

高等教育的希望：佛教興辦的大學

龔鵬程

摘要

基督教與天主教辦高等教育似乎理所當然，佛教則因未曾辦過大學，所以近幾年台灣佛教團體籌辦佛光大學、玄奘人文社會學院、法鼓人文社會學院，引發社會的好奇與質疑。本文由西方寺院教育與中國書院起始之歷史分析，逐步闡釋現今社會對於高等教育之企盼，並說明佛教興辦大學的教育理念與社會羣衆之互動關係。

歐洲大學由教會的寺院教育體系發展而來，中國社會事實上不曾有過類似歐洲中古教會統治的時期，佛教道教並沒有籠罩萬有、凌駕王權的力量；儒家的教育體系則又已是與民衆倫理生活結合、與國家文官體制結合。所以，在傳統社會，佛教並不需要發展出寺院佛學教育之外的公衆性教育體系，並不需要辦大學。待清朝末年，驟然引進西方大學，替代傳統儒學教育體系。當大學扮演著科學理性反迷信的角色，立刻成爲傳統儒道佛教的對立物，佛教又如何去興辦大學呢？

由深一層看，則應是一種社會結構性的問題。由於科學理性所強調的知識化傾向，以及社會國家實用需求的世俗化功化工具化傾向，在現今大學中已愈來愈濃厚了，所以佛教才需要起來辦學，辦出一種不同於歐洲大學模式的大學。佛教所辦大學之共同特色，即是針對現今大學體質及教育狀況企圖進行之改革。基本上反對大學教育僅重知識技術之傳授，也對功利實用觀念表示不滿。主張重視生活、德性之教養，希望能發展「全人」的人本教育。不論是慈濟醫學院證嚴法師「教育是菩薩精神的文化」，華梵工學院「覺之教育」，或是法鼓人文社會學院聖嚴法師的「心靈環保」，特別是佛光大學，秉持星雲大師之理念，朝非佛學院化發展，但強調人文精神，且利用中國書院傳統，來豐富並改革現行大學體質，重建大學的神聖性，以便進行真正的高等教育。

Buddhist Universities, The Hope of the Higher Education

Peng-cheng Kung*

I.

In 1921, there was only one national university in the whole of China, that was Beijing University (北京大學), and there were two provincial universities: Shanhsi University (山西大學) and Peiyang University (北洋大學). The others were the five private universities: Wuchang China University (武昌中華大學), Beijing China University (北京中國大學), Chaoyang University (朝陽大學), Nan-Kai University in Tientsin (天津南開大學) and Amoy University (廈門大學) that was Beijing University, and there were two provincial universities: Shanhsi University and Peiyang University.

On the other hand, Christian universities in China at the same time amounted to over 60 in number. American Christian churches founded all the universities for women in the country. Including the primary and high schools, church schools in 1914 amounted to over 12,000, and the students totalled over 250,000.

We can tell from these figures why people took it as a natural matter that Christians and, in particular, Catholics founded universities. Since the Buddhists never founded any universities at this time, many people felt curious and suspicious when the Buddhist groups founded Foguang University (佛光大學), Hsuan Tsang College of Humanism and Liberal Arts (玄奘人文社會學院), and Fa Ku College of Humanism and Liberal Arts (法鼓人文社會學院).

However, if we examine Western educational history, we find that Christians themselves did not have any experience in founding a university at the beginning. They founded universities because they

* President of Foguang University, Taiwan (佛光大學校長)。

were forced to do so by the historical situation which then prevailed. There were no universities at the early stage of Europe; there was only the system of monastic education. During the "Dark Ages" following the decline of the Roman Empire, the Catholic Church led the social development. The education was used mainly for educating clerics or for teaching laymen to recognize the power and the meaning of God.

When cities were well developed, citizens organized various business councils to protect the rights and interests of their own businesses and to develop autonomy. At this time, the first universities appeared. The term "university" originally meant a group of teachers or students organized (in accordance with the mode of guilds for mutual protection and help) to cultivate brotherhood, to associate and treat one another in friendly communion, to care for the ill in health, to help the poor, to arrange funerals, to eliminate hate, to accompany and escort the ones who were going to take examinations for the positions of teachers, and to help their members get consolation from God.

By then, universities belonged to the Church, and teachers were priests and, thus, the principal content of education was religious. Yet the separation appeared in 1464, when a city government of Scotland appointed the principal of a school. That is, the rights of appointment of principals and teachers were gradually transferred from the Church to the governments.

