**Mao’s Yan’An Red Base**

1. What interests you about China?

India and China were on parallel trajectories a decade ago. Books like *The Elephant and the Dragon: The Economic Rise of India and China, and What It Means for the Rest of Us* by Robyn Meredith predicted that India and China would quickly become the world’s next superpowers. However, over the past five years, China has maintained a strong upward trajectory, whereas India has begun to languish. Although the two countries had nearly equal GDP growth rates in the year 2010, the World Bank reported that China was able to maintain a growth rate above 7.7% during the period 2010 to 2013 while growth in India slowed to a measly 5% during that same period.

As an Indian, I am proud of how my country’s economy has grown over the last decade. However, I am jealous of how quickly China has been able industrialize and become an economically powerful manufacturing nation over that same time period. After looking at the numbers, I have asked myself, “What is China doing that India is not?” I want to find answers to this question, and for that reason, I am interested in China.

2. What interests you about Communism?

According to Dictionary.com, Communism is “a theory or system of social organization based on the holding of all property in common.” The dictionary definition of this term makes Communism seem like a system in which every citizen is completely equal. As a result of this complete equality, a Communist state seems like it would be peaceful and harmonious. But history has shown us that this theoretical vision is far from the truth. The dictatorships of Joseph Stalin and Fidel Castro are Communist experiments that have been marred by violence and perpetual unrest. In these societies, everyone was not equal. The ruling party and its head had a disproportionate amount of power and used it to impose their will on millions of people. Among other things, these dictators used their power to exterminate dissidents and abolish the free press. The vision of communism that we have seen is not the theoretical image that we conceived. I am interested in Communism because of this disparity, the discrepancy between the denotation and connotation of the word “Communism.”

3. Explain your experience doing role-play, in Model UN or any other activity (including acting, etc.).

I have participated in three Model UN conferences. In March 2012, I represented France in the International Monetary Fund at the St. Peter’s University Model United Nations Conference (SPUHSMUN) and won the Honorable Mention Best Delegation Award. In December 2013, I represented Liu Yunshan in the Chinese Politburo at the Princeton University Model United Nations Conference (PMUNC) and won the Honorable Mention Award. In March 2014, I represented China in the Legal Committee and won the Best Delegate and Best Position Paper Awards at SPUHSMUN.

4. Do you have a particular interest in a certain time period, type of government, etc.? If so,

why?

I am fascinated by the Han Dynasty of China, which lasted between 206 BCE and 220 CE, because understanding the scope of the Chinese capability for technological innovation during this period can help to explain one of the potential reasons why China is so economically powerful today. According to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, during this span of approximately 400 hundred years, the Han Chinese developed “paper, water clocks, sundials, [and] astronomical instruments, and a seismograph.” The West only began to discover and employ these tools one thousand years after the Chinese did. The inventions of the Han Dynasty are representative of the ingenious spirit that has characterized China for thousands of years. This creativity and capacity to develop might be part of the reason why the Chinese were able to quickly overtake the United States and become the world’s leading manufacturer.