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ECONOMIC IDEAS REVEALED IN
THE *CHUNG YUNG*

(THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN)

1. PRELIMINARY REMARK.

The composition of the *Chung Yung* (Doctrine of the Mean) is attributed to Tsu Szu, the grandson of Confucius the Supreme-sage. His life is recorded in the 'Biographical History of the House of Kung, i. e. Confucius,' of Szu-ma Chien's *Historical Records*, the great historical work published in 103 B.C. Tsu Szu's theories on ethics and philosophy were derived from the philosopher Tseng Tsu, one of the best disciples of Confucius, under whose tuition he acquired the Confucian precepts, and he handed down their doctrinal quintessence in his *Chung Yung*. He bequeathed his mantle to Meng Tsu, i. e. Mencius, who composed seven Books of the *Meng Tsu*. As is expatiated upon by Choo Tsu, i. e. Choo He, the famous scholiast and philosopher, in the prolegomena of his work the *Chung Yung Arranged in Chapters and Sentences*, the *Chung Yung* holds a position of paramount

importance among all the sacred Chinese Classic Scriptures for the reason of its transmitting the orthodox doctrines of Confucianism. Originally the work constituted part and parcel of the *Li Chi* (Record of Propriety), together with the *Ta Hsueh* (Great Learning); the earliest commentary on it, which is generally known as the 'Old Commentary' among the Chinese scholars, being written by Cheng Hsüan (circa 180 A.D.). The denomination of the Four Sacred Classics in which the *Chung Yung* is included with three other scriptures—viz. the *Ta Hsueh*, the *Lung Yu* (Analects of Confucius), and the *Meng Tsu* (Works of Mencius)—was for the first time established in the Sung dynasty, when the text of the *Chung Yung*, as we have it in the present form, was arranged in chapters and sentences by Choo Tsu, who at the same time published two standard works on it, the *Synoptic Commentaries of Chung Yung* and the *Queries on Chung Yung*.

Previously I presented the reader with a short article entitled '*Economic Ideas Revealed in the Ta Hsueh.*' (The Economic Review. Japanese edition. Vol. XXII, No. 3). This essay is supplementary to that article and states my views on the economic ideas revealed in the *Chung Yung*. Though it is entitled '*Economic Ideas revealed in the Chung Yung,*' I must beg in anticipation the acquiescence of the reader if my discourse is found to contain various subjects or problems which do not exactly fall under the head of economics, in the strict sense or in the modern acceptation of the word; while it may exclude many important chapters and passages as well as many principal doctrines, which are comprised in the *Chung Yung* but which will not be alluded to in this short essay for obvious reasons. The point, however, on which emphasis is laid in this essay is that the *Chung Yung* at so early an age forecasted a positive conclusion or indicated an appropriate course of solution as regards certain fundamental theories or principles of great moment, which have long been and are yet at issue among modern European scholars, the political economists in especial.

2. THE NATURAL LAW AND THE PRINCIPLE OF RELATIVITY

By certain fundamental theories or principles of great moment which have long been and are as yet in controversy among modern European scholars, I connote in the first place the Natural Law and secondly the Principle of Relativity. To begin with the Natural Law, we observe that its upholders are at variance among themselves in their opinions. On the one hand, while they keep their common ground as advocates of the Natural Law, the juristic scholars are more or less at variance with the economic scholars. Yet on the other hand it does not follow that the views of all the economic scholars have arrived at a perfect concordance with one another. For instance, the assertion on *l'ordre naturel*, as it is so called, which has been maintained by Quesnay and other economists who belong to the school of the Physiocracy, is not quite the same as that which was upheld by Adam Smith. The former scholars take 'l'ordre naturel' as something which it is for us to practise or realize (*c'est un ordre à réaliser*), whereas the latter scholar holds it to be that which shall be realized of its own accord if it be left alone (*un ordre qui se réalise*). Next comes Jean Baptiste Say who succeeded in condensing anew Smith's theory and in reference to it came to use the term 'the laws that regulate wealth' (*des lois qui régissent la richesses*), which had not been used by Smith. As for the explanation in the abstract of the natural law made by Ricardo and the free-trade theory of the Manchester school that followed him, they emphasized a theory or policy that is most likely to be adaptable only to a specific nation at a specific age as though it is applicable to any age or nation. Such were the cases of the Natural Law or the General Principle in economics misconstrued and expanded to an extreme, and, as might have been anticipated, they naturally gave rise to reactionary theories.

Friedrich List, the German scholar, in his work *Das nationale System der politischen Oekonomie* published in 1841, advocated in opposition to the Cosmopolitan Theories of the above-mentioned free-traders the specific economic policy which must be adhered to by each nation and at each age. He declared to the German nation of his age the urgent necessity of adopting a protective policy for manufacturing industry in his country which then remained yet in its infantile state. The scholars of the Historical School which had its rise in Germany, such as Bruno Hildebrand, Wilhelm Roscher, and Karl Knies, succeeded him, and opposed also the former theories that had maintained the Natural Law or the General Principle in economics. All of them introduced a new method of research; viz. they collected and scrutinized historically as well as statistically all possible materials in connection with economy that had developed in various nations and ages, and, by means of the inductive process applied to those materials, tried to the best of their power to elucidate one by one the qualities of all the specific national economies developed in those different ages. Though Roscher's *Grundlagen der Nationalökonomie*, of which the first edition appeared in the year 1854, is the work that shows his characteristic method of research to its best advantage, it may be noticed that his view on his special historical method was already set forth manifestly in the preface of a pamphlet entitled *Grundriss zu Vorlesungen über die Staatswirtschaft nach geschichtlicher Methode*, published some ten years earlier in 1843. He remarks: "Our object is to delineate what nations have thought, desired, and perceived in reference to economy, what they have pursued and attained, why they have pursued them, and why they have attained them."

