfortably on the hard root. "What you need to know is that each cannot *be* without the other. The Up, which we want, brings the Down, which we hate.

Bob still looked at the TV, but his black pearly eyes had a distant gaze as he churned this over in his little head. *Each cannot be without the other...the dancer can't dance without the difficult rehearsing... my acorn, my tree would not exist if acorns didn't fall...I like the summer because I hate the winter... new species evolve and flourish only after the death of earlier less adaptive species...wait, that was an insanely complex thought.* God had whispered that last one through Bob's mind. Bob turned resentfully to tell him off, but was startled at the sight of another squirrel sitting near him, holding his own tail. The newcomer looked ancient at best, but had an unusually fresh, young air about him with a face that spoke of endless – complete – knowledge, a face showing an entire squirrel lifetime in the beard and the rings under the eyes. Bob squinted at him in disbelief. "God?" The other squirrel sat with his bushy tail wrapped around him, resting his cheek on the fluffy tip, looking up at

Bob with a right-handed smile, running his paws through the soft fur.

“Do you know why I gave squirrels bushy tails, Bob?”

Bob twitched his tail, straightened up and recited an educated answer. “To add balance to the art of tree climbing.” The other squirrel – God – was shaking his head slowly, still feeling his tail, grinning like he knew a juicy secret.

“This. This is why I gave you a bushy tail. So that you can *squeeze* it...” God the squirrel was making a lazy contented gurgling noise, watching Bob’s dumbfounded face. “It’s the little things that keep you going, Bob. Recognize, *see*, the little things...” A flying acorn suddenly plopped into the ancient squirrel’s white tummy and sent him reeling backwards, rolling over twice and falling off the root out of Bob’s view.

Bob was doubling over in laughter. “SEE the little things!” He was wiping tears from his eyes, when a loud WHOOSH broke his laughter. Leaves and dust had risen into the air, and God was towering over Bob, again, misty, his lips curled, clearly unimpressed at having the wind knocked out of him by an acorn. Had Bob finally crossed the line? Was this it?

“If I didn’t love you, Bob...divinely...”

Bob quivered. “I just wanted to show you how...”

“They are that big for a purpose. If I made them smaller, it would be easier to lift them, but you’d have to make twice the trips you make to stock up for winter. Never heard you whining when you’re up there munching away.” God had interrupted with a good point, Bob thought. “Course it’s a good point.” But Bob wished God would stop mind reading. “Every thing has a purpose, which is basically to lead to the next thing. Nothing lasts forever – except me. You never hear me complain, living with myself for a gazillion years.” He shrugged and added almost immediately, “Do you know how lonely it gets up there? Gets to the point where I can’t help but leave my *awesome presence* holding the fort and descend in a merely almighty mist to mingle with the likes of you.” Bob couldn’t decide whether that meant as sourly as it sounded, but then God crouched, and said, in a tone that almost literally *touched* Bob, “I come to see my *little things*.” There was a queasy pause – Bob had never thought of himself as part of God’s eternal therapy routine – then God stood up abruptly.

“And as for your tail...” God had his smile back and was pointing a long smoky finger at the squirrel, who turned to look at his tail and jumped forward in shock. All he had was a little bunny-like stub where his long bush used to be. His heart racing, he looked back at God to protest, except that God wasn’t there – no mist, nothing. He started to feel uncannily alone, but only had a second to suffer this hardship; his ears

stuck out and his stomach clenched hard with the sound of flapping wings behind him. Bob let out a squeal and bolted off, behind him where he had been standing, the sound of claws striking the ground. His feet kicked up leaves as he sped to the tree trunk. Wings flapped just above him casting a blurred shadow in front of him and driving wind into his ears. He veered hard to the left and felt a wing brush him on his back, then rounded the tree and clawed its trunk to the top like a confused lightning bolt. Invisible in its branches, Bob paused to take long, quiet breaths, to instinctively hold his furry tail close to him, but remembered there was nothing there. After a moment, he heard nothing but his breathing, then the once-annoying sounds of dropping acorns. He looked around to see if the bird was still there, then something touched his butt and made him jump.

“You made it.” God was grinning more widely than ever, feigning admiration. “Without your tail.” Bob’s tail was back with a POP. The squirrel gave it a grateful twitch, then looked back at God, his face contorted with contempt.

“You were the bird!”

“An eye for an eye, squirrel.”

