THE INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

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This paper was delivered at the Association of Commonwealth Universities Twelfth Commonwealth Universities Congress, Vancouver, August 1978, and is printed with the Association's permission. The full Congress Proceedings have since been published by the Association.

There are three stages in the development of student and staff overseas education and research. The first is the "free market" or *laissez-faire* stage where individuals select their own academic and research programmes, enter or associate themselves with institutions that will accept them, and are essentially accountable to no one but themselves. This first and primitive stage can be likened to the early automobile in open country — no traffic problems, few "Stop" signs, no policemen and hardly any accidents.

As higher education expanded after World War II and the international dimension of higher education expanded at the same time, and as the purposes of international education became more differentiated and complex, overseas study and research projects became a matter of more than individual concern. They became a feature of both educational and national policy.

On closer examination questions began to arise about both the assumptions and the actual consequences of overseas educational activity. As a result, "Stop" and "Go" signs begin to appear, dangerous curves are identified, and prospective hostels are marked for high standards of bed, board and room charges. Home institutions ask insistent questions about the way their overseas students spend their time. Academic credit is granted only after home authorities receive proof of achievement. Students are interviewed before entrance, language and course requirements are established and enforced, and financial solvency with local employment must be guaranteed. In short, an increasingly complex set of requirements and conditions has emerged to test those who would use the academic highways and to reduce the prospect that individual decisions would do the individual, the university and their socieites more harm than good.

We have just described some of the features of Stage Two — known as the "restricted market" where the individual is free to make the correct choices, choices he may disregard at his peril. But we have by no means completely moved beyond the "free market" stage. The field abounds with the free-lancer who moves on his own, dodges the traffic signs, travels by instinct rather than roadmap, and does not wish to be accountable for his performance to anyone but himself. It would be pleasant to record that our free-lancer accepts the negative consequences of his independence. But, alas, our travelling scholar is all too human and frequently complains that he has been unjustly treated both at home and abroad.

We have not fully entered the "restricted market" era because the guidance is imperfect, the purposes uncertain, the restrictions are full of loopholes, and institutional and national differences vary so considerably as to allow great freedom of choice. However, restrictions are on the increase everywhere. Differential tuitions penalize the foreigner, quotas are an established feature of the landscape, work opportunities and financial assistance for foreign students are progressively reduced and the choice of institutions is no longer entirely free.

We are now moving into a third stage that may well be a consequence of the second. As restrictions, rules, conditions and difficulties multiply, the "planned market" emerges as the natural way to relieve the individual of having to deal himself with the complexities of Stage Two. By "planned market" I mean the emergence of systems and arrangements worked out between institutions of different countries, generally with the blessing of their respective governments. Educational and national goals are established, appropriate preparation and reception is arranged in advance, funding and sometimes measurement of achievement is provided. By systems I mean regional and international organizations that supplement institutional arrangements like the Inter-University Council in the United Kingdom, the Fulbright Program in the United States or the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* (D.A.A.D.) in West Germany.

There remains great freedom of choice for both students and staff but the wave of the future involves more structured arrangements with increased institutional responsibility to which students and staff will become increasingly accountable. Hopefully, this process of organization will not too severely curtail the *élan* and spontaneity of the current scene. To return to the automotive analogy, we surely need the autobus and the railroad train, but the private car will always have its uses. And footpaths must still be provided for those who wish to reach their destination by bicycle or even on foot.

Having laid the groundwork for the evolution of staff and student foreign experience, perhaps a more detailed look at the scene is in order. Student concerns will be followed by a brief reference to those of staff, with a concluding comment on what is euphemistically called the "brain drain".

First as to students. We know that students seek foreign educational experience for a whole variety of reasons — some educationally respectable, some educationally neutral. We also know that there are a great many of them enrolled in foreign educational institutions. A reasonable guess is there are over 700,000 students studying in countries other than their own. Some go abroad because there are literally no places for them at home. There are 5,000 U.S. students at the Autonomous University of Guadalajara because they could not enter the narrow doors of U.S. medical schools. Some go abroad because their governments find it less expensive to pay their costs in foreign universities than to expand their own.

