

現代における教養教育の条件の探究：非対称的な留学経験を手がかりとして

Liberal and General Education for the Present Century : Some Hints from an asymmetrical type of study abroad experience

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ABSTRACT

本論は、現代の大学生に有意義な教養教育が成り立つための基本的な条件を探究し、そうした教育プログラムについてのささやかな提案を試みる。まず、アジア諸国から合衆国のダートマス大学へ留学した3名の女性の教育的な経験を分析して、そこに非対称性を認める。非対称性とは、留学前の目的地での勉学・社会生活に関する期待と、留学先での実際の有り様とが大きく食い違う事態を指す。こうした事態は、ICUからの交換留学生の具体例のうちにも観察できる。具体例を見るかぎり、留學生活がほぼ予想通りであった学生たちに比べ、非対称的な留学経験をもった者たちは、人間としての生き方、生活態度に関して、振幅の大きな変容を被ったようである。現代の大学生向けの教養教育には、こうした変容は極めて有意義であり、本論はそうした角度から構成された学士課程教育を推奨する。こうした変容体験をより意義ものたらしめるためには、現代の諸問題に関わる諸科目と、そうした諸問題の解決の手がかりとなる様々な理論的な科目は不可欠である。けれども、留学の非対称性を強調しつつ教養教育を構想すると、通常はこうした体験の対極に位置すると理解されている古典にも、関心を向けざるをえない。古典をめぐる経験は、しばしば予想もしなかった思想との出会いとなるという意味において、非対称的な留学経験と共通点をもつ。人間の努力の意味を時間の軸の中に知るためにも、古典との対話を改めて教養教育の中に位置付けたい。

In discussing liberal and general education these days, we must first liberate its argument from any narrow framework of teaching methods or of curriculum. We must ask instead how to help young people to learn. In other words, we may study details only within a larger context, and that context points to, among others, the conditions which either promote or discourage liberal and general learning itself. One of these conditions refers to what I call an “asymmetrical” type of educational experience on the part of students. In the following, an asymmetrical type of learning will be delineated through an analysis of a few examples of study abroad experiences, and their consequences, on the part of some Asian students including our own at International Christian University. Then, on the basis of that analysis, I will outline an organization of collegiate general and liberal education for the present century.

What does it mean to be liberated or not to be liberated with reference to education? Instead of developing an abstract argument, I would here analyze a concrete experience of a young Chinese-Malaysian girl who studied abroad in Canada and the United States in the 1990s. I start with this example because her paradoxical case entails a radical re-examination of our assumptions about education in general, and about liberal and general education in particular. Through a variety of experiences at home and abroad, she obtained her liberal education, but in quite an unexpected way.

I . Asian Girls between Two Realities

Lai Heng Foong, a Chinese-Malaysian, seems to have been fully qualified to study medicine in her country, but her Chinese

background prevented her from doing so. Moreover, prior to this symbolic incident, Foong had already perceived a pervasive tendency to conformity. The point especially applied to schools where teachers dominated pupils, as well as to the family where males controlled females. As it was manifested in higher education, the “conformity” signified a discrimination between native Malays, on one hand, and Chinese and Indian Malaysians, on the other, among which the government one-sidedly favored the former. Deciding to become an educational “exile”, Foong first entered an international high school in Canada. The school provided her with a real international community as well as quite a few new things such as scuba diving and rock climbing, which proved a liberation for her.

From hindsight, she learned that her Canadian school was an unrealistic utopia. Even though the Dartmouth College, a more permanent destination, differed from Malaysia, her Dartmouth experience retained something in common with that at Malaysia. Within the first few weeks at Dartmouth, she could not but notice a “subtle” but equally unmistakable pressure upon new members for conformity among its students. The other side of this conformity manifested itself in Edinburgh as “confinement” when her fellow students reproduced a Hanover in that international city after crossing the Atlantic for the sake of unique philosophical experience. Her succeeding work camp in South Africa, as well as trips in Europe, helped her deepen perception of the real world. By thus learning many things at first hand, and by reading a lot of philosophical scholars, Foong grew educated as an overseas Asian student at Dartmouth.

