

## K'ANG YU-WEI'S *Shih-li kung-fa chüan-shu*:

(A complete book of substantial truths and universal principles)

by

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Despite the extensive scholarly treatment of the thought of K'ang Yu-wei (1858-1927) in various languages during the past decades, K'ang remains a controversial figure and his thought has been subject to diverse interpretations and evaluations. The significant role he played in the process of China's modernization cannot be disputed. As a philosophically oriented scholar confronted with a drastically challenging situation, the approach he used to synthesize Chinese and Western values was, to say the least, innovative. He was a man of extreme versatility and complexity who succeeded in drawing inspirations from a vast range of sources in the process of formulating his own moral, social, and political philosophy. K'ang was concerned with the viability of Chinese civilization in general and of its humanistic and societal patterns in particular. Furthermore, he engaged himself in an anguished search for the ultimate meaning of existence, which effort distinguished him from most other intellectuals of his time. He championed vigorously such notions as equality, the individual's right of autonomy, human progress, the necessity of accommodation and change, and the value of the demonstrability of science -- each of which was indispensable if China were to modernize itself without disrupting its *humanistic* heritage under the impact of Western wealth and power. <sup>(1)</sup>

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(1) "Humanism" is a highly ambiguous term. Failure to use it without qualification often leads to misunderstanding and confusion. "Humanism," by its generally accepted definition, necessarily implies an attitude of mind, which attaches primary importance to man and to his faults, affairs, temporal aspirations, and well-being. This is an attitude often regarded as characteristic of the Renaissance in Europe. We may recall that Medieval Christianity suggested that human life on earth was significant only in so far as it affected the individual soul's expectations of God's mercy after death. Teleologically, the present life of a person was merely regarded as a preparatory phase for a more meaningful existence after life. It was against this belittling of the individual's natural condition that the humanists of the Renaissance asserted the intrinsic value of life before death and the greatness of each person's potentialities. In contrast, the early Chinese humanists believed that they had already discovered the true meaning of existence -- *i. e.*, the enjoyment of a simple family life, the extension of which was to be found simultaneously in the broader social context. The Chinese tradition was decidedly humanistic if we are referring to its perennial concern for man-in-society and to its preoccupation with human relations in the world. One may, therefore, argue that the humanism as developed in Renaissance Europe and that in China are essentially different. For the Chinese humanism did not necessarily imply the anthropocentric thesis that the individual is the measure of all things. Still, a discussion of humanism would be meaningless if it were disassociated from notions of the dignity and worth of the human person. Traditional Chinese humanism was not, of course, totally indifferent to the dignity and worth of the individual. However, unlike the European tradition, personal dignity was generally believed to be derived from virtuous and righteous conduct and from social approval. What seems to have been lacking was the concept of worth innate in each human soul. In the Chinese tradition, personal worth was acquired through acceptance of ethical principles and through socially sanctioned conduct.

Although K'ang's thought went through successive stages of continuous adjustment during his long career, the foundations of his philosophy established during the mid-1880's remained basically unaltered. In fact, the extent of his intellectual innovation is already indicated in two of his earliest extant writings, "*K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien*" 康子內外篇 (Esteric and exoteric essays of Master K'ang) and "*Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu*" 實理公法全書 (A complete book of substantial truths and universal principles). The manuscripts of these works were written, in all probability, during 1884-1887.<sup>(2)</sup> While the validity and feasibility of some of the ideas laborously expounded by K'ang in these works are controver-

(2) Both *K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien* and *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu* (hereafter, NWP and SLKF respectively) were microfilmed in Peking by the late Professor Mary C. Wright for the Hoover Institution in 1947. I am indebted to Professor Kwang-Ching Liu for generously lending me his xerox copy of the microfilmed manuscripts. K'ang himself dates the NWP to 1886-1887 and the SLKF (title varies) to 1885-1887 in his chronological autobiography (see "*K'ang Nai-hai tzu-pien nien-p'u* 康南海自編年譜," pp. 118-119 and Jung-pang Lo, ed. and tr., *K'ang Yu-wei: A Biography and a Symposium*, Tucson: The University of Arizona, 1967, pp. 42-44). Richard C. Howard has followed K'ang's dating (see his "K'ang Yu-wei (1858-1927): His Intellectual Background and Early Thought," in Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Confucian Personalities*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962, p. 307 or his "The Early Life and Thought of K'ang Yu-wei, 1858-1895," Columbia University, Ph. D. Dissertation, 1972, p. 107). K'ang T'ung-pi 康同壁, K'ang Yu-wei's second daughter, stated in her supplementary to K'ang Yu-wei's autobiography that it was as early as 1884 when K'ang began to prepare the early versions of SLKF under different titles—"Jen-shen Kung-fa 人身公法," "Jen-lei kung-li 人類公理," and "*Kung-li shu* 公理書," all of which are not extant except the supposedly final draft version which bears the title "*Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu*" (see Kung-ch'üan Hsiao 蕭公權, "K'ang Yu-wei and Confucianism," in *Monumenta Serica* 18, 1959, pp. 107-112 or his *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858-1927*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975, pp. 50-54; Kung-chuan Hsiao, "In and Out of Utopia: K'ang Yu-wei's Social Thought," *The Chung Chi Journal*, vol. 7, no. 1, November 1967, p. 17n63). While there is a lack of biographical evidence to ascertain the actual and accurate dates during which these two manuscripts were written, it is beyond doubt that they were done during 1884-1887. The 1891 demographic data pertaining to the numbers of divorce cases and of illegitimate children in France included in the SLKF are, in all likelihood, later insertions. Certainly, NWP and SLKF are not the only writings of K'ang during this period. According to his chronological autobiography as well as Jung-pang Lo's account, he also completed four other works, namely, "*Yün-hsüeh chih-yen* 韻學卮言" (Desultory remarks on phonetics), "*Chiao-hsüeh t'ung-i* 教學通議" (General discussion on pedagogy), "*Cheng-hsüeh t'ung-i* 政學通議" (General discussion on government), and *Yen-hsiang lao-wu shih-chi* 延香老屋詩集 (Poems of the Old House of Abiding Fragrance, published in Hong Kong, 1966). However, the first two of the four works were subsequently discarded by K'ang himself and hence are no longer extant. According to Jung-pang Lo, *Chenghsueh t'ung-i* is also no longer extant. The dating of poems in *Yenhsiang lao-wu shih-chi* as given in the extant version is not always reliable. Judging from their content, many of the poems could not have been composed prior to 1887, despite K'ang's own statement in his chronological autobiography. Consequently NWP and SLKF are the only two sources available for our study of K'ang's intellectual development during the crucial years 1884-1887.

sial, some of his ideas proved to be essential in China's modernization. K'ang's ideas of modernization as stated in these manuscripts were as valuable to the revolutionary movement before 1911 as they were destructive of the old imperial order. The intellectual transformation of China which took place with unprecedented magnitude during the 1890's-1920's can therefore be traced back to the 1880's.<sup>(3)</sup> These two manuscripts must be regarded as historical documents of prime significance which require critical investigation and careful scrutiny. An analysis of the content of *K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien* has appeared elsewhere.<sup>(4)</sup> This article discusses some of the seminal concepts K'ang expounded in his *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu*. They serve to reinforce and to spell out in more concrete terms the ideas already presented in the other manuscript.

As the title *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu* suggests, K'ang's primary objective was to formulate a body of ethico-political codes and fundamental cosmological principles of universal validity and applicability. Apparently K'ang did not regard this manuscript as the final version. In fact, it is hardly more than a rough outline and a basic framework, to be amplified in the future. *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu* was intended to be the core outline of an ambitiously comprehensive and immensely encyclopedic work to be entitled *Wan-shen kung-fa* 萬身公法 or "Universal Principles of Myriad Persons." K'ang saw the compilation of the latter as an enormous unending task, which is to be contributed by generations of people in the future.<sup>(5)</sup> Strictly speaking, therefore, *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu* was to remain a work forever containing imperfections, and always having room for improvement. K'ang suggested that following his own initial formulation, it should undergo a quinquennial revision indefinitely. K'ang strongly disapproved of the notion that human intelligence, however superior, represented any ultimate truth of absolute unchallengeability. K'ang's faith in the continuous evolution of his treatise itself reflected his concept of

(3) For an insightful discussion of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's role in the process of intellectual transition in modern China, see Hao Chang, *Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Intellectual Transition in China*, 1890-1907 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971).

(4) San-pao Li, "K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien ch'u-pu fen-hsi: K'ang Nan-hai hsien-ts'un tsui-tsao tso-p'in (A Preliminary analysis of K'ang Yu-wei's earliest extant essay, *K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien*)," *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, n. s. XI, nos. 1 & 2 (December 1975), pp. 213-247.

(5) *Wan-shen kung-fa* was to contain no less than ten various titles. For a list of these titles, see SLKF: *Ch'ang-ch'i ti-ch'iu shu-chi mu-lu kung-lun* 整齊地球書籍目錄公論, p. 1 or the translation provided below in "General Discussion on the Comprehensive List of Books of the World."

progress. To him, linear progress, a movement through successive upward steps to a brighter future, is possible. It is, however, a slow and arduous process. In his view, sudden, abrupt, and revolutionary change does not necessarily guarantee the betterment of society. The Age of Great Unity, once reached, is but "a tiny oasis in the desert of time, to which men trudge hopefully and, having arrived, move on."<sup>(6)</sup> It is only through uninterrupted and patient efforts at gradual improvement that perfection in its ultimate sense can be approximated.

The concept of *jen* 仁 was constantly reiterated in traditional Chinese philosophy. All Confucianists, ancient and modern, assert in unison that *jen* represents the totality of all virtues. This view was re-asserted with much vigor by K'ang. It can indeed be regarded as the *idée maitrise* of K'ang's moral philosophy. His utopianism is inconceivable without actualizing in its entirety *jen*, which is the dynamic motive force of all things, the sole *élan vital*. It is, furthermore, the categorical (or apodictic) imperative. Every rational agent ought to have a genuine love for others. *Jen* is what is quintessentially human. The fulfillment of this naturally endowed virtue is an action enjoined for its own sake. Its realization is therefore an a priori practical proposition, demanded of each individual.

But what approach should be adopted for the realization of this virtue? Unlike most traditional Confucianists, K'ang was convinced that *jen* could be fully manifested at the expense of hierarchical social relations. K'ang no longer believed that the latter was a *sine qua non* for the actualization of the former. In fact, he regarded the rigidly defined social distinctions of traditional China as a serious handicap for the realization of *jen*. To K'ang, the traditional hierarchical social relationships could potentially be abused by certain individuals, and as a result the right of autonomy to which other individuals are entitled would be denied. What K'ang envisioned in his two early manuscripts was a totally undifferentiated socio-moral order in contrast to the minutely differentiated moral order usually implied in such concepts as *i* 義 (sense of obligation) and *li* 禮 (propriety). For K'ang, his utopia was unattainable unless it was first recognized that human beings are born not only with equal endowment but also with equal worth and dignity. That all men *are* naturally equal

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(6) Jung-pang Lo, "K'ang Yu-wei and His Philosophy of Political Change and Historical Progress," *Symposium on Chinese Studies: Commemorating the Golden Jubilee of the University of Hong Kong, 1911-1961* (University of Hong Kong, 1968), vol. III, p. 80.

in the descriptive sense and that they share equal attributes in every way, according to Donald Munro, is not at all a notion alien to the Chinese. That all men *should be* accorded equal right in the evaluative sense, however, is something quite novel in Chinese moral and political philosophy.<sup>(7)</sup> The essence of K'ang Yu-wei's intellectual innovation lies precisely in his unyielding claim of each individual's "right of autonomy" or the "right to be one's own master" (*tzu-chu chih ch'üan* 自主之權). Equality in the descriptive and the evaluative senses of the term must therefore be clearly distinguished.

