

UNDERSTANDING THIS CHINESE GENERATION

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1. Discontent

Born during the closing days of the twentieth century, today's Chinese youth are caught between traditional and modern values and Chinese and Western currents of thought. Conflicting ideologies and spiritual anxiety manifest as the chaos and strife of modern times and contribute to the morbid psychology of today's youth.

The older generation, feeling a sense of sadness and remorse, lament that "public morality has degenerated" and "traditional virtues have vanished." At the same time, teenagers, in the prime of their youth but shortsighted in their outlook and ignorant of the past, face an obscure and desolate road ahead. Feeling helpless and not knowing which way to turn, they sink further and further into a state of depression.

Is this situation the fault of their elders, or are today's youth themselves to blame for their own condition? Actually, neither group is at fault; it is simply impossible to place the burden of guilt on the shoulders of any single party. This phenomenon is part of a natural historical tendency produced by shifting cultural norms and ideologies, which inevitably arise with epochal change. Moreover, this morbid state of mind represents a stage of life that has characterized human development throughout the course of history.

However, if the issue of responsibility and guilt must be examined, then we can begin over two thousand years ago during the great historical upheaval of China's Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (770-221 BCE). In his *Spring and Autumn Annals*, Confucius, China's most universally recognized sage, placed responsibility and blame on the elites who had the power and position to influence national policy. The pros and cons of this thesis involve historical and philosophical issues that we will put aside for now. However, at the very least it should be understood that during the Spring and Autumn period education and learning were not widespread. Because of this, the elite feudal literati did indeed have an inescapable obligation to society at large.

During the same period, the Indian sage Shakyamuni, who founded Buddhism and spread the Buddhadharma, considered social turmoil to be the result of the collective karma of humankind and all living things. Like a fiery wheel spinning out of control, once the momentum of this shared karma was set in motion no hand could stay its course; any attempt to halt it merely feeds its power and leads to greater chaos.

At the heart of Confucian philosophy lies the principle of “seeing the world in terms of man,” hence the *Spring and Autumn Annals* take the feudal literati to task for the ills of the day. Shakyamuni’s reasoning, however, similar to Lao Tzu’s concepts of “non-action” and “cause and effect,” “sees man in terms of the world.” Therefore, the tone of the Buddhadharma is one of sad lament for the intractable collective karma of the mass of living beings.

If we analyze Shakyamuni’s theory of history from the point of view of “seeing man in terms of the world,” then we do indeed find his philosophy well founded. However, the natural outcome of this logic is for one to stand paralyzed by the sidelines with hands in pockets, mourning the sad fate of all living things! If, however, like Confucius we “see the world in terms of man,” then we must conclude, “the rise and fall of nations rests in the hands of men.”

As heirs to the past, if we are to pass on our legacy and forge ahead into the future, meeting our responsibility in a time of dramatic historical change head-on, then we must approach the ideological and psychological issues of today’s youth through deep soul searching and develop a new path forward. In the process of analyzing the morbidity afflicting the thoughts and psyche of modern youth, we must also trace its root causes within the course of historical and cultural evolution. We can then focus our efforts on the search for a prescription to treat this morbidity.

The Psychology of Discontent

When we, today's older generation, were in our youth some fifty to sixty years ago, we were just like today's younger generation. We, too, were filled with courage and determination, imagination and impulsiveness, which were matched only by our boundless confidence. However, like today's youth, we also harbored feelings of restlessness, sadness, and depression, viewing the world with hostility and rejecting all things out of hand.

Straddling the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, we saw the ascendancy of modern culture over tradition and the blending and fusion of Eastern and Western influences in all aspects of life. These trends lead to a turbulent period in which waves of new thinking were awakened in Chinese society. Women, who had lived sheltered lives hidden away at home with their bound "three inch golden lotuses" were liberating their feet and struggling for equality of the sexes. Meanwhile, men, who formerly spent their days reciting the classics and preparing to win fame in the imperial examinations, now shaved their beards, donned business suits, and sang the praises of all things Western. In short, regardless of age, knowledge, or events, we are all caught in the inevitable process of change.

Faced with this situation, members of the older generation were full of suffering and misery. From morning till night they shook their heads and sighed, "public morality has degenerated" and "classical virtues have vanished"; all they could do was swallow their bitterness as their lives ebbed away. Before too long, however, under the merciless march of time, we rebellious youngsters who rejected and despised the outlook of the older generation began to change. Little by little their hand wringing and sighing entered our own psyche, until this behavior became second nature to us. Sometime around World War II, without realizing it, we had entered middle age and had slowly begun to echo the dissatisfaction of our elders. This cyclical tragedy, like a symphony whose melody is the sorrow of the times, will always exist in the shadow of history. This explains why humanity has always been dissatisfied with the realities around them. Regardless of the era, the younger and older generations will always have different perspectives.

Because of this realization, I always remind myself that one need not be disillusioned with the present. If I die, the sun will still rise in the east and set in the west, and as before, history will continue its onward evolution. Perhaps the lives of the next generation will be happier and more interesting than ours – or perhaps they will be even more irrational and crazy.

Hearts and Minds In the Midst of Historical Evolution

Based on the lessons of personal experience and an understanding of humanity's cycle of dissatisfaction, we can proceed to explore the origins of the generational divide in psychology and thought. This may allow us to understand the role of man's emotions and how they limit the upper bounds of wisdom and reason.

Our emotions are not solely preoccupied with and determined by our own individual concerns. They are also heavily dependent on the historical human condition, man's habit of spiritual contemplation, our cultural background, and the prevailing practices of time and place.

Because our habits have an historical and inherently inflexible nature, during times of epochal advancement we cannot adapt to the attack of sudden change. If we are to withstand the push of change, it must occur gradually. This especially holds true with regard to our spiritual life and the sensory impressions that emerge from our daily experience, including our concepts of societal order, family values, and standards of moral behavior.

In the process of historical cultural change, these factors can easily elicit the psychological opposition of the younger generation and the lament of their elders. This is clearly evident in the dramatic changes of the late twentieth century. From my generation's standpoint, viewing the degeneration and madness of the younger generation, we are overwhelmed with sadness.

If we are to objectively understand the contradictory psychological and ideological tendencies of the younger generation, we must carefully examine the highs and lows of historical cultural evolution and their causes and effects.

In this age, where what is relegated to the past and what belongs to the future follows the development of material civilization, today's youth have lost touch with acceptable standards. Like wild horses unfettered by the reins of self-control, they have recklessly become caught in a web of confusion. This phenomenon is not limited to Asian youth alone. Western youth, and indeed youth around the world, have succumbed to this generationally transmitted disease.

Does this actually mean that we are living in an age where all standards of morality have been lost? Is the difference between right and wrong something we simply can no longer comprehend? Of course not. Morality and the concept of right and wrong will always exist within the soul of man because they are natural elements of his humanity. Only their outward appearance changes to match the flow of time and space.

Throughout the cultural history of mankind our conceptions of morality have been governed by the religious principles of sin and retribution; from this our educational norms and modes of thought have taken shape, maintaining the social order for the last three millennium. With the rise of the modern culture of materialism and the consequent rapid development of commerce and industry, our view of morality has gradually fallen victim to an ideology of economic valuation that attaches a price tag to all things.

In the past, our notions of right and wrong held man's thoughts and behavior to higher standards of goodness based on religious doctrines of heavenly retribution. Today, however, even as our concepts of freedom remain distorted and our extreme individualism is defined by selfishness, science continues to feed the growth of material civilization. It seems we are fast approaching the decision of whether or not we need to redefine morality. Not yet fully etched in the psyche and thoughts of modern man, this definition of morality urgently awaits the careful deliberation and judgment of the best minds of our generation. However, we must be cautious. If we are slaves to the moment and proceed recklessly, or if through sentimentality for the past we are consumed with pessimism, then we will lose the reasoned approach essential to our quest.

History and Culture — A Work In Progress

Standing at the edge of the millennium, the religious, philosophical, educational, and moral systems today's youth have inherited are hanging by a thread. As fundamental faith in these institutions fades away, we must react with a spirit of unwavering determination and challenge ourselves to meld together the best elements of east and west, old and new. It is this effort that will build a new cultural destiny for the next generation and secure their road ahead.

At the same time we must recognize that the fruits of culture throughout history remain forever young and must feed from the waters of new knowledge as they struggle toward maturity. Existence has always and will always remain full of possibilities. As Tseng Tzu stressed in *The Great Learning*, one of the four Confucian classics, "Today is a new beginning, and even after endless tomorrows a new day always awaits us."

Along these same lines, a consistent theme of the *I ching* is "advance with the times" and "move upward to the highest level." Both of these classics remind us to let go of the past and look toward tomorrow as we build the future. It is the spirit of youth that will forever generate the kinetic energy that drives civilization forward. Taoists have always held that "the universe is a boundless macrocosm, and man is a microcosm of the universe." Using this Taoist logic to more fully explain the concept of the eternal youthfulness of culture, we may say that "the course of history is one grand life story, and each person's life story is a small history."

Because each of us is naturally endowed with unique abilities, our sense of individuality and imagination is necessarily different. This is especially true in the pre-adult phases of life when the majority of our time and energy is preoccupied with our imagination. These dreams are not a fault, but rather when coupled with learning and applied to our thoughts and actions, they can become a vehicle for principled self-realization. However, without the tempering effect of diligent study, they can resemble a wild steed, a danger to oneself and others.

The collective individuality, dreams, and knowledge of mankind, which emerge as our thoughts, actions, and the fruits of our experience, converge to form history and culture. And yet the course of each of our individual lives is determined early on when we either succeed or fail to marry the rich imaginations of our youth to the power of learning. When we reach middle age we enter the phase of life where, through practical action, these dreams can become reality. Whether expressed through scholarly achievement or as success in the practical world, even in the life of the religious devotee or the missionary, this rule is consistently at work. By old age, all we can do is look back with longing and perhaps sigh at past joys and sorrows as our achievements become mere memories and gradually fade away. As Confucius said, "The young have the potential for greatness, but who knows whether in the future they will be different than us today? If by forty or fifty years of age one remains obscure, then he cannot be said to have achieved greatness."

Looked at from the point of view of modern medicine, while our mental abilities begin to develop during adolescence, it is not until our fifties that this development reaches its height. However, the sad heavenly fate of man is such that when his intelligence and wisdom finally reach full maturity and his cumulative experience is at its peak, just then, like a red ripe apple that falls to the ground, it returns to nothingness. Aside from a few people blessed with unusual vitality, those who manage to remain vigorous in old age and continue to develop their talents are the exception rather than the rule. These are the individuals whose accomplishments are the gems that decorate the stage of history. Most players in the drama of history, from the religious prophets and philosophers who rejected the mundane to the movers and shakers of everyday life, have not been able to escape this basic law of nature.

Since the existence of man is subject to these inescapable laws, the span of his contributions to wisdom are bound by historical and cultural limits which are equally brief. Therefore, it can be said that history and culture throughout the ages, whether modern, ancient, Chinese, or Western, is an ongoing production where the young play the lead role and their elders edit and produce its final draft. This production, youthful and full of possibilities, will always remain a work in progress.

From primitive religion, man has progressed to the development of philosophy and expanded its scope to arrive at the achievements of modern science. And yet, the age-old mystery of human existence which we all face remains unanswered. Apparently, despite the multitude of different disciplines and ideologies mankind has developed throughout the centuries, none has been able to provide a lasting peace that can bring prosperity and happiness.

In our present age, we are amazed at the accomplishments of science and universally sing its praises. Yet so many of us are mesmerized by the civilization of science that we actually forget that its development is only one part of a broader cultural picture. Swept up in the advance of science, the development of the natural sciences has become the primary focus of our culture. Consequently, we lose sight of the spiritual sciences and become hollower with each passing day as we build an age of ideological idiocy. The most dangerous aspect of this crisis is that there is still no single construct capable of unifying the large number of individual scientific disciplines, making it impossible for the philosophies of spiritual and scientific civilization to join forces.

The Buddha said, "While man fears the effects, the Bodhisatva fears the cause." Those youth in our modern age of science who have the will and the knowledge to do so need to step forward and work to build a new history and culture. If a new path is not found, then without exception, as a society and as individuals, we will suffer needless anxiety and confusion. However, while we shouldn't wait and plead for solutions from the natural sciences, we must also insure that we do not neglect the urgently needed development of spiritual science. Otherwise, history and culture at the close of this century will without a doubt be setting out on a journey "preparing for takeoff insane and sedated, with dope and despair as copilots" and a sick society straight ahead.

2. The Impact of Western Culture

Reality and Rejection

In our previous discussion we explored the nature of the cycle of discontent with reality which characterizes human psychology. However, since we necessarily exist within the real world, we must resolve to confront and master it. Yet, when reality hits us, we feel immediately dissatisfied and seek to throw it off and flee. Caught in this contradictory psychological state, man over and over hurries through his allotted span.

In the midst of this phenomenon, the majestic and awe inspiring story of human history and culture has unfolded. Viewed from a different perspective, it is exactly this psychological state which has been the catalyst for the development of human history and culture. However, taking into account the course of history and the experience of daily existence, we can also say that the psychology of rejecting reality is precisely the main cause of human tragedy and the pathetic state of mankind's affairs.

Looking past these sharply conflicting views, we may ask if it is reasonably possible to be content with reality? And if humanity had not been restless throughout the course of history, could civilization have moved forward? This question is so important that its careful analysis will uncover the key to unlocking the puzzle of reality and rejection. However, if in asking the question we get caught up in the issue of progress, it further raises the philosophical question of whether culture has indeed been advancing, or whether it is actually degenerating.

Whether it be the Confucianists and Taoists of China or the Buddhists of India, the prevailing view of the Eastern philosophical disciplines on the historical progress of culture has been “today cannot match yesterday, “ “new is inferior to old, “ and “movement cannot equal stillness.” Therefore, each historical step forward by humanity only leads to a deepening degeneration of

civilization. As if in perfect accordance, the philosophical view of Western religion on this issue has the same fundamental outlook as the East.

However, on the basis of history and the real life demands of human existence, we can say that not only is the advance of civilization bringing constant improvement, but also, in the process of moving forward, we must push for even further progress. So in the end, are history and culture progressing or degenerating? The answer requires us to approach the question from two basically different angles.

The classical view of both Eastern and Western philosophy, which regards historical development as a step backward, originates from a religious and moral reaction to the erosion of spiritual culture. This decline, which has left society directionless and has encouraged the all out pursuit of material cravings, is seen as the source of humanity's troubles.

As a consequence of sheer momentum, the constant progression of material civilization promotes the ongoing development of human society. This in turn insures continuing progress in daily human life and the societal order, bringing prosperity in many areas. As the demands of day to day life increase man gladly gives in to the convenience of this prosperity leading to the belief that civilization has improved. From this we know that those who believe in historical degeneration are pointing to the spiritual life of man, and that so-called progress only concerns daily existence and material civilization.

The Three Undertows of Western Culture

From our previous discussion, we know that the issue of reality and rejection arises from the age-old, and perhaps irresolvable, conflict between spirituality and materialism. We will now turn our attention to the influence of Western culture and the modern era on the ideological and psychological evolution of Chinese youth in order to understand its causes and effects.

Today's youth, like those of previous generations, loves slogans glorifying past historical movements. As examples we may cite the frequent

glorification of the Renaissance in the West or the fixation with the May Fourth Movement in China. In reality, however, as remnants of past historical events and concepts simmer in our brains, they tend to become generic and generalized. Other than a few genuine historians willing to engage in honest and careful analysis, most people unaware of the real causes and effects of historical events. They capitalize on past ideas by casually quoting concepts which, while having the air of truth, remain muddled and inappropriate.

Emerging from the darkness of the Middle Ages, Western European culture was marked by a rebellious spirit of rejection. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries this spirit gradually took shape to form the European Renaissance. The Renaissance, and the new European mentality that accompanied it, laid the foundation for the Western cultural traditions of democracy and liberalism. Subsequent political revolutions in France and other Western countries built on this foundation, consolidating the ideals which now form the core of modern Western thought. However, this wave of change also produced a contradictory duality, where democracy and the cult of personality existed side by side, and liberalism and selfishness became indistinguishable. As a result, the first undertow of Western culture was set in motion, accompanied by a renewed spirit of rejection and cynicism.

