

第五章：在臺大迷失自己

民國四十九年我考上在臺北市的國立臺灣大學（臺大）農業工程（農工）系（見第五十頁的圖九）。所有高中畢業生都在特定的日期參加聯考，並且試題都是一樣。聯考被認為是最公平的制度，而這也是它唯一的優點。考試之前要填志願，而我對收音機很有興趣，所以就把所有大學的電機（工程）系填做首選。根據聯考前一年的錄取成績，我第一志願寫臺灣大學，之後成功大學，諸如類推。二哥是東海大學高年級生，他看著我的志願表問說：「你不在臺北怎麼找家教？」畢竟我需要一份工作來維持生計，所以他建議我先填所有臺大的科學和工程系，第二年可以再轉系。我聽了他的建議，進了臺大農工系。國文滿分一百分，我得八十四分，但三民主義卻只得四十四分，可能我不是孫中山的三民主義信徒。我成績如果再高兩分就可以進數學系，那我就不會轉系，可能我的命運就大大不同了。

我一向喜歡數學和國文，也都讀得很好，看來左右腦的理論，在我身上行不通，因為我兩門都好，我也能一心二用，我女兒就遺傳到我的基因。我很驚訝自己沒進神經病院，我說話快，做事快，思考快，甚至連吃東西都快。父親曾說：「除了吃東西太快，我對你非常滿意，將來老了就有得受了。」我就是不知道要怎麼像有些思考比較慢的人一樣慢下來，但我非常有耐心。

我被分配到臺大公館大一新生第八宿舍，這個宿舍是給農學院和法/商學院的學生住的。我和許多竹中的校友同住，我的室友郭松財就是我的好友。我們一起去應徵廣播播音員，兩個都沒被錄取。我想他後來應該在臺灣當最高法院的

Chapter Five: Losing Myself in NTU

In 1960, I passed the college entrance exam and was assigned to Agriculture Engineering Department (AED) of National Taiwan University (NTU/國立臺灣大學) (See Picture 9 on Page 50) at Taipei. All high school graduates took the same exams on the same dates. It was considered the fairest exam for us. The system had only one advantage, i.e. fairness, nothing else. Before we took the exam we had to fill in a wish list. I was so interested in the radio, so my top choice would be Department of Electrical Engineering (EED) in all universities. I went by the score list of last year to fill in my wish list. National Taiwan University was my top choice, then Cheng Kong University (成功大學) and so on. My second brother T.H. who was a senior at Tunghai University (東海大學) looked at my list and asked, “How are you going to find a tutor job, if you are not in Taipei?” I needed a job to support myself. He advised me to fill in all NTU departments of science and engineering. I could ask for a transfer in sophomore year. I took his advice and got into AED of NTU. I got 84/100 in Chinese, but my score of “Three People Principles (三民主義)” had a very low score of 44/100. I probably did not believe in Dr. Sun Yat-Shian (孫逸仙)’s theory. He was the inventor of of “Three People Principles.” If my score were two points higher, I would be in Department of Math, and then I would stay. My life would have been quite different.

I was always interested in Math and Chinese Literature. I was pretty good in both subjects; the left and right brain theory did not work for me, since I was good in both subjects. I could also do two different things at the same time. My genes were inherent to my daughter. I am surprised that I did not go to the mental hospital. I spoke very fast, worked very fast, and thought very fast. I even ate fast. Once my dad told me, “I am very happy about what you are except eating too fast; it will get to you when you become old.” I just did not know how to slow down like some slow thinkers, but I am a very patient man.

I was assigned to the NTU 8th Dormitory at Gong Guan (公館) for freshman. This dorm was for Agriculture and Business Administration/Law College students. I stayed with a lot Chu Chung alumni. My roommate S.T. Kuo (郭松財) was my good friend. We went to a job interview for a radio announcer. Neither of us got the job. I thought he might become a Supreme Court Justice in Taiwan, since he was in

大法官，因為他讀法律系，他轉業所以沒當成。另一個竹中校友張健一曾說我應該讀法律系，因為我很會辯論，反應也很迅速。那時是醫學、科學和工程系的天下，最頂尖的學生都想擠進這些系。醫科能保證穩定並且優渥的未來。物理系位居第二，因為受了兩位華人諾貝爾獎得主楊振寧和李政道的影響。土木（工程）系第三，因為當時建石門水庫需要聘請很多土木工程師。土木系的學生第三年就可以考到職業工程師執照，他就能從承包商賺進一筆。那些承包商沒受過什麼教育，考不到職業工程師執照，他們需要職業工程師執照才能承包工程。

在臺大農工系的第一年過得很快，我們常常利用下課時間玩橋牌。我還為了玩橋牌翹了一些無趣的課，看來我翹課的本性難移。我下學期的成績是全班第一名，所以應該很有機會可以轉到電機系。民國五十年夏天，本來我要上普通化學，為了轉系作準備。但當時有機會去臺大的森林實驗所，地點在溪頭，是最美的旅遊景點，機不可失，於是我就去了溪頭參加農訓班。農訓班只算一個學分，但那是個美好的假期，還有人幫你付費，何樂而不為呢！為了在高山上保持溫暖，我們就喝高粱酒。我們混合了一點汽水在高粱酒裏，喝起來很甜。有個同學從前滴酒不沾，但當天也喝了很多，結果那天晚上吐得要命。課程結束後，我們打道回府，途中還在臺中停留了一下。當中有個廖重光同學，他家在臺中，家裏是賣酒的，他父親請我們喝酒，要喝多少有多少。有幾個同學昏了過去，而我一回到旅館就倒在榻榻米上，還得有人把我拉進房內。大家都喝多了，但那真是一個有趣的夏天，還好我後來沒變成酒鬼。

