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## STUDIES IN CHINESE PERSONALITY: A CRITICAL REVIEW\*

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In this paper, the studies in Chinese personality in recent years are reviewed. The findings in general are congruent with those of earlier studies. The most frequently mentioned characteristics of Chinese people are: (a) conformity and self-restraint, (b) humility, and (c) the holistic perception. In conclusion, this author made two suggestions in regard to the personality studies in the future: (a) learning the similarities between different cultures, and (b) finding the Golden Mean of a model personality.

In this paper, I am going to review the important studies on Chinese personality carried out in recent years. The contents of those studies have touched various aspects of Chinese personality and each of them provides a bit of information about Chinese people. This topic is chosen for the following reasons. First, many of the participants to this Conference come from other countries outside China and many of you are in Taiwan for the first time. You may like to know something about this country and about the people you meet at the Conference or on the street in Taipei. What kind of people are they, you may ask. Hence it seems appropriate to present to you what we have learned through existing studies about Chinese people. Second, much research on Chinese personality involves cross-cultural comparison and so fits well with the theme of this Conference. Third, a good number of studies on Chinese personality are reported in Chinese and published in Chinese journals which may have not been made available to scholars in other countries. Fourth, psychology as a science started in the West and was brought to this country in the 1920's. Since then Chinese psychologists have been learning what they know of psychology from their Western colleagues, including the theories, the methods of research, the measuring instruments, etc.. But we realise that our responsibility is far greater than just making a Chinese translation of psychology worked out in the West; we should also try to make more contributions. This has been made the goal for all Chinese psychologists, but it is particularly true for those in the field of personality studies. Indeed, many scholars from other countries have made remarkable contributions in studying Chinese personality. It remains true, however, that Chinese psychologists are in general in a more advantageous position to work with Chinese subjects because of their acquaintance with the cultural background, the language, and the social structure, as well as having practical conveniences in carrying out the research programs. It would be unwise to leave these

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advantages unutilized. Hence it seems advisable to put more time and energy in this area of study and a review of previous studies will provide invaluable information to guide further researches. We hope this presentation will arouse your interest in personality studies so that during this Conference we may get suggestions and advice from you concerning various aspects of such research programs.

#### **Major findings of previous studies on Chinese personality**

It is difficult to determine when the study of Chinese personality began. Sixteen years ago, Yang (1965) made an extensive review of the previous studies in this field. He traced back to as far as 1918 and covered 25 articles and research reports. He found a tremendous diversity in regard to the objectives of research, the subjects covered in the studies, the methods of investigation, and the instruments used. Some researchers aimed to study personality traits of Chinese, others were interested in the attitudes or values of their subjects, and still others try to determine the need patterns of Chinese. While students were used as subjects in most of those studies, the age and grade level varied from study. to study Overseas Chinese students and Chinese-Americans were included in some studies. Researchers chose different instruments, and nearly the whole gamut of psychological measuring devices, from standard tests to projective techniques, were used. Hence it was very difficult to put the results of those studies together to draw a neatly organized conclusion.

Generally speaking, Chinese subjects, in comparison with people in the West, were found to be more introverted, more restrained, more withdrawn, more cautious, less impulsive, less social, emotionally less stable, less dominant and less aggressive. But not all of those studies reported consistent results.

One interesting study included in this review was done by Yang, et al. (1963) on the popular responses on Rorschach of normal Chinese subjects. The authors found that to Rorschach Cards IV and VI, very few Chinese gave the response of "animal skin (or fur)" which was a popular response to Westerners. As the determinant for such a response on those cards was a texture response, the absence of it was often interpreted as being lack of close relationship with or keeping some distance from others. The authors felt that such an interpretation could be connected with the fact that Chinese had a lower need of affiliation than Americans. This point was in congruence with the findings of Watrous and Hsu (1963) who reported that more Chinese than Americans gave "one-person" or "no person" stories to TAT Card 12BG. The low affiliation need of Chinese subjects on the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) reported by Peng (1962) also supported Yang' point.

In the last two decades, the findings of Chinese personality studies have in general been congruent with those of the earlier researches. Among the most frequently mentioned findings are: (a) conformity and self restraint, (b) humility, and (c) the holistic perception. These will be briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

#### **(a) Conformity and self-restraint**

Meade and Barnard (1973) found that under the group pressure of five confederates who made statements contradictory to their own, Chinese subjects, in comparison

with Americans, increased their hesitancy to make subsequent responses to a greater degree and made a greater number of shifts in opinion toward the direction of the majority. In other words, Chinese subjects showed a far greater tendency toward conformity than did Americans. This was attributed by the authors to the strong group-feeling tendencies and the traditional values of the Chinese. Two years later, the authors replicated the study with Chinese women students in Hong Kong and in a state college in the United States. The results confirmed their earlier findings (Meade and Barnard, 1975).

