

Speech of  
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Good morning! It's really nice to be back. It's really great to be back. It's really refreshing to be back in our campus, the Ateneo. I was once a fellow and a scholar and I'm really proud, I must say that I am proud being part of this prestigious higher education, academic institution as fellow and as a scholar at the Center of Asian Studies in the years 2012 and 2013. That's when I first met some of our colleagues. I'd like to congratulate and commend the organizers of this conference for the effort, for bringing us here together, to meet and discuss pressing and important issues about Korea; on matters about Korea that is relevant. When I first got the communication of invitation that I will be speaking in this conference, I was very excited, ecstatic and at the same time, very curious on what I'm going to talk about. And so, I replied to Ms. Domingo Lipura, and she said you would need to discuss the relevance and future direction of Korean Studies. At first glance, admittedly, I thought it was an easy task. Really. It's very easy-- relevance and future direction. I can mention all those relevance, very important, very significant, all those terms and you can play with it. But when I finally sat down and really thought about the outline of my presentation, I found myself overwhelmed. In a moment, I was frozen because there are many issues and problems that I really want to answer. And for the years that I have spent in Korea, for 15 years, I have had many experiences that I really want to share with you. It's really a good experience. It's the reason I'm still here, or I'm still there in Korea.

So, with the limited time I was given, I had to choose the most important things. And finally, I got to come to terms with myself that I just need to present the relevance and culture, and my journey to become a Koreanist; and the issues and challenges that we have, we face in Korean Studies; and the future direction.

So, my name is Dr. Joeffrey Calimag. I am currently a professor at the University of Ulsan Global Management and International Business of our university. Thank you for your warm welcome.

First, you are here because of Korea. But why Korea? Why not other countries? Why not Indonesia? Why not, let's say Papua, New Guinea? Why not Guatemala? Why not America? Probably there are reasons why you want to study Korea or anything about Korea.

Secondly, I want to start my presentation with these situations and questions that you can answer, you don't need to answer back but you can answer for yourself. How much do you know about Korea? Well, the common answers that I get are kimchi, Korean Wave, Lee Jong Suk, I don't know who he is. I've been living in Korea for quite a long time but I don't their names. I just know their faces.

On top of that, I want you to answer this: How well do you understand Korea? Among you here, how many of you are taking Korean classes? All of you? Who are not taking Korean classes or Korean-related courses? Why are you are here? Why? So, these are the simple questions that I want to present before we proceed to my presentation. When she asked me about the relevance, I had to qualify because relevance is a very

broad terminology. So, qualifying the relevance of Korean studies has brought me to these situations. Imagine a world without North Korea. What would be the kind of world we have without North Korea? Without the issue of North Korea? Probably boring, isn't it? Because Korea has a lot of rhetoric. When they need something, they just say something that triggers South Korea and America, isn't it? Imagine a world without Samsung. Who among you here are using Samsung phones?

What about Iphone? Who have iphone phones here? Iphone people, please raise your right hand. You better throw that out. I will have another lecture if you want me explaining the anatomy of the Iphone and where your money goes. Because really, the Iphone is getting much of your money. Just to give you an example, Iphone manufacturing and materials cost, labor cost, is only \$178. That's the first 3G Iphone. Now the Iphone 7 is about \$250. And they're selling it for a thousand dollars. Anyway, that's the business side. That's the economic side. Well, congratulations for having a Samsung phone.

And then, imagine Asia without Hallyu. I'm pretty sure that you know Hallyu. Korean wave, isn't it? So, what does Hallyu incorporate? We have Kpop, we have fashion, we have drama, we have songs, we have cosmetics, isn't it? Cosmetics is also part of Hallyu.

Now turning to the Philippines, imagine the Philippines without Korean tourists and investors. Just to give you some information, Korea is our sixth largest trade partner and we are the fifth most attractive economic partner for Korea. In 2014-2015, we reached \$8 billion trade volume between these

two countries and it's relatively big. And so, the last one, imagine the welfare of OFWs in Korea. Do you know how many OFWs we have or Filipinos married to Koreans in Korea? We have about 70,000. So, without taking care of the welfare of our fellow Filipinos in Korea would be a disservice to our countrymen, isn't it? So, imagine all of these without them. What would be the kind of world we have? Well, we can continue to live. We can still continue to study at the Ateneo.