In a purely evaluative reference to equality, "worth" and "dignity" are qualities attributed by an external agent. In the European tradition, early egalitarian Christianity stressed that human beings are of equal worth, since God values all souls equally. The maxim that "all men are created equal" meant to John Locke that none had by birth the God-given right to lord over others. "Consent" must be sought if some are to rule over others. Otherwise all persons should always be treated impartially and regarded as having equal rights. In imperial China, such an external agent as God was absent. K'ang desired to transform equality from a descriptive to an evaluative idea, and was keen enough to see the need for deriving in a rational manner a set of selfevident "substantial truths and universal principles," which were to be recognized as containing cosmic validity, as standards of evaluation. He wrote: "[Since] human beings are formed by partaking their respective share of the primordial substance (*yüan-chih* 原質) of heaven and earth, [they are of equal worth and dignity]. Every individual possesses a soul.....has the right to be his or her own master."<sup>(8)</sup> Autonomy as a human right was regarded by him as instrumental in bringing forth his "Great-Sameness" (*ta-t'ung* 大同) utopia. While this trend of thought was already clearly implied in his *K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien*, it was further developed and stated in a much more explicit manner in his *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu*.

Basing his reasoning entirely upon this theoretical foundation, K'ang continued rigorously to substantiate his assumptions that individuals in various human relationships ought to enjoy their right to autonomy equally. Wife and husband, both possessing souls of equal worth, should be equally free to express their

(7) Donald J. Munro, *The Concept of Man in Early China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), pp. 1-2 and note in pp. 179-180.

(8) SLKF: *Tsung-lun jen-lei men* 總論人類[門] or the translation provided in the "General Discussion on Humankind" section below.

preferences, even though their preferences may harmonize.<sup>(9)</sup> The primordial substance of which each individual is made belongs exclusively to heaven and earth and does not belong to one's parents. Parents are therefore not entitled to any inherent prerogative over their children.<sup>(10)</sup> Furthermore, human Reason in Immanuel Kant's sense may be said to be analogous to K'ang Yu-wei's concept of primordial substance, although the two are not identical in technical philosophical language. When a person partakes *yüan-chih*, he derives simultaneously therefrom a rational capacity. The *K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien* argues that each individual is endowed with the same capacity to explore the principles hidden in the dispersed *yüan-chih*. K'ang identifies this rational capacity as *chih* 智, which we may indeed translate as Reason. Because of the existence of universal Reason, K'ang questioned the validity of the sacrosanct relationships of inequality that existed in Chinese society. A teacher, for example, cannot command respect from his students simply because he is the teacher.<sup>(11)</sup> Even the ruler's role should be similar to that of a mediator. A mediator is ordinarily selected by agreement of the two parties involved. His power to arbitrate is derived; it is invested in him by others and not inherent in his position. K'ang went so far as to say that every individual should be provided with equal opportunity to be ruler.<sup>(12)</sup> Moreover, K'ang thought that while virtue commands respect, age itself does not -- since after the demise of the aged, the person's *yüan-chih* disperses and recondenses to form another person.<sup>(13)</sup> Obviously, K'ang rejected the idea that the arbitrarily established hierarchies of traditional China reflected any absolute or universal moral values. This assertion of every individual's equal right to be his or her own master underlies K'ang Yu-wei's utopian thought. This is equality in the evaluative sense of the term; this is also the basis and essence of *jen* as interpreted by K'ang.

In Europe, the concept of the natural right of man can be traced back to the Stoics. Their emphasis on the essential equality of men as men was quite explicit. The sense of dignity and self-sufficiency of the individual as exemplified by Cicero's writings found similar expression in Voltaire, who bade all persons to forget their petty differences and to remember their essential dignity

(9) SLKF: *Fu-fu men* 夫婦門 or the "Husband and Wife" section below.

(10) SLKF: *Fu-mu tzu-nü men* 父母子女門 or the "Parents and Children" section below.

(11) SLKF: *Shih-ti men* 師弟門 or the "Teachers and Disciples" section below.

(12) SLKF: *Chün-ch'en men* 君臣門 or the "Sovereign and Subjects" section below.

(13) SLKF: *Fu-mu tzu-nü men* and *Chang-yu men* 長幼門 or the "Parents and Children" and "The Elderly and the Youthful" sections below.

as human beings. From the Stoics to the *philosophes* of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, there were several major periods during which the concept of equality and individual's right to autonomy were gradually developed into a dynamic faith. For example, in the egalitarianism of early Christianity, each person was regarded as being equally endowed with a soul. Judaism spoke of men as equal before God's law; Christianity spoke of the equal worth to God of all his children. The "exuberant humanists" (as Crane Brinton calls them) of the Renaissance period were, in fact, "casting off all authority.....[and] believed that man is the measure of all things, and each man is a measure of himself."<sup>(14)</sup> It is perhaps not far-fetched to say that if we regard K'ang as a humanist, he is comparable to the "exuberant humanists" of the Renaissance period.

Immanuel Kant, the eighteenth century German idealist, claimed that "With all his failings man is still better than angels void of will."<sup>(15)</sup> Angels would be inferior to man if they did not possess free choice of action in pursuit of a morally valid goal. Immanuel Kant portrayed man as an autonomous being, respecting always the categorical imperative and therefore justifies his infinite intrinsic worth and dignity. A central aspect of the Kantian ethics is the principle of personality, which centers around the idea that no one should ever be treated solely as a means for the ends of another person. Kant believed that human intellect operates always in identical fashion; it therefore provided an epistemological dimension to the modern concept of "human rights." For Kant, morality was almost inconceivable without the autonomy of the rational will; and this autonomy was very foundation of the irreplaceable dignity of each individual. Immanuel Kant and K'ang Yu-wei, both articulators of what we may call "universal values," were identical not only in their claim of the presence of intellect within each individual, whether it is called Reason or *chih* and its relationship to the individual's right of autonomy. Both philosophers were also firm believers that human beings are capable of moral progress, either as individuals or as members of society taking part in shaping its institutions.

According to K'ang, although possession of the naturally-endowed *chih* (intelligence or "Reason") is what distinguishes human beings from other animals,

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(14) Crane Brinton, *Ideas and Men: The Story of Western Thought* (Englewood, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950), p. 276.

(15) William S. Sahakian, *History of Philosophy: From the Earliest Times to the Present* (New York: Barnes and Noble Inc., 1968), p. 177.

it should by no means be regarded as unlimited and having absolute validity. Human judgment is fallible. Francis Bacon also believed that ethical ideas as well as conventions are all socially determined, hence do not reflect absolute values. Indeed there are many things that escape our sense and understanding. K'ang argued in the *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu*, although indirectly, that it is a grievous error to assert that perception and human understanding are the ultimate measures of things. Bacon's analogy between mind and an uneven mirror contains some truth. The mirror distorts the rays of object; human mind often distorts reality. No matter how reverently accepted and popularly practiced, institutions created by man should command no final authority, for they are often at variance with the "substantial truths." They can, at best, be put under the category of "lesser alternatives."<sup>(16)</sup>

Institutions established by man, according to K'ang, must not only strive to approximate the immutable "substantial truths," but also must not for a moment fail to demonstrate that they are both practicable and beneficial to humanity. Whether or not an institution or a teaching is "beneficial to humanity" at a given time or place is, in fact, such an important consideration that this criterion is employed as justification for K'ang's arguments in no less than twenty occasions in the *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu*.

Should an institution or a certain teaching prove to be no longer beneficial or adequate, it must be modified, updated, or even replaced with a new one. "It is feared," K'ang wrote, "that even the latest ones may become antiquated."<sup>(17)</sup> The "substantial truths and universal principles" formulated by K'ang himself in the *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu* are no exception. K'ang stated, without the slightest hesitation, that "it is perfectly permissible if not a single word contained in all the books on the Universal Principles of Myriad Persons is retained after subsequent supplements and revisions made by people of the later ages."<sup>(18)</sup> While he was often criticized for his intellectual arrogance, K'ang's willingness to accept challenge and to change for the better is indeed striking. He is one of the earliest modern Chinese intellectuals who campaigned assiduously against the notion "*an yü ku-hsi*" 安於故習 or "being content with old practices." He saw his own ideas as incomplete, subject to new challenges in every turn.<sup>(19)</sup>

(16) See SLKF: "Preface" translated below.

(17) SLKF: *Shih-tzu chieh* 實字解 or the "On the Term Substantial" section below.

(18) SLKF: *Cheg-ch'i ti-ch'iu shu-chi mu-lu kung-lun* or the "General Discussion on the Comprehensive List of Books of the World" section below.

(19) See NWP: *Chueh-shih p'ien* 覺識篇 in San-pao Li, "*K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien ch'u-pu fen-hsi*," pp. 228-230.



To K'ang, *chih* meant not only the innate intelligence and Reason with which each individual is equally endowed but also the postnatal enlightenment (*les lumières*), or learning. He recognized the fact that power (*shih* 勢), physical as well as intellectual, was the first postulate of human action. Nevertheless, while physical power inevitably produces injustice and dominance of the strong over the weak, intellectual power leads to enlightenment, the absence of which would deter human progress.<sup>(20)</sup> The concept of *chih* in K'ang's philosophy embraces the moral and evaluative as well as the intellectual and cognitive aspects of the term. Each individual not only must fully utilize his naturally endowed faculty to make his own moral judgment, but also must rejuvenate his intellectual capacity by constantly acquiring new knowledge, which in turn helps to nourish an individual's moral insight. In this way, K'ang made it explicitly clear that in his philosophical structure humanity (*jen*) and wisdom (*chih*) are integrated. It is together that they overach, embrace, and transcend all other values. They are both beyond temporal and spatial confines. They are eternally valid moral principles, and can be put under the rubric of "immutable" (*yu-ting* 有定) virtues as opposed to other virtues which are susceptible to degeneration.<sup>(21)</sup>

Reason or *chih* as K'ang interpreted it led to new knowledge, not to the scholastic erudition best exemplified in the preparation for writing examination essays, which reeked of pedantry and triteness. Rather, it was reason and the evaluative faculty possessed by all individuals and the new knowledge, scientific or otherwise, constantly discovered by people as a result of the exercise of this innate faculty. He argued forcefully in *K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien* that the traditional Chinese scholars, whether sophisticated or unsophisticated, accomplished or unaccomplished, must free themselves from the *cul-de-sac* in which they had placed themselves.<sup>(22)</sup> People must liberate themselves from ignorance and extend their mental horizons far and wide. The old traditions are to be scrutinized and whatever is obsolete, is to be eliminated. Consequently, the point of departure should be the cultivation of each person's innate faculty to evaluate, the development of his or her conceptual apparatus, the intellect, and the formation of the habit of a perpetual search for truth and knowledge. It may

(20) NWP: *Shih-tzu p'ien* 勢祖篇, p. 18 or Li, "K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien ch'u-pu fen-hsi," p. 234.

(21) NWP: *Jen-chih p'ien* 仁智篇 p. 17b or Li, "K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien chiu-pu fen-hsi," pp. 232-233.

(22) NWP: *Chueh-shih p'ien* 覺識篇, p. 13b or Li, "K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien ch'u-pu fen-hsi," pp. 228-229.

be said that to K'ang this departure is the beginning of intellectual modernization.

Any institution or teaching must be inherently both beneficial and acceptable to the members of the society. When such institution or teaching can no longer escape the fate of obsolescence--when, in K'ang's own words, it comes to an "impasse" (*pu-neng* 不能)--people must utilize their intellect (*chih*) and learning (*hsüeh* 學) to find an alternative.<sup>(23)</sup> "To bring to light new knowledge" (*pi hsin-chih* 闡新知) is considered one of the most valuable contributions to humanity, deserving nothing short of a "major merit" (*cheng-kung* 正功) in the merit evaluation system designed by K'ang.<sup>(24)</sup> It seemed to him that the increase in knowledge would certainly contribute to the only progress which, in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's view, really counts: moral progress. His faith in the significant role of knowledge was echoed in T'an Ssu-t'ung's *Jen hsüeh* 仁學, where T'an made it most explicit that the spread of knowledge was bound, in time, to generate enough "heat and light" to compel change.<sup>(25)</sup> Never before in Chinese history was the significance of *chih* (human intellect, Reason, intelligence, wisdom, or knowledge) recognized with such force. This was because K'ang saw *chih* as the most effective instrument for the liberation from the old values and beliefs.

In addition to advocating the individual's right of autonomy, the need for accomodation and change, and the necessity of constant acquisition of new knowledge, K'ang also championed vigorously and passionately the demonstrable validity of science. In fact, aside from the rather unusual format in which *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu* is written one is struck immediately by K'ang's persistent and indefatigable references to the "axioms of geometry." We find in this seemingly sketchy and inadequate work no less than 38 occasions where K'ang discussed the compatibility of a certain "substantial truth," a "universal principle," or a "lesser alternative" with the "axioms of geometry." The laws that proceed from the axioms of geometry were regarded by K'ang as "necessary truths" (*pi-jan chih shih* 必然之實) or "eternal truths" (*yung-yüan chih shih* 永遠之實) whereas those arbitrarily established are plainly "equivocal truths" 。

(23) NWP: *Li-hsueh p'ien* 理學篇 p.5 or Li, "K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien ch'n-pu fen-hsi," p. 219.