In her experimental studies conducted in Taipei and in Albuquerque, Lily Huang (1974) also found that Chinese subjects conformed more than Americans. Sue and Kirk (1972) reached the same conclusion when they compared the Chinese-American freshmen in the University of California with other students of the freshmen population.

As conformity has nearly the same meaning of deference defined by Edwards, those studies which revealed higher need of deference of Chinese on the EPPS than people in other countries (Fenz and Arkoff, 1962; Hwang, 1967; Peng, 1962) were good support to the conformity studies.

To conform to social norms or conventions often requires some degree of self-restraint. Abbott, after a thorough analysis of the scores on the California Psychological Inventory (CPI) of Chinese subjects in San Francisco and in Taipei, concluded that "Chinese are more self-restrained, less extroverted and sociable (in the American sense). Sensitivity to the opinions of others is a factor in day to day psychological functioning" (Abbott, 1970, P, 228). Abbott pointed out the purpose of self-restraint was to maintain harmony.

In his study of social attitudes of Chinese and Scottish adolescents, Hwang (1974) noticed the trend of self-restraint of Chinese subjects in their TAT stories. The TAT Card 6BM was often seen as a kind of conflict situation between mother and son. While the Scottish young people tended to end the mother-child discord by leaving home, the Chinese adolescents tended to yield to the situation and keep the family unbroken. To the TAT Card 14, about the same number of each cultural group (54 Scots and 50 Chinese) made stealing the theme of their stories. While a majority of the young people put the thieves in prison for penalty, there were more Scottish than Chinese youths who allowed the thieves to run away with the stolen goods. We can see here again that Chinese subjects tended to put greater restraint upon their "hero" in their stories as they often do upon themselves in everyday life.

#### (b) Humility

Some twenty years ago, an American visiting professor of psychology asked his Chinese assistant how much statistic he had learned, the answer was "a little bit." After a thirty minute talk with the young man, the professor found the latter had an excellent knowledge of statistics. So he said: "I think you know every part of statistics very well." Again the response was "just a little bit." That is an example of humility,

a highly valued virtue among Chinese, particularly in the circle of learned people.

In the above mentioned cross-cultural study, Hwang (1974) asked his Chinese and Scottish high school pupils to rate seven concepts on a set of semantic differential scales. The Chinese subjects tended to give more favorable ratings than their Scottish counterparts to nearly all concepts on most of the scales except in the case of the concept "Myself". Chinese youths rated Myself less favorably than Scots on six of the nine scales (good-bad, happy-sad, beautiful-ugly, active-quiet, strong-weak, friendly-hostile).

In giving a revised form of Rosenzweig's Picture-Frustration Study to 320 Chinese college students, this author found the reactions of his subjects significantly more intropunitive than those of Americans and Japanese when they were confronted with frustrating situations (Hwang, 1968).

Among the EPPS subscales, the one measuring the need of Abasement is closely related to humility. One may predict Chinese subjects would get a higher score on that particular scale than do people in a Western culture. That was exactly the result when the scores of Chinese on Abasement was compared with American norms (Hwang, 1967; Peng, 1962). When the EPPS was used among five ancestry groups in Hawaii, Fenz and Arkoff (1962) also found that Chinese had higher need for Abasement than Caucasians.

Visitors to this country have often been told that bamboo is a favorable plant to Chinese people and the learned class in the old days used to regard bamboo the "Chun-tze" (the perfect man) in plants. The admired characteristics of bamboo are: its upwardness in growth, its tolerance to coldness, its resistance to wind, and above all, its hollow stem which symbolizes the "hollow-mindedness". A learned person should be hollowminded so that he would have a good capacity to learn, to receive teachings and helpful suggestions, to tolerate criticisms or ideas different from one's own. It is generally believed that the more one has achieved in self form cultivation, the better able he would be "to keep his mind as empty as a valley". This concept not only existed in classics, but was also prevalent in public readings such as the Three Character Classics. The saying that "Boasting invites damage, and humility receives blessing" is known to Chinese people from all walks of life.

