

ENTRANCE CEREMONEY:

Some Thoughts on Intellectual Slaughter

In black **satin robes of a funeral wake**
young **students prepare for 13th grade.**

Withdrawing stiff papers from his coat pocket
the dean delivers **a commencement spiel -**
a **boring sermon**
about the **necessity of zeal.**

The majority of faculty
gaze in to space
or close their eyes to consider events far away
as parents **wipe perspiration from their heads**
a few more brain cells fade.

When **the speech is over**
Muffled applause is heard:

Another ritual has passed
and a new herd of sheep is ready
to become mutton.

"Oh **Lamb of God**
who takes away the sins of the world
please slaughter them mercifully."

Melissa: (coughing) Why such a morbid view of schooling? Should school entrance be a celebration and joyous feast?

Liao: Well, you can't have a feast without a harvest or slaughter. If new concepts are to be created through learning, old concepts must be subsumed. I concur with H.G. Wells that education is largely a matter of clearing away old cultural debris so that new understandings can arise.

Satoru: I think many people have a one-sided views of life, focussing only on growth. It's essential to have balance and remember that growth and destruction are twins. Isn't that what Schumpeter has suggested? Wise teachers recognise how destruction and creation necessarily coexist.

Tim: (with a flaccid smile) I'm not so sure . . . haven't we heard enough gab?

- T Newfields

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