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Globalization and Higher Education in Greater China: Trends and Challenges

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趨勢與問題

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摘 要

1980 年代以降，全球政治、經濟、學術皆經劇烈變動，其中對人類生活衝擊最爲鉅大的，莫過於「全球化」浪潮。然而，全球化以科技發展爲前提，結合當前的國際情勢，演變成政經強國宰制弱小國家的「意識形態」，進而威脅了各地傳統文化的生存與延續。因此，如何保留文化意識，並促進文明間的對話，乃是高等教育機構刻不容緩的工作。

然而，自十九世紀末葉以降，海峽兩岸的大學在「實用主義」的指導之下發展，如創立於 1928 年的台北帝國大學是日本帝國進軍東南亞的學術基地；大陸的高等學府如北洋大學（創立於 1895 年）、京師大學堂（創立於 1898 年）等，更是因應「富國強兵」的口號而生。在這種歷史背景與氛圍之中，現代華人知識份子早已和傳統文化漸行漸遠，而科技發展和學術主體性之間，個人利益與社會福祉之間，鴻溝亦日益加深。

「全球化」與科技宰制，乃是國際普遍存在的問題。但在近百年來華人社會的歷史脈絡中，傳統與現代價值之間有其特殊的張力存在。本文針對上述問題進行分析，並提出華人地區高等教育應加強與傳統文化接軌並彰顯大學的社會良心，以癒合「全球化」發展爲華人地區高等教育帶來的傷痕。

關鍵詞：全球化、大中華、高等教育

I. Introduction

During the last decades of the twentieth century, the world witnessed a rapid turn of the page of history. The former Soviet Union disintegrated, the European Union was formed, NAFTA (North American Free Trade Area) was established, the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) appeared, and China emerged; each of these events influenced the others and shook up the old geopolitical, economic, and cultural orders. In the academia, rapid developments in biochemical sciences and technologies, nanotechnology, telecommunication technology, cognitive science, etc., spurred the knowledge-based economy and strengthened the trend of globalization — through which the rich and powerful countries increasingly control and exploit the poor and weak ones.

The impact of these new trends on institutions of higher education around the world is unprecedented in force and magnitude. In this rising tide of globalization, each country faces a higher level of competition, in turn intensifying the conflict between “globalization” and “nationalization” within each institution of higher education. These trends also upset the balance between equality of opportunity and pursuit of excellence in higher education, triggering conflicts between preserving local culture and anticipating future change, between diversification and unification of the functions of higher education, between cultivation of personal interest and contribution to society, so they are ever more difficult to negotiate and balance.⁹ In response to the serious new challenges faced by institutions of higher education in the twenty-first century, UNESCO issued, in 1998, the “World Declaration on Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century: Vision and Action.”¹⁰ Also, on May 2 to 4, 1998, Beijing University’s centennial celebration included a seminar on higher education; university presidents from many countries came to discuss problems

⁹ Clark Kerr *et al.*, *Higher Education Cannot Escape History: Issues for the Twenty-first Century* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994).

¹⁰ *World Declaration on Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action* (UNESCO, 9 October 1998), accessible at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/0011/001138/113878eb.pdf>.

facing college education in the twenty-first century.¹¹ And, on November 13, 2005, National Taiwan University held a forum of world university presidents to discuss trends and issues of higher education in the twenty-first century, focusing on the tension between globalization and localization, the impact of the knowledge-based economy on higher education, and university management of the competing demands between democracy and efficiency. Among the many problems faced by institutions of higher education, forum participants stressed that universities should make sure that universities keep close tabs on the changes in organization and instruction that are brought by technological innovation and economic production.¹²

As the universities in Greater China enter the new era of globalization in the twenty-first century, on the one hand, each university faces many problems that are common to other universities around the world, such as changes in financial management and administration, establishment of new evaluation systems, reform of curriculum and content,¹³ and innovative technology research; on the other hand, in facing all of these phenomena, universities on both sides of the Taiwan Strait feel great pressure and have made serious errors in the evaluations — since the purpose and standards of these evaluations have not been well defined. The evaluation is a problem also faced by universities overseas; for example, the rising tendency to emphasize the “quantity” over “quality” of research results¹⁴ and for political power to intrude and command academic work.¹⁵ In the new age of globalization, while each of the universities in Greater China has its own special problems, many of the challenges they face are peculiar to Greater China, including:

a) How to maintain the balance between transmitting national cultural traditions

¹¹ Wei Xiu and Ma Wanhua, *The University of the 21st Century: Proceedings of the Forum of Higher Education in Conjunction with the Centennial of Peking University, May 2-4, 1998* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 1998).