Thereafter, the whole of Europe began to transform: humanism and its Renaissance prospered. Epistemology took humanity as its center instead of God. The new learning asked people to use their reason to observe this world and to discover the mystery of the universe. The process of the change was described as "removing the curse of the world," it seemed now that humanity had been cursed in the past years and become dazed and confused and puzzled by its religions. Henceforth, the binding of the curse was removed; humanity could use reason to observe this world. Science and reason were emphasized, and religions were criticized as superstitions. Such a change was reflected in the field of education: theology was gradually substituted by science, and questions about faith were also replaced by questions about knowledge. Universities then became "the fortresses of knowledge and science," instead of the institutions training capable men for the Church.

Meanwhile, a new political situation appeared: the power of the

Church was separated from the power of kings, and the right of education was transferred from the Church to the thrones. The education which used to educate clerics and laymen now turned to educate capable civilians for government. What was a citizen to provide and promote? 1. consciousness of nation rather than of religion, 2. skills developed for promoting national prosperity and building rather than religious knowledge and cultivation. From thence, these marks of intent were the increasingly important elements for universities. The functions and contents of education were completely changed.

All these changes made universities less theological. Church schools could not help but try to make divisions in pursuance of the vigorous tides of the times; wherein, a part of the schools maintained the gist of the clerical education and still had lectures on theology and taught religious ceremony, stressed divine grace and spiritual cultivation, and mostly belonged to the internal organization of churches and were integrated with the churches; i.e., they still belonged to the theological seminaries. While the other parts were transferred to the civil educational system, cultivating those citizens who were to be engaged in lay businesses and to have a lay life. The universities belonged to this educational sphere. The people accepting education needed not to take theology for their vocation or careers, neither to unquestioningly believe in the religion. What they needed were the skills in social life, therefore, their values, moral requirements, and knowledge were very different from those of the early church schools.

What we now call the university, has emerged from such distinctions made long ago. In these schools, there might be some clerics, some religious courses, some churches, and prayer rooms. But as a whole, they were not theological seminaries.

Those universities which were introduced to Asia during the last years of the Ching dynasty by Western missionaries were exactly of this kind. In other words, the collapse of Western divinity-worship in the West had caused the creation of an education taking science and rationality as its backbone, assuming social practicability and the national requirements as its main function. These two veins led the development of the Western universities in a dominating way.

The Chinese society has never actually had a period similar to the Middle Ages in Western Europe, one in which the Church had reigned supreme. Religions such as Buddhism and Taoism have nev-

er had that supreme power over everything, and even over the rites. The Confucian educational system had already combined with the ethical life of Chinese people and with the national civil official system. Hence, in the traditional Chinese society, Buddhism did not need to develop a public educational system other than the Buddhist temple education. It was not necessary to found any Buddhist universities. During the latter years of the Ching dynasty, when the Western universities were suddenly introduced to China and took the place of the traditional Confucian educational system, the universities played the role of instigators of science, rationalism and anti-superstition. The universities became immediately the opponents of the conventional Confucianists, the Buddhists and the Taoists. How would the Buddhist groups begin to found a university under the circumstances? Conclusively, we surely can say that Buddhism did not found a university merely because of weakness in power and a lack of capable men. Rather, if we think about the matter more deeply, we can find such a more structural and historical argument.

Based on a similar structural factor, Buddhism now is keen on founding universities. The reason emphasized by science and rationalism, together with the tendency of secularization and functionalism, have been more and more manifested in the universities nowadays. Buddhism wants to found universities with different but complementary modes from those of westernized universities.

Why does Buddhism want to found universities? What is the background of the times? Here is the answer. Almost every Buddhist university places great emphasis on the meaning of its educational reformation and calls clearly for taking humanism as a most serious pursuit and vocation.

II.

Among those Buddhist universities, the first one is Huafan University, which was established in 1989 and started as Huafan College of Engineering, as the Ministry of Education only opened the founding of the colleges of Science and Engineering. In 1993, the policy was further developed and modified. Its name was changed to Huafan College of Humanity and Technology. Raising the intention to "develop science and technique based on humanism [以人文為體，發揮科技大用]." Stressing equally both Confucianism and Buddhism, and promoting "the education of consciousness [覺之教

育」, the educational policy thereof was “science and technique emerge in humanity”; civilization, mercy and wisdom grow together. According to Huafan’s dean, Mr. Ma Hsun, the education of consciousness is in practice composed of the following six elements: 1. education of mind, 2. education of spontaneity, 3. education of wisdom, 4. education of humanism, 5. a full-scale education, 6. lifelong education.