(24) SLKF: *Lun-jen kung-fa* 論人公法 or the "Universal Principles Governing the Evaluation of Persons" section below.

(25) See *Jen hsueh* in T'an Ssu-t'ung 譚嗣同, *T'an Liu-yang ch'üan-chi* 譚劉陽全集 (The complete works of T'an Ssu-t'ung, Taipei: Wen-hai Publishers, 1968), passim.

(*liang-k'o chih shih* 兩可之實).<sup>(26)</sup>

This very fact suggests that K'ang had more than a mere superficial appreciation of science. Rather, he cultivated a genuine faith in Western science and regarded it both as a value in itself and as an approach to truth. His attachment to and deep admiration for science was already demonstrated in his *K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien* where he criticized the arrogance and presumptuousness of the Ch'ing scholars. In order to convince these scholars of the value of science and new knowledge, he found it necessary to "fetch a telescope and ask them to see with their own eyes."<sup>(27)</sup>

For K'ang, "substantial truths" meant, first of all, truths which have been empirically proven by scientific investigation. They must be fully supported by verifiable facts. He himself, in fact, looked restlessly for empirical evidence and stated categorically that "truths that are incomprehensible, vague, and unverifiable are excluded [from the present work]."<sup>(28)</sup> The statistical figures he meticulously gathered to justify his "universal principle" in the "Husband and Wife" section serves as a good example, showing his emphasis on quantification of information. He did not seem to question at all the feasibility of quantifying the extent of the mother's discomfort during pregnancy and the amount of the "primordial substance" expended by the parents in begetting their child. He went so far as to suggest that the public authorities should deliberate and establish a fixed schedule on the basis of quantified data in order to provide compensation to the parents.

During the last decades of the nineteenth century the efficacy of modern western medicine seemed to have a great appeal to many Chinese who were exposed to it either through literature made available by missionaries like John Fryer or through actual diagnoses and treatment they received at missionary-sponsored clinics at the treaty ports. Among the 322 letters to the editor published in the *Ko-chih hui-pien* 格致彙編 (The Chinese Scientific Magazine, 1876-1892), the first journal published in the Chinese language explicitly and exclusively concerned with modern science and technology, no less than 26 inquiries or 8 percent of the total number of letters dealt directly with personal

(26) SLKF: *Shih-tzu chieh* or "On the Term Substantial" section below.

(27) NWP: *Chueh-shih p'ien*, p. 14 or Li, "*K'ang-tzu nei-wai p'ien* ch'u-pu fen-hsi," p. 229.

(28) SLKF: *Fan-li* 凡例 or the "Preface" section below.

(29) SLKF: *Fu-mu tzu-nu men* or the "Parents and Children" section below.

health problems and diagnoses.<sup>(30)</sup> K'ang was also intensely interested in western medicine. We cannot fail to detect in some passages in the *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu* an innocent faith in the efficacy of modern medicine, the utility of which he thought was clearly and readily demonstrable.

In a discussion of the appropriateness of various forms of salutations, he wrote, "greetings--elaborate or simple as they may be--should always be studied by medical scientists according to the theories established by them.....The form which is determined to be the most beneficial should be recommended as a "universal principle."<sup>(31)</sup> Kowtow, an act not infrequently practiced by people in traditional China to show deference and submissive respect to the elderly and other individuals whenever appropriate, was criticized by K'ang with a good reason: "kneeling does harm to one's muscle and blood vessels; kowtow causes the blood in the brain to circulate in a reverse direction. [The adverse effects of kneeling and kowtow] have already been studied by medical scientists."<sup>(32)</sup> According to K'ang, the number of holidays, too, should not be determined until the medical scientists are entrusted to study the number of hours of work an individual's energy and stamina could sustain per day.<sup>(33)</sup> Furthermore, the frequency of sexual intercourse of married couples is also to be determined by physicians. He or she should be ordered to abstain from sex temporarily should his or her "blood vessels found to be excessively weakened."<sup>(34)</sup> These are indeed startling remarks for a Chinese scholar in the 1880's. But K'ang's naive faith in western medicine went beyond this. On matters of dwelling, utensils, and diet, K'ang did not fail to see a similar need to have these deliberated upon and investigated by medical scientists. Quite incredibly, he even saw the need to prescribe the appropriate length or style of beard and hair for people living in varying degrees of latitude after this has been properly investigated by medical scientists.<sup>(35)</sup> We may, indeed, venture to say that in his envisioned utopia the greatest authority and the weightiest responsibilities are to be assigned

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(30) For the significance and an analysis of the content of *Ko-chui hui-pien*, see San-pao Li, "Letters to the Editor in John Fryer's *Chinese Scientific Magazine*, 1876-1892: An Analysis," *Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica*, vol. IV, Part II (December 1974), pp. 729-777.

(31) SLKF: *Li-i men* 禮儀門 or the "Ceremonies and Etiquette" section below.

(32) *Ibid.*

(33) *Ibid.*

(34) SLKF: *Fu-fu men* or the "Husband and Wife" section below.

(35) SLKF: *Chih-shih men* 治事門 or the "Administration of State and of Personal Matters" section below.

not to the officials of the government but to the medical scientists who, according to K'ang, uniquely possess the knowledge required to prolong human life. Ultimately, men and women alike will be able to lead a happy life resembling that of the "celestial beings" (*t'ien-jen* 天人).<sup>(36)</sup>

I have attempted in this essay to discuss some of the most important concepts creatively formulated and emphatically expounded by K'ang during the most crucial years of his intellectual development. It is historically indisputable that these ideas of his possessed great transforming potential. The new and sometimes quite unorthodox concepts and the vocabulary which K'ang introduced into the existing Chinese intellectual milieu eventually proved to be contagious and fast-spreading. They consequently exerted a great impact upon K'ang's disciples and in time upon the traditional Chinese society and its values and morality. They contributed to the emergence of a new awareness and a new mentality embraced by Chinese in their effort to bring China up to par with other modern countries.

*Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu* is sometimes mentioned by intellectual historians. To the best of my knowledge, however, there is as yet no completely translated version available to interested scholars. The following is a draft translation of the unabridged text. Footnotes are provided whenever necessary.

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(36) For K'ang's fascinating discussion on the "celestial beings," see the Preface in his *K'ang Nan-hai chu-t'ien chiang* 康南海諸天講 (Lectures on the heavens, published in 1930).

Appendix: Draft Translation

“*Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu*”

(*A Complete Book of Substantial Truths and Universal Principles*)

Contents

1. Preface (*Fan-li* 凡例)
2. On the Term “Substantial” (*Shih-tzu-chieh* 實字解)
3. On the Term “Universal” (*Kung-tzu-chieh* 公字解)
4. General Discussion on Humankind (*Tsung-lun jen-lei men* 總論人類門)
5. Husband and Wife (*Fu-fu men* 夫婦門)
6. Parents and Children (*Fu-mu tzu-nü men* 父母子女門)
7. Teachers and Disciples (*Shih-ti men* 師弟門)
8. Sovereign and Subjects (*Chün-ch'en men* 君臣門)
9. The Elderly and the Youthful (*Chang-yu men* 長幼門)
10. Friends (*P'eng-yu men* 朋友門)
11. Ceremonies and Etiquette (*Li-i men* 禮儀門)
12. Penal Laws (*Hsing-fa men* 刑罰門)
13. Religious and Educational Matters (*Chiao-shih men* 教事門)
14. Administration of State and of personal Matters (*Chih-shih men* 治事門)
15. Universal Principles Governing the Evaluation of Persons (*Lun-jen kung-fa* 論人公法)
16. General Discussion on the Comprehensive List of Books of the World (*Cheng-ch'i ti-ch'iu shu-chi mu-lu kung-lu* 整齊地球書籍目錄公論)

Preface

The immense scope of the world [*i. e.*, the human realm] does not go beyond moral principles (*i-li* 義理) and institutions (*chih-tu* 制度). What are moral principles? They are substantial truths (*shih-li* 實理), universal truths (*kung-li* 公理), and “truths” recognized as such by individuals (*ssu-li* 私理). What are institutions? They are universal principles (*kung-fa* 公法), lesser alternatives (*pi-li chih kung-fa* 比例之公法), and “principles” recognized as such by individuals (*ssu-fa* 私法). If substantial truths are understood, the universal principles may then be determined. In cases where [the principles or institutions] cannot be determined, those which are beneficial to humanity are to be chosen. In either case, decision must rest upon the views common to all humankind.

Truths that can be empirically verified but are unrelated to institutions are not included in the present work. Truths that are incomprehensible, vague, [and unverifiable are excluded.

Institutions in various regions of the earth must all be included in this work, provided they are not in violent contradiction with substantial truths. Institutions that are evidently not in accordance with substantial truths yet are being adopted by men on earth also to be included without omission. Only those which are neither in accordance with substantial truths nor being practiced by men are not recorded herein. Institutions commonly shared by two [or more] regions must be mentioned in detail in the footnotes. In addition, newly formulated universal principles as well as lesser alternatives are also to be included. Universal principles must be either derived from geometrical axioms or those principles which are most beneficial to humanity. The rest are categorized as lesser alternatives, which are arranged according to their respective degree [of benefit to humanity]. Those which are not easily determined must be jointly deliberated and decided by people who are well-versed in universal principles.

Any principle proposed for application which lacks substantial proof [of its applicability] and hence is clearly impractical is to be excluded, even if one merely intends to include it at the end of the "lesser alternatives" section [which contains less desirable or undesirable principles or institutions]. This work includes only those principles [*i. e.*, institutions] which can be put into practice.

This book [*i. e.*, the completed version of *Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu*, of which the present is merely a prospectus and a preliminary draft] must be written in two separate versions -- one in literary language and the other in the vernacular. Comments on moral principles should be written first in the vernacular form and subsequently translated into the literary style.

Upon each [quinquennial] revision of this book, all those undersigned must first jointly deliberate and discuss the section updating "Books on the Universal Principles of Myriad Persons" before they actually endorse it. Views lacking profundity are not to be printed in the book.

Each substantial truth contained herein must be followed by one [or more] illustrative statements. The substantial truth must then be expounded in detail in the explanatory notes.

Each of the universal principles and lesser alternatives discussed must be synoptically explained. A heading must first be given and then discussed in detail in the explanatory notes. The headings must be written in the language used by the compilers and their contemporaries and must not contain archaisms. Phrases related to the institutions found in ancient teachings and the classics are quoted in full in the notes.

### On the Term "Substantial"

[Among "substantial truths" there are, first of all,] *empirically provable "truths"* (*shih-ts'e chih shih* 實測之實), that is, substantial truths which have been empirically verified by scientists.

[Another kind of truths are the] factually verifiable "truths" (*shih-lun chih shih* 實論之

實)。For example, how was a certain teaching used to enlighten the people in antiquity? To what degree were they enlightened? How did a certain state formulate its laws? To what degree did the people governed by such laws observe them? The actual results of these teachings and laws can be [quantified,] tabled, and verified. The more recent these verifiable laws, the better they are. It is feared that even the latest ones may become antiquated. For example, the world today, there is a missionary who teaches people a certain method; [we may ask] whether or not people follow him happily and to what extent they benefit from this method? A country recently adopted a certain law; [we may ask:] how many crimes of a certain type are reduced annually? To what extent do people benefit from this law? Since the actual results of such method and law can be used to determine their merits and faults, they can be graded. All the discussions in this book shall employ this as the sole criterion. Although there are numerous other so-called "factually verifiable truths," they should not be discussed in a vacuum.

There are also "concrete and actual truths" as opposed to those which are untenable and unreal (*hsü-shih chih shih* 虞實之實). If these laws proceed from the axioms of geometry, their principles are relatively more substantial; if they proceed from the laws that have been established by man, their principles are relatively untenable. And, the laws that proceed from the axioms of geometry are termed "necessary truths" (*pi-jan chih shih*) or "eternal truths" (*yung-yüan chih shih*); laws established by man are termed "equivocal truths" (*liang-k'o chih shih*).