¹² See James J. Duderstadt, *A University for the 21st Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000, 2002).

¹³ See Tamil Salmi, “Facing the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century,” *Perspectives: Policy & Practice in Higher Education*, Vol. 6, Issue 1 (Feb. 2002): 8-12.

¹⁴ See Lee Harvey, “The Power of Accreditation: Views of Academics,” *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 26 (July 2004): 207-33.

¹⁵ See Kauko Hämäläinen, “Common Standards for Program Evaluations and Accreditation?” *European Journal of Higher Education and Management*, vol. 26, July 2004: 291-300.

and inculcating the new globalization outlook?

- b) How to reestablish and maintain the subjectivity and autonomy of higher education in this era of rapid technological development in the twenty-first century?
- c) How to strike the balance between creating personal interest and enhancing social welfare in Greater China, where there is a huge gulf between rich and poor?

Although these problems are universal in the twenty-first century, they are especially acute for universities in Greater China and warrant particular attention.

II. Traditional Values and Dialogue among Civilizations in the Age of Globalization

The first challenge to higher education in Greater China in the twenty-first century is: How, in the midst of the rising tide of globalization, to baptize the college students in the spirit of traditional Chinese culture, so they can participate creatively in the new age of dialogue among civilizations. The great rupture between tradition and modernity that occurred in Chinese culture during the past several centuries accounts for why this issue poses such a major challenge for the higher education in Chinese society.

During the twentieth century, while Asia went through a stormy historical process, it could be said that the Chinese people had written China's contemporary history with their own tears and blood. It was against this historical backdrop of Western powers' encroaching on the about-to-collapse China that China's modern institutions of higher education were set up. Hence, universities in the twentieth-century China had the mission of driving China to the way of being rich and powerful. In 1895, Peiyang University (Beiyang daxue, 北洋大學) was established with the mission of teaching science and technology. In 1898, Peking University (Jingshi daxuetang, 京師大學堂) was established with the mission of cultivating a modern bureaucracy. By the turn of the twentieth century, institutions of higher education all over China had the

goal of helping China to catch up with the western powers in science and technology so as to be free from being colonized and exploited.

In that age of pragmatism, higher education in China was tactically developed for increasing the national wealth and power. It was these presumed practical effects of education that were valued. The original purpose of education was forgotten and did not receive serious attention. Coming to the present day, technology is still a key focus in higher education in the effort to build a prosperous country. Besides the Mainland China, the Japanese colonial government in Taiwan established the first modern university in 1928, Taihoku (Taipei) Imperial University 台北帝國大學 (present-day National Taiwan University 國立台灣大學). The purpose of establishing this university was to support the imperial Japan's strategy of encroaching on the South East Asia. The Japanese were also interested in strengthening their treatment of tropical medicine and developing South East Asian cultural resources. The first president of Taihoku Imperial University, Shidehara Tadao 幣原坦 (1870-1953), advocated that Taiwan was a base for Japan's entry into the South East Asian region. The humanities and natural sciences received about equal regard in that mission. He further emphasized that this imperial university was established expressly for the sake of completing these political objectives.¹⁶

During the past several centuries, institutions of higher education were established in Greater China as a strategy of surviving under the pressure of the Western powers. At the same time, the phantom of Capitalism loomed over Greater China, stealing the souls of the Chinese people and subordinating the traditional sphere of education to the non-educational spheres, thus leading to a serious commodification of education. With this historical distortion of several centuries, institutions of higher education in Greater China increasingly neglected traditional culture and value ideals and, consequently, young Chinese intellectuals who received their college education in China felt estranged from their traditional culture — often to the extent of despising it.

¹⁶ Shidehara Tadao, "Taiwan no qakujitsu teki kachi 台湾の学術價值" *Taiwan Jiho* 台灣時報 (December 1923): 25-34.

