

# ANTHOLOGY OF THE INSCRIPTIONS IN THE TAIPEI CONFUCIUS TEMPLE



TAIPEI CONFUCIUS TEMPLE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

統一編號

031022770014



## CONTENTS

<b>I. An Anthology of the Inscriptions in the Taipei Confucius Temple .....</b>	<b>2</b>
1. An Inscription Concerning The Establishment of the Temple .....	2
2. An Inscription Concerning the Maintenance of the Temple and the Glorification of Confucianism .....	4
3. An Inscription Concerning the Establishment of the Ming Lun Hall .....	6
 <b>II. The Background of the Taipei Confucius Temple .....</b>	 <b>8</b>

# **I. An Anthology of the Inscriptions in the Taipei Confucius Temple**

## **1. An Inscription Concerning the Establishment of the Temple**

A country must have an educational system so that the ancient teachings can be preserved. A country without a moral foundation is not soundly established. An ancient Chinese was not considered to be cultured if he had not studied the classics. Confucius edited **The Book of Odes** and **The Book of History** and established the rituals for ceremony and music, basing them on his moral doctrines of benevolence and righteousness. This is why he is considered the greatest teacher of all time. Few civilizations of the ancient world have any scholar comparable to Confucius.

In ancient China, a major temple in honor of Confucius was founded in every city or county. In early February and August each year, leaders from the emperor down to local officials paid homage to him with memorial service. The participants would fast one day before and conduct rites with three consecrations at dawn on the day of solemn services.

After the provincial capital of Taiwan had been established, the Taipei Temple was constructed with funds and materials left from the construction of the city walls. Additional construction was undertaken in 1882 with donated funds. When Japanese forces invaded and occupied Taiwan in 1894, they dismantled the Temple and changed it into a school and a law court. However, they maintained a small hall in the school

in which the tablet of Confucius was placed.

In January 1925, Chen Pei-ken and Huang Tsan-chun, citizens of Taipei, approached Ku Hsien-jung regarding reconstruction of the temple. A follower of Confucius and a generous patron, Mr. Ku approved the project. A planning commission was established with Mr. Ku as the head. Mr. Chen donated a plot of ground of more than 2,000 ping (some 12,000 square feet) and raised money for another plot of some 1,000 ping for the project. The funds for yet another plot of more than 1,000 ping were donated by Mr. Ku. Design of the project began in June 1927. By 1939 the Ta Cheng Hall was completed and construction of the Chung Sheng Shrine ensued. The Shrine along with the Left and Right Wings were completed in August 1930. Construction was suspended from December of that year until 1935 for lack of funds. Work resumed in 1935. The Ling Hsing Gate, the Gate of Propriety, the Road of Righteousness, the Hung Men (the western side gate), the Pan Chih, and the High Surrounding Walls were completed in 1939. The total construction cost amounted to some 360,000 old Taiwanese dollars. Among the numerous donors throughout the island, Mr. Ku contributed the lion's share with 100,000 old Taiwanese dollars. The next biggest donors were Chen Pei-ken and Huang Tsan-chun. From the time of the building's completion until the restoration of Taiwan in 1945, the cost of maintaining the temple was borne by Ku Chen-fu, son of Ku Hsien-jung.

During a period of foreign occupation when Confucianism and the classics were neglected, these local gentlemen donated money and exerted themselves to



build a magnificent temple for the veneration of the sage. The undertaking would have been impossible without their enthusiasm. Today people from near and far, many students among them, come to pay homage to Confucius on his birthday, September 28.

This inscription was written twenty years after the completion of the Temple at the request of the Taipei Confucius Temple Administration Committee.

Chia Ching-der  
Senior Advisor to the President  
Former President of the Examination Yuan

August 1959

## **2. An Inscription Concerning the Maintenance of the Temple and the Glorification of Confucianism**

The Taipei Confucius Temple has been reconstructed twice at great expense. Although many Taiwanese citizens donated money, Ku Hsien-jung, and, after him, Chen Pei-ken, made the greatest contributions. Huang Tsan-chun was also generous in this regard. Details regarding the establishment of the Taipei Confucius Temple are included in the inscription written by the late Chia Ching-te, former President of the Examination Yuan. The present inscription records for future generations the efforts of all those Taiwanese citizens who, expressing their longing for the fatherland, attempted to maintain traditional Chinese culture by paying homage to Confucius during the period of Japanese rule.

After the old temple had been destroyed by the Japanese, the Taipei gentry of Confucian scholars organized the Chung Sheng Association which conducted annual memorial services for Confucius. The Association also became the center of concerted efforts for the rebuilding of the temple and its future maintenance. Part of its funds were granted by the Taipei Municipal Government in 1946, when mayor Yu Mi-chien became the Association's Chairman.

The Taipei Chung Sheng Association was disbanded in 1950. In March 1951, mayor Wu San-lien and city Council Speaker Huang Chi-jui proposed to organize the Taipei Confucius Temple Administration Committee. With mayor Wu as its chairman and Huang Chi-jui and Ku Chen-fu as vice chairmen, the Committee took over the administration from the Association. At the centennial of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's birthday, President Chiang Kai-shek promulgated the Chinese Cultural Renaissance movement and recommended adoption of the rites and Music as practiced in the Ming dynasty for the memorial service. After careful study by experts invited by the Bureau of Cultural Affairs of the ministry of Education, these recommendations were implemented, resulting in a more magnificent ceremony. In July 1971, the Taipei Municipal Government took over the administration of the Temple.