### On the Term "Universal"

[Among "universal principles" there are, first of all,] those which are agreed upon by the public (*kung-chung chih kung* 公衆之公). For example, this volume [*i. e.*, the completed version of *Shih-li kung-fa ch'anü-shu*] is one which belongs to everyone, for it is not written by a single person. Although views must be expressed by a person, once they are included in this book, they belong to everyone. The remarks of ancient and modern times contained in this book are included regardless of to whom are they attributable, for their remarks have been adopted and belong to the public.

[The second kind of] "universal principles" [are those which are] based upon the axioms of geometry (*chi-ho-kung-li chih kung* 幾何公理之公). For example, "one, two, four, eight, sixteen, and thirty-two" is such a principle. It is an unchangeable law (*i-ting chih fa* 一定之法). The fixed laws derived from geometrical axioms are but one part of the "universal principles." There are very few laws proceeding from the axioms of geometry [that are applicable to human affairs], and hence they are insufficient for our purpose. This is why we must have man-made principles (*jen-li chih fa* 人立之法). Occasionally, a man-made principle is considered a "universal principle" while that which is derived from geometrical axioms is considered as a "lesser alternative." This is done for the sake of saving the age [from degeneration. Whatever the principles or the institutions may be,] it



is always hoped that they are beneficial to humanity.

[In addition, there are also] "*universal principles* [which are] *deduced by all mankind* (*kung-t'ui chih kung* 公推之公). There are many institutions in the world to which the axioms of geometry do not apply; and not having principles that proceed from the axioms of geometry, we must rely on those which are established by people. Principles established by man are fundamentally lacking in certainty, and so we can only deduce those that are most beneficial to humanity and consider them as "universal principles." For these are deduced in common by all mankind; therefore, we may call them "universally deduced principles."

### General Discussion on Humankind

*Substantial Truths* (Four illustrative statements are included herein, the explanatory notes of which have not yet been provided. In fact, all the illustrative statements for the truths contained in this book have not yet been provided with explanatory notes.)

Human beings are formed by taking their respective share of the primordial substance (*yüan-chih*) of heaven and earth.

Every individual possesses a soul and hence possesses intelligence or "reason" (*chih*). However, the nature of each person's soul differs from that of all others.

When a person is born he or she possesses already a disposition both to love and to hate [*i. e.*, the capacity to be attracted or repulsed]. When people grow up and come into contact with their fellow human beings, they benefit them as they manifest their love-disposition (*ai-chih* 愛質) and harm them as they manifest their hate-disposition (*wu-chih* 惡質). Furthermore, love produces love and hatred produces hatred; they do not produce one another.

Human beings are born with good faith and not with deceit; the latter is acquired through practice.<sup>(37)</sup>

*Universal Principles* (While many more main entries [*i. e.*, "Universal Principles"] can be included in this section, only six Universal Principles and six Lesser Alternatives are listed herein.)

People have the right to be their own masters (*tzu-chu chih ch'üan*). *Note:* This is a principle derived from geometrical axioms and is wholly in accordance with the substantial truths that human beings are formed by taking their respective share of the primordial substance and that every individual possesses a soul [hence possesses "reason"].<sup>(38)</sup> Moreover, [observance and practice of this Universal Principle] is also the

(37) While this statement is essentially Confucian, it is, curiously enough, quite analogous to the "environmentalism" of the Enlightenment. See Crane Brinton, pp. 384-387.

(38) K'ang, in fact, strongly maintained that a functional relationship exists between the common human attribute "reason" and the necessity of an egalitarian humanity. This vein of thought is in accordance with that of the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment. See Norman L. Torrey, ed., *Les Philosophes: The Philosophers of the Enlightenment and Modern Democracy* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1960), p. 15.

most beneficial to humanity.

[Should] man-made principles be applied, they are to be employed in accordance with the spirit of equality. *Note:* The equality of humankind is an axiom of geometry. Man-made principles should never be employed unless they are based upon the concept of equality.

Laws should be formulated in such a way that people could restrain one another. On earth, no individual, either of antiquity or of the modern times, is exempt from being restrained. *Note:* This is a principle derived from geometrical axioms and is most beneficial to humanity.

Legislation will aim at promoting love and eliminating hatred. *Note:* This is a man-made law; yet it is most beneficial to humanity.

Laws which reward the trustworthy and penalize the deceitful should be emphasized. *Note:* This is a principle derived from geometrical axioms and is wholly in accordance with the substantial truth that man is born with good faith and not with deceit. It is also most beneficial to humanity.

Institutions should all be uniform. If a law is adopted as "universal law" after public discussion, it must apply to everyone without discrimination. It is not permissible to apply only to certain people as do the "lesser alternatives." *Note:* This is a principle derived from geometrical axioms and is most beneficial to humanity.

#### *Lesser Alternatives*

Not every person has the right to be his or her own master. *Note:* This statement is not in accordance with geometrical axioms.

Man-made laws are to be adopted with the spirit of inequality. *Note:* This deviates completely from the very essence of geometrical axioms. Certainly few of these man-made laws are sound, if they are based upon this concept [of inequality].

Laws are to be instituted upon a double-standard (*i-shun i-ni* 一順一逆) basis so that certain individuals of antiquity and of the modern times are able to control others and not vice versa. *Note:* This certainly will produce people monopolizing power and influence who will exert [their power and influence] onto others with imprudence. People under their control will surely suffer.

Laws which are yet to be enacted [or institutions to be established] are not necessarily capable of promoting love and of eliminating hatred. *Note:* If this were the case, humanity will consequently be in great distress.

Laws which reward the trustworthy and penalize the deceitful are not perfectly satisfactory. *Note:* This is a result of the imperfection of legislation.

Institutions suffer the lack of uniformity. *Note:* This is a result of the obstructions inherent in man-made laws. Morals of the world are consequently unable to be reinvigorated to their utmost and become incompatible with geometrical axioms.

#### **Husband and Wife**

*Substantial Truths* (Two illustrative statements are included herein.)

Medical scientists have now demonstrated no difference exists between [marriages in which] a husband and a wife are permanently mated, [marriages in which] a man is wedded successively to several wives, and [marriages in which] a woman is married successively to several husbands.

It is most difficult for one soul to remain united to another soul for a prolonged period of time; if they remain together for a long time, their feelings of love for one another are apt to change.

### *Universal principle*

In all cases where a man and a woman love one another, they shall be permitted to do as they please, except that they shall not be allowed to enter into a [marriage] contract. If there is the least bit of dislike or repugnance between them, then there is no need for them to remain together. If one harms the other as a result of love or hatred, or if one commits a criminal offense, [he or she] shall be judged by law. *Note 1:* This is a principle derived from the axioms of geometry. Since heaven creates a man and a woman, there should be relations between sexes in the human realm. If two people love each other, it is only reasonable that they exercise their right of being their own masters. This is as far as the axioms of geometry go. As for entering into a [marriage] contract, this is to superimpose a man-made law, and is not inherent in the axioms of geometry. The acceptance of laws as such without superimposing [other man-made] law [or laws] is itself a law [or sound principle] based upon the axioms of geometry. *Note 2:* [In order to insure the practicality of] this principle, clinics should be widely established. Every individual should be strictly required to undergo an examination at the clinic every three or five days. His blood vessels should be examined by the use of a stethoscope [*sic.*] to see whether they have been weakened [as a result of excessive sex]. He should abstain from sex for certain days, the number of which should be contingent upon the degree [the blood vessels are] weakened. Persons [whose blood vessels are] found excessively weakened should be ordered to stop having sex for several days and to be treated and nursed with medicine. People then would not have the worry of dying young. Yet, is the establishment of numerous clinics for this purpose alone? In later generations the medical profession is certain to prosper. This can be prophesied, for it [*i. e.*, medical science is an exact science and hence] is capable of probing into the very root of principles.

### *Lesser Alternatives*

Men and women in love should enter into a three-month marriage contract. Upon the expiration of the contract, they should be free to enter into a contract with someone else. If the original parties desire to renew their contract, it cannot be drawn up until a period of three months elapsed [following upon the termination of the previous contract]. It is also permissible that they repeatedly renew their contract until death. In cases where several people simultaneously desire to enter into a [marriage] contract,

they should either be allowed to do so if, after investigation, they are found indeed to be in love with each other or prohibited [if it is found that they do not love each other]. *Note*: This is to institute a man-made law in addition to the axioms of geometry. However, this is the best of all the man-made laws [governing marriage].

When men and women enter into a [marriage] contract, the duration of the contract should be at their own discretion. When the contract expires they can either enter into another contract with someone else or renew the contract with their original partner. In cases where several people simultaneously desire to enter into a [marriage] contract, they should either be allowed to do so if, after investigation, they are found indeed to be in love with each other or prohibited [if they are found not to love each other]. *Note*: This is also a man-made law. Yet it is not as good as the one above.

When men and women enter into a [marriage] contract, it must remain binding for life, dissoluble only with [good] reasons. In addition, an individual should not be allowed to conclude a [marriage] contract with two people. Both men and women have their respective right to be their own masters. *Note 1*: This is also a man-made law. Yet it is incompatible with substantial truths and is without benefit to humanity. It is even more inferior to the above [two man-made] laws. *Note 2*: According to the Paris census for 1891, there were a total of 5,752 cases of divorce in Paris and other localities [in France]. This fact represented an increase of as many as 295 cases when compared with that of the year 1890. Furthermore, it is reported that in the same year [*i. e.*, 1891] the total increase of population [lit., people born as either males or females] was 866,377. Among them, a total of 73,936 were born by mothers who were not formally or legally wed. People married in that year totaled 285,458 and those deceased totaled 876,822. The total population of France was 38,343,192. The above figures are all drawn from the 1891 census of France. The law which governs [marriage] contracts between men and women in France is precisely this very "lesser alternative." As a result of adopting this law, there are indeed already a total of 11,504 men [and women] who resented and hated each other in this year alone!<sup>(39)</sup> It is obvious that this alternative is inferior to the preceding ones. Furthermore, we have no way of knowing how many men and women, in whom resentment and enmity had been bottled up, failed to file lawsuits. And, among the males and females born [in 1891], a total of 73,936 were born by mothers not formally wed. Therefore, men and women who obeyed clandestinely the "universal principle" [governing the relationship between husband and wife] in the year 1891 indeed already totaled 147,872.<sup>(40)</sup> Moreover, it is found that women who bear two children within a period of two years are rare. It necessarily takes three years to give birth to two children. Therefore, women

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(39) The figure is derived from the multiplication of the total number of divorce cases (*i. e.*, 5752) by two.

(40) This figure is derived from the multiplication of the total number of "illegitimate" children (*i. e.*, 73,936) by two.

who bear children this year must not be those who also bore children last year. Consequently, if males are included, there was indeed a total of 295,544 [*sic.*, 295, 744] people who obeyed clandestinely the "universal principle" in France during this one single year, excluding countless people who, while obeying clandestinely the "universal principle," were unsuccessful in bearing children.<sup>(41)</sup> It is reported that people married in that year [*i. e.*, 1891] totaled 285,458. However, the number of men and women who loved each other and obeyed clandestinely the "universal principle" exceeded that of men and women who loved each other and obeyed faithfully the laws of the nation. The [difference in] number was 10,086 [*sic.*, 10,286].<sup>(42)</sup> While France has not adopted the "universal principle" and is slightly repressing those who obey the "universal principle" [governing the relationship between husband and wife] clandestinely by distinguishing their children from ordinary [*i. e.*, "legitimate"] ones, people nonetheless still obey the "universal principle" covertly to such a considerable extent. This bears eloquent witness to the fact that the "universal principle" is truly and justifiably a universal principle. It has also become obvious that this "lesser alternative" is even more inferior to the first two.

[A marriage] contract between a man and a woman is not concluded according to their own will but, rather, is dictated by their parents. The undersigned bind themselves for life; the contract is not dissoluble without a significant reason. The male is the "standard" (*kang* 綱) of the female; the wife is under control of her husband. Moreover, a husband is allowed to marry several women while a wife is prohibited from marrying several husbands. *Note:* This is even less compatible with the axioms of geometry and is without benefit to humanity.

People are prohibited from establishing husband-wife relationships. *Note:* This is totally incompatible with substantial truths. It is not only without benefit to humanity, but will utterly exterminate the human race.