The findings concerning self restraint and humility of Chinese are actually no surprise to students of Chinese studies. Both have long been considered important virtues in the teachings of Confucius which have had tremendous influences on the behavior of Chinese people. The following excerpts from Lun-yu, the Analects of Confucius, may give some idea how much humility and self-restraint have been emphasized.

"Tuan-mau Tz'u said: Our Master gets it (his information) through his gentleness, his superiority, his humility, his restraint, and his complaisance" (Chapter 1, Lun-yu)

"Confucius said: 'He who in this world can practice five things (humility, mag-

namity, sincerity, diligence and graciousness) may indeed be considered man-at-his best (or man of JEN). ”(Chapter 17, Lun-yu)

“Confucius said: ‘There are nine things of which Great Men must be mindful: to see when he looks, to hear when he listens, to have a facial expression of gentleness, to have attitude of humility, to be loyal in speech, to be respectful in service, to inquire when in doubt, think of difficulties when angry, to think of justice when he sees an advantage.’ ” (Chapter 16, Lun-yu)

“Great Men cherish excellence, ...cherish the rules and regulation.” (Chapter 4, Lun-yu)

Hence we can see that humility, gentleness, restraint, and living by rite are highly desirable traits in Chinese culture. One should not wonder that they are found in abovementioned studies.

### **(c) The holistic perception**

From his analysis and discussion of the CPI data collected in his Chinese Family Life study, Abbott (1976) concluded that one of the three principal personality components of Chinese was total gestalt or global perception.

Abel and Hsu (1949) noticed this characteristic when they found that, in their study of Chinese subjects in New York with the Rorschach test, there was a greater W% in the Chinese protocols than the American norms. They related the result to an analysis of visual perception of the Chinese by Hellersberg who remarked that “unlimited visual space seems to attract the Chinese imagination, ... Large wholes do not disturb them” (Abel and Hsu, 1949, p.287). This trait of whole-perception fits well, of course, with Hsu’s concept of situation-centeredness of Chinese.

Abbott seemed to have special interest in this global perception (1970) of the Chinese and tried to relate it to the use of rote-memory in learning. He went on to interpret the result of a study by Goodnow (1961) who found that Chinese subjects in Hong Kong were superior in Digit Span and Block Design and had more trouble with Object Assembly and Picture Arrangement in a Chinese adaptation of the Wechsler-Bellevue Scale. Moreover, Abbott attributed the low scores of his Chinese subjects on the Intellectual Efficiency (IE) Scale of the California Psychological Inventory (CPI) to their “Total Gestalt Perception”. Furthermore, Abbott suggested that the low scores of the Chinese on two other CPI scales, Tolerance (To) and Flexibility (Fx) might also “reflect this Chinese proclivity to perceive and to conceptualize in whole.... it may also reflect difficulty in interchanging or manipulating components of knowledge or social situations when individuals perceive phenomena as wholes. It may be much difficult to change one whole for another than to change parts of model.... Hence there is a tendency to reject the unknown (low To) and to stay carefully within the known (low Fx)” (Abbott, 1970, p.205-206).

While Abbott’s explanation of the CPI scores of his Chinese subjects may need the support of more evidence, the tendency of Chinese to perceive wholes rather than parts seems to be a well established fact. This author also noticed the holistic perception of Chinese adolescents in their stories given to TAT Card 12BG. That was a picture

of natural scenery with a boat under a tree. In making their stories, one third of them ignored the boat completely and another third merely mentioned its existence but did not involve it any further. On the contrary, a majority of the Scottish adolescents (68.12%) included the boat in their stories and many even made it the central object in the narrations. The Scots used the boat for picnic trips, repaired it, or gave a sad end to it (broken). But our Chinese young people tended to submerge themselves in the "beautiful scenery," making stories of aesthetic appreciation or season changes which covered the whole picture and paying little attention to its details.

Chinese people are not born with the holistic perception; they learn it. Indeed there are many things in Chinese culture that seem to have helped the development of this characteristic of global perception among Chinese people. In China, a person is constantly reminded that he is a member of his family rather than an isolated individual. He is taught to associate with other members of the family, horizontally and longitudinally. He is encouraged to work hard, to perform good deeds, to reach a goal of fame and prosperity not just for his own achievement, but also, perhaps more importantly, for glorifying his parents and ancestors. Similarly, evil behavior and failure are to be avoided so that the family name as well as his will not be damaged. As Hsu (1955) pointed out, Chinese people always share life's ups and downs with their family. But Hsu was probably wrong to say that a Chinese, "in triumph his glory is toned down because he is not enjoying it alone, just as in disaster, his misery is not so unbearable because it is mitigated by division." (P.64) This author believes that the opposite is probably closer to the fact: a personal success is often amplified when it is celebrated with his family, and a personal failure is often a heavier blow to a Chinese than to a Westerner as he has to bear also the guilt of having disgraced his family name.

