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Vol. XVI, No. 1, Fall 2008

A Journal for Asian Studies in the Liberal Arts

Vol. XVI, No. 1, Fall 2008



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A Journal for Asian Studies in the Liberal Arts

Vol. XVI, No. 1, Fall 2008

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A Note from the Editors

We are very pleased to unveil this inaugural issue of *ASIANetwork Exchange* in its new journal format. The official title of the publication now reads, *ASIANetwork Exchange — A Journal for Asian Studies in the Liberal Arts*. This change comes about as the result of a decision made by the Board of Directors at its spring meeting in San Antonio this year to build upon the growth of ASIANetwork and the advances made by the *Exchange* as the consortium's newsletter since its inception in 1992.

Under the leadership of a series of excellent editors preceding us, the *ASIANetwork Exchange* evolved from an informational newsletter at the outset to an increasingly content-oriented “news journal” that included not only current updates of information related to the organization but also occasional articles, reviews, and reproductions of syllabi to aid reader-members in their efforts to teach about Asia in the liberal arts setting. When we assumed the responsibilities as editors three years ago, we systematized these elements of the newsletter by creating regular sections: Network News, Research of Note, Teaching about Asia, Media Resources, For Our Students, New and Noteworthy, and, most recently, Books that Beckon.

The new journal, now to be published twice annually as fall and spring issues, will maintain all these sections except those relating directly to the organizational news of ASIANetwork. Communications from the officers of the consortium, information about initiatives and annual conferences, and announcements of accomplishments and transitions of member institutions and faculty will now be published separately in a new winter publication, the *ASIANetwork Bulletin*.

As a journal, the *ASIANetwork Exchange* will fill a unique niche among Asian Studies periodicals. It will publish not only fresh research and media evaluations, it will do so with continued emphasis on the sharing of information that is particularly useful

to educators in the liberal arts setting. It will continue to address classroom issues and provide materials to encourage and assist our students in maturing as young Asian scholars themselves. We are hoping that as a journal, the *Exchange* will attract even more submissions of high quality from teacher-scholars at our member colleges and universities.

In this latter regard, we are especially eager to help bring to fruition the new plan to engage a guest editor for a special section of each spring issue of the *Exchange*. We hope that a number of our creative readers will submit proposals to gather a collection of thematically unified articles to serve as the centerpiece of the spring issue. A copy of the call for proposals can be found in the Announcements on the ASIANetwork homepage at www.asianetwork.org.

In this issue, we are happy to highlight the second keynote address from last spring's annual conference, this one by Henry Rosemont, Jr.; to include a timely piece on the recent Tibet protests by A. Tom Grunfeld and several panel papers presented at the spring conference; and to provide a sweeping overview of the exciting work completed by the student-faculty research teams from 2007.

Tom Lutze and Irv Epstein

About the Contributors

S. N. Balagangadhara

S. N. Balagangadhara is a professor at the Ghent University, Belgium. He is currently the director of 'Research Centre Vergelijkende Cultuurwetenschap' and the UGent India Platform. He is interested in a comparative study of Indian and Western cultures and is active in multiple academic domains, including Cultural Psychology, Comparative Law, Philosophy and Ethics, and Religious Studies.

John G Blair and Jerusha McCormack

Since their retirement from the University of Geneva and University College–Dublin, respectively, Professors Blair and McCormack have concentrated their attention on teaching “Western Civilization with Chinese Comparisons” at Beijing Foreign Studies University. They now plan to bring this innovation in comparative civilizations study to the USA. They seek a teaching venue for offering a trial version in a liberal-arts setting (one semester or less in condensed format). After testing, they look forward to publishing an American version of their sourcebook with Berkshire Publishing. Their detailed curriculum vitae appear on their website <http://comparativeculturestudies.org>.

Roy B. Campbell

Roy B. Campbell is an Associate Professor of History at Presbyterian College in Clinton, SC. His research centers on the relationship between China and the West between the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

Alisa Gaunder

Alisa Gaunder is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. Gaunder is the author of *Political Reform in Japan: Leadership Looming*

Large (Routledge 2007). Her research interests include comparative political leadership, campaign finance reform in Japan and the United States, and women and politics in Japan.

A. Tom Grunfeld

A. Tom Grunfeld is SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor at Empire State College who specializes in the history of modern China and Tibet. He has published widely on these subjects including the book, *The Making of Modern Tibet*.

Henry Rosemont, Jr.

Henry Rosemont, Jr., is a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Brown University. His areas of research and writing are Chinese philosophy and religion—especially early Confucianism—moral and political theory, philosophy of religion, and philosophy of language. His publications include *A Chinese Mirror* (1991), *Rationality & Religious Experience* (2001), and with Huston Smith, the *Is There a Universal ‘Grammar’ of Religion?* (2007).

Van J. Symons

Van J. Symons is the William A. Freistat Professor of World Peace at Augustana College. A Qing dynastic historian, he teaches courses in Chinese and Japanese history. From 1995-2005, Dr. Symons served first on the board of directors, then as executive director of ASIANetwork. He currently serves as the Program Coordinator for the ASIANetwork Freeman Student-Faculty Fellows Program.

RESEARCH OF NOTE

Philosophical Reflections from a Chinese Mirror

Henry Rosemont, Jr.
Brown University

George Orwell may have had the date wrong, but the frightening world he described in 1984 could yet become a reality if current geopolitical trends at home and abroad continue unchecked. Here in the U.S. the misnamed Patriot Act, tortured legal arguments for torture, warrantless surveillance, military adventurism fueled by a defense budget that is out of control, being labeled a terrorist sympathizer if you challenge the government—all of this and more can only make Big Brother smile.

Internationally, more states are failing and/or are engulfed in civil wars, resources are growing more scarce and environments more harsh; ideologies have become more strident and absolutist, and—most important of all—the disparity between the haves and the have-nots grows ever wider, both within and between nation states (especially the United States, in both cases).

The economic activities definitive of globalization are arguably responsible for many of the problems currently casting shadows over America and destabilizing the world, and their potential for improving the lot of humankind will remain unrealized until and unless those activities are regulated by an international authority with many of the trappings of a world government. Only in such circumstances, I believe, can poverty be overcome, a more equitable distribution of wealth be undertaken, wars ended, and environmental protection laws be enforced around the globe. Just as the U.S. would quickly degenerate if each of the 50 member states developed their

own economic, legal and foreign policies with respect to the other 49, so, too, may we expect most nation-states to degenerate henceforward unless there is an international organization with sufficient authority to bring harmony out of the present growing discord.

It is clear, to me at least, that the United States cannot wield the needed baton with its invisible hand of unbridled capitalism. Cooperation must replace competition, distributive justice must check purely procedural justice, the good must be seen to take priority over the right.

One may, of course, come to see all of these issues and problems without knowing anything at all about Asia. But studying and teaching Asia—more specifically China, most specifically Chinese philosophy and religion—has helped me see them with greater clarity, and helped me think about them in different ways, a few of which I want to share with you this morning.

All of my remarks that follow are going to be made from more or less the perspective of the classical Confucians, focusing on a critique of the ideological orientation that is shared by both liberal and conservative U.S. elites, which Confucius would insist is much more responsible for the continuing growth of poverty today than economic factors. One of his simpler, but profound statements is that “It is a disgrace to be well fed while the people are hungry.” (8.13), and consequently the question he would have us address is this: given that more than enough food is being produced to adequately feed the 6+ billion people alive now, and that none of that food is more than a two hour plane trip from an area of hunger and malnutrition, why are tens of millions of people going to bed hungry tonight? Why, more concretely, are 30,000 children dying every day from hunger and preventable disease (Medicine, too, is never more than two hours away).

Wealth and Poverty—Abroad and at Home

Let us examine some of the details of poverty more closely. Consider the following from a *Wall Street Journal* article:

Forty years ago the world's 20 richest countries had a per capita GDP 18 times greater than that in the world's 20 poorest countries. The most recent statistics indicate the rich countries' GDP is now 37 times higher. Over 1.2 billion people around the world live on less than \$1.00 a day.

These figures are now almost five years old. With China's dramatic economic growth the number of people living on less than \$1 dollar a day has shrunk by about 70 million, but the number of people living on less than \$2 a day is now well over 2 billion. Moreover, that \$2 does not mean what U.S. dollars will buy in the object country, but what it will buy here; a loaf of day-old bread perhaps, or a large can of dog food; the morning paper and a small cup of non-upscale coffee.

On the other hand, there are 1,125 billionaires in the world, and their combined wealth is approximately \$4.4 trillion dollars.

And at the peak of the wealth pinnacle, the wealthiest 20 individuals have combined assets that exceed the combined GDP of the 90 least developed countries in 2005.

As awful as these contrasting figures are to contemplate, they are made much more awful by considering just how relatively little it would take to begin seriously redressing the imbalance between those who have, and those who have not. A 2002 United Nations Development Report, for example, said that:

For an additional \$45 billion a year, basic health, basic nutrition, basic education, reproductive health and family planning services, and water sanitation facilities could be extended to the entire world's population.

How much is \$45 billion? It is 10% less than what President Bush requested last August as a *supplementary* budget to the \$167 billion he requested for 2008 just for Iraq and Afghanistan—and received from the Congress—earlier in the year. It represents less than 1/100 of 1% of the world's income in 2005. Or, to quote from the UN Report once again:

A yearly contribution of 1% of the wealth of the 225 richest people could provide universal access to primary education for all, and a 5% contribution would suffice to provide all of the services listed above.

Closer to home, it is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the fact that 37 million Americans are living at the poverty level, with 15 million of them living at least 50% below that level, which in 2006 was determined to be \$20,600 annually for a family of 4, a low figure. Almost twice that number of people (57 million) have incomes no more than twice the poverty level, and if they lose their jobs, will almost certainly fall below it. Working for minimum wage, which the Congress has just raised to the un-princely sum of \$5.85 an hour, a full-time worker will earn \$11,700 a year, barely half of the poverty level for a family of four and only slightly above the poverty line for an individual (\$10,300). For contrast, the CEOs of the 350 largest U.S. corporations will make approximately that sum in less than two hours.

To see how these figures compare with those of other developed countries, we may take the internationally accepted definition of poverty to be the percentage of the population whose annual income is less than half of the median for the country. By this measure, the U.S. ranked 24 out of 25 developed countries in 2001—the last year for which we have full figures—and the anecdotal evidence suggests strongly that things have not improved since: using this definition of poverty, for instance, and applying it to children—and here I quote from a recent analysis of a UNICEF study in 2006: “The U.S. ranked dead last among 24 nations studied ... 22nd out of 24 on rates of infant mortality and low birth-weight, and the share of children with less than ten books in the home.”

There is much more of moral import in current statistics dealing with poverty. Seventeen million young children in the U.S. live in families whose income is below the poverty line—even though two-thirds of them have at least one working parent. 47 million Americans have no health insurance, a figure that

has gone up every year since 1998. Our prison population is now at 2.4 million (2006), giving the U.S. the highest per capita incarceration rate in the world. And even by conservative estimates, at least that many Americans are homeless—many of them with jobs. In New Orleans alone, 12,000 people are homeless, two and a half years after the post-Katrina clean-up was supposed to begin.

Meanwhile, the 469 richest Americans have assets totaling 1.6 trillion dollars, more than the bottom 92% combined. While many Americans are sick and/or undernourished, others are equipping the toilets in their private jets with alligator skin seats. Some of them pay cash for \$25 million homes, furnishing them with \$60 thousand mattresses, parking \$1 million automobiles in \$225 thousand parking spaces in New York City, checking the time with \$600 thousand wristwatches and drinking \$2 thousand glasses of scotch in the bar at a hotel which charges \$28 thousand a night for some of its rooms.

At the same time, these 469 Americans, augmented by mere multi-millionaires, have been given substantial tax cuts by the Bush administration beginning in 2001, which have amounted to roughly \$93,000 for millionaires, up to \$18 million for those in the top tenth of 1%. Meanwhile, the average middle-class wage earner has received \$215 dollars, and those below the average, of course, have received nothing at all in the way of a tax cut, even though their taxes contribute to making a United States defense budget which is greater than those of every other nation in the world *combined, without* adding in the budgets that have been squandered in Iraq.

How can this happen? To be sure, a part of the reason is structural. For many people, the Democrats and Republicans together form only one party, with two right wings. Our choices at the ballot box are increasingly determined by the very rich who endorse candidates dedicated to protecting their interests, so that we have only to decide whether to pull the lever for tweedledee or tweedledum. There is a strong element of truth in the old anarchist saying that “If voting could really change things, the government would make it illegal.”

The Central Role of Ideology

But I want to suggest that the structures remain in place because of ideology. It is not just the greedy rich and super rich alone who maintain and strengthen the structures standing in the way of peace, social justice, and the alleviation of poverty. If the facts that I have just narrated strike you as highly immoral, I can nevertheless give moral reasons for keeping the structures as they are. A great many lawyers, doctors, engineers and other professionals, too, demand the status quo; the media enable it; politicians and pundits defend it; and not a few members of the professoriate accept enough of this ideology to help keep it in place. None of these people are going to say they are moral monsters, and indeed they are not. But the reasons that can be given for maintaining the structures are no longer good or solid reasons, in my opinion, because as we have seen, the situation is worsening, not improving. Let me turn, then, to a brief consideration of that ideology, followed by its Confucian alternative.

I believe that if poverty alleviation efforts and the establishment of peace within and between communities, ethnic or religious groupings, or nation states are to be more efficacious in the future than they have tended to be in the past, it is necessary to fundamentally alter the conception of what it is to be a human being that currently undergirds legal, political, economic, and moral thinking, and equally dominates the discourse on human rights shaped largely by successive governments of the United States.

For most of the past two-plus centuries—in a process of evolution that stretches back to Greek and early Christian antiquity—the basic conception of what it is to be a human being in Western civilization has been *individualism*. That we are social creatures, strongly influenced by the others with whom we interact, has always been acknowledged on all sides, but has not been seen as of the essence of our humanity at the philosophical level, nor of compelling worth. The reason for this is that our social situations are in an important sense accidental, in that we have exercised no control over a great

many of them—i.e., who our parents are, the native language(s) we acquire, our citizenship, and so forth. As a consequence, what gives human beings their primary worth, their dignity, integrity, and value on this account—and what must command the respect of all—is their ability to act purposively, to have a capacity for self-governance, i.e., autonomy.