In the model nation states of England, Germany, France, and Italy a militarism emerged which “preached justice at home, while flexing its muscle abroad”; dictatorship of the people merely became dictatorship, and the rule of law was twisted into might makes right. Dragged under by these cultural currents, European youth embraced the notion of national glory through “economic riches and military might.” However, still restless and discontent, they directed their scorn at the past and the privileged power elites of society.

With the birth of modern science and the industrial revolution in the seventeenth century, a new culture of materialism arrived which pushed the limits of development and the mercantilist system. While this commercial and industrial explosion ushered in a new golden age of scientific discoveries, it also uncovered the ugly side of capitalism. As the gap between rich and poor grew wider and more obvious, a new set of ideologies fueled by growing discontent emerged to form the second undertow of Western culture.

It is my belief that these ideologies put forth by Marx, Engels, and a handful of the other Western philosophers of that period were actually provincial, short sighted, and not representative of true philosophy. In obsessing so intently on the social morbidity of their own era, works such as *Capital* and *The Communist Manifesto* proved to be extremely narrow -minded. The influence of their arguments, which grew out of the classical Greek materialist dialectic, planted the seeds for a legacy of disaster in the twentieth century that continues to this day. Tragically, Marx and company, without any real understanding of Eastern culture or history, felt the need to recklessly add their appraisal to the discussion. Meanwhile, they failed to predict that the capitalist course would put society on a natural path to prosperity.

The philosophical and theological studies of the mid-nineteenth century Danish doctor Soren Kierkegaard opened yet another front in the ideology of rejection. He maintained that our humanity was shackled by modern mechanized society. Seeking a way to deliver the masses from this insanity, he founded the existentialist philosophy. Sadly though, not only did his philosophy fail to save the world, it apparently could not even save him from an early death brought on by anxiety and depression. However, before too long the embryonic existentialist ideology, like the psychosexual studies of Freud, took Europe and the world by storm. Under its influence, the young believed themselves and the world beyond hope of salvation. Among the by-products of this negativism was the emergence of a number of parochial psychological movements which, although based on ego-satisfaction and selfishness, passed themselves off as true philosophies.

The bizarre story of Western culture and ideology on the heels of these rapid developments is strikingly similar to the strange fiction of the seventeenth century Chinese author P'u Sung-ling who wrote, "New years day, and the west wind blows eastward. Fireflies on the wing stir up the grass and brush against the bed netting." Even as this cultural disaster headed eastward, the stage was being set for World War I.

It seems as if human psychology and ideology will always be both laughable and pathetic, like a never ending self-authored, self-directed, and

self-portrayed story which opens as a comedy but by the final scene closes as a self-composed tragedy. What begins as discontent and rejection ends in self-pity and sorrow as we throw ourselves to the wolves.

China and Her Youth at the Threshold of the Twentieth Century

As Europe was still struggling to escape the storm of this elaborate nightmare, its winds turned eastward rudely awakening the five thousand year old conservative culture of classical China. During the late nineteenth century reigns of the Ching dynasty emperors Hsien-feng and T'ong-chih, an attempt was made to master the modern technologies of steamships, cannons, rifles, and armaments. However, this attempt also paved the way for China's complete capitulation to Western culture. What began as the importation of mechanization quickly turned into the assimilation of everything from Western religion, philosophy, humanism, and the natural sciences to food, dance, music, and even brassieres and underwear.

However, the change in eating habits from white rice to milk and rye bread was never the critical issue, but rather it was the appearance of philosophies as varied as humanism and realpolitik which brought true cultural disaster. From democracy and liberalism to fascism and anarchy, each made its appearance on the Chinese stage, blindly followed until the next rage and leaving chaos in its wake. Even armed with the "Three Principles of the People" enunciated by the father of modern China, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, as before, the torrential force of this cultural storm could not be stopped. At this point, everyone should be able to comprehend that communism is actually a by-product of Western cultural influence, and is in no way a creature of Chinese or Eastern culture.

Hurdles In the Post May Fourth Movement Maze

Heartbroken at the weakness of the Chinese people, in the early days of the twentieth century China's youth were racing against the clock to strengthen and save the nation. However, influenced by the latest trends of Western

culture, there was also mass confusion as their beliefs drowned in a cauldron of conflicting Eastern, Western, classical, and modern elements. In the general discontent and resentment that resulted, the call for revolution could be heard everywhere.

As the belief took hold that a “Renaissance” inspired by Western culture was needed to save China, the “May Fourth Movement” naturally followed. Some point to particular individuals or groups to explain the varied negative and positive results of the “May Fourth Movement.” However, this outlook is actually blind to the overall impact of the historical and cultural momentum behind events, an impact that deserves unbiased discussion and research.

During that period, intellectuals, and particularly those within literary circles, mounted merciless attacks in an effort to pluck out the poisonous thorns of the old society. When combined with the general animosity and resentment individuals felt for the dark and brutal sides of Chinese culture, the pace of these slanderous attacks only increased.

Consequently, while communist ideology enjoyed a widespread surge in popularity among the young, the progress of China’s more moderate revolutionary movements were stopped dead in their tracks. As in previous ages, the influence of literature reflecting the psychology of discontent proved more powerful than that of religion, philosophy, or education. Caught in this melee of competing classical and modern, Chinese and Western ideologies, Chinese youth stepped into the twentieth century.

However, the unending misfortunes of my generation did not stop there. In the middle of our internal strife, Japan surged forward in a wave of aggression, forcing us into a hurried and wasteful resistance. With their world in ruins and filled with a profound sense of grief, the young, who should have been in the prime of their lives, simply had no strength left for the task of cultural and ideological reconstruction. Under these conditions, the false prophets of communism and the materialist dialectic were able to push through the cracks and flourish.

In other words, the youth of that period, who are of course the old men

and women we see today, were like an ideological wrecking crew, tearing down the old society and throwing it out with the trash. With axe and hoe in hand they were determined to break ground and pave the way to a cultural utopia for future generations. But how could they imagine that just as they began their work someone would set their world ablaze. How could they know that just as this fire raged out of control viscous killers would emerge from all sides waiting to consume their group of would-be patriots. Caught in this firestorm, some died, some fought back, and some simply withdrew from the world into lives of seclusion. In the end, all that remained was desolation and emptiness, without a single achievement to point to.

Of course, viewing these events, the younger generation of adolescents next in line ignorantly cursed the older generations as useless and irresponsible. With ever increasing indignation, they went off half-cocked, jumping up and down and spewing profanities in bouts of useless crying and screaming. When fatigue finally overtook them, shell-shocked and disoriented, they desisted, acting as if they didn't have a care in the world! This picture adequately portrays what came of the "hopes and dreams" of twentieth century Chinese and Asian culture. However, it is also directly connected to the psychological and ideological emptiness of today's youth.

3. Short Stories from a Great Age

The Fall of Western Culture Begins

As World War II ushered in the closing scene of the tragedy being played out in the East, in the West the fate of the old European order was being sealed. Italy, Germany, France, and even Britain (on whose empire it was said the sun never set) fell one by one like dominos. Other than a few remnants of historical glory which people held on to, what remained were sobs of grief at the passing of the “princely” powers of imperial Europe.

However, “eventually the tables turn for everyone.” Today it is America, barely two hundred years young, with its democracy, freedom, scientific innovation, and mighty greenback which has emerged out of the Western tradition to take the world by storm. Making good use of this cultural capital, the American upstarts quickly caught up. Combining her lack of experience in world leadership with the attitude that “great deeds require great faith,” they shook up the global status quo. Nevertheless, despite her superficiality and immaturity, the influence of American culture over the last thirty years has been overwhelming. Not only has it touched both the world's scientifically advanced and industrially backward regions alike, but has also had a profound impact on China.

Sino-American Differences In Cultural Perspective

Turning our attention back to the problems of modern youth, we see they are indeed intimately related to the “whirlwind” of Western cultural influence. A few true accounts from my own personal experience can perhaps indirectly offer a more penetrating insight into the main issues involved.

Young Americans on Modern Civilization

The First Story

One evening five or six years ago, I had an after dinner conversation with an American student studying in China who had been attending my class for several months. In the course of our discussion he asked, "You often say that before the learning process can begin, we must first focus on the ideals of individual and universal salvation. Why is that?" Feeling quite surprised I said, "You still don't understand this fundamental mode of thought even after attending so many lectures on Chinese culture?" He responded, "I'm simply asking, why this focus on saving the world?" "You don't feel there is too much pain and suffering in this world?" I asked. "People today benefit so much from the advances of modern science, how can you say there is such overwhelming suffering?" he asked. I responded, "Don't you understand the intense anguish and horror caused by the world wars which were fueled by our modern age of science? Can't you see that we are still living with the tragic results of these wars to this very day?" He answered, "But the two world wars were more of a local phenomenon than anything else. On the whole, their effect on the rest of the world was actually quite limited. Most people living in the worlds different regions are very fortunate, the age we live in today is by far the most brilliant and beautiful of all."

I was dumbfounded! But at the same time the mentality of modern American youth was suddenly clear to me. I asked, "Do Americans in general, and young Americans in particular, feel the same way you do?" "I would assume so," he answered. I said, "I am certain that if you were Swiss or Australian, you would have already concluded I was crazy and angrily stormed off. Too bad you're not Asian though, and its even more of a shame you are not Chinese. You have not suffered the first hand lessons of our unfortunate history of anguish and despair, which the culture and ideologies of the modern age have brought us. Obviously, I have not expressed myself clearly enough to you in the past, but we should continue our exchange of views and opinions. However, I now more fully understand the flawed mentality of the 'academics who contemplate world events from their ivory towers' who fill your country's

state department. I have also gained a clearer insight into your country's so-called China experts, whose views are anything but expert and plagued by an inherent bias. "

As our talk was winding down he said to me, "Chinese are fond of saying that racism is deeply rooted in our psychology. I have been in Asia for more than a year now and have lived in Japan, India, and even passed through Southeast Asia. After living here with you for several months, I feel that not only are Asians racist, but Chinese are indeed the most racist of all." I laughingly replied, "You have already experienced the good natured civility of the Chinese student-teacher relationship, you must feel quite embarrassed having called me a virulent racist, yes or no?" Just as my words left many issues hanging in the air, we both burst into laughter, bringing our conversation to a close.

The China that American Academics Imagine

The Second Story

Four years ago, a certain American professor of sociology on summer vacation was visiting the Orient. Because he had read an English translation of my book *The Unique Problem of Chinese Society*, he made special arrangements to have an interview with me.

At one point during our conversation, he commented, "Throughout history, China has gone through many periods of near national destruction. However, not only were her people and culture not destroyed, but instead, after each historical disaster, she has returned more resilient and radiant than ever. I don't believe there is a similar example of this in Western history; what is the source of this strength?" Offering a clear and concise answer, I replied, "It is the power of cultural unity."

Although his pen did not once stop as he listened to my reply, his expression seemed full of doubt. Not waiting for the next question, I stated, "During the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, we were actually just like Europe, with numerous feudal states of all sizes, each with its own

written and spoken languages, economies, and forms of exchange. However, with the implementation of the 'standardization of language and transportation' during the Chin and Han periods, not only was the political system integrated, but also in the process Chinese culture itself was unified. Of course, over the next two millennia, isolated by great distances, her regional dialects, customs, and habits were able to develop and maintain their own individual linguistic characteristics. However, China's written language and cultural ideology have remained entirely consistent, even becoming widely adopted in Asian countries such as Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. So, while China has endured generation after generation of political upheaval, the unity of her national culture even in the face of historic change has remained irreversible. If in its classical period, the written language and culture of Western Europe had been integrated, then it would resemble China, and the West and its history would not be what they are today. It can also be concluded that it is precisely this different cultural and historical background, with its diversity of viewpoints, which led to the advances of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the eventual rise of modern American power. The cultural tradition of our spiritual, Confucian, and Taoist ideologies, however, all demand unity and order."

Eventually he touched on the concept of "the great unity" as detailed in the chapter on the "The Evolution of Rites" in the Confucian classic, *The Book of Rites*, asking, "Isn't it actually true that this traditional Chinese political ideology has much in common with the social ideals of communism?" Hearing this I broke out into uncontrollable laughter, laughing so hard in fact that his expression began to appear very uneasy. After regaining my composure, I said, "I am so sorry. I was really out of line, but your question made me think of your country's so-called China experts. Doesn't it seem reasonable to assume that they hold the same mistaken notions you do?" He said, "I don't know whether the notion is mistaken or not, but it is our opinion and most people agree with it." I then said, "This notion is not only a mistake, but a quite serious one at that. The individual awareness of our humanity is at the core of the sociopolitical ideals contained in "The Evolution of Rites". As each of us individually seeks to elevate the morality of his own character, these ideals hold that the perfection of the collective morality of society will naturally follow. The way of the enlightened monarch detailed in *The Spring And Autumn Annals*, the so-called three ages of peace, order, and prosperity spoken of in *The Kung-yang*

Commentary to the Spring And Autumn Annals, and the Taoist prescription patterned on natural 'non-action' all emerge from this same cultural tradition. As for the ideals of communism, they are simply a means of obtaining the political power necessary for the construction of a communist social system. In a word, this system which demands total acquiescence to the exercise of its power is not only completely devoid of any genuine freedom, but also ignores the cultivation of human virtue. When you equate the ideology of 'the great unity' with communism, your view is not only flawed, but actually misses the world of difference that exists between the two."

American Style Freedom and Democracy

The Third Story

Four years back I had a series of conversations with an American graduate student studying in China. Our discussions, which he transcribed and planned on translating into English, focused on issues relating to Western and Chinese culture. On one occasion, when the issue of freedom and democracy came up, I remarked, "In our modern era America alone carries the flag of Western cultural glory, championing democracy and freedom. But what Americans like to call democracy and freedom is actually the 'American style of democracy and freedom.' Although this style is by no means suitable for most other people and places, it is especially inappropriate for the five thousand year old culture of China. However, not only do Americans not understand this fact, but you also refuse to even consider its possibility. So your good intentions and American style of democracy and freedom are matched by an equally powerful response of antipathy wherever they turn up."

"What exactly do you mean when you say the American style of democracy and freedom," he asked. I replied, "The answer requires quite a complex discussion of two hundred years of contributing factors, from the founding of your country to the present. To summarize though, from the eighteenth century to the present, as America's forefathers flocked to the New World, they carried with them the culture of the European industrial revolution. However, coming from many different countries such as England, France,

Germany, and Austria they carried with them the unique cultural perspectives of their individual ethnic backgrounds. These perspectives, combined with an ideological inclination toward the promotion of the general welfare, helped form the spiritual foundation of your nation — ‘of the people, by the people, and for the people.’ However, regardless of what shape it assumes, hiding in the framework of liberalism and democracy has been the secret ingredient of the market forces that drive industry and commerce. This was true at the birth of your nation, and after two hundred years remains true to this very day. To be honest, the behind-the-scenes bosses who actually manage your democratic politics are inseparable from the capitalist and commercial industrial complex which surrounds them. Yes its true! Even today, America’s territorial ambitions abroad have been quite limited. However, the same thing cannot be said of your desire to occupy foreign markets. This hidden agenda, when added to the tangle of your democratic politics and an unsophisticated provincial populace, has resulted in hesitation, inconsistency, and fence-sitting on the international scene. If you really want to live up to your superpower status, you must combine your international political experience with an in-depth study of the Chinese classic *The Spring And Autumn Annals*. Only then will you grasp the righteous principle of ‘restoring the nation and insuring its posterity.” Having returned home, today this American colleague has begun teaching *The Spring and Autumn Annals* and its related commentaries at Harvard University.

For the sake of furthering our discussion of the impact of American cultural on Chinese youth in the last thirty years, I have recounted these few short stories from my own life. Now we can go a step further and explore the aftermath of the arrival of these “American Yankees.”

4. The Hidden Spell of American Culture

Regardless of the region or country, when we discuss history, culture, and the psychological and ideological issues of twentieth century modern man, we must to some degree involve the impact of America. This is especially true in Japan and China, where relations grow more intimate and involved every day.