The emphasis of one's membership in a unit larger than just oneself can also be seen in the name of a Chinese person. Generally a Chinese personal name consists of three characters of which the first one is the family name. Another character is there to indicate the person's generation order shared by all in the same generation, like brothers, sometimes sisters too, and the cousins in the family. Then the remaining one is for personal identification. For a two-character name, part of the second character is often the generation indicator. Thus a person will always remember where he belongs.

The traditional concept of reciprocity, or "PAO" may also have some influence on the development of global perception. PAO has been a prevalent belief among Chinese and it means that everyone gets a return from what he has done. L. S. Yang (1957) made a lengthy analysis of PAO and called our attention to its broad functioning concerning its involvement, its form, and its time limit. This means that the retribution may not fall on just on one person, but may operate on a family basis; it may be in the form of a natural phenomenon, either a harvest or a natural disaster; and it may be carried to a person's "next life". With these convictions, separate events could be bound together surpassing the boundary of space and time. Thus a person has to learn to evaluate things from a broad perspective instead of treating them as independent matters.

### Change in Chinese Personality

In recent years, this country has made rapid progress in her educational, social, and economic development, and a great deal of change has been witnessed in nearly every aspect of the society. The question behavioral scientists like to ask is how much have the Chinese people changed and in what way. The result of several studies may be used to answer this question.

Abbott (1970), in his study of Chinese Family Life, found that adolescents in Taipei and San Francisco are moving away from the parents' modal pattern. In the CPI data, their scores on the Good Impression, Self-control, and Femininity scales dropped and those on the Flexibility and Tolerance scales rose. In general, the psycho-social functioning of Chinese is changing by adaptation and adjustment to be more overly aggressive, individualistic, and direct.

This author made two studies concerning the changes of the needs and attitudes of Chinese young people. As was mentioned before, this author studied the psychological needs of Chinese university students with Edwards' EPPS in 1963 (Hwang, 1967). Later in 1975, he replicated the study with subjects drawn from same institution the 1963 group. When the two sets of data were compared with each other, significant differences appeared on many of the EPPS scales. The 1975 group got higher scores than the 1963 group on seven scales, with significant increase on Exhibition, Atonomy, Intropection, and Heterosexuality. On the other hand, the 1975 group got lower scores on eight scales with significant decrease on Deference, Order, Nurturance and Endurance. When these result are interpreted against the definition of each of the EPPS scales, they seem to indicate that Chinese university students of 1975, in comparison with their counterparts twelve years ago, were less concerned with social conventions and customs, made less effort in planning and in having things organized, were more easily distracted from their work or jobs, and showed less affection and offered less help to others. On the other hand, they showed a greater tendency to talk about their own achievement and experiences, with a stronger urge to be independent of others in making decisions and in doing things, and were more interested in associating with people of the opposite sex.

The second study this author did was based on two small scale surveys which were carried out fifteen years apart. The first survey took place in 1959 covering 128 university students with a 54 item questionnaire related to dating and mate-selection. The second one was carried out in 1974 with the same questionnaire and the subjects, 321 in number, were drawn from the same institution where the first investigation was conducted. When the two sets of results were compared, the following types of attitude-change were evident: (a) The male-dominance attitude in mate-selection moved toward that of male-female equality; (b) there was an increasing tendency to be independent of the opinion of others; and (c) there was a tendency to be more unconventional with greater tolerance toward divorce, separation, and premarital sex experience in mate-selection.

Yang (1981b) made a comprehensive analysis concerning the development and

change of the character and behavior patterns of Chinese people based on the orientation of cultural ecological psychology. According to this school of thinking, the ecological characteristics of a community are the key factors in its economic systems which in turn determine its social structure. A society with a specific social structure will develop its characteristic ways of socialization through which the character and behavior patterns of its people are developed. Yang felt that the changes involved in the process of industrialization of this country are following a dynamic scheme of which the end results could be outlined as in the following:

1. social orientation → individual and self orientation
2. authoritarian character → egalitarian character
3. external control → internal control
4. autoplasic adaptation → alloplastic adaptation
5. past oriented → future oriented
6. meditation → action and achievement
7. dependence → independence
8. conformity → difference tolerance
9. particularism → universalism
10. suspicious → trusting

We can easily find evidences of these changes. In a series of studies Yang and his associates found that individual modernity correlated positively with self-centered need for Achievement (Yang and Liang, 1973), with internal control (Yang and Wen, 1976), with autonomy and independence (Yang, 1973), and negatively with authoritarianism (Yang, 1976).