“But... but you scared me furless!!”

“Your tail. You tried to hold it, didn’t you? Ah,” waving a finger, “Sometimes the little things count the most when you’re down, eh?” God did an ‘about-face’ and began to walk away slowly. “Balance. Poof! What nonsense! Building big explanations around simple concepts. Such a human thing.” Ignoring Bob’s scowl, he picked up his TV and turned round, his eyes twinkling, with a warming, calming, immensely soothing smile. “Bob. When times are hard, squeeze your tail. The little things, hey?” With that, there was a POP and the TV flew out of God’s hands, looping and shrinking noisily like a deflating balloon. It disappeared with another POP. And God? Well, the mist had dissipated away and risen into the waiting clouds, which rolled out like vast scrolls. They rolled shut, engulfed the mist, and hid the remaining glimmer of sun; curls of cloud came together as if heeding an unspoken command to form a colossal face, then everything rumbled and Bob could make out the words, “R-e-m-e-m-b-e-r, B-o-b.” The face disappeared into itself.

Honestly, Bob thought, *why go through all that trouble...* He clambered to the ground, looked around for his acorn, stopped, and recalled what the evening had taught him. *Squeeze my tail...the little things... every thing has a purpose...to lead to the next thing... each cannot be without the other...each does not last forever.* Bob scooped up his acorn, and disappeared into his tree. He couldn’t help but feel enlightened.



Untitled

Vadim "dr. P.O.N." Kostylev

While looking
 in moonlight at
 a blade of a knife, turning it
 in milky rays
 while the glare was blinding
 my eyes in darkness,
 my blood freezing
 from the horror when thoughts
 arouse in my buzzing
 tired brain,
 I stopped thinking
 of a pain
 from the cut as I
 cross my arm to forget,
 while the world went on
 dark. Gloomy,
 with age,
 murdering, murdering
 innocent people, thundering
 with wars,
 the dust twisting
 on its way as a
 cream merging with
 coffee.



The Armed Falcon

Natural Forces of Love

Sindy Mulyono

Love...love...love.... Everybody is talking about love. They come and go telling you the meaning of love. People often misuse and take advantage of love. Love is not just about happiness, romance, and those twinkling feelings you have inside of you. Love is also caring, understanding, frustrating, crying, sharing, believing, and forgiving. Those are the natural forces of love. Love has the ability to make such big impacts on one's life.

Love is brighter than the sun, deeper than the ocean, and wider than the universe. When love comes you will know because the smallest detail about your special someone, the ones that are so insignificant to most

people, seem fascinating and incredible to you. When you are in love, you are able to make each other laugh at the very worst time. Love is being honest with yourself and your special someone at all times, telling, respecting the truth, and never pretending. When you are in love you will accept your special someone just the way they are, and you will not try to change them to be something else. You are able to talk about everything because love is sharing, caring and honest.

Love is as plentiful as oxygen. You do not have to be thin, super-beautiful, sexy or popular to have it. All those aspects are relative; every one of us is different and unique in our own way. You do not have to worry about your height, weight, make-up, or what you wear because it does not matter. Just be yourself, the best that you can be. Take good care of yourself. Love will find you in a very unpredictable, unique, and mysterious way.



The man woke up to the sound of the waves crashing into the side of the boat. Droplets from the impact hit him in the face. Ice cold. He shuddered from it under his thick bearskin and began to feel a sore spot in his back from something he had lain on during the night. The skies were gray right now, and looked heavy with rain. Five dark shapes moved around on the boat and some of the other 35 men were beginning to rustle as they woke up. The big dark rectangular sail hanging from the lonely central mast was at least flapping steadily as the wind tore into it. He stood up and wrapped the bearskin around him like a mantle, the winds were as cold here as the water.

He looked around. East and west, north and south, it was water all around to the far horizon, or at least as far as he could see on this gray rain-clouded morning. He ran his tongue over his cracked lips and carefully stepped over the still sleeping men to the oarsman. Johan, the oarsman, a huge man with a large black beard nodded at him as he approached.

"How was the night?" he asked.

Dark and cold, Johan replied with a tired voice. But at least we seem to have gone past all the icebergs now. And the captain seem to think we are on the right course. Tonight we had an hour of clear skies and he was looking up at the sky the whole time. Maybe he was looking for some sign from the gods, I don't know. But he didn't seem angry.