There are a handful of countries which remain underdeveloped for geographical and environmental reasons, and a few genuinely backward peoples untouched by modern civilization. However, most of the world today sits back believing they can enjoy the benefits of material civilization while continuing to hold on to their own traditions. Western Europe has a long history of looking down on America, while gloating over their own glorious past. However, swept up in the momentum of the historic changes of our age, they have been unable to ward off the torrential onslaught of American pop culture. In Asia, the tumultuous and chaotic arrival of American culture in China over the last thirty years has led to a situation where America's "friends are harmed while enemies delight" as its "good intentions lead to disaster."

Today Chinese youth urgently need to recognize and think about the following: while American inexperience and naivete have helped create our present predicament, caught between the contradictory forces of modern and classical culture our own position has also contributed to it. Finding ourselves in this extremely difficult situation, if we truly desire self-renewal then we must first explore and meditate on what has led to and resulted from this historic age. Only then will we be able to "understand the future through our study of the past" and learn how to stand on our own two feet as we help raise up others.

Rudely Awakened, Japan Joins the Imperial Powers

A hundred years back, with the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution behind them the newly reinvigorated nations of the West turned their

attentions eastward. Finding China and Japan, they imagined these two pillars of the East to be a second and third India. Alarmed at the foreign intrusion, Japan and China both followed the delusional and ill-conceived strategy of raising their drawbridges and putting up their defenses. The next natural step was to send their students' abroad to study the West. However, for that generation the heart of Western civilization was not in America, which was a mere shadow of its present strength and influence, but rather in Western Europe.

Returning home Japanese students initiated the most glorious chapter in their nation's history, the Meiji restoration, and lifted the country up to take its place among the imperial powers. And China's youth? A handful of them did serve the government in the foreign affairs ministries. However, surrounded by a decrepit and disintegrating Ching dynasty, the majority of China's best and brightest returned home to promote their own ambitions as middle-men and agents for foreign business. Naturally, we cannot lay the blame for this phenomenon at the feet of the young of that time; it was just another face of the tragic history of China. The resentment that grew out of this failure developed into the force behind the national revolution, the overthrow of the Manchurian Ching dynasty, and the establishment of the Republic of China.

The course of events in Japan can naturally be attributed to its historical background, which made the success of the Meiji Restoration possible. Politically, Japan had the benefit of a unifying, continuous, and ancient imperial culture that did not need to contend with ethnic strife and other equally troubling issues. This opened the door for the remarkable achievements of leaders such as Ito Hirobumi. In the arena of ideology and education, the widespread influence of post Sung and Ming dynasty Confucian theorists such as Wang Yang-ming had already coalesced to form the backbone of the Japanese cultural spirit. While it may be true that they made use of Western science, the guiding principle of Japan's cultural soul was the spirit of the Yamato era. As to her military, Japan's brutally fierce tradition of Bushido made it especially easy for her to accept imperialism and lapse into a militarist ideology of aggression which believed "its day had come."

The Western Wind Storms Cathay

And what of China during that period? It was the reverse image of Japan. Politically, after nearly three hundred years of ethnic tension, she was still ruled by the last remnants of the impossibly corrupt and decaying Ching dynasty. In education and learning, from five thousand years of culture she could point to a distant past with a vast ocean of competing ideological disciplines from Confucius and Mo Tzu to Taoism and the Chou philosophers. However, more recently Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism were matched by the cultural clash between East and West and the generational divide, producing discord and disarray.

This was especially evident as, after three hundred years, the nationalist revolutionary movement arrived at a historical turning point. Blindly taking on the French style of revolutionary thought, they proceeded to throw out everything of value from the past as they reached straight for the bottom of the barrel. Worst yet, in their obsession with perpetual revolution, they devolved into complete chaos, losing their ideological center.

As to the national martial spirit, since the Ching conquest of the Ming dynasty one novel alone had captured the imagination of the entire nation from top to bottom — *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. However, from tales of allegiance, loyalty, and sacred oaths between blood brothers, we somehow ended up with pistol waving horseman, riding roughshod over the country as they carved out their own personal kingdoms. In their self-aggrandizement they affected napoleonic theatrics, paving the way for China's tragic history of monarchists, restorationists, pretenders to the throne and northern warlords. From this disaster emerged the legacy of Sun Yat-sen, who said, "The work of the revolution is not complete, comrades you must keep the struggle alive," and the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek during the Second World War struggle against Japan.

However, with its ill-conceived grand plan, Japan single-handedly brought ruin and destruction to Chinese and Asian culture. Once we understand this historic fact, if we compare the modern history of my country with that of Japan and the Soviet Union, whom do you think ought to be held responsible for how events unfolded? "Although it is said to be the work of man, the heavens must surely be against us!"

America as Second World War Upstart

Even though China's history is vast and far reaching, it is still only one short chapter in the endless ongoing story of humanity. Yet compared to America's two hundred-year history since independence, what my country has endured in its recent past alone is, as the Buddhists say, so full of misfortune one cannot bear the pain of looking back. Today's youth learn of these events in a general way from their high school and university classes. However, there is no way for them to truly understand the suffering and misery which we "middle aged" and "golden oldies" have had to endure. Nevertheless, it was America which charged out of the Second World War with a deafening roar to become the chief representative of Western culture and capture the imaginations of our young.

In the hearts and minds of our youth, when they hear the words "Western culture," it seems as if they only think of America. To them, the glorious cultural systems of nineteenth century Western Europe are merely research materials that occupy a few pages in a book. Who would know that fifty or sixty years ago, when England was the world's preeminent military power, its culture also reigned supreme. Back then the focus of students studying abroad and what they preached when returning home was always the British model. Later, as German and Japanese power grew, their schools of thought became the new fad of the moment.

England, Germany, France, and Japan each had its turn, and now America is the new flavor of the day. We can blindly follow this historically immature but enterprising, culturally naive yet vigorous friend. However, while we idolize her naked beauty and fall for her indulgent lifestyle, we are indeed playing on top of an active volcano.

We must stay extremely alert and guard against “building careful proofs on reckless suppositions” when looking at the history and culture of the nation and mankind. If we fail in this, the incalculable price of our recklessness will be nothing less than the very lifeblood of our nation.

When the young see the older generations criticize, ridicule and look down on the American and British “hippie” style they become extremely resentful. Strangely, it seems as if their unlimited curiosity in, and sympathy for the “hippies” is only matched by their contempt for their elder’s criticism of that style. Actually, the appearance of the Anglo-American “hippie” culture is just an outward show of American and European youth rebellion against Western culture.

In their opposition to the cultural traditions of the older generation, they discarded religious faith and shed old philosophies. In their disgust with materialist mechanized society, they developed a simple psychology of reactionary rejection. “Hippie, hippie”! These are no accidental “spoiled brats”! Today, however, the American “hippie” culture has quickly become passé. Yesterday’s hippies now blindly dabble in Indian “transcendental meditation,” Chinese “pseudo-Zen,” and Taoist “sexual cultivation,” as they search for the next metaphysical craze.

Spoiled Cowboys Can’t Save the World

I often hear our friends gleefully quote from an American speech given by a former governor of Hong Kong in which he said, “The nineteenth century was the British century; the twentieth century is the American century; the twenty-first century will be the Chinese century.” Too bad I couldn’t hear it with my own two ears, although it seems difficult to corroborate the accuracy of such quotes. Even if this speech actually occurred, people tend to be loose with the facts when they talk too much and possibly have hidden motives. However, if we ourselves do not struggle to reach our true potential will it ever even be possible?

Looking at the America's reckless behavior these days, both at home and abroad, it could bring a person to tears. If she had not landed a man on the moon to pull the wool over our eyes back on earth, I'm afraid her prestige and international standing would have gone the way of her currency in European markets, devalued and stripped of its leadership role. Now it is "American style democracy and freedom" which is the source of her mass appeal and success. Yet in exercising this "American style of democracy and freedom" domestically and internationally, she has opened the fatal wound from which her power and influence bleeds.

Consequently, wherever it has appeared in the post World War international political scene, the greatest accomplishment of American style democracy and freedom has been to split other countries in half. While America completely misunderstands the inherently democratic and peaceful nature of the hidden true face of communism, she fails to offer up an effective strategy of her own for genuine global security and stability.

Under the flag of "American style" democracy and freedom, her own internal politics are awash in the colors of crisis as the country turns red (left leaning politics), yellow (rampant pornography), blue (labor troubles), white (drugs and addiction), and black (racial strife). Add to this a variety of other issues, from student unrest and the women's movement, to draft dodging and tax evasion, and we must conclude that America is leading the world's youth down a twisted path of degeneracy.

Needless to say, American's don't seem to be in a panic over any of these issues. Not bothered by the weight of history and culture, they think they can instantly fix any shortcoming by passing a law and believe they can change themselves overnight. Because they possess sufficient freedom and courage, they indeed have reached the stage where they can operate under the principle of "once recognized, a problem must be corrected." Nevertheless, when influenced by American culture it seems far too easy for youth around the world to pick up its worst habits, and far too difficult to repair the damage. So what can we do?

A few days ago, a semi-westernized Chinese youth and a young American said to me, “Your government can prohibit its own young people from having long hair or acting like ‘hippies,’ but why does it extend these restrictions to us foreigners”? I asked, “Why are you here?” He answered, “To study.” To this I remarked, “Since you have come here to study us, I’m sorry to tell you but our ‘national customs’ have always held that ‘clothes make the man’ and ‘when in Rome, do as the Romans do.’ Our cultural ways are quite particular about it; we discourage people from being overly casual here. If I went to a nudist colony, I would definitely try to fit in. It is common courtesy for one to adapt to the ways of a foreign society when abroad, and you should not feel as if your freedom is being restricted. Anyway, more than once I have seen your fellow students walking the streets barefoot and no one bothered them. Is that not so?”

Mother Jia and The Prodigal Son

After wasting so much blood and treasure on the battlefields of Europe and Asia, some wonder why America doesn’t simply dispense with pretense and use its military might to impose a lasting international peace. The truth is, this is the inevitable end game of “American style democracy and freedom.”

However, even if her politicians were as talented as the heroes Guan or Yue, they would still have no way of acting on their aspirations. Even if America’s military elite possessed the wisdom of Sun Tzu or Wu Ch’i, their ambitions would still remain impotent. Limited to a military strategy which ties one hand behind its back, she enters into conflicts abroad which she is not allowed to win — this is the meaning of “American style democracy and freedom.” She will split another person’s country in two, draw a line in the sand, and then demand that they follow “American style democracy and freedom.” Meanwhile, back at home she shuts her doors and turns her back to the outside world, going about her merry way as she enjoys the good life — this is the habitual policy of “American style democracy.” One shouldn’t be surprised; this was the case in the past, it is true today, and will be for many years to come.

The essence of the so-called “American style of democracy and freedom” was well captured by the favorite sayings of one of her own self-made industrialists: “Life's greatest lesson is how to get people to gladly take the money from their own pockets and put it into yours” and “Learning breeds financial power, financial power is the key to political control.” Those very same capitalists who command industry and commerce and struggle for domination of world markets are inseparable from the backroom forces that control the political fortunes of elected officials. So when she must go to war to uphold her principles and help others engage in “nation building,” she cannot. Since it is not profitable from a purely commercial standpoint, it is simply not allowed. Moreover, the American general public and housewives, who form the electorate, truly don't understand why their politicians and military cannot be satisfied with their present good fortune and leave well enough alone. Why must they insist on sending troops overseas to fight other people's wars? “The prodigal son sits back and does nothing to uphold the family honor.” Which mother would willingly send her own precious son off to war?

In the court of American public opinion there is a powerful segment, accounting for about half of the electorate, which resembles the two characters Mother Jia and Wang Xi-feng in the classic Chinese novel *The Dream of The Red Chamber*. Although their political alliance is troubled and one of mere convenience, they and the capitalists nevertheless have the same goal in mind. They join forces and throw their support behind the candidacy of a political idealist. Then after two or three years in office, just as that elected official has begun to grasp the ins-and-outs of domestic and international politics, he must turn his attention and actions toward building support for the next political campaign.

Even if he possessed earth-shattering talent, how could a politician deal with the public's countless different demands, and how could he possibly insure their votes? Even with the versatility to control a team of horses, facing the thundering voice of the popular vote whose “screams can melt metal, and combined scorn can crush bone” who would dare take on the danger of doing the right thing. To do so would be equivalent to sacrificing one's own career on the altar of political righteousness!

American Culture Is Not the Model For Humanism

From this general understanding, our young fellow students should be able to identify “American style democracy and freedom” and its cultural and ideological merits and drawbacks. At the same time they ought to understand that devoid of any independent homegrown cultural ideology, in blindly falling for the American way they are setting themselves and the nation up for a disaster of unimaginable proportions.

If we confine ourselves to studying and understanding America in the context of the development of science, material civilization, and commerce and industry, then our thinking will be one hundred percent on track. However, within the entire scope of cultural humanism, to hold up a country with a mere two hundred-year history as the ultimate representative of Western culture would be an enormous mistake. A nation is made up of people, and people are the instruments of their minds. Only with a millennium of experience and thought behind them will the cumulative hearts and minds of a nation’s people be able to form a true cultural system. Today’s America is merely a shooting star in the sunset of Western culture, and while she may be the testing ground for the civilization of science, by no means is she the model for humanist culture.

5. Great Expectations for Our Children

Facing an Honest Discussion of Heredity

If we extend our present discussion of youth issues to the wider scope of human experience and understanding, we must touch on family upbringing and public education, or at least implicate the role of socialization. As society evolves to meet the ever-increasing pace of epochal change, the momentum pushing the problems of our youth grows with each passing day. At the same time, following fast on the heels of this danger is an explosion of childhood problems and troubled children. As a result, when we hear the mere mention of these issues, in our minds they take on the appearance of an imminent disaster ready to erupt. Sitting on our hands without a plan, we substitute anxiety and moaning for answers and solutions.

Actually, whether individually or as a social group, the contributing factors which form our thoughts and psychology consist of an array of elements which are anything but simple or few in number. A person's thoughts are an expression of consciousness in motion. The activity of our consciousness is cast in the mold of family, education, and societal influences and follows our physiological changes as we mature. It is this activity of consciousness that forms each of our transformations of thought and shapes the state of our psychology. Our mentality in all its categories, from the ordinary to the bizarre, emerges from this psychological state and the stimulation and response which result from our contact with the outside world. Taken as a whole, Chinese culture has customarily viewed early development in four stages, each roughly five years long — infancy, childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood. During these phases our mental and psychological behavior takes shape, relying on the mutual interaction of body and mind to fuel its growth.

Putting aside for the moment more intrinsic issues of metaphysical ontology, the six main contributing factors to the mentality and psychology of the young are heredity, family, historical culture, current trends, social environment, and public education. Neglecting any one of these issues may

render our conclusions biased and open to error. Therefore, a casual and overly general discussion of family upbringing and public education is not sufficient to guarantee our analysis will not be flawed.

Regarding heredity, if we recklessly delve too deeply into the sphere of genetics, it will be difficult for us to avoid becoming impractical armchair theorists. So for now, we will keep the involvement of heredity in our arguments limited. If we were to rigorously discuss the relationship of heredity, we would have to involve a large number of related disciplines. These include anthropology, ethnology, physiology, sexual psychology, reproductive biology, and even astrology, astronomy, and the strict proscriptions of the classical Chinese study of prenatal influences. Therefore, for now we will restrict our discussion to those aspects of heredity which most practically and directly relate to the subject at hand.

Other than those metaphysically inherent aspects of the human condition that we are putting aside, the driving factor behind each of our psychological conditions is the growth of our potential consciousness. For every person, whether child or adult, this potential is one of many characteristics that for the most part are inherited from our parents. It is true, perhaps, that this central point is often overlooked because people are basically unaware of the latent role their own parents play in the formation of their consciousness.

The inheritance of behavioral characteristics roughly falls into two categories: (1) direct inheritance — hereditary behavior passed on to a particular person directly from both parents; (2) indirect inheritance — hereditary behavior inherited through family ties with grandparents. However, whether direct or indirect, inheritance accounts for about half of the factors which govern the formation of a person's personality and psychology. The effects of heredity can also alternate, skipping generations, so even if parents or grandparents are intelligent, it seems unavoidable that either their children or grandchildren will turn out to be idiots.

Among the ingredients of heredity there is also the endowment of ego, which accompanies the effects of physical environment and the mental and psychological states of the parents at the time of conception. As these key causes of positive and negative heredity change, the transfer of hereditary is affected, giving rise to the generational skip.