We can flesh out this bare sketch of human beings by considering what other qualities must inhere in them in order for the concept of the autonomous individual to become morally robust and not barren. Individuals must be rational if they are to be autonomous; that is to say, they must be capable of going against instinct, emotion, or conditioning; for creatures that cannot so act are surely not autonomous. Further, human beings must *have freedom* as another defining characteristic; if they were not free to rationally choose between alternative courses of action, and then act on the choices made, how could they be said to be autonomous? We see these linked qualities clearly when we ask, “Why did you do that?” as a moral question. Clearly, it assumes the individual was free to have done otherwise, and that the person can give reasons for his or her choice, i.e., the individual behaved rationally.

In addition, although the quality of being self-interested is not strictly entailed by this basic view of human beings, it has been standard in most of philosophy (and virtually all of economics) since before the Enlightenment and the rise of industrial capitalism in the West.

Further, these qualities of individual human beings as most fundamentally autonomous, rational, and free (self-interest has been less enthusiastically applauded by some) are taken as unalloyed *goods* in the ethical sense. Who, for example would want to speak out against freedom?

If we define human beings in this individualistic manner, it would seem to follow that, in thinking about how we ought to deal morally with our fellows, we should seek as abstract and general a viewpoint as possible. If *everyone* has the (highly valued) qualities associated with individualism, and it is just these qualities we must respect at all times, then their gender, age, ethnic background, religion, skin color, and so on, should play

no significant role in our decisions about how to interact with them morally (apart from concern for ethically irrelevant details). Thus, on this orientation it is incumbent upon us to seek universal principles and values—applicable to all peoples at all times—or else the hope of a world at peace, devoid of group conflicts, racism, sexism, homophobia, and ethnocentrism, could never be realized.

This emphasis on reason, on objectivity, impartiality, and abstraction has provided strong support for arguments in favor of universalism in ethics. Many people, and most Western philosophers, have been persuaded by it, not unreasonably; it is a strong argument, complete with a vision of peace, freedom, and equality, which makes the rare challenges to this position seem either hopelessly relativistic, authoritarian, or both. John Locke basically proffered this definition to argue for a number of universal human rights, which he employed as a conceptual check on the divine right of kings as articulated by defenders of monarchical power.

In sum, then, much good has come from this individualistic view of persons, and it is an understatement to say that the many gains in human dignity it has brought about are to be celebrated, and not lost.

The Dark Side of Individualism: Passive vs. Active Rights

There is a dark side to this view, however, which is coming increasingly to the fore as the growing maldistribution of wealth both within and between nations becomes starker, and as the policies and actions of the United States, adamant in pressing an unfettered capitalism on the rest of the world, are doing more to exacerbate than alleviate the gross inequalities that contribute so much to the violence in so much of the contemporary world, and to the growth of poverty. This dark side of the ethics of the abstract individual is that when freedom is weighted far more heavily than social justice, the political, legal, and moral instruments employed in defending and enhancing that freedom virtually insure that social justice will not be achieved, and hence poverty not alleviated.

To see how and why this is so, consider the U.S. Bill of Rights, enshrining many of Locke's views as amended by Thomas Jefferson and focusing on freedom: of speech, of association, of worship, and to freely own and freely dispose of property legally acquired. (In law, corporations are also individuals.) Clearly these civil and political rights—"first generation" rights—are linked to the individualistic view of persons: if I am essentially free, and rational, self-interested, and autonomous, then certainly no one else, especially a government, should interfere with my speaking my mind, worshipping as I choose, or associating with whomever I wish, as I pursue the projects I have chosen for myself.

It must be noted, however, that these civil and political rights are passive, in that they are solely focused on freedom *from*, which can be seen from the fact that I can fully respect all of your civil and political rights simply by ignoring you; of course you have a right to speak, but not to have me listen.

To appreciate the significance of this passivity, or "negative liberty" as Isaiah Berlin defended it, we must look to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which in addition to the civil and political, also lists a number of social and cultural rights, such as the right to a job, education, health care, decent housing, and much more (Articles 22-27). These "second generation" rights were adopted into the Universal Declaration after World War II as a way to get national governments to commit themselves to ending poverty within their borders. They are active rather than passive rights, concerned as much with freedom *to* as freedom *from*. They are active in the sense that there are certain things I must do if you are to secure the benefits of these rights (pay more taxes, at the least).

By simply listing all rights *seriatim*, the Universal Declaration implies that they are compatible with each other; but unfortunately they are not, for if I acknowledge your rights claims to basic food and food security, housing, health care, a job, and so on, then I must actively help you obtain them so that you may pursue your own projects. But then I would no longer be fully free to self-interestedly pursue my own projects as an

individual, and consequently I am strongly inclined to deny that you have legitimate social, economic and cultural rights at all. As an individual first and foremost, I am not my brother's keeper, nor my sister's either. That I, too, could secure the material benefits accompanying second generation rights is no counter to this argument if I believe I can secure these material benefits on my own, or in some freely chosen contractual form in conjunction with a few others. Nor can it be replied that I may freely choose to assist you on my own, for this would be an act of charity, not an acknowledgement of your right to these goods. Worse, if we are well-off individuals, we do not need to demand any second generation rights for ourselves. If the maximum Social Security check persons can receive after 68 is \$3000 a month, they will receive about three-quarters of a million dollars if they live to be 89. But if they make a million dollars a year now, and all of it was subject to the Social Security tax, they would pay that three-quarters of a million dollars themselves in just 12 years. If they made \$10 million that was subject to the tax, they would pay that sum in 12 months. Hence we should not be surprised that the rich and the super rich strongly support Social Security "reform" —which means gutting it and, at the very least, working hard to insure that the income subject to the tax remains as low as possible (currently \$97, 500).

Such "persons"—individual, family, or corporate—pay lobbyists very large sums of money to influence legislation that affects them, and they can give the commercial media large sums of money—through giving or withholding advertising dollars—to "spin" the legislation so that it misleadingly appears to be to everyone's benefit, from giving away public lands and resources to lumber and other extraction corporations; to subsidizing the oil companies, defense contractors, and other major capitalist enterprises; to giving huge tax cuts to the already wealthiest 1% of Americans, as we have already noted.

Consequently, if I am personally well-off, and/or hold a managerial position in a large corporation, I will be strongly disinclined to see second generation rights truly as rights, for I will surely be less "free" and not as well off if they were. Rather, I will want to elect officials who will see second

generation social, economic, and cultural rights not as rights, but as “hopes” or aspirations,” as the U.S. Senate has done in its consistent refusal to ratify the U.N. International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (as all other developed countries have done). Former US Ambassador to the UN Jeanne Kirkpatrick was more explicit, referring to social, economic, and cultural rights as a “letter to Santa Claus,” while her successor Morris Abrams described the International Covenant as “little more than an empty vessel into which vague hopes and inchoate expectations can be poured.”

It is in this presuppositional sense that I place American liberals and conservatives in the same ideological camp. Individualistic moral theories supporting a capitalist view of economics and the world more generally *allow* governmental intervention in overcoming societal ills, but do not *require* it, and in its *laissez-faire* incarnation, pretty well exclude it. These theories advocate strongly the morality that flows from an outlook of the distinctiveness of ourselves from all others, and hence tend to especially champion those dimensions of governmental intervention in the market that are necessary for supposedly strict competition between individuals to insure the supposed best outcome for all.

Liberals might be more inclined to advocate greater governmental intervention in curing societal ills caused by the runaway greed that can drive individualistic tendencies toward monopoly, and champion as well legislation that would entail at least a minimal redistribution of wealth toward the poor, but they are not, in my opinion, at all willing to employ most of the means that will very probably be necessary to secure that admirable end, beginning with curbs on freedom of expression based on money. Why, for instance, is there not a great uproar when we all see clearly the truth of Joseph Liebling’s observation that “Freedom of the press is guaranteed only to those who own one.” “Money is speech,” declare the courts, and where are the liberal protests against such abuses of the First Amendment?

But only if human beings are defined as most fundamentally free, rational, self-interested, and autonomous individuals is it

possible to feel morally justified in doing nothing with respect to alleviating the unemployment, inadequate housing, lack of health care, disease, food insecurity and much else that make for wretched lives on the part of far too many of our fellow citizens (i.e., the miseries second-generation rights are intended to address), a moral stance taken by not a few U.S. governments, and virtually every national and transnational capitalist corporation—which, again, are legally construed as individuals with regard to first generation rights. It must also be noted that it is only on the conceptual foundation of individualism that we may close our eyes to poverty and suffering by invoking a “blame the victim” argument, which continues to be persuasive in many circles today despite its absurdity.

This, then, all too sketchily, is the dark side conceptually of viewing human beings most basically as autonomous individuals: liberty is purchased at the expense of social justice. In such an intellectual climate—reinforced by international legal and other institutions dominated by the U.S. —there is little reason to hope that a more equitable distribution of the world’s goods will ever take place, or attendant racial, religious or ethnic violence to diminish—or poverty, alleviation efforts to be successful.

Now it might seem that by challenging the concept of individual freedom I am at least implicitly championing a collectivism of some sort, Stalinist or Fascist. But individualism and collectivism do not exhaust our social and political possibilities any more than selfishness and altruism exhaust our moral possibilities. These Manichean splits are modern Western conceits, and basically serve as rhetorical support for maintaining the individualistic status quo in some parts of the world and the collectivistic in others. If all challenges to individuals making individual choices in their own self-interest can be made to appear as subtle endorsements for the gulags, killing fields, and labor reeducation camps, then obviously we must give three cheers for individualism, drowning out all dissent. But the status quo in the United States is clearly unjust, and to the extent the status quo is defended by appeals to individualism, to just that

extent do we need a broader view of what it is to be a human being.

An Alternative Ideology: Confucianism

One candidate for such a view, suitably modified for the contemporary world, is that of the classical Confucians, whose texts provide significant conceptual resources for forging new pathways to social justice and the alleviation of poverty. Here now is the other side of the mirror.

The texts gathered under the heading of “classical Confucianism” are by no means in full agreement on all points, and there are several tensions within each text itself; moreover, many passages in those texts have an ambiguity about them that makes reading them an act of creation. They nevertheless present an overall coherent view of the good life for human beings, and the good society in which those lives may be led. This life is an altogether social one, and central to understanding it is to see that Confucian sociality has aesthetic, moral, and spiritual, no less than political and economic dimensions—all of which are to be integrated.

None of the early texts address the question of the meaning of life, but they do put forward a vision of being human, and a discipline in which everyone can find meaning in life. This meaning will become increasingly apparent to us as we pursue our ultimate goal, namely, developing ourselves most fully as human beings to become *junzi*, “exemplary persons,” or, at the pinnacle of development, *sheng*, or sages. And for Confucians, we can only do this through our interactions with other human beings. Treading this human path (*ren dao*) must be ultimately understood basically as a religious quest, even though the canon speaks not of God, nor of creation, salvation, an immortal soul, or a transcendental realm of being; and no prophecies will be found in its pages either. It is nevertheless a truly religious path, yet at the same time a humanistically oriented one; for Confucius, we are irreducibly social, as he makes clear in the *Analects*: “I cannot run with the birds and beasts. Am I not one among the people of their world? If not them, with whom can I associate?” (18:6)¹

Thus the Confucian self is not a free, autonomous individual, but is to be seen relationally: I am a son, husband, father, grandfather, teacher, student, friend, colleague, neighbor, and more. I live, rather than “play” these roles, and when all of them have been specified, and their interrelationships made manifest, then I have been fairly thoroughly individuated, but with nothing left over with which to piece together an autonomous individual self, free to conclude mutually advantageous contracts with other rational individuals. Rather, to put the case strongly, I am constituted by the roles I live in consonance with others. The free, autonomous, individual self is not a fact, but an ideological fiction underpinning the ethos of a capitalist economic system.

While this view may seem initially strange, it is actually straightforward: in order to *be* a friend, neighbor, or lover, for example, I must *have* a friend, neighbor, or lover. Other persons are not merely accidental or incidental to my goal of fully developing as a human being, they are essential to it; indeed they confer unique personhood on me, for to the extent that I define myself as a teacher, students are necessary to my life, not incidental to it. Note in this regard also, that, again, while Confucianism should be seen as fundamentally religious, there are no solitary monks or nuns, anchorites or anchoresses, or hermits to be found in the tradition.

Our first and most basic role, one that significantly defines us in part throughout our lives, is as children; familial reverence (*xiao*) is one of the highest excellences in Confucianism. From our beginning roles as children—and as siblings, playmates, and pupils—we mature to become parents ourselves, and assume many other roles and responsibilities as well—all of which are reciprocal relationships, best generalized as holding between *benefactors* and *beneficiaries*. Each of us moves regularly from benefactor to beneficiary and back again, depending on the other(s) with whom we are interacting, when, and under what conditions. When young, I was largely beneficiary of my parents; when they were aged and infirm, I became their benefactor, and the converse holds for my children. I am benefactor to my friend when she needs my help, beneficiary

when I need hers. I am a student of my teachers, teacher of my students, colleague of my colleagues. Taken together, the manifold roles we live define us as persons. And the ways in which we meet the obligations attendant on these relational roles, and the ways others meet similar obligations toward us, are both the ways whereby we achieve dignity, satisfaction, and meaning in life. Although there is no word for “freedom” in the classical language in which the Confucian texts were written, I believe the Master would say that it is not a stative, but an achievement term. We cannot be born free, for we are bound inexorably to others from the moment we leave the womb, and we are surely not “free” even as adults if we only do our moral duty because we feel consciously obligated to do so; it is only when we truly enjoy helping others as benefactors, and being helped by them in return as beneficiaries, that we could meaningfully be said to be free.