Some wish to supplement their domestic education by continuing their studies in more sophisticated institutions, or to engage in graduate or professional studies, or to go to a country whose culture they wish to understand. Some are political or social refugees and wish to escape a hostile environment at home. This is a very sensitive problem but many countries make special provision for their attendance. Incidentally, it sometimes seems that governments encourage such an exodus as a way to be rid of troublesome persons.

Putting aside for the moment the controls of the receiving countries, let us consider the distribution of foreign students not only by the factors already mentioned but also by the financial resources available. The OPEC countries send over 50,000 students to the United States and possibly over 200,000 to foreign countries all together. Nor should it be surprising that students gravitate to disciplines and professional programmes for which a particular country is well known: engineering and business management in the United States, humanistic studies in France, engineering and the humanities in Germany, and social studies in the United Kingdom. Language is also a great distributor. Students go to countries where they have some linguistic competence. Since English has become the most widely used second language, it is not surprising that the English-speaking countries — the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom — are three of the first four in numbers of foreign students. The UNESCO figures for 1975 report the foreign student population as follows:

RANK	COUNTRY	,000
1	U.S.A.	179.3
2	France	119.5
3	Canada	98.4
4	U.K.	49.0
5	Fed. Rep. of Germany	47.3
6	U.S.S.R.	30.6
7	Italy	18.9
8	Japan	14.5
9	Austria	10.3
10	Switzerland	10.1

Some comments on this table are in order.
(a) The French figure includes about two-thirds from French-speaking former colonies which have woefully few of their own colleges and universities.
(b) If foreign students as a percentage of total students were listed, the U.S.A. would drop from first to twenty-first and Canada would head the list.
(c) Finally, the numbers of students reflect not only student choice but availability of places within a framework of ability to pay.

Two additional factors bear on the incentives for overseas study experience. The first is the extent to which a course of study is prescribed by a series of requirements for advancing through a discipline and receiving a degree. A free elective system makes a year or two of foreign study easier to manage. In the United States, we have been passing through more than a decade of free electives and foreign education has been relatively easy. But even so, some disciplines, particularly mathematics and the natural sciences, have retained a tightly prescribed course of study and U.S. students in these fields have remained at home.

The second point concerns employment prospects. Students seem to come to different conclusions as to whether an overseas experience in a tight job market helps or hinders their careers. Some believe that their chances of entry into their own professional schools are better if they stay close to home and personally cultivate their connections. Others believe that the academic records of applicants are so close that an overseas experience might be the deciding factor in their favour. Since there is no hard evidence either way, everyone must make the best guess possible. Perhaps the only thing reasonably certain is the retarding influence of rising costs everywhere and, for U.S. students, the decline of the value of the dollar. But in spite of all this, over 110,000 U.S. students studied abroad during the last academic year.

From the point of view of the receiving country there are also problems. Most countries want a substantial representation of foreign students for a variety of reasons. There is the belief that their own students will become less parochial, that graduates will return home as friends of their hosts, that some of the best will stay to add to the pool of high-level manpower and artistic and cultural talent. For countries facing a surplus of places like the United States and others expecting a demographic decline there may, in time, be active recruitment of foreign students. They may become a source of educational income. Barbara Burn has suggested that in the United States this may amount to almost $700 million. But that time for other countries is not now.

At the present writing, foreign students are a substantial cost to many receiving countries that face a demographic bulge for the next decade or so. As a result, some countries have established quotas for foreign students (7 percent in Germany), announced reduction in numbers (U.K. and France) and even threatened to cut them off entirely (Italy). Others have thought to apply the "head and shoulders" formula (a foreigner must be "head and shoulders" above a native prospect) to teaching assistantships which will directly affect the prospect for foreign would-be graduate students.

There are also cultural problems which can turn into psychological and political problems. Iranian students overseas seem to have a large complement of persons visibly and vocally opposed to their own regime. Since foreign students seem to swarm together, a large block of Iranian students on one campus can be a complicating factor for the local community. Even when relatively quiescent, they can be a hard group to assimilate, with consequent loss of the very values that underlie the whole arrangement.