Can Our Great Expectations Ever Live Up To Reality

The most obvious and overlooked fact regarding the role of heredity is that its effects can be categorized as either acceptance or rejection of genetic heritage. (1) So-called genetic heritage acceptance results when the behavioral characteristics and nature of the parents, whether good or bad, are matched by the child. (2) So-called genetic heritage rejection results when the behavioral characteristics and nature of the child are opposite those of the parents, as when the parents are generous and righteous, but the child might nevertheless be selfish and stingy. It is even possible for the effect to fall somewhere between the two extremes, leading to a dual personality.

Therefore, if a particular person's parents were perverse and deceitful, but the child was accomplished and prudent, this phenomenon would be a function of genetic heritage rejection. His parents might be intelligent and gracious, but he nevertheless could turn out stubborn and ignorant. This effect can be seen in ancient Chinese history, where the famous sage-king T'ang Yao handed his kingdom over to a virtuous minister rather than his own incompetent and worthless son. Ku-sou and his wife were both evil and tried to kill their own son, yet this very same son eventually became the sage-king Shun.

There are honest and noble families who produce corrupt and spoiled offspring, and rotten parents who nevertheless produce children that are paragons of kindness. This is to say, within the psychology of a particular mother and father lies the latent potential to produce both good and evil. One example of how this effect occurs is the case of an honest man who is always ready to turn the other cheek. The meek and mild-mannered appearance of the honest man is only possible because he has suppressed the urge to hit back, leaving him no way to act out. The reality is, however, that his heart is anything but at peace. Although the repression of his psychological desires lets him

maintain a veneer of humble and honest behavior, it cannot pacify his deep-seated anger and hidden rage. This sublimation allows the formation of contradictions in personality, which emerge as the generational skip.

The psychological state of the parents, their surroundings, or even climatic conditions have the potential of releasing a repressed or rebellious nature, which can become the contradictory effects of the generational skip in hereditary characteristics. Therefore, although our great expectations for our children's futures are not necessarily a foregone conclusion, they are certainly not merely a matter of chance.

Following this principle, it is perfectly possible for the child of a leading academic to be illiterate, having no love of learning, while it is not impossible for the children of a great hero to turn out to be cowards and weaklings. The children of a literary scholar might enjoy a good party more than a good book, or an artist's children may despise fine art but find satisfaction in manual work or the world of business. The daughter of a military officer may love literature and hate war, while the son of a captain of industry may be a slacker preferring to live the life of a rich playboy.

Through the scientific collection and statistical analysis of data, combined with philosophical reasoning, those researchers with an interest can flush out the complicated and intricate origins of this phenomenon. At that time, we will know if my analysis is correct or not. For now, we are merely bringing to light certain principles which our fellow students need to research further. I myself have neither the time nor experience to do this type of detailed statistical work.

I say all of this in the hope that parents and those concerned with family education will combine an understanding of these principles with introspection, or more in-depth research, and choose the right course for the upbringing and education of our children.

Although we may not be able to help but have great expectations for our children, it still seems as if there are those parents who persist in trying to live out their own unrealized dreams through the lives of their children. Hoping to

bring prestige and glory to the family name, they push their children to move up in the world and climb the social ladder. This strategy is not only a grave mistake, but is also a complete failure parental responsibility. If they insist on pursuing this absurd course, they will get a result totally different from what they had hoped for. Instead, they will plant in the child a latent rebellious psychology, which will lead him to reject both family and community and eventually fall into juvenile delinquency. Not only will the reputation of the family be damaged, but also the wider society will suffer the useless loss of human talent. I hope those who are obsessed with having the letters Ph.D. at the end of their name will learn to relax and direct their energies toward family, community, and country so that our children can reach their true potential.

Family Education

When we mention "family education," it sounds like quite an ordinary term. After all, which parent has not played some role in the education and discipline of their own children from the time they are born until the time they reach early adulthood? Other than a few rare unfortunate circumstances, across the world and throughout history, which child has not received some form of parental upbringing? Because of this, wouldn't it be safe to assume that as widespread as it is, family education is actually a non-issue?

Nevertheless, we can still ask what are the standards of family education, and how should we go about its implementation? Which parents are competent enough to take on the role of family educator? This is equivalent to the statement: every school must have a teacher. However, what type of person is qualified enough to be considered an educator, and what makes a teacher genuinely good? Is the family upbringing and formal education of a parent good enough or is it lacking in some way? These are the preconditions which determine the outcome of family education. If we ignore these questions, we run the risk of concluding that a troubled youth must be the product of a failure in family education, turning the whole issue into one of family education itself.

The Classics On Family Education

The popular view of most ordinary Chinese holds that our system of family education is the greatest and most time honored form of ethical upbringing a child can receive. The fact of its long historical tradition is indisputable. However, whether or not it is the greatest system is a complicated issue, which cannot properly be discussed with such broad generalizations.

Of the many great Chinese cultural teachings that deal with family education, none shines more brightly than *The Book of Rites*. I have always maintained that my own countrymen and people should be in the forefront of efforts to truly understand their own culture. At the very least since this requires a general familiarity with the major sections of *The Book of Rites*, I will assume detailed quotes are not necessary here.

According to the classical traditions of etiquette, the cultivation of well-balanced and wholesome habits begins with the real life lessons of hard work, followed by the study of proper manners. This is what is meant when we use the term “social graces.” In other words, when a child enters primary school at age six, according to classical standards of etiquette their starting point is “the refining of manners.” Its educational spirit does not treat the absorption of knowledge as a prerequisite, but rather emphasizes the cultivation of character and standards of decorum. Therefore, in *The Analects*, an account of Confucius’ teachings, it says, “Entering as a youth the disciple learns filial piety. Emerging as a young man with an overflowing love for humanity and benevolence in his heart, he uses his reservoir of strength to join in the pursuit of knowledge.” Revealing this important central thought, we can see that classical Chinese childhood education truly does begin with “the refining of manners.”

However, It is hard to imagine that before the age of six there has been no exposure in the home to “the refining of manners.” The fact is this is not the case. When a child’s whole world is his family where “all one sees and hears” is the example of the parent, the child will naturally absorb the lessons of “the refining of manners” in this teacherless environment.

Other than the emphasis placed on the fundamentals of decorum and the essential lessons of childhood, those skills and knowledge whose cultivation is treated as a prerequisite by the classics fall under the “six arts” of pen and sword. These arts are etiquette, music, archery, charioteering, literature, and mathematics. When the child reaches eighteen and enters university, the process of adult education begins, which will enable him to become independent and make his own way in the world. When we say, “knowledge is power,” we are pointing to the education a young adult obtains during this stage of life. In short, when we talk of classical Chinese family education it is safe to say that *The Book of Rites* is the authoritative work of its type.

Following the Han and Wei periods, a steady flow of works related to the concept of family education began to appear. However, strictly speaking, although these brilliant works touched on family education, their arguments were not based on educational ideals or derived from educational philosophy. The great body of these writings reflected the importance placed on family status and respectability following the Chin and Han periods. Two examples of this trend were *The Women’s Four Classics* written by the authoress Pan Chao between the Han and Wei periods, and the Sui dynasty author Yan Chih-tui’s *Yan’s Family Precepts*. These works were more a study of adult ethics than a guide for childhood education.

As the Buddhist and Taoist concepts of cause and effect and heavenly retribution permeated the idealist school of Confucian philosophers after the Sung and Yuan periods, their influence could be seen scattered throughout many individual writings on family education. From the Yuan dynasty Confucian philosopher Kuo Chu-ching’s twenty four models of filial piety to the *Maxims of Family Management* authored by the Ming dynasty idealist philosopher Chu Po-lu, works emerged which could more generally be regarded as childhood educational materials. Well known and universally popular Taoist works such as *The Book of Rewards and Punishments* and the Confucian, Buddhist, and Taoist influenced *Treatise on Hidden Destiny* and *The Rules of Virtue and Vice* were adopted as guidelines for family education. One can also say that the traditional standards of “The Education of Women” and “Instructions On Manners” mapped out in the Ching dynasty Confucian scholar Chen Rong-

men's *Five Varieties of Family Traditions* are an expression of this convergence of Confucian, Buddhist, and Taoist concepts on family education.

However, practically speaking, the majority of these works focused on the cultivation of adult ethics and character, and therefore belonged more to the realm of adult education. So when we discuss the theory and practice of family education in Chinese culture, we cannot slavishly follow dogmatic notions, but instead must engage the subject of its superiority with a fresh and critical mind.

6. Love and Filial Piety

The Principle of "Order through Filial Piety" in the Home

As the reigns of the Han dynasty emperors Wen and Jing came to a close, the spirit of "order under heaven through the principle of filial piety" had gradually been established as the cornerstone of Chinese education. Accordingly, with the implementation of Emperor Wu's merit-based system of civil service in the Han dynasty, social custom increasingly stressed the importance of personal morality. As a matter of course, this selection of the so-called "best and brightest" scholars compelled the government and society at large to emphasize the cultivation of character as the central focus of family education.

By the last days of the Wei dynasty emperor Tsao P'i's reign, the principle of filial piety was being vigorously promoted. As successive rulers applied this doctrine to their political ideologies and strategies, "enlightened rule through the principle of filial piety" became the governing paradigm. And yet, it seemed at times that "filial piety" could not consistently serve as the vital core of the family educational experience, while remaining the driving force behind patriotic idealism and the national identity. Following the T'ang dynasty, an effort was undertaken to reconcile "patriotic loyalty and filial piety" through the spiritual harmonization and integration of *The Cannon of Filial Piety* and *A Greater Filial Piety Under Heaven*. From this process, the classic Chinese cultural dogma of "loyalty to country and king begins with filial piety at home" emerged.

"Order under heaven through the principle of filial piety" is not in itself a flawed concept. Indeed, "the principle of filial piety" is the bedrock of Chinese culture that uniquely makes it what it is. However, over the course of the last three hundred years, the Chinese cultural principle of "filial piety" has undergone two momentous political and historic changes that have yielded mixed results. Oddly, the spirit of these transformations echoed the writings of the philosopher Chuang-tzu who said, "Following common sense, people lock

up their belongings to guard against pickpockets and petty thieves. However, for fear that lock and key will prove useless against professional bandits, these same precious items are misplaced and lost in the shuffle as they are hurriedly hidden away." In much the same way, well-intentioned worldly endeavors can often have unforeseen results, and the true goals of others may remain capricious and unpredictable. The only way we can hope to assess the merits of any cultural value is to conscientiously seek to understand the highest levels of its philosophical heritage.

As the Manchus swept into China, their conquest sparked a major change in the concept of "order under heaven through the way of filial piety," when the K'ang Hsi Emperor made the principle an essential element of his political policy. Who could imagine that having conquered China, all the Manchus would need to successfully consolidate their rule over four hundred million people would be three books! Legend has it, that in an effort to teach his clansmen the arts of war, the Aisin Gioro royal family even schooled their children in the classic Chinese military saga *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.

After ascending to the throne, the secret to K'ang Hsi's political success was to "wear the hat of a Confucian scholar, while keeping Huang Ti and Lao tzu in one's heart." He insisted that the clans of the Manchurian ruling class be well versed in the teachings of Lao tzu. Eventually, he turned his attention to the *Cannon of Filial Piety*, throwing his support behind the time-honored teaching of "enlightened rule through the principle of filial piety." Adapting this classic to his own policy of "social engineering," village scholars and heads of families alike were commanded to instruct the nation's children in its principles on the first and fifteenth of every month.

In reality, while popularizing "the principle of filial piety" proved to be the crowning moral achievement of K'ang Hsi's rule, it also was the key step in securing the political power of the Ch'ing. Ironically, in forging "filial piety" into a political tool he was able to utilize the strategy of "order under heaven through the principle of filial piety" to effectively deal with the Confucian scholar Li Erh-ch'ü and his campaign of passive resistance west of the Han Ku Pass. At the same time, making use of the Han dynasty regional system of selecting the

nation's "best and brightest," he initiated a special rank for the country's "preeminent literary minds" designed to bring the remaining Ming scholars into the Ch'ing fold. Consequently, Ming loyalists such as the scholar Ku T'ing-lin were rendered impotent and irrelevant. Just imagine, with every child compelled to follow the principles of filial piety and obedience, what parent would willingly send his or her child off to lose their head opposing the Ch'ing? Nevertheless, whether K'ang Hsi's administrative maneuvers were part of an "enlightened rule through filial principles" or merely the use of an expedient political tool, they remain the principal positive change seen in the doctrine of "filial piety" over the last three hundred years.

Once the communists seized control of the Mainland, they moved to implement their own cultural and ideological revolution by weeding out these deep-rooted elements of traditional culture. As part of their plan, "filial piety" and the traditional village and family ways of life were vilified as the main enemies of dialectical materialism and the communist ideology. When the Red Guards were unleashed, children were taught to turn in their fathers and elder brothers, purging families and wiping out a generation of accomplished and experienced elders. This perversion has been the biggest step backwards in the development of the principle of "filial piety" over the last three hundred years.

East and West on Love and Filial Piety

For all of its positive and negative transformations, in the end, the results of cultural evolution must inevitably become relics of the past. We who stand at the crossroads of the modern age face both overwhelming changes at home as past and present collide and the crushing weight of Western cultural influence from abroad. Yet, we must continue our painstaking analysis of the principles of "filial piety" and family education, even if we come to conclusions that may not please everyone.

On the ideological front, over the course of the last half of the twentieth century there was no urgent need for us to be preoccupied with complete or even partial Westernization. The fact is by that time our thinking had already

succumbed to the influence of Western ideology. From an educational point of view our family and public school systems, and even our notions of social awareness, are now all grounded in the Western concept of “love.” Some may play the role of matchmaker and seek to reconcile the two distinct traditions. Like modern day embodiments of the ancient “Na Chia” method of divination, that harmonizes the ten celestial stems with the eight diagrams, they might explain how “love” and Confucian “benevolence” are actually the same. Yet, the proponent of “benevolence” describes his own unique conception of benevolence, and the teacher of “love” preaches his own ideal of love. “God loves you,” “I love you,” “a parent’s love for a child,” and “a teacher’s love for his students” have all been conceptually lumped together in a vague and confusing “one size fits all” concept of “love.” Actually, each of these different notions of “love” is a category unto itself, with its own internal logic and psychological processes. Only those wise men who truly understand “benevolence” can fully “comprehend its dimensions.”

In America and Europe, learned “love” between parent and child arises out of prevailing custom and culture and is not the result of some kind of instinctual inclination toward “doting affection.” Raised on this “love,” the next generation is inculcated with a spirit of rugged individualism and independence. As this system and our Chinese conception of “fashioning arrows out of chicken feathers” met, a new style of family upbringing characterized by “indiscriminate love” and “doting affection” inevitably emerged. This is the place where the modern Chinese parent must stop and look into the mirror of self-reflection and the point from which they will set off on their journey of renewal.

At the same time their sons and daughters, the children of our modern age, must understand that in practice the deep-seated tradition of “filial piety” is both an extension and the natural result of “love.” Because most people do not bother to look beneath the surface of Western culture, they only see the outpouring of “love” that its parents shower on their children. However, this concept is completely alien to the traditional Chinese psychological obsession with “raising sons as insurance against old age and hoarding food to guard against famine.” So, as parents in the West reach old age they often find themselves aimless and abandoned, “alive but irrelevant” and waiting for the end.

Actually, although it is a systemic weakness of Western culture, lack of “filial” devotion and “love” for one’s parents is not a fundamental feature inherent in the nature of its people. As far as I can tell from my own contacts with Americans and Europeans, including many young people, their feelings for their parents are in no way inferior to the “filial” devotion of Asians. In the course of conversation, they often display a longing for home and concern for parents and family. Recently, after returning home a French student sent me a letter relating how he developed a psychosomatic stomach ailment following his parent’s bitter divorce. So, who can say that a Western education must necessarily result in a lack of “filial” devotion? At most, it can be said that they lack the cohesiveness and organization of a system of “filial piety.”