In brief, the economic scholars who belong to the school of the historical method seem to be inclined, generally speaking, to deny the Natural Law or the General Principle, and to assert that some or other specific economy should be adopted by every nation and at every age,—in a word, the Principle of Relativity in economics. It seems to me,

however, that this view of the German scholars cannot be acknowledged likewise as a perfect truth. Let me quote in this respect from Cossa, the Italian economist, who says: "Mr. Roscher says that food for babes is not food for men, but Mr. Messedaglia (another Italian economic scholar) answers that both alike require food of some kind, and that we look to physiology for the laws of the function of alimentation as such." (Luigi Cossa: *An Introduction to the Study of Political Economy*. English translation. London. 1893. p. 85).

I must say that I heartily concur with Messedaglia in his observation; because in my opinion the Natural Law or the General Principle and the Principle of Relativity are of such a nature that they may stand side by side and are not necessarily inconsistent with each other. To cite some instances: the fact that food, clothing, and habitation are the absolute necessities of our life may be said to pertain to the natural law, whereas the explanation of such facts as that we wear light stuffs in summer and heavy furs in winter, or that some people dwell in caves and others in stately mansions, or that some races chiefly take a flesh diet while others live on grains, may be most properly treated by the theory of relativity. Again, the principle of our Five Cardinal Virtues is, I believe, assuredly the Natural Law on morality that holds good throughout all ages. But social rites and ceremonies or national laws and ordinances are subjected to due amendments and rectifications in conformity to changes of the times, because they are the facts which pertain to the theory of relativity. That the Imperial Rescript on Education of Emperor Meiji, which I mention with due reverence, elucidates for us the Natural Law or the General Principle of the highest morality of supreme sublimity, will be obviously realized when we peruse the following Imperial words. "This principle is in sooth the teachings that have been bequeathed to us by our Imperial ancestors and forefathers. It is what all of our descendants and subjects should submissively abide by, and it will prove to be good and righteous in all times or to be true and infal-

libe in all places." In this wise we have now the Natural Law or the General Principle of morality as well as of education ; while our rites and decorums of morality and our educational institutions are as a matter of course subjected to various changes and alterations in conformity with the demands of the age. This accounts for the facts that rites and ceremonies in respect to our four great ceremonial occasions—viz. the coming to man's estate, marriage, funerals, and ancestral service—are not uniform in their formalities through all ages ; or that of all extant educational systems and facilities many were quite inaccessible in the old times, or even if they were accessible or attainable, totally dissimilar in their features. All this is due to the Principle of Relativity.

From these observations we are able to gather that the Natural Law and the Principle of Relativity are theories which admit of co-existence and do never contradict each other. Nevertheless, this truth has not been fully recognized, or at least has been misapprehended by modern European scholars, and consequently some of them advocated the Natural Law, others emphasized the Principle of Relativity, and they came to fierce refutations and vehement controversies of which I have given above a brief sketch. Meanwhile, not a small number of Oriental scholars, though they lived in remote antiquity, were superior to such biased and one-sided views and maintained very fair and impartial theories, and among the unbiased and well-balanced theories of those enlightened scholars the ideas which found expression in the *Chung Yung* stand most conspicuous. That is what has induced me to write this essay.

3. THE NATURAL LAW PREACHED IN THE *CHUNG YUNG*

First of all comes the question : "What is the theory preached in the *Chung Yung*?" The answer is : "*Chung Yung* (Mean) itself is no less than the Natural Law." Ching Tsu, the renowned philosopher, scholiast, and autho-

urity on exposition of some classic scriptures, remarks: "Being without inclination is called *Chung*; admitting of no change is called *Yung*. By *Chung* is denoted the correct or righteous course to be pursued by all persons under heaven; by *Yung* is denoted the fixed or constant principle regulating all things under the sun." Now between the phrases 'the correct course to be pursued by all persons under heaven' or 'the fixed principle regulating all things under the sun' and the terms 'the Natural Law' or 'the General Principle,' there is an apparent difference in the form of expression, but there is thorough and complete identification in their virtual significance, as we shall see presently. In short, in all of these phrases or terms is implied that divine view or theory which 'will prove to be good and righteous in all times or to be true and infallible in all places.'

The *Chung Yung* opens with the following ethically as well as philosophically famous sentences: "Heavenly endowment, that we call Nature. An accordance with Nature, that we call Path. The cultivation of Path, that we call Instruction (Education)." Nature, Path, and Instruction, which form a trinity of the doctrinal truths, are all engendered in heaven, yet they are virtually inseparable from our actual being. Therefore the sentences are followed by the no less celebrated passage: "The Path may not be departed from, not even for an instant. If it might be departed from, it would not be worthy of being the Path. On this account, the superior man does not wait till he sees things to be cautious, nor till he hears things to be apprehensive. There is nothing more visible than what is secret and nothing more manifest than what is minute. Therefore, the superior man is watchful over himself when he keeps his own company." And the passage proceeds: "While joy, anger, sorrow, or delight is not given vent as yet, that state of mind is called *Chung*¹⁾ (i. e. *Equilibrium*). When

¹⁾ The word 'chung' comprises or admits of some variant readings as well as different meanings, as the case may be. Cf. the notes on pages 13 and 14.—Translator.

these feelings are duly given vent, that state of mind is called *Hsi* (i. e. *Harmony*). Equilibrium is the Great Root in the world from which grow all the human actings, and Harmony is the Universal Path under the sun which we should all pursue. Let the states of Equilibrium and Harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish."