Putting the education of consciousness into practice requires completion of the conditions about timing, place and men. “Timing” means the right opportunities for education, “place” means the environment for education, hence “education of scenery” [景教] and “education of circumstance” [境教] shall be stressed, while “men” suggests the production of those proper teachers who are essential to true education. Huafan University has been advocating this kind of education in the belief that: “Our society is sick today. Education is the only way to correct the weak and sick social atmosphere.”^①

Tzhchi College of Medicine (慈濟醫學院) is a successful university founded in 1994, after Huafan University was founded. Combined with Tzhchi Nurse School and Tzhchi Hospital, it showed Tzhchi’s spirit of mercy and assistance. Master Cheng Yen (證嚴法師) at a salient point said: “Education is not only for spreading knowledge, but also so revealing kindness and concern for people.” What comes out from a person’s love can then help himself and others. Such inspiring education of love, is exactly Tzhchi’s culture, and moreover, the Bodhisattva’s spirit.” Accordingly, the college emphasizes the inspiration of conscience, drawing out lovingly kindness embedded in people’s heart, and serving people with this “great love.” Tzhchi’s motto, “being merciful and fond of giving” [慈悲喜捨] is full of this spirit.

As for the course arrangement, Huafan University claims that “science and technique emerge in humane civilization,” “professional knowledge is laid equal stress on as is general knowledge,” “theory is laid equal stress on as is practice,” and “study is combined with teaching.” There is an historical relic museum and a meditation room in the school. The latter is a place of meditation for students, while the study of Buddhism is a guide to the education of general knowledge and psychology.

The arrangement of courses in the Tzhchi College of Medicine

① Ma Hsun, “The Education of Consciousness: Idea and Practice.”

takes science and medicine as a basis. Aside from the professional education of medicine, the education of general knowledge thereof gets rid of the teaching mode wherein a single course lasts the whole academic year; instead, a multi-unit teaching course in several sections is taken each term. The courses include 16 units of lecture, i.e., the Tzhchi humanities, the medical history, personal career management, the art of living, philosophy, aesthetics and logic etc. Additionally, every student has a Br. Tzu Chieh 「慈誠師兄」 or Sr. Yi Te (懿德母姐), as his or her guide, and the school provides a consulting room, Tzhchi Humanities. All the students are in uniforms and all take a vegetarian diet. This is similar to the rules of inhibition from smoking, drinking, and gambling, showing strong religious characteristics.

The Hsuan Tsang College of Humanism and Liberal Arts and Fa Ku college of Humanism and Liberal Arts are similar to the above two universities. The Hsuan Tsang College of Humanism and Liberal Arts has "the notion of founding a school which emphasizes the cultivation of youths with righteous comprehension, and the spreading of humanism and the concept of social service." Obviously the intent was a critique of the old utilitarianism and the confusion of good and evil. Hsuan Tsang College of Humanism and Liberal Arts emphasizes that "the education of living is thought highly of, and diligence as well as simplicity should be a custom." In the future, the course planning of general knowledge will put Buddhism into it.

Fa Ku College of Humanism and Liberal Arts' founding principles can be summarised as follows: 1. Promoting vegetarian diets and strengthening the concept of "being merciful and fond of giving." 2. Promoting the education of labor by cultivating the attitude of social service. 3. Strengthening the combination of religion, art and life. 4. Advocating multiple-language training. 5. Becoming the international center of the Chinese Mahayana Buddhism.

From this viewpoint, when the college sets its departments, the core is the position of the Department of Religions. As for the departments of languages, in addition to Japanese, English, and European languages, there are still Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Bali language for Buddhist study. The plan for setting the department of sociology also emphasizes "the rescue of the social customs, the ameliorating of human minds and the promotion of the concept of a friendly society." The latter actually is an attempt to promote Master Sheng Yen's concept of "environmental protection of mind." (See Life

Magazine, no.145.)

Conclusively, those Buddhist universities are commonly characterized, in that they all are antagonistic to the theory that college education is simply an education of knowledge, and against the promotion of simple utilitarianism. They all claim that the life and the education of virtues shall be thought highly of. They hope to develop the education of humanism: to teach the student how to be a whole person.

However, such attitudes and claims were perhaps most perfectly expressed by Foguang University. In the first issue of Foguang Review《佛光學刊》I have written that:

In history, religious groups founded many schools. In Taiwan, many newly founded universities appeared in recent years. But Foguang University's founding is still of very great significance. Why? When we describe the power and the veins of Taiwan's society's development, the liberalization of economy in the middle seventies and the democratization of politics in the middle eighties gave the most distinctive indications. When it got into the nineties, the economical limitations were gradually realigned; the market order was erected step by step; the political democratization had led to the overall re-election of the Congress, the direct election of the president and the governors of the province and cities. At this time, the humanization of education formed the new tendency and force of movement.