The serious split between “tradition” and “modernity” bequeathed from the twentieth century higher education in China makes it difficult for Chinese intellectuals to face the challenges of the new age in the twenty-first century. In contrast with the fact that the political, economic and cultural forces interacted in the geopolitical context of the twentieth century, the twenty-first century has witnessed the rapid development of telecommunications industry and more and more “citizens” of each country are becoming “netizens” of the world. What is replacing the geopolitical territory of the twentieth century is the post Cold War cultural identity, so the possibility of clash of civilizations has accordingly been heightened.¹⁷ In 2001, the World Trade Center in Manhattan became “ground zero” of the 9-11 terrorist attack, signaling the vital need for real dialogue among diverse civilizations in the twenty-first century.

In this age of dialogue among civilizations, China’s rapid economic development during the past thirty years have received intense concern.¹⁸ By exploiting Chinese labor and abundant natural resources, together with Taiwan’s high-tech industry and economic development, and supported by Hong Kong’s international experience and resources, the new “China Circle” will possibly rise up on the heels of North America and Europe to become the new economic center of the twenty-first century.

However, viewed from the century-long development of higher education in China, the sort of training received by young Chinese intellectuals at institutions of higher education increasingly cut them off from their own cultural tradition and value ideals, due to the serious split between “tradition” and “modernity” in education, even today they are still unable to enter deeply into the treasures of their own cultural legacy, and thus unable to play an active role in the age of dialogue among civilizations.

III. The Tide of “Globalization”

¹⁷ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

¹⁸ See Barry Naughton, ed., *The China Circle: Economics and Technology in the PRC, Taiwan and Hong Kong* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1997).

Besides the traumatic history of the past centuries, after the Second World War, the tide of globalization exacerbated the tension between “tradition” and “modernity”, adding frustration and suffering to the Chinese people. The tide of globalization, in many guises, turns out, in effect, to be a matter of the economically rich countries extending their power to suppress the development of other parts of the world. These economically powerful countries are, for the most part, also politically and militarily powerful; they are the countries that consume the most energy resources. These influential powers also control the international banking and financial organizations, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). They have the power to direct the international capital markets, such as through the World Trade Organization (WTO). They possess state-of-the-art developments in the high-tech industries, such as information technology, aeronautics, space technology, biomedical technology, as well as controlling the latest developments in the arms industry. They always form alliances in order to obstruct and encroach upon other countries’ advances. Therefore, the tide of globalization always works to strengthen the long-term vantage of the powerful countries in political and military affairs.¹⁹

The basic reason why “globalization” has developed into a weapon for the strong, rich countries to wield over the weak, poor countries is that, under the domination of the strong, rich countries, “globalization” becomes a compelling general necessity that goes deeper and wider than the special conditions of each country and its international activities. The “globalization” tide is a relentless, unstoppable geopolitical- economic control force. In recent decades, it has been put forth as a rationale for destroying cultures, ways of life and individualists. It is not far-fetched to say that globalization provides “a rationale for killing people” (*Yi li sha ren*, 以理殺人). In this way, the poor countries of Asia and Africa are caught up in the web of globalization, sucked in by an irresistible force. They are compelled to draw loans from the IMF in order to join the WTO. They cannot resist being sucked into the vortex of the global system of capitalism centered in the USA. In other words, “globalization” is the

¹⁹ Huang Chun-chieh, *Quangiuhua shidai daxue tongshi jiaoyu de xintiaozhan* 全球化時代大學通識教育的新挑戰 (*New Challenges for University General Education in the Age of Globalization*) (Kaohsiung: Tongshi jiaoyu xuehui, 2004). See especially chapter 1, p. 8.

rising tide of economic power that is rolling over each of the weak, poor countries; it does not offer the tools that they might use to become really prosperous. Consequently, the rewards of “globalization” easily become the “exclusive domain” of the strong, rich countries just as, within the context of a single country, the “nation” becomes the exclusive internal affairs club managed by the capitalist class.

