



智性

辯論

專訪

對話

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Interview with Dr. Kwok Pak Nin, Samson: Dialogue, Debate, Intelligence

通識「與人文對話」的最後一課，郭柏年博士（Samson）安排了師生辯論環節。題目是「吃肉的人在道德上有問題嗎？」班上廿五個學生自由選擇立場，舉手發言。不論同學是正方或反方，郭博士都以相反立場回應。同學戲言這是「一對廿五的挑戰」，來回論辯無間斷。

郭博士是2016年通識教育模範獎的得獎人之一，同學大多稱他為Samson。頒獎典禮於今年四月舉行。典禮完結後，不少學生排隊和他合照，都是受教於他的「與人文對話」或新亞書院通識「學生為本教學與研討」（SOT）課程的。

Samson出身於香港中文大學哲學系，在2012年加入中大的通識教育部擔任全職講師，除了上文講的「與人文對話」和新亞書院通識「學生為本教學與研討」課程，他還任教哲學系的「批判思考」大學通識科目。上過他的課的同學，都會對他清晰思維和一針見血的語言留下深刻印象。他能夠把學生說話中的論點和概念釐清，把討論的核心清楚地帶出來。有江湖上的傳聞，指他在學期的最後一堂課親身上陣與學生辯論，以一人之力迎戰二十五個學生，是真是假？《大通報》記者就特意向Samson查證，證明屬實：「這場辯論是今年新加入的，因為學生說之前都是同學之間的辯論，我就坐在一旁打分，沒有參與和介入他們說不好，想我都落場玩一次。所以就加入一次師生辯論。」結果，全班廿五個同學就「吃肉的人在道德上有問題嗎？」和Samson辯論，可以自由選擇立場。不論學生是正方或反方，Samson都以相反立場回應。

由此讀者應該會感受到Samson教學的獨特之處。在頒獎禮中，Samson談到自己的教學方法是以鼓勵同學辯論，學習開口與他人對話為核心。「其實中大的學生的智力和學術質素是非常高，但他們的習慣是不喜歡說話。而如何去令他們說話，最好的方法是在課程設計上需要他們表達和溝通。」他在課程中加入了辯論的環節，一組在堂上負責報告，另外就有一組同學負責反駁；同學在備課時要閱讀文章，包括正反兩邊的論點，同學必須消化雙方的理解，去組織自己的立場。

「你有玩過彈子跳棋嗎？或者有沒有下過象棋？」在他眼中，辯論如下棋，同學最好先預想對方的思路，包括觀點的遞進、援引的理論和論據，才能又跳又擋去應對駁斥。

在Samson的課堂上，辯論不只是唇槍舌劍、雄辯滔滔去挑別人邏輯毛病，而是有他的一套規矩和哲學。「上堂的時候如果同學要批評一個講法，我會請同學先將對方的講法

演繹得為合理，然後再請同學設想一下對方會如何回應你的批評，而你也可以如何回應對方的回應。只有通過這個方法，你的批評才可以說是公允。」在這個方法之下，同學能夠通過兩邊反復的思考去訓練自己的思維，而且同學更會學懂如何去聆聽別人，去了解對方真正的想法。象棋界中，能猜到對手十步棋路就是王者；於通識課的辯論，他特別欣賞能挖掘乃至強化對方論點的學生。

重視辯論，不止是為了訓練學生邏輯思辯能力，Samson的教學是要培養學生成為一個知識份子——不止是知識上，而是具備知識分子的能力和態度。

他認為，課堂上有理有節的辯論能夠培養學生認真而開放的求學態度。「通識教育不只是訓練學生的能力，亦是價值的教育。作為知識分子，應有一個基本的求學態度：要開放、持平，亦要批判。如何可以做到？要先由老師做起，老師在教學的時候應該是『只問理由，不問立場』；亦要鼓勵同學多表達，要儘量把同學的講法詮釋到最合理，不要矮化學生，使他們勇於批評。」

四年的大學教育，學習不同思想方法，很多學生都會問究竟這些與生活有何關係。學習一些古老的智慧如儒家經典《論語》，究竟在今時今日有什麼意義？Samson在課堂上會強調學生要懂得應用所學，把抽象的思維融入生活。「我教邏輯課的時候，會教學生如何用邏輯方法，去分析現今名人和高官說話的謬誤，讓同學知道邏輯在生活中是可以應用的。學生其實都知道他們說話有問題，但是『知其然不知其所以然』，這些例子就讓他們知道實際上是什麼問題。」「教經典課的時候，例如教《論語》，學生會質疑這些古典中國儒家講法和現今社會有何關係。我會討論如現今大陸將孝道引入法律條文的措施，用實際例子和同學討論：究竟把道德滲入法律對社會有什麼影響？」

為人師表，必定對學生有所期望，希望他們在社會中可以成為一個更好的人，Samson致力於教學，花盡心思去啟迪同學，是源於他對通識教育的一個信念：「通識教育最重要的目標是透過不斷和不同的人、不同觀點的對話，來加深彼此的認識，批判大家的立場，從而達至真正的理解。」中大通識教育就正正希望學生可以不止在自己的專業中精益求精，亦能夠明白自己身處的社會文化，通過廣闊的眼界去了解自己，活出一個有價值的人生。最後Samson用一句精闢的話總結他對學問和個人的追求：「只有了解，才可以超越，個人如是，文化亦是如是，學科亦然。」

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In the last lesson of *In Dialogue with Humanity*, Dr. Kwok Pak Nin, Samson held a teacher-student debate session on “Is eating meat immoral?” The 25 students in class could choose their own stance and express their opinion. Dr. Kwok gave his response in the opposite stance no matter that student was from the affirmative or negative side. Students casually remarked this non-stop debate as “a battle between one and twenty-five”.