But her revelation arrived from an unexpected direction, that is, from her grandmother in Malaysia who had typically embodied what Foong regarded as “conformism”. Throughout her life course, the old lady had quietly obeyed what the Malaysian society, its males, assigned her to do and not to do. However, as Foong’s study abroad prolonged, the grandmother’s attitudes underwent basic modifications, and she proved remarkably flexible to new habits and new ideas. Not only did she show understanding to Foong’s Caucasian boyfriend. The grandmother even expressed her views on ideal life-style for women in which she wished, if ever to repeat the life again, to remain single but to adopt children. “My first reaction”, Foong has written, “was absolute shock. My grandmother could embrace an idea (single parenthood) that even I did not dare entertain at that time despite my education... My grandmother was not allowed to do many things she would have liked to, but she accepted her fate with strength and dignity. This quiet acceptance did not prepare me for her admission of regret at the direction her life has taken.” (1)

A “regret” certainly it was, but there’s something impressive about the old lady. What Foong said against the stereotyped American view of Asians indicates what it was: that is, although the view is partly true, quiteness nonetheless “does not necessarily equal submissiveness.” Despite the life-long quietness, the grandmother’s wish did not die that she wanted to live differently than she actually did. And that wish, in its substance, went even beyond that of her freely-educated granddaughter. The grandmother could “develop a more liberated outlook.” (2) The old lady’s words in turn had the effect of

liberating Foong herself. Formerly, having learned personally that any country would impose upon its inhabitants conformity of one kind or another, Foong felt alienated and sensed that she belonged nowhere. Now she came to perceive that “it is more accurate to say that I try hard to feel that I belong everywhere.” (3)

What does this story indicate about the plight or possibilities of liberal and general education? First of all, there is a tough question as to how the grandmother could entertain a very liberal idea of life when she did not receive any liberal and general education. I must confess that I can hardly give any reasonable explanation. Yet the grandmother’s case will help make us cautious against any grandiose assertion upon the effect of organized liberal and general education. We may well remain humble. Then, through her plight as a Chinese Malaysian, Foong had already undergone serious social problems of discrimination and conformism herself at home which she shared with her grandmother, at least to some extent. Because of her high expectations thus held concerning freedom in universities in North America, she was sensitive to the reality of pressure for “subtle” conformism. This sense of reality in turn opened up herself for reappraisal of her native country including, as the most important, the reaction by the grandmother. Even the pervasive conformism would not exterminate the victims’ wish to cherish and state their ideas. Foong’s odyssey confirmed the point that a human life is worth living, and is challenging enough, under any political circumstance, an ultimate lesson of liberal and general education.

Now what separates Foong and her fellow American students at Dartmouth with respect

to their educational experience? More than anything else, these students must have been fully at home, without major problems, in the United States. Thus, when they were expected to become open-minded, at Edinburgh, Dartmouth students built, and enclosed themselves to, a Hanoverian outpost. Foong's assertion here may find resonance with Allan Bloom's now famous dictum that American youths become all the more closed-minded in the very process of their alleged exposure to the divergent world. (4) At this stage I would point to the presence of serious problems at home as well as, to a lesser extent, in subsequent student life in the United States on the part of Foong.

Though it is less known among educators, John Dewey was severely critical (probably too much so) of the levels of intellectual maturity on the part of American student body. In his statement made in 1929, Dewey's major interest lay in giving causal relationships which produced such results. "If we Americans manifest, as compared with those of other countries who have had the benefits of higher schooling, a kind of infantilism, "holds Dewey, "it is because our own schooling so largely evades serious consideration of the deeper issues of social life; for it is only through induction into realities that mind can be matured." (5) Here, Dewey's point seems simple and clear. Only when learners become prepared to act on some serious social issues with an informed determination, do they become mature in an honorific sense.

Now this scheme of maturity offers a framework within which to analyze not just Foong's experience but those of others who also studied abroad at Dartmouth. Two more Dartmouth girls from Asian backgrounds,

had similarly suffered from serious problems prior to their arrival at Dartmouth. Through the lives of her mother and her grandmother, the Chinese girl, Yu Chen, learned personally how women in China had been exploited by men. While the Korean girl Misun Kim, confronted, when she studied in the United States on secondary school levels, all kinds of troubles deriving from physical and cultural differences she had with fellow American girls. How did the respective troubles help make them intellectually and morally mature at Dartmouth?