Upon the foregoing text, which he himself paragraphed and sectioned as the first chapter of the *Chung Yung*, Choo Tsu makes the following expository remark: "In the first chapter given above Tsu Szu states the view which had been handed down to him as the basis of his discourse. First, it shows clearly how the Path is to be traced to its origin in heaven and is unchangeable, while the substance of the Path is provided in ourselves and may not be departed from. Next, it speaks of the importance of preserving and nourishing this substance, and of exercising a watchful self-scrutiny with reference to it. Finally, it speaks of the nutritious achievements and transforming influences of the sage and spiritual men in their highest extent.....This is what the writer Yang called 'The sum of the whole work.' In the ten chapters that follow, Tsu Szu quotes the Master (Confucius) to complete the meaning of this chapter."

It may be safely asserted from the quoted passages which make the opening chapter of this celebrated classic that the *Chung Yung* preaches the Natural Law. The assertion may be also corroborated by those peculiar phrases used in the text such as 'the Great Root in the world' or 'the Universal Path under the sun.' Let me add a few more expository explanations of my own upon the textual sentences which we have quoted above.

The meaning of the sentence "Heavenly endowment, that we call Nature" may be best explained by illustrations. For instance, water flows down, fire blazes up, earth produces plants and trees, and birds and beasts breed and multiply. These actings are the Nature of Things,—what has been

bestowed or conferred by Heaven. Benevolence, justice, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity (i. e. the five cardinal virtues) are the Nature of Man who is the lord of creation, and are also the endowment from Heaven. Hence the words: Heavenly endowment, that we call Nature.

The sentence "An accordance with Nature, that we call Path" indicates the existence of a certain course or inclination in all things or beings to act in accordance with the spontaneity of Nature. For instance, we row boats and float rafts down the rivers, or irrigate the fields, in accordance with the down-flowing nature of water; we hoist sails or set mills in motion, in accordance with the nature of wind; we boil and broil our food, or forge iron and temper steel, in accordance with the up-blazing nature of fire; and we sow soil with seed and tend vegetables, or raise cattle, in accordance with the nature of earth. These are the Path which is in accordance with the Nature of Things. A lord should be gracious, subjects loyal: a father must be affectionate, a son dutiful: husband and wife should be in perfect accord: brothers should love one another sincerely, and friends live on good terms of mutual reliance: these constitute the Path which is in accordance with the Nature of Men.

The meaning of "The cultivation of Path, that we call Instruction" may be expediently explained by dividing Instruction into two parts, viz. the Instruction which is in accordance with the nature of Things, and the Instruction which is in accordance with the nature of Men. For instance, the instruction or education in mining and metallurgy, husbandry and stock-raising, culinary art, or the utilization of vessels and vehicles belong to the former category, while that in laws, morals, economy, etc., belong to the latter. It may be noticed that the Instruction, properly so called in the *Chung Yung*, meaning the cultivation of Path pertains chiefly to the latter category, yet the former is also comprised in it. Therefore it is said elsewhere: "There is nobody but eats and drinks. Yet there are few who can

distinguish flavours" (Chapter IV); which, I take it, points to the existence of the proper Path or the Instruction proper to be cultivated in eating and drinking. Again we have: "The Path that the superior man pursues (i. e. the Course of the Mean or Chung Yung) reaches far and wide, and yet is secret"¹⁾ (Chapter XII). The range of the Path that the superior man pursues is far and wide in its practice, and yet the essence of the Path is minute and mysterious. The range of the Path is far and wide; therefore "Even common men and women, however ignorant they may be, may intermeddle with the knowledge of it (that is, there is that which they can carry into practice) (*ibid.*). The essence of the Path is minute and mysterious; therefore "In its utmost reaches, there is that which even the sage is not aware of or is not able to practise." (*ibid.*). The words of Confucius which he gave in reply when requested by his disciple Fan Che to teach husbandry, may be consulted with profit: "I am not so good for that work as an husbandman." (*The Analects of Confucius. Tsu Loo. Bk. XIII.*)

The textual passages that follow, that is, "The Path may not be departed from, not even for an instant, etc." are, in my opinion, the discourse in respect to the requisite of cultivating or regulating the Path, and Choo Tsu's commentary thereon is as follows: "The Path is the principle by which are duly carried out our daily actions in life. This is the virtue of Nature, which is inherent in our mind, which pervades all things, and which prevails throughout all times. Therein lies the reason why the Path may not be departed from even for an instant. If it might be departed from, how could we say that it is 'an accordance with Nature'? On this account, the mind of the superior

¹⁾ In the original only one word 'Fei' stands for the version 'reaches far and wide,' and a single word 'Yin' represents the English 'is secret.' The former means 'the wide range of the Path in its practice,' and the latter 'the minuteness and mysteriousness of the Path in its nature and essence' which eludes any measurement or even observation. The one answers to the *what* of the Path and the other to the *why*.— Translator.

