



Words to Live by

人生を変えた師からの言葉

英米・英語圏文学が専門のサイモンズ・クリストファー 上級准教授と、サイモンズ先生のアドヴァイジー学生、 アンジェヴァイン・信濃さんにお話を伺いました。

For this issue, we sat down with Senior Assistant Professor Christopher Simons, a specialist in literature in English, and Shinano Angevine, one of his advisees, to talk about the importance of a liberal arts education, as it ties different academic disciplines together to enrich an individual's world view.

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文学と物理学が交差する地点から見えた、初めての景色

New Landscapes Glimpsed from a Place Where Literature and Physics Meet

サイモンズ先生との出会い

アンジェヴァイン サイモンズ先生は、私のアドヴァイザーです。入学時から履修登録の度に面談をしていただき、さまざまな問いに丁寧に耳を傾けてくださいました。さらに「リベラルアーツとはどういうものか、なぜ大切なのか」についてご自身の経験を交えてじっくり語ってください、ICUで学ぶ意義や日々の授業が意味するものがより深く理解できるようになったと思います。

サイモンズ 信濃さんは、当初からリベラルアーツや学際的な研究に強い関心を持っていましたね。ICUは、専攻する分野を絞ることなく入学する特別な大学です。この場所で学ぶ価値を享受できる人とは、自分自身や世の中に対する好奇心が旺盛で、多くの疑問を抱くことができる人でしょう。その意味で、自らの疑問と正面から向き合い、固定概念に捉われず自由に思索を深める信濃さんは、まさにICU生らしい資質を備えていると感じました。

アンジェヴァイン 一対一の対話を重ねる中で、サイモンズ先生の教育に対する熱意と使命感に感銘を受け、先生が担当される「文学の世界(The World of Literature)」という科目を受講しました。この授業は、SF小説や映画について相対性理論などの科学知識を学びながら読み解いていくものでした。

サイモンズ 信濃さんは毎回のように興味深いアイデアを発表し、作品とグローバルな問題との関係性について述べてくれました。文学がいかに人生のほとんど全ての領域に影響を与えているかについて、熱心に探求する姿勢を嬉しく思ったのを覚えています。

印象に残っている先生の言葉

アンジェヴァイン 授業の中で印象的だったのは、主人公がタイムトラベルをする作品で、時空に関するアルベルト・アインシュタインの特殊相対性理論を学んだことです。この特殊相対性理論を知ることによって、筆者のメッセージや主人公の心境をより深く理解できました。さらにそこで学んだ、同一の時空で人が持っている全ての社会的要素を表す“frame of reference”という概念は、私たちが生きている世界の在り方や、人と人の関係性について掘り下げて考えるきっかけになりました。文学を出発点として、物理学の分野に足を踏み入れたことで多くの気づきが得られ、分野に捉われず学ぶことの面白さ、多様な視点から物事を考えることの大切さを改めて実感しました。

サイモンズ 一見すると異質に感じられる理論や方法論、知識同士の結び付きを見出すよう働きかけることは、私の教育モットーでもあります。特に現代は一つの分野の知識で対処しきれない問題が山積しているため、複数の分野の知識を統合する力を持つ人が今後ますます求められるようになるでしょう。そうした意味でも、

Meeting Senior Associate Professor Simons

Angevine Dr. Simons is my advisor. Ever since I entered the university, whenever I registered for courses, he was always available for an adviser-advisee meeting, and always took the time to answer all of my questions very patiently and thoroughly. He also explained to me what a liberal arts education was and why it was important, using his own life experiences. Those conversations gave me a much better appreciation for what it meant to study at ICU and the significance of the classes I have been taking on a daily basis.

Simons From the very start of her studies, Shinano-san has had a strong interest in liberal arts education and interdisciplinary research. ICU is different from other universities in that students do not have to commit to a particular major when they enter the university. The people who are best equipped to make the most of studying here are people with a great sense of curiosity about themselves and the world around them—people with lots of questions. Shinano-san has the ability to address those questions head on, and develop her ideas freely without being trapped by preconceived ideas. I felt when I first met her that she had all the qualities she needs to thrive as an ICU student.

Angevine During our meetings, I was impressed by Dr. Simons's passion and sense of mission for teaching. I decided to take one of his courses called “The World of Literature,” in which we explored science fiction novels and films while learning about scientific subjects like space-time relativity.