The Chinese Yu Chen consistently witnessed around her undue dominance by men over women in the larger part of her childhood and adolescence. Although her girl friends even at the elitist University of Beijing maintained that women should obey men or they must, anyway, Yu Chen could never concede to the alleged superiority of men when her father had literally made her own mother miserable. Again her grandmother, whose husband had been executed because of his skeptical attitude toward the party's war victory during WW II, suffered miserable discrimination. As she grew up under such a circumstance, a vague idea of feminism was constantly in ferment in the Chinese girl. While studying in Beijing, she encountered an American Fulbright female professor who staunchly supported in public Yu Chen's position on feminism. Getting a powerful endorsement for the first time in her life, she was moved and charmed by the professor and her country with their frank and proud pronouncement on the unalienable rights of women, rights which had been rather positively ignored even by well-educated Chinese men. The Korean girl Misun Kim made every effort in secondary schools to bridge the gaps

between herself and her American friends. She studied hard to beat them all in academic achievements to enter Dartmouth. But deep in her heart she felt her effort a failure as a means to overcome her inferiority complex. This understanding would prompt her, as I will show later, to change her views of intellectualism which in turn enabled her to evaluate the traditional Korean family culture from a new perspective.

It comes as no surprise to find that each of these girls immediately detected in fellow Dartmouth students something contrary to what each had expected to. On entering Dartmouth, the Korean girl Kim found herself no longer a top student as she used to be in high school. At the threat of her consistent superiority in academic achievements up until then, Kim had to admit that a lot of students were intelligent enough to get superior grades. Here, however, her troubles in adolescence and her Korean background, as well as an exposure to moral philosophy course, combined to make her realize the "difference between intelligence and intellectualism." Compared with her friends who grasped philosophical concepts quickly, she found herself not quite intelligent to do so. But Kim apparently saw that intelligence and individualism, or even egoism, could well get along with each other. For she has written that philosophy taught her to become "not just a person, but a good person—honorable, intellectual, thoughtful, and caring." (6) In other words, the Korean girl defined intellectualism partly in terms of social responsibility, a quality that she missed in many fellow students at Dartmouth. Kim's personal plight and the Confucian family tradition in Korea concurred to forge a belief that intellectualism was superior to mere intelligence.

Yu Chen's case is complicated. At home around her, men exploited women harshly. Moreover, with the exception of her mother, adults around her consistently discouraged her from excelling and, in particular, from defeating fellow boys in academic study. No wonder that, having received an overwhelming endorsement from the American Fulbright scholar, Yu Chen decided to divert to the United States. She naturally held deep expectations that in the new country many would understand her. A few things stood in her way, however. First, she confronted a linguistic barrier. Though fluent in English among Beijing students, Yu Chen realized that her ability stayed far behind for smooth communications. Second, she could not but learn that Dartmouth friends were grossly indifferent to her third-world background, especially her feminine struggles at home. On the contrary, they insisted that she should never miss football games on weekends which, expectedly, turned out "one of the most painful hours in my life." (8) Now, beside cultural differences, I believe, something much more was at stake here. The levels of expectations of her fellow students, even those of the Fulbright scholar, for that matter, did not simply match Yu Chen's great expectations. She would not have overcome her communication discrepancy by merely improving her English.

There was another circumstance which made her sense of alienation in Dartmouth even more unbearable. Despite her strong feminism, Yu Chen in fact had a boyfriend in Beijing whom she adored. To her great shock, she learned shortly that the boyfriend was already engaged to a girl from his native country. All she could think was that "This is the end of the world... Why do I still live?"

How could he just leave me?" It took her some time before she understood clearly that she herself was much romanticizing her friendship with a man. In the very process of agony, Yu Chen digested the points of women's studies differently and she discovered "the significance of female friendship and affection in my life." Simultaneously did she learn that love itself represented a social construct and as such could be perfectly reconstructed. Her Dartmouth experience led her to turn herself from someone to be understood by others, to an understanding person. Yu Chen would build an organized theory and practice of feminism at Dartmouth upon her original experience which she had undergone by the side of her mother.

