Medical Student Examination Questions for Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery of Almost 60 Years Ago

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Medical student examination questions of 60 years ago are very rare to find irrespective of medical specialty. Recently, medical student examination questions for thoracic and cardiovascular surgery were found, which were presented between 1957 and 1959 at Seoul National University Medical College. All examination questions were hand-written in six pages by a professor as examiner. Among the six pages, four examination papers were dated and/or the target grade was identified, while the remaining two did not offer any information. These materials are thought to have a valuable historical meaning for the Korean medical community as well as the Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery at Seoul National University Hospital.

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2. Student examination  
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Medical student examination questions of 60 years ago are very rare to find irrespective of medical specialty. Recently, medical student examination questions for thoracic and cardiovascular surgery were found, which were presented between 1957 and 1959 at Seoul National University Medical College. The year 1957 was when a clinic for thoracic and cardiovascular surgery was first opened at Seoul National University Hospital and lectures on thoracic and cardiovascular surgery targeting third- and fourth-year medical students were first introduced at Seoul National University Medical College.

In 1957, the Department of Surgery at Seoul National University Hospital decided to create a thoracic and cardiovascular surgery specialty according to the trends of development in modern medicine. Dr. CB Lee(李燦范, 1915–1967), then an army physician as a lieutenant colonel, was discharged from the army and immediately placed in charge of the specialty as an assistant professor [1]. These student examination questions were composed in this context.

All examination questions found were hand-written in six pages by Prof. CB Lee himself (Figs. 1–5). Among the six pages, three examination papers were dated and the target grade was identified, while one examination paper had only the date of writing, and the remaining two did not offer any information.

Of the dated examination questions, the earliest one was dated Feb 16, 1957 (Fig. 1). The questions were composed for fourth-year medical students. What is more interesting is that there was additional information in this paper such as the duration of the test (90 minutes) and the testing method (selection of any five questions out of a total of nine questions). Another fact was also mentioned in the paper: the test was held together with the examinations of
Fig. 1. Medical student examination questions dated February 16, 1957 (for a fourth-year medical student).

Fig. 2. Medical student examination questions dated March 1957 (for a third-year medical student).

Fig. 3. Medical student examination questions dated September 3, 1958 and May 28, 1959 (for a third-year medical student).
Fig. 4. Medical student examination questions dated February 17, 1959.

Fig. 5. (A, B) Medical student examination questions, undated.
other surgical professors from different specialties. On two dated examination question pages, the year was expressed according to the Korean traditional year-counting system, called ‘Danki (檀紀)’ in the traditional year-counting system at that time (Figs. 3, 4).

For the better understanding of readers, these original documents have been rewritten by the author of this paper, as above. (Figs. 1–5).

In conclusion, these materials are thought to have a valuable historical meaning for the Korean medical community as well as the Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery at Seoul National University Hospital.

**Conflict of interest**

No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported.

**References**