The conclusion we must draw is that “filial piety” is the natural consequence and sincerest expression of “love.” In all honesty, however, even past disciples of the Confucian School had a flawed understanding of “filial piety.” These theorists, known to later generations simply as Confucianists, stressed the idea that “father and mother know best” and treated the concept of parental infallibility as immutable natural law. Actually, as early as the pre Chou and Ch’in dynastic periods, our philosophy as expressed in the *I ching* hexagram *Ku* (Work on what has been spoiled) had already hinted that not all parents are infallible. Hence, a divination of the diagram *Ku* yields the concept of the “bewitchment of mothers” and the “bedevilment of fathers.” However, a child’s lot in life was to overlook even the most heinous acts of one’s parent, and suffer the wrongs of misguided mothers and fathers in silence and with a generous and “loving” heart. Along these lines Confucius said: “Suffer the admonitions of your parents and do not yield to selfish ambition; obey in respectful obedience and labor without bitterness.” However, as a direct result of either incompetence or deliberate corruption, succeeding generations handed down a legacy of misinformation that twisted the concept of “father and mother know best” into an ironclad commandment carved in stone.

Parents must understand that the Chinese ideal of “filial piety” is not a one-way street, but rather a state of mutual love and affection. “Loving parents have filial sons” and “kindhearted brothers have devoted younger siblings” are inevitable outcomes that follow from the natural laws of cause and effect.

Confucius reasoned, “Rulers rule, ministers minister, fathers father, and sons are sons;” the second repeated word in each of these pairs is a verb. Viewed through modern eyes, we can interpret this to mean that parents must step into their appropriate roles and take to heart the obligations of “love;” otherwise, “filial” devotion is nothing more than an unreasonable one-sided demand. The remaining pairs from our above quotation can be deduced from what has already been said.

Our summary of traditional Chinese beliefs on family education does not seek to deny the ideals of “filial piety,” nor does it attempt to blindly embrace the pedagogy of “love” as absolute truth. Our aim is to explain how conflicts between traditional and modern values and Chinese and Western currents of thought have damaged the familial, pedagogical, and value systems of this age. This is especially relevant with regards to modern Chinese parents, who have slavishly adopted the trappings of the Western lifestyle and allowed the American and European systems of family upbringing free rein to work their evil influence. Now they have compounded the damage by patterning themselves after foreign movies, accepting a hodgepodge of ideas neither truly Eastern nor Western as their golden rule. However, deep in their bones, the marrow of traditional Chinese cultural thought and its “great expectations” for sons who will bring “glory to the family name” remain. As a result, we now face a crisis in the home that has produced troubled children and delinquent youth. The bottom line is, we cannot point the finger of blame at God without the other four pointing back at us, or rail against the failures of society and the educational system from the sidelines while we absolve ourselves of all blame. Only after we begin the process of self-examination and rethink our system of family upbringing can we truly address the troubled hearts and minds of our youth. Until then, we cannot place the entire blame for these mistakes on the shoulders of our sons and daughters.

7. The Rigid “Eight-Legged Essays” of Yesterday and Today

From the time Confucius first “edited the classics of poetry and history and standardized the rules of ritual and music,” his legacy of works and revision of the *Six Classics* have served as both the spiritual core and guiding force for over three thousand years of education. In short, under his influence, the aim of our pedagogy has been the moral development of the human character. *The Book of Rites*, *The Great Learning*, *The Doctrine of the Mean*, and *The Way of the Scholar* set forth a wealth of righteous principles to guide us in this task. Yet, despite this legacy, from the time of the Eastern Chou dynasty, when *The Great Learning* instructed “emperor and commoner alike to ground their lives in moral self-cultivation,” its wisdom has fallen on deaf ears. Today, we refer to “self-cultivation” as character development. However, regardless of our terminology, the development of character must still be built on a foundation of psychological and ideological rectification. This is the origin of *The Great Learning*’s systematic focus on the subjects of “practicality, erudition, sincerity, and righteousness.”

From this perspective, reflecting on the *Six Classics* and the essence of their guiding principles, we can emphatically state that the spirit of *The Book of History* is the model of political philosophy and morality to which succeeding generations must strive. When integrated with the spirit of the Confucian classic *The Spring and Autumn Annals*, a body of precedent is formed against which the state of political thought and behavior can be measured.

Armed with scientific (from a classical Chinese point of view) observation, the spirit of the *I ching* joined the fray and permeated the very essence of Chinese philosophy with a cultural pedagogy of spiritual purification and intellectual advancement. When married to *The Book of Odes* and *The Record of Music* (the surviving portion of *The Book of Music*, which was lost in the Ch’in dynasty book burning), it becomes a powerful educational force with which to cultivate the disposition and perfect the hearts and minds of the people.

The spirit of the “three rites” – the *Book of Rites*, *Rites of the Chou*, and the *Ceremonial Rites* – contained in *The Book of Rites* embody a system of thought covering education, politics, economics, warfare, society, literature, the arts, and daily life that represent the cultural zenith of ancient Chinese tradition. I cannot state strongly enough that this is the pattern on which the moral development of both the political elite and the masses of future generations must be modeled.

From the earliest days of the Han dynasties to our modern age, it has been the Confucianists who have established the importance of these works in society. At the same time, it is an historical fact that for the five hundred years from the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods to the Ch'in and Han dynasties, the *Six Classics* remained largely ignored. This was especially true during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, when “cunning and fearless” knights matched wits in “the halls of diplomacy and on the field of battle” with pen, sword, and sorcery. The Holy Grail of their crusade was the King’s favor and its promise of worldly success through royal rank and prestige. However, a handful of scholars emerging from a common Confucian tradition, such as Tseng Shen, Tsu Szu, and Mencius were keeping the Confucian classics alive. Nevertheless, even these philosophers were in the business of securing the good graces and protection of royal patrons, without whom fame and comfort would have been unobtainable. Given this, and facing the real possibility of an obscure and desolate existence, their affiliations were inevitable.

The Goals of Education and Learning in the Post Ch'in-Han Period

Historically, it is well known that after his pacification of the country and founding of the Han dynasty, a favorite saying of Liu Pang was “the world is won on horseback.” Later generations would make use of these same remarks to mock Liu Pang, whom they considered to be unlearned and uncultured. Given this, and his own background and contempt for the intelligentsia and Confucianists (at that time, “Confucian” was used as an umbrella term covering many different intellectual traditions, including Taoism), a vacuum emerged in the areas of ideology and learning, as cooperation between the two sides

proved impossible. This unfortunate result should be enough to discourage us from falling into the same trap of ridiculing Liu Pang's lack of education.

At the same time, during the early days of the Han dynasty these Confucianists had begun to embrace the discipline (actually a structured system) of Shu Sun-t'ung. Although these so-called Confucianists often cited the traditions of ancient Chinese culture as they rode the coattails of Liu Pang to power, their understanding of the classics was shallow and incomplete. A study of Ssu-ma Ch'ien's *Records of the Grand Historian* and Pan Ku's *History of the Han Dynasty* and their accounts of Shu Sun-t'ung reveals the true ideological aims of these erstwhile intellectuals. From this, we know that their motivation was limited to pleasing their royal patrons and the attainment of political rank and fame, and did not include some noble desire to propagate learning and knowledge. From the very outset, these objectives were completely incompatible with the essence of the classical Chinese tradition of education and Confucian thought.

In reality, the veneration of Confucius began with the early Han emperor Wu's admiration for Ssu Ma Hsiang-ju's literary verse, his esteem for the ideology of Tung Chung-shu (who was far from a faithful follower of Confucius and Mencius), and his belief in the ersatz Confucian ideals of Kung Sun-hung. Consequently, Confucius and the Confucian ideology were revered in the Western Han and gradually developed into the "classics based" ideological achievements of the Eastern Han Confucian scholars. While on its face Han Confucianism wore the hat of Confucian ideology, beneath the surface it capitalized on the strengths of Taoist, Mohist, and traditional Chinese cosmological schools of thought to develop its own power. The internal evolution of the Confucian School continued during the Wei, Chin, Northern and Southern Dynasties, T'ang, Sung, Yuan, and Ch'ing dynasties, although "literature, logic, and learning" and the ways of "gentility, scholarship, and statesmanship" remained at its ideological and spiritual core. In the end, however, regardless of how it was expressed, their underlying purpose was the same inevitable search for fame and fortune through power and position.

Mencius said, "There are three transgressions against the principle of filial piety, the foremost of which is to allow the family name to die out." Of the

remaining two, according to the Han Confucianists' commentaries, leaving one's "family in poverty without attaining official rank" was the greater offense. In other words, apart from the purpose of obtaining government position, scholarship was irrelevant to the task of earning a living, and failure to secure a living and support one's family was, of course, the most unspeakable crime of all. In the final analysis, given today's "career based education" and worship of money, other than some peculiarities in form and style, is there any real difference between our contemporary motivations and those of the past?

Educational Thought and the Imperial "Meritocracy" of the Han and T'ang Dynasties

We have already laid out a broad summary of the effect of educational goals on scholarship following the Chou and Ch'in dynasties. During this period, with the exception of the classical age when those entering official service were held to high standards of learning and morality, because education was underdeveloped, a meritocracy in the selection of governmental officials had not yet been instituted. However, by the Warring States period, with the sudden efflorescence of scholarship and the emergence of the ambitious feudal princes, the talents of the intellectually gifted were once again in demand. As a result, by the end of this period a climate prevailed in the remaining six kingdoms which encouraged the "development of the scholar-statesman" and valued human capital.

Following national consolidation in the early Han, the atmosphere that had encouraged the "nurturing of the scholar-statesman" soon dissipated with the establishment of peace and political stability. Yet, despite this change thoughtful and learned men remained, and this selection system, based on moral character and intellectual achievement, that brought the "best and brightest" from every region into the highest levels of national service became firmly established. However, although the "selection" process of the early Han was certainly well intentioned and reasoned, like all of the reasonable laws and benevolent governments throughout history, in practice, the system inevitably fell victim to abuse. "Power corrupts," after all, is a saying in both East and West that has survived since antiquity. So, by the last days of the Han, through

cronyism and self-enrichment, an entrenched political caste had managed to monopolize the “meritocracy,” fueling the resentment of scholars and leading to social chaos. Consequently, over the next three hundred years of upheaval during the Wei, Chin, and Northern and Southern Dynasties, the intelligentsia lapsed into the habit of seeking security through power and position in a system that stressed the “nurturing of the scholar-statesman.”

This system persisted until the Sui-T’ang era when the emperor Tai Tsung, who had inherited the Sui dynasty methodology of selection, established an examination system of which he proudly boasted “I have netted the world’s greatest talent.” From this system evolved the civil service examinations of the Sung, Yuan, Ming, and Ch’ing dynasties. What resulted from this process, however, was a deeply rooted and twisted obsession with dreams of success and fame. This phenomenon was captured by the sayings: “At the stroke of three, lamps are lit, at five the rooster crows, this is when adolescent scholars roll up their sleeves for study;” and “Although ten years are spent alone in silent study, once official rank is attained the world takes notice.” By the last days of the Ch’ing dynasty, the rigid eight-legged essay of the civil service “examination” system had become rife with abuse and the education process hackneyed and corrupt. This in turn gave rise to the restlessness of thoughtful and learned intellectuals which, when coupled with the principles of national revolution, toppled the three-hundred year reign of the Manchu dynasty and two-thousand years of pedagogical tradition.

Recently I ran across some supplemental material to the *History of the Chin (Tungusic) Dynasty* that offers a glimpse into the sad state of educational thought produced by the “imperial examination” selection process. The latter Ming and Ch’ing dynasties, for the most part, remained trapped in this same quagmire, with the problem becoming especially pernicious in the waning days of the Ch’ing, when the “eight-legged” essay formed the backbone of the exam process. Today, the conventions of the “examination halls” of the past are widely recognized for what they truly were, corrupt and laughable customs.

Kuei Ch'ien-chih said:

Because the civil service examination system of the Chin (Tungusic) dynasty stressed the *fu* and *tzu* forms of verse, scholars rarely had time to study other forms of literature. Consequently, when their experienced elders discovered their children reading unrelated works, like those of the calligraphers Su Shih and Huang Ting, they became enraged. Therefore, scholars poured their energies into the study of the *fu* style of verse, but often could not answer a single question regarding other areas of literature. It was only after passing the civil service examinations that they dared go on to the more general study of literature and the possibility of scholarly celebrity. With the colonization of the South, many scholars with a love of classical learning began to value the broader literary arts as highly as the composition of verse. However, these classical scholars of old and those who tailored their studies to the more mundane requirements of the imperial exams began to divide into hostile camps, launching slanderous disdainful insults at one another. Those thinkers devoted to poetry and the broader literary arts viewed prospective imperial test takers as examination stooges, while those working their way through the examination system regarded their erudite opposites as spoiled incompetents, unable to make the grade. After all, everyone knew that the four mandated topics of the national imperial exams would separate out the most talented from the rest. *Fu* verse unearthed those skilled in organization and association; through poetry, literary talent was discovered; analytical writing uncovered those with an aptitude for economics; and through dialectic, one's powers of logic were gauged. These four subjects taken together were intended to reveal those with truly unique talents. However, blindly following convention, scholars limited their efforts to the study of *fu* verse, while completely ignoring poetry, analytical writing, and argument. This unhealthy trend was a consequence of the prerogatives of official exam administrators who chose to only test *fu* verse at the expense of other subjects. I try to bear in mind the words of my teacher, who said: 'During the T'ai-ho period, officials supposedly tested examinees through *fu* verse, set themes, and questions. However, when they picked up the pen to grade exams in the Emperor's name, these same officials gave

the best marks to those whose papers had the greatest number of words and the least number of crossed out characters.’ With officials like these it was nearly impossible for examinees to divine the proper focus for their studies. After their relocation to the South, even though the honorable officials Chao and Yang shook up the rigidity of literary testing, they became the objects of criticism and slander.

Reforming the Rigid Educational Disciplines of Yesterday and Today

A true understanding of three thousand years of “imperial examinations” and educational history reveals that despite the maxims of the great sages and the proscriptions and prescriptions of accepted educational doctrine, a reality of “hidden agendas” has caused us to fall short of society’s professed pedagogical ideals. Our willingness to hold up our educational ideals and historical experience to the mirror of critical analysis will expose two thousand years of mistakes, as we have spun our wheels, mired in the mud of “hidden agendas.” The origins of this wrong-headed approach are rooted in the ancient practice, common to both the East and West, of “favoring sons and neglecting daughters.” Why was this philosophy able to take root so deeply? Simply because, although women are the masters of family life, outside of the home it’s a man’s world. “With a son the family is complete” because he could “bring prestige to the family name” and “glorify the memory of ancestors through worldly success.” These are sayings that explain the staunch determination of parents to have a male child.

Generally, the tried and true path to the goal of family honor and prestige has been through study. This was especially true in the anti-commercial environment of the past when it was held that “learning is the noblest of human pursuits”! What was and still is so special about learning? Through study, one could test their way into the official ranks and reach the highest levels of government service and power. As a natural consequence, “study and serve” became the mantra for success in popular society. What were the advantages of imperial government service? As an official, one was entitled to live off the imperial largess, enjoying the benefits and security of a government salary. “Finding one’s fortune through government service” inevitably became a norm

tantamount to natural law in the eyes of the people. As these basic beliefs were cultivated and reinforced, the classics of history, philosophy, and literature were cast aside as young scholars pinned all of their hopes on the moribund and inflexible “eight-legged” essays of the imperial examination system. This mentality took shape so naturally and subtly that it is indeed difficult to place the blame on any one person or factor.

By the turn of the century, occidental cultural thought had already arrived in the East and was slowly reconstructing the hoary pedagogical institutions of traditional China, such as “family schools,” “classical schools,” “examination seminaries,” and “charity schools,” into the image of the Western institutional system of education. From the humble beginnings of what were termed “foreign schools,” the process has continued unabated, leading to the three-tiered school system and graduate studies programs of today. Now, education is truly universal, and the intellectual level of the general populace has in fact improved. However, even as the reach of knowledge has spread, the spiritual underpinnings of learning have collapsed. This is especially true of the essence of Chinese and Eastern culture, which have fallen into such a state of disrepair as to be virtually unrecoverable.