Dr. Kwok, who is called Samson by most of his students, was one of the winners of Exemplary Teaching Award in General Education. After the presentation ceremony, many students, who were taught by him in either *In Dialogue with Humanity* or a New Asia College’s GE course – *Student-oriented Teaching and Seminar (STOT)*, queued up to take a pictures with him.

Samson graduated from the Department of Philosophy at CUHK, and joined the Office of University General Education as a full-time lecturer in 2012. Apart from the above-mentioned *In Dialogue with Humanity* and *STOT*, he is also responsible for teaching a GE course – *Critical Thinking*. Students who have taken his course will definitely be impressed by his clear mind and sharp opinion. He can articulate the ar-

guments and concepts from students’ speech, and then bring out the focus of the discussion clearly.

There’s a rumor that Samson participated in a one on twenty-five debate with students in the last lesson. Is that true or not? Reporter from *GEF News* got verified from Samson and that rumor turned out to be true: “(This debate) is a new event added this year. Students said I was sitting beside and grading their performance only, and did not participate in and intervene in the debate among students. They hoped I could join the debate. So I joined” After that, the whole class with 25 students debated with Samson on “Is eating meat immoral?”. They chose their own stance and express their opinion. Dr. Kwok gave his response at the opposite side no matter that student was from the affirmative or negative side.

From the above example, you may know more about the uniqueness of Samson’s teaching. In the presentation ceremony, Samson said that his teaching method was to encourage students to debate, the focus would be learning to have a dialogue with others. “To be frank, the intelligence and academic quality of CUHK students are very high. However, they are not used to having a dialogue with others. And the best way to make them talk is to design the course with a need to express and communicate.” He added a debate session in his course, in which one group needed to present in-class, and the other group needed to rebut the viewpoints. Students needed to read articles, with the viewpoints both in the affirmative and negative sides, to prepare for the lessons. They must digest the understandings from both sides to organize their own stance.

“Have you ever played checkers or Chinese chess?” For him, debate is like playing chess. It would be better for students to anticipate others’ thoughts, including the development of arguments, theories cited and the support, so that they would be able to defend and give rebuttals.

In Samson’s lessons, debates are

not only finding others’ logical fallacies, but also have a set of rules and philosophy behind. “If students need to criticize a certain claim or argument in lessons, I will invite them to present that claim or argument in the most reasonable way and think on the way others’ may response to your criticism, in which you will have an idea on how to response to others. Only criticism given by this method can be said to be just and fair.” With this thinking method, students can train their mind by dialectic thinking and learn to be a good listener to understand others’ real thoughts. In the world of Chinese chess, a player who can anticipate opponent’s ten more steps will be the winner. And in the debate of a GE course, he really appreciated the students who can reveal or even support others’ arguments.

In Samson’s teaching, a great importance has been attached to debate. This is not only the training of students’ ability on logical speculations, but also to cultivate students as an intellectual – who acquire abundant knowledge as well as the ability and attitude an intellectual need.

In his opinion, a reasonable debate in class can cultivate students’ learning attitude in terms of seriousness and openness. “General education is an education on values other than just a training on students’ ability. As an intellectual, we should have basic learning attitude, which should be open, just, and criticizing. But how can we achieve all these elements? Teachers should play a leading role in which they should “ask for reasons but not stance” in their lessons. Also, they have to encourage students to express their own viewpoints more by interpreting students’ saying in the most reasonable way and not dwarfing them. And then they will be willing to criticize.”

In the four-year university education, students may ask what’s the relationship between the different thinking methods learnt and their life. We have learnt some ancient wisdoms such as the Confucian classics *The Analects*, but what’s the importance of that in today’s context? Samson empha-

sized the applications of abstract thoughts in daily life in his lessons. “In my logic lessons, I taught students to analyze the fallacies of the famous people and officials with some logical methods, which showed them those methods are applicable to daily lives. Many students know their speeches are problematic, but they don’t know the reason behind. These examples can tell them where the actual problem is.” “In my classics lessons, for example in the teaching of *The Analects*, students may question on the relationship between the Chinese Confucian sayings in these ancient classics and the current society. I will discuss with them the filial piety introduced into the law by mainland China and use these real-life examples to discuss the topic: What is the impact on the society if we introduce filial piety into the law?”

As a teacher, he/she must have expectations on students to be a better person in our society. Samson is devoted in teaching and does his best to inspire students. This is because of his belief in general education: “The ultimate goal of general education is to deepen our mutual understanding through dialogues with different people and viewpoints, and to achieve genuine understanding by criticizing different stances.” The General education at CUHK encourages students not only to strive for achievements in their own specialty, but also understand the society and culture they are currently within and understand themselves with a broadened vision, and finally have a life with values. At last, Samson used a wise saying to conclude his pursuit of knowledge and individual development: “You can only be outstanding with understanding. This applies to personal development, culture, and also learning.”

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