上普通物理課時，我試著填轉系申請表。我第一志願填電機工程系，第二志願空白。當時坐我旁邊的莊燦煌建議我把土木工程系加在第二志願，我說：「土木系的分數比電機系高，這樣對土木系是侮辱。」不過我還是填了。從

the Department of Law. He did not, due to a career change. Another Chu Chung alumnus C.Y. Chang (張健一), a law student, told me once that I should be in the Department of Law, since I was a good debater and quick responder. It was an era of medicine, science and engineering. Most top students tried to get in these fields. Medicine was the top choice, because it gave us a secure and wealthy career. Physics was the second choice due to two Chinese Nobel Prize winners, Yang and Lee's influence. Civil Engineering was the third choice due to the Shih Man Earth Dam (石門水庫) Project hiring a lot of Civil Engineers (CE's). CE could also pass a P.E. (Professional Engineer) license exam after junior year and earned a good income from the contractors, who had very little education. They could not pass the P.E. license exam and they needed a P.E. license to get the engineering contract.

My first year at NTU's AED went by quickly; we played a lot of bridge games during the class break. I even cut some less-interesting classes to play bridge. My cutting class habit was hard to change. I was the top of the class in the second semester in AED, so I had a very good chance to be transferred to the Electrical Engineering Department (EED). In the summer of 1961, I should take the General Chemistry to get ready for EED, but I had an opportunity to be in NTU Forest Experimental Institute in Shi-Tau (溪頭). It was the prettiest place for tourists to go. I could not pass up that chance. Therefore, I went to the Agriculture Training Class at Shi-Tau. It was a one unit course and a nice paid vacation. We drank Kao Liang Wine (高粱酒, 59% alcohol) to keep us warm in the high altitude. We mixed it with a 7-Up-like soft drink, and it tasted very sweet. One guy who had never drunk before, he drank a lot. That night he threw up like crazy. After the class was over, we stopped by Taichung to go home. One of us, Liaw (廖重光) lived in Taichung. His father was a liquor merchant. He treated us to all we could drink. There were quite a few of us passed out. I went back to hotel and hit the tatami (榻榻米) right away. Someone had to drag me in. We all drank too much. It was a fun summer. Luckily I did not become an alcoholic.

In the General Physics Class, I tried to fill in the departmental transferring application form. I wrote down the Department of Electrical Engineering (EED) as my first choice and left the second choice blank. Chu Chung alumnus C.H. Chuang (莊燦煌) who sat next to me in Physics class asked me to add the Department of Civil Engineering (CED) as second choice. I said, "CED had a higher score than EED in college entrance exam. It would be an insult to CED." I did it anyway. After

溪頭回來後，我聽說進了土木系，非常失望，因為電機系通常會接受一個從農工系轉來的學生，不過那年沒人從農工系轉到電機系。竹中校友王燦照在公佈前，就告訴我這個消息，他從地質學系成功轉到電機系，我不懂他怎麼會事先知道結果，到現在還想不通。

第二年很快就開始了，我跟在小二和小三時一樣翹課，只是不玩橡皮圈和彈珠了。對於唸電機系的夢想破滅，我非常難過，但卻不能重考，會少賺兩年錢。我幾乎整學期都沒去上普通化學實驗，父親並不知道，要不然我又會被打得屁股開花。二年級的土木系我唸的還可以，我有兩個獎學金可以養活自己，家教的工作也斷斷續續的，我的命運因為得不到我應得的而毀了。父親曾告訴我「塞翁失馬，焉知非福。」那是一句古老的諺語，為了讓失敗的人好過點，我認為那是「阿 Q 精神。」

I came back from Shi-Tau, I was told I got transferred to CED. I was very disappointed, since EED always accepted one transferee from the Department of Agriculture Engineering (AED). That year, no one got into EED from AED. Chu Chung alumnus T.C. Wang (王燦照) told me before the announcement. He got into EED from Department of Geology. I did not know how he found out the result. It still puzzles me now.

Sophomore year started pretty soon. I cut class like I was in the second and third grade, except I did not play rubber bands and marbles. I was so upset that my lifelong dream to be in EED was broken. I could not afford to retake the college entrance exam again and delay two years to earn money. I did not go to General Chemistry Experiment class for almost the whole semester. My dad did not know, otherwise he would have spanked the hell out of me again. I was doing OK for my sophomore year in CED. I got two scholarships to support myself. I had tutor jobs on and off. My life was ruined by not getting what I deserved. My dad told me, “Horse racers might not be unlucky by losing their horse game (賽翁失馬，焉知非福),” an old Chinese saying to make a loser feel good. I think it is “Ah Q Spirit (阿Q精神).”