

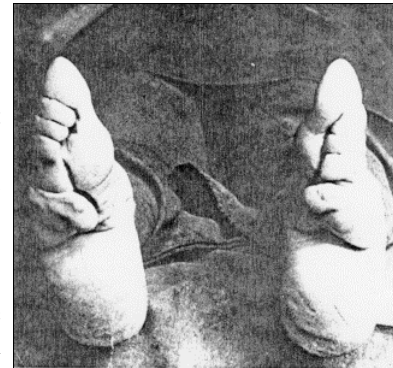
PARALLELS BETWEEN IRAQ AND FOOTBINDING

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Saddam Hussein and his governing regime of Iraq murder, torture, rape, rob, and threaten the people of Iraq. Such thuggery and oppression are very bit as much a form of war as any other kind of war. Unthinking pacifists tolerate and never demonstrate against *that* war. They are thus hypocrites for demonstrating against the necessarily violent police action required to remove Saddam's regime from power. Even worse, by tolerating the crimes of that regime without doing anything to eliminate, pacifists are accomplices to those crimes.

Iraq has suffered from these same crimes for upwards of 35,000 years. Iraq has never, not since the days of Adam and Eve, been ruled by a government that operated by consent of the governed. Its territory has always been dominated by one or more illegitimate governments. Most Iraqis have no idea what it is like to live and work in a nation ruled by a constitutional representative government that guarantees civil rights. And they certainly have never had the benefit of a Magna Carta or anything like it that limits the abuses of government.

The condition of Iraq is something like that of Chinese women who had their feet bound from birth so as to make the feet tiny and "feminine". The shape of their feet, without the bindings, somewhat resembled the talons of a bird when perched on a branch. We would think it hideous. Chinese men thought it sexy (and their women could not run away easily).



When the bindings were removed, the women could not walk, and their feet hurt terribly when they tried to do anything with them. The practice of footbinding was outlawed in China in 1911, but it lasted long into the 20th century. The law was effective only on infants and small girls whose feet had not already been permanently deformed.

There is a reason the practice was slow to die out, and persisted for over a thousand years in spite of the profound social difficulty it caused: Sex.

Bound feet were known as "Golden Lotus". They were formed by bending the toes of infants underneath the small of the foot, and bending the foot so the toe and heel came together, then wrapping the foot in that position. This caused the bones to break and then re-fuse in that position. Shoes for bound feet were three inches long.



Chinese men associated bound feet with higher-status love and sex. Golden lotuses connoted both modesty and lasciviousness, became a sexual fetish, and were said to be conducive to better intercourse. For a man to view a woman's naked golden lotus was tantamount to viewing the woman's vulva. Society accepted the notion that golden lotuses were both an aesthetic and a sexual appeal for the Chinese male. Men fantasized that footbinding resulted in a highly-muscled vagina "full of wondrous folds". The tiny size of the foot aroused both lust and pity. Chinese pornography reflected a preoccupation with the feet. Men ("lotus lovers") who adored them authored the

classics of brothel culture, describing in detail the various shapes of bound feet and their use in erotic practices. According to Chinese connoisseurs of the golden lotus, the mincing walk produced by the bound foot contributed to a more voluptuous and sensitive sexual anatomy. Thus, both poetry and song celebrated tiny feet.

Most westerners find the practice of bound feet to be interesting but also disgusting, and despicably demeaning and cruel to women. Americans and other citizens of free nations similarly feel revulsion for the victims of tyrannical governments like that of Iraq. And, the parallels between footbinding and the status of Iraq cannot help but provoke a host of conundrums.

What shall be done to unbind the feet of Iraq? What is the bond of Iraqis for their despotic and iniquitous government? Do they not even perceive it as villainous and corrupt, or have they merely come to accept it as an inescapable reality of life? In what ways has their union with such a government handicapped them? In what way do they feel bound by necessity to it? When the bindings of oppression and deprivation are removed will they be too crippled to function socially without becoming rampaging, lawless renegades?

How shall Iraq be weaned from the endogamy that prevents its evolution of a true republic? In what ways will the binding of inbreeding produce and perpetuate organized crime, and how shall a new government deal with it? How shall Iraq be initiated into representative government? How long will such a government last? How shall the government be kept out of the clutches of Sunni and Shi'a Islamic clerics who are absolutely dying to get control of the oil wealth of the nation? How shall the hands of the French, German, Russian and other greedy nations be kept out of the rich till of Iraq?

The bindings of Iraq must be removed. But oh how ugly the feet of the nation will be till a generation arrives that has never known life under tyranny.

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