man is always kept in an apprehensive and circumspective state, and he is ever cautious and never off his guard, even before he sees or hears things. Thus it is that he holds fast the essential substance of the heavenly principle, so that he lets not the Path leave him even for an instant." This commentary of Choo Tsu is excellent. However, I must say that with his interpretation on the text that follows—"While joy, anger, sorrow, or delight is not given vent as yet, that state of mind is called *Chung (Equilibrium)*"—I have long been dissatisfied. Thus Choo Tsu comments: "Joy, anger, sorrow, and delight are feelings. While these feelings are not given vent yet, that state of mind is nothing else than Nature. It is without inclination to either side. On this account it is called *Chung (Equilibrium)*." Now, is it possible that the Nature of man is without any inclination to either side? Mencian maintenance that human nature is good is presumably a discourse spoken very broadly. (*The Meng Tsu. Kao Tsu Pien. Part I*). According to Confucius, "By nature, men are nearly alike: by practice, they get to be wide apart." (*The Analects of Confucius. Yang Huo. Bk. XVII*), and "There are only the wise of the highest class, and the stupid of the lowest class, whose nature cannot be changed." (*ibid.*) In my opinion, the nature of man, with the exception of the sage, is *not* without inclination to either side; consequently, once that nature is stirred up and exhibits itself in feelings, it fails not to become the more inclinable and so to get the more biased and prejudiced. If Choo Tsu's interpretation be correct, we must logically infer a possible case of a stupid man who is enabled to have his nature (that is, his state of mind before the feelings of joy, anger, sorrow, and delight are given vent) without inclination to either side,—which is to be called to be in the state of *Chung (Equilibrium)*,—which again is to be called 'the Great Root in the world from which grow all human actings': an inference which would be utterly absurd. Presumably, the fallacy of Choo Tsu's interpretation lies in the inappropriateness of his premise;

hence the inappropriateness of his conclusion. And here I beg to submit humbly my view or rather my own expository interpretation concerning this question to the learned reader.

According to my opinion, the text "While joy, anger, sorrow, or delight is not given vent as yet, that state of mind is called Chung (Equilibrium)," is required to be read together with the preceding sentences, "The superior man does not wait till he sees things to be cautious, nor till he hears things to be apprehensive. There is nothing more visible than what is secret, and nothing more manifest than what is minute. Therefore the superior man is watchful over himself, when he keeps his own company." The superior man is very cautious, previous to his seeing, or very apprehensive, previous to his hearing, and watchful over himself even when he is alone. This quality of the superior man but makes him capable of keeping his mind in Equilibrium, which is the state when the feelings of joy, anger, sorrow, or delight are not stirred yet. On this account, when he comes in contact with other persons or external things—that is, when he sees or hears—, he rejoices on the occasion when he ought to be joyous, or gets indignant on the occasion when he ought to be offended, or grieves on the occasion when he ought to be sorrowful, or takes delight on the occasion when he ought to be pleased. Not only this: when these feelings of his are given vent duly, there ensues the state of *Harmony (Hsi)*, where all and each of them act in due degree. Such state of Equilibrium is 'the Great Root in the world,' and such state of Harmony is 'the Universal Path under the sun.' Such state of *Equilibrium-and-Harmony (Chung-Hsi)* enables a happy order to prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things to be nourished and flourish. All things in the universe, in their final analysis, may be said to be at one with us; therefore if we are enabled to walk in the same line with the Path or if our acts are in perfect accord with the State of Equilibrium-and-Harmony, we may expand and let it pervade throughout all things in the universe. Consequently

it is given below: "The Path of the superior man is incipient in the intercourse of common men and women; yet, in its utmost reaches, it shines forth brightly through heaven and earth." (Chapter XII). Again we have it elsewhere: "It is only he who is possessed of consummate sincerity that can exist under the sun, that can give full development to his nature. Able to give its full development to his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other men. Able to give its full development to the nature of other men, he can give their full development to the natures of creatures and things. Able to give their full development to the natures of creatures and things, he can assist the transforming powers and the fostering influences of Heaven and Earth. Able to assist the transforming powers and the fostering influences of Heaven and Earth, he may with Heaven and Earth form a Ternion". (Chapter XXII). Again: "How great is the Path proper to the sage! Like overflowing waters it sends forth and nourishes all things, and rises up to the height of Heaven." (Chapter XXVII).

Tsu Szu, the author of the Doctrine of the Mean, elucidates the state of Equilibrium-and-Harmony (Chung-Hsi) in this wise, and reiterates the words '*Chung-Yung*'¹⁾ (*Mean*) nine times in the second to the eleventh chapters. Instances where he uses the word 'Chung' singly may be cited from the second and the sixth chapter. The one reads: The superior man alone '*maintains the Mean*' (*Chung*),²⁾ whenever the occasion demands." The other appears in the passage in which Confucius spoke of Shun the ideal sage-sovereign with panegyric words: "Greatly wise was Shun! Shun loved to question others and to study their words, though they may be shallow. He concealed what was bad, and displayed what was good, in those words

¹⁾ As has been already noted (v. Page 8), the '*Mean*' which is rendered into one English word throughout this essay is expressed by the two words '*Chung-Yung*' in the original.—Translator.

²⁾ Here the word '*Chung*' used singly and independently is treated as a verb and means '*to maintain the Mean*.'—Translator.

of others. He took hold of their extremes, determined the Mean (*Chung*), and employed it in his governance of the people." Instances in which the word '*Yung*' is used apart from the word *Chung* in the text, may be pointed out from the thirteenth chapter, and the quotation is from the words of Confucius again: "Earnest in practising the '*Ordinary*' Virtues (*Yung*¹⁾ *Tê*), and careful in speaking about the '*Ordinary*' Words (*Yung*²⁾ *Yuen*), if in his practice he has anything defective, the superior man dares not but exert himself; and if in his words he has any excess, he dares not allow himself such licence." The truth of the Mean is expressed in divers ways, sometimes by the term Equilibrium-and-Harmony (*Chung-Hsi*), sometimes by the term Ordinary-Virtues (*Yung-Tê*) or the term Ordinary-Words (*Yung-Yuen*), or simply by the single word *Chung* (which means 'to maintain the Mean'); but we can infer from the context that obviously they all are synonyms of one and the same *Chung-Yung* (the Mean).