Under the “globalization” tide, higher education in Greater China has started to face the problem of rapidly losing its cultural tradition and value ideals. This problem manifests itself mainly in the following ways:

- 1. Traditional Chinese cultural education is increasingly being neglected in higher education in Greater China.** In the general-education courses designed to cultivate the students’ basic abilities, the position of traditional Chinese culture, such as the humanities and arts, is weakening. Not only are such courses being squeezed out of the curriculum by rising technology-related courses, but the research trend enforced on the faculty detracts from the professors’ ability to incorporate edifying educational content in their courses on Chinese literature, history and philosophy.
- 2. Under the slogans of “globalization” and “internationalization,” some universities in Greater China now offer most of their courses in English as an index of their degree of internationalization.** We should keep in mind that languages are not merely tools of communication; at the same time, each language is the rich repository of cultural values. Under the objective condition that English has become the *lingua franca* of international education and scholarship, it is important for universities in Greater China to emphasize English instruction. But, to exaggerate the use of English as their working language under the pressure of “globalization” makes scholars from non-English speaking countries face “relentless fierce competition from scholars in the same field from other countries under conditions most unfavorable to themselves.”²⁰ Naturally, it is beneficial for one’s research

²⁰ Ding Xueliang 丁學良, *Sheme shi shijie yiliu daxue?* 什麼是世界一流大學? (*What is a World-class University?*) (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2004), p. 104.

results to reach the international community of scholars through established international channels; but, if we continued to over-exaggerate English instruction, the university's function of maintaining and developing ethnic cultural traditions are being killed off under the insidious manifold forces of globalization.

IV. Intimate Linkage of "Tradition"

Facing the high tide of globalization, how can universities in Greater China promote effectively the traditional culture and its values? Certainly, this is a major challenge.

Facing the challenges of the tension between "tradition" and "modernity" and the hegemony of Western cultures over Eastern cultures, universities and colleges in Greater China can select from among various coping strategies. The most direct and effective one, naturally, would be to strengthen instruction and research in East Asian literature, history and philosophy, especially to delve into the classics and values of East Asian cultures to improve the college students' familiarity with their "tradition".

The so-called "Classics", in fact, are the records of profound spiritual dialogues. But, there is a key difference between the classics of China and those of the West. The "Other" addressed in the spiritual dialogues of the western classics is God, while the "Other" addressed in the spiritual dialogues of the Chinese classics is "Man", or perhaps the "Sage" or "Wise Man". Regarding the "Bible" of East Asia, the *Analects* of Confucius, the Japanese Tokugawa (1600-1868) Confucian scholar Itō Jinsai 伊藤仁齋 (1627-1705) proclaimed it was "the ultimate book in the universe (saijō jikyoku uchudaiichisho, 最上至極宇宙第一書)."²¹ The reason why Itō Jinsai praised the *Analects* so highly was that this book presented the eternal true principles

²¹ Itō Jinsai 伊藤仁齋, *Rongo Kogi* 論語古義 (*Ancient Meaning of Confucius' Analects*), in Seki Giichirō 關儀一郎 ed., *Nihon Meika Shisho-Chūshaku* 日本名家四書詮釋全書 (*Complete Works of Commentaries of Famous Scholars in Japan*), (Tokyo: Ōtori Shuppan, 1973), Vol. 3, p. 4. Itō Jinsai, *Dōshi Mon* 童子問 (*Inquiries of a Child*), in Ienaga Saburō 家永三郎 et al., eds., *Kinsei Shisoka Bunshu* 近世思想家文集 (*Collected Works of Modern Thinkers*) (Tokyo Iwanami Shoten, 1966, 1981), Vol. 1, p. 204.

governing human life “in everyday upright human relationships.” The twentieth century Japanese sinologist, Yoshikawa Kōjiro 吉川幸次郎 (1904-1980) also expressed endless praise for the philosophy as life in the Chinese classics.²²

In fact, the reason why the Chinese classics are worthy of continued study and reflection, even in the age of globalization, is because the Chinese classics body forth the unfathomable mysteries of spiritual transformation in the context of everyday upright human relationships, so people can concretely realize the abstract, general values in the stream of life. In the new age of dialogue among civilizations, we should offer ample instructions on the Chinese classics so that the college students have the opportunity to hold the hands of the ancients, walk with the ancients, and read through the classics in order to communicate with them. By deepening the college students’ interest and roots in local cultural resources, they will become well-grounded young intellectuals who can, in the age of globalization, engage in dialogues with youths from other cultures so as to share their values and achieve a higher degree of mutual understanding.

V. New Technological Developments and the Subjectivity of Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century

The second major challenge facing higher education in Greater China lies in the rapid development of new technology: How can the university preserve and develop the subjectivity of college education? The reason why this challenge is so crucial for universities in Greater China is identical with the one identified by C.P. Snow (1905-1980) in England: the great divide between the cultures of “science and technology” and “the humanities”.²³ During the past one hundred years, this division has become especially serious and pronounced at institutions of higher learning in Greater China.