Now, my assumption is that liberal and general education has been concerned not so much with an acquirement of mere information as with the basic attitude toward life or, more dramaically, its transformation. The three cases dealt with above reflect this sort of education or transformation. Among others, the three cases show a fusion, in the young souls, of older traditions and new situations in the formation of fresh and firm determinations. I cannot but locate in these stories a theme which has long been forgotten since the Bildungsroman had fascinated young people in Europe and even in Japan, as exemplified by Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* and Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, and Natsume Soseki's *Kokoro*. In particular, I would like to point to the kind of intellectual odyssey which seems glarely missing from many of our capable youths in Japan and perhaps in North America and Europe as well. The three cases above pose a basic challenge to liberal and general education of ordinary kind. To keep

continuity in discussion, let me take up a few more individual cases of study abroad from International Christian University.

II. ICU Students Undergo Asymmetrical Experiences Abroad

The three cases dealt with above and our cases of exchange students at ICU may not be exactly comparable. Among other things the latter usually spend only one year abroad at the interruption of their regular four years at home. Nonetheless, the two groups share some elements in common.

Judging from those essays written by some sixty students who lately went abroad from ICU, no serious problems seem to have promoted their study abroad. Many applied in order to broaden the range of their experience; some wanted to study what they couldn't do at home such as study in Indonesian culture or an environmental study in New Zealand, while others simply wished to enjoy a different campus life than that at the small ICU by attending a huge American university. Let me give typical reasons. For a student who studied at a Canadian university, the major purpose was to gain an opportunity to observe Japan from a foreign perspective, to improve English ability, and to experience living in a different culture. Another who spent a year at a French university set it as her goal to move out of the mundane academic life at ICU, and to dislocate herself from the comfort zone into a completely new environment. Still another who enrolled at a British university gave two major reasons as the language improvement and cultural experiences. As could be anticipated, after one year, these students returned with some satisfaction. The student who went to Canada

reportedly learned about different world views as well as the importance of respecting those differences by meeting, and interacting with, a variety of people from all over the world. Similarly, the student to France felt that she grew dynamically and benefited greatly from living there. The third one who experienced the student life in Great Britain thought that that life helped him to look at things from others' points of view, thus broadening his horizon. Through their study abroad, these students have personally learned something, even something new which they did not foresee prior to departure. Nonetheless, it is not too much to say that the gist of their experiences fell within what might be termed an intelligent life style typically expected of a sophisticated college student of superior academic ability in Japan today. (10)

Now I would call such a type of study abroad experiences symmetrical: symmetrical in that the students' expectations prior to study abroad, and their consequences as well as self-evaluations largely coincide. Despite some difficulties, they found these expectations mostly fulfilled through their stay overseas, their ends-in-view being confirmed by end-results. In contrast, the three girls from Asia at Dartmouth underwent asymmetrical experiences. Contrary to her expectations, the Korean Kim found Dartmouth filled with intelligent students, which led her determination to be an intellectual one herself. The Chinese Yu Chen looked for the predominance of feminism and sympathetic understanding toward her at Dartmouth. But reality belied her expectations and she confronted discommunications and discouragement, in the midst of which she launched her quest for academic and practical femi-

nism. Finally, from the Malaysian Foong's perspective, Dartmouth must be free from conformism, the very vice of her native country. But, as it turned out, Dartmouth students submitted themselves to a subtle but equally fatal conformism, a conformism deriving from an institutional chauvinism as well as an unconditional commitment to American culture. What the three girls expected at the start and their subsequent experiences diverged rather fundamentally. Hence, I would characterize their experiences asymmetrical.

