

Commemorative Lecture

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“I am deeply honored by the bestowment of the Fukuoka Asian Cultural Prize and wish to express my gratitude to the people concerned and the citizens of Fukuoka.

If I may begin with my origin, I was born on January 19, 1925 in Chuk Sun Dong near an ancient palace in Seoul, the Republic of Korea. My mother was from a prosperous family and her ancestors have served as civil officers for generations. Since my mother was not in good health, I spent my childhood with my maternal grandmother. My mother was an affectionate and gentle person. My father was a man of few words, but always watched me grow up with love. My mother's family lived in a mansion that had three gates in Kong Duk Dong and I used to play in the large yard surrounded by three gates — a small, medium and large one. My sweet memories of carefree childhood were, however, shut off at the age of six when my mother died of a disease. After her death, I was raised by my great-grandmother on my mother's side until I was in the 4th grade. Then my great-grandmother died at the age of 82. I still recall that she taught me many important things and I am grateful to her for having disciplined me in an appropriate manner. Because of her, I made good scores at school and was a good student.

By the way, the main event in my life occurred on August 15, 1945. That day, my homeland was liberated from the colonial rule of Japan. I was 20 years old when this historical event took place. It opened my eyes and I felt as if a whole new world had appeared in front of me. Fifty years have passed since then and we celebrate the Day of Kwan Bok (Restoration of Light) this year. It has also been 50 years since I started teaching and decided to pursue the in-depth study of education.

It is needless to say that the last 50 years have seen a series of big changes in the world, but I would like to stress that the Republic of Korea has gone through such hardships all these years.

The reason I could continue to pursue my career under these difficult circumstances was that I had a strong desire to establish a new theoretical system in the study of education as a 'study for the future.' I later named the system *Kichojui*=Foundationism.

I do not intend to elaborate on what Foundationism is at today's lecture. I would like to talk about instead the key words I have been thinking about lately under the theme of Invitation to the Study of Education.

First of all, I wish to talk about experiencing.

I spent my junior high school through college days (1938-1948) as a swimmer. I remember myself being surprised to learn that I was nominated as a regular member to participate in the London Olympic Games. It turned out, however, all

the team members achieved bad records before the Games and our participation was cancelled. Eventually, the Republic of Korea officially entered the Olympic Games in the category of swimming for the first time at the Rome Olympics.

Through those ten-years' experience as a swimmer, I learned one very important thing, that is 'when you focus your energies on something, you have to concentrate on one point.'

If you are a swimmer, you may understand that you have to concentrate your energies on the central part of your spine. When you do it right, your force will spread across your arms and legs, even finger tips and toes. You should focus your energies on your spine, not on the fingers nor toes. Therefore, when we teach beginners how to swim, we tell them to loosen their arms and legs at first and concentrate their energies on their spines. This way a paradox, 'to loosen is to concentrate,' becomes true. If you can accept this paradox, you will be able to fortify the strategic points not only in swimming, but also in any matters. Although it may look as if you were saving your energies you are actually concentrating your power. I suppose those who can achieve the essence of this secret must have gone through a series of discipline and hardship. In my case too, it took me a lot of hard work until I discovered it is the spine that I should focus my energies on in swimming.

As you may be aware, there are three factors in swimming : buoyant force, driving force and breathing. When you hear the word, swimming, you may think of water at first. If you stay under the water, you are diving. To swim, you have to float and you need buoyance to float. It may be not too difficult just to float: even a log can float in the water. To keep swimming, you need to move forward with the help of driving force and breathe to keep swimming. Breathing is an important factor along with buoyance and driving force in swimming. An excellent swimmer is good at employing the three factors in harmony while concentrating his or her energies on the spine.

I have learned a few precious lessons through learning how to swim. Lao-tzu praises the virtue of water in one of his teachings, 'The supreme good is like water.' I fully support this saying. Water can change its shape, in sphere or cubic, depending upon the shape of the vessel. Whatever the shape is, however, the essence of water stays the same. Although water is very soft, it can pierce through a hard rock by dripping onto it incessantly. Also a drip of water can constitute an ocean by going down a stream. It indicates the magnanimity of water and manifests a proverb, 'Softness overcomes hardness.'

Today I would like to take the honor to introduce to you the three phrases I learned as lessons for life for the first time in a public occasion.

1. Do not float

I just mentioned a word, buoyance, as one of the three factors of swimming, but what do I mean by 'Do not float?' I suppose a little explanation may be needed for that. Apparently, it is crucial to be able to float in swimming. It is especially a very important skill for a beginner to acquire. On the other hand, when you swim for a long distance in occasions such as competition, you

sometimes get too exhausted to swim any further and have no choice than just to float. It is an evidence that you lost your driving force. What I mean by saying not to float is that you should not lose your driving force. It is also a warning against aging too soon.