Yang feels that the traditional behavior pattern of the Chinese can be described as "social orientation" which is basically "a tendency for a person to act in accordance with external expectations or social norms, rather than internal wishes or personal integrity, so that he would be able to protect his social self and function as an integral part of the social work" (Yang 1981a). To find support for his view that now the Chinese are moving away from social orientation, Yang reviewed many studies in which social orientation was found to correlate negatively with individual modernity. In addition, Yang compared the responses of a high modernity group to Rorschach Ink Blots with the responses of a low modernity group. He found that the former produced more varied responses, gave a smaller proportion of popular responses, had a shorter latency for the first reaction, and used a shorter average time for each response. These findings, according to Yang, indicated the strong generalized cautiousness and generalized conformity in less modernized subjects (Yang, 1981a).

The change of the attitude of Chinese toward man-nature relationship can be seen when the result of Morris' study (1956) is compared with that of Yang's (1965). Morris administered his "Ways to Live Questionnaire" to Chinese high school and university students on the China mainland in 1948 and found that the 13th way ("Obey the cosmic purpose") was one of the best liked by the Chinese. Seventeen years later, Yang administered the same questionnaire to university students in Taiwan and found that

the 13th Way was no longer preferred and became one of the two least liked ways of living. Singh et al. (1962) got the same result from Chinese students in the United States who placed the 13th Way in the seventh position according to their preference. In another study (Yang and Wen, 1976), Chinese college students were asked to make their choice among three value orientations (Obeying nature, Keeping in harmony with nature, and Controlling nature), and 80% of them indicated their wish to control nature.

The outline worked out by Yang gives a good picture of the changing process and indeed very helpful. However, one must be aware of the fact that although those behavior patterns are closely interrelated, their changes did not start at the same time nor are they moving on with a uniform speed; and they do not, at any given time, arrive at the same point on the scale of modernization. We all have noticed that in some areas, things change fast (clothing of young people, for instance); and in other areas, the pace of change is rather slow.

Abbott (1970, p.291), studying cultural change related to Chinese family life, discovered that some Chinese values, such as harmony in family, respect for age, and viewing the family as the initial social unit, are strongly held.

Another value that has been held thus far is "Hsiao" or filial piety. In a replication of the McClelland-Winterbottom study on achievement and motivation, Yu (1974) found that filial piety is indeed a potent social psychological variable upheld to this day among Chinese teen-agers. This author also made a survey with an anonymous questionnaire among high school and college students (N=1196). About 85% of the respondents felt that filial piety is still necessary in modern society and a majority of them thought that there was not much difficulty in performing "Hsiao" in today's life. When they were asked to suggest some practical ways of performing filial piety, the young people's responses were essentially congruent with the basic classical concept of "Hsiao". These findings indicate that the value of filial piety is still well accepted.

#### **Concluding Remarks**

Reviewing the existed studies on Chinese personality, we find many of them very enlightening and a good foundation for further research. However, there are also shortcomings in some of them if viewed with strict scientific criteria concerning sampling, selection of instruments, methods of data treatment, etc.. Yang (1965) listed the common weakness of those studies he reviewed and the important ones were: (a) Most of those studies used students as subjects and did not cover people in other social-economic categories. Not infrequently the size of the sample was not big enough to insure the stability of the statistics reported. (b) Many comparative studies did not make adequate control of those important attributes of the subjects besides the experimental variables, so that the reliability of their conclusions was greatly damaged. (c) Many researchers did not make a critical examination of the instruments in regard to their suitability for the purpose or nature of the studies concerned.