With such an emphasis on familial reverence it should be clear that at the heart of Confucian society is indeed the family, the locus of where, how, and why we develop into full human beings. A central government is also important to the good society, because there are necessary ingredients of human flourishing—especially economic—which the family (and local community) cannot secure on their own. The early Confucians saw the state not as in any way in opposition to the family, but rather saw both as complementary; stated in contemporary democratic terms, if we wish to live in a state that insists I meet my fatherly responsibilities, it should insure that I have the wherewithal—i.e., an education, job, good health, etc.—to do so. Similarly, this state must assume responsibility for the well-being of those who have no family networks for support. Confucius, Mencius, and Xunzi all insisted that it was the responsibility of the state to provide functional equivalents of universal health insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, workers’ compensation, food stamps, and social security plus employment, and insisted as well on a meritocracy rather than wealth or bloodline in recruiting for officialdom; and they began doing this 500 years before the time of Christ. Mencius and Xunzi also had the keen insight to insist that the government had an

obligation to provide jobs for the poor. The problem with most welfare programs is that they consist mainly of handouts, and no person with any degree of self-respect would want to be only a beneficiary; dignity, pleasure and happiness can only come when we have the wherewithal to be benefactors as well.

The ideal Confucian society is thus basically communally oriented, with customs, tradition, rituals, ceremonies and manners serving as the binding force of and between our many relationships to one another. Above all, it is not a laissez-faire capitalist society. “Exemplary persons never compete” said Confucius. (3.7) In another place he said that the major work of exemplary persons was to help the poor, not make the rich richer. (6.4) Mencius said that if you want to be wealthy you cannot become an exemplary person, and if you want to be an exemplary person you cannot be wealthy. (3A3)

This, then, in woefully brief compass, is Confucian humanism in action: interacting with others as benefactors and beneficiaries in an intergenerational context. Confucius himself was absolutely clear on this point, for when a disciple asked him what he would most like to do, he said:

I would like to bring peace and contentment to the aged,
share relationships of trust and confidence with friends,
and love and protect the young (5:26)

Modified Confucianism for Today’s World

Much more, of course, needs to be said about the early Confucian view of what it is to be a human being, but I believe much more can be said with respect to the contemporary world. The concept of the family can be retained, for example, while making women equals to men, and it can be enhanced by allowing two (or more) nurturers of the same sex to be responsible for child-rearing and care of the elderly—both with state help. Neither sexism nor homophobia are logical implications of Confucian familial communitarianism and its larger philosophical and religious dimensions.

Returning now more directly to poverty alleviation again, It is clear that such role-bearing persons will take second generation social, economic, and cultural rights very seriously, while necessarily remaining sensitive to the civil and political. If you and I can only flourish as we help each other realize our full humanity as benefactors and beneficiaries, why would I want to silence you, not let you choose your other friends, or follow whichever faith tradition inspires you? That is to say, with role-bearing persons as our philosophical foundation, moving from second to first generation rights is conceptually and attitudinally straightforward.

But the converse does not hold. It requires a major cognitive (and affective) shift to move from respecting civil and political rights passively to actively helping others obtain the benefits attendant on respecting social, economic and cultural rights and committing the country to the elimination of poverty. The history of the U.S. provides little grounds for expecting the shifts to take place: it is now 216 years since civil and political rights became the law of the land, yet we have all those nauseating figures I narrated at the beginning of my talk, and they are worsening even as we are discussing them here.

It is time to conclude these remarks, and I want to do so by offering some reasons to believe the struggle for a better future than our present is possible, and worth the effort. And I want to do that by simultaneously replying to an objection to my analyses of why poverty continues to grow both at home and abroad.

“Look here,” someone might reasonably object, “It is all well and good that you have been beating up on the rich and the super rich, the politicians, pundits, corporations and the media while lamenting the gross inequalities that define the country today, but they are only a relatively small part of the problem. It is the overweight, TV-addicted, consumptive anti-intellectual *average* American that is largely responsible for the country’s plight. Americans don’t study the issues, tend to be self-centered, and indeed often celebrate the rugged individualism you have been challenging. Don’t you know anything about the pro-life movement? Have you never heard of the National Rifle Association?”

This objection is not without force. We all know someone pretty much like what was just described. While this view of the American public is unfortunately fairly widespread, there is one major problem with it: the evidence strongly suggests that it is false. Let me return to some statistics, this time from non-partisan polls. First, when asked if it is the responsibility of government to care for those who cannot take care of themselves, 57% answered affirmatively in 1994—the year Newt Gingrich and the conservative Republicans gained control of the House. In 2006, 69% of Americans answered the question affirmatively, according to the Pew Research Center, after completing a 20-year roundup of public opinion. Exactly the same percentage of Americans—69%—believes that the government should guarantee every citizen enough to eat and a place to sleep—even *if it can only be done by raising their taxes*. 75% of small business owners believe the minimum wage should be raised by at least another \$2 per hour. For every citizen who wants the government to reduce services in order to reduce spending, two citizens want more services even if it means increases in spending.

In another recent poll taken by the Wall Street Journal—certainly not a socialist-leaning part of the media—53% of those polled said the Bush tax cuts were “not worth it because they have increased the deficit and caused cuts in government programs.” There is much more, some of it surprising to some. CNN reported that in their latest poll, only 25% of the people polled wanted to see *Roe v. Wade* overturned. 67% would prefer diplomatic and economic efforts over military efforts in fighting terrorism. A Zogby poll found 89% of the population much preferred rehabilitation over incarceration for youthful offenders. Immigration? 62% told a CBS/NYTimes poll that undocumented workers should be allowed to keep their jobs and eventually apply for legal status. And oh, yes, the NRA: another Wall Street Journal study found 10% of the American public wanted gun controls to be less strict; 58% wanted much stronger controls.

These figures are, to my mind, of great significance, yet they receive no coverage in the news. They show a decent

American people who can keep their decency even when they think they are almost alone, and when they are bombarded instead with such trivia as Barack Obama's middle name, Hilary Clinton's cleavage, and the cost of a John Edwards haircut—none of which is of any significance to their lives, or ours.

I trust these figures, because the responses are just what I personally find when I leave a college or university campus to lecture at churches and union halls. The American peoples no less than college students have always been a source of hope for me, and I hope they may be the same for you.

These, then, are the ways my Chinese mirror has reflected the ways in which I reflect on my own culture, my own country.

Toward Knowledge— —Not Just a Feeling— About Tibet

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The Myths

Americans feel more about Tibet than they know.

The name alone conjures up mystery and intrigue—the mythical Shangri-la. When added to a history filled with geographical, historical, and legal ambiguity, achieving understanding takes some doing.

When Europeans were exploring the world, climbing the highest mountains, discovering the source of every river, and conquering the world, Tibet remained unassailable, forbidden, out of reach. The more unsuccessful Europeans were in “opening” Tibet, the more the mystery grew.

Westerners created religions allegedly based on Tibetan Buddhism—such as Madame Blavatsky’s Theosophy—full of secret teachings and secret rituals; fantasies of the western mind. One scholar dubbed it: “pseudo-orientalia.”¹

In the 1920s, James Hilton published *Lost Horizon*, a novel about a secret valley in the Himalayas with no illness, no aging, no need to work, and plenty to eat. For an audience in the midst of a depression, this was a fantasy worth embracing. Frank Capra’s awarding-winning film of the book (in which the Tibetan Buddhist abbot was played by a former New York Jewish high school teacher from the Bronx) added enormously to the mythologizing.

In the 1960s, LSD advocates developed their own Tibet fantasies by celebrating *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, a translation of Buddhist rituals for the deceased. They promoted the text as an essential guide to understanding life.

Then came new-age philosophies and the Tibetan diaspora, with hundreds of proselytizing monks. Westerners, especially Americans, fueled by their new-age attraction to the spiritual bazaars of the day, were prepared to accept images of a benign, idyllic society ruled by beneficent lamas practicing secret rituals based on occult knowledge. As a result, an imaginary “Tibet,” a figment of the Western imagination, was sustained and flourished.

The Shangri-la myth, in the words of one scholar of Tibet, is “...a dream from which the English-speaking West has not entirely awoken...”²

While the West created this mythical Tibet, China, in the past two decades, has created a myth of its own—although the Tibet the Chinese evoke is quite different from its Western counterpart. Since the internationalization of Tibet in the late 1980s China has produced a blizzard of books, magazines, TV shows, and films on the region. While these have failed miserably to influence people outside the country, internally they have created a mythical Tibet, evoking images of an exotic land and people, clean air, simple living, and, in some instances, notions of “noble savages” and secret Buddhist rituals. Tibetan medicine has become widely popular, and the word “Tibet” is used often in products that have nothing to do with Tibet but are intended to tap into the exoticism of the term to encourage sales.

The History

There is a third Tibet—a real place, with real people and a real history. That history, however, is complicated and controversial, contributing to the difficulties in trying to understand the situation today.

To begin, there are two geographical areas designated as Tibet. One is China’s Tibet, a political entity called the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), which corresponds roughly with the political area under the rule of the earlier Dalai Lamas. The other, the Tibet claimed by today’s Dalai Lama, is about twice the size and corresponds to the entire area in which ethnic Tibetans live, including portions of the current provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, Qinghai and Gansu.

There was no Tibet as a national entity before the 7th century when a remarkable man, Songsten Gampo, pulled the various tribes in the region together, introduced Buddhism, developed a written script, and created a Tibetan identity.

Tibet's most important external relationship was—and is—with China. As early as AD 832, the two signed a pact called the “Treaty of Uncle & Nephew.” Later, amidst new tensions, Tibetans invaded China and fought their way to the gates of the capital—present-day Xi’an.

When the Mongols conquered China and established the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368), they failed to conquer the Tibetans. To the contrary, the Tibetans managed to convert the Mongols to Tibetan Buddhism. The Tibetans and the Mongols developed a “priest-patron” relationship whereby the Mongol armies protected the Tibetans from invasion while the Tibetan monks provided spiritual guidance in return. To reward these spiritual guides, the Mongols created the position of Dalai Lama and the theocratic state which would govern Tibet for the next several centuries.

Tibetans argue this arrangement was exclusively a Mongol-Tibetan relationship; Chinese argue that the Mongols were Emperors of China at the time, so Tibet was incorporated into the Chinese empire.

By the 1600s, China was ruled by Manchus (Qing Dynasty, 1644-1911), who administratively integrated Tibet into China around 1720 and for the next two centuries sent officials (*ambans*) to the Tibetan capital of Lhasa to govern in the name of the emperor. But not all these officials cared about governing. Tibetans discovered that they could pay lip service to the system while continuing to govern themselves largely unhindered.

Herein lies another major dispute: was this relationship solely a Manchu-Tibetan one or did the Manchus represent the state/empire of China?

The debate over the status of Tibet was exacerbated in 1911 when the Qing Dynasty collapsed and China had no central government. Tibet unilaterally declared independence; it had its own government, bureaucracy, army, postal system, currency and foreign relations. So in some ways during the Qing period,

and certainly from 1911-1951, Tibet was, for all intents and purposes, independent.

Despite this *de facto* independence, however, every treaty signed in the post-1911 period and every government (including that of the U.S.) recognized Tibet as a part of China. Legally (*de jure*), Tibet was part of China.

It is easy to see how both those who advocate Tibetan independence and those who contend that Tibet is a part of China have plenty of historical precedence to call upon to argue their cases.

Tibet and the PRC

In October 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) declared the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC), and both China and Tibet underwent monumental transformation.

The Communists, like all 20th Century Chinese (regardless of their political persuasion), believed Tibet was, and had always been part of China. To Chinese, Tibet has been as much a part of their country as Hawai'i has been to Americans.

After a brief military skirmish on the Tibetan border in 1950, the CCP offered Tibetans a treaty of incorporation: the 17-Point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet. This initiative was curious, for if Tibet was historically part of China, why the need for a treaty? Clearly, the new government was acknowledging that Tibet presented a special situation.

Having ratified the agreement, Tibet now actually became a part of the Chinese state; fully incorporated for the first time with the arrival of large numbers of officials and soldiers of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). At no time in the previous 1200 years had either of these developments occurred.

In the 1950s the Chinese government created a political boundary in eastern Tibet. To the west was "Tibet" (the TAR) and to the east was "China," albeit inhabited with Tibetans. Mao Zedong's policy in the 1950s was to leave Tibetan society intact, work to win the allegiance of the aristocratic feudal elite and hope they would introduce revolutionary reforms. So nothing changed west of that line. However, east of that line was

“China” and since the entire country was going through revolutionary socialist upheaval, then that area had to as well. Mao’s policy was based on the notion that Tibet was so different and the society so entrenched that radical change would breed resentment. Somehow Chinese bureaucrats did not realize (care?) that there was no difference in how people lived on both sides of the border. So Mao’s premonition about how Tibetans would react to socialist reforms proved correct.

Resentment against Chinese rule grew in eastern Tibet to the point that by 1956 there was a full-blown insurrection which spread westward into Lhasa. In March 1959, events came to a head, and the resulting revolt led to the Dalai Lama and about 50-60,000 Tibetans fleeing into exile in India, Nepal, and Bhutan, where they remain to this day. The Dalai Lama and about 130-140,000 Tibetans live in exile, while about 6 million Tibetans live inside the PRC.

The guerrilla war that developed lasted until the early 1970s, fueled by the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and its cold-war attempts to destabilize the Communist government in China, but ultimately ended in failure.

Chinese policies over the ensuing 58 years have varied widely, creating a climate of mistrust. In the 1950s and the 1980s Tibetans were free to practice their religion and culture. But the years 1966-1969 of the Cultural Revolution witnessed massive destruction of religious buildings and artifacts, the forced abandonment of religious vows by the large population of clergy, and attempts to destroy traditional Tibetan culture. On the other hand, government policy during the 1960s did assist Tibetan serfs in loosening the bonds that had chained them to powerful landlords and monasteries.