### Parents and Children

*Substantial Truths* (Four illustrative statements are included herein.)

Primordial substance belongs to Heaven and earth; it is not created by parents.

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- (41) This is obviously a calligraphic error. The correct figure should be 295, 744. I believe it is derived from the multiplication of 147, 872 or the number of people who obeyed clandestinely the "universal principle" governing the relationship between a husband and a wife in 1891, by two, supposing there were an equal number of such people who became parents of illegitimate children in the previous year and hence were not included in the Paris census for 1891, for it was physically impossible for them to again bear children in 1891. Although they were not included in the 1891 census, they did exist simultaneously with the other 147, 872 men and women.
- (42) This figure, I believe, is a mistake for 10,286, which is derived from the subtraction of 285,458 (or the number of people married in 1891 who obeyed the state law governing marriage) from 295,744 (the number of people who obeyed clandestinely the "universal principle" in 1891 in France). See also note 5 above.

Parents can only use the primordial substance pertaining to Heaven and earth to beget children. The merit of parents in begetting children--approximately how much did the father use up his primordial substance, how much did the mother use up her primordial substance, and how much discomfort did the mother experience during pregnancy [--can all be quantified and measured].

As in most cases, the nature of the children's souls differ from that of the parents' souls. If they live together for a prolonged period of time, their souls become mutually incompatible and the degree of affection between them would also vary.

After the death of human individuals, some people's souls are capable of rebirth into other beings [*i. e.*, *pratisamdhi*]; some, while incapable of being their own masters, also conglomerate and are reincarnated into other beings; some become half dispersed and half conglomerated and are reincarnated; and some are [completely] dispersed yet also get reincarnated into other beings.<sup>(43)</sup> Therefore, the souls of deceased parents might become reincarnated [in the bodies of] their children's descendants.

People partake of food, exhale and inhale daily, absorbing fresh substances and discharging the old. [In the process] the primordial substance consumed is large in quantity. Yet the old that is discharged, once having gone through the process of "material transformation" (*ch'i-hua* 氣化) is refreshed and is [ready] to be partaken of by other people. Hence, the "matter" (*chih't'i* 質體) between one individual and that of another undergoes a daily exchange (*lun-hui* 輪廻). There is also an interchange of matter between parents and children.

#### *Universal Principle*

In all cases involving the birth of children, the public authority will act to set up nurseries for rearing them, and will, as the time occasions, deliberate and establish a fixed schedule upon the basis of the primordial substance the parents have expended and upon the mother's discomfort endured during pregnancy for payment to the parents on their children's behalf. (If the father is not known, compensation shall be paid entirely to the mother.) When children have reached adulthood under the care of the nursery, then taxes will be collected from them to defray the expenses. (They do not have to be in the form of poll tax. Excise tax could better reduce the wealth of the rich and enrich the impoverished.) Should the children meet their parents, it would be a "universal principle" that the parents could not demand performance of filial duties by their children, and the children could not demand affection and care from their parents. Each person enjoys the right to be his [or her] own master. *Note:* This is a principle derived from the axioms of geometry. It is itself a geometrical axiom that since men are formed by taking their respective share of the primordial substance of Heaven and earth, parents and their children alike should have their respective right

(43) This passage clearly demonstrates the dual influence of Neo-Confucian thought, particularly that of Chang Tsai's 張載 "philosophy of material force," and Buddhism.

to be their own masters. It is also a geometrical axiom that children are begotten by their parents, they naturally should repay [in the form of money for the diminution of their parents' primordial substance and for the mother's discomfort during pregnancy]. However, when an infant is newly born he is incapable of repaying his parents. Those [adults] who observe the "universal principles" first repay [the infant's parents] in his behalf. This is but a principle derived from geometrical axioms. For, the infant is unable to observe it; he must rely upon those who are capable of observing such principles so that they can be observed.

#### *Lesser Alternatives*

Children are reared by their parents when they are young. Once they grow up, they should be given the right to be their own masters. *Note:* This is definitely not a principle derived from the axioms of geometry. If this "*lesser alternative*" were to be adopted, there must be laws prescribed against those parents who are not willing to rear their children. Therefore, parents would consequently be deprived of the right to be their own masters if they were to continue to be held responsible for rearing children who had already been physically separated from them. Moreover, inherent in this "lesser alternative" are further incompatibilities with the axioms of geometry. Not only are children begotten by their parents, but they are raised and educated by them for some ten years. Their merits are enormous. Even if the children desire to repay their parents' kindness, it would be beyond their ability to do so in full. Therefore, those who obey the "principles" cannot actually impose upon their children the responsibility for repaying their parents' kindness. Furthermore, among ten thousand children there would be no more than one or two who are capable of fully repaying [the debt of filial obligations to] their parents. It would be even less practical to ask the children to nourish themselves from infancy. Many countries in the world today are adopting this "lesser alternative." If we examine [the extent of] its practice, we will then be able to see how many children among ten thousand are capable of repaying their parents. The nature of the children's souls differs from that of the parents' souls. Repugnance will inevitably develop between them as a result of being together. How many of them among ten thousand resent and hate one another? How many parents resent and hate their children? How many children resent and hate their parents? This can all be determined.

Children are raised by their parents from infancy. They do not have the right to be their own masters even after they have grown up. They are possessions of their parents. *Note:* This "lesser alternative" is even less compatible with the substantial truths. If we were to recognize that children are possessions of their parents, then, through giving birth parents in fact forcefully take possession of the primordial substance which belongs to Heaven and earth. The souls of children are not given solely by parents. Besides, each individual is different from the other. Yet parents could possess

and have control over them! Since several major principles in the axioms of geometry are negated by such man-made principle, [the concept of] children repaying their parents becomes incompatible with that which is contained in the axioms of geometry.

In all cases children are at first raised and educated by their parents. When they begin to study with their teachers they become the latter's disciples. They become possessions of their teachers, no longer being related to their parents. *Note*: This not only is diametrically opposed to the axioms of geometry but actually completely negates them.

### Teachers and Disciples

*Substantial Truths* (Five illustrative statements are included herein.)

With the birth of the earth, principles (*li* 理) are thus complete [and dwell in the myriad of things]. Since there are physical elements (*ch'i-chih* 氣質), there must also be pattern and order (*wen-li* 紋理, lit., "the veins of things"). Man possesses a soul; intelligence emerges therefrom. Man, therefore, is capable of discovering where the principles lie. Consequently when men's discoveries [of principles] become increasingly numerous, institutions and laws established by men also become increasingly perfected each day. <sup>(44)</sup>

If one investigates [into nature] according to the "veins of things," the principles derived are natural and spontaneous (*tzu-jan* 自然) and need not to be grasped or rejected. Such are the principles derived from the axioms of geometry. They cannot be regarded as man-made; they are principles inherent in Heaven and earth. Having discovered it is the only merit attributable to its discoverer, and nothing beyond that.

There are actually no unchangeable practices regarding the investigation [into nature] according to the "veins of things." It is imperative that one first observe carefully and thoroughly the "veins of things" and then apply his innate intelligence (*ling-hun chih chih-shih* 靈魂之知識) to determine what is to be modified and what is to be adjusted. This way, practical principles can then be derived; they can also be beneficial to humanity. Such are man-made principles and cannot be regarded as inherent in Heaven and earth. He who succeeds in establishing such principles has the merit of establishing them. Although they are inclusively considered as having discovered new knowledge (*p'i hsin-chih*), one must not be unaware of the ultimate origin of such knowledge.

Knowledge of men of a later age inevitably excels that of their predecessors. This is because men of later generations gain without effort what their predecessors possessed. Men of later generations not only can learn in entirety whatever discoveries made by those who preceded them but also are able to further discover some of the principles of Heaven and earth. [To that extent at least] their knowledge consequently surpasses

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(44) This statement is essentially Neo-Confucian. This positive belief in a knowable universe ultimately composed of particles of matter finds similar view among the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment. See Brinton, p. 384.



that of their predecessors. However, it is not so in terms of the merit of discovering new knowledge. The degree of merit of one's discovery should be calculated by extracting the cube root of the principles of Heaven and earth. (This will be further discussed in detail elsewhere in the "Universal Principles Governing the Evaluation of persons" section below.)

Men take their respective shares of primordial substance from Heaven and earth to form souls; intelligence emerges therefrom. Possessed of intelligence, men are consequently able to learn.

*Universal Principle I* (This universal principle deals specifically with our attitude toward the sages and worthies from antiquity to modern times.)

The sage holds no authority which pertains to all (*ch'üankuei-yü-chung* 權歸於衆). Doctrines of antiquity and of modern times will all be judged in the light of Truth (*li*); they will not be measured by [the words of] sages or worthies. All dicta shall be evaluated on the basis of their intrinsic validity, without considering the persons who uttered them. *Note:* Heaven and earth produces principles (*li*). A doctrine (*tao* 道) which is put into practice and is found to be fitting naturally involves the exertion of human effort. The ultimate authority [to judge the validity] of a doctrine lies with the public. This is a principle derived precisely from the axioms of geometry and is most beneficial to humanity.

*Lesser Alternatives*

The authority of the sage is limited. While people who observe obediently the teachings of the sage measure all other teachings against that of the sage, they [must] also judge them in the light of Truth. *Note:* This "lesser alternative" is not compatible with the axioms of geometry.

The authority of the sage is unlimited. People who observe obediently the teachings of the sage judge all other teachings in the light of that of the sage. They do not evaluate them in the light of Truth. *Note:* This "lesser alternative" is diametrically opposed to the axioms of geometry.

*Universal Principle II* (This universal principle deals with the relationship between teachers and disciples.)

In the teacher-student relationship people have the right to be their own masters. *Note:* The relationship between teachers and disciples is established from man-made institutions. It is a relationship resulting from man-made institutions. Let them [*i. e.*, both the teachers and the disciples] be granted the right to be their own masters. This is to implement a man-made institution upon the basis of equality. It is most beneficial to humanity.

*Lesser Alternative*

Disciples who are under the instruction of their teachers are possessions of the latter, deprived of the right to be their own masters. *Note:* This "lesser alternative" seriously violates the axioms [of geometry] and is not beneficial to humanity. Its harm is enor-

mous. It is even more harmful than to implement a man-made institution which is based upon the concept of inequality.

### Sovereign and Subjects

*Substantial Truth* (One illustrative statement is included herein.)

That people choose their sovereign is for the sake of their own protection. [The role of the sovereign] is similar to a mediator (*chung-pao* 中保) chosen by two individuals in dispute. Therefore, people are all subjects; officials from the lowest rank up can all be called sovereigns.

*Universal principle*

A single parliament is to be established [*i. e.*, through indirect democracy] to carry out the business of government. Even [direct] democracy is not to be adopted. *Note:* The sovereign-subject relationship is developed entirely from man-made institutions existing prior to the sovereign-subject relationship. This universal principle advocates that "power pertains to all." This is to implement a man-made institution upon the basis of equality. It is most beneficial to humanity.

*Lesser Alternatives*

[Direct] democracy (*min-chu* 民主). *Note:* This is also to implement a man-made institution upon the basis of equality. Yet it is not as refined as the universal principle above.

The sovereign and the people share the executive authority; each has a limited power. *Note:* This deviates from the very root of geometrical axioms.

The sovereign enjoys unlimited power. *Note:* This seriously violates the axioms of geometry.

### The Elderly and the Youthful

*Substantial Truths* (Two illustrative statements are included herein.)

The elderly and the youthful are simply people who happen to be born in the world [at different times], the former preceding the latter. Therefore, virtue alone is to be revered. Seniors and juniors in age are like old and new utensils or articles.

According to the substantial truth of *samsāra* (*lun-hui* 輪迴 "the wheel of transmigration"), the elderly will in time become the youthful, and vice versa.

*Universal Principle*

Equality exists between the old and the young. Man-made principles are not to be applied. *Note:* As there exists no substantial truth that allows either the old or the young to be onesidedly emphasized, there is no need to impose man-made principles upon either of them. [The elderly and the youthful are regarded as equals. This is a principle derived directly from the axioms of geometry.]

*Lesser Alternatives*

The elderly are superior to the youthful. *Note:* This is a man-made principle. It cannot actually benefit humanity.

The youthful are superior to the elderly. *Note:* This is even less beneficial to humanity.

**Friends**

*Substantial Truth* (One illustrative statement is included herein.)