"Is there any water left?" the man inquired.

The supply of freshwater was the single most important thing to the men of the boat. They had been at sea for three weeks now and almost all the fresh water had been drunk. Only the captain had the right to decide if the men could drink now. They were down to a couple of small mugs two times a day.

I think there is, but you will have to wait for morning meal for it.

Johan settled back against the gunwhale, apparently content with conversation for now.

The man went back to his sleeping spot and sat down on his chest of belongings. He started to think.

Three years since he had seen his home in Uppsala. The time seemed to have passed by at great speed. He barely remembered the journey he had to make to the Icelandic village of Berg after the family's trouble with the Jarl. An oath of blood waited for him back home. A thing of the past now, he didn't expect to return there, even if he survived this present journey.

The three years in the village he had spent fishing and helping out with the mending of the Knorrs, the Viking work- and tradeboats but he missed the summers of home. When the captain had begun to plan a trip to the west in search of the rumored land, he had

I had a dream this morning.
I had a dream about being "great."

What does being "great" mean first off?!
Is dat about bein' nice or mean or happy or sad?!!
What "great" really is?!!

Well, bein' "great" is not about bein' nice or mean or happy or sad, it is about being your "Self",
It is about askin' others to accept U the way u wanna be accepted.

No! I ain't "Great" and I do not wanna be the "One"

Did I really have a dream?!
Yeah, I had a dream about setting my "Self" Free
Freeing my "Self" from the "consumption culture"

The ruined FUTURE; Invention, Consumption,
Destruction.

asked to be part of the crew. The boat had been carefully equipped with goat meat, cabbages and herring. Thirty big barrels of freshwater for a month at sea had been rolled aboard. At 30 meters in length, the long-boat had been an impressive sight with its fearsome dragonhead staring angrily from the stern. Twenty-two days ago they left the village and headed west. It was in the summer but the weather was never very warm in these parts. Icebergs had to be expected the year around and even snow could occasionally fall during summer. Ten days ago a storm caused five of the water barrels to come loose as the ropes that held them down broke under the stress. Now only one barrel was left. The whole world knew the Vikings were the greatest sailors, but they had to find some more water soon, or they would die from thirst. The man looked out over the waves searching for something else besides the gray sea. Nothing, only the water topped by the white foam. Would they never see the rumored new land, he wondered. Rumors about it had been around the village for a long time but no-one actually knew if it existed or not. The land of the Far West. The tales said it was full of green grass and herds of animals, that life was easy and good.

If one could only get there, there would be no more problems. If one could only get there. Would they get there?

The man stood up and stared further out over the moving sea. He gripped the sides of the boat and let his eyes wander.

Again the thought rose as it had many times before. Would they make it? Would they see the promised land?



Are You a Mermaid or Something?

Lara Said Pullicino



The other day, a group of funny guys, now very good friends of mine, were looking at the world map in the dining room of the International House, trying to find Malta. They said that they could see the word 'Malta' in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, but could not find any sign of land. So as a joke, they jumped to the conclusion that Malta does not exist and that I must be a mermaid living in the sea. Since then they have been cracking jokes like "How do you cook pasta under the sea?" or "We should make a reunion on Malta, but how are 73 people going to fit on the island at the same time? We would have to take turns to go in and out of Malta", and everybody would laugh.

This is what it is like, being the only 20 year old girl in the International House coming from Malta, this mysterious microscopic dot on the world map. I must admit that it is pretty fun and exciting that people show great interest in getting to know about my country. It is the first time that I learnt to appreciate the originality and treasures of my own country- things that I always took for granted!

So to relieve your curiosity about my little, rich country, I will tell you a few things about it.

Malta and its group of smaller islands, Gozo and Comino, both of which are inhabited, and the smaller uninhabited islands of Cominotto, Filfla and St. Paul's Islands, lie in the center of the Mediterranean Sea in Europe. With a population of around 370,000 crowding an area of about 320-sq. km., the Maltese Archipelago is one of the most densely populated countries in Europe. Malta, the small island Republic has a very strategic position lying midway between the island of Sicily, at the tip of Italy, and the Tunisian coast of North Africa. Because of this, it has since time immemorial been dominated by foreign powers until attaining independence in 1964. The Phoenicians, the Romans, the Arabs, the Greeks, the Normans, the Spanish, the Knights of Malta, the French and the British all dominated my native land and left an indelible mark on our history. The Sovereign Military

Order of St. John, the Knights of Malta made the islands their home from 1530 to 1780, when Napoleon Bonaparte and the French rule took over the island. The French were then thrown out of Malta with the help of the British, who remained in Malta from 1800 to 1964, when Malta achieved Independence as a full member of the British Commonwealth.