However, even as our educational system and philosophy pushed aside old ideas to make room for the new lesson plans of Western culture, the deep-seated “hidden agendas” of our past still lurked in the background. After a slight adjustment in orientation, traditional habits of “bringing prestige and glory to the family name” and “study and serve” were set on a new course, this time with the goal of striking it rich in the market place as their aim. In keeping with this, we idealize our self-delusion by openly describing our pedagogy as “career based education.” Is it not possible that behind the joyful graduation celebrations of many of today’s parents lies the subconscious desires of these hidden agendas, and doesn’t it seem likely that in our modern system of elective study these same notions have influenced our children’s choice of courses and majors? Now we even have a modern equivalent to the rigid “eight-legged” essays of the past in our “scientific” methodology of testing. Like their decrepit antecedents, our modern methods are built on a foundation of “rote memorization” and “blind regurgitation.” In fact, if one merely memorizes and then disgorges a few essays and theorems, they will excel on national

exams and assure their spot in a top school.

In the past, we studied in preparation for imperial examinations and the ultimate aim of official service; now we study and take examinations with an eye toward a career that will allow us to earn the highest salary. Many of the scholars of old studied with the “noble ambition” of devoting themselves to national service in the imperial government. Others who “mounted the steed of responsibility at an inopportune time, but nevertheless rode with care and skill,” returned to village life and devoted themselves to both the book and the plough. Today, with diploma in hand, we plan for our chance to go abroad and find our fortune, but reluctantly settle for disappointing careers in the government bureaucracy that don’t require a lifetime of difficult study. The lure of success and the urban lifestyle of our modern commercial age have had an especially profound impact on the imaginations of small town folk. Those who cannot migrate to the big city waste their lives waiting for an opportunity to escape and, like self-appointed “town watchmen,” indolently mill around without a plan, leaving the course of their lives to blind fate.

With clam reflection on the present state of education we may be able to truly untangle the complex web of cause and effect in which modern youth are trapped. Therefore, the burden of analyzing the familial, social, and academic systems of thought and generating a legacy of cultural renewal and rebirth for future generations falls on our shoulders. Although the issues involved are anything but simple, nevertheless these problems require solutions, and a method of resolution must be sought ought. However, responsibility for this task cannot be accomplished by the older generation alone, it must also be taken up by today’s youth who must push learning to its limits and help bring about the urgently needed national revival and cultural renaissance of China.

8. Turning Adversity into the Power of Positive Change

We have not yet discussed the Republic of China's withdrawal from the United Nations on October 26, 1971, an event which shocked the conscience of Chinese at home and abroad and grabbed the attention of every country across the world. That day, caught up in the general mood of anxiety and apprehension, a few colleagues paid me a visit. Many mentioned how ironically appropriate my August speech on "The Hidden Spell of American Culture" was. Actually, its accuracy was neither the product of supernatural insight nor astonishing foresight, but simply the result of sound reasoning. For all of the agitation that resulted from it, the decision to quit the United Nations was both brave and well calculated, and the self-induced anxiety that accompanied it was excessive and completely unfounded.

Some of us, dismayed at the unsettling effect of events on the emotional state and morale of the people, desperately sought to understand their proper role in the unfolding drama. Actually, the situation was a temporary but inevitable phenomenon, not worthy of excessive contemplation, which before long would return to normal as long as cooler heads prevailed. Still, as a general rule, people tend to live in the moment, ignoring the benefits of far-sightedness. However, within a few days one young colleague commented, "It's strange that my generation is so thin-skinned. It seems as if the announcement that we have withdrawn from the UN has dropped a veil of gray over people's lives, leaving everyone in a dejected state of shock. Some even seem to be at the end of their rope, desperately looking for some way to vent their frustration. This is especially true for those who have lost their patience and are simply looking for a way out; in their shortsightedness, they ignore all other concerns and merely focus on how events will affect their plans to emigrate. Their lack of patriotism, exposed by recent events, is enough to make my blood boil." When I heard this, I let out a long sigh, sounding my deep dismay! Nevertheless, I responded by pointing out that this generation's lack of direction and focus reflected the inexperience and intellectual poverty of its brightest stars. As modern youth, they have been denied both the nourishing milk of traditional Chinese culture and the epic lessons of adversity experienced first hand by my generation. These recent events, short lived and bound to play themselves out

before too long, need not lead to excessive frustration and agitation. In the midst of global change, we should not allow the appearance of transitory thoughts to distract us from the true crux of the matter, which remains the fundamental issue of rectifying the hearts and minds of our youth. This will prove to be the cornerstone of our legacy and is the order of business most deserving of our attention.

Before long, we shall see with our own eyes that a spiritual awakening has already taken hold among the intellectual elite of the younger generation, which will emerge in a spontaneous response to the call for national salvation. Although over the last twenty years such an auspicious development has not yet surfaced, history will show that it was the shock of our announcement to leave the UN that restarted the beat of national renaissance in the hearts of our sons and daughters. Looked at in this way, it is extraordinarily heartening to think that they have already begun to awaken and shake off the decay and excesses of this age, as they set off on their journey of self-awareness and renewal.

However, while fearlessly forging ahead is easy, flexible adaptation in the face of change is the true challenge. A short-lived burst of indignation can therefore lead to a headlong and mindless rush ahead. As Chuang Tzu said, “Even a spear aimed with precision and determination may miss its mark as it falls to the ground.” As to flexible adaptation in the face of change, one must first harness the power of the wind to release its “potential energy” and gain the power of flight. This is how danger is transformed into security, and the nation’s fears are put to rest. National salvation follows from the application of talent and wisdom, and the cultivation of talent and wisdom is the windmill which harnesses the “kinetic energy” of the winds of profound thought and learning. Based on the concepts of “rethinking the old to understand the new” and “examining the past to master the future,” we must map the recent historical evolution of our present approach to national salvation. With this in hand, the causes and effects of the complex confusion before us will be revealed and we can begin to understand how to productively direct our efforts in the perilous days ahead.

The Ideology and History of National Salvation

From a philosophical and historical point of view, the human race is truly a sorry collection of souls. Although we benefit from the accumulated talent and skill of nearly five thousand years of human endeavor and an endless expenditure of energy and effort directed toward the building of peace and contentment, our history has nevertheless been one of strife and chaos. It seems, in truth, that upheaval and chaos are the rule of history rather than its exception. Yet, it is precisely this process of adversity that has produced the Eastern sages and Western philosophers who have ceaselessly sought out strategies to benefit the people, the nation, and humanity. Whether Third World or First, European or Asian, no place or time has escaped this rule.

We now turn our attention to the last three hundred years of scholarship, including the overthrow of the Ming dynasty and the rise of the Ch'ing. A review of some of that period's major works and thinkers will show today's ideological struggles for political reform and national salvation to be a modern successor to the long line of past efforts. Confucian rationalism, the cornerstone of doctrinal belief in the late Ming, responded to the Manchu conquest by vigorously promoting the notion of national and popular renewal, producing an ideological wave of reform. More recently, from the turn of the century to the present, with the violent encounter of Eastern and Western culture and the relentless march of global transformation, the efforts of both traditional scholars and the ideological avant-garde alike have been directed toward the goal of national renaissance. Viewed from this broad perspective, we see that the ideological inconsistencies and emotional despair of modern youth are intimately related to the past and are not merely chance aberrations.

The Great Scholars of the Ming-Ch'ing Transition

Of the many great scholars during the transitional period between the defeat of the Ming and the consolidation of the power of the Ch'ing, the most influential were Huang Tsung-hsi (Li-chou), Ku Yen-wu (T'ing-lin), and Yen Yüan (Hsi-chai). Although they would eventually suffer the personal devastation of national defeat, with a deeply intuitive sense that national renaissance

required a rekindling of the intellectual arts and the principles of virtue, they sounded an early alarm against the intellectual necrosis and social decadence of the late Ming. Indeed, this insight was the key characteristic that set them apart from other Confucian rationalists of the Sung and Ming periods. At the heart of their political philosophy were the promotion of popular morality and virtue and a devotion to the overthrow of the Ch'ing and the restoration of the Ming.

However, the imperial house of the nascent Ch'ing dynasty countered by producing three generations of extraordinarily talented and capable rulers. With a firm understanding of the principles of the rationalist reformers, the K'ang Hsi, Yung Cheng, and Ch'ien Lung Emperors dedicated themselves to literary and military excellence, and recast the essence of the best ideological beliefs of their day into a tool for the consolidation of their power. As Mencius said, "Intelligence and wisdom cannot compare to good timing, the firmest foundation is not as good as the power of patience." The synergistic meeting of the thought of the great scholars of the Ming-Ch'ing transition and the imperial house of K'ang Hsi transformed the theories of a handful of rebel reformers into an age of great accomplishment. Emerging from this period, the intellectual work of two of its brightest scholars, Ku Yen-wu and Wang Fu-chih (Ch'uan-shan), permeated the next three hundred years and continues to exert its influence today.

The Importance of Gung Tzu-Chen Thought in the Post Ch'ien-Lung and Chia-ching Periods

Following the reigns of the Ch'ien-lung and Chia-Ch'ing emperors and the peak of the practical accomplishments of the Ch'ing political machine, the former brilliance of the imperial house of K'ang-hsi began to fade. This decline roused the youth of the age and set the stage for the intellectual achievements of Gung Tzu-chen (Ting-an). Although some of his contemporaries, such as Chin Sheng-t'an and Wang Chung-c'hu, shared his status as a brilliant eccentric, they could not match Gung's raw intellectual talent. The impact of his ideas stretched from the reigns of the emperors Tao-kuang and Hsien-feng to the founding of the Republic.

Although the basic perspective of their age was different, even the iconoclastic reformers K'ang Yu-wei, T'an Szu-tung, and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao (who served during the reigns of T'ung-chih and Kuang-hsu) were successors to Gung Tzu-chen's Influence. Indeed, his works, such as *On Average* and *The Secret Distance between Two and Three*, had a profoundly galvanizing effect on the ideology of national salvation. As for the reformer Tseng Kuo-fan, who served during the Hsien-feng and T'ung-chih reigns, he developed his ideas against the backdrop of the practical, rationalist thought of Gung Tzu-chen, a process that is again a topic of discussion for another time.

Scholarly Thought in the Modern Era

By the time of the last throws of the Ch'ing dynasty and the birth pangs of the Republic, the storm of Western culture had already touched down in the East, sending a new tidal wave of change on a collision course with our modern era. As these waves crashed to shore, the resultant interplay of ideologies – classical and modern, Chinese and foreign – created an atmosphere charged with a spirit of national renaissance. In the midst of this storm, it was the thought of Sun Yat-sen which was most influential and may be credited with having inspired the founding of the Republic of China. By tracing the evolution of learning back to the origins of our present circumstances, we may contribute to the general understanding of our young fellow people as they traverse this complex age.

(1) Thirty years before the Republic:

A. Scholarly works dedicated to national renaissance that greatly influenced government and society:

- K'ang Yu-wei: *The Great Unity*, Commentary to the *Li Yun*, and the *Second Memorial to the Ch'ing*
- Liang Ch'i-ch'ao: *Collected Works from the Ice Drinker's Studio*
- T'an Szu-tung: *The Study of Benevolence*
- Chang Chih-tung: *Admonition to Learning*
- Yen Fu: Translation of Huxley's *Theory of Evolution* and his own *Strength of Nations* and *Critique of Han Fei*

- B. Theoreticians whose thought expanded the boundaries of scholarship:
- Yang Jen-shan: Buddhist studies
 - Ou-yang Ching-wu: Buddhist studies
 - Ma I-fu: Confucian and Buddhist studies
 - Hsiung Shih-li: Confucian and Buddhist studies
- C. Influential scholars who straddled both the practical and academic worlds:
- Chang T'ai-yen
 - Liu Shih-p'ei
- D. Influential writers and artists during the transition from feudal to modern society:
- Fan Fan-shan
 - Ch'en San-li
 - I Shun-ting
 - Su Man-shu
 - Hung I Shang Jen (Li Su-t'ung)
 - Lin Ch'in-nan (translations of Western novels)
 - Ku Hung-ming
 - Wang Kuo-wei
 - Nan She
 - P'u Ju
 - Ch'i Pai-shih

(2) The Last Forty Years

- A. Authors whose works advocated national salvation but which had the opposite effect:
- Hu Shih
 - Chang Chun-li
 - Ku Hsieh-kang
 - Ma Hsu-lun
 - Ma Yin-ch'u

- Feng Yu-lan
- Yang I-wei

B. Theoreticians whose works expanded the boundaries of scholarship:

- Hsieh Wu-liang (Buddhist studies and literature)
- T'ang Yung-t'ung (Buddhist studies)
- Chiang Wei-ch'iao (Buddhist studies)

In addition, we should also mention the conservative and radical schools of thought. Like other groups already cited, the moderates had their radical fringe and the radicals had their moderates who all exerted their influence on the ideological currents of the day. Although many different people and personalities had a part in this drama, their names do not immediately come to mind and would be nearly impossible for me to enumerate one by one. As for those who had a foot in both the political and intellectual worlds, although at the time they may have been renowned, their celebrity was as short-lived as a shooting star.

As for the new disciplines in the natural sciences, other than Chan T'ien-yu, the field was a lonely one. In fact, inventors and innovators in this area were so rare that unless data is preserved immediately, it is inevitable that their history will be lost.

C. So-called conservative ideology:

- Its dependence on the Three Principles of the People is largely a matter for Kuomintang party historians and falls outside of the area of our discussion.

D. So-called radical ideology:

- Indicates those who used translations of Western socialism and communism to smash traditional culture, and whose narrow extremism strongly influenced intellectual circles and society at large. Many of them cunningly injected their nebulous ideas into the hearts of the people, insidiously sabotaging seventy years of efforts for reform by those already mentioned above; this was the work of what has generally been referred to as the first generation

of leftist writers. Although some of them had “deathbed conversions,” their pernicious influence had already taken hold, and even heroic efforts at repentance could not undo the damage.

- Chief among this generation were: Ch'en Tu-hsiu, Ch'en Ch'i, Ma Che-min, Pao Wai-lu, Ch'en Wang-tao, Shih Ts'un-t'ung, Chang Wen-t'ien, Lo Lung-chi, Ch'en Yu, Chou Tso-jen, Chou Shu-jen (Lu Hsün), Ch'en Yen-ping, Yu Ta-fu, Li Fu-kan (Pa Chin), and Wan Chia-pao (Ts'ao Yü).

E. Literary artists and novelists whose momentary popularity was sufficiently long-lived to influence popular opinion:

- Chu Tzu-ch'ing, Hsu Chih-mo, Shu She-yu (Lao She), and Chang Hen-shui.

Although the national salvation movement, whose origins we have briefly examined is a mere blink of an eye in historical terms, its influence and that of its small band of professional iconoclasts captured the youth of the last generation and has endured for nearly sixty years. Lacking a strong desire for learning and facing an incoherent glut of ideas, our young have largely chosen to ignore ideology and learning. Yet, the sheer energy of the previous generation's youthful passions has remained and left its mark on modern youth. This historical process is aptly captured by the words of the Ch'ing scholar Chao I who said, “The influence of distinguished men outlives them by five hundred years.”

The intellectual struggle of these famous thinkers was dedicated to the salvation of the nation and its people, and they threw the full weight of their spiritual resources behind our cultural struggle. However, during this same sixty-year period the nation found no salvation from the monstrosly disastrous effects of the eight-year War of Resistance against Japan and the Cultural Revolution. While the radicals dedicated themselves to support of the Communist Party and the establishment of its ideals, the conservatives were completely obliterated like a puff of smoke caught in the winds of change. Today, in a democratic, liberal, and prosperous Taiwan, we have the luxury of the unfettered pursuit of knowledge and the free discussion of ideas. However,

our continued reliance on the stewardship of Mr. Chiang Kai-shek and submission to the legacy of the Three Principles of the People is an undeniable fact.

Sensing the Coming Storm amid the Deafening Silence

In our earlier discussions concerning the intellectual climate of this century's last seventy years we saw that yesterday's youth, born during the Second World War, immersed themselves in a bewildering variety of Chinese, foreign, classical, and modern ideas. However, even as they filled their heads with these notions for the sake of the people, the nation, and humanity, their hearts suffered in a state of incredible contradiction and confusion. At the same time, the horrors of the War of Resistance against Japan were unexpectedly visited upon them, magnifying the crushing burden of frustration and grief that already weighed on their hearts and minds. From a literary perspective, the young intelligentsia of that period experienced the sad realization that "the nation is in turmoil, and the storm beats at the shutters," while in the peace and security of today, we "sense the coming storm in the deafening silence of the forest."