Since its construction in 1879, the Temple had suffered from the Japanese occupation and the ravages of war. Reconstruction and maintenance were difficult, and would have been impossible without the persistent efforts on the part of these gentlemen in charge of this matter. These gentlemen deserve admiration for their labors in promoting the doctrines of the Sage.

A stone inscription is hereby made to record for later generations the history of the Temple with a view to encouraging its future maintenance and protection.

Author: Kao Yu-Shu, Chairman, Taipei Confucius Temple Administrative Committee

Calligrapher: Huang Hsueh-tsun, Deputy Secretary-General, Planning Commission for Recovery of the Mainland

April 1972

### **3. An Inscription Concerning the Establishment of the Ming Lun Hall**

A country must be established on discipline and principles; likewise a man's life must be established on ethical principles. If the discipline is lax, the country will be in chaos; if the ethical principles are not observed, proper human relations will cease to exist. The primary ethical principles are the affections between father and son, righteousness between the ruler and his subordinates, harmony between husband and wife, priority of the senior over the junior, and faithfulness among friends. Mencius said that the common educational goal of the Hsia, Shang, and Chou dynasties was to establish ethical principles among the ruling class and to promote their observance by the common people.

Confucius established these principles and set himself up as a paragon for all generations.

In ancient China, the Ming Lun Hall, where teachers taught the classics and administered the

annual examination, stood beside the Confucius Temple. Those who enter this hall today should be reminded of its significance.

Construction of the Taipei Confucius Temple, including plans for the Ming Lun Hall, was once suspended because of the Japanese invasion.

Because the Communists were destroying traditional Chinese culture, the late president Chiang Kai-shek ardently advocated Confucianism, stressing ethics in particular with a view to boosting morale for the recovery of the mainland. This, he felt, would not only deter the counter-current of communism but lay the foundation for national reconstruction.

Taipei, formerly a provincial capital, is now the national capital. Because the appearance of the city is a matter of great concern the construction of the hall was undertaken in accordance with ancient requirements as well as with the need of the times.

Citizens arriving from the mainland along with local patrons jointly sponsored the project and donations were made available. The design of the hall made use of the forms of a traditional bell and musical stone—a reference to Confucius' synthesis of tradition, as expressed in the phrase "Chin Sheng Yu Chen" (literally, the sound of the metallic bell starts the orchestra, and the jade instrument gives the signal to cease). Construction of the building was started on July 23, 1955 and completed on the eve of Confucius' birthday in 1956, an event which president Chiang Kai-shek commemorated with a tablet now placed at the center of the hall.

Mindful of what its name implies, visitors to the Ming Lun Hall will realize the common educational

goal of the three dynasties and the remarkable influence of Confucianism on education. Inspired by president Chiang's advocacy of Confucianism, they will be encouraged to support the country's efforts to recover the mainland, to restore traditional Chinese morality, and to seek the perpetual well-being of mankind.

Chia Ching-der,  
Former President of the Examination Yuan  
December 1956

## **II. The Background of the Taipei Confucius Temple**

The Taipei Confucius Temple was constructed with the help of donations on the part of the city's prominent citizens, Ku Hsien-jung and Chen Pei-ken. Additional constructions undertaken from 1927 to 1955 enlarged it to its present size. It includes the Ta Cheng Hall, the Chung Sheng Shrine, Right and Left Wings, the Gate of Rites, the Ling Hsing Gate, the Road of Righteousness, the Gate of Propriety, the Pang Kung (the eastern side gate), the Hung Men (the western side gate), the Pan Chih, the Ming Lun Hall and the High Surrounding Walls. The Temple occupies an area totaling 5,200 ping (185,032 square feet) with buildings taking up 1,400 ping (49,816 square feet). The style of the construction refers to that of the original Confucius Temple in Chufu (Confucius' native town in Shangtung) and to the temples in the counties of Chang and Chuan of Fukien Province. Majestic and magnificent, serene

and solemn, it compares favorably with the Confucius Temple in Tainan.

The Temple houses 186 tablets in all. The Ta Cheng Hall houses the tablets of Confucius, the Four Lesser Saints (Yen Hui, Tseng Sheng, Tzu Ssu, and Mencius), and the Twelve Wise Men (Min Sun, Jan Jung, Tuanmou Ssu, Chung Yu, Po Shang, Yu Jo, Jan Keng, Tsai Yu, Jan Chiu, Yen Yen, Chuan-sun Shih, Chu Hsi), 17 in all. The Chung Sheng Shrine is devoted to the consecration of Confucius' ancestors and the fathers of the Four Sages, and the fathers of the distinguished Confucian Scholars of the Sung dynasty. The Shrine altogether houses 15 tablets. The Right and Left Wings, on both sides of the Ta Cheng Hall, are for the consecration of Confucius' distinguished disciples and other outstanding Confucian scholars. There are altogether 154 tablets (on the east, 40 tablets for the wise men and 37 for the Confucian scholars; on the west, 39 tablets for the wise men and 38 for the Confucian scholars).

In 1971 the descendants of Ku Hsien-jung and Chen Pei-ken, Ku Chen-fu and Chen Hsi-ching, in recognition of the fact that reverence for Confucius and the advocacy of Confucianism are popular rather than family matters, donated the temple to the central government. With the approval of the Executive Yuan, the Taipei City Government subsequently took it over. In July 1972, the Taipei Confucius Temple Administrative Committee was established under the Department of Civil Affairs of the Taipei City Government.