Now it may do injustice not only to educational theory but also to those who underwent a variety of study abroad to argue that radically asymmetrical experiences count more than others. But when we focus upon a basic attitudinal change, so crucial to liberal and general education, we should pay due attention to this type of study experience, because it is more often through this type that students undergo a radical modification of their attitude by opening up new perspectives for the future. It is not easy to identify among ICU students cases similar to those of the three girls'. Nonetheless, there are some experiences of an asymmetrical type, though of a slightly different kind. In a few cases the students held very limited expectations but their subsequent experiences turned out far exceeding their expectations. One such example is a girl who went to a large state university in the South. Although one of the research universities, this institution was not well known among our students. As a consequence, the student concerned did not hold high expectations about her life there. A few of the things which occurred to her turned out a revelation. Since the university's overwhelming size did not allow her to meet her

friends frequently, she joined a Wesley Foundation or the United Methodist University Center and became a Christian. Compensating for her isolation in the large classes, the Foundation provided her with a real fellowship. Among other things, a week-long Mission Trip to a Mexican town in the spring break marked the pinnacle of her study abroad. For some months prior to the trip, she worked part-time at several places to earn the expenses for the materials for construction scheduled during the Trip. Throughout the work-camp itself, she slept on the concrete floor of a church with some thirty fellow students and cooperated with native inhabitants for the construction of a clinic and several houses. "Though it was March the weather was like Tokyo in August", she writes, "and the work was all sand-dust and sweat. Physically the site was inconvenient without any facilities so common in Japan and the US, but the people I met there and the new profiles of the Wesley Foundation friends shown through the trip had the effect of challenging my old ideas of the world, human beings and value." (11) Unlike the three Asian girls' who started with very high expectations, our student to the US departed with rather low expectations. But she ended with consequences almost diametrically opposite. Thus, her case too represents another asymmetrical type.

Similarly, a student who spent a year in the Philippines at Manila obtained end-results which distinctly differed from her original anticipations, and to her great enlightenment. From hindsight, she could hardly believe that only a four-hour flight separated the Philippines and Japan. At school, she assumed that most college students in the country spoke English, which

proved wrong. Not only was Tagalog used widely in the classroom. Its absence from daily speech, and an exclusive use of English, served to highlight one as a foreigner and a target of a crime. It was outside the university, however, that the student learned much about the Philippines and its people. Every weekend, she joined the Catholics in providing lunch for children in slums. Again, she volunteered to join an NGO to take care of streetchildren by staying overnight with them a few times. She took and enjoyed several courses in sociology at the university, but it was her personal experiences that posed her significant challenges. She states:

Throughout the period of study abroad, most of what I had firmly believed to be true and just have been overthrown. But I appreciated it very much that I could face these dilemmas without fear or anxiety. The more I met a variety of people and saw quite a few realities, the more I felt light-hearted. Probably, I learned personally a bit how to see those things important from those not, and to forget about unnecessary things. Things may impress us as either good or bad, but whichever is the case, they always present something for us to learn." (12)

Just like Foong did through her grandmother, this ICU student also acquired in the Philippines something indispensable for liberal and general education.

Another example may be somewhat controversial. This case refers to a boy student who spent his junior year at a university in Lithuania with which ICU started exchange lately. Unlike virtually all other participants, this boy had some reservation for recommending this opportunity for every prospective applicant. For the first few

months he enjoyed the town life eating and drinking almost daily at a new restaurant or a new bar. Among other things, the commodities there cost very low, unless they were imported industrial products such as electrical goods and ball-point pens. With the improvement of his Lithuanian language, the student's views of the Lithuanians in the university city, underwent a change. He began to share with other foreign students an impression that many of the people there were less than respectable. From small children to adults, they would tease every Asian with the same queer shriek with which they believed they represented the Chinese civilization. To his surprise he himself for the first time in life became skeptical about a people, Lithuanians. By the side of these people, he felt, most of the people of other countries were well- educated and cultured. At home in Japan, the majority (he used to be one of them) believed easily that all people on earth are equal and thus are entitled to all basic rights. Now the student began to doubt how many of them have learned personally and directly how some of these people behaved. Thus, the Japanese would be puzzled and upset once they watch through media severe conflicts in Eastern Europe or in a republic in the former Soviet Union. These experiences and observations definitely promoted the student's interest to study "how a people's perception of differences in other people turn into their hatred and aversion under one circumstance, and into admiration and intimacy under another, a major theme of world history as well as of the clarification of one's own self". (13)

This case is controversial because the student may have been on the verge of racial hatred himself. At the same time, however,

more than any other case that I studied this time, did his statement challenge not only his own perception, but also the general perceptions of foreign culture and of human rights on the part of our institution. Despite some dubious points attending it, his study experience in Lithuania is of an asymmetrical type in that his original assumption sharply contrasted with what he actually underwent. Moreover, his case has reminded me of Miki Kiyoshi, a Japanese philosopher who died in war-time prison, who pronounced that "a true idealism is born from facing realities of life and society as they are, and from finding out their contradictions." (14) Overall the year in Lithuania proved an invaluable experience for the student who now works for an NGO for surveillance of conflicts and human rights violations in Asia.