Now turning from students to staff, we have some similar and some new problems. It has already been mentioned that the world has become a playground for the research scholar. Anthropologists who had been confined to studying native minorities can study more exotic tribes in Cuzco, Ching-mai and Ouagadougou. Teachers, burning their own pedagogical smoke, can experience the exciting novelty of teaching new students with brand-new questions. Scholarly students of social and economic development can leave their ivory towers and try to put their theories into practice. Although few found brave new worlds, the widening of experience, the stimulation of novelty, the new perspectives on old problems — all led to increasing interest in overseas experience.

There are no reliable figures on the scope and content of the outflow of academic talent. An estimate has been made that over 100,000 U.S. faculty members were active overseas in 1975 engaged in teaching, research or development activities — or only 1 percent of the total staff of U.S. higher education. As in the case of students, the numbers continue to grow, showing that in spite of increasing difficulties, "where there's a will, there's a way".

Some problems can be identified. Many are similar to those of students. Lack of funds, inadequate leave policies, constraints of language, the fear of losing one's position on the academic ladder, the lack of the adventurous spirit keep many staff at home. For those who do go, the experience is cumulative — the second trip is easier than the first and by the tenth trip they are full-fledged members of the international intellectual community — sometimes inelegantly referred to as the "international academic jet set". For those who have tasted the heady wine of international comparative study, confinement to one's own campus, or even country, can seem like a restriction hardly to be borne.

The receiving country presents problems also. Research that puts foreign countries under an academic microscope is not a very "lifty" experience for the subjects of the inquiry. They come to resent it unless there is a chance for a reciprocal experience or at least one in which natives are partners as well as specimens. When there is a suspicion that the examination has political, or especially covert purposes, the whole overseas research process can be destroyed.

When research turns into participation in local economic or social development, the process also becomes tricky. Here the auspice becomes decisive in order to establish a purity of purpose, a concern for the people to be aided, a willingness to work in harness with native colleagues, and a proven objectivity and insightfulness in reports on findings. Better to work quietly under the umbrella of a respectable native institution than to exercise visible leadership, however brilliant, a style not easily acquired by very successful scholars at home.

For those who would "gladly teach," particularly for those who look for permanent positions in other countries, there are some hurdles. Short-term assignments for a quarter or semester present fewer difficulties but permanent positions are most frequently closed to foreign scholars except in the United States, the United Kingdom, West Germany and a few others. In most countries the professor is a civil servant, a post from which non-citizens are almost always barred. Efforts to liberalize and better arrange have grounded on the shoals of a diminishing job market. In a few cases, like the teaching assistant in Ontario, an appointment may be made if no competent native can be found.

Rumour has it, however, that where there is a real readiness and desire to appoint a foreign teacher, ingenuity has risen to the occasion. To reveal the means would endanger the laudable ends, so we shall turn to the special problem of the "brain drain" or the movement of talent from less affluent and smaller countries to larger and richer ones.

For developing countries, and even for some developed ones, the movement of highly trained and scarce manpower to other countries assumes the dimensions of a large public problem. Now referred to as a "brain drain", the loss can be as severe as the loss of capital, and perhaps more so. For the developed country it may involve a complicated social problem of digesting a foreigner with a different culture. Here we repeat the problems of the student, with the great difference that the professor has his professional career at stake while the student, in most cases, plans to return home.

There is no way to remove the tilt towards the large affluent countries for posts in universities, hospitals and the like. The attraction is permanent and ineradicable. But the advantage can be and must be offset by vigorous measures to make more attractive the academic ambience of the home country, to have the obligation to return certainly on the part of the undergraduate student, and to grant graduate fellowships on the promise of return.

The international movements of students and staff are the results of tides in the affairs of educational and public policies, as well as changing aspirations and opportunities. On these tides students and staff range the world seeking ways to improve their knowledge and their training. Their numbers increase, their interests diversify, and the problems of their accommodation become painfully visible. But the tide increases and produces its own resistance. Efforts to eliminate barriers only increase the demands for countervailing measures. But the tide sweeps on, bypassing obstacles, rationalizing systems to make the currents more and more constructive and with less and less human wastage. The growth of the international intellectual community can scarcely be resisted. Do we really wish to?