When Heaven and earth give birth to men, they are *originally* born equal (*pen-lai p'ing-teng* 本來平等)

*Universal Principle*

Equality exists between friends. *Note:* This is a principle derived from the axioms of geometry. It is most beneficial to humanity.

*Lesser Alternative*

By applying man-made principles [a person is allowed to] humiliate his friends and refer to them as servants or maidservants. [He is also allowed to] purchase them with money and possess them as his own property. *Note:* This goes violently against the axioms of geometry.

**Ceremonies and Etiquette**

This section is further divided into [four] smaller sections. Ceremonies and etiquette are extremely complicated. A comprehensive description is not available until the statutes and customs of various countries in the five continents are compiled and tabulated. This section merely attempts to enumerate a few of the major items for the purpose of illustration.

A. Designations for the "Lord on High" (*Shang-ti* 上帝)

*Substantial Truth* (One illustrative statement is included herein.)

"Ether flux" (*Ch'i-hua* 氣化) is capable of encompassing the entire life span of a person. No matter how intelligent a person might be, he is unable to escape from the "ether flux."

*Universal Principle*

[Proper designations for the "Lord on High" are:] *Ch'i-hua* (Ether-flux), *Yüan-chih* (Primordial Substance), and *Ta-chu-tsai* 大主宰 (the Great Lord). *Note:* These three terms can be regarded as the most appropriate designations. In the world there are many names which fail to reflect realities. "Lord on High" is the origin of the myriad things. Its designation must be carefully chosen.

*Lesser Alternatives*

"*Shang-ti*" "*Tsao-hua-chu* 造化主" "*Hsi-lu-pa-ni* 西路巴尼" "*A-men* 阿們" "*A-hu-*

*la-ma-cha* 呵呼喇馬乍” “*Ti-wu-ssu* 地烏斯” “*Ti-wu-pa-te-erh* 地烏巴得耳” “*Teng-li* 登里” “*Yün-ma* 雲馬” “*Ko-pa* 戈巴” “*Pi-li* 壁立” “*I-lo-hsin* 以樂欣” “*Yeh-ho-hua* 耶和華” “*T'ien-ti* 天地”(45) *Note*: If some of the above designations were to be translated as the Everlasting (*wu-shih wu-chung* 無始無終, lit., no beginning, no end), they would suffer from being too vague; if they were to be translated as Heaven (*tien* 天), they would suffer from being too shallow--neither is in accordance with the substantial truth. They, therefore, are all categorized under “Lesser Alternatives.”

#### B. Calendar Reckoning an Era or a Year

*Substantial Truth* (One illustrative statement is included herein.)

Although the reckoning of an era or a year is a practice developed by men, it has its substantial truth. Calendrical science, even more so, has its substantial truth.

#### *Universal Principle*

The initial year should be reckoned on the basis of the beginning of civilization on earth. (Learned scholars of the world should jointly examine and choose the most reliable date from those which are recorded in the ancient books.) Years are to be recorded chronologically following that. With regard to the calendar, the best method developed by calendrical scientists should, as it requires, be adopted. *Note*: This is the most cosmopolitan of all.

#### *Lesser Alternatives*

The initial year is reckoned on the basis of the births of individual sages. Years after that are recorded chronologically while years prior to that are recorded retrospectively. *Note*: This “lesser alternative” is quite incompatible with the substantial truth. People living prior to the sage could not possibly anticipate a sage after them. It would be preposterous if we were to record their dates retrospectively. (46) And, if at

(45) Among these alternative designations, none of which is desirable to K'ang, only a few are either translatable or identifiable. *Shang-ti* may be rendered as “the Lord on High,” *Tsao-hua-chu* as “the Lord Creator,” and *T'ien-ti* as “Heaven and Earth.” *Ti-wu-ssu* is apparently a transliteration of Deus and *Yeh-ho-hua* that of Jehova. *A-men*, presumably Amon, an Egyptian god, was originally one of eight gods (the ogdoad) of Khmun in Middle Egypt, where people personified the mysterious invisibility of the primeval ocean. Amon assumed at a later date features of other gods, especially of the fertility god Min of Coptos, and was identified with the Heliopolitan sun-god Rē as Amon-Rē. *A-hu-la-ma-cha* is presumably Ahura Mazda, the supreme god or the “Wise Lord” in the religious system of the Iranian sage Zoroaster (630-553, 628-551, or 618-541 B.C.), worshiped by the Persian King Darius I the Great (r. 522-486 B. C.) and his successors as Auramazda, greatest of all gods and protector of the just king. *Yün-ma* is probably Uma, a manifestation of Sakti or the Mother Goddess in Hindu religion. She is regarded as the bestower of blessings and stands for nature in all its aspects.

(46) It is interesting to note that while K'ang admitted that this practice was not at all desirable, the view he held at a later date was quite contrary to this earlier one. He proposed, especially at the turn of the century and after, that the year of Confucius' birth be taken as “Year One” and actually adopted this method of reckoning in some of his own writings completed in these years. See Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World*, p. 433n94.

the same time there were several sages whose achievements were equally great, there would coexist several calendars [based on the births of these various sages]. This is not at all beneficial to humanity. Furthermore, knowledge possessed by people of the later ages will inevitably surpass that of their predecessors, so will their achievements. Yet if people of the later ages are not allowed to change their calendar, it certainly would be incompatible with the axioms [of geometry]. Even if they are to be allowed to do so, repeated change of calendar is also not beneficial to humanity.

The initial year is reckoned on the basis of the reigns of individual rulers. *Note:* This is even less beneficial to humanity.

The initial year is reckoned on the basis of a particular event. *Note:* This is an extremely bad practice.

### C. Amenities

*Substantial Truths* (Two illustrative statements are included herein.)

The function of amenities is to express a person's adoration [toward another person]. If amenities were to be dispensed with, even if I adore someone I will be unable to express to him my feelings. The reason why they must be kept within limits, allowing neither excessiveness nor inadequacy, is to enable them to be commonly practiced by everyone. Amenities are reciprocal, existing between two individuals. If a person stays in a room alone, amenities will be of no use. So long as one feels no qualm, his soul is fully content.

A person whose amenities are inadequate should be punished lest people resent him. Those who act excessively commit a breach of etiquette, for they not only fail to follow the way practiced by all but also fail to restrain their adoration. This naturally should not be practiced. For example, if I give everything I have to one whom I adore without sparing a thread of silk or a single grain of millet, I will be frozen and starve to death the following day.

### *Universal Principle*

Salutations are performed in the forms of folding one's hands in a bow (*kung-shou* 拱手 and *i* 揖), handshake, kiss, hat-raising, hand-waving, nod, and embrace. Greetings -- elaborate or simple as they may be -- should always be studied by medical doctors according to theories established by them. They should subsequently determine as to whether or not they are beneficial to one's health. The form which is determined to be the most beneficial should be recommended as a "universal principle." *Note:* This means second best is not good enough.

### *Lesser Alternative*

Salutations are performed in the forms of kneeling, kowtow, and weeping. None of these greetings -- elaborate or simple -- has yet been studied by physicians to determine their advantages and disadvantages. *Note:* This is an "alternative" resulting from insufficient deliberation. Kneeling does harm to one's muscles and blood vessels;

kowtow causes the blood in the brain to circulate in a reverse direction. [The adverse effect of kneeling and kowtow] has already been studied by physicians. Although weeping is a manifestation of love, it cannot be accepted as a greeting. It is also most harmful to [the health of an] individual.

#### D. The Length of Repose

*Substantial Truth* (One illustrative statement is included herein.)

The principle of motion and quiescence should be understood from two different aspects, one of which is that of permanent inertness and perpetual motion while the other is that of the motion-quiescence cycle inherent in perpetual motion. Those two aspects should be examined simultaneously [for a thorough understanding].

#### *Universal Principle*

The number of days and hours of repose should be determined upon the basis of the economic conditions of the people. If the people are affluent, the number of days of repose should be increased; if the people are impoverished, it should be reduced. The number of hours of rest each day should also be increased if the people are affluent or be reduced if the people are impoverished. *Note:* This is truly a principle derived from the axioms of geometry. It is highly beneficial to humanity. If it is decided that each person should work eight hours daily, he [or she] consequently works 240 hours per month. Government officials should conduct a census and calculate [upon that basis]. If they find that the people are quite affluent and that if the 160 hours of work performed by each person each month would enable them to earn enough for their monthly expenditure, then it is only appropriate that they leave ten days per month as their days of repose. Any increase or reduction [of the number of days] should use this principle as a criterion. Daily hours of work should also be increased or reduced accordingly. To alter the number of working days in order to shorten or lengthen daily working hours should be allowed. Moreover, [the number of hours of work] should be deliberated and determined only after the physicians are entrusted to study the number of hours of work an individual's energy and stamina could sustain per day.

#### *Lesser Alternatives*

From every seven days one day should be chosen as the day of rest. *Note:* This is a practice developed by man.

The days and hours of repose are not to be set aside. *Note:* From the very moment a person is born, he enters into perpetual motion. Only after he is deceased would he then return to permanent quiescence. Therefore the fact that men are born to be active is a characteristic endowed by Heaven. Men are not born to be inert. However, if we examine the process of perpetual motion in relative terms, there does exist the principle of a motion-quiescence cycle. Hence it is an axiom of geometry that there must be rest [after action]. People retire [and go to bed at night]; therefore, men must have a time of rest each day. People work all year round [*sic.*, month?] and a period

of rest for one or two days becomes indispensable. This is the reason why there must be a period of rest each month. If people are deprived of rest, quiescence is consequently eliminated from the motion-quiescence cycle. This is utterly impossible! If the period [of repose] is fixed, it is after all a man-made rule and hence is not worthy of being valued. To fix a time for repose without becoming too rigid (*i wu-ting wei yu-ting* 以無定爲有定) is the only principle derived from the axioms of geometry. It is also a universal principle. Those people who fail to fix a period for repose as a result of their not being aware of it [’s importance] are unenlightened and are ignorant of the principle which lies behind it.

### Penal Laws

This section is to be subdivided into smaller sections. It is not to be completed until the statutes and sub-statutes of various countries have all been translated and tabulated. At present one example is given for illustrative purpose only.

#### A. Law-cases Involving Life

*Substantial Truth* (One illustrative statement is included herein.)

Human life is exceedingly precious.

#### *Universal Principle*

One who commits an unprovoked homicide should pay with his life. One who commits a provoked homicide should be heavily penalized if the crime is serious or be penalized in a lesser degree if the crime is not serious. *Note:* This is a principle derived from the axioms of geometry.

### Religious and Educational Matters

This section is to be subdivided into smaller sections. This section is to be completed only after the canons and rules of various religious sects, churches, schools, and the codes governing church activities and educational institutions are all collected and tabulated. At present only a few items are [*sic.*, one example is] mentioned for the purpose of illustration.

#### A. Religious Matters in General

*Substantial Truths* (Two illustrative statements are included herein.)

The substantial truths [*i. e.*, the functions] of religion and education are two: first, to develop men’s intelligence, talent, and ability, and to enhance their love and [ability to safeguard their] integrity; second, to transmit to them the essential doctrines and beneficial institutions which have been advanced and developed by fellow men of the five continents, so that they may also enjoy the benefits [of these developments], transform their evil nature, and weed out their artfulness acquired through evil practice. In this way their intelligence, talent, and ability would not be wrongfully employed.

Political authority and Church authority are naturally differentiated into two separate

spheres. For an individual is unable to be concurrently in charge of both realms. In addition, matters [relating to these two spheres] are of different nature; and each individual has his own unique talent.

*Universal Principle*

Church and political authorities shall not encroach upon each other. *Note:* This is a principle derived from the axioms of geometry. It is most beneficial to humanity.

*Lesser Alternatives*

Those in charge of the Church may encroach upon political authority. *Note:* This is definitely detrimental. If a certain church authority encroaches upon a certain state authority, the extent to which harm is done can be verified.

Let religious matters be entrusted to the administrators of the state. As to the authority deservedly possessed by Church authorities, the administrators of the state could override it without justification. *Note:* This is also harmful.

**Administration of State and of Personal Matters**

This section is to be subdivided into smaller sections. It is to be completed after [the information pertaining to] the political institutions of various countries in five continents are extensively collected and tabulated. At present only a few items are mentioned for the purpose of illustration.