In the 1980s policies had been designed to encourage the flourishing of Tibetan culture. “Their social customs and habits must be respected,” CCP leader Hu Yaobang had declared, “...If we do not do that, we are only speaking empty words.”³ The idea was to ensure Tibetans cultural security and then proceed to economic development. But these policies did not produce a break-through in the Beijing-Dalai Lama negotiations then underway. Then, in 1989, the Dalai Lama rejected an

invitation to visit Beijing . This was the most serious of several missteps the Dalai Lama made in negotiations with Beijing since Deng Xiaoping had initiated contacts in late 1978. In January 1989, moderates were still in charge of Tibet policy in Beijing. The Dalai Lama's failure to go was the last straw in the demise of these moderates, and hard-liners were able to wrest policy-making away from them.

As a result, the Chinese government chose to employ a different strategy. Now the policies would be based solely on economic development. Beijing has pumped billions of yuan into Tibet, especially since the 1990s. Some 75% of the TAR's GDP is from outside subsidies. Lives have become materially better, life expectancy has soared, child mortality has plummeted, especially in the cities. A nascent middle class of Tibetan merchants, officials, university students, CCP members, and military/police officers, who have a vested interest in the status quo, has been created.

In recent years, international tourism and funding from the Chinese state have helped develop Tibet's urban economy (though the rural areas, where 80% of Tibetans live, remain devastatingly poor). For many Han Chinese (the dominant nationality in the country), more personal freedom and disposable income have led to their choosing Tibet as a tourist destination—and in massive numbers, aided by the newly built railroad. Moreover, the development of the economy has attracted tens of thousands of Han Chinese looking for economic opportunities. Consequently, Tibetans have become a minority in the three urban areas of Tibet.

The contemporary grievances of the Tibetans go back to the introduction of these economic development policies in the 1990s. These policies gave short shrift to cultural issues, and Tibetans have come to resent the religious restrictions, the languishing of their language, the continual debasement of the Dalai Lama, the day-to-day discrimination in wages, and the attitudes of the Han Chinese who have poured into Tibet and have been the disproportionate recipients of the rewards of economic development. Moreover, there has been serious economic displacement: nomads being forced into sedentary

villages and job discrimination against Tibetans in favor of Han Chinese in the cities.

In short, the government's economic stimulus efforts have not been sufficient. The government is seen by Tibetans not as a neutral party protecting the rights of all citizens but as advocates of the Hans. As one Tibetan herder told Nick Kristoff of the *New York Times*, "living standards had improved...yet he had joined the demonstrations against Chinese rule. His priority, he said, wasn't wealth, but freedom to worship the Dalai Lama."⁴

The International Campaign

As mentioned, beginning in 1978, the Dalai Lama and Beijing began talks which have continued, on and off, since. During one break in the 1980s, the Dalai Lama launched an international campaign. The goal was to garner international support for his cause in hopes it would pressure Beijing to compromise at the negotiating table.

Building on the Western mythology of Tibet, utilizing a selective and emotive historical narrative, and employing modern public relations methods, this campaign became extraordinarily successful. Tibet support groups, Hollywood stars, the Noble Peace Prize, etc., all managed to make Tibet and the Dalai Lama household names. For years the Dalai Lama preached independence. The hope was, especially after the demise of the Soviet Union and its allies, that Communist China would go the same route. After some years, the Dalai Lama realized this was not going to happen, and the policy changed to something he called the "Middle Way." He was no longer interested in independence but now wanted only a "high level of autonomy;" an ambiguous phrase that the Tibetan and Chinese negotiators continue to have trouble defining. However, the independence movement has been like a snowball on a steep hill: it keeps getting bigger and harder to stop. This confuses Beijing, which points to the contradiction in the Dalai Lama's claims that he no longer strives for independence while simultaneously, in his name, a movement grows among Tibetan exiles and Western supporters, demanding a separate state. This rift between the

exile community and the Dalai Lama's pronouncements is large, but since it is difficult to openly criticize the Dalai Lama, the dispute is muted.

The exceptional success of this International Campaign in the West, however, has been mirrored by its failure inside Tibet. The Campaign—and the related involvement of governments such as the United States—has been both helpful and unhelpful in advancing toward a peaceful resolution of the situation in Tibet. Helpful in that it keeps the spotlight on the Tibet issue, raises money, brings in recruits, etc.; unhelpful in that external interference in China's domestic affairs is an extremely sensitive issue in its body politic. It reinforces the power of the hard-liners, who want to assimilate the Tibetans, by allowing them to recall the history of Western intrusion into China and the CIA's involvement in the guerrilla war. Separatism, ("splittism," as it is called in China) is, according to the official line, China's "number one threat," and the Dalai Lama-, they argue, is once again aligned with Western forces bent on breaking up the Chinese state.

Beijing's recent policy has been to give Tibetans enough material goods in hopes that they will become less interested in their culture, their ethnic nationalism will diminish, and, in the meantime, the Dalai Lama will die and the international campaign will wither. As the current CCP leader Hu Jintao said recently; "The emphasis should be laid on improving the living and working conditions of farmers and herdsmen; development is the basis and key to tackle *all* the problems in Tibet."⁵⁵ [emphasis added] But the events of March 2008 demonstrate clearly that these policies have failed.

Recent Events

The March protests were touched off by various recent developments as well as by long-standing grievances. In spite of the fact that the two sides began talking again— six rounds since 2002— no forward movement is obvious. The Tibetan delegation issued cautiously positive statements while the Chinese barely acknowledged the talks at all.

March 10th is the anniversary of the failed uprising in 1959, usually commemorated in Lhasa by small numbers of monks unsuccessfully trying to demonstrate. This year was no different; monks came out of their monasteries, gathering peacefully from March 10-13. On March 14th, however, a clerical demonstration in central Lhasa was met by police force, and non-clerical Tibetans joined in. The police retreated and an ethnic riot ensued in which random Han Chinese were attacked and Han-owned shops were burned to the ground. Beijing says 18 people died.

These events, remarkable on their own, came after the debacle of the Olympic torch relay around the world in which demonstrators protesting the situation in Tibet threatened, in city after city, to seize or douse the fire. The relay became a public relations disaster for China. For several years, Tibetan support groups around the world had seen the Beijing Olympics as an opportunity to raise the Tibetan issue when the world's attention would be focused on China and they began preparing accordingly.⁶

These circumstances led to an unprecedented series of events. The 2008 demonstrations were significantly different from earlier Tibetan protests on the March 10th anniversary, which had always been small, sporadic and uncoordinated. This time, a substantial number of lay Tibetans became involved. Ethnic violence broke out for the first time. Usually the protests were within the Lhasa region, but now they broke out across a wide swath of greater Tibet, even among Tibetan students in Beijing.⁷ Protests of the past only lasted a few hours at best, yet in 2008 reports of small protests continued for months, despite the massive show of military force thrown into the region. Moreover, because of the Olympics, foreign governments weighed in, pressuring Beijing to renew talks with the Dalai Lama.

China's initial response was typical of previous such protests; however, because of the overriding concern for stability leading up to the Olympics, the government reaction was heightened. Monasteries were locked down. Clergy were forced

to attend days-long “patriotic education” classes where they were compelled to sign attacks on the Dalai Lama and pledge their loyalty to the Chinese state. Though most have since been released, thousands of people were rounded up, detained, and interrogated. Some 42 individuals have been “tried” and sentenced to death, although there have been no executions to date.

The state has attacked all criticism as “splittist” and deemed it treasonous. The TAR was immediately closed to tourism. But since tourism is the major economic engine for the TAR, within a few weeks Chinese tourists were permitted to return, and by late June small numbers of foreigners as well. The paramilitary authorities remain in large numbers throughout the region, and activities of Tibetans’ daily lives have been curtailed.

Beijing did agree to renew talks with the Dalai Lama, and two short meetings were held. No one knows if China is now serious about negotiating or merely participating in a public relations exercise with regard to the Olympics. Most observers are gloomy. “In the course of our discussions we were compelled to candidly convey to our counterparts,” said the chief Tibetan negotiator, “that in the absence of serious and sincere commitment on their part, the continuation of the present dialogue process would serve no purpose.”⁸ The Chinese response has been that these matters are complicated and will take time to work out. Compare that hesitation with the rapid and dramatic policy changes towards Taiwan as soon as the new “one China” Guomintang government in Taipei was elected to replace the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party.

The Chinese government has accused the “Dalai clique” of being responsible for the unrest, thereby refusing to take responsibility for their failed policies. To be sure, pro-independence groups outside China have been in touch with Tibetans inside, especially the clergy from affiliated monasteries; pamphlets, audio teachings, and photos of the Dalai Lama and other materials are routinely brought into Tibet surreptitiously.

Nevertheless, there is no credible evidence that outside forces were responsible for the violence; indeed, despite their rhetorical claims, these groups have never been able to gain any foothold within Tibet itself.

The Sichuan earthquake took the issue of Tibet off the front pages and turned world opinion of China from that of aggressor to victim. But the issues surrounding Tibet remain, and China's policy is in disarray. Some Chinese news outlets and officials hold out the hope for compromise while others vilify the Dalai Lama in crude language unheard since the Cultural Revolution. There have been repeated missteps and political failures on both sides. Today, the onus is on the Chinese government. Economic development will never engage the Tibetans as long as they feel culturally insecure and economically discriminated against. These issues are far more pressing than independence. The question now is what does China want to do?

Endnotes

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The May Fourth Era at Yale-in-China, 1917-1921

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In 1906, Yale University founded a missionary middle school in Changsha, the capital city of China's Hunan province. Long regarded by foreigners as China's most conservative and anti-foreign province, Hunan, only five years previous, had been the last Chinese province to open its doors to foreign settlement. In this new and seemingly fertile field, the Americans of the Yale Foreign Missionary Society cultivated their middle school (Yali) and, by 1916, had greatly expanded their presence by also opening a School of Nursing, a College of Arts and Sciences, and a Medical School. As with most missionary educational enterprises of this period, the primary objective of the Yale educational missionaries was to inculcate their students with Western Science and knowledge, and, most importantly, Christian values. With the anti-traditional and pro-democracy message of the New Culture movement that erupted amongst China's youth both before and after the May Fourth incident of 1919, the Yale missionaries, like others, believed that their efforts were being fulfilled. However, after this rising student consciousness turned increasingly nationalistic and anti-foreign, the Yale missionaries eventually not only had to address its implications within the context of the greater missionary enterprise in China, but, even more importantly, had to confront its manifestations amongst the students in their own institution.

In recent years, many historians of the general missionary experience in China have focused upon the missionary's inflexibility, insensitivity, cultural superiority and paternalistic methods, and the manner in which these actions and attitudes provoked reactions from the Chinese populace. However, my research has shown that this only partly reveals the complexities

associated with the rise of student consciousness at the institution. As the tide of student consciousness rose in both Hunan and China, the Chinese students and foreign teachers at Yali did not immediately, nor conclusively, become diametrically opposed to the ideas and actions of one another. Instead, especially in the early years of the movement, there existed a spirit of cooperation between Yali's Chinese students and their foreign educators, which was exemplified in the former's actions to share their ideas for reform with the latter, and the willingness of the latter to not only listen, but to consider and offer accommodations, such as the hiring of more Chinese instructors, offering more courses in Chinese language, history and culture, and, most importantly, the removal of religious requirements from the institution's curriculum. Ultimately, the Yali missionaries' reactions to, and perceptions of, the growing student consciousness, both within and without their institution, between 1917 and 1927, represented, not an inflexible resistance and opposition to change as is often depicted or assumed, but a fairly enlightened attempt to adjust their attitudes and policies in order to meet the demands and needs of the youth of a changing China. This article examines one facet of student-teacher relations at Yali during this period, the student literature that was produced at the institution during the May Fourth era, 1917-1921.

Yali Student Writers

In 1917, the Yali Middle School students began the publication, on a bi-annual basis, of a student magazine, *The Yale-In-China Student*, which provided a forum for the institution's students to broadcast their activities to the greater Chinese community. Coincidentally, while the magazine provided a useful vehicle for transmitting the students' activities to their fellow Chinese, it also served to affirm the Yali educational missionaries' belief that they were succeeding in their objective to Westernize and Christianize their students. For example, in an article titled "What Constitutes Good Scholarship," one student, Hwang Pu, lamented:

In discussing what constitutes good scholarship we feel sorry when we see the present condition of Chinese scholarship. We find that our scholarship has many defects in cultivating mind, body, and heart symmetrically. These defects are so pernicious to our education, to our civilization and to our country that they are certainly worth discussing.¹

This frustration over the limitations of Chinese scholarship highlighted by Hwang Pu is a major theme within the May Fourth era literature produced at Yali. Like their peers at Chinese institutions, the Yali student writers identified the source of this problem as China's attachment to, and veneration of, the past. This predisposition toward traditionalism manifested itself in myriad ways, and had, from the students' perspective, stunted China's intellectual and cultural growth. In particular, Chinese literature was criticized by students like Ho Lien, who, in his "A General Aspect of Chinese Literature," argued that China's literary talents had stagnated due to "the spirit of exclusiveness and mental inertia as is shown by the old customs that have ever been ingrained in the nature of her people."²

While students like Ho Lien found the cause of China's stagnation in her traditionalism, they found the solution to it in the modernism of the West. This hope for the amelioration of China along Western lines is particularly well expressed by Ho who referred to a coming "Oriental Renaissance," describing it in the following hopeful manner:

It is in expectation that the twentieth century will be the nuptial period for the elements of World Civilization, namely; western and oriental;...Let us, accordingly, get our room decorated, feast prepared, and everything ready for the celebration of this couple –the Western Bride and the Eastern bridegroom–which will result in a sacredness of family life and a glory for the family tree forever.³

Though it has been suggested by some scholars that the Yali students simply borrowed the best that the West had to offer in order to use it in throwing off the yoke of Western influence and domination, we see, in the above paragraph, a more representative aspiration that China's future would be intimately connected to that of her Western peers. For the Yali educators, this type of positive recognition seemed to suggest that their efforts to bear positive influence on the Chinese were finding success.

Specifically, the Yali students championed Western-style education as one of the fundamental cures to China's ills of traditionalism. One student, Conrad Yuen Shen Shu, argued that the reason America and Europe had become so dominant and wealthy in comparison to the rest of the world stemmed "not only from their modern inventions,...but principally as a result of their universal education."⁴ Recognizing that "a nation's advance in civilization may be measured by its attention to education," the author advocated that his fellow countrymen follow the model of the West, "so that education in China shall some day become universal and unrestricted."⁵ Yuen Shen Shu's thoughts reveal not merely the influence of the Western-style education he had received at Yali, but also his overwhelming approval of it.