Simons In almost every class, Shinano-san would come out with interesting ideas and observations about the connections between the works we were studying and global issues. I remember being impressed by her passionate curiosity about how literature influences almost every area of human life.

Words that Inspired Me

Angevine One of the things that made the biggest impression on me, during our classes, was when we learned about Albert Einstein's Theory of Special Relativity, while we were studying works in which the main characters experienced time travel. Learning about the principle behind space-time relativity allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the author's message, and the main characters' state of mind. This was made possible by learning about the concept of an individual observer's “frame of reference” from Einstein's Theory of Special Relativity and how this idea could be applied to understanding how social factors and individual life experiences can shape a person's perspective uniquely. This prompted me to think more deeply about the world we live in and the connections between people. Using literature as a base, Dr. Simons gave students a perspective from the academic field of physics as a tool to explore new concepts and ideas. I found it fascinating to learn without the confines of one academic field and how important it is to think about things from a diversified perspective.

Simons Working to find connections between theories, methodologies, and fields of knowledge that at first glance may appear to be quite different is part of my teaching strategy. In our present age we face a huge number of problems that cannot be solved by knowledge from just one field. In the

教える側と教わる側が、お互いに学習者となる喜び

Faculty and Students Sharing in the Joys of Learning

学生たちにもっと分野横断的な知識の世界への扉を開いてあげたいと思っています。

アンジェヴァイン その言葉通り、授業では他にもリベラルアーツの神髄や面白さを感じる機会が数多くありました。そこから作品理解にとどまらず、世界や社会、人間、自分の人生や学びについて考えるヒントが得られたと思います。

サイモンズ 信濃さんが学期の最後に書いた研究論文では、カート・ヴォネガット (Kurt Vonnegut) の『スローターハウス5』という小説を取り上げ、時空の相対性の科学的・哲学的理念と「実存」の概念について論じていました。この論文は読みものとして興味深いだけでなく、私自身の講義や研究を新たな観点から見つめ直させてくれました。こちらが知識の箱を開くことで学生がそれに応えてくれて、教える側と教えられる側がお互いに学習者になる。こういう瞬間があるからこそ、この仕事はやめられないですね。

今後の目標について

アンジェヴァイン 幅広い学びに触れて興味を広げてきた経験を生かしながら、今後は進む道を見定めていくつもりです。サイモンズ先生からは「一つに絞らなくても大丈夫」と言っていたこともあり、いろんな分野に関わり続けていきたいですね。現段階では、あらゆる分野と関連する「形質人類学」や「考古学」の分野を軸にすることを検討中ですが、いずれにせよ一生にわたって学ぶことを楽しみ続ける人でありたいと思っています。

サイモンズ 学生の皆さんに、自己の啓発と純粋な楽しみを求めて生涯学び続ける人になってほしいというのは私の願いの一つです。信濃さんは、どんな方向へ行くにしても簡単な道は選ばない人だと思います。自分が一度志した道なら、きっと困難な道でも挑戦を続けるでしょう。日々の学びの中で考えや目標をどのように形にしていくのか、今後の報告が楽しみです。



years to come there will be a greater demand than ever for people who can bring together knowledge and insights from different disciplines. In that sense, I want to help students open the door to a wider world of interdisciplinary learning.

Angevine As Dr. Simons says, many times in class I got a real sense for the essence of a liberal arts education and what makes it so interesting. These moments not only helped me to understand the literature, but also gave me useful hints for thinking about society, people, my own life and studies, as well as the world we live in.

Simons In her research paper for the class, Shinano-san wrote a paper on Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*, in which she discussed the scientific and philosophical ideas of space-time relativity and the concept of existence. The paper was not only interesting to read but also helped me to see my own teaching and research from a new perspective. As faculty member, my job is to lift the lid of the box of learning, and observe how the students respond. Ideally, both the teacher and the student become learners. Moments like this are what makes this job so rewarding.

Future Goals

Angevine In deciding my future, I would like to apply my experiences of learning in many fields of studies, as a way to guide myself. Dr. Simons reminds me that it is all right for me to not narrow my interests down to a single discipline. With that in mind, I would like to continue my involvement with several different subjects. At the moment, I am considering subjects like physical anthropology and archeology as possible fields to anchor my academics in. This is because, these fields incorporate a wide range of knowledge from different fields in its studies. In any case, I hope to become an individual that enjoys studying and learning throughout my life.