Humanistic education means that everybody shall be educated, and that education is provided for the needs of humanity. It aims at the goal of making a person a whole man, therefore, education is not for the requirements of the government. A man is not a tool for enlarging the number of the labors who can help the national product and the economical development, nor a tool for expanding the will of a nation; not even mentioning man as a steppingstone for a prosperous commerce. The content of education is about the elevation of the quality of human life and mind. It rightly aims to help people comprehend the essence of their existence, the values, significance and responsibility, and then appreciate the relationship between the truly human and the exterior environment. It is more than a complexity of techniques and withered theories.

This new direction of education started in the late eighties. In a challenging way, it expanded through contests and experiments. Responding to the constitutional changes of Taiwan's politics, the edu-

ational structure changed and made some adaptat ions in the organization of Taiwan's educational system. The examples are the abolishment of the Educational Act of the Normal Education, the amendment of the Act of University, the opening of private school's foundation, the erection of the Consultatio on Committee of Educational Reformation, the foundation of the forest primary schools and middle schools etc. It is expected that the adjustment will go on for several years, and will influence and be influenced by the associated problems of social evolut ion.

However, till today, though the experiments on education have been full of innovation and are vital in kindergarten education and primary education, to date there are only a few changes in college education. The existed contests and reformation in n the campuses basically are limited to the expression of political democratization. As the systematic supremacy of the national power machine, the university's condition has not been reviewed deeply nor discussed fully. Inside the scholastic groups wit thin universities, the closed and decayed constitutions and the tendency of formalization, mechanization and technocracy are getting worse. The educational reformation still stays at the stage of asking for "the release from national control." People ha ardly pay attention to rendering the higher education to respect life and express vitality, and then build a university with a real Chinese spirit.

Foguang University expected to create a new era of education. Except for those regulated by the Ministry of Education, from the process of the designing of the school system to the mode of operation, everything is different from the contemporary uni iversities.

To fulfill this ideal, Foguang University broke the convention in the designing of a whole set of general courses for the freshmen and sophomores without the division of departments. It totally discards the division into professional departments and d the coexisting situation of the required general courses and the core general courses.

As for the civics education, we do not supervise the students as if they were in the primary and high schools: we do not ask them to wear uniforms, nor prohibit smoking and drinking. We hope our students can manage their own lives in an autonomic st yle. For instance, the libraries and dormitories do not have any entrance guards. When our students go to the libraries, they will never be defended as if they were thieves. So too is the administration of personnel: no more sign-in, sign-out, nor clo ck-in, clock-out-all the employees are

encouraged to select courses, and to take part in the academic activities. We enjoin every member of the university to build together a significant "community of learned people." Just because of this, the system of homeroom teaching can be put into practice. So far, every teacher instructs three students in Foguang University. In addition, staff at least holding a bachelor degree are arranged to be the vice-homeroom teachers, assisting the homeroom teachers. This proportion of teachers to students and the relationship among the teachers, the administrators and the students is the important ingredient which other schools can not provide.

In respect of environmental education, Foguang University arranges not only delicate environs but also the silent educational functions of every classroom and space. Hence Foguang University's classrooms are designed into various styles, and therefore express different functions and senses of beauty. Every balcony is arranged to be a place to stroll, leisure and show, a tea brewing art center, a cafe or a theater, etc.

A school like this shows its rebelliousness in the planning, from the ideal to the practical system. It intends to represent a series of revolutions against the constitution of the Westernized universities which developed from the fifteenth Century. Together with the other Buddhist universities, Foguang will push Taiwan's higher education into a new era.

III.

Intending to take the on role and the mission of reformers, the Buddhist universities cannot avoid coming into conflict with the existing system. Among the conflicts, the first one is induced between the Buddhist universities and the national system of education.

As I stated above, universities today are principally designed and intended for the investigation of knowledge. Increasingly, the main purpose of the academic development is for the prosperity of the nation, perhaps only partially based on pure academic requirements and interests. Therefore, the modern universities today contain less and less academic independence, and are more and more the "intellectual storehouses" of the government. They exist for the cultivation of citizens who are reigned by the government providing the manpower and intelligence in raising the national product and the national competitive capability. For this purpose, the government

makes "educational plans" frequently for the universities. The governor considers whether a university should be founded and how it would be managed based on the tendency and the main concerns of the government policy.

In contrast to this "national viewpoint of education," the Buddhist universities have the "personal viewpoint of education." They do not agree that universities are limited to merely creating the manpower for the country, because the students are all "human." By this fact, they should be educated into men and women of healthy personalities. People like this are not easily cultivated by the "professional training centers."

The regular universities train their students in a mode of professional training so that their students can join the vocational market to help the prosperity of the nation as soon as they graduate from the school. Here, people are primarily tools. What they learn are mainly vocational techniques. What the students would ask from those universities are only skills helping them get a good job after graduation. The college education is merely a steppingstone. The purpose of learning is something utilitarian and practicable.