Qualifying the relevance of Korean Studies, I have come to these figures: the first level of relevance of Korean Studies, first and foremost - Korea is in Asia. Geographically it's in Asia. And it has trade relations with the Philippines and Asia. The interdependence, the latest phase of globalization now is very complicated. It's very interdependent. And the second level of the relevance of Korean Studies is why we need Korean Studies. Is there a point, is there any reason, is there an importance for us to study Korean Studies? For Asian scholars? Yes, because we need to have a deeper understanding of Korea. Deeper understanding of Korea means we have better policies to make. We have better decisions to make. A single miscalculation of our policies would bring us to a disaster. A single miscalculation of North Korea issue can bring us to a disaster. A single miscalculation of the trade relations to Korea would bring both economies to a derail.

And so, I would like to emphasize my expertise about culture. Culture has six determinants. What are these? We have religion, we have social strata, we have education, we have language, we have politics and economic philosophy, isn't it? I'm not sure if you're familiar with that but these are

determinants of culture. And with these determinants of culture, it says a lot about Korea. It says a lot about the area of studies that you want to focus on.

And with my experience in Korea, my journey to become a Koreanist is very soft, sweet because I went to Korea in 2002. I had options to go to Japan and Germany. I studied German actually for a scholarship there. But Korea was very fast in responding to my application. You know, Korea is known for the 빨리 빨리. During the times of the industrialization in Korea, the restaurants or factories; you would not see people like we do here in the Philippines where after your lunch; you have to stay for a while, like for 10 minutes and chit chat, right? There, you have to eat fast because others are waiting and you need to go back to your work. You should not waste any time unlike here in the Philippines. That alone we can learn something from Korea, right? Yes, you know it.

Anyhow, in 2002 Korea was very fast in responding to my application and at that time, I was so desperate to leave the country. I am a Filipino. I am proud to be a Filipino, but at that time, I was so desperate because I wasn't given the opportunity here. So probably, it's a blessing in disguise for me to have no opportunity in the Philippines. But please don't do that. Please stay here in the Philippines. Don't be like me because I am not a good example of a Filipino leaving the country for Korea. You know, I'm doing a lot for Korea. I'm serving Korea. I'm not doing anything for the Philippines.

After that, I had Master's Degree in Political Economy, Economics and Political Economy. I came back to the Philippines. I really thought that I would get a good job in the

Philippines because I already have a Master's degree, but really the stars are telling me: "Joeffrey, the Philippines is not really for you." And so I went back to Korea, studied the Korean language; and that time I already realized that Korea is really for me because there are many opportunities. I just realized on my second trip to Korea, that Korea has a lot of opportunities for me, and that was 2002.

Before that, all I know about Korea is Kia Pride. Kia Pride is an old model, a small box type, and like plastic. They all made jokes about Korea, right? Some friends, they don't want to bring that; they don't want to drive the car because they said it's for the poor. You know, if you are from Ateneo, don't ride a Kia Pride that time. But now, Kia Pride has a really good design, doesn't it?

At that time, I saw the opportunity to stay in Korea. I pursued my Ph.D. I could have pursued a Ph.D. in Economics, Ph.D. in Marketing or Management; but I decided to have Ph.D. in Korean Studies. Why? Because at that time, there are no people who are really experts on Korea from the Philippines. So, I really wanted to become an expert of Korea in the Philippines. And I'm still waiting for that, coming back to the Philippines because I'm still based in Korea. And I thought that it was only in the early 2000s that we have the opportunity for Korea but it is growing because it's very extensive. Even now, for those who want to become a Koreanist or Korean expert, you still have a lot of opportunities.

Currently, I teach business-related courses, but it has something to do with Korea. I am with the globalization and internationalization of education in Korea. I have developed courses related to Korea – Korean economy, Korean business,

Korean culture, society and Korean political economy. Korea is really welcoming students now. We have an issue of enrollment in Korea. Enrollment of students in Korea is going down. If you go to Korea, you are very, very much welcome, especially in my university. So that is my journey in becoming a Koreanist.

Now I do a lot of activities related to Korea and international business. So, let's review our objectives. Why do you want to study Korea again? Why? What is your goal? Before you started studying Korean studies, you should have something, there should be a deciding factor why you wanted to study Korea. Why is that? What are those? For whom is your reason to study Korean Studies? And for what? Is it for your future? Is it for your hobby? Oh, I'm studying Korean Studies for hobby. Who has that? Are you studying Korean Studies just for a hobby?