Today, universal education and the boundaries of knowledge grow with each passing day at a rate unheard of more than thirty years ago. Yet, the dedication and spiritual "zeal" of our youth to the ideals of the "movement for national renaissance" cannot compare to that of the generation before them. As we pattern ourselves on the advances of material civilization, we trade in our inhibitions and self-control for the good life, seeking refuge in its promised future of comfort and security. Blindly pursuing the development of commerce and industry, each frantic moment of our precious time is devoted to the attainment of wealth, even as our love of learning and self-realization become impoverished. As a result, we have fostered a social milieu that slavishly stresses the potential of the natural sciences, but treats the exploration of humanist thought as a profligate squandering of time. We continue to avert our eyes from the tragic future certain to result from the grotesque juggernaut of natural science as it feeds off the remains of humanist culture, like a "parasite in the belly of a lion, consuming its mighty host."

If we truly desire to chart a new ideological course for the nation and the world, we must first come to terms with the struggles of modern life and the realization that they are the symptoms of a cultural war. Whether we look to the regions of communist control or the Free World, the industrially advanced First World or the underdeveloped Third World, as in the past we remain lost between the goals of spiritual realization and the necessities of practical existence. In other words, our frustrations are a product of the competition between man's quest for economic equality in the face of scarcity and his search for spiritual rebirth and peace of mind. In our struggle, two preliminary issues emerge: the unabashed borrowing of capitalist economic devices by modern communism, and our own wrongheaded worship at the altar of materialism. Therefore, other than the current focus of modern youth on learning the skills necessary for everyday life and the struggle for national renaissance, there are two important topics that urgently need to be addressed by the best of this generation:

1. How to shape a new economic philosophy for the benefit of mankind
2. How to synergistically unite and harmonize the cultures of materialism and spirituality.

In the process of working towards this goal, we must proceed with the understanding that our endeavor is an outgrowth of the humanist ideal and a challenge worthy of the best among us, requiring deep reflection, a love of learning, and an inductive approach. Our task is not one of hasty plans and hurried work. While it may be true that there is an ocean of difference between our quixotic goals and the reality of the world around us, "diligent study ultimately leads to success." Applying this wisdom to the honorable pursuit of humanist ideals will lead us to the inner realm of self-understanding. If, however, we limit our strategies to the goals of personal success and the necessities of individual life, then the historic opportunities now within our reach will be lost. We must seize our present situation and exchange it for an everlasting reality, grab hold of our individuality and transform it into an historical destiny. If we do see to it that these notions take on a renewed sense of worth in the minds of our young, we run the risk of becoming the

laughingstock of future generations as we leave a legacy of blank pages to the next sixty years of scholarship.

9. Sixty Years of Pedagogical Transformation and Confusion

Education is the lifeblood of the nation and the spiritual sinew of the people. Over the last sixty years of this century, our pedagogy has undergone a drastic metamorphosis. However, even though on the surface our educational system appears to have progressed, beneath the surface festers a multitude of problems and contradictions. This has resulted in the rejection of the current system by today's youth and their psychological confusion. If we are to understand these problems in their entirety, we must divine their causes and effects from this process of pedagogical transformation and then, after deep reflection, begin the struggle for self-renewal and empowerment. If we fail to do this, we risk drawing meaningless and incoherent conclusions.

From Classical "Family Schools" to Modern Educational Institutions

Since the Sung dynasty, both private and public "scholastic academies" have existed in every region and province, serving as institutions of higher learning roughly equivalent to our present day system of secondary schools (junior high and high school) and universities. Despite this, however, as recently as fifty to sixty years ago the reality of education in China was that it was anything but universal.

The classical "scholastic academies" were presided over by a teacher known as a "mountain master" who managed a tutorial system based on the single-handed administration of pedagogical responsibilities. Teachers and students were completely unencumbered by government regulation and free to choose when and how to study. Similar to our present day test prep schools, their curriculum focused on the race to the examination hall (of the imperial exams) and the study of the eight-legged essay writing form. However, classics and the cognitive approach of the rationalists, often accompanied by writing and discussion, were also studied and addressed.

Those who could afford to enroll in a "scholastic academy," for the most

part, began their studies with a strong academic foundation, some having even already attained official rank. Those who came from poor but honorable families did their best to find the resources necessary to devote themselves to a life of rigorous study when the opportunity presented itself. However, in order to understand and compare what has been gained and lost in the modernization of education, we must take a brief look at the childhood educational experience of the general populace, from matriculation in private “family schools” to the academic focus and environment of these institutions. At the same time, we can provide some practical information regarding traditional pedagogical practices that may be useful to younger colleagues researching education.

Reflections on the Classical Style of Family School Education

Following the spirit of *The Book of Rites*, tradition requires a child to enter primary school at the age of six and begin learning the basics of literacy. However, economic reality and popular custom in the villages and towns of our agrarian society made this nearly impossible for the great majority of people. First, since public schools were almost non-existent, those who worked the land had to rely solely on their own ability to marshal the resources necessary to hire a full-time teacher and establish a “country school,” similar in function to our modern day “private” kindergartens and elementary schools. Because of the complexities of organization and the tendency of people to shirk responsibility, the establishment of a “country school” was indeed a difficult task. Second, real life conditions in most villages were nothing like the optimistic and idealized picture painted by Mencius, who said: “Planting mulberry trees and raising silkworms on five acres of land has the potential to clothe fifty. Carefully raised and cared for, a variety of livestock has the capacity to feed seventy. One hundred acres of farmland, well tended and tilled can save an eight-person household from hunger. Prudent country school training in the principles of filial devotion to one’s elders offers hope that one need not toil and suffer in their old age.” In actuality, “the old and weak toiled in the fields as the young were sent far off” and “families starved as the military machine grew fat on the conscription of their young.” This phenomenon dominated country life in the waning days of the Ch’ing dynasty. However, even the children of rural families who were relatively better off “lazily grew melons in the shade, ignorant of the

hardships of weaving cloth and working the soil.” It seemed that a life of study, imperial examinations, and official rank was the exclusive purview of a certain segment of society and was beyond even the wildest dreams of the general public.

If a suitable “family school” and the opportunity to attend did exist, however, then a child’s “first steps” as they entered school and began their studies was an extravagant affair. Of course, at the time, this was limited to young sons, since educational opportunities for daughters were extremely rare. Even in homes barely able to focus on their children’s education, the very first day of school would begin at home with prayers and kowtowing to one’s ancestors at the family altar and then, with his books slung over his shoulder, a parent would accompany his child to school. Once the child arrived at the “study hall,” he first kowtowed in supplication to the sacred image and tablet of the great sage and teacher Confucius, then bowed in obeisance to his teacher. After settling in, the student began the tedious process of learning how to read and write.

As recently as thirty years ago we still called our teachers “Sir,” and would even respectfully affix his family name to this title when addressing him directly; at least I never personally heard anyone dare to refer to a school’s “Sir” as “teacher.” Generally, teacher’s aides and apprentice schoolmasters were referred to as “master tutor.” The term “teacher” or “master” was only used in popular society as a general title for craftsmen and artisans. As far as I know, this was equally true for the areas of the country south of the Yangtse River. Having shifted with the modern age, our mood and customs over the last twenty to thirty years have allowed the “Sirs” of the past to become the “teachers” of today. From this we can clearly draw the conclusion that standards of morality and etiquette are nothing more than functions of time and place; after all, where in the world has a rule supposedly written in stone managed to remain immutable?

The Classical Family School Learning Experience

At that time, what did students first entering the “family school” study?

For the most part, the curriculum followed two different types of requirements:

If the ultimate goal of study was to test for imperial rank, then a student usually began with *The Annalects*, and then progressed to *Mencius*, *The Doctrine of the Mean*, and *The Great Learning*. Between the ages of six and nine, students were required to commit the above mentioned four classics to memory in preparation for the initial battery of tests, the “junior exams.” As for *Childhood Treasures*, *A Collection of Sung and T’ang Poetry*, and the *Three Hundred T’ang Poems*, these works were considered extracurricular but required reading, whose thorough memorization was a prerequisite to well-rounded scholarship. One result of the heavy emphasis placed on “memorization” at that time was the elevation of “recitation,” that saw scholars rattling off passages with skills of melody and rhythm worthy of Peking Opera stars. As far as the actual books were concerned, despite mass printings of the twenty chapters of the *Annalects*, they were sold chapter by the chapter in loose editions that were grabbed up by “primary students” regardless of their wear and tear.

If the primary aim of education was literacy, then studies began with the *Three-Character Classic*, the “one hundred family names,” the *Collection of Classical Essays*, *Child Prodigy*, and the *Works of the Ancients*, with no necessary order of study required among the works.

Because of this, in some “family schools” with many students, after Teacher marked off the day’s required reading and distributed the different volumes, the study hall would fill with the thunderous babble of students mindlessly “reciting” their assigned archaisms. Long ago, someone aptly described the organized chaos that characterized the typical “family school” in the following doggerel:

As a crow’s shrill squawk breaks evening’s calm,
Students raise their voices in unison.
Chao, Ch’ien, Sun and Li, Chou, Wu, and Cheng (the one hundred
Chinese family names),
Heaven and earth, God and man, the universe is grand (the *Thousand
Character Classic*).
As the last classical poem (the *Collection of Classical Poems*) is sung,

Child Prodigy (a classical book) has begun.
Among them a precocious lad is seen,
He will study greatness (the *Great Learning*) and learn the golden mean
(*The Doctrine of the Mean*).

As to mastery of the poetic art of tonal rhyming and lyrical cadence, this was an integral part of a student's "first steps," requiring at least two to three years of study. Students began their task by mastering lyrical couplets, starting with two-word pairs and eventually progressing to parallel prose. It was for this purpose that Li Li-weng penned the following model of paired tonal prose:

Heaven and earth, wind and rain,
Endless sky meets the open plain.
Mountain flower and sea of trees,
The burning sun matches cool spring breeze.
Rolling thunder and mist and haze, high noon pairs with end of day.
Autumn's moon and winds so high,
After the storm crimson clouds fill evening sky.
Herd Boy and Weaving Maiden separated by a Milky Way of stars,
Shinning Venus rides the dipper as it follows Mars.
October frost descends on border towers,
Northern winds howl, a soldier cowers.
An old fisherman shivers on a frozen river, covered by vast snows of
endless winter.

After studying *The Four Books* a ten-year old student was able to write a poem without great difficulty, although the quality of the verse was a different matter entirely. In general, at that time poetic composition was an indispensable skill from the earliest "junior exams" on, much like our current English requirements; as a result, the tonal rhyming and lyrical cadence of poetry and the composition of literary essays became completely inseparable. Back then, by the time we were twelve or thirteen years old, writing poetry was like second nature to us. However, I have run across many former imperial officials of the defunct Ch'ing dynasty, gentlemen who were so-called *hsiu-ts'ai* or *first-level* exam graduates, who even in their old age were still unable to pen a masterful verse. This all too common occurrence confirms the words of Chao Yi, who was very much to the point when he said, "By old age a man knows his limitations, life is three parts effort and seven parts innate talent."

Classical Family Schools and the “First Steps” to Literacy

The topic of a child’s “first steps” to literacy during that period is a very interesting one. The very first step in learning to write began with a set of “red stencils,” i.e. sheets of white paper with characters printed in red that a student would trace over with a brush in black ink. At six or seven years of age, students who barely knew how to properly hold a brush dove straight into the difficult task of tracing over “red stencils.” By and by, a teacher or adult would often “guide their brush” (place their hand over the student’s and help them trace the characters).

Although the characters used for the initial set of “red stencils” were not the best suited for their purpose, they were backed by a time-honored history of cultural tradition. The actual phrases, whose use by “first step” primary students stretched as far back as the Sung dynasty went as follows: “The greatest among us is Confucius. He enlightened three thousand, and his disciples even more. His closest followers were eight or nine. They embodied benevolence and fathomed the meaning of the rites.” Over the last thousand years, these seemingly meaningful words have been accepted and applied far and wide. Some thirty years ago, I encountered a Taoist alchemist, learned in the magical arts of drawing spells and chanting mystical incantations, renowned as a spiritual master of unlimited power. However, as I got close enough to see behind the curtain of the much-vaunted powers that he peddled, it was apparent to me that his magic boiled down to a single spell. Can you guess what that all-important chant was? His mantra was “The greatest among us...” Similarly, shamans who treat sickness through the drawing of spells and incantations will typically mumble the phrase, “The way of the great learning illuminates illustrious virtue.” You tell me, is this truly laughable or not?

In general, the concept of “red stencils” as a literacy tool was a sound one. Some impoverished students, however, could not even afford the first of these character models, “The greatest among us.” Instead, they painted the surfaces of a piece of wood black and white and filled in the white portion of the board with their ink brushes. But when the teacher was looking the other way, they would drop some ink on the board’s white side, and with a few puffs of breath and fingertip scrawls, produced breathtaking landscapes of miniature

worlds, teeming with all forms of life. I often think back to the wood board paintings of my young classmates, those small ink masterpieces were executed with such skill and detail, I am certain that today they would surely be considered fine examples of impressionist and abstract art. Yet, when we were all together in the “family school,” with our book bags full of brushes, books, and ink and stone, we were anything but fashionable. After a day’s worth of studying and laboring with the brush, our hands, faces and mouths were so streaked and smeared with ink and grime that we could have passed for clowns in a Peking opera.

The Headmaster and the Family School

When we hear the term “family school,” the picture that naturally comes to mind is one of private study halls set up in individual homes. But actually, this was the exception rather than the rule. There were always those few wealthy families who had a strong enough taste for scholarship to set aside some extra space as a “family school” for their children, but in the agrarian society of the past, the great majority had neither the time nor resources for such educational luxuries. So, more often than not, the great majority of “family schools” were set up in the family-clan “ancestral shrines” or temples that dotted the countryside. Both spacious and serene, these places offered enough room for some extracurricular fun, such as playing on swings, piling up into pyramids, kicking a ball around, or even the all too common playground brawl.

However, a more detailed description of these clan-village “family schools” in the countryside has to wait for another day. Here, my goal is to explain why I have consistently referred to these schools as “family schools” rather than “private schools. The answer is simply that these privately established “family schools” only became legally known as “private schools” under the new educational regime of the Republic. But in reality, before the founding of the Republic, there was never a distinction made between so-called publicly or privately founded schools when we used the term “family school.”

As for the headmasters responsible for educating the pupils of these “family schools,” there is much to regret. I cannot help but feel heartbroken and

teary eyed when I think of the impossible environment in which these teachers had to practice their art, torn as they were between the conflicting appeals of things old and new, Chinese and foreign.

Most people know that under the educational customs and practices of the past, privately hired teachers were also known as “Western Fellows.” In turn, these teachers referred to their employers as “Eastern Master” or “Eastern Elder.” Some families with promising children, who had already proven themselves to be exceptional, would hire a learned “Western Fellow” with official rank. In general, however, while certainly not imperial exam dropouts, the remaining “family school” teachers were proud but poor scholars who in their abject poverty had few alternatives. Although on the surface most people made a show of respect for these teachers, in reality they were not held in high regard. The drudgery of their lives and meagerness of their compensation was truly unimaginable. At that time teachers were not paid by the month but rather three times a year during the holiday seasons in goods, or rarely, in hard to come by gold or silver currency. Their compensation for a year’s hardship was often barely sufficient to put food on the table. As to raising and supporting a family on these meager earnings, this was so difficult that it cannot even be described.

It was the sad reality of this very environment that produced the lament “An early end is far better than a life of poverty, woe to those poor souls who must choose a teacher’s misery.” On the other hand, I have run into a number of “pedantic” pedagogues who were so detestable as to make people feel that “of all the worthless things there are, a teacher is the most by far.” Of course, in this instance, as with all things, there are two sides to the story and, naturally, one should take each with a grain of salt. For the most part, however, at that time the lot of those who passed their days as teachers can be summed up in two words, “noble poverty.” The famous Ch’ing dynasty scholar Cheng Pan-ch’iao, who first served as a teacher before successfully testing for imperial rank, wrote this lasting piece of verse which aptly expresses the lament of later generations:

Teacher’s lives are vile and low, while others pass their lives in ease.
An underfed guest, our noble sir,

Unfettered by cuff of collar but still a prisoner.
Instruct the whelps and guide the young,
He detests the lazy ones.
For those who try of course its worse,
Their reward will be his vilest curse.
Behind his seeming good fortune and name,
Hide broken dreams and a life of shame.