The Buddhist universities protest against such an educational pattern. They hope the college education they offer can make men complete in mind. Their educational object is to help people understand who they are and the importance of life's values and meanings. The education as a whole has the spirit of "humanization;" however, this attitude is not necessarily appreciated by those who run the Ministry of Education.

As I mentioned above, the Ministry of Education allowed the Buddhist groups to found Colleges of Engineering first, and then colleges of medicine, and at last the colleges of Humanism and liberal arts. Why is the foundation of the colleges of humanism and liberal arts put at the last? It is because of the prevailing assumption that in the national educational system, education of humanism and liberal arts is the least required. It is also taken as the opponent of the national education, and the least welcomed in the permitting of foundation. The past long-term educational plans seemingly pressed the development of the colleges of humanism and liberal arts. But in the present, the departments of Engineering have the students cultivated according to the national industrial and commercial needs and such students amount to over 230,000, while the students of the departments of humanism and liberal arts (including all the depart-

ments of literature, history, philosophy... etc.) only amount to around 3,000. Do not mention the ideal to make the educational system humanistic.

Such a conflicting relationship is reflected also in the erecting of departments in addition to those central to the nature of a whole school. The Ministry of Education stipulates by itself (in the Act of Private Schools) that it has the right to approve or reject the erecting of the departments in a university "according to the requirements of the national and social development." Therefore, no matter how eager a university is in planning to erect a department, or how good the faculty or the equipment is, no permission will be granted if it does not meet the manpower plan for national economical development.

Moreover, the Buddhist universities are all private: they are not the public schools founded by the government, and discrimination is probably inevitable. For instance, a public institution can get the permission to be a "university" from the very beginning of its foundation, as in cases such as the Open University (空中大學), Chi Nan University (暨南大學), Chung Cheng University (中正大學) and Tung Hua University (東華大學). Yet, the Buddhist ones must start from "colleges" and be permitted to adapt to universities only when each one of them gets enlarged into three colleges. A public university can recruit students when it is not yet qualified to meet the basic standard of the first recruitment since its foundation; e.g., Chi Nan University started recruiting with less than twelve-thousand square-meter floor area of its buildings, Tainan Art College (台南藝術學院) with less than forty thousand books in its library, and Chung Cheng University with incomplete constructions in its campus. Nevertheless, these schools were permitted full foundation. However, the Buddhist university, Nanhua Management College, did not have such a kind of favored treatment. All the schools are not equally treated.

The second conflict is induced between the Buddhist universities and society itself. The secularization of universities is the result of or a part of the secularization of society at large. Therefore, the characteristics of universities-utilitarianism, practicability, and technocracy-reflect the characteristics of society. The Buddhist universities attempting to reform such an educational pattern hope to reform the society thereby. However, the social customs have accumulated for a long period of time; they cannot be changed suddenly.

The society has doubts about the foundation of the Buddhist universities. People not only are suspicious regarding the motif of the Buddhists groups, but also in respect of their capability. Many people instinctively feel that the Buddhist universities are actually the Buddhist seminaries. They worry that the students would be forced to take vegetarian diets or become monks or nuns.

The conventional China had never experienced the public education held by Buddhist groups. So that the public will suspect that the Buddhist universities are exactly the Buddhist seminaries cultivating Buddhists and Buddhist clerics. But is this not simply an example showing that the secular society always keep a wary eye on religions? The university founded by the government can be planned in arrangement of its departments and the courses according to the government's requirement in the cultivation of manpower for national development. The university founded by enterprises can cultivate the manpower according to their requirements. Then, why are religious groups not allowed to cultivate their own manpower by founding universities? Is clergy not a proper occupation in the view of society? It is not fair to inhibit universities from cultivating clerics. Those who consent to this inhibition hold a bias that "a university must not be like a seminary." This concept has been deeply planted in the hearts of people for more than 500 years, and hence the Buddhists would have this problem at the beginning of the founding of universities.

People who doubt the Buddhist groups' capability in founding a university mainly suppose that the Buddhist resources are quite limited, and that they are inexperienced in proper deployment of such resources. So they advise the Buddhists groups to focus their resource in the foundation of one university. This certainly is an advice out of concern and kindness. However, in our experience on other business, it is hard to succeed without the support of a single religious group. The Buddhists' support is not only to the religion but also to the branches and to certain masters. Thus the union of multiple denominations may not obtain a support stronger than that which an individual group can get. Second, quite many universities founded by Protestants and Catholics in China were founded by a single denomination or order, testifying to the capability of a single denomination or order in founding a university on its own. Third, when the Buddhists try to found a university, they may be in a similarly general direction and spirit with one another; however, there

are still many individual differences in the exact direction, the scale of the system, the contents of departments and courses, the mode of operation and management etc. It is impossible to force them to mix with each other, therefore, it is better to let them found their own schools separately.

