

Intellectual History of the Central Bookstore (1927-1957): Confucian Discourse of Chang Shen-chieh and Hsu Fu-kuan

Wei-huan Li

ABSTRACT

The Central Bookstore, founded in 1927, played a key role in promoting social and cultural reforms in central Taiwan and remained a hub for intellectual exchange until the post-war period. Current studies focus on the works published by the bookstore during this time, particularly those by Chang Shen-chieh, as well as the interactions between Hsu Fu-kuan and the bookstore's leadership. As a result, scholars often emphasize the importance of Confucian values within this intellectual community. This paper argues that, in the early post-war period, the bookstore's leaders continued the social ideals of the pre-war Wufeng I-hsin Society, but their activities were deeply affected by the 228 Incident. In response, the bookstore strategically engaged with the party-state system through its publishing activities, promoting its own ideas and values. Comparing the Confucian discourses of Chang Shen-chieh and Hsu Fu-kuan, the paper suggests that, while both expressed sympathy toward Confucian traditions, their emotional and ideological frameworks differed. The publications reflect the tension between local intellectuals and the ruling authorities, most clearly evident in Chang Shen-chieh's Confucian discourse. In contrast, Hsu Fu-kuan's Confucian thought largely reflects internal ideological disputes within the ruling ethnic group. From an intellectual history perspective, the relationship between the bookstore and Hsu Fu-kuan is less about shared identification with Confucianism and more about a mutual emphasis on human dignity as a core value under party-state rule.

Keywords: Taiwanese Confucianism, Hung Yen-chiu, Lin Pan-long, Qiu Miao-qiang, Lu Shi-xian