Our native language is Maltese, which originated from Arabic and which has been particularly influenced by the languages of all the countries that previously ruled Malta. English is our second language and Italian is our third. As a result, 90 percent of the Maltese population is trilingual.

The first Maltese were a group of Late Stone-Age Sicilian farming families, who brought with them their domestic animals, pottery, bags of seeds and flint implements. These were the earliest human remains in Malta that dated up to the Early Neolithic period (c.5200-4100 BC). By the Late Neolithic (c.4100-2500BC.), after a number of generations, the islanders were in a world that was very much isolated from their original Sicilian homeland. As a result, the islanders gave rise to one of the most fascinating cultural phenomena that remain to this day unique and unparalleled. As a cultural laboratory, the Maltese Islands became the homeland of the world's oldest freestanding stone monuments, the pre-historic temples, a fascinating funerary ritual involving elaborate underground cemeteries and a remarkable repertoire



of unrivalled art forms.

Malta is indeed rich in fine churches and impressive architecture. Valletta, the capital city of Malta, has the richest architectural heritage, the most majestic being St. John's Co-Cathedral, in which lies the renowned painting of Michaelangelo Merisi de Caravaggio entitled *The Beheading of St. John*- recognized by critics all over the world as 'the painting of the 17th century'. Having said all that, I can assure you that the historically-minded visitor has a wealth of choice that can prove belittling.

The other main tourist attraction is a beautiful southern Mediterranean environment, including our





pretty beaches and the beautiful deep blue sea surrounding the islands. My country is blessed with an equitable climate, with fine sunny weather for most days of the year. The temperature ranges from a maximum of 38 degrees Celsius in summer, to a minimum of 7 degrees Celsius in winter.

We also have a number of unique traditions such as our own typical traditional food, music, various handcrafts and ritual celebrations that are worth experiencing.

If you have read to this point, then I am sure that you cannot wait to come and visit me on this little 'treasure island'. It would be great to have you at home and I would be willing to take you around in my little, red Ford Ka. The nightlife in Malta is great too, especially in the summertime and I can assure you that you will love that part of your holiday.

I am looking forward to meeting you guys and having you visit me on my little precious island.

I will leave you by wishing you good health in Maltese- "Sahha!!"



Photos: <http://www.immortalimages.com>, <http://www.maltavista.net>, <http://www.aboutmalta.com/>

One

Bhavini Joshi

God is one,
Then why are there so many names?
Why are there so many religions,
When Devotion is one?

Blood is red,
Then why are there so many races?
Why is there discrimination,
When all humans are one?

Land is one,
Then why are there so many borders?
Why are there different pieces,
When Earth is one?

Speech is one,
Then why are there so many languages?
Why is there so much difference
When the language of love is one?

Life is one,
Then why are there so many needs?
Why is there so much lust,
When bliss is one?

World is one,
Then why are there so many countries?
Why is there nationality,
When humanity is one?

Success is one,
It's in sacrifice,
Then why are there wars,
When heroism is one?

इश्वर एक है
तो फिर इतने नाम क्यों हैं
इतने मतलब क्यों हैं
जब भक्ति एक है

रक्त लाल है,
तो फिर इतनी जातियाँ क्यों हैं?
इतना भेदभाव क्यों
जब मनुष्य एक है?

जमीन एक है
तो फिर समूह क्यों हैं
इतने टुकड़े क्यों हैं
जब धरती एक है

वाणी एक है,
तो फिर इतनी शाखाएँ क्यों हैं?
इतना अंतर क्यों हैं
जब मीत की भाषा एक है?

जीवन एक है,
तो इतनी जरूरतें क्यों हैं?
इतनी आस्था क्यों हैं
जब नीवशा एक है?

दुनिया एक है,
तो फिर अलग अलग मुलक क्यों हैं?
मिर्फ़ अफ्री ही मुलक हैं
जब इन्सानियत एक है?

सफलता एक है
जो बलिदान में है?
तो फिर जंग क्यों हैं
जब श्रुति एक है?





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