Perhaps more interesting, and revealing, than the above-mentioned student articles are those statements that directly applaud the work and contributions of the American missionaries at Yali. For example, in an article titled "Student Life at Yale-in-China," the author, Tsai-I-O, offered the following commendation of the contributions that Yali was making not only in the lives of its students, but, even more importantly, in the life of the new Chinese republic:

...the student life at Yale in China is unique. The various wholesome influences derived from work and play all tend to mold the young life of the student along lines of the greatest possible service to his country—spiritually, intellectually and physically.⁶

Resounding corroborations of Tsai's approval are echoed in many of the *Yale-in-China Student* articles from this period.

Student Activism

Following the May Fourth incident of 1919, Yali's students recognized, even more clearly, the urgent need for social and political change in China. Aside from education-related issues, Yali's students demonstrated a positive regard for the social elements of campus life at their institution. Many issues of the *Yale-in-China Student* contain articles discussing extra-curricular activities such as athletics, in which the students issue their praises for the opportunity to participate in organized Western sports, like volleyball, football, and tennis, that had been introduced by their American instructors. In addition to these positive representations of campus life, students discussed their participation in community service projects, which, as explained in Lei Ch'iang's "The Social Activities of Yali Students," were inspired by the institution's Christian dedication to the promotion of good works. In this particular article, Lei describes how, during times of strife, Yali students were willing and eager to help those who needed it. He explains, for example, how, after the general Chang Ching-Yao ransacked Changsha during his advance through the region the previous year, Yali students went into the city and brought helpless women and children back to Yali where they could take refuge.⁷ The influence of the institution on these activities is evidenced in the following statement made by Lei: "This is the spirit of Christians and illustrates one of the social activities of Yali."⁸ Like others, Lei sees the work of Yali as having an integral place in Chinese state and society. He explains that the benefits of Yali's social activities can only be accomplished through the united strength of the student body and that, through this unity and cooperation the students would be "able to make our institution famous, society improved, and the country strong."⁹

While Lei focused upon the social activism at Yali, one student, K.C. Hwang, in an editorial, provided a telling testimony of the general nature of student consciousness at Yali. In

assessing this rising consciousness amongst him and his peers within the context of the greater student experience at Yali, K.C. Hwang wrote:

On the side of students, self-development which Yali always emphasized, the great thing is the awakening of the students' own initiative and energy. Attention is fixed not only upon externals, such as the performance of set tasks and the gaining of marks, but also upon their growing power of thought.¹⁰

Inspired by the May Fourth movement, this "growing power of thought" to which the author refers seemingly served as an intellectually liberating influence in the lives of the Yali students. According to K. C. Hwang, the students at Yali were now no longer limited to "accepting ideas of the teachers or facts of the textbooks, but also to give forth ideas that had been produced within themselves."¹¹ Hwang further revealed his notion of a change in the intellectual climate by insisting that from that point forward, the students at Yali would no longer merely be the "receivers" of information, but also the "givers."¹²

While Hwang's editorial represented a virtual intellectual "coming of age" amongst the students of Yali, it is important to note that he maintained his belief in, and support of, the educational and social agenda of his Western institution. In explaining the manner in which the students still sought to work within the practical and ideological framework that had been established by their American instructors Hwang wrote:

In every activity the students undertake, the spirit of cooperation, the so called "Yali Spirit," is exhibited...whatever the students do is done for Yali as a whole. Exactly what Chinese students are in need of, now, since they are going to be the future social leaders, is to discuss all kinds of social questions. No social problem can be easily solved unless a great cooperative spirit is well promoted in those who are going to solve it.¹³

As evidenced above, therefore, Hwang believed that the best way for Yali students to contribute to the amelioration of society was not to reject the Western influence of their institution, but rather, embrace it. He saw Yali as a cooperative forum of exchange and liberality, in which new ideas could not only be discussed and developed, but also implemented. For the American instructors at Yali, Hwang's words would have been received most eagerly, because they echoed the very charter of their institution, which advocated Western-guided progress and development for China and the Chinese.

The Yali Faculty: Impressions of the May Fourth Era

The positive attitudes toward both the West and Yali itself that the above-cited student articles conveyed served to confirm, in the minds of the American instructors, that their efforts to reform their Chinese students along the Yale model were succeeding. As a reflection of the modernizing and liberalizing trends of the greater May Fourth era, the articles in the magazine convinced the Yali faculty that their institution was playing no small part in engendering these same values in their students between 1917 and 1921. Similarly, their students' participation in the strikes and protests during this same period, and in later years, was seen not as a reason for the faculty to be concerned, but, instead pleased, due to the manner in which it seemed to reflect a positive change in the direction they had long envisioned. A publicity article from this period demonstrates, in the following excerpt, the manner in which the institution was increasingly coming to see itself as a bridge between the West and the East:

Yale in China is aiding much in the development of a closer friendship between China and America. Chinese youths are there receiving the best that the Orient and the Occident have to offer, and the achievements and ideals of the Western world are being adapted to the atmosphere, needs, and traditions of China...The Yale family has reason to be proud that among its number have been those whose faith, foresight and sacrifice

have built up at Changsha an institution which is making so important and direct a contribution towards a better understanding between the West and East.¹⁴

Of particular significance, in regards to the manner in which the Yali faculty viewed their institution's role in the atmosphere of a changing China, was their perceived success over the traditional pervading influence of the scholar-gentry class in Hunan. For example, in 1921 Hume described, with great delight, to a friend, "how significant an enterprise has arisen in the very heart of China where formerly there was only conservatism and an antiforeign spirit."¹⁵ In another publicity article published by the institution, this apparent change is heralded even further: "The old order is changing and our order of things is superseding it. Even in remote places like Changsha, pink socks and light tan shoes represent our style of dress if not taste."¹⁶

In assessing the overall significance of the May Fourth Era at Yali, it is important to consider this period from the perspective of both the institution's Chinese students, as well as the foreign instructors. Though the Chinese students at Yali contributed to the greater May Fourth movement, through their literary productions and participation in strikes and protests, their experiences and consequent developing consciousness were quite different from those of their peers at Chinese institutions. Having been isolated within a foreign institution, and educated along Western lines, the students at Yali were somewhat limited in their exposure to, and involvement in, the greater movement. In fact, it may be said that the Yali students were torn between two worlds. While they sympathized with their fellow Chinese students, they also identified with their Western instructors. Though the students sought similar changes as their peers at Chinese institutions, they believed that their own institution, with its American curriculum and instructors, could serve as a guiding force. Of course, as these Chinese students at Yali became increasingly more mature in their ideals and vision for China's future, they became more confident in both their right and ability to demand more of their instructors and institution.

Conversely, for the American instructors at Yali, their students' participation in the May Fourth movement seemed proof positive that their educational objectives were indeed being fulfilled. These instructors heralded their students' willingness to join in the strikes, protests, and boycotts against both the Japanese government and China's own seemingly weak bureaucracy, which seemed to suggest that their efforts to channel their students' growing political consciousness in a positive direction were succeeding. Nothing corroborated the faculty's feelings more than the students' own words found in the articles of the *Yale-in-China Student*, as well as the positive impressions and commentaries issued by Yali graduates about their institution. Even when the students took their instructors to task, by asking them to make certain changes to Yali's curriculum or policies, the tone of their requests were not confrontational, but cooperative. Assuredly, because this expressed spirit of cooperation was exactly what the foreign instructors at Yali were endeavoring to cultivate within their students; it would have been perceived, and welcomed, as a positive sign of the institution's growing influence on their students.

After 1921, as student consciousness across China became increasingly radical, anti-foreign, and anti-Christian, the instructors at Yali could take certain comfort in the fact that at their institution, their students remained in a loyal and subordinate position. The Yali faculty saw their students as not part of the general student population, but, instead, as partners in their educational enterprise, who, as a result of their guiding educational and moral influence, had become not only different from their peers at Chinese institutions, but, in terms of manners, maturity, and capability, better prepared to lead China into a new era. This impression is important, as it set the tone for student-teacher relations from that point forward, especially during the difficult years between 1923 and 1926.

It was because the Yali faculty had come to firmly regard their students as partners in the educational enterprise that they later refused to acknowledge any expressed animosity or

opposition from them as sincerely motivated. Instead, between 1923 and 1926, when their students began participating in anti-Western and anti-Christian protests and, later, even launching strikes against the institution itself, the Yali faculty almost always looked for some outside influence upon which to fix blame for their students' having been led astray. Similarly, when the Yali faculty began pursuing an increasingly active program of accommodation for their students, it was based far less on student pressures and agitations, than it was on the instructors' established notion of, and good faith in, the cooperative relationship they had promoted between themselves and their students. Therefore, when the tide of opposition and frustration grew increasingly high amongst Yali's students during this later period, its actual impact on the institution itself was softened to a marked degree based almost exclusively upon the well-established perception of the Yali faculty that their students remained their allies, despite outside distractions and interferences, in the Yale-in-China enterprise.

Endnotes

¹Hwang Pu, "What Constitutes Good Scholarship" *The Yale-in-China Student* 1 (June 1917): 7, Records of the Yale-in-China Association. In further explaining the cause of China's weaknesses, Hwang Pu added that China lacked the virtue of self-sacrifice, a principle promoted amongst the Yali student body.

²Ho Lien, "General Aspects of Chinese Literature," *The Yale-in-China Student* 2 (November 1916): 6.

³Ibid. , 6-7.

⁴Conrad Yuen Shen Shu, "Universal Education in China," *The Yale-in-China Student* 2 (November 1916): 21. The author further expressed his support for, and admiration of, the West by stating: "They all know how to read, write, calculate, and do business for their country and society, both men and women, boys and girls; even the coolies and house servants all know how to read newspapers, write familiar letters, and how to calculate simple problems in arithmetic."

⁵Ibid., 21-22.

⁶Tsai-I-O, "The Student Life at Yale-in-China" *The Yale-in-China Student* 2 (November 1917): 5.

⁷Lei Ch'iang, "The Social Activities of Yali Students," *The Yale-in-China Student* 7 (June 1921): 33. In addition to this, Lei states that during peacetime, Yali students provide free elementary education through their Y.M.C.A, and also give speeches on topic such as sanitation and hygiene to the "ignorant people."

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., 34.

¹⁰K.C. Hwang, "Editorial," *The Yale-in-China Student* 7 (June 1920): 4.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid. K. C. Hwang demonstrated this newly felt freedom by explaining that: "all school societies organized by Yali students are provided with a constitution based on students' control and with minimum of faculty supervisions."

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Publicity Article (no date), Records of the Yale-in-China Association.

¹⁵Edward Hume to Helena McMillan, 28 August 1921, Edward H. Hume Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, New Haven, Connecticut.

¹⁶"China in Flux," 1, Records of the Yale-in-China Association.

TEACHING ABOUT ASIA

Comparing China and the West:

Who is ready for the challenge?

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Comparative culture studies often seem to come up half-empty: the China specialist may object if half the readings focus not on China but the West, and the teacher of Western Civilization may object to half the class's attention being turned away from the subject he or she was hired to teach.

From our experience, we have come to believe otherwise. As the authors of a one-semester comparative course, we have discovered that no one can comprehend a distant culture unless one is capable of comparing it with one's own civilization. All too often, students do not seem to know even the rudiments of the origins of their own way of life.

Cultural amnesia seems to be dangerously widespread both in China and in the West, though for different reasons.

In China, students feel an intense need to understand the West, which is such a powerful influence in their world. At the same time, they are largely cut off from their own deep heritage by the after effects of the Cultural Revolution and related events. Hence, the Beijing Foreign Studies University, through its School of English and International Studies, has since 2003, made obligatory for its advanced students our course entitled *WCwCC* [*Western Civilization with Chinese Comparisons*]. Its sourcebook has been published by Fudan University Press in Shanghai.

We believe that this fresh approach to Asian Studies should now be tested in a North American liberal-arts setting. Western students are just beginning to realize how important China is

going to be throughout their 21st century lives. And at the same time, many suffer from serious cultural amnesia due to a long-term devaluing of their traditions.

As Westerners we have learned a great deal about cross-cultural education. 200 students at a time follow this course, making large lectures our primary pedagogical tool. But then, PowerPoint slides have proved to be also important, for reasons that go far beyond the numbers of students. Chinese students find it hard to absorb abstract concepts unless they are attending the class in detail. Similarly, many categories Westerners used to explain their world apply so awkwardly in China that they require radical redefinition if they are to be helpful. Among these categories are *truth*, *reality* and *religion*. Within a comparative perspective, these and similar concepts appear as cultural constructs, indispensable to the way Westerners look at the world but of uncertain application elsewhere. Similarly, an understanding of Chinese civilization depends on a variety of notions that require major reinterpretation if a Westerner is to make sense of them. Among these concepts are *dao*, *yin & yang*, and *qi*.

A quick test can illustrate many of the differences that impede mutual understanding: Think of three words: PANDA, MONKEY, BANANA. Without reflecting extensively, decide which two go most easily together. Most North Americans respond with PANDA and MONKEY, since both belong to a category we have learned: *animals* or *mammals*. Most East Asians, however, respond MONKEY and BANANA, since monkeys like to eat bananas. This kind of connection requires no abstract concept at all; it remains part of the down-to-earth practical world. Neither one of these responses is right or wrong, but they are worlds apart in the way they reflect the use of words and ideas.

Our job is to help people on both sides of this cultural divide understand how the others look at things, how they use their minds to make sense. Our primary tools are short texts, designed to be read on-screen. Drawn from both civilizations over the last 2000 years and more, these are selected and edited to

facilitate this comparative purpose. Texts come with short introductions and study questions that suggest relevant lines of comparative analysis. In addition, we provide introductions to key terms that might otherwise seem confusing. We distribute materials in PDF format and include lots of background that is accessible primarily through clickable links.