Simons One of my hopes is that students will become people who continue to study throughout their lives, both for self-development and for pure enjoyment. Whatever direction she decides to go in, I don't think Shinano-san is the kind of person to choose the easy path. Once she's made up her mind to do something, I think she will continue to work at it even when things get difficult. I look forward to hearing about her progress and to watching her thoughts and aims take shape as she continues her studies.

教員のリベラルアーツ

To the Professors:
What is Liberal Arts?



「越境するもの」への強い興味が、私を研究者へと向かわせた

A Career Sparked by a Fascination with Interdisciplinary Studies

私の教育・研究活動の原点にあるのは、異なる分野にまたがるものの、越境するものに対する興味です。若い頃から科学と詩が何よりも好きで、科学者になろうと考えたこともありました。しかし大学の実験室での研究をきっかけに、自分は人々に刺激を与え知的興奮を呼び覚ますことに興味があると気づいたのです。さらに、歴史、科学、文学など多くの分野の師と出会い、「人の気持ちを奮い立たせることができる指導者が、どれほど相手の人生に影響を与えるか」を身を持って感じたことから、今につながる教育・研究者の道を歩み始めました。

現在は、批評と詩、小説、写真を中心とした創作活動の両方を含む幅広い研究を行っています。ICUで文学を教える上で重きを置いているのは、私自身の原点でもある、分野を横断した学際的な知識と技能です。芸術、文化、歴史、人類学、宗教・哲学、政治、心理学、そして科学など、人間のあらゆる側面を結集させる文学は、素晴らしいリベラルアーツ科目です。「私たちはなぜ存在するのか」「私たちはどこから来て、どこへ向かうのか」。学生たちには、こうした人間の在り方に関する大きな疑問に、一つの作品を通して向き合ってほしいと考えています。

今日のグローバル社会の中で、リベラルアーツの存在意義はさらに大きくなっていると感じます。専門家はもちろん必要ですが、複雑に絡み合う問題を解決するためには、あらゆる分野を横断し、創造力にあふれ、批判的な視点で物事を見ることができる思想家こそが求められています。そしてリベラルアーツは、そうした思想家を生み出す根源的原動力なのです。学生の中には、高校の数学が苦手だったから数学が嫌い、理系は縁遠いものだと考える人もいるでしょう。しかし文学を介して見ると、数学や物理の新たな面白さを発見することも少なくありません。私はさまざまな分野に関わり続けてきた教育者として、学生の皆さんが分野に捉われず多様かつ柔軟に学ぶ手助けをしたいですし、その楽しさに目覚め、自分の道を切り開くために生涯にわたって学び続ける人になってほしいと切に願っています。

An interest in subjects that straddle several disciplines has always been the inspiration behind all my teaching and research activities. When I was young, science and poetry were the two things I loved more than anything else, and for a while I considered becoming a scientist. But the research I did in university laboratories made me realize that I was interested in inspiring other people and awakening their sense of intellectual excitement and curiosity. Also, my encounters with eminent figures in history, science, and literature gave me a real sense of the impact that an inspirational teacher can have on people's lives, and this was another thing that led me to follow a career as an educator and researcher.

At the moment my research involves both criticism and creative work in poetry, fiction, and photography. The focus of my literature teaching at ICU is interdisciplinary knowledge and skills that go beyond a single area or discipline. This has also been the foundation of my own work. Literature brings together so many aspects of what it means to be human, including art, culture, history, anthropology, religion and philosophy, politics, psychology, and science. This makes it in some ways the ideal liberal arts subject. “Why are we here? Where do we come from? Where are we going?” My hope is that students will learn to tackle these fundamental questions about human life through their encounters with particular works.

In today's global society, the significance of the liberal arts has become greater than ever. Of course specialists are always important, but in order to find solutions to the problems we face today, which involve a complex web of many different fields of knowledge, society urgently needs creative thinkers who can move across disciplines and examine things from a critical perspective. A liberal arts education is one of the fundamental driving forces that can produce this kind of person. Some students may dislike mathematics because they weren't very good at the subject in high school; others may think of science as somewhat distant or irrelevant to their lives. But looking at these subjects through the window of literature often helps to uncover fascinating new aspects of mathematics and physics. As an educator who has always been involved with a wide variety of academic disciplines, I want to help students learn in a diverse and flexible way that goes beyond the confines of a single academic field. I hope they will realize how enjoyable learning can be, and become people who will continue to learn throughout their lives, to help them forge their own paths through life.