1. The Impact of Technological Development on College Education

²² Yoshikawa Kōjiro 吉川幸次郎, *Shinajin no Koden to sono seikatsu* 支那人の古典とその生活 (*The Classics and Lives of the Chinese*) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoden, 1943).

²³ C.P. Snow first pointed out this problem in a lecture he presented at the University of Cambridge on May 7, 1959. See C.P. Snow, *The Two Cultures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Since after the Second World War, technological development has advanced at a furious pace. For example, in 1945, the United States successfully tested the first atomic bomb. In 1946, the first electronic calculator appeared. In 1953, human DNA was decoded. In 1957, the Soviet Union launched the first satellite, Sputnik I. In 1959, the integrated circuit was invented. In 1960, the laser was invented. In 1961, the Soviet Union launched the first manned space ship. In 1969, the American astronaut Neil Armstrong (1930-) mounted and walked on the moon. In 1969, the US Defense Department completed the Arpanet computer network that was subsequently developed into the Internet in the 1980s and the World Wide Web (www) in the 1990s, which has changed the pattern of human life incalculably. In 1978, the first test tube baby was born. In 1982, the first artificial human heart was implanted into a person. In 1990, a research project on human genome was launched in Europe and the United States;²⁴ by 2001, ahead of schedule, the human genome sequencing project was completed, thanks to the joint efforts of scientists around the world. During the past twenty years, developments in telecommunication technology, nanotechnology, genetic medicine, life science and cognitive technology have stirred great changes in academic attitudes in the university community, leading to the appearance of the following two noteworthy phenomena:

a. An increased degree of commercialization of knowledge at the universities and colleges. The rapid development of new technology has greatly changed the age-old production methods, creating new business opportunities in which the new knowledge serves as the key to rapidly increasing wealth. Additionally, since the modern university community is developing in a capitalist production network, the degree of commodification of new knowledge created at the university is increasing. In recent years, major universities have set up centers for innovation and incubation to serve as a bridge between the industry and the academic world. This is precisely a manifestation of the commodifying trend of knowledge.

Because technological development is leading the commercialization of knowledge, on the one hand, the university community warps into a sort of

²⁴ *The New Age of Discovery (Time Magazine, Special Issue)* (January 1998).

weird “academic capitalism”.²⁵ As this trend incubates and develops, it leads to the overturning of the original mission of the university as the pursuit of truth. On the other hand, great business opportunities created by technical research at the university strengthen the trend for government to get actively involved in guiding the research. Moreover, as the mutual dependence of science and technology grows stronger, the resulting technological production becomes the ground of the legitimacy of universities and colleges in the eyes of the sponsoring government and taxpayers, which makes the relations between the university administration and the political powers grow ever more intimate.

This trend tends to kill off the critical function of the university as the conscience of society, turning the university into a sort of think tank of the capitalist production system. The university becomes a training ground for personnel who benefit the vested-interest classes of the capitalist society.²⁶

b. Students and teachers in the university easily fall into the trap of quantitative thinking. The rapid development of technology influences the worldview and the academic views of the college students and teachers in Great China such that they take on a sort of “quantitative mode of thinking.” This quantitative mode of thinking defines the intellectual sphere of modern university as the realm of modern technology, and thus they always tend to adopt a “quantitative” position and rarely a “qualitative” one when considering questions and issues in research and education. For example, in Taiwan, emphasis is placed on number of SCI-listed articles, number of patents awarded from research projects, amount of profit earned from cooperation between academia and industry, etc.; however, less emphasis is placed on the inspiration the teachers give to the students, the benefit the teachers give to the students in maturing and enriching their lives, the criticisms the teachers launch against the unfairness and injustice in society, and the question whether the university is

²⁵ Sheila Slaughter and Larry Leslie, *Academic Capitalism: Politics, Policies and the Entrepreneurial University* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