In the West, if such a course exists, it probably follows a familiar chronological organization of the kind that has seemed “natural” in the West for the last few centuries. But the Chinese habitually approach history quite differently so we have divided the course into modules (“Encounters”) that focus attention on one of six domains of culture. These carry labels that are necessarily large and vague. For example, Encounter 5 concerns HUMANS AND AUTHORITY, a label spacious enough to include authorities that are spiritual as well as political. The list of readings below will allow interested parties to see the kinds of authors and texts we call on for our comparative purposes.

Further background about us and our project is available on our website: www.comparativeculturestudies.org.

So far we know of no other course like this in the world, though we would be delighted to learn of others that are similar in scope. For this very reason, we look to ASIANetwork colleagues for their responses.

MAIN READINGS

Introductory Lecture Backgrounds Week 1

Hour 1: Where Comparisons Begin: Mapping Ethnocentrism

Hour 2: Mind-Mapping in Chinese and English

Encounter 1: **LEARNING** (as enculturation)

1.1 Traditional Ideas and Practices Week 2

Key Concepts:

Varieties of Knowledge

Western Texts:

Education in Athens

Spartan Alternatives: Xenophon

Walter Ong: *Agon* in Western Education

China Texts:

Kongzi: On Learning and Teaching

Zhuangzi: What Can Be Learned But Not Taught

Sanzijing: Serious Advice for Children

Zhu Xi: Training Children

Père du Halde: Early Qing Schooling

Comparison Texts:

Traditional Sayings as Knowledge

Kongzi and Socrates: Two Models of Sagehood

1.2 Modern Schooling Week 3

Key Concepts:

Learner-centered versus Teacher-centered Education

Western Texts:

Jean-Jacques Rousseau: *Emile or, On Education*

Horace Mann: Justifications for Free Public

Schools John Henry Newman: *The Idea of a University*

China Texts:

Quotations from Mao Zedong

Qian Qing, Teaching English in a Modern Chinese
University

PRC Education in Recent Decades

Comparison Texts:

Comparative Guidelines for Argumentative Writing

Writing Matters: Copyright and Plagiarism

Encounter 2: **HUMANS IN FAMILIES****2.1 Traditional Family Practices** Week 4

Key Concepts:

Filiality [Xiao]

Monogamy

Traditional Worldviews Based on Family Models

Western Texts:

Adam and Eve Story

St. Paul on Sexuality

Saint Augustine: The Universality of Original Sin

China Texts:

Zuozhuan: A Wife's Dilemma

Kongzi: On Family Matters

Mozi: On Universal Filiality

Mengzi: Filial Models

Gu Hongming: A Proper Chinese Wife Has No Self

Comparison Texts:

Xenophon: Advice for a Young Wife

Ban Zhao: Lessons for Young Women

2.2 Modern Trends Week 5

Key Concepts:

Romantic Love and Modern Marriage

Western Texts:

Two Models for Modern Western Families: George Lakoff

Abandoning Family Traditions: Philippe Ariès on

Modern Dying

China Texts:

Reforming Family Traditions: Hu Shi on his Mother's Funeral

The PRC Marriage Law of 1950

China Today: Revival of Family Trees

Comparison Texts:

Howard Gardner: Chinese and American Parenting
Population Issues, East and West

Encounter 3: **HUMANS THEMSELVES**3.1 **Traditional Views** Week 6

Key Concepts:

Longevity

Western Ideas of the Body as Matter

Comparative Immortalities

Western Texts:

Human Nature according to the Western Tradition

Plato: On Human Nature and Its Diseases

The Classical Four-Humors Theory of Disease

China Texts:

*The Yellow Emperor's Internal Medicine Classic*The *Qiemai* Tradition in Traditional Chinese

Medicine (TCM)

Comparison Texts:

“Why Chinese Do Not Have ‘Bodies’ in a Western Sense”

Comparative Pre-Modern Ideas of *Selfhood*3.2 **Modern Views** Week 7

Key Concepts:

Modern Western Medicine

Gender in Modern Western Cultures

Western Texts:

Human Nature according to Psychology

Sigmund Freud and Psychoanalysis

Jean Baker Miller: A New Psychology of Women

China Texts:

Medical Practices in China since 1900

The Appeal of Psychology in China Today

Liu Xin: “The Mirror and I”

Comparison Texts:

TCM versus MWM: A Sample Case, 2005

Comparative Feminine Beauty

Encounter 4: **HUMANS AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS**4.1 **Traditional Ideas** Week 8

Key Concepts:

Dao: The Natural WayThe Emergence of *Economics* Thinking

Western Texts:

- The Creation of Nature (according to *Genesis*)
- Xenophon: On Agriculture and War
- Desiderius Erasmus: Against the Power of Money

China Texts:

- Guan Zhong: Seeking Profit Is Human Nature
- Kongzi: Compete without Competing
- Zhuangzi's Eden Story
- Mengzi: Against the Profit Motive
- Han Dynasty Debates on Iron and Salt

Comparison Texts:

- Pastoral: Cultural Parallels

4.2 **Modern Dilemmas: Economics versus Ecology** Week 9

Key Concepts:

- Capitalism(s)
- Market Economy
- Modernization as an Economic Concept

Western Texts:

- Milton Friedman: On Adam Smith Today
- Karl Polanyi: Fictions in Free Market Economics
- The Limits to Growth: The Club of Rome*

China Texts:

- The Chinese Economic Miracle
- The Terrible Cost of China's Growth

Comparison Texts:

- Ecology at the Start of the 21st Century: J. R. McNeill,
Something New under the Sun

Encounter 5: **HUMANS AND AUTHORITY**5.1 **Traditional Authorities** Week 10

Key Concepts:

- Justice and Natural Law
- Lizhi, Fazhi, Renzhi* in Chinese Governance

Western Texts:

- Aristotle: On Greek Governance
- Justinian's Code: Roman Legal Categories
- Western Types of Government

China Texts:

The Duke of Zhou as Regent

Kongzi: Right Priorities

Mengzi: When Rebellion Is Right

Xunzi: Why China Needs Hierarchies

Extra-legal Punishments: The Castration of Sima Qian

Comparison Texts:

Two Theorists of *Power*: Niccolò Machiavelli & Hanfeizi

5.2 **Modern Authorities**

Week 11

Key Concepts:

Social Contract

Rights and Human Rights

Liberty versus Equality

Western Texts:

Copernicus and Science as Cultural Authority

Thomas Hobbes: Humans Need a Sovereign

Jean-Jacques Rousseau: On States and Sovereigns

China Texts:

Sun Zhongshan: Three Stages of Revolution

The PRC Dual Governing System

Wei Luo: The 1997 Criminal Code of the PRC

Deng Xiaoping: PRC Perspectives on “Human Rights”

Comparison Texts:

“Rule of Law” *versus* “The Rule of Law”: Randall

Peerenboom, *China’s Long March toward Rule of Law*

Encounter 6: **VALUES AND WORLDVIEWS**

6.1 **Traditional Orientations**

Week 12

Key Concepts:

Divination

Fundamental Mindsets, Western and Chinese

Western Texts:

The [Hebrew] Ten Commandments

Epictetus: The Art of Living Stoically

Jesus of Nazareth: The Sermon on the Mount

Varieties of Judeo-Christian Ethics

China Texts:

Yijing: The Book of Changes

Zhuangzi: On What We Can Know

Xunzi: “Do Not Look to Heaven for Explanations”

Fortune or Misfortune: “Old Sai Lost His Horse”

Comparison Texts:

Ming Critiques of Christianity

6.2 Modern Tendencies

Week 13

Key Concepts:

Quantification

Probability

The Idea of Progress

Western Morality and Ethics

Western Texts:

René Descartes: “I Think Therefore I Am” [*Cogito Ergo Sum*]

Robert Pirsig: Two Ways of Knowing

Pragmatism as an Alternative: Richard Rorty

China Texts:

Hu Shi: On John Dewey on Experience

Five Chinese Generations since 1949

Comparison Texts:

Contemporary Socio-economic Systems: Daniel A. Bell, *Beyond Liberal Democracy*

Review: Post-Modern Challenges to Western Traditions

Week 14

Preface: THE INTERNET AS POST-MODERN

Encounter 1 CULTURAL UNLEARNING

Comparative Skepticisms: Jacques Derrida and Zhuangzi

Encounter 2 HUMANS IN FAMILIES

Same-Sex Marriage

Encounter 3 HUMANS THEMSELVES

Euthanasia

Encounter 4 HUMANS AND THEIR SURROUNDINGS

Post-Modern Science: Chaos Theory

Encounter 5 HUMANS AND AUTHORITY

Supra-National Authorities: The European Union

Encounter 6 VALUES AND WORLDVIEWS

Post-Modern Study of Humanity: Anthropology

Postscript: POST-MODERNITY AS “EASTERNIZING”?

Comparing India and the West

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During the last two decades, I have been pursuing an unorthodox way of studying cultural differences, focusing mainly on the Indian and the western cultures. Because I believe that one can answer questions about the circumscription of the words 'Indian' and 'western' cultures satisfactorily (Balangadhara, 1994), I will assume their intelligibility in what follows. In this paper, I want to raise a rather intriguing problem about comparing these two cultures. I shall do that without looking at other approaches to the issue and in the form of an argument. In order to come to the point quickly, let me make use of Said's *Orientalism*.

The Challenge of Orientalism

How best should we look at Orientalist discourse? One way: it as a description of the Orient. The second way: it is a description of the western experience of the Orient. I believe the latter to be the case. If we accept that 'Orientalism' is how the western culture came to terms with the reality that the East is, then, 'Orientalism' refers not only to the discourse about experience but also to the way of reflecting about and structuring this experience. In this sense, even though Orientalism is a discourse about western cultural experience, it is *oblique*. It is oblique because *it appears to be about other cultures*. It is 'western' in the sense that it refers to the experiences of the members from a particular culture. Orientalism is the western way of thinking about its experience of non-western cultures. However, it takes the form of an *apparent discourse about the Orient*.

In this process, western culture built and elaborated conceptual frameworks using resources available from its own culture. These descriptions helped in Europe's description and understanding of itself. That is to say, Europe's description of other cultures is fundamentally entwined in many untold ways with the way it has experienced the world. The challenge of Orientalism, thus, *is a challenge to understand the western culture*. That is, to understand the self-description of the West and the way it has described the others is to begin understanding western culture itself.

Western Culture from a Comparative Perspective

I want to draw out one of the implications of this argument explicitly. If we study a culture this way, we begin by conceptualizing the subject matter of our study itself, which is the western culture, in a *comparative* way. The West is what it says about the others and itself. We compare what it says about the others with what it says about itself in order to find a common conceptual structure. In one sense, this stance is congruent with the insight we have about human beings: when a person describes another human being, the resulting description tells us much about the describer himself. The same holds good at the level of individual descriptions provided by members of a particular culture. In other words, if there is a common conceptual structure to the European descriptions of India, then such a structure reflects a shared and common European culture. The research that both predates and postdates Said's *Orientalism* tells us that *such a structure is present*. If the same structure is found to be present in its self-description, then we can justifiably say that such a structure is the western culture. This argument also provides us with a methodology to objectively, non-arbitrarily and scientifically study the western culture *in a comparative way*. Since I have no time to elaborate on this point, let me leave it here and turn my attention to see whether the same consideration holds good with respect to India.

At first sight, it looks as though this insight should also work when we study the Indian culture: that culture too is what it

says about itself and what it says about the 'others'. If we dig into the Indian intellectual traditions with this expectation, we are bound to come out puzzled: (a) the 'native' Indian traditions have produced very little about themselves and even less about 'the others'; (b) the modern Indian intelligentsia appears to merely reproduce the western descriptions of India and the western culture. How to understand or explain these facts and what do they say about a comparative study of the Indian culture?

Let us look at these questions separately and begin with the issue about the absence of 'native' Indian descriptions about themselves and the others. What exactly is absent in the Indian traditions? Let me take three randomly chosen topics: religion and God; ethics; social structure.

The standard text-book trivia which we teach our students routinely assure us not only that there are multiple 'native' religions in India (Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, different forms of Saivism, multiple varieties of Vaisnavism, the Bhakti movements, Sikhism, and many more and other kinds of 'popular' religions) but also that they arose in conflict with the ruling 'orthodoxies'. For instance, the pure Vedic religion is supposed to have given birth to a degenerate 'Brahmanism'. The *Sramana* traditions (exemplified by both Jainism and Buddhism) are alleged to have fought Brahmanism. The latter itself is said to have mutated into 'Hinduism', partially strengthened by Advaitic religion that fought Buddhism and so on. In such a case, one would expect a huge volume of literature regarding religion (what religion is, what these individual religions are, etc) and even more literature in theology. After all, both Buddhism and Jainism deny God, do they not? Yet, there is hardly any theology in India (if we look at Christianity as an example of what it means to write theological tracts) and there is hardly any explicit reflection on the nature of religion. All one needs is an acquaintance with the history of Christianity to notice how staggering this absence is. To this day, neither the scholar nor the layman can answer the question about what makes, say, 'Hinduism' into a religion or what that 'Brahmanism' is which Buddhism fought. Are we to seriously believe that Buddhism,

as a religion, fought another religion, Brahmanism, for centuries on end without even being able to say what made Brahmanism into a religion?

Similar considerations hold good elsewhere. Despite the presence of the voluminous *Subhashita* and *Dharmashastra* literatures, India has hardly produced noticeable tracts and sustained reflections on 'ethics'. There is no equivalent of an '*Ethica Nichomachea*', let alone a '*Summa Theologica*' in the Indian intellectual traditions. This does not mean that there is no evidence for intellectual reflections; on the contrary. Yet, certain kinds of reflections are noticeable for their absence.

One such example is the famous 'Indian caste system'. We are assured that the Indian social structure is synonymous with 'the caste system' and all we have by way of an explanation (or even justification) of this system are a few verses: in the *Purusha Sukta*, in the *Gita* and in some *Dharmashastras*. No Indian could tell you the 'principles' of this system, even though quite a few modern 'theories' about it float around. Sociologists, anthropologists, political theorists have provided all kinds of descriptions without being sure of the kind of system that 'the caste system' is supposed to be.