2. Do not make noise

In Korea, there is a proverb that an empty car makes more noise than a loaded one. If you shake a bottle filled with content, it makes no noise, but you will hear some noise when you shake a half empty bottle. Likewise in swimming, the poorer your swimming skill is, the more noise you will make beating the water. If you are a really good swimmer, you make little noise because you are kicking the water in the most efficient manner. Once again, it is very important for a good swimmer 'not to make noise.' People call this era that of public relations, but I wonder if it is very nice to be loud all the time. I believe your real ability is much more important than how you advertise yourself. Your achievements and accomplishments are what really matters.

3. Do not strike at the air

Needless to say, if you don't kick the water properly, you can not move forward. A good swimmer proceeds by kicking the water efficiently. If you skip practicing even a day, you may feel water differently the next time you swim. You feel as if water was going through your fingers wastefully. This theory applies to life too — we should live sincerely every day. If we wish to accomplish something in life, we should cherish every day and try to live in earnest, trying never to strike at the air.

'Do not float,' 'Do not make noise' and 'Do not strike at the air' — these three phrases explain the outlook on life I have acquired through my experience as a swimmer. Now I would like to talk about my core philosophy in regard to the formation of personality next.

Ladies and gentlemen, what do you think the core philosophy of personality formation for the Japanese is? There are typical words which represent the Japanese character such as *monono-aware*(pathos), *wabi*(taste for simple and quiet), *sabi*(elegant simplicity) and *amae*(presumption upon someone else's kindness). However, the philosophy may differ for each individual and all the Japanese may not share the same idea about the philosophy.

I am sure that everyone has his own philosophy and every one has his own words that supports his policy. I call those words the core philosophy of forming personality.

Philosophy of that kind has been presented in the teaching of the sages since ancient times. The most important teachings for me above all are the Confucian principle of benevolence, the moral doctrine of Taoism, Buddha's teaching and the love of Jesus Christ. I am not elaborating on what the essence of these principles are today. Instead, I would like to mention briefly that benevolence is developed into the system of Confucianism and love into Christianity. Many people in the world are leading their lives trying to manifest their principles as Confucianists, Taoists, Buddhists or Christians. This way people are deepening their core policy

both inwardly and outwardly.

Needless to say, the core philosophy of forming personality is not limited only to Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and Christianity. More importantly, whatever the name of the philosophy may be, people always have some part of it in their character. My learning that there is one crucial point on which you focus your energies is one of the examples.

For the Koreans, there are words such as *hahn*, *hanunim*, *mutt* and the principle of *hong ik ingan*. Taking this opportunity, I would like to give you a brief explanation of these words.

There are at least six characters for the sound, *hahn* and they mean : light, bright, right, straight, various and big. By the way, my family name also reads as *hahn*. *Hanunim* is a word to praise the heaven and it actually means the God. Therefore, for the Koreans, the word means the absolute being which disciplines their daily lives as the indwelling God.

Mutt is a Hangul word which means stylishness or chic, very close to a Japanese word, *iki*. I define the word *mutt* a little pretentiously as 'a creation and manifestation of the supreme value that would appear once for all.' The principle of *hong ik ingan* or man of public good is presented under Article 1 of the Education Law of the Republic of Korea and I give it a new interpretation — the principle of *hong ik ingan* is a *mutt* of the Education Law.

As I said, the core philosophy of the formation of personality is called by different names, depending upon the religion, state and individual.

What I would like to stress today is the philosophy of 'foundation' as one of the core philosophies of personality formation with an educational viewpoint.

The word 'foundation' is a key word that is often used very naturally in our daily lives. People often say, 'In architecture, the most important thing is the foundation.' Or, teachers often tell their students that they have to learn the foundation first. When parents come to the home room teacher and ask why their child can't keep high grades, the teacher would say to them, 'Don't worry too much. If your child can rebuild his foundation, it will be all right.' The teacher is telling the parents that the child's grades will be improved if he can master the essence of the subject. What I would like to emphasize here is that the foundation is tantamount to the truth, therefore, the foundation is important. Where do you think the gap between the developed countries and the developing nations lies then? I think it lies in the difference of the foundation between the two. In other words, the difference lies in the gap of the manifestation of the supreme value.

In my view, there are five educational implications in the word, 'foundation':

1. Foundation as the core philosophy of the formation of personality
2. Foundation as the truth
3. Foundation as the logic of creation
4. Foundation as a standard of educational evaluation
5. Foundation as a principle of education

'Foundationism' is the system I have invented based upon my own experiences and wisdom of our predecessors in education and implies that the

core philosophy of personality formation in education is 'foundation.'

Now I would like to talk about a compass needle of the educational world.

As you may be aware, education is a basic human project which molds human beings into human beings. The problem will be which direction education should guide people to. In other words, what value education should provide with people as the good.

