Death of the American Academic

Document # DRAFT-120012
Version 0.1
September 12, 2007

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1 Part of Khodzadgi

This article is part of tha series of Khodzadegi (Self-Toxxication) articles.

The trust of Khodzadegi is that when the balance between self and society is overly in favor of the individual, as it is in America to the extreme, professions start to die.

2 Death of the American Academic

Academics play an important role in the well being of the society. Their role falls into two broad categories:

1. Teaching
2. Research

The process that has made the American economic model the American societal model has corrupted both teaching and research.

I use my own school (and my son's and my sister's and likely my daughter's) – University of Washington – as an example and case study.

2.1 Corruption in American Teaching Universities

Students are raw material.

Education is about becoming a better person.

Education is different from training.

Civilized societies (Iran, China, India, Japan, even France, ...) consider cultivation of the young as the society's responsibility. There, if the student has the brain, she gets into the right university. And, comes out a better person. Money is irrelevant. She is regarded as society's asset and her cultivation is in society's interest.

In America, money is everything. Even when it comes to education. Not values, but money rule American Universities.

Average American student is 40K in debt coming out of the University.

And what the American student is taught are values of American business.

UW Commencement June 2008: The celebrated model engineering student had gotten a patent as part of work study.

At no point was that model student thought that getting a patent is in conflict with academic values.

Defining values for the students: UW CS department conference rooms – Bill Gates Room, Paul Allen Room. There are no Linus Trevold room, no Richard Stallman room, no Knuth room. The values being promoted in the CS department are not quality. They are the values of financiers.

In the context of teaching the academic communities goals are:

1) Education – Cultivate the student towards becoming a better Human (Education, Teach, Books,)

2) Training – Prepare them to become members of professions That envolves two pieces. First become skilled in the profession. Second protect the profession. Becoming skilled in a profession involves mastery of tools. Choice of tools is critical. Tools for Conviviality. Windows vs Linux. Google email service. Training vs Education.

3) Instill the right set of values. VC values vs science – Indoctrination / Equalization – Other than money as values

2.2 Corruption in American Research Institutions

A great deal of modern university research is lacking in what one might call its ”integrity of purpose.”

The ”processes” of contemporary academic research have become corrupt.

Here are some readily apparent manifestations:

2.2.1 Wrong Side of Patent

The existance of the patent debate is understandable in the industry but not in academia.

Pursuit of knowledge is in conflict with ownership of knowledge.

Being in favor of patents and participating in IPR regime is in conflict with being an academic.

Yet, American Academia loves patents.

http://www.washington.edu/faculty/facsenate/handbook/04-05-07.html

As if it is a matter of fact, UW PATENT, INVENTION, AND COPYRIGHT POLICY section 1 B. says:

“... it is generally in the best interests of the University and the public that patents be obtained and/or licenses granted as described in this policy. ...”

Great! pseudo-intellectuals as tools of financiers, now speak on behalf of the public and say that a corrupt model is in the best interest of the public.

This is what happens when the economic model is the societal model.

Patents are NOT in the best interest of the public. When such statements appear in leading American Public universities, rest assured that financiers are riding on top of the academics. The rest is just choreography.

UW CS Department has the list of dotCon era spin and flippers and pump and dumpers at the enterance to the building as role models and leaders. Let me pick one as an example: Greg Amadon.

Tera Beam: The quintessential spin and flip. Nothing of value got created.

2.2.2 Wrong Side of Copyright

Accepting that public academic work may be restricted from being copied verbatim is in conflict with being an academic.

When it comes to fundumental topics of Copyright and Patent; a scolar, an academic goes through the analysis and comes out with clarity.

Sharing of knowledge and information are academic values. Restricting access to information through copyright is in conflict with academic values.

While being on the wrong side of copyright should be shameful for any academic but particularly shameful when teaching text books are copyrighted. In which case separate from the university, the teacher is milking the student.

Include text from article by Rupert Gatti that was published in the Cambridge Alumni Magazine, Issue 62, Lent 2011. It is available online from http://www.openbookpublishers.com/.

2.2.3 Irrelvance of Tenure

What good is freedom and independence if it is not exercised.

Underlying theory of tenure is meant to protect the genuine principles of academic freedom. The academic is made secure and in return we expect the academic to be independent, exercise intellectual integrity, take risks and even challenge conventional thinking.

At any rate, it certainly does not warrant the enormous amount of emotional energy it engenders. It is among the class of things that can be discredited entirely, by simple, personal act of fiat.

2.2.4 Publications List – Low Quality – Economically Driven

Generally speaking, academic output is of very low quality. One of the most readily apparent manifestations of this can be seen in the quality of the end results – academic papers.

A great deal of academic research is driven by motivations other than genuine scholarship. It represents little more than the shallow pursuit of prestige.

But much of the research that I have seen is oriented towards pleasing the funding agencies' agenda and seem to have little value other than to establish the so called researcher's commitment to the establishment and to rack up publications, advance careers, and pay mortgages.

2.2.5 Economicaly Dictated Research Topics

A large part of modern academic research consists of an endless grind of fundraising, enterprise management for a project of intensely narrow focus and questionable relevance, coupled with a relentless pressure to publish superficial and frequently substandard papers.

And the research is usually narrowly targetted towards profit not science. There is a Big market for Viagra so Let's research Viagra.

2.2.6 When Confused Value-Less Foreigners Become American Academics

Number of foreign students in US is large. Percent of foreign born teachers and researchers in American Academic institutions is high.

American universities function as indoctrination vehicles of American empire. Take best and brightest raw easterners and convert them into indoctorinated western values – supremacy of free markets, capitalism, IPR, ... Come in young – value-less. Indoctorinated – return back as agents of neo-colonialism.

Buy into the capitalist model. Raw smarts, quickly brain washed.

Ambition, makes them even more corrupt than American "American Academics".

3 groups in particular are focussed on to demonstrate their influence on the American Academic character and to also demonstrate the way that those groups have been impacted by the American Academic character.

1) Chinese – because 1 out of every 5 human is chinese. 2) Indians – beacuse so many of them are American Academics. 3) Iranins – becasue there used to be many of them who were American Academics.

The American-Indian Academics Profile

[By American-Indians, I am refereing to peaple from India who have chosen to be Americans. Not the Natives of America which have been destroyed.]

Indians as a people never recovered from colonialism. They have not had the equivalent of the Khomeini experience – where the old masters were full rejected. After the rape, they seem happy to co-habitate with those who raped them.

Many Indians teach in American universities. The interests of Indian immigrants in the USA and interests of the vast masses in India are, after all, quite distinct.

Their impact on the American Academic character is to make it even uglier.

Winston Churchill says the difference between northern Ireland and India is that in India with a majority of uneducated and a corrupt minority of educated it is easy to colonialize.

The American-Iranina Academics Profile

For many of them, their greatest service to Iran has been to have stayed out of Iran.

The American-Chines Academics Profile

Taiwanese are irrelevant.

Mainland china doing a good job. Only for grad school with every incentive to return.

Send the student out only when his character is somewhat formed.