So, we have to review our objectives, our goal of studying Korean Studies. Korean studies face problems. Problems are not necessarily negative. Problems are things we need to solve. So, Korean Studies face threats but there are also opportunities. We have to get rid of threats we face in Korean Studies. At the same time, we have to grab the opportunity for Korean Studies. So what are these threats and opportunities? The threats in Korean Studies, we have different perspectives but it could be also an opportunity. Presenting our thesis, presenting our papers, having different perspectives could be bad or could be good. So, it's a threat and it's also an opportunity. That's why you can see this again in the opportunity slide.

Another issue and challenge for Korean Studies is that our Korean Studies scholars have very low Korean language

proficiency, and we have to focus on that as well. The Koreanists, the Korean Studies experts are scarce, we don't have many of them. So, we have to breed new scholars. We have to breed new Koreanists. And we have lack of financial support. And we don't know the demand for Korean Studies. We have to have a really good statistics or number for that so that we can have a really good policy for a good program, Korean Studies Program.

And the last and most important is there is an impression on Korean Studies scholars as 'jack of all trades.' This is a challenge. What do you mean by jack of all trades? If you are a Korean Studies expert, you should know economics, you should know Korean economy, Korean business, Korean language, Korean history... But can you do all these? Can you? I'm not really good at history. I'm not really good at literature. I have difficulties reading those texts. But I could be a resource person for Korean economy or business in Korea. But still, it's part of Korean Studies. Next is the opportunity. Well, Korean Studies is very extensive. Every discipline we have is part of Korean Studies. And contemporary Korea is very dynamic. Korean economy is the 15th largest economy in the world, so that alone says something. And with Korea-Southeast Asia relations getting stronger, again there are different perspectives to present.

So, what is the future direction of Korean Studies? We have to respond to these challenges and opportunities, issues, threats. We have to respond to these problems. And how do we respond to these problems? We have to make our Korean Studies hybrid and organic. And what do we mean by hybrid and organic? We have to make our Korean Studies Program an



open system that is welcoming, open to other fields. It has to naturally grow and adapt to change. It has to be explorative. On the right side, we have hybrid Korean Studies, meaning to say it has to be interdisciplinary as Dr. Raghavan said. And hybrid Korean Studies also means very innovative, very innovative on how we deliver our program. And it has to be sustainable and relevant. This is the future of our Korean Studies.

There are many things that we have to do in this very simple slide. It's a very simple one slide, but there are many things that need to be done. And you should be part of it. There should be, as I've said, it has to be an open system, meaning to say, if you want to be an expert of Korean economy, then you have to be familiar with Korea and at the same time, know everything about the concept and terminologies and theories that are being used in economics. How can you become an expert of Korean economy if you just know about Korean culture, if you know just about the internal economic factors of Korea yet you don't know anything about theories? Yet you don't know about the concept and terminologies that are being used in economics. So, there should be a kind of interdisciplinary and you should master your field. And you should use Korea as your platform.

So, thank you very much. I hope you have a good day.

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numerous awards and grants from different organizations and programs such as the Global Ambassador Fellowship, Korea Foundation, One Asia Club, Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and Hanyang University Graduate School of International Studies. Currently, he is a Subject Matter Expert and Adjunct Lecturer at the International Federation of Professional Managers (IFPM-London), CPM (Asia) and the Vice President for International Business of Illustrados Business Consulting (IBC), Ltd., a Hong Kong-based international consultancy firm. His current research interests include cultural intelligence, person-society-fit, international business ethics and ASEAN integration but not limited to issues and trends in international and Korean business and management. In South Korea, on top of his being a professor, Dr. Calimag is actively involved in migrants' affairs holding positions in a number of Filipino Community organizations; as simultaneous current presidents of the Association of Filipino Educators in Korea (AFEK) and the University of the Philippines Alumni Association-Republic of Korea (UPAA-ROK). He was conferred with the prestigious *Bagong Bayani Award* (Modern Hero Award) by the Bagong Bayani Foundation, Inc. in June 2016; a global search for outstanding and exemplary Overseas Filipino Workers. The provincial government of Cagayan likewise commended Dr. Calimag for this global-search national award. He has been in South Korea since 2002 and has made efforts in bridging friendship between the Philippines and South Korea. He is an advocate of gender equality, labor welfare and financial literacy. His various accomplishments aside, Dr. Calimag describes himself as having a very positive personality. In his free time, he cooks and meets friends. He loves singing and dancing. He enjoys travelling and has been to countries more than his current age.