The text of the second chapter reads: "*Chung Ne* (i.e. Confucius) said, 'The superior man embodies the truth of the Mean, and the small-minded man acts to the contrary. The superior man embodies the truth of the Mean because he is a superior man, and so he maintains the Mean whenever the occasion demands. The small-minded man acts to the contrary because he is a small-minded man and not scrupulous.'" And the third chapter runs: "The Master said, 'Perfect is the virtue which is according to the Mean! Rare have they long been among the people, who could practise it.'" And we have it in the fourth chapter: "The Master said, 'I know how it is that the Path of the Mean is not walked on: the knowing go beyond it and the stupid do not come up to it. I know how it is that the Path of

¹⁾ It may be remarked that the word '*Yung*' is used here as an adjective, while elsewhere it is used as a noun or a verb; and that its significations are also different—meaning 'ordinary' in the former case, and 'admitting of no change' in the latter, and 'to maintain the Mean' in the last.—Translator.

the Mean is not glorified: the wise go beyond it and the worthless do not come up to it. There is nobody but eats and drinks, yet there are few who can distinguish flavours." Perusal with appreciation of the foregoing passages may give the intelligent reader the clue to the signification of the Path of the Mean. As it is, the Path of the Mean is, like the acts of eating and drinking, what we are daily acquainted with and practise actually, and that which contains nothing too much or too less. The superior man, if he exerts himself sedulously to preserve and nourish the substance of the Path of the Mean provided in him, and to exercise a watchful self-scrutiny in reference to it, may be able to maintain the Mean as the occasion demands, so that he neither goes beyond nor stops short of it. The small-minded man on the contrary gives full play to his passions or inclinations and acts wantonly without any caution or scruple; therefore his actions, though he may approve them himself, contradict the Path of the Mean in reality. It is a noteworthy thing that the distinction between the superior man and the small-minded man which has been explained in the second chapter, is different from the distinction between the knowing and the stupid or between the wise and the worthless which has been mentioned in the fourth chapter. The former distinction is the discrimination between the man who exerts himself sedulously to preserve and nourish the substance of the Path of the Mean and to exercise a watchful self-scrutiny in reference to it, and the man who is negligent and disregards the efforts. Whereas the latter is the discrimination which is due to men's inborn qualities or endowments, because, generally speaking, men are to be distinguished by nature as wise or stupid, or sagacious or worthless; and while the wise and sagacious go beyond the Path of the Mean, the stupid and good-for-nothing do not come up to it. That is the way the truth of the Mean is neither glorified nor practised.

From the foregoing exposition it is evident that the teaching of the Doctrine of the Mean is no other than the

Natural Law or the General Principle, which all of us should know and practise. The author Tsu Szu then goes on to set forth his orthodox doctrine about 'Sincerity', the word which appears for the first time in the sixth chapter. He says: "Such is the impossibility of repressing the outgoings of Sincerity." In the twentieth chapter, where he enters into somewhat detailed explanation, he says: "Sincerity is the Way of Heaven. The attainment of Sincerity is the Way of Man. He who possesses Sincerity is the man who without making any effort hits what is right and apprehends without the exercise of thought:—he is the sage who with natural ease embodies the right way of the Path. He who attains to Sincerity is the person who chooses what is good and firmly holds it, etc." He continues to dwell upon this in the twenty-first chapter, thus: "When we have intelligence resulting from Sincerity, this condition is to be ascribed to Nature Itself; when we have Sincerity, resulting from intelligence, this condition is to be ascribed to Instruction Itself. But given the Sincerity, and there shall be intelligence: given the intelligence, and there shall be Sincerity. The whole text of the twenty-second chapter, which commences with the sentence "It is only he who is possessed of consummate sincerity that can exist under the sun, that can give full development to his nature.....", I have quoted above already. In the following chapters Tsu Szu recapitulates the truth about Sincerity, and thus we have it in the twenty-fifth chapter: "Sincerity is that whereby self-completion is effected, and *its* way is that by which man must direct himself. Sincerity is at once the end and the beginning of things; without Sincerity there would be nothing able to hold fast of itself. On this account, the superior man regards the attainment of Sincerity as the most excellent thing. The possessor of Sincerity does not merely accomplish the self-consummation of himself, but thereby he also consummates other men and things. The self-consummation shows his perfect virtue. The consummation of other men and things shows his wisdom. Both these are the virtues belonging to

Nature, and this is the way by which a union is effected of the internal and external. Therefore whenever he employs them (i.e. the entirely sincere man employs these virtues) their actions will be right."

The word Sincerity is interpreted by Choo Tsu as 'Truthfulness and Veracity'. It is the essentially intrinsic principle which holds its existence dependent on no human artifices. The approximate rendering of the word may be 'Truth' in English, 'Vérité' in French, and 'Wahrheit' in German. To adduce a few instances by way of illustration,—the changes of night and day, or the transition of the four seasons, or the revolution of planets, or the growth of plants and the breeding of birds and beasts, and so forth. The sage who is the man that embodies this essentially intrinsic principle, is enabled to hit what is right without making any effort, to apprehend without the exercise of any reflection, and to tread on the right Path with ease and naturalness. Thus, to be brief, the virtues of the sage are coequal to the Way of Heaven,—the very thing which it is impossible for the generality of people, who do not reach the highest moral standard of the sage, to achieve. We must therefore make most sedulous efforts to choose what is good and retain it firmly. That is the way to attain to Sincerity, and that means, in other words, nothing else than the Way of Man. With regard to the mode in which we should make our most sedulous efforts to choose what is good and hold it firmly, the following five requisites are enumerated by Tsu Szu: "To attain this there are requisite the extensive study of the accurate inquiry about, the careful reflection upon, the clear discrimination of, and the earnest practice of, what is good." (Chapter XX). The reader may realize well how scrupulous and how solicitous the author is to direct us, the followers after truth, and his scholastic solicitude and conscientiousness are, I venture to say, better than any of the methods for the research of truth enunciated by our modern scholars.