I admit that study abroad in Europe and North America would benefit its participants in many ways, especially academic. And yet, from the point of view of students' growth and maturity, or of liberal and general education, our policy needs a re-orientation. Instead of promoting symmetrical studies abroad, we should positively encourage asymmetrical ones. It is clear that those ICU students who underwent an asymmetrical experience learned something which vitally affected their attitude toward other people as well as toward themselves. They share something essential in common with the three Dartmouth students from Asia. In the future when youngsters may be even less enthusiastic about merely academic studies, universities must induce them more into serious issues through an asymmetrical type of study in order to keep their vital tradition: that is, to train the next generation in intelligence and maturity.

III. A Scheme of Liberal and General Education

Here I would apply the foregoing argument to the analysis of two major curricular elements of liberal and general education; namely, social issues such as environmental problems, world population explosion, and genetic engineering, as well as classics. Many would agree that issues courses such as those mentioned above, along with women's studies and peace issues occupy increasingly significant place in liberal and general education today. By the side of these, more traditional courses such as history, literature, and physical science seem to pale. To the extent that the future destiny of our posterities hinges upon one or more of these issues, they certainly represent "serious social issues" to be taken up for scrutiny in higher education. For these issues really to help promote students' maturity, however, their courses must fulfill a couple of conditions, at least. First, issues courses such as environmental problems, world population explosion, and genetic engineering must be related to personal experiences on the part of students. Prior to taking such courses, students should have ideally been exposed to asymmetrical experiences such as typified by a few cases of study abroad dealt with above. In other words, they must have become interested, even if unconsciously, in these issues themselves. Second, the instructors must mobilize thoroughly the theoretical principles of one or more scientific disciplines to give depth and coherence to analyses of the issues. Here I have in mind, for example, Emile Durkheim's theoretical frameworks of solidarity and anomie which would afford students "asymmetrical" intellectual experience

concerning the causal explanation of suicide. Only when issues courses are thus preceded by students' personal experiences and when they are simultaneously expounded on theoretical principles, will they contribute to students' maturity.

We should not be very optimistic about these issues courses. Although they may attract quite a few students at their initial stage, these courses may sooner or later cease to be challenging to students. Why is this so? Social issues attract popular attention because, by definition, they are overt disputes which easily appeal to human emotions. Now in this sphere, mass media such as the TV and Newspapers would present and analyze issues more dramatically and effectively than most of the university lectures. What college students anticipate about these issues and what they actually learn through lectures may largely coincide and simply reinforce students' old beliefs. In short, students' experiences may end up with a symmetrical type. Unless students have personal interests and unless instructors can analyze issues theoretically enough, issues courses may well stay lukewarm.

Our emphasis upon an asymmetrical type of experience may highlight those subjects which appear diametrically opposite to issues courses. I mean courses organized around classics, which are allegedly irrelevant to contemporary concerns. The allegation may be well taken. But here we should focus not so much upon their irrelevance as upon their reading as an asymmetrical type of experience. With reference to classics, many people probably will share the same experience with me. When I first read Plato, Rousseau, Durkheim, or Fukuzawa, each of them was a revelation precisely because I had had next to

no expectations that they would have said something interesting. School knowledge about them had only fixed their names as remote from, and irrelevant to, us. Yet their reading caused a revolution in attitude toward them. Since I started teaching, I located similar experiences among my students as well. For instance, one of my students in the history of Japanese education class immediately found Nitobe Inazo's *Bushido* revealing. She was a returnee student who wanted to have clear explanations about the structure and roots of culture peculiar to Japan, and she had taken many classes in social sciences on the subject without satisfaction. To several of her basic questions, she found pertinent and penetrating answers, she told me, in the most unlikely place that she thought she would find them, that is, in Nitobe's classical work.