A. System of Civil Service

*Substantial Truth* (One illustrative statement is included herein.)

Officials are elected by the public. They can all be regarded as sovereigns.<sup>(47)</sup>

*Universal Principle*

Among the systems of civil service of various countries in the world, the best is that in which officials are, without exception, elected by people before they are appointed to office. *Note:* [In order to insure the efficacy of this system] the merits of these individuals must be tabulated and evaluated.

*Lesser Alternative*

An imperfect and inferior civil service system would be to choose and appoint officials entirely according to the sovereign's personal opinion.

B. Temperance Applicable to Body, Dwelling, Utensils, and Diet

*Substantial Truth* (One illustrative statement is included herein.)

[Temperance applicable to body, dwelling, utensils, and diet--] all serve the purpose of nourishing one's life.

*Universal Principle*

Temperance applicable to our body, dwelling, utensils, and diet must be deliberated upon and investigated by medical scientists of the world, adopting none but the best

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(47) See the "Substantial Truth" in the "Sovereign and Subjects" section above.



system. Temperance may be divided into five or three grades. "Grades," however, is to be loosely defined and should not be stringently [defined]. *Note:* [Temperance applicable to] body may include shaving or letting one's beard and hair grow. For instance, what would be the appropriate [length or style of] beard and hair of people living in a certain degree of latitude? Once this is investigated by physicians, all people living in that particular degree of latitude should adopt it unanimously. Such matters as the frequency of showers and baths are also to be prescribed and made uniform. With regard to [the temperance applicable to] dwelling, utensils, and diet, it should also be deliberated upon and investigated by physicians and be differentiated into three or five grades. The reason for doing so is to honor those who serve in government and in the Church. This is to impose a man-initiated practice [which admittedly somewhat violates the principle of equality] upon people. Ordinary people should nevertheless be equally treated. [Ordinary] people living in the same degree of latitude should without discrimination belong to the same grade so that the practice can correspond to the axioms of geometry. Gardens, restaurants, museums and such things should all be put under public ownership; they should not be possessed by any individual [for his personal pleasure]. However novel the system might be, [what is most essential is] to enlighten the people and to give them pleasure. The only restriction is not to do harm to their health. Everything would then be fine.

C. Interment (Funeral ceremonies should be included in the "Amenities" section above)

*Substantial Truths* (Two illustrative statements are included herein.)

When a loved one dies, his survivors naturally continue to feel lingering sorrow. The body of the deceased, however, certainly is no longer conscious.

Since there is birth there must be death. This is a matter-of-course substantial truth. If there were only birth and no death, people on earth would eventually not even have space to stand on.

*Universal Principle*

The scientists are to be entrusted with the study and discovery of the best method [of burial]--cremation or burial at sea or inhumation. *Note:* Men are formed by partaking [their respective share of] the primordial substance. Although their souls are not dispersed immediately after death, particles [which previously formed their bodies] are transformed back into primordial substance. This is a matter-of-course substantial truth. The process of transforming back into primordial substance is the fastest in the case of cremation; burial at sea is the second fastest, and inhumation the slowest. But scientists are to be entrusted with the study and discovery of the best way of interment which will not cause the evaporation [of the disintegrated body] to become poisonous and harmful to the living. The decision [reached by scientists] can then be regarded as the most appropriate.

D. Offering Sacrifices

*Substantial Truth* (One illustrative statement is included herein.)

The realms of the living and the dead are set apart.

*Universal Principle*

In all cases when sacrifices are offered one offers one's sincerity. Sacrificial articles are not employed, nor are ceremonies deemed necessary. Neither specific time nor place [for offering sacrifices] is to be prescribed. People of a later age are to be allowed to select sites where statues may be erected for those who achieved distinction in the previous age to convey their languishing admiration. Statues of those who committed crimes may also be erected in order to serve as a clear warning. Utensils may also be used to engrave portraits. If one's beloved is deceased, he should be allowed to engrave the latter's portrait onto his utensils to express his love. However, if one has virtually no achievement, his statue is not to be presumptuously erected. Furthermore, the Lord on High and the multitude of deities have no images after which statues can be erected; this is to be prohibited. *Note:* The passage pertaining to the offering of sacrifices in this universal principle actually is [in accordance with the principle of] establishing an institution without making it [unnecessarily rigid]. This is a principle derived from the axioms of geometry. Although the passage dealing with the erection of statues is, on the other hand, a man-made practice, it is most beneficial to humanity.

*Lesser Alternative*

In all cases when sacrifices are offered, sacrificial articles are used and ceremonies are necessary. Both time and place [for the offering of sacrifices] are to be prescribed. *Note:* This is sheer stupidity. While one is clearly aware of the fact that the realms of the living and the dead are set apart and that neither sacrificial articles nor ceremonies can be communicated to the dead, he still follows such practices. This is because people are not yet enlightened.

### Universal Principles Governing the Evaluation of Persons

Discussions on "Die for Integrity" and on "Endure Sufferings for the Sake of the Truth" are appended to this section.

*Substantial Truths* (Three illustrative statements are included herein.)

The discussion on the merits and demerits of ancient people is intended to preserve justice [lit., opinions agreed by all] in the world.

Public opinions are to become increasingly more refined.

Public opinion serves to rectify the inadequacies of penal laws.

*Universal Principles* (This section is not to be subdivided into small sections.)

Evaluation of a person embraces two aspects, namely, merits and demerits. Merits may be differentiated into two types: the merit of bringing to light new knowledge and that of doing good deeds. Similarly, demerits may also be differentiated into two types: the demerit of propounding harmful teachings and that of committing evil deeds. When

judging an individual, each of his deeds must be evaluated in terms of both its merit and demerit. Merit and demerit should be measured against each other. If neither merit nor demerit is found in an individual, he is to be generally regarded as an ordinary person; no further evaluation is necessary. Whether we evaluate people lived in antiquity or our contemporaries, the same rule applies. In all cases where merits and faults are discussed none discusses both simultaneously. However, [they must be discussed separately; and] after this is completed, a total number [of pluses and minuses] may then be obtained.

In all cases where the merit of introducing new knowledge as well as the demerit of propounding harmful teachings of ancient people and of our contemporaries is discussed, we must first determine the time and the place [where the meritorious or detrimental behavior took place]. But when we measure [the merit and demerit of a person] against the "universal principles" and the "lesser alternatives" by degrees, they are discussed upon the basis of two further categories: moral principles (*i-li*) and institutions (*chih-tu*). For instance, at a certain place there was a certain individual whose book or a certain number of his utterances have been hitherto preserved. His period of existence was the earliest; no one is found to have lived prior to him [and have uttered similar ideas]. The moral principles he propounded and the institutions he introduced, excluding those which are too vague or incomprehensible, [should be evaluated in the following manner:] the moral principle he propounded should be evaluated against the substantial truths which have been disclosed up to the present as a criterion; then one must measure the extent of his contribution; and finally one must determine the magnitude of his merits. The institutions he introduced should be evaluated against the "lesser alternatives" contained in the present work, starting from the last one [*i. e.*, the least desirable]; then one must measure the number of degrees these institutions should be upgraded and their comparability with certain "lesser alternatives;" and finally one must determine the magnitude of his merits. If [the moral principles propounded and/or the institutions introduced by him are proven to be] biased and absurd, their demerits are not to be counted. For there was no one who preceded him. If there was indeed someone who preceded him, this "someone" then serves as a criterion. He is either accorded merit if he improved upon [the moral principles propounded and/or the institutions introduced by] the "someone" or is recorded a demerit if his was inferior to that of the "someone."

In all cases where the good deeds as well as the demerit of committing evil deeds of the ancient people and of our contemporaries are discussed, the "universal principles" and the desirability of the "lesser alternatives" should serve as criteria. [The method of evaluation] is identical with the one discussed immediately above. The only difference is that in these cases a person's deeds are considered while in the above cases a person's utterances are considered. When a person's utterances are being evaluated, only his

discovery of new knowledge or his advocacy of harmful teachings are under consideration. If he merely borrowed what had already been uttered by others, he is not to be accorded either a merit or a demerit. But it is not true in this case [*i. e.*, the evaluation of a person's deeds]. If one commits a deed [--meritorious or otherwise--] based upon the teachings of someone belonging to a previous age, his merit and/or demerit should be recorded.

If in "*Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu*" [which is yet to be completed and to be revised every five years thereafter] one succeeds in formulating a new "universal principle" and in debasing the original "universal principle" into a "lesser alternative," his merit should of course be recorded. The original "universal principle" will serve as a base line upon which the extent of superiority of the [newly formulated] "universal principle" is to be measured. His merit is to be recorded accordingly. This may be designated as a "major merit" (*cheng-kung* 正功), which is to be equally attributed to people living before us who brought to light new knowledge. When one succeeds in including further "lesser alternatives" [into the later versions of the present work]--provided that he realizes there are already existing "universal principles," that he merely intends to increase the number of "lesser alternatives" so as to further manifest the excellence of those existing "universal principles" instead of muddling them, and that he does not intend to prompt other people to act according to his [proposed] "alternatives" by forsaking the "universal principles"--his merit of bringing to light new knowledge is to be measured upon the basis of the [existing] "lesser alternative" which is regarded as inferior [to none but the one proposed by him]. But this type of merit is to be designated as a "minor merit" (*hsiao-kung* 小功). This method [of assessment] has been commonly employed throughout history. Among the ancient people there were also those who belonged to a later age noted and commented on the books written by people belonged to a previous one. [Those notes and commentaries] were in fact in some cases "lesser alternatives." Therefore, "minor merit" may be designated and recorded. Moreover, a minor merit should be recorded for people of a later generation who revised, modified, and improved the utterances made by those belonging to a previous generation.

If the fault of propounding harmful teachings is indeed a result of one's lack of perspicacity, or of one's unawareness of the existence of such teachings already propounded by people before him, or of the absence of precedent--one is consequently unable to compromise--he may then be forgiven and the registration of his fault exempted. A separate body of "laws of exoneration" (*yüan-ch'ing-fa* 原情法) should be enacted [to deal with such cases]. However, [this body of laws is applicable only when] the person involved must not have intended to achieve selfish ends by propounding his teachings and that the people of later ages must not have already received the detriment of his teachings.

People on earth who have neither publications nor accomplishments, or even if they

indeed do [have their publications or accomplishments which] deserve neither merit nor demerit--they are considered as "ordinary persons" by the "universal principles." They perform good deeds, yet are not quite deserving of merit; they do evil deeds, yet are not quite deserving of demerit. They are merely persons existing between Heaven and earth. People who, for selfish purposes, either compete to eulogize or to make jeering comments against those who have already been assessed by the "universal principles" must be meted out punishment by the latter for their failure to distinguish clearly the "universal principles" in public.

Appendix A: Discussion on "Die for Integrity"

*Substantial Truth* (One illustrative statement is included herein.)

To die for integrity, by definition, is to remain faithful and steadfast even when people whom I intensely love raise to oppose me.

*Universal Principles* (This section, too, is not to be subdivided into smaller sections.)

When a person who died for [preserving his moral] integrity is under discussion the time of his death [or: the circumstances under which his death took place] mu, first be determined. The moral principles which he inherited and to which he adhered are to be employed as the criterion. Subsequently, death itself is to be examined and ascertained. If according to such moral principles he ought to have died, he died a perfect martyr; if according to such moral principles he ought, to a certain extent, yet ought not to have died, he died an imperfect martyr; if he ought not to have died under any circumstances, no regard is to be paid to his death despite the fact that he might have sacrificed his life heroically. Those who died a perfect martyr are again examined in terms of the extent to which their deaths are related to their jobs in order to determine the scale of their merits progressively. The merits of those whose deaths have no connection with their jobs are to be reduced progressively from that of those who died a perfect martyrdom.

In such cases where certain people who brought enlightenment to all the people by education or established institutions died for integrity, their merit and demerit are before anything else to be determined. If their merit outweighs their demerit, they are considered as having died a perfect martyr. If the opposite is true, no regard is to be paid to their deaths.

The demerit of one who, while deserting his cause and disregarding the principle he adhered to, devotes his allegiance to others in time of adversity should be assessed upon the dual basis of the moral principles which he inherited and to which he adhered and of the relatedness between his desertion and his job. And, if at a later date his merit and demerit are again to be assessed, the moral principles he later subscribed to are employed as the criteria.