As for those who do not know why the Buddhists want to found universities, those who often laugh at them trying to imitate the Christians and Catholics in the foundation of universities. Some others would claim that there are already a lot of good and famous universities in Taiwan, and the Buddhists universities can hardly gain the upper hand in competition with them. Why don't the Buddhists donate the fund for founding universities to help the development of these universities? They simply do not understand that the Buddhists do not found universities just for adding another similar one, but rather for founding different types of educational institutions, those which surround a moral compulsion.

These misunderstandings actually represent the difference between the Buddhists universities and the social cognition. This difference directly influences the effectiveness of fund raising, the recruitment, the faculty, the examination of departments by the Ministry of Education and so on. It makes it harder for the Buddhists to found universities than for the regular private school founders.

IV.

There is often a passionate fellowship among the Buddhist groups and believers, so that the conflicts and difficulties mentioned above are ultimately defeated. Contrarily, people tend to have a wrong impression, that founding a Buddhist university is well supported by the public.

In fact, the resource Buddhist groups hold cannot compare with either government or private enterprises. The Buddhist universities hold a far weaker financial resource in attracting a strong faculty than the average public universities, and the private ones founded by enterprises. For instance, the annual budget of Huafan College of Humanities and Technology is no more than six hundred million NT dollars (about twenty one million US dollars). However, National Taiwan University's is more than eight billion NT dollars (about two hundred and eighty million US dollars). Actually, this latter figure is more than the sum of the founding costs of all the Buddhist

universities in Taiwan put together.

So too is their a comparative situation between the Yuan Chih Engineering College (元智工學院), founded by Far East Enterprise, and the Buddhist universities: the latter do not have a strong financial background to make themselves effective competitors in the environment of Taiwan's college education. If we compare National Taiwan University's and Chang Gung University's Medical School (長庚醫學院) with the Buddhist Tzhchi College of Medicine, we can clearly see the weakness of Buddhist schools.

We have to bear the mission of reforming the college educational system with such a weak background, to create a better university with such a less-than-average condition. Are we not modern Don Quixotes?

But, we believe that Buddhist universities have the potential to compete with others on the basis of their ideal and creativity. Though without enough resource, we can be the navigator, leading the reformation of Taiwan's universities. We can also use our ideal to attract investment from different territories and to create a generally improved situation. Take Foguang University for instance, we attracted the best faculty. These teachers gave up their original good positions to build a new school from nothing. What has attracted their interest? The so-called resources and fame? No, for these are experienced professors who have become disappointed by Taiwan's educational environment. It is Foguang University's educational ideals which have satisfied them. It is the dream, wanting to set a new example for Taiwan's higher educational system, which combines them all together. We hope to make the dream come true.

Therefore, playing the role as a reformer and the vitality of creation are the key points of a Buddhist university's success.

However, some Buddhist groups cannot comprehend this. They expect the universities to preach Buddhism and little else. But actually college education has been tightly connected to world affairs for hundreds of years. A university is destined to be more than and different from a seminary. We have to respect the difference. It will not be proper to make a university into a seminary. Otherwise, Buddhist universities will be taken as indulgent and alien, and have no way to earn the support from the society and government and the respect from academic fields. Even though we have many ideals, they will be mistaken as preaching, instead of leaders of the new direction of Taiwan's college education.

So far, we are progressing well, especially on the case of Foguang University and Nanhua Management College, which has just started first recruitment. And I believe this can be taken as a milestone in the history of Taiwan's college education. Nanhua identifies itself as a Buddhist college more than as a Buddhist theological seminary, yet takes humanism as an important element of its core spirit. Taking Chinese shuyuan's^② tradition to enrich and reform Taiwan's current educational environment, Nanhua tries to reconstruct the sublimity of the ideal university.

Among the waves of educational reformation, we often find a voice asking for the renaissance of Chinese traditional shuyuan (書院) spirit. What is it after all? How do we get it under today's educational system?

Let us take a brief look at the Chinese traditional educational system first. It is said that school education began in ancient prehistoric China. The name for the primitive school is "Chengchun" [成均] until Chou Dynasty. It was fundamentally set for noble youth and it later became the Imperial College.^③ The ordinary citizens could not receive any formal education until Confucius (551-419 B. C.), who provided education for all people without discrimination. Thereafter, private schools became a parallel to the public schools. The phenomenon of all schools of thought contending for attention in the Epoch of Warring States (403-221 B. C.) was influenced by the flourishing of private schools.