On many educational matters pragmatist philosophers such as John Dewey and Sidney Hook have nice things to say. But as far as the content of liberal and general education is concerned, those who advocate classical texts have much to recommend, not for their allegedly permanent value, but for the strategic position they occupy for education of students. From the point of view of efficiency and logical clarity, Sidney Hook may be correct in claiming that scientific knowledge would better be imparted to students through organized lectures rather than through classics. (15) When students are no longer very much motivated to study, however, something must replace efficiency and logical clarity to motivate them. Here, classics supersede other ordinary subjects including issues courses in giving students asymmetrical experiences similar to those which ICU students who studied in the South, the Philippines,

and Lithuania had enjoyed. I recall Robert Maynard Hutchins' contention that classics, when offered in translations, were "easier for people who have had no formal education than they are for those who have acquired that combination of misinformation, unphilosophy, and slipshod habits that is the usual result of the most elaborate and expensive institutional education in America." (16) In other words, that Hutchins should be remembered here who presented great books as a radical alternative to, rather than a culmination of, ordinary school education. Although in a slightly different context than what he originally envisaged, his classics education idea may hold a key for our liberal and general education in the future.

Finally, let me outline a recommendable scheme of liberal and education for the current century. It has three major elements: studies of serious social issues, basic principles of major sciences, and classics. Moreover, they must be organized and presented from an asymmetrical point of view. Of the three, classics including modern classics, would be offered to students at any time under any circumstance. Here, the only necessary things are that students enjoy enough access to complete textbooks of classics themselves, and that classes remain small in size, say less than twenty students per class. Throughout their four years in college, students would thus read in the neighborhood of a dozen selected classical works under the close guidance of instructors. The texts themselves hopefully would divide between Western and Eastern ones in their origins and characteristic approaches.

When it comes to basic principles of major sciences, instructors should not try to include all the major principles in their discipline.

Rather they should select from among many, only a few and explain and evaluate them exhaustively. For example, in educational science, one may concentrate on the developmental theory of moral judgement as expounded by Lawrence Kohlberg and as criticized by fellow scholars. I recommend that subject because Kohlberg has formulated his hypothesis and testing methods in such a unique and succinct manner that, once exposed to its outline, the theory can travel in its integrity with students the rest of their lives with all its significant ramifications. Another example may be taken from the history of thought. Here, instead of enumerating major figures and their ideas from Thales to Richard Rorty, the instructor should take up and compare distinctive contributions of Newton, Einstein and Heisenberg to the basic criticism of the time-honored idea of dualism. When the task is beautifully done as by John Dewey in *The Quest for Certainty* (17), their study not only helps students see what may be wrong with Cartesian philosophy. The studied principles will also enable students to explain what's wrong, for instance, with the Taliban with regard to their fundamental assumptions of action, if not with the destruction of the Buddhist statues itself. In teaching these principles, instructors' knowledge must be thorough in that they know wherein these principles are revolutionary as well as vulnerable in full ramifications. They must mobilize their expertise fully to explicate these theories as understandably and as dramatically as possible so that their significance should be clear to a student. That is why the principles to be taught are to be selective.

As for social issues courses, students' backgrounds will determine their success or fail-

ure to some degree. Today, these backgrounds themselves would derive in turn from students' experiences which are partly organized by universities. They must arrange places of study, for example, whether they be universities or NGOs abroad. These places must be challenging as well as safe enough to afford students an as asymmetrical type of experience as possible. The instructors at home should organize their issues courses desirably by topics which are relevant across regions so that returned students can exchange their diverse experiences to the benefit of the participants. But in this sphere, students are mostly held responsible for locating and analyzing serious social issues as they confronted them in respective places.