As for the rest of the textual passages which I have

quoted above, I think I may spare myself the labour of entering into a minute and lucubratory exposition of them, partly because they contain nothing particular to which I want to add my opinion, and partly because for further study I should like to refer the earnest reader to those excellent commentaries of Choo Tsu.

4. THE PRINCIPLE OF RELATIVITY PREACHED IN THE *CHUNG YUNG*

Now we have come to the next inquiry: "What is the theory preached in the *Chung Yung* in connection with the Principle of Relativity?" It is most concisely expressed in the sentence of the second chapter which runs: "The superior man embodies the truth of the Mean, because he is a superior man and so *maintains the Mean whenever the occasion demands.*" In the fourteenth chapter it is expounded at some length. "The superior man does what is proper to the station in which he is: he desires not to go beyond this. In a position of wealth and honour, he does what is proper to a position of wealth and honour (i. e. he pursues the Path which ought to be pursued amid riches and honours). In a position poor and low, he does what is proper to a position poor and low. Situated among barbarous tribes, he does what is proper to a situation among barbarous tribes. In a situation difficult and distressful, he does what is proper to a situation difficult and distressful. The superior man can find no position or situation in which he is not himself. In a high position, he does not treat with contempt his inferiors, and in a low position, he does not court the favour of his superiors. He rectifies himself and seeks for nothing from others, so that he has no dissatisfactions. Thus it is that the superior man lives at his ease, calmy waiting for the appointments of Heaven, while the small-minded man walks in dangerous paths, looking for lucky occurrences."

Upon the original Chinese text which reads 'Chun tsu

so chi wei hang,'¹⁾ (君子素其位行) and which version is here given as 'The superior man does what is proper to the station *in which he is (so)*,' Choo Tsu comments as follows: "The word 'So' is the same as 'To be present.' The meaning is that the superior man does what he ought to do in any station in which he is at present, and he has no desire to do any other things that transgress the limits of his station." This commentary is quite correct. The superior man is able to maintain the Course of the Mean on any occasion; in other words, he is able to behave himself in the way that is proper to any situation or circumstance in which he is—whether it be that of wealth and honour, or that of indigence and humiliation, or that of living among barbarous tribes, or that of distress and difficulty: and there is indeed no condition but sits well on him. So we have in the *Analects of Confucius*: "Tzu Kung asked the Master, 'What do you pronounce concerning the poor man who yet does not flatter, and the rich man who yet is not proud?' The Master replied, 'They will do. But they are not equal to him who though poor is yet cheerful, nor to him who though rich yet loves to observe the rules of propriety.'" (*Hsiao Er*. Bk. I). He who though rich yet loves to observe the rules of propriety is the man who does what is proper to a position of wealth and honour in a position of wealth and honour. He who though poor is yet cheerful is the man who does what is proper to a position of indigence and humiliation in a position of indigence and humiliation. Again we have it in the same scripture: "The Master said, 'Tae Pih may be said to have reached the highest point of virtuous action. Thrice he declined the throne, and the people in ignorance of his noble motives could not express approbation of his conduct.'" (*ibid.* *Tae Pih*. Bk. VIII). Tae Pih was the eldest son of Tae the Great,

¹⁾ The verbatim translation of the original reads in its natural order of words 'The superior man, as he is present in, his station, acts' (The superior man acts as he is present in his station).—Translator.

the founder of the Chow dynasty. His father the king desired in secret to hand down his kingdom to his third son Chang. Tae Pih observed this and wished to have his father's desire accomplished by abdicating the throne in favour of his youngest brother. Therefore he retired with his second brother Chung Yung among the barbarous tribes of the south and left the youngest brother in possession of the state. There according to the custom of the tribes, he tattooed his skin and cut his hair short. He died in the country to which he had withdrawn and became the founder of the House of Woo. The motives of his conduct he kept to himself, so that the people could not find how to praise him. Tae Pih is a man worthy of the appellation of superior man, who does what is proper to a situation among barbarous tribes, situated among barbarous tribes.

According to Szu-ma Chien's *Historical Records*, "The father of Shun was a bigot, his mother a shrew, and his mother a shrew, and his brother a bully. However, he softened and ameliorated their perverse characters by attending on the parents with the utmost filial piety and treating the brother with the utmost fraternal affection, so that in their behaviour they were not guilty of going to extremes." Shun is the man who does what is proper to a situation difficult and distressful, in a situation difficult and distressful. He who being in a high position treats with contempt his inferiors is the man who being wealthy is invariably haughty. He who being in a low position courts the favour of his superiors is the man who being poor is not ashamed to adulate. These are the small-minded who walk in dangerous paths and look for lucky occurrences. The superior man, on the contrary, does not treat his inferiors with contempt though he be in a high position, nor does he court the favour of his superiors though he be in a low position: that is, he neither murmurs against Heaven nor grumbles against men. Such is the man who leads his life at his ease, calmly waiting for heavenly appointments. Perusal with appreciation of those passages in the fourteenth

chapter will suffice to convince the reader that the *Chung Yung* manifestly preaches the Principle of Relativity.