²⁶ The mission of the university is the pursuit of the truth, thus it should not be at the service of powerful corporations or political authorities to conduct research for their practical benefit. See Ortega Gasset, ed., Howard Lee Nostrand trans., *Mission of the University* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 1991, 1992), esp. pp. 47-56. This sort of university ideal is being seriously challenged at university campuses on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

contributing to the development of the human spirit. In recent years, at universities on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, the faculty promotion assessments and the course evaluations have been conducted on a quantitative basis. For example, Shanghai Jiaotong University (上海交通大學) announced the evaluation criteria for the “2004 Global University Academic Ranking” are “Number of Nobel Laureates,” “Number of highly-cited papers,” and “Number of Publications in Top Journals,” such as *Nature* and *Science*. About the same time, the “Supplement on Higher Education” of the *Thames* in England in 2004 published the list of “The Top 200 Universities in the World.” This list was compiled from scores given by 1300 scholars from 88 countries based on the following five standards: “International Recognition” (50%), “Average Frequency of Citation of Faculty Writings” and “Teacher-Student Ratio” (20% each), “Number of International Faculty” and “Number of International Students” (5% each). Among these standards, the first one “International Recognition” is certainly subjective, and it tends to favor the older universities with long histories in major countries. On October 9, 2005, the ROC Ministry of Education issued a press release titled, “‘Project Aspiring for Top Universities’: Assessment Results and Explanation.” The fourth point under the first item of this press release affirmed that, in the future, universities would receive funding based on the MOE assessments according to the present-day international standards. For the project to be effective, the following standards were recommended:

- (a) Cultivation of talents: Increase the quality and number of high tech and special area personnel training and related industrial production personnel.
- (b) Augmentation of the number of international publications and influential name lists.
- (c) Increase of the number of internationally outstanding teachers and researchers.
- (d) Increase of the number of concrete cooperations between domestic and foreign universities and research institutions.
- (e) Growth of the average annual rate of guiding cooperative research plans between academia and industry.

These university evaluation standards all, in various ways, exhibit “the trap of quantitative thinking.” This kind of “quantitative thinking” deeply injures the idea of the university, overturns the character of the university and distracts from the real function of college education. In fact, under such “quantitative thinking,” the university is turning away from its original position as the temple of the pursuit of truth and the academy that uplifts the maturing spirits of the students, and becoming a profit-making SCI papers vending machine, gradually killing off the precious subjectivity of the university and encouraging that the intellectual creativity be used for non-academic purposes, e.g., as tactics to search for wealth and power. In effect, this makes the university faculty become mere SCI paper workers and college students become digits of quantification. This is an unfortunate development of college education.

2. Rejuvenating College Student’s Subjectivity

Looking into this future, how should the universities in Greater China respond to these challenges?

The universities in Greater China can respond to these challenges in a variety of ways. However, the most important strategy of response should lie in the renewal of the autonomy of the university. This so-called renewal of the autonomy of university should take two main forms:

In the first place, as to the universities’ falling into the “toolification” trend, we should strongly uphold and preserve the original purpose of college education. Intending to lead the university back to its original purpose as an academic institution, the university must strengthen the reform of the university-level common-and-general instruction. In particular, it should offer curricula for the research and study of Chinese and Western classics in order to acquaint the college students with the greatest insights of China and the West, to engage them in intimate dialogues.

Secondly, as to the universities’ trend to overemphasize formalism in operation and evaluation, we should stress the original purpose of college education to enlighten the students about life and to enrich human life generally.

VI. Economic Development, Gap between Rich and Poor, and Social Responsibility

The third challenge to college education in Greater China is: under the new situation of an ever-increasing gap between rich and poor in hand with economic development, how can the university work toward the formation of a fair, just society in which each sector is prosperous, and in which each person will have a fair and equal chance to be educated and create his life?

This challenge has become particularly important in recent years because the gulf between rich and poor has gotten wider on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Since entering the twenty-first century, the poverty gap in Taiwan society has become very wide indeed. According to the ROC Executive Yuan statistics on annual household income for 2004, the average income for the top 20% was NT\$1,792,000 while that for the bottom 20% was NT\$297,000. The average income for the top 20% was 6.03 times that for the lowest 20%. Although the difference was greater in 2003, 6.07 times, that the income gap between rich and poor remains great is an indisputable fact.²⁷ Among students at National Taiwan University, those from Taipei City and County account for 57.6% while those from rural counties, such as Miaoli, Jiayi, Hualian, Xingu, Taidong, etc., account for less than 1%, respectively.²⁸ The statistics for Mainland China are equally telling. For the years 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2001, disparity between the richest and poorest household incomes was 4.4 times, 4.5 times, 5 times, and 5.3 times, respectively.²⁹ Comparative statistics between 1985 and 2002 reveal that, while the income disparity between rich and poor in 1985 was 3.74 times, the gross amount of difference in Renminbi was 901 in 1985, but grew to 17,680 in 2002, or 19.6 times greater!³⁰ According to the Beijing City Bureau of Statistics, the ratio of income disparity between rich and

²⁷ See <http://www.stat.gov.tw/public/Attachment/59911302371.doc>.

