

Lu Yi Chuang, Fellow Classmates and Friends:

As we gather together on this solemn occasion in memory of the late Professor Tsou Tang, I am both sad and joyous. I am sad because Professor Tsou has left us. But, I am also happy to see so many former classmates gathered here today to reminisce and share together the moments and events when Professor Tsou touched our lives when we were young men and women here in Chicago.

I remember some thirty years ago, when as a result of an admissions policy to admit more foreign students into its undergraduate student body, that a small group of Chinese students from Hong Kong began to appear on the Midway campus.

To this small group of undergraduate students from Hong Kong, Professor Tsou and Lu Yi Chuang became their teachers and friends. I think many of us still remember that life as an undergraduate student in Chicago was stimulating, challenging and not always easy to adapt to. For the Chinese undergraduates from Hong Kong, their life in Chicago also coincided with the search for understanding of modern Chinese history and its meaning to them. Professor Tsou and Lu Yi Chuang played an important part in the development of the social, intellectual and moral life of this group of students, perhaps without realizing it and without ever intending to do so.

In 1971, a few of us decided to form a summer study group to learn about contemporary Chinese history and asked him for advice as to what we should be reading. He did not give us a long reading list or even a selected one. Rather he told us that in whatever we read we had to be aware of the background of the author, his motivation in writing the study, that we should appreciate the differences between the approach of a historian and a political scientist, and why there is a distinction between China watching and social science analysis and why both are useful in different ways. We did not exactly get what we wanted but we left better prepared in embarking on our summer project. Many years later we came to appreciate even more his way of teaching us critical thinking.

Professor Tsou never taught undergraduate courses when we were undergraduate students, but most of us took his courses anyway because we were interested in China. A number of us recall the experience of going to his office to request permission to enroll in his courses. I can still vividly recall the image of him leaning forward from his chair, peering through his thick spectacles, with a smile on his face, a pipe in one hand and a pencil in the other and asked, "Are you confident enough to take this course?" And when we said yes, even though we really were not, he leaned back in his chair beaming and said, "Very good." I suspected that he saw through us, but was prepared to let us try it. We were greatly relieved and encouraged. We worked very hard to survive in his courses, but it was a very rewarding experience. The course turned out to be very different from what we had expected. Instead of teaching us contemporary Chinese politics directly he challenged us to use the Chinese experience to test different political theories.

While we always held him in great respect as a great teacher and scholar, he never conducted himself in that manner. Lu Yi Chuang had always insisted that we address her by her name directly. At first we thought they were just being exceedingly kind. We naturally felt at ease in their presence and enjoyed our conversations with them. But later we came to see that they were genuinely interested in us and in what we have to say. Indeed we came to realize that his humility and warmth was due to a profound respect for every individual human being and in his belief that there was something to be learned from each of them.

To the late Professor Tsou every conversation was a dialogue in which he was as willing to teach as he was prepared to learn. Even after I had left Chicago, I have continued to correspond with them from time to time. On the occasions when I visited Chicago, either alone or with my wife, we have enjoyed immensely our conversations with him, and have been impressed by his tireless appetite for conversation even when it was visibly straining his physical endurance. In him and in Lu Yi Chuang we have found wisdom, friendship, warmth and a gentleness that is seldom present elsewhere. My wife and I will sorely miss him and the time we spent together.