After the First Emperor, Chin Shih Huang, unified China under the Chin dynasty (221-206 B. C.), he burned out the books and buried the scholars alive in order to control people's thoughts and speech. Attempting to retrieve the monopolistic imperial education, the First Emperor prohibited scholars from teaching in any private schools. But the Chin dynasty eventually perished and was replaced by the Han dynasty. Unlike Chin, Han allowed both public

② Shuyuan is a name for ancient Chinese private schools, starting at the end of Tang Dynasty (around 820 A. D.). Its influence even reached the educational system of Ming and Ching Dynasty (1368-1911 A. D.).

③ The Imperial College, Tai Hsueh, was a school set for the noble youth, especially for the heir of the crown. It was also the best national college at that time.

and private schools. The Imperial Court set Imperial College and doctorates^④ to cultivate quite an amount of scholars. Yet, it was also popular for erudite scholars to found their own private schools, studies like *chingsho* 「精舍」 or *chinglu* 「精廬」. According to historical records, some erudite masters' pupils were in a huge amount of several thousands. So we can deduce that the private schools were quite popular. Actually, a great part of their students were families whose descendants became the gentry in the South and North dynasties. Those gentry took the classics and decorum as their heirloom. They spread their knowledge and preserved tradition outside of the official educational system.

In Sui dynasty, a scholar Wang Tung (王通) founded his school at Hofen. Later many of his students became the elder statesmen participating in the founding of the Tang dynasty. But Tang set a system to select government officials from the attendees of the Civil Service Examination: Kochu (科舉). This system attracted most of the youth, and therefore expanded the number of public schools and caused the fade-out of private schools. Till the end of Tang dynasty, the chaos in politics deteriorated the quality of the public schools. In addition, the rulers of the following dynasty, Sung, had not done anything in building schools during the first eighty years of their reign. This emptiness of public education forced people who desired for knowledge to turn once more to the private schools. This was the beginning of shuyuans.

In Sung dynasty, shuyuans sometimes were also called *chingsho*, such as Mount Hsiang Shuyuan (象山書院), which was originally named Mount Ingtien Chingsho, and Kaoting Shuyuan (考亭書院), which was Luchou Chingsho. Shuyuans had always been indicated as the rival which spreaded knowledge freely, compared to the public schools which pushed the students into the mold of officials the government wanted.

Such was shuyuan. And the conflicts between it and the public schools never ended. Chin dynasty had prohibited the private schools. Similarly, shuyuans were suppressed by the government of Sung after they became popular. For example, the famous Confucian scholar Chu His had been forbidden to lecture-his lectures were called those of the "false school 「偽學」." In the sixteenth year of

④ An official rank, initiated in the Chin dynasty and conferred upon scholars of profound learning.

Chiaching, Ming dynasty (1537 A. D.), the Imperial Censor Yu Chucheng impeached Chan Juoshui for developing the "evil school [邪學]." The Imperial Court then dismantled Chan's shuyuan. The next year it happened again. During the Wanli years, Ming dynasty, the Prime Minister Chang Chucheng even gave an order to demolish all the shuyuans under the reign of Ming. He believed it was the only way to ensure the prosperity of the public schools and to unify the customs and culture. Moreover, the next prime minister, Wei Chunghsien, forged an imperial decree to demolish shuyuans in order to destroy the Tunglin Party by the way. After Ching dynasty started its reign, the Court gave its decree in the ninth year of Shun-chih: "Shuyuans and parties are prohibited."

The shuyuan education had always been prohibited and criticized as evil and false. But shuyuans still existed everywhere. Since the country's law cannot diminish them, it was eventually recognised that the more efficient solution must lie in admitting and reorganizing them into the government system. One of the methods was to bestow a tablet with honor upon the shuyuans. For instance, in the Ching dynasty, Emperor Kang His (康熙) bestowed a tablet engraved with complimentary: "Education with real wisdom in a sincere nature [學達性天]." upon Pailutung Shuyuan (白鹿洞書院), run by the disciples of Chu Hsi in Kiangsi, and "The spirit of education returns to innocence [學道還淳]." was conferred upon Tzeyang Shuyuan (紫陽書院) in Soochow. This sort of action indicated that though these shuyuans were not held by the Court, they were officially admitted. Another way was in letting the Imperial Court found shuyuans, too. For example, after the reign of Emperor Yung Cheng of the Ching dynasty, many public shuyuans appeared: Lienchih Shuyuan in Chihli, Chungshan Shuyuan in Kiangsi, Changhan in Hupeh, Chihfeng in Fukien, Chingyang in Shansi, Kuanchung in Shensi, Chengchiang in Szechwan, Wuhua in Yunnan etc. These shuyuans were actually public schools; they were simply founded with appropriate labels.