The twenty-eighth chapter reads: "To no one but the emperor does it belong to order ceremonies, to fix measures, or to determine the characters.....The Master said, 'I may describe the ceremonies of the Hsia dynasty, but the literature of Ki cannot sufficiently attest my words. I have learned the ceremonies of the Yin dynasty, and in Sung they still continue. I have learned the ceremonies of the Chow dynasty, which are now used, and I shall follow Chow.'" In his exegetical exposition upon the passage quoted Choo Tsu says: "Ke is the noble house that follows Hsia. Attest means verify. Sung is the noble house that follows Yin. All the ceremonies of the three dynasties—i. e. Hsia, Yin, and Chow—Confucius had learned before, so that he was able to summarize their characteristics. Among them, the ceremonies of the Hsia dynasty were so obsolete that they could no longer be inquired into and verified, and the ceremonies of the Yin dynasty, though still extant, likewise were not the system which was proper to his age. Only the ceremonies of the Chow dynasty were the institution established by the reigning kings, and continued to be in use even then. Now, Confucius at that time was not in a position in which it was proper for him either to institute a new system of ceremonies or to re-order the old ritual of the existing ceremonies, and so he, who knew well his distance, was contented with following the ceremonies of the Chow dynasty." What is it that this chapter discusses but the Principle of Relativity also, which indicates that what is proper for one to do or not to do is to be decided in accordance with what is proper to do or not to do according to the position, to the country, or to the age, in which he is?

It is said in the *Analects of Confucius*: "Yen Yuen asked how the government of a country should be administered. The Master replied, 'Follow the seasons (i. e. calender) of Hsia. Ride in the stage-carriage of Yin. Wear

the ceremonial cap of Chow. Let the music be the Shaou accompanied with its pantomimes. Banish the songs of Ching, and keep far from specious talkers. The songs of Ching are licentious and specious talkers are dangerous." (*Wei Ling Kung*. Bk. XV). Thus we may observe that Confucius was also of opinion that we should regulate our conduct so that we may be enabled to do what is proper to satisfy the desiderata of the age.

To summarize the foregoing expatiation, the *Chung Yung* may be justly called a thesaurus that gives us that the Principle of Relativity, which may be subjected to any changes and innovations in consideration of expediency or of making it appropriate to any age, nation, or country; while it instructs us in the General Principle or the Natural Law which holds true in all places and is infallible throughout all ages.

5. EPILOGUE

I have dwelt in this essay upon the fact that the *Chung Yung* preaches the *Natural Law* as well as the *Principle of Relativity*. Now I may add that the *Chung Yung* has also given expression to the truth on the theory of *Solidarity*, which has been eagerly advocated by modern European scholars. Moreover, this theory of *Solidarity* evolved in the *Chung Yung* is entirely different from that which was thought out by Bastiat, the economic scholar, from the idea regarding the division of labour, or that which was inferred from the quasi-contract in private law by Leon Bourgeois, the statesman, or that which has been constructed in a rather incoherent and desultory manner on materials collected from the scientific standpoint of bacteriology, sociology, and the like; it constitutes indeed a highly ennobled ideal, both abstruse and recondite, which is one of the salient features of Oriental metaphysics. To be more explicit, the *Chung Yung* preaches the existence of *Solidarity* between man and all things in the universe. It also argues the existence of

Solidarity between the Way of Heaven and the Way of Man, or shows the existence of Solidarity between spiritual beings and men, or evinces the existence of Solidarity between former ages and later ages, and finally it preaches that the blood that runs throughout all these veins of Solidarity is nothing else than *Sincerity*.

"Let the states of Equilibrium and Harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish:" so it is preached in the first chapter. "It is only he who is possessed of consummate sincerity that can exist under the sun, that can give full development to his nature..... Able to give their full development to the natures of creatures and things, he can assist the transforming powers and the fostering influences of Heaven and Earth. Able to assist the transforming powers and the fostering influences of Heaven and Earth, he may with Heaven and Earth form a Ternion": so it is preached in the twenty-second chapter. Do not these teachings evince the existence of Solidarity between men and universal nature? The sentences, "Sincerity is the Way of Heaven. The attainment of sincerity is the Way of Man," (Chapter XXI) and "How great is the Path proper to the sage! Like overflowing water it sends forth and nourishes all things, and rises up to the height of Heaven" (Chapter XXVIII); do they not convince us of the existence of Solidarity between the Way of Heaven and the Way of Man? "How abundantly do spiritual beings display the powers that belong to them! We look for them, but we do not see them; we listen to them, but we do not hear them; yet they enter into all things so that nothing can be considered without considering them. They cause all the people in the empire to fast and purify themselves, and array themselves in their richest dresses, in order to attend at their sacrifices. Then like overflowing water they seem to be over the heads and on the right and left of their worshippers.....Such is the manifestness of what is minute and mysterious! Such is the impossibility of repressing the

outgoings of Sincerity!" (Chapter XVI). "They occupied the high places of their forefathers and ancestors, practised *their* ceremonies, and performed their music. They revered those whom they honoured, and loved those whom they regarded with affection. Thus they served the dead as they would served them alive; they served the departed as they would have served them, had they continued to live among them. Such is the consummation of filial piety, etc." (Chapter XIX). Will not these two extracts suffice to suggest the existence of Solidarity between spiritual beings and men? As to the question of the Solidarity that exists between former ages and later ages, it is manifested in the words "Chung Ne expounded and handed down the doctrines of Yaou and Shun (the two ideal sage-sovereigns in Confuciasm) as though they had been his ancestors, and elegantly displayed the regulations of Wan and Woo (the sage-emperors) taking them as his model." (Chapter XXX). Further I may refer our reader to the following passages: "It is only King Wan of whom it can be said that he had no cause for grief! His father was King Chi and his son Woo. His father laid the foundation of the dynasty, and his son transmitted it, etc." (Chapter XVIII), or "The Master said, 'How farextending was the filial piety of King Woo and the Duke of Chow! Now filial piety is seen in the skilful carrying out of the wishes of our forefathers, and in the skilful carrying forward of their undertakings, etc.'" (Chapter XIX).