²⁸ Kuo I-ling, 郭奕玲 “Yige Taiwan, liangge shijie 一個台灣,兩個世界, (One Taiwan, Two Worlds).” See http://magazines.sina.com.tw/businessweekly/contents/800/800-001_1.html.

²⁹ *Tianxia zazhi* 天下雜誌 (*Commonwealth*), no. 272 (April 1, 2003): 89.

³⁰ *Zhongguo laogong tongxun* 中國勞工通訊 (*China Labor Information*), electronic report, accessible at: http://big5.clb.org.hk/public/contents/article/revision_id=65105&item_id=65104.

poor households in Beijing rose from 4.7:1 to 5.8:1 from 2003 to 2004. In Jiangsu, the disparity in income between rich and poor households grew from 5.39 times in 2000 to 9.91 in 2003 and reached 10.71 in 2004. According to national statistics for cities of over 50,000 households throughout China, the income disparity between the richest 10% and poorest 10% households was 9.5 times during the first six months of 2004!³¹ In general, the income disparity situation between rich and poor households in Taiwan has been improving gradually in recent years.³² In mainland, nevertheless, under the high tide of reform and opening in recent years, not only has the gap between affluent and destitute households widened, but the gap between the highest and lowest personal incomes has increased greatly. Moreover, the relative difference in incomes between the prosperous cities along the coast, like Shanghai, and the poor provinces in the northwest is growing ever more extreme and unsustainable.

Under these new socio-economic conditions on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, college education stands at a historic crossroad. The knowledge transmitted in modern college education can support each student's competitiveness in the job market after graduation, so college students graduate with a relatively advantageous position in the capitalist division of labor system, thus creating personal economic benefits for the students. As the market value of the graduates increasingly becomes a criterion in considering the value of college education, the curriculum itself increasingly is geared toward job competitiveness. This benefit increasingly determines what the students and their parents consider to be a hot program, a hot curriculum.

Taking a deeper look, we find that university production consists in the activity of transmitting knowledge. But, in the grip of the capitalist socio-cultural-economic system, it receives the severe constraints of the logic of

³¹ Data from New China website 新華網 (Xin Hua net), "Zhongguo pinfu chaju youmeiyou bei kuada?" 中國貧富差距有沒有被誇大 "Has the gap between rich and poor in China been exaggerated?" See:
http://big5.xinhuanet.com/gate/big5/news.xinhuanet.com/comments/2005-03/11/content_2682008.htm.

³² See the web site:
<http://www.dgbas.gov.tw/public/data/dgbas03/bs7/yearbook/ch8-13&14.xls#a28>,
<http://www.dgbas.gov.tw/public/attachment/581814552071.doc>.

the capitalist market economy. The university campus nowadays is filled with consumerism, and the operation of university increasingly embodies and reproduces the characteristics of corporate culture.³³ Universities on both sides of the Taiwan Strait are developing rapidly in this direction. Moreover, carried along in the globalization tide that is the mainstream of the twenty-first century, students receive the sort of education that will land them in the best positions in the employment market. But, the operation of the world economy is becoming less free: when a person enters the world job market and is placed in the world employment system, he or she can only float along as a single element in the cut-throat capitalist system, pouring all of his or her self into capitalist production.

The new tide of post-Cold War capitalist globalization has had a huge impact on higher education. Higher education is increasingly market-oriented, and the knowledge transmitted in the university is increasingly commodified.³⁴ As university research and instruction evolve gradually into something increasingly opposed to the original goal of the university, the resultant self-estrangement of the university becomes an inevitable tragedy. This sort of production context affects many universities on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. As early as 1949, National Taiwan University President Fu Sinian 傅斯年 (1896-1950) had pointed out, “The University was established for scholarship, for youth, for Chinese and world cultures.”³⁵ Sadly, students nowadays have put aside Fu Sinian’s ideal. They are happy for being trained to fit into the capitalist society and study hard to reap the economic and class benefits!