From the view of a governor, the function of education was supposed to suit the needs of the ruler. The private schools had their own thoughts which were different and therefore "false and evil." It was best to prohibit the founding of shuyuans to avoid any disturbance of the educational system. This phenomenon is still quite serious even into the present time of change and reform. Under this circumstance, the school in Ching dynasty became a unit of the gov-

ernment's authority, so that the teachers were called school officials (hsuehkuans) and military instructors (chaokuans). The students entered schools according to their domiciles; the school officials could not receive any students outside his school district. There was not real education: no lecture was held actually. What the students learnt were skills for the Civil Service Examination. They read classics, practiced the formal writing, and took tests on time. In the big courses, they practiced the eight-legged essay (pa-ku-wen). In the small courses, they had tests on poetry, the old literary style, notations on the classics, and questions and themes.^⑤ Besides these, there were official courses and religious courses. The former were tested by the officials of the local government, and the latter by the religious supervisors. Those "schools" were more like po-hsi-pans for the Civil Service Examination than educational institutes. The situation was quite like the high schools nowadays: the students get into schools according to their domiciles; the deans of the schools are appointed by the government; the content of education is completely for the College Entrance Examination. They have year courses, month courses, big courses, and small courses, too. This is not a healthy and complete education.

Sprouted in the decay of public schools, shuyuans educated their students in a completely different attitude. The scholars built Ching-shoes and shuyuans based on their own academic philosophy and unique educational ideal. Thus, shuyuans existed to elucidate thoughts and to explicate and advocate their theories. It was not their purpose to help the students pass the exam and then get a meteoric rise to the official career. What attracted the students was the founder scholars' academic achievement and ideal. So the students could choose their teachers in spite of the long distance between the shuyuans and their homes.

As for the educational methodology, shuyuans emphasized lectures mainly held by the master. There even were workshops every month. So we can find the written records of lectures in shuyuans today, but nothing was left behind in the public schools.

The main difference between shuyuans and schools is the academic intention. The schools were founded by the government

⑤ The eight-legged essay, poetry, the old literary style, notations on the classics, and questions and themes were all subjects of the Civil Service Examination.

and normally located near the yamen-the government offices. They taught students how to pass the exam and become officials. What they taught was for the practical use in the political career. Pan Ku (班固)^⑥ had already hit the nail on the head in his History of the Han Dynasty《漢書》: "the Imperial College thrived by the convenience of getting position and wealth. The students went there for getting a high rank in the Civil Service Examination and a profitable future. Studying was merely a steppingstone to success."

This was the reason that Huang Tsung-his in his *The Solutions for the Chaotic Society* (Ming-i Tai Fan Lu 明夷待訪錄) upbraided: "Tempting the youth by wealth and position, the so-called schools, actually a preliminary battlefield for the Civil Service Examination, have lost their intrinsic nature of education and become tools of the Court... Therefore, people chose shuyuans for education instead of the public schools." This was why China had the most ancient college education yet the country's erudite scholars were rarely cultivated by the Imperial College. And the rise of shuyuans was based on the same background.

Shuyuans were designed for a completely different educational purpose from the public schools. The design was neither for raising tools and slaves^⑦ of the Court, nor for offering the students satisfaction of wealth and position. Rather, they were set for the clarification of reason and studies. Although shuyuans were often on a small scale (usually with a couple of tens of teachers and students teaching in four or five classrooms, not like the Imperial College, which could have tens of thousands of students), there was more academic sincerity and educational effect arising amidst the encouragement among the friends learning together. It was not coincidental that most of the famous erudite scholars and philosophers in Chinese history received their education in shuyuans.

We have been embracing an ideal to extend and enhance the traditional shuyuan's spirit from the very beginning of Foguang University's foundation. From the contrast between shuyuans and the public schools, we can easily find that the differences between Foguang University and the others which were the products of

⑥ Pan Ku (32-92 A. D.) completed the History of the Han Dynasty (Han Shu 漢書) begun by his father.

⑦ The word slave, Nutsai, was often used by officials referring to themselves when addressing the emperor, especially in the Ching dynasty.

Buddhist Universities, The Hope of the Higher Education

Taiwan's contemporary educational system is actually similar to the differences between shuyuans and the public schools. Mr. Huang Tsung-hsi supposed that the rise of shuyuans was due to the public schools' failing to offer real and sincere education. Now, in Taiwan, it is also higher education's serious problem-colleges become similar to the ancient public schools instead of shuyuans. It was this problem and tendency which inspired us to answer the call by founding such a different university: Foguang University.