These kinds of Solidarity which have been dealt with separately in the above exposition are, on the other hand, to be combined and unified into one Solidarity, and that one and the same principle which pervades throughout all of them is *Sincerity*. On this account, "Sincerity is at once the end and the beginning of all things. Without Sincerity nothing would be able to hold fast of itself" (Chapter XXV); and "Sincerity is not only the way to consummate one's own Self, but it is also the way to consummate other men and things." (*ibidem*). After the quoting of these sentences,

all of which have been mentioned elsewhere already, I believe, I cannot do better than commend to the reader the following well-known passages on the virtue of Consummate Sincerity, which form respectively the opening part of chapter XXVI and chapter XXXII, and which represent the metaphysical aspects of the *Chung Yung* to advantage. "Hence to consummate sincerity there belongs ceaselessness. Being ceaseless, it continues long. Continuing long, it evidences itself. Evidencing itself, it reaches far. Reaching far, it becomes large and substantial. Large and substantial, it becomes high and brilliant. Large and substantial: this is how it contains all things. High and brilliant: this is how it overspreads all things. So large and substantial: it makes the possessor of consummate sincerity the coequal to Earth. So high and brilliant: it makes him the coequal to Heaven. So far-reaching and long-continuing: it makes him infinite. Such being its nature, without any display it becomes manifested: without any movement it produces change: and without any effort it accomplishes its end. The Way of Heaven and Earth may be completely declared in a single word (that is, Sincerity). It is without any duality; and so it produces things in a manner unfathomable. The Way of Heaven and Earth is large and substantial, high and brilliant, far-reaching and long-continuing, etc." "It is only the individual possessed of consummate sincerity that can exist under the sun, who can adjust the great invariable relations of mankind, establish the great fundamental virtue of humanity, and know the transforming and nurturing operations of Heaven and Earth." The so-called 'consummate sincerity' or 'the individual possessed of consummate sincerity that can exist under the sun' means no other than the sage himself. The virtue of the sage is so sincere and veracious that makes it coequal to Heaven and Earth. Therefore his virtuous graces and beneficences are far-reaching and long-continuing and pervade throughout all places and all times. Hence the words—So large and substantial: it makes the possessor of consummate sincerity the coequal to Earth. So

high and brilliant: it makes him coequal to Heaven. So far-reaching and long-continuing: it makes him infinite.

The theory of Solidarity is preached in this wise in the *Chung Yung*. Now let us compare this theory with that theory which has been advocated by some modern social solidarists, who often look on the inferior members of society (viz. the imbecile, the insane, the infirm, the sick, the criminal, and the poor, etc.) as social creditors who can claim social aids, while they regard the superiors in society (viz. the healthy, the wealthy, and the like) as social debtors who owe to society the obligation of monetary discharge. We observe that the latter theory comprises a very dangerous element which runs counter to the truth of Equilibrium-and-Harmony and does not harmonize with the Path of the Mean. Suppose a state of society, in which the social inferiors came to believe and maintain that they had a right to enjoy the aid or support of society, and declined to accept all charitable donations made on the part of the social superiors as such, but insisted that the government should impose a certain money obligation on the social superiors, which the latter were obliged to pay compulsorily as their debt in the form of tax or in another way. We apprehend that in such a condition the peace of society would be thereby threatened and the inter-class strifes greatly exasperated.

Needless to say, I admit that the theory advocated by modern social solidarists has many strong points in its own way. None the less there is an apprehension, as I have just stated, that it would create very grave consequences because of its ideas being rooted in mere rights. Theories much more dangerous than this, however, are the Marxian Socialism and its offshoots, Syndicalism and Bolshevism. All of these theories throw emphasis upon the inter-class struggle in society and exact one's best exertion for the purpose of encouraging and precipitating it. They aim at the stamping out of all other parts of society or all other constituents of nation, by means of solidarity or union of mere workers and proletarians who in actuality make up only a part of

society or of a nation. If such is worth while being called solidarity, it is an extremely biased and perverted solidarity: nay, it is indeed a creed very destructive to the true solidarity which is to be peaceful, harmonious, and well-balanced. Here let me quote from Tsu Szu for the last time, and with no impertinence I hope. Citing the words of Confucius he remarks: "To quest out any obscure and perverted principles, and practise monstrosities, in order to be mentioned with honour in future ages; that is what I dare not do." (Chapter XI). What Tsu Szu had in view in composing the *Chung Yung*, I believe, we can clearly realize from that quotation. His mantle of the Confucian doctrines he bequeathed to Mencius (presumably, not directly but through his disciple), who handed down the Doctrine of the Mean and persistently rebutted and ostracized those perverted doctrines of Mih Teh and Yang Choo. Yang Tsu's (i. e. Yang Choo's) Egoism was a radical individualism somewhat similar to Anarchism, and Mih Tsu's (i. e. Mih Teh's) Doctrine of the Universal Love might be compared to Socialism. Neither doctrine is compatible with the Path of the *Chung Yung*, and it was with reason that Mencius did his utmost to banish them. Nowadays, we observe that more extreme and radical ideas than the doctrines of Yang and Mih have been propagated under the pretext of 'study of Marxian doctrine,' or they have been encouraged in the disguise of 'social solidarity.' These are days when movements "to quest out any obscure and perverted principles, and practise monstrosities" are most rampant without any restraint. It is this thought that has partly induced me to write this essay and submit it to the judgment of the learned and intelligent reader.

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