The Absence of Intellectual Reflection

In this sense, we notice two kinds of facts when we try to study Indian culture. First, there is a noticeable absence of intellectual reflection on these and allied phenomena; second, in the course of the last three hundred years or so, Indian intellectuals have merely reproduced western descriptions of the Indian culture and her traditions. When we study India, our question should then be: why is there such a vacuum? It requires noting that this question cannot be answered by appealing to other 'negative facts', for example, the contention that Indian culture did not have 'sciences.' We need to appeal to what exists in the world in order to explain what does not.

Let me make this general point in a more concrete way. Consider the kind of questions that people in the West routinely ask today: Why do the Hindus wear *bindi*? Why do Indians not

eat beef? Is it true that the most Indians worship the phallus? What do Indians think about the caste-system? Do they still practice *Sati* in India? Why do Indian gods have six or eight arms? What is the Hindu religious symbol? Do most Indians worship statues in temples? Do the Buddhists believe in God? Are Hindus religious? And so on and so forth.

Consider now the fact that most Indians do not ask these questions in their process of socialization. *Why are these questions not raised there?* I mean to say, why do they not go around asking questions about eating beef, wearing *bindi*, worshipping the *Shiva Linga*, and such like in India? Why have people not found it important to write huge tracts about such practices? Surely, it is not because they know the answers to these questions: if they did, they would have no problem in providing the same answers to the western interlocutors. Here is a simple but a very important answer: *it does not occur to most Indians to raise these questions about their traditions.* It does not occur to them not because they are any less curious or intelligent than people in the western culture but because such questions do not make sense in their cultural milieu. That is to say, *they learn not to ask such questions about their tradition* because they are learning to become conversant with the Indian tradition. Of course, when I say that they do not ask such questions, it does not mean that they have never raised these questions at any point in their lives: for instance, as children they too would have raised many such questions, and the answers have satisfied them. Such answers would (mostly) refer to the nature of their inherited practices.

When Indians confront such questions in the West, two things happen: (a) they feel compelled to provide an answer; (b) the answers they give very closely track the answers already provided by Westerners. That is to say, when such questions are asked of those practicing Indian traditions, *one should not assume* that these questions are intelligible to these Indians; they are not. *It is in the nature of the western culture to encourage such questions to be raised.* Furthermore, such questions also outline the kind of answers that are admissible.

One of the most important consequences of my claim is this: when the western culture quizzes Indians about the nature of their traditions, this culture is telling us about itself. To provide answers to the western interlocutors about Indian traditions one needs to understand the nature of western culture. Simply put: *to understand let alone answer such questions about the Indian traditions, one has to understand the western culture.*

Cross-Cultural Asymmetry

In other words, we face an asymmetry. To study and understand western culture, we need to study what it says about the others and itself. However, we need to do exactly the same thing even when we want to study Indian culture. Alternately put, we compare the western descriptions (of itself and the others) to understand the West; if we want to understand India, we have to begin by saying why (and in what sense) India is not like the West. Our expectation of wanting to study India by looking at what it says about itself and the others is not met. Nor could we simply continue with the so-called ‘empirical’ and/or ‘textual’ studies to understand Indian culture because, in this process, we will merely add to the western descriptions of India and not advance our understanding of the Indian culture.

Why is there such an asymmetry? It has to do with what colonialism is also about: establishing frameworks of inquiry into the nature of human beings and societies through the use of power and violence (S. N. Balagangadhara et al., 2008). Once established and generalized, such frameworks continue to draw their legitimacy through sources other than those that are cognitive in nature. Today, it appears to me, this legitimizing process has reached its apotheosis in the guise of an attitude that suggests that a science of culture and the sciences of the social are simply impossible because of human and epistemic limitations. Needless to say, a persistent ‘anti-scientific’ attitude adds fodder to such an attitude.

I believe that it is possible to develop a science of culture that is in every way as scientific as physics or biology. However, we shall not get there unless we realize that our road will be comparative in nature: study the West in a comparative way and study other cultures to isolate their *differentia specifica* from the West. They will be two different types of comparison but they will give us what we lack and so badly need today: knowledge of human beings in their societies and cultures.

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Bringing Scholarship to the Classroom: Strategies for promoting research through teaching

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An issue all academics grapple with is how to strike the desired balance between research and teaching. This balance is heavily influenced by the type of institution where one seeks employment. At liberal arts colleges, excellence is expected in the classroom and a premium is put on faculty student interaction. The expectation, however, is to be teacher-scholar, not simply teacher. And indeed, the desire of most professors at liberal arts colleges is to remain active in their field. With limited time and large teaching demands, the challenge becomes one of continuously making progress on one's research agenda. When asked to consider how to connect scholarship and teaching on the "Bringing Scholarship to the Classroom: Japan Studies" panel at the ASIANetwork conference in March 2008, I realized I had developed several strategies to link my research and teaching. What I also realized was that all these strategies were influenced by the fact that I was a junior professor vying for tenure. That is, my motivation for connecting scholarship and teaching was largely instrumental. In addition to being able to speak more passionately about topics we research and therefore engage students more fully, I would argue that finding ways to incorporate one's research in as many classes as possible is a way to better tackle the dual role of teacher-scholar. Connecting research and teaching can accelerate one's research

agenda simply by preventing the liberal arts professor from being torn in too many different directions.

I am a professor of political science with a specialty in comparative politics and a focus on Japan. My research focuses on political reform, political leadership and women and politics, mainly in Japan but also in comparative perspective. My teaching repertoire includes “Introduction to Comparative Politics,” “Contemporary Japanese Politics,” “The Chinese Cultural Revolution” and a senior capstone on political leadership. During my time at Southwestern University, I have experimented with the following strategies for connecting scholarship and teaching:

- Develop a course on a theoretical topic related to your research
- Develop an assignment that targets your research
- Invite guest speakers in your specialized field to complement course material as well as expand personal networks
- Apply for grants to do faculty-student collaborative research
- Co-author conference papers with students
- Direct independent studies related to your research

Connecting research and teaching is not an easy task and does have both benefits and costs. I do not claim to be an expert on this topic. In this essay, however, I will consider the positive and negative sides of strategies I have experimented with for using teaching as a tool to promote my research.

Course Development

The first strategy for connecting my research to my teaching centers on course development. When asked to teach the senior capstone seminar for political science majors during my second year at Southwestern, I chose to develop a course on political leadership. The course explores political leadership from several

different perspectives with an emphasis on connecting a variety of subfields in political science, including American politics, political theory, comparative politics and international relations. I chose to develop a course on this topic at the same time I was revising my dissertation into a book manuscript. The theory chapter of my dissertation focused on political reform. One of the main revision tasks I faced was incorporating a more thorough discussion of political leadership, my answer as to when and why politicians pass reform legislation. By developing a course on political leadership, I was able to use the course to help me revise the introduction to my book manuscript.

Developing a course on a theoretical topic related to my research had benefits and costs. On the positive side, the advanced nature of the course allowed me to assign challenging readings related to my own work. In particular, I was able to assign new books on the topic, published after the completion of my dissertation. The intellectual exercise of developing a syllabus on political leadership helped me trace the main debates in political science on this topic. At the end of the course I had clear sense of what a political leadership literature review required. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, teaching a course directly related to my research reduced the amount of time and energy needed to switch modes from teaching to research.

Such course development did have some limitations in terms of furthering my research agenda. First, the course content only covered a fragment of the relevant theoretical literature. Moreover, to make a cohesive capstone course, I was only able to consider topics directly related to my research in two of our weekly class meetings, when we discussed legislative leadership and prime ministerial leadership. Other class meetings covered types of leadership more tangential to my work, including charismatic leadership and revolutionary leadership. In addition, since I was working through new material at the same time I was teaching the course, the course direction was

unclear at times. This is often the case in any new course, perhaps more so in courses unrelated to one's research.

The second strategy for connecting my research and teaching involved developing a course assignment related to my area of expertise. Specifically, in my "Contemporary Japanese Politics" course I had students write a ten page research paper analyzing the actions of a postwar Japanese prime minister in an issue area central to the prime minister's administration. The goal of the analysis was to draw conclusions about the power of prime ministers in postwar Japan.

This strategy has allowed me to share my expertise with my students. In this sophomore-level class, many students are not experienced researchers. By choosing a topic I had researched extensively, I was better able to assist students. I could suggest prime ministers and issues areas as well as provide students with citations to get them started. Finally, to a certain extent, the students' papers expanded my knowledge of prime ministers and policy areas of interest. The only frustration I have had with this strategy is that students often adopt the position presented in my own work on the topic. The students seem less willing to think independently when in the professor's area of expertise.

Guest Lecturers

Another way to connect scholarship to the classroom as well as expand personal networks is to sponsor lectures on topics related to one's own work. With funds from the Luce Foundation, I was able to organize lectures by Richard Samuels on political leadership in Japan, Ellis Krauss on Koizumi and the LDP, and T.J. Pempel on Japanese politics more broadly. While these funds have expired, I continue to raise funds from various departments and programs to sponsor lectures on Japanese politics.

An extremely positive aspect of sponsoring guest lectures is that these talks bring course content to life. Lectures can also provide a different perspective from that of the instructor.

As mentioned above, lectures can expand personal networks in your field as well as increase your college's visibility. It can be especially helpful to students considering graduate school, to interact with professors from research universities. The most prohibitive factor related to this strategy is that it requires financial resources. It also requires the faculty member to master organizational detail, which takes time away from research and writing.

Faculty-Student Research

Grants for faculty-student research are perhaps the most direct ways to connect research to teaching. In my second year at Southwestern, I received an ASIANetwork Freeman Foundation Faculty-Student Collaborative Research grant to explore political leadership in Japan. When developing the grant proposal, it became clear that it would be most beneficial to all parties involved to carry out research about one of my own scholarly interests. Within the general theme of political leadership though, I allowed students to choose their own specific topics, ones that did not have to be related to my own work.

The ASIANetwork Freeman Foundation grant furthered my research in several ways. To begin with, it funded a research trip to Japan. I was able to extend my time in Japan to conduct personal research following the faculty-student group research. Much to my surprise, having students involved in the research process also expanded my interview connections as many politicians were intrigued by a group of American college students interested in Japanese politics and thus, granted us interviews for this reason. Since some of the students' projects were connected to my research, I have been able to maintain interview contacts that students initially secured. Finally, the project allowed me to experiment with using a translator in elite interviews. I am proficient in Japanese, but I found that having a native speaker as a translator/research assistant greatly increased the speed and accuracy of my work, especially on a short research trip to Japan. I have continued to use research

assistance by a native speaker as a budget item on other grant proposals with great success.

Faculty-student research did pose some difficulties from my perspective as a researcher. First, student topics often differed greatly from my own research agenda, reducing the usefulness of interviews conducted on these topics. The students did not speak Japanese and were not familiar with Japanese culture. The inability to communicate in Japanese often limited our group research, although this was somewhat attenuated by the use of translators. Finally, when conducting field research with students, a professor's professional reputation becomes connected to the students' ability to conduct their first field research project.

The two final strategies for linking research and teaching I have used were connected—writing a co-authored conference paper and directing an independent study. When working with the students on the ASIANetwork Freeman grant, one student and I applied for additional funding from Southwestern to develop a co-authored conference paper that we presented at the Association of Asian Studies. We worked on this project as an independent study. On the positive side, co-authorship allows professors to mentor aspiring graduate students. Close work with students also exposes professors to the strengths and weaknesses in undergraduate research training. The weaknesses in particular can be targeted in future course assignments. For example, I developed a step by step guide for writing political science literature reviews after working with this student. Independent studies can also build one's familiarity with a new theoretical literature or empirical case.

One of the largest costs of faculty-student research, however, is that it often requires more time to mentor a student than to complete a single authored work. In addition, the success of the project is contingent on the student's ability to carry out research at the graduate level, something that is particularly complicated in Asian Studies due to the language skills required for such research. Finally, as is true of collaborative field research in general, the professor's professional reputation becomes

linked to the student's ability to conduct research as well as write at the graduate level.

As I have already mentioned, I am not an expert on connecting teaching and research. The above strategies have been experiments in my early career as I attempt to fulfill the requirements for acting as a teacher-scholar. Upon reflection, I would argue that the development of a course on a theoretical topic related to my research had the greatest benefits with the least number of costs in terms of promoting my research agenda and increasing my productivity. The faculty-student grant also aided my research, especially in terms of providing travel to Japan and new interview contacts, but the language limitations of my students restricted the overall depth of this project. While many of the strategies have only promoted my research in limited ways, all have allowed me to enrich my teaching by relying upon my own expertise, something that creates satisfaction for the professor and student alike.

FOR OUR STUDENTS

Student Research in Asia Overview of 2007 Student-Faculty Fellows Program

Van Symons
Augustana College

During the summer of 2007, mentors from fourteen different small college/universities in North America, each with from two to five students, conducted undergraduate research in East and Southeast Asia as part of the 9th annual Student-Faculty Fellows Program. Each project was generously funded by the Freeman Foundation and administered by ASIANetwork.

The institutions participating in this program represented a broad cross section of liberal arts colleges: Bard College, Colby College, Colorado College, Eckerd College, Gettysburg College, Green Mountain College, Hiram College, Illinois Wesleyan University, Naropa University, State University of New York-Purchase, Swarthmore College, University of Puget Sound, Valparaiso University, and Virginia Wesleyan University.

One team conducted its research in Malaysia, one in the Philippines, one in both Malaysia and the Philippines, one in Thailand, one in Vietnam, while two teams travelled to Japan. The remaining seven research projects were undertaken in China, including one in Southwestern Tibet.

The Role of Faculty Mentors

Following the guidelines established for this program, some research projects were undertaken as group endeavors with the objective of completing a joint research paper or video analysis of a pivotal topic. Other research teams worked together to foster individual research undertaken by each undergraduate participant. In these groups, a broad theme for

joint consideration was usually addressed, but each member of the group was engaged in his/her own research leave and the production of a final individual paper related to this broader theme.