There are two types of teaching values in education. One is to teach values by 'imposing' them. The belief in this teaching style is that teachers should select and teach appropriate values to their students since they know nothing. What lies underneath it is autocracy exercised in a totalitarian society. What stands opposite to this is 'go-as-you-please' type of teaching. Its attitude is based upon the policy that value is not what you should impose upon students: you should leave them alone to learn values and respect their individual personalities. This is rather democratic. However, there remains the question whether students can make a wise choice without being given alternatives. This is where I suppose the need of a compass needle arises.

A compass needle is an apparatus mountain climbers use to find directions. It is also an indispensable tool of navigation for planes and vessels. If you don't have an accurate compass needle and are given a wrong direction, the result might be disastrous.

I wondered if we could provide a compass needle in the world of education, and presented an educational value system based upon foundationism. I called it the theory of '1 core, 3 principles and 6 concepts.' Foundationism is based upon an 'educational philosophy which functions as a theoretical guidance.' It belongs to neither 'imposing' nor 'go-as-you-please' type of teaching. It belongs to the third one — 'guidance' type of value teaching.

In the 'guidance' type of teaching, a compass needle shows all directions to the users so that they can choose the one they want. Teachers neither force educational values on students, nor leave everything up to students. Instead, teachers formulate educational values that have been already discovered and clarified in the past and provide a compass needle so that students can select a value they like on their own. I believe this guidance type of teaching deserves attention. What guidance can we as teachers give to our students then? I suggest teachers and scholars of education in the coming generations further create and offer educational guidance in specific forms. The educational value system I offer in my theory of foundationism is one of the alternatives. Let me introduce you to the theory, '3 principles and 6 concepts' once again. In this theory, the structure of human consciousness is seized as spherical and tradition, subject and reform are considered to have existed in three dimensions in history. In other words, 'foundationism' is a theory of personality formation based upon the harmony of tradition and reform.

Corresponding to the three words — tradition, subject and reform — I use three principles of 'time, freedom and order.' The principles are further broken down into the six concepts: culture, life, intelligence, personality, cooperation and

service. These six concepts can be rephrased as 'sacred, health, truth, good, wealth and beauty.' When the theory of '1 core, 3 principles and 6 concepts' or the educational value system of foundationism is presented in an educational compass needle form, it is offered exactly as a piece of 'guidance.'

Fourthly, I would like to talk about the construction of an educational state.

When I say 'educational state,' I mean two things. One is that I wish that each country of today's world works towards constructing an educational state as an ideal nation. And the other is the hope that the world becomes an educational state as a whole.

Why should the whole world be an 'educational state' then?

The new world order is often talked about these days, but they have been talking mostly about the 'logic of power' and 'logic of money'. 'Logic of power' means military and political power. Historically, mankind has been power-oriented since the Warring States periods of ancient times. The imperialism from the 19th to 20th centuries is an example of the world order controlled by the logic of power. Since the end of the cold war, the logic of money has escalated causing trade frictions between nations. Furthermore, there is a common factor between the new world order controlled by military and political power or 'the logic of power' and the one ruled by economic power or 'the logic of money.' It can be seen in the fact that one nation is ruling many other countries. This power structure has repeatedly appeared in the history of mankind. Therefore, if the world is still controlled by power or money, we can not call the world order 'new' since we see no grand ideal of coexistence and coprosperity of mankind realized. What is the third logic that will replace the logic of power and money then? Herewith I wish to advocate 'the theory of *mutt*.'

The Korean word '*mutt*' means 'creation' or 'the principle of a man of public good.' It also means 'foundation' which I advocate in my foundationism. You may understand it is equivalent to one of the three principles of a classic work entitled, *The Great Learning* or *Daxue* — 'stay in ultimate good.' Staying in ultimate good is the supreme state of mind and it will be ideal to achieve that state. In other words, the principle of *mutt* is an idea in which the construction of an educational state is considered an ideal act.

I normally use the following formula to explain the principle of *mutt*:

<i>gam</i>	x	<i>maumssi</i>	x	<i>somssi</i>	=	<i>mutt</i>
essence	x	sentiment	x	elegance	=	<i>mutt</i> (or excellene)
material	x	sentiment	x	technique	=	creation
tradition	x	subject	x	reform	=	'foundation' of foundationism

In Korea, we call phenomena, such as opening up a new path, creating a new object and breaking a record, all *mutt chida*. '*Mutt chida*' is an exclamatory phrase which means 'there is *mutt*' and used to applause a new invention or discovery. On the other hand, for imitations or fake ones, a blunt phrase '*Mutt ubtta*,' which means 'there is no *mutt*,' is used. Here you can see the word, *mutt*, is used to judge or evaluate matters and things.

In my view, the 21st century should be 'the century of education' and 'the

construction of an educational state' should be aimed at based upon the principle of *mutt*. An educational state ruled under the true new world order is an ideal nation where the coexistence and coprosperity of mankind are realized. That is why I stress that the study of education should be opened to the public. When all the human beings of the world can achieve the formation of character in an educational way, permanent world peace shall be achieved. By suggesting the study of education, I would like to conclude my commemorative lecture today. Thank you for your attention."