Even more chilling is the constant efforts of economic liberals to apply principles of the marketplace to education. When these economists raise the

³³ See Eric Gould, *The University in a Corporate Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

³⁴ See Derek Bok, *University in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

³⁵ Fu Sinian 傅斯年, “Guoli Taiwan daxue disici xiaoqing yanshoci” 國立台灣大學第4次校慶演說詞 “Observance of the Fourth Anniversary of National Taiwan University,” presented on November 17, 1949. See *Fu Sinian xuanji* 傅斯年選集 (*Collected Works of Fu Sinian*) (Taipei: Wenxing shudian 文星書店, 1967), ch. 9, pp. 1573-74.

call for students to have ever more freedom and choices,³⁶ they completely forget that, by making college education tantamount to market economy, they are expanding the benefits of the economically affluent class and creating a class-restricted sense of freedom such that the farmer and labor classes continue to toil under less freedom just because they cannot receive the best education.

Consequently, the question arises. Where does the social responsibility of the university lie: in entering into “collaborations” with the capitalist system, or in creating benefits to all sectors of society? This is the third serious issue facing college education on both sides of the Taiwan Strait in the twenty-first century.

VII. Conclusion

With the development of globalization and knowledge-based economy, higher education on both sides of the Taiwan Strait faces major challenges in the twenty-first century. The present essay gathers these challenges under several issues: a) the transmission and development of traditional culture, b) the impact of rapid technological development on the university, and c) the social responsibilities of the university. By analyzing and tracing the development of these three issues, we can begin to work out positive strategies for responding to them.

We advocate that higher education in Greater China in the twenty-first century should plant deep culture roots so that students may avoid becoming rootless orchids in the great tide of globalization and lose themselves and their cultural identity. We also advocate that the university should shed its excessive pragmatism and formalistic habit of thinking, and return to the original goal of education. The university also should review the challenge to take up its social responsibilities, support the idea that the university plays the role of conscience in society, thus creating great benefits for all of the people in society, not just the advanced capitalists.

³⁶ See, for example, Milton Friedman, “The Role of Government in Education,” *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), chapter 4. See also Milton & Rose Friedman, *Free to Choose: A Personal Statement* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980).

These strategies for responding to three issues all remain mindful of the original spirit of college education. In this age of separation between science/technology and the humanities, between East and West, we must work to renew the idea of the university and make the university into the temple of exploring and upholding truth, so it can be the field of conscience in society. By renewing the spirit of college education, universities on both sides of the Taiwan Strait will be able to lead the steps of development in the twenty-first century so that in the new age of dialogue among civilizations and globalization of the twenty-first century, we can bring the most positive elements into play.

Abstract

Since the 1980's, the world has seen drastic changes in many a fields such as politics, economics, academics, and so forth. Among them surges the tide of "globalization," which exerts a profound impact on human lives. However, the trend of globalization rises on the premise of technological development. Since such development is all too often in the grip of the powerful countries, the so called globalization turns out to be an capitalist tool which enhances the dominance of the strong over the weak, and poses threats to local cultures of the latter. Therefore, it comes to be the responsibility of the higher education to reserve the cultural consciousness and even promote the dialogues among civilizations.

Nonetheless, since the end of the 19th century, institutions of higher education of both sides of Taiwan Strait have been developed out of "pragmatism." For example, Tahoku (Taipei) Imperial University (1928) as a study center was taken to be the springboard for Imperial Japan's invasion into Southeast Asia; even earlier, Peiyang University (1895) and Peking University (1898) in Mainland China were established for building a powerful modern country. Under the circumstances, modern Chinese intellectuals have been sent far away from their traditional culture, and the gaps between technological development and academic subjectivity, between personal profit and social welfare, have been wider and wider during the course of last century.

Admittedly, both "globalization" and "technological dominance" are international issues, but there are tensions between traditional and modern values specific to Chinese societies being observed. This article discusses the phenomena aforementioned, and proposes that higher education should serve to rehabilitate traditional culture as well as to kindle social conscience, for the wound caused by the trend of globalization to be sutured.

Keywords: globalization, Greater China, higher education