The research of undergraduate students was facilitated by the expertise of their faculty mentors, especially evident in their personal links with colleagues throughout Asia and the access they were able to provide students to archives, Asian scholars, universities willing to support their research, and government and community leaders. For example, the research of Katlin Okamoto and Lucy Thompson on “Knee Laxity and Leg Strength in Female Soccer Athletes in Japan” was fostered by the close ties of their mentor, Dr. Joan Ericson, of Colorado College with Waseda University. This relationship enabled them to test 120 female Japanese athletes in order to compare their knee laxity and leg strength with that of U.S. soccer players. Similarly, water quality research in the Hangzhou area of East Central China was undertaken by three students led by their mentor, Dr. Jonathan Schoer, as part of a collaborative research project between Zhejiang University and Valparaiso University.

Access to archival materials can often be a tricky business in East Asia and one that would be difficult for undergraduate students to negotiate without a faculty mentor. Dr. Adam Cathcart was particularly adept at gaining access for his three Hiram College students to a range of archival materials in North and Northeast China housed in the Beijing Municipal Archives, Chinese Foreign Ministry Archives, the National Library, and various provincial libraries. As a consequence, his students have produced outstanding research papers, some being considered for publication. Similarly, Dr. Thomas Lutze used a range of connections at Beijing University, Fudan University, and Beijing Union University to gain access to archival materials and key urban planners to facilitate the individual research projects of his five Illinois Wesleyan University students, all of which focused upon urban planning in the early years (1949-56) of the People’s Republic of China in Beijing, Shanghai, and Hangzhou. Dr. Deborah Sommer, a religious scholar at

Gettysburg College, collaborated with a Chinese colleague in Chongjing and a Yi minority scholar to lead her group of five students for four weeks to important religious sites throughout Southwest China as they studied “Social and Religious Identity in Southwest China.”

Two outstanding examples of the effective use by mentors of their ties to government and community leaders to encourage undergraduate research are evident among this year’s projects. Dr. Evangelina Blust led her four students from Green Mountain College to the town of Barangay Talisay, Lipa City in the province of Batangas in the Philippines to study “The Impact of Overseas Filipino Employment on Families Left Behind.” There they used a collective case study approach, balancing interviews of members of five families with additional interviews of thirty town residents to accomplish their objectives. The research experience included brief home stays for each student with members of the local community.

The key to success for a group of five Virginia Wesleyan students, who were seeking to carefully consider the impact of the Vietnam War on individuals in post-war Vietnam, was the close ties established between their mentor, Dr. Steven Emmanuel, and the Head of the Department of Medical Genetics and Director of the Office of Genetic Counseling and Disabled Children at Hue Medical College, Dr. Nguyen Viet Nhan. As a result, Dr. Nguyen provided the necessary links to enable these five undergraduate students to undertake research on diverse topics such as the role of Buddhist organizations in providing education to disabled children and the introduction of micro-banking in Vietnam.

Group Projects

As mentioned earlier, researchers involved in this program can work on either joint or on individual research projects. Among the summer 2007 projects, half (seven) were group-focused and seven were not. A discussion on the group-focused research endeavors is illuminating.

In two of the seven group projects, the individual work of each student was focused on providing background and understanding for the production of a video. Naropa University's production is titled, "Three Paths-One Mountain: An Exploration of Pilgrimage to Mount Kailash within Three Distinct Religious Traditions." It examines the ritual of circumambulation of this holy mountain by adherents of the Bon, Hindu, and Tibetan Buddhist faiths. To prepare this video, the mentor, Nataraja Kallio, and his five students traveled overland from Nepal to Southwest Tibet to Mt. Kailash, which soars to over 22,000 feet and is one of the world's most venerated, but, because of the ruggedness of the terrain and harshness of the climate, less-frequented holy sites. Once there, by participating in the thirty two mile circumambulation process themselves, they were able to explore more fully what motivates pilgrims to circumambulate Mt. Kailash, and to examine the relationship between the outer journey and the inner experience of these pilgrims. Most individuals take three to four days to complete this process, but some prostrate themselves around the entire boulder-strewn route and spend weeks—even months—completing the journey. The Naropa study group faced numerous obstacles including severe intestinal disorders, altitude sickness, jeep breakdowns, and multiple interrogations by Chinese military personnel.

A second video production, based on over 30 hours of footage and entitled "Making Peace with Viet Nam," has also been completed by Dr. Steven Emmanuel and five students from Virginia Wesleyan University. It considers the impact of the Vietnam War on the inhabitants of Vietnam, boldly asserting that no country in modern history has been subjected to a more intensive and ruthless military assault. The video focuses on the humanitarian efforts being undertaken by the Office of Genetic Counseling and Disabled Children (OGCDC) at Hue Medical College to repair the damage. Help in producing the video was provided by research activities undertaken by each student participant, focused on the following topics: the role of Buddhist organizations in providing open education to disabled

children in Hue; the efforts of the OG CDC to help rural poor in Vietnam; the micro-loan initiative of the OG CDC in Hue; ongoing problems with dioxin in Vietnam; and the role of government in protecting the environment.

The other five group projects centered on the following topics:

1) "Ethnicity in the Lives of Modern Malaysian Youth" (Eckerd College). This study explored the pulls of tradition versus those of modernity on Malaysian youth. To complete the study, 196 Malaysian youth were interviewed in four different locations in Malaysia.

2) "The Impact of Overseas Filipino Employment on Families Left Behind" (Green Mountain College). This research examined five case families in the town of Barangay Talisay, Lipa City and supplemented this analysis with additional interviews of other community residents.

3) "Contrasts and Similarities in Water Quality Issues Facing East Central China and Northwest Indiana: Issues, Perceptions, and Approaches for Resolution" (Valparaiso University). This study group performed water quality research and conducted surveys on the perceptions regarding water quality and management in China, and then compared the results with studies undertaken during the summers of 2005, 2006, and 2007 in Northwest Indiana.

4) "Knee Laxity and Leg Strength in Female Soccer Athletes in Japan and the United States" (Colorado College). This study by two students showed that Japanese soccer players have greater knee laxity and hyperextension than U.S. players, and that U.S. players have more leg work output. It also showed that Japanese players reported having double the number of stress related injuries.

5) "An Analysis of *Omamori* [good luck charms, generally placed in small cloth bags with blessed protective words written inside] in Contemporary Japanese Society" (University of Puget Sound). The mentor and three students spent four weeks travelling throughout Japan to interview Japanese Buddhist and Shinto persons, priests renowned for their knowledge of

omamori, the manager of an *omamori* factory, and over 150 ordinary people to conduct research on the origin of *omamori*, the commercialization of *omamori*, and the modern history of *omamori*.

Projects Encouraging Individual Research

It is somewhat more difficult to summarize what a large number of students accomplished in the seven groups where mentors undertook the challenging task of facilitating individual research. However, it is possible to discuss the overall research themes of these groups and highlight the research of some undergraduate students:

1) “Tourism, Cultural Festivals, and the Politics of Representation in Island Southeast Asia” (Bard College). This group of students, all anthropology majors, spent six weeks in Malaysian Borneo (Sarawak and Sabah) and the Philippines, attending seven cultural festivals in order to study ethnomusicology and the anthropology of music. Their focus centered on the “specific ways local cultural forms, particularly music and dance, are appropriated, transformed, and objectified through the globalizing process of tourism.” The commitment of mentor and students to visit seven different festivals during a six week period is impressive, as are the papers produced by each student on a related topic.

2) “Tradition, Transition, and Modernity: Reconfiguration of Public Spaces in a Globalizing China” (Colby College). This research group worked in four Chinese cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Wuhan) to “explore how China’s urban landscape and cultural scenes have been transformed in the past two decades.” Each student focused his/her research on a different aspect of the changing urban landscape.

3) “Buddhism in Contemporary Southwest China” (Gettysburg College). This group traveled to a number of important Buddhist sites in Southwest China, including those in Chongqing and Chengdu, the ancient Buddhist cave grottoes in Dazu, the giant Buddha at Leshan, and the Buddhist temples on Mount Omei. They proceeded on to Southern Sichuan where

the Yi culture with its nonbuddhist shamanic traditions thrive. Students produced their own research papers, and two are quite remarkable, one by Eric Canzano entitled “Buddhism in Modern Southwest China,” and one by Kate Vredenburg entitled “Buddhism and Social Engagement.”

4) “Individual Research in 20th-Century Chinese History” (Hiram College). Most of the time in China for this group of students was spent doing archival research that has led to the completion of a number of projects. The mentor, Adam Cathcart, and his student, Patricia Nash, have prepared two papers, and Cathcart and his student, Daniel Falk, an additional two papers, all of which are being submitted for publication. Patricia Nash’s paper titled “Plague and Propaganda: The Significance of Bacteriological Weapons Allegations in the Korean War” has just been published in the Spring 2008 issue of the *Wittenberg University East Asian Studies Journal*, and John Sommerville’s paper titled, “The Tianjin Incident,” has been included in the anthology of Senior Seminar Papers at Hiram College, 2008.

5) “Urban Planning in the Early Years of the People’s Republic of China: The Challenges of Education, Health Care, Housing, Sanitation, and Pollution Abatement” (Illinois Wesleyan University). This group worked in libraries, municipal archives, and museums of city planning, and carried out interviews with former directors of city planning, academicians, and elderly city residents to record the varied methods employed by officials and residents in the cities of Beijing, Shanghai, and Hangzhou to initiate substantive changes in urban China after the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. All five undergraduate papers draw well from written materials, balanced by interviews and onsite investigation. They provide wonderful examples of solid undergraduate research.

6) This group of three students from SUNY-Purchase were led by their faculty mentor to Thailand where they conducted research on three separate topics: “The Challenge of Slums in Bangkok,” “The Impact of Media on Changing Images of Thai Women,” and “The Costs and Benefits of the Tourist Industry

in Thailand.” Rebecca Katzenberg’s research on the changing images of Thai women was integrated into a much longer senior project on the impact of globalization on modern Thai women. All submitted interesting photo journals of their projects.

7) “China and the West: An Investigation of Chinese Cultural Encounters in the New Context of Globalization” (Swarthmore College). Professor Xiaorong Li accepted the challenge of directing the five most diverse individual research projects undertaken during the summer of 2007. Concentrating their focus in Beijing, they included studies on the use of English loan words in Chinese youth culture, the changing views of young Chinese towards Chinese medicine, the impact of globalization on Chinese art and artists, the broadening horizons of Chinese migrant workers, and film and homosexuality in China. What is truly remarkable is the commitment displayed by the faculty mentor to facilitate such a wide range of inquiry.

The Positive Results of the Summer 2007 Program

Faculty often note that a three to six or seven week experience leading undergraduate researchers through a part of East or Southeast Asia is truly transforming for them, and there is little doubt of its dramatic impact on the students who are involved. Students, upon their return to campus, are often given almost celebrity status. Reports of their experience are published in the college alumni bulletin or in local newspapers. This year, a half dozen research groups presented their findings to faculty and students as part of undergraduate research fairs or other faculty or student forums. Others participated in regional conferences of the Association for Asian Studies.

Even though this is not the primary goal of faculty participants, some have drawn from these experiences to enrich their course curriculum and to prepare articles or scholarly presentations. Students from Colorado College, Gettysburg College, Hiram College, and Valparaiso University have submitted their research individually, or jointly written with their faculty mentor, for publication in scholarly journals. Others have integrated their findings into their senior projects.

Three of this year's fourteen groups prepared photo exhibits that were posted in their libraries and other central parts of their campuses to share their experiences. As already noted, two groups have produced quite remarkable videos on pilgrimage at Mt. Kailish and "Making Peace with Viet Nam."

Mentors and students often remark that this experience has been instrumental in helping them gain admittance to solid graduate programs focused on their interest in East and Southeast Asia. Moreover, it is surprising how many students involved in the summer 2007 program have now returned to Asia. For example, from the Eckerd College student-faculty fellows group, Jonathan Banner from Eckerd College returned to Thailand as a volunteer to work in the Baan Unrak Children's Home (orphanage), while Zoe Friedman is now teaching in Malaysia as a Fulbright ETA, and Melissa Christie will be teaching in the Marshall Islands for a year.

The group from Gettysburg College, once back in the States, organized a Sangha Buddhist Interest Group which meets regularly to meditate and encourage the study of Buddhism on their campus. They travel to a local Tibetan Buddhist temple in Maryland, and have sponsored visits by Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns to Gettysburg.

It is a joy for those of us who administer this program to read these final reports and, in turn, provide members of the ASIANetwork board of directors, the Freeman Foundation, and the general membership of the consortium with further insight about this wonderful program. We hope that faculty and students at member institutions will take full advantage of this opportunity.

The *ASIANetwork EXCHANGE*, *A Journal for Asian Studies in the Liberal Arts*, is published two times a year. As an important venue for communication among members, the journal includes information and articles in its sections Teaching about Asia, Media Resources, Research of Note, For Our Students, and Books that Beckon.

We welcome submissions of materials for any section of the newsletter. **Deadlines** for submission: **February 1** for the Spring issue and **July 1** for the Fall issue. The editors reserve the right to edit all materials submitted for publication.

Materials may be submitted electronically to <anexchange@iwu.edu>, or disks may be sent to Patra Noonan, *ASIANetwork EXCHANGE*, Illinois Wesleyan University, P. O. Box 2900, Bloomington, Illinois 61702-2900. For further information contact the editors at the above e-mail address or by telephone at (309) 556-3420.

ASIANetwork is a consortium of over one hundred seventy North American colleges and universities that strives to strengthen the role of Asian Studies within the framework of liberal arts education to help prepare succeeding generations of undergraduates for a world in which Asian societies play prominent roles in an ever more interdependent world. The unique teaching mission of the undergraduate liberal arts institution poses special opportunities and challenges in the development of Asian Studies. ASIANetwork seeks to encourage the study of Asian countries and cultures on our campuses and to enable our students and faculty to experience these cultures first hand. In a time of fiscal constraints, ASIANetwork facilitates conversation among faculty and administrators concerning the development and strengthening of Asian studies programs, as well as ways to foster collaboration among institutions.

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