

Honorary Fellow A Citation



Professor Kuan Hsin Chi, LLB, MA, PhD

In *The Practice of Government* of the Analects, Confucius made this observation: "Pursuing governance by means of virtues compares with the North Star; it stays in its place and the mass of stars rings it round." In his *Exegesis on the Confucian Analects (Lunyu Yizhu)*, Yang Bojun elaborated on the passage thus: "One who governs the nation on virtuous principles will, like the North Star, serenely hold his court at a permanent and secure place, while all others will make their courses around him." It is indeed the political precept of Confucius himself that the art of government lies in the application of virtue to edify the people, so that they may be brought to civic obedience without the use of heavy penalties and severe punishments.

If we look carefully at the short quotation from the *Analects* and the interpretation of Yang Bojun, we will realize that the "governance" referred to by Confucius implies both "politics" and "administration" in modern parlance, and reflects the close connection between the two. And it is for this very reason that, at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, political science and public administration are accommodated within the same academic department, that is, the Department of Government and Public Administration. With this one is apt to ask: who, among the University's numerous scholars, would be the person, who is learned of both the ancient and the modern studies, and equally an authority in both the disciplines that the Department embraces, to head this department? The answer is easy and obvious: Professor Kuan Hsin Chi.

Professor Kuan is a renowned scholar and researcher in the two disciplines that he professes, and he is now Emeritus Professor of Government and Public Administration at the Chinese University. Professor Kuan has an extensive range of research interests, comprising Hong Kong politics, methodology, democratisation, developmental politics, comparative politics, political culture and political participation, culture of politics and law, and electoral systems.

Professor Kuan received his LLB degree from the Chengchi University in Taiwan in 1963. He proceeded to further his studies in Germany and obtained his Master degree of Arts from the Free University of Berlin in 1967. In 1972 he took his PhD degree from the University of Munich, and joined the Department of Government and Public Administration at the Chinese University as a lecturer in the following year. In these 35 years he took up many important posts in the University: he was Chairman of his department as well as its Chair Professor, Chairman of the Department of Journalism and Communication, the Dean of Social Science, the University Dean of Students, as well as a member of the University Council, the Senate, and various committees of the University, in all these capacities offering outstanding services to the University.

Professor Kuan retired from the University at the end of July 2006, and from the 1st August on assumed the emeritus professorship. He is a teacher greatly loved by both students and alumni, and his last lecture given prior to retirement was delivered to an audience that packed



the auditorium. During a teaching career of 33 years there were a lot of his former students who greatly cherished his lessons, and many of them were present at his last lecture. The scene was not dissimilar from the standing ovation and shouts for encore that one encounters at the end of a highly successful symphonic concert. In 1967 Professor Kuan received his MA degree in Berlin. Berlin is a city that is justly proud of having one of the top orchestras in the world, one which has fascinated lovers of classical music in every corner of the earth for decades. 39 years after receiving his degree in Berlin, Professor Kuan echoed the thundering calls for encore given to the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra as he concluded his formal teaching activities with a most excellent discourse on the twin sciences of Government and Public Administration, an experience which mesmerised all students and alumni who were present, and which is remembered to this day with great fondness by all in academe.

In 2008, Professor Kuan established the Professor Kuan Hsin Chi Scholarship and Professor Kuan Hsin Chi Best Thesis Award for the benefit of students of the Faculty of Social Science. Since 2005 Professor Kuan has been an advisor to the Centre for Catholic Studies under the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies and from 2006, an advisor to the Centre for Christian Studies at the same department. Over the years he has spoken at numerous seminars and forums on the close relationship between the Church and Hong Kong society. By general reckoning, religion is in the realm of otherworldliness, while politics and administration are very much matters of this world. Professor Kuan is a devout Catholic, and also a Professor of Government and Public Administration. By combining the profound wisdom of religion and the practicality of the political and administrative sciences, he is of course the ideal person to undertake the studies that these centres are committed to. In January 2006, the Vatican announced the appointment, by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, of Professor Kuan to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, as a commendation for his outstanding merits and contribution in promoting academic research in sociology, economics, political science and law. The membership of the Pontifical Institute bestowed on Professor Kuan is of deep significance and a recognition of the marvellous results he has achieved in fostering communication between religion and society.

From 1988 to 2008 Professor Kuan was the Director of the Universities Service Centre for China Studies. After twenty years under the illustrious leadership and tireless effort of Professor Kuan, the Centre has acquired fame all over the academic world. It now boasts of the best equipped library for contemporary China studies anywhere in the world which provides for the needs and earns the praise from international scholars in the field. Professor Ezra Vogel, the renowned Harvard scholar who was the keynote speaker at the conference commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Universities Service Centre for China Studies, had this to say about the achievements of the Centre: "What we learned here at the Centre became the core of the courses on contemporary China that we faculty taught in universities around the world. As faculty, we trained generations of scholars, journalists, government officials, lawyers, and business people who later became bridges as China opened to the outside."



Professor Kuan was for many years a Fellow of United College Assemblies and he participated in the management of College business and the committee work involved with great enthusiasm. In 2006 he was appointed a Senior College Tutor at United College and continued to contribute substantially to the development of the College.

Professor Kuan has an enormous output in terms of publications, and has produced books, articles, and speeches at seminars based on in-depth study in various issues pertaining to political science and public administration. These include works on such topics as the 1997 transition of Hong Kong, elections for the Legislative Council and the District Councils/Boards, the Hong Kong legal system, and the community's response to the rule of law, and the laissez faire system. He is an ardent supporter of public service, and is a director of the Agency for Volunteer Service, and previously sat on the Committee on Governance and Political Development under the Commission on Strategic Development of the Central Policy Unit, the Law Reform Commission and the Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations of the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

To celebrate his remarkable achievements in higher learning, and to acknowledge his distinguished contribution to both the Chinese University and to Hong Kong, Mr Chairman, may I present Professor Kuan Hsin Chi for the award of an Honorary Fellowship of the University.