Also handed down to us is the following verse penned by Li Sen-lu, a scholar and teacher by profession, who lived during the reign of the emperor Kuang-hsu and sent this poem to his wife after he was unable to return home for the New Year:

This year the schoolhouse is very slow
And the number of new and old students remains quite low.
With these words my dearest wife please put your heart at ease,
There is no need to fear bad debt or worry over financial needs.
My sad lot in life is after all already sealed,
Two bare hands for toiling, an ink stone as my field.
This year's drought, it seems, has left my ink well dry,
For my meager harvest, though, I am thankful and cannot cry.

Although the lives of today's teachers are not as thoroughly miserable as that of their pre-modern predecessors, relative to the potential benefits in commerce and industry, these "knowledge farmers" enjoy few of the material comforts of other professions. In days of old, an official who fell from grace would suffer the indignity of a far off post, with a nomadic "green felt mat" to cover his cold seat. Now, it is the heartless terms of our contracts that banish us to the wilderness of unhappy teaching assignments. In the shapeless void of every institution, every department, and every section cliques and groups will always begin to form, as the Ch'ing scholar T'ung Erh-shu said:

Cliques to my left and cliques to my right and groups still yet to form,
Who knows how many groups to count that are already born?
If today I run away and flee their frightful reach,
I'm afraid their mighty sway will hound me to my dying day.

Regardless of the time or place, this is a fundamental problem that plagues the inner workings of our hearts and minds.

[Chapter 10 onward is in draft form]

10. The Pedagogy and Ideology of the Pre-Republican Eight-Legged Essay

Aside from learning tailored to "testing one's way to success" and official service, when discussing China's pre-revolutionary educational process many have divided her two-thousand year body of cultural works into three categories: "logic;" "literature;" and the "classics." From this conceptual viewpoint, we may say: the "legacy" of the two Han dynasties can largely be categorized as belonging to the "classics;" the sublime Sui and T'ang dynastic compositions fall under the genus of "literature;" and from the Sung and Ming dynasties on, "logic" has moved to the fore. Yet despite these classifications, "logic" and "literature" were not part of the educational agenda in the classrooms of the classical "family school."

For the most part, we can say there was "education by memorization." As for the development of character and "morality," under this regiment of rote memorization the seeds of its lessons were stealthily and inexorably planted in the subconscious minds of the young. Of course, viewed through modern educational eyes, this methodology of memorization was merely filling "empty heads" with blind facts and trivia while failing to inspire the talents or spark the creativity of young minds. In the minds of modern educators it was an idiotic system that ultimately transformed its brainwashed victims into "learned morons."

Realistically speaking, however, this opinion was not necessarily accurate. In the past, the social structure of society lacked both the prosperity and complexity of modern life, and consequently the educational curriculum did not encompass the breadth of topics covered today. "Memorization" was limited to only famous works of relevant literature and logic, and in practice only a few were recited daily. The brightest students could recite an entire literary composition in two hours, and with their remaining time were then free to read, write, recite and compose poetry, or even steal away for a short break of play and fun. Although they did not have the benefits of modern physical education

equipment, carefree play and martial arts practice were every day activities that went largely unchecked. At the same time, the strict use of "memorization" was not merely seen as a necessary step to "testing one's way to success," but under classical pedagogical theory was also believed to have been the active ingredient in a process of "rumination." Because the mind is shaped in early adolescence, the inculcation of poetry, literature, and the classics was initiated during the time of intellectual innocence of these formative years. Although initially their faculties of reasoning may not have been fully up to the task, by middle age, after every day normal use and following the natural processes of human experience, this knowledge was eventually digested through a process of "rumination." Like cows eating grass, the lessons of their youth were swallowed and then re-chewed throughout their lives, until a fine nourishing gristle of distilled wisdom remained. Indeed, even though they may have been the end product of an era of revolutionary educational modernization, martyrs of all ages who sacrificed themselves for the good of the nation over the last sixty years were actually rooted in this classical pedagogical style. As to the rising stars of this next generation completely schooled under the modern educational regime, for now we can only speculate since the jury is still out on their role in the succession of historical responsibility.

From the Family School to the Classical Academy

The normal term of study in a "family school" was fairly short. After eight to nine years of schooling, and having mastered the "Four Classics" and the imperial exam inspired eight-legged essay, the brightest students were ready to begin preparation for the local "Hsiu Ts'ai" degree examination. In their late teens, with the Hsiu Ts'ai degree safely under their belt, young adults would immediately begin studying for the "Chu Jen" degree, although so-called prodigy Chu Jen in their twenties were quite rare. The next step for those that had managed to overcome this difficult hurdle was the "Chin Shih" degree, an endeavor that most would not attempt until their thirties or forties. Fifty to sixty years ago, even after the introduction of a modern system of education, some people could not forget the old system and viewed upper-level primary school graduates (equivalent to our national primary school) as "Hsiu Ts'ai;" middle school students as "Chu Jen;" and university graduates as "Chin Shih." As for

doctoral candidates in graduate school, they were equated with the advanced students of the classical "National Academies." In the waning days of the Ch'ing, around the same period of time that K'ang Yu-wei and his progressives began their attempts at reform, others who had gone overseas to study the modern disciplines of science were returning home. In fact, the "Chin Shih Equivalence" degree, a foreign version of the "Chin Shih" degree, was a conscious effort to accommodate these recently returned scholars.

As for those who began their academic lives in the "family school," after "years of self-sacrifice and disciplined study in obscurity" was it really necessary for them to enroll in a "classical academy"? Actually, this is a difficult question to answer since, even though some were publicly funded, there was no official prerequisite that one first study in a "classical academy" before qualifying to sit for imperial examinations. Moreover, in their emphasis on "classical" study, both publicly and privately funded classical academies were free to set their own curriculum, with some following a general lecture-based program while others specialized in the advanced study of the trendy eight-legged essay compositional system in preparation for examinations. However, by the final days of the Ch'ing, the system of "classical academies" had already fallen far short of the spirit of their historical Sung dynasty progenitors.

The Eight-Legged Essays of Yesterday

Pages 105-112 Skipped

11. Transforming the Pedagogy of Yesterday and Today

The classical Chinese system of educating and choosing talent discussed above, which revolved around The Four Books and The Five Classics, was first advocated by Wang An-shih during the Sung Dynasty following the ascendancy of the Confucian rationalists. As for the "eight-legged" essay, the first examples of its official use as a test device in the imperial exams are found in the early Ming period. The elimination of the bureaucratic examinations and the "eight-legged" essay in favor of the "Ts'e Lun" system of topic focused questions was the direct result of intense lobbying by K'ang Yu-wei and Yang Shen-hsiu prior to the Wu Hsu Coup. Their efforts persuaded the emperor Kuang-hsu to issue the imperial edict that formally put an end to the historical eight-legged essay. However, the complete termination of the imperial civil service exam system and the establishment of modern school-based education would not occur until after the thirty-first year (1905) of K'uang-hsu's reign.

As a purely historical matter, the elimination of the imperial exams and the establishment of an institutional school system cannot solely be traced to the final days of K'uang-hsu. In order to truly understand the cause and effects of the last sixty to seventy years of educational development and its future course, one must first look back to the havoc waged by the Heavenly Army of the T'ai P'ing and the Ching era of reforms following the Opium War. That is to say, modern China's establishment of an institutional based school system, from the outset, was part of its response to the challenge of Western culture and was, therefore, shaped by overriding military demands and the need for the practical sciences. However, although the long overdue abolishment of the imperial exams and the eight-legged essay in the waning days of the Ching dynasty was inevitable, in no way did it resemble the well-planned clean break from the past resulting from Japan's Meiji Restoration reforms.

In the wake of the Opium Wars, its hand forced by the necessities of foreign relations, the Ching government established the Foreign Ministry for International Affairs in the tenth year of Hsien-feng's reign (1860). In the first

year of the reign of T'ong-chih (1862), at the request of the Foreign Ministry, the Tong Wen Institute was established in Beijing for the purpose of translating foreign materials and enabling the Ministry to familiarize itself with international matters. However, at that time the Tong Wen Institute was directed to recruit its students exclusively from among the top ranked examinees from the imperial examination system. In its second year, in addition to the study of foreign language, the Institute added to its curriculum Western astronomy and mathematics. The establishment of the Institute was not, however, without controversy and aroused fierce opposition from reactionary forces among the government and the people. By the fifth year of T'ong-chih's reign (1866), the practice of sending the best and the brightest university students abroad to study all over Europe had begun. Nevertheless, at that time a large majority of these so-called "university students" were actually products of the Tong Wen Institute. During that same period, owing to the efforts of Shen Pao-chen in the work of naval construction and the essays of Tso Chung-tang on the maritime arts, the education of shipwrights and shipbuilding technology had already begun the process of partial westernization.

By the twenty-first year of K'uang-hsu's rule (1895), Chang Chih-tung petitioned the imperial court for the establishment of railroad engineering and army academies patterned on the German system, and two years later solicited for the creation of an academy of military technology science. The reforms continued until the year of the Wu Shu Coup with the introduction of the study of economic science, the establishment of Capital University in Beijing, and a government edict directing the nationwide transformation of the old scholastic academies into formal institutions of education. However, the so-called "economic science" of that period bore little resemblance to the more narrowly defined science of economics of today: at that time economics was a general study that encompassed the classical notions of statesmanship and administration. In May of that same year, by imperial edict the "eight-legged" essay was eliminated from the curriculum of the civil service examination system and replaced by the "Ts'e Lun" system of topic focused questions, and all provinces were directed to establish local school systems. In 1903, formal educational guidelines and regulations were officially promulgated. Two years later, in the thirty-first year of K'uang-hsu's reign, the imperial examination system was formally abolished, while the study of economic science was

officially endorsed and the Ministry of Education was established.

We now have a basic understanding of the gradual process, beginning in the tenth year of Hsien-feng's reign (1860), by which China's educational system was radically restructured as a result of contact with Western culture. Today, almost one hundred years of history temporally separates us from these events, and with the relentless march of time has come even further historic change and transformation. Nevertheless, if we make the connection between this educational reform process and the interplay of Western and Eastern culture to the misfortunes of the nation and its people, our sadness and feelings of loss for what might have been can only grow deeper.

Our approach has been to "explore the past in order to understand the future." In order to accomplish this, we have revisited the major historical events relating to the reformation of the educational system during the last days of the Manchurian-Ching dynasty (the K'uang-hsu era). In order to "perceive the present by reflecting on the past" and flesh out the factors which have shaped the condition of today's youth, we must piece together the puzzle of the relationship between the pedagogy of this age and the hearts and minds of our troubled sons and daughters.

Supplementary Information

Continuing T'ong-chih's policy of importing Western culture through foreign study, in the thirteenth year of the reign of K'uang-hsu the Foreign Ministry issued fourteen articles regulating the overseas student program. The fourteen articles basically covered the following areas:

1. A Yearly budget exceeding forty thousand taels of gold, with ten to twenty persons
2. Criterion for selection of talent, with particular attention paid to those with a good memory and methodical attention to detail
3. The different ranking and salary levels
4. Authorization of travel expenses and personal servants
5. Time periods for foreign study

6. Salary advances
7. Accounting for sea and land travel expenses
8. Local living and study expense allowances
9. A detailed account of each locale of study
10. A linguistic study of several target countries
11. Requiring students to give a full and honest personal account of their experience upon return to China
12. Entrusting the well-being of the students to China's overseas diplomatic consul
13. Requiring each person to file a complete and detailed itinerary
14. After proper application, allowing those scheduled to go overseas to avoid travel due to parental illness or old age

One of Chang Chih-tung's first acts as governor of the Guangdong and Guangxi region was to establish academies dedicated to the military sciences. In the twenty-first year of K'uang-hsu's rule, the governor officially reported the adoption of Western methods of military training and the establishment of the New Southern Army for National Salvation, and by December of that same year was able to note the establishment of army and railroad engineering academies. The report went as follows:

The circumstances surrounding the establishment of the New Army for National Salvation have already been officially reported and are on record. To a man, every member of the German armed forces is a product of academy training; I intend to follow the German model and forge our military into a formidable fighting force. However, unless many academies staffed by the finest instructors are established, we will surely lack the resources necessary to create the superior soldiers we seek. In the twelfth year of K'uang-hsu's reign, I founded an academy of military armaments in the area of Tianjin. Presently, as governor of the Guangdong and Guangxi region, I have also set up a military academy. The current number of students remains somewhat limited. Nevertheless, the quality of the recruits for our newly established units has been quite good and they are progressing rapidly, which undoubtedly is good news for the academy. It appears that in the provincial capital of the Jiang-Nan region, where a naval academy has

already been established, a fully furnished army academy, complete with dormitories and drill grounds, has been established in the area of Yi Feng Men He Hui avenue. The students, who number one hundred and fifty persons, are either assigned as cannoneers or to artillery, cavalry, or infantry units for their first two years, and spend their third year exclusively studying gunnery. At the end of their third year, after being assigned a grade of A or B, the students graduate. There is also the specialty of railway engineering, which is of particular relevance to the army. Although we have already set up a railway academy in the North, the limited number of students enrolled hampered our success. Now, however, with three foreign instructors and ninety students, and after reclassifying the field as specialty within the army academy, we hope to meet with greater success. The over forty-thousand-gold taels necessary to get the army academy up and running were obtained from the Bureau of Emergency Appropriations. As for the respective forty and twenty-thousand tael annual budgets of the army academy and its railway department, forty thousand is supplied by the Sanhai Pass and seven thousand by the [Zhenjiang Pass] Hsin Jen Chia Chieh societies, with the remainder coming from private donations.

The preceding well illustrates the historical connection we have explored between the adoption of the Western model of education and the need for practical technology and the demands of the military.

What follows is an account of the founding of the Kuan Shu Chu government bureau and the appointment of Sun Chia-nai as the minister in charge in the twenty second year of K'uang-hsu's reign, and what resulted when Western culture was embraced too enthusiastically.

The feeding frenzy of the imperial powers began in the early days of K'uang-hsu, and now they come closer to our shores with each passing day; Japan has seized the Ryukyu islands, France has grabbed Vietnam, and England has snatched up Burma. Most Chinese and foreign officials alike recognize that the old ways have completely failed us, and have secretly longed for reform. In 1888, English and American diplomats and evangelicals established the Kuang Hsueh Hui Language

Institute in Shanghai. Although staffed with idealistic people of integrity who labored together to produce translations of new works and lectured on contemporary fields of study, the Institute eventually fell victim to a wave of anti-foreign frenzy and nationalistic conceit. Following the Sino-Japanese War, Southerners such as K'ang Yu-wei sought to revive the work of the Institute by founding the Ch'ang Hsueh Hui National Salvation Society in Shanghai, with the support and approval of officials such as the governor of Hubei, Chang Chih-tung, and State Secretary Sun Chia-nai. Consequently, many persons from both the private and public sector cooperated in not only establishing the Salvation Society, but also in its mission of translation and research into international affairs. Nevertheless, Imperial Censor Yang Ch'ung-i soon petitioned the court for an order to shut down the Salvation Society. Eventually, Imperial Censor Hu Fu-ch'en successfully obtained an order placing the Salvation Society under the official control of the Foreign Ministry, and the Society was renamed as the Kuan Shu Chu.

Following an official order of approval, Sun Chia-nai was specially named as the minister in charge. In July of that same year, following an official request from the Ministry of Public Works and State Secretary Sun Chia-nai, Capital University was established in Beijing. The process was initiated by the university scholar Li Tuan-fen, who petitioned for the expansion of the educational system and forcefully argued for the establishment of a university in Beijing.

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12. Reflections on Education and the Generation Gap

13. The Hollowmen of Education and Culture

Annexes

A. Respect and Reverence for the Teacher and his Teachings

B. The Martial Art Short Story and the Psychological Development of Society

C. Classical Literature and the Modern Literary Arts

D. Human Nature and Desire