As already mentioned, in the course of four years in college, issues courses and basic principles courses should be so interrelated that they may shed light upon each other. In order to do this efficiently, students should first learn basic principles in half a dozen courses. They should also have read a few classics. After around two years of study at the home institution, students may study abroad for one or half a year. Under some circumstances, courses such as Overseas Project Seminar or International Internship may replace study abroad. In these, after prolonged academic orientation, students spend some time abroad either studying their own projects intensively at first hand or assisting work for an NGO as interns. For some issues, students may better locate them at home. After one or half a year of such experience, students would return to the home institution to finish up education. They will continue with classics reading in which Nitobe's *Bushido* or Fukuzawa's *Bunmeiron no Gairyaku* (*An Outline of the*

Theory of Civilization), for instance, will pose invaluable challenge regardless of the divergent issues as experienced by students. The returned students will also do somewhat more applied studies of sciences. On top of all this, students may choose to prepare theses as integration of serious issues as well as theoretical studies at home, hopefully, in the spirit of, or even in competition with, one or more of the classics read.

Now, the reader may wonder how many years does such an education take for students? (I believe at least half of the four years will be devoted to the liberal and general education program outlined above.) Does this not cost too much for the university and, ultimately, for society? Do virtually all students comply with the university's recommendation to go abroad for study, and in those places for which they may not have high expectations? In short, is such an education realistic enough? These questions are well taken in so far as we can ignore a serious issue of our time: how can we survive this century without educating most of our members this much mature? In the past, personal maturity issued from having undergone hard struggles of life of one kind or another. As a consequence, we have assumed that people would sooner or later become mature with the passing of time. With the arrival of a highly industrialized society, where the basic necessity of life is guaranteed of everyone, at least from the perspective of growing youths, this assumption may well prove wrong. Benefit for living may be the very cost for learning. If we are not ready simply to reverse our time, we must do something not just to keep enough number of people mature but also to improve the quality of maturity itself. Such necessity is especially acute in the face of the

rapidly globalizing world. However costly it may be to have a Foong or a Yu Chen or a Kim or an ICU student in the Philippines, we cannot be sure of a positive role of higher education in Asia without them. Although none of them is an exclusive fruit of higher education, nonetheless it has some role to play in this venture especially through liberal and general education whose outline I described in the present paper.

Endnotes:

- (1) Lai Heng Foong. "Finding Solace in the Familiarity of Myself." In Andrew Garrod and Jay Davis, eds. *Crossing Customs: International Students Write on U.S. College Life and Culture*. Falmer Press, 1999, p.207.
- (2) Ibid., pp.200 and 208.
- (3) Ibid., p.208.
- (4) Cf. Allan Bloom. *The Closing of the American Mind*. Simon and Schuster, 1987, p.34.
- (5) John Dewey. *Individualism, Old and New*. Capricorn Books, 1962 (1929), pp.127-129.
- (6) Misun Kim. "A Little Voice from My Heart." In *Crossing Customs*, pp. 137-138.
- (7) Yu Chen. "I Sing the Unsung Songs." In Ibid., p. 158.
- (8) Ibid., p. 161.
- (9) Ibid., p.165.
- (10) The excerpts of these essays may be found in a publication of The ICU International Educational Exchange Office. *Kokan Ryugaku/Kaigai Ryugaku Puroguramu: Obo no Tebiki. (On Exchange and Study Abroad programs: Guidelines for Applicants) 2000*, pp. 35-

81. I have consulted some of the original essays which are somewhat longer.
- (11) Ibid., p.78.
- (12) Ibid., p.49.
- (13) Ibid., p.46. For this essay, I have consulted the original written by the student, inasmuch as the printed version is only an excerpt.
- (14) Miki Kiyoshi. "Gakusei no Chinoteika ni tsuite.(1937)" ("On the Lowering of Students' Intelligence.") In *Bungei Shunju ni miru Showa-shi. (The History of the Showa Period as Shown in the Journal Bungei Shunju)* Vol. I. Bungei Shunju, 1998, p.367.
- (15) See Sydney Hook. *Education for Modern Man: A New Perspective*. Alfred Knopf, 1963, pp.129-131.
- (16) Robert M. Hutchins. *Great Books: The Foundation of a Liberal Education*. Simon and Schuster, 1954, p.19.
- (17) See John Dewey. *The Quest for Certainty*. Capricorn Books, 1960 (1929), chapters V, VI, VII and VIII.