To sacrifice one's life heroically, to die for moral obligations with composure, to die a savage and violent death, and to be murdered by clandestine means--the situation

of each of these cases varies. If ancient people are under discussion, the moral principles which they inherited and to which they adhered are the sole criteria; if our contemporaries who observe the "universal principles" are under discussion, the codes formulated below [are applicable to such persons]--because "universal principles" are based upon "substantial truths" and the substantial truth [pertinent to the question of human life] reads "Human life is exceedingly precious."

People who observe the "Universal Principles of Myriad Persons" [*Wan-shen kung-fa*, of which the completed "*Shih-li kung-fa ch'uan-shu*" will serve as the root and source] are considered to have died a perfect martyr provided that: their conduct is in perfect conformity with the moral principles contained in the various books on the "Universal Principles of Myriad Persons;"<sup>(48)</sup> that they are killed by others; and that their deaths are indeed impossible to guard against nor is there time for them to take precautions [to avoid death].

The codes will not hold people responsible for preventing things from happening. Yet a person cannot be regarded as having died a perfect martyr if he, while being clearly aware of the preventability [of the worsening of the matter] after he detected the initial signs, makes light of his life and fails to take possible precautions.

The codes allow no one to make light of his life. In all cases where a person is humiliated for the sake of preserving the Truth (*tao*), he ought to bear disgrace and insults while discharging his duties conscientiously so that his merit for enduring sufferings for the sake of the Truth can thus be assessed. He shall not willingly submit himself to death unless it is imposed upon him by others. He may then be regarded as having died a perfect martyr. One who submits his life to death hurriedly cannot be regarded as having died a perfect martyr.

Although those who, for the sake of the Truth, are suddenly and unexpectedly victimized by others deserve no merit for enduring sufferings for the sake of the Truth--as do those who are entrusted the task of spreading the Truth, travel to remote places, and are killed by flood, fire, or various other calamities--they similarly die for integrity. So long as they cannot be criticized for having failed to take precautions, they die in perfect martyrdom. However, deaths caused by flood, fire, and various other calamities are not included here if they were not traveling in remote places.

#### Appendix B: Discussion on "Endure Sufferings for the Sake of the Truth"

The extent of sufferings should be measured and the merit deserved be attributed to persons who endured sufferings for the sake of the Truth if indeed he ought to do so from the standpoint of the moral principles which he inherited and to which he adhered. The method of its assessment is identical to that which is applicable to "die for integrity."

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(48) A complete list of titles of the "Universal Principles of Myriad Persons" is provided in the next section. See below.

If, on the other hand, he ought not to have endured sufferings from the standpoint of the moral principles which he inherited and to which he adhered, all the sufferings which he endured are to be disregarded completely.

*General Discussion on the Comprehensive List of Books of the World*

(This section is subdivided into [four] smaller sections.)

A. Compilation of the Books on the Universal Principles of Myriad Persons

Books on the Universal Principles of Myriad Persons include the following: "*Shih-li kung-fa ch'üan-shu*" (A Complete Book of Substantial Truths and Universal Principles), "*Kung-fa hui-t'ung* 公法會通" (Guide to Universal Principles), "*Huo-fu shih-li ch'üan-shu* 禍福實理全書" (A Complete Book of the Substantial Truths Pertaining to Good and Ill Fortunes), "*Ti-ch'iu cheng-shih* 地球正史" (The Authentic History of the World), "*Ti-ch'iu hsüeh-an* 地球學案" (The Philosophies of the World), "*Cheng-shih hsüeh-an k'ao-cheng ch'üan-shu* 正史學案考證全書" (A Complete Book of Scholia upon the Authentic History and Philosophies of the World), "*Wan-kuo kung-fa* 萬國公法" (International Law), "*Ko-kuo lü-li* 各國律例" (Statutes and Sub-Statutes of Various Countries), "*Ko-kuo tzu-tien* 各國字典" (Dictionaries of Various Countries), and "*Ti-ch'iu shu-chi mu-lu t'i-yao ch'üan-shu* 地球書籍目錄提要全書" (A Complete Book of the Summaries of the Books of the World). People obeying the "Universal Principles of Myriad Persons" need merely to bring together all the [existing] items for "*Wan-kuo kung-fa*," "*Ko-kuo lü-li*," and "*Ko-kuo tzu-tien*." But as for the remaining seven titles, people obeying the "Universal Principles of Myriad Persons" must supplement and revise quinquennially after the compilation of these works are completed. The rules governing such a process are to be deliberated from time to time and are to be established at a later date. However, two of these rules are provided here [for illustration]:

It is perfectly permissible if not a single word contained in all the books on the Universal Principles of Myriad Persons is retained after subsequent supplements and revisions made by people of the later ages.

Inclusions or omissions must be endorsed by the public. The undersigned must first deliberate and discuss [any change] before they endorse it.

B. Editing the "Sacred Scriptures"

On account of the extensiveness and complexities of the books on the Universal Principles of Myriad Persons, they are beyond children's power of recollection. Following each quinquennial revision of those [seven above-mentioned] books on the Universal Principles, [which is made possible by reviewing and] collecting all the available books, a few volumes of the "Sacred Scriptures" (*Sheng-ching* 聖經) are to be edited by the public so that children can memorize them. If they study them while they are young, words of utmost profundity and significance may be imprinted on their minds. And, if they are re-edited every five years, not only will the most profound and significant words of the past not fall into oblivion, but those of the future will also become increasingly refined. This is itself a

universal principle. The reason why books of this kind cannot be included in the list of books on the Universal Principles of Myriad Persons is that they enlighten people with someone's knowledge gained from his own study (*hsin-te chih hsüeh* 心得之學). This kind of knowledge varies from one individual to another, depending on one's proclivity. It is incomparable with the truth contained in the universal principles (*kung-fa chih hsüeh* 公法之學), which is universally identical.

#### C. Selection of Books for Various Special Fields

Books for various special fields include those on rhetoric, music, religion [*hun-hsüeh* 魂學, lit., study of the soul], mathematics, chemistry, medicine, astronomy, study of the Earth, physics (*ko-chih hsüeh* 格致學), and various branches of art. Every five years after the "Sacred Scriptures" are edited, the best book of each special field is selected and honored as the model for the world lest scholars of such special fields lose their directions.

#### D. Chronologize, Categorize, and Preserve Books of Antiquity and of Modern Times.

Books which are of excellent quality and utility are to be collected in their entirety. As for books written by ancient people and by our contemporaries which do not belong to this category, the exegetes may find them not immediately dispensable. In addition, books written by people of the previous generations might not have been sufficiently commented upon by those of the later generations. They, therefore, cannot be ignored. They should be chronologized, categorized, and preserved.



# 康有爲的「實理公法全書」

## —中文摘要—

李 三 寶

過去二、三十年來，中外學者對康有爲（一八八五——一九二七）之思想，已有精湛之分析與闡釋。兩年前華盛頓大學出版蕭公權先生英文巨著現代中國與新世界：康有爲——維新者及理想主義者一書，爲蕭先生多年來有關南海思想全面研究心得之結晶，誠爲中外學界可紀念之盛事。南海思想中有若干點非吾人所能苟同。然就其整個思想體系而言，則洵博大而精深，在中國維新思想史中，有不可磨滅之地位。

南海親睹中西文化之交流，進而探討維新變法之道。他基本上乃一哲學家，除了爲人生之意義不斷尋求解答外，更關心中國文化之存亡絕續問題。針對此點，他提出若干至爲重要的觀念——平等、自主之權、人類進步、變與革、以及科學實證。此種新體認及對於新價值觀念的接受在中國近代化之過程是不能或缺的。尤其是「平等」及「自主之權」（即「人權」）也就是當今國際政治道德的主要論題。早在一八八〇年代康氏對人權問題已有詳論，且已大力倡導。

南海早期與晚期思想不盡相同，其間歷若干不同階段。然其早期兩篇未刊抄稿——「康子內外篇」及「實理公法全書」——實爲其日後思想之根基。此兩種早在一八八四至一八八七年間即已完成的作品，吾人可視爲南海維新思想之理論基礎，實爲治中國近代史者不可忽視之重要文獻。「康子內外篇」及「實理公法全書」中外學者，自蕭公權先生以下，多有引徵，而似尙乏專題研釋。筆者於清華學報第十一卷，第一、二期合刊本中已有文討論「康子內外篇」之內容。茲新撰英文稿，除分析「實理公法全書」之重要概念外並附全部英譯，不揣譾陋，就教於中外學界。

「實理公法全書」別名「人身公法」、「人類公理」、或「公理書」。現存稿本乃康氏最後修正之抄稿，但渠本人並不視之爲已完成或不容增刪之作品。所列之

「實理」或「公法」乃屬建議性質，不過為其理想社會草擬綱領及藍圖而已。康氏認為將來完成公法之後，每五年應重修一次，以適應千變萬化之社會需要與環境。「實理公法全書」乃康氏一度計劃編撰之「人身公法」之第一部，有提綱挈領之意，然「人身公法」其他九部日後似未寫出。

傳統儒家中心思想之「仁」為南海理想社會之基礎。康氏之理想社會乃完全依循「仁」之倫理原則鋪陳設計。康氏對「仁」的解釋，拙文「康子內外篇初步分析」中已略論及。南海與傳統儒家學者見解顯著之不同即渠所認為求「仁」之實現應有之條件。康氏認為人若不能視衆人與自己同享有絕對的、立足點相同的平等，一律珍重，互敬互愛，則社會上不免有高下貴賤之分野。有役人者與役於人者之分，便不能實現合於「仁」之社會。因此，康氏言「仁」，主旨在說明「平等」之真義。「人生而平等」對康而言猶不夠積極。他更進一步主張人皆有「自主之權」。人既生而平等，「各分天地原質以為人」，則同有自為主宰的基本人權，絕對平等，同樣珍貴。任何不平等的現象都是人為的，反自然的，與「幾何公理」相違背的，也都應該泯除。

康氏雖然同時主張「人道之異於禽獸者全在智」（見「康子內外篇」仁智篇）。然而他認為人之智慧究竟有限。一切學說與制度既為人所立，皆不免有可改進之處。「安於故習」是他所最憎惡的。唯有開敞胸襟，以「今之惟恐其不今」的態度接受新的考驗與挑戰，不斷革新改進，才能「有益於人」，人類文明也才能有真正的進步可言。南海所謂「智」，不僅指每一個人有與生俱來的「理性」（略如西哲康德之意）。南海同時並肯定每一個人皆有探討宇宙現象的根本智能以及對任何社會現象與制度判斷與選擇的能力。康氏以其所謂的「智」為出發點，得到三個重要結論：(一)人皆有與生俱來的、無差等的「理性」。(二)人皆有智，故有能力探討前人所不知，亦應不斷「闢新知」。(三)人皆有天賦的判斷是非的能力，因此不應固昧盲從，一任人人固有之能力因不用而退化。中國近代思想家中，南海對於「智」的解釋可謂週全而最有力。

「實理公法全書」之寫作形式甚為特別。每章先列舉康氏認為最具實證性之「實理」，作為理論根據。然後每章中分條列述渠所認為將來理想社會中應行而可行之模範「公法」。至於目前世界各國一般社會之弊法，則依其優劣之程度納入其「比例」一欄，以資比較。全書條理井然，絲毫不紊。就形式而言，康氏顯受西方科學——尤其歐幾里得幾何學——之影響。就其全書之宗旨而論，則目的在於為當前人類社會立法。康氏認為人類社會每不符真理，變化無常，無論思想與制度每陷於

「兩可之實」。康氏研求哲理，希望能制訂逾久不變的、以科學論證（即「必然之實」與「永遠之實」）為根據的「一定之法」。人對事物的看法每有不同，惟科學之結論則較為確鑿不變。南海之哲學故可謂乃基於渠對西方科學之認識，亦即自此種認識進而解釋人類社會不盡合於理想現象之所由生。南海之理想社會中，科學家及醫學家之職責至為重大。

康氏思想對梁啟超、譚嗣同等門人影響甚深。其在一八八四至一八八七年間即已形成之觀念，不僅在中國近代化過程中曾有啟發之功，今日觀之，仍未失其重要性。其所論人人應有之「自主之權」或人權，更為任何自由社會所必備之條件，與孔氏論「仁」之基本觀念相符；對於實現尚仁社會之必備條件，且有精闢之發揮。

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（十）