As the research methods have advanced in recent years, the quality of the research has been greatly improved. Nevertheless, the abovementioned weaknesses have not

completely disappeared. Moreover, because of the availability of computer services, the researchers tend to pay a good deal of attention to the treatment of data by using sophisticated statistical techniques without giving adequate concern to the procedure of data collection, which has become increasingly difficult due to the unfavorable reaction of the public toward testing. More should be done to improve the procedure of test-administration in order to invite the cooperation of the subjects. In addition to the technical problems, this author wishes to make two suggestions in regard to the personality studies in the future:

(a) **Learning the Similarities between Different Cultures**

Cross cultural studies have made remarkable contributions in promoting inter-cultural and international understandings. However, it seems that in cross-cultural studies, researchers tend to pay more attention to the differences between the cultural groups concerned and do not show equal interest in their similarities. Of course, inter-group differences, whatever they are, do have their scientific significance. However, they are sometimes over-emphasized. A statistically significant difference between two groups may be just one point or even less on a particular test or scale which may not necessarily mean any visible difference in the overt behavior of the two groups. Nor does the existence of such difference rule out the possibility of a greater difference within one or the other group. Thus when a cross-cultural difference is reported, particularly when it is not accompanied by the statistical data, it may cause unnecessary misunderstanding. On the other hand, reported similarities between two cultures may have positive significance as they may draw the two peoples closer to one another according to the principle of inter-personal attraction. Should we all realize that those who live in another part of the world are sharing with us many of our attitudes, beliefs, likes and dislikes, fears and worries, etc., we may accept them more readily instead of building up unfavorable stereotypes that would keep us away from one another.

Similarities and differences between groups often exist simultaneously. When this author made his study of Rorschach popular responses of Chinese subjects (Hwang, 1955), he noticed that among the fifteen most frequently chosen responses of Chinese subjects, seven did not appear in the list of P proposed by Beck. But he also found that eight of the Chinese P's were similar to those identified by Beck and Klopfer from the protocols of Americans. Both facts deserve equal attention.

This idea of paying equal attention to intergroup similarities as well as differences may also be applied longitudinally. There are doubtlessly a great many of differences between the behavior patterns of Chinese people in ancient days and those in the modern era. However, close examination will also find that in traditional Chinese teachings, there were traces of many modern concepts. For instance, many ideas suggested by contemporary scholars concerning healthy personality can be found in Confucian Analects and the concept of self actualization was once clearly expressed by Mencius (Hwang, 1980).

When the concept of filial piety, the traditional top virtue of the Chinese, was

analysed from the psychological viewpoint, it was found that this concept dealt much more than mere parent-child relationships. It involved the principles of self-developmnet, general interpersonal relationships, and one's everyday adjustment (Hwang, 1977). It is similar to rather than different from the thoughts of contemporary behavioral scientists. In the same token, one can hardly differentiate the old Chinese concept of "hollow-mindedness" and the idea of "being open" which is valued by people today.

**(b) Finding the Golden Mean**

In studying Chinese personality, we owe F. L. K. Hsu a great deal for his insightful concept of individual-centered as the characteristic of the American way of life and that of situation-centered as the characteristic of the Chinese pattern of behavior (Hsu, 1955) After a detailed analysis of various ways of life of the two peoples, Hsu pointed the weakness of each of them to show that "virtues...can produce grievous faults when they are carried to excess". He continued that "This is true of the Chinese way of life no less than of the American way. Just as self-reliance and its associated attitudes have given rise to difficulties that are uniquely American or have exaggerated problems found to a limited extent elsewhere in Western society, so in China has mutual dependence and deleterious as well as beneficial consequences" (p. 355). That is a fair statement.

Yang and Hchu (1974), in their excellent review of studies of individual modernity of Chinese subjects, pointed out that not all those characteristics of a modern man were desirable traits. They concluded their article with the remark that some of the changes our people had made toward modernization had given them (the authors) a good deal of delight, but other changes had brought them worries. Such mixed feelings are indeed shared by all socila and behavioral scientists in this country.

Hence there is little wonder for Hsu, in concluding his book entitled Americans and Chinese, to suggest a compromise between individual-centered and situation-centered models. Apparently Hsu got his solution from the Doctrine of the Golden Mean, one of the main teachings of Confucius.

In simple words, the Doctrine of the Golden Mean means the middle way. The main idea is to avoid going to extremes though it does not necessarily suggest a stand at the point of the quantitative or geometric center.

Following the Doctrine of the Golden Mean, one would not dichotomize the ideas of opposite views or the contradictory trends of behavior, nor would he regard them mutually exclusive. In fact, one can be modern and traditional at the same time; he cannot be a hundred percent of either, but a composition of both. The Golden Mean Doctrine does not suggest one "mid-point" for all different aspects of life. On the contrary, it varies in different matters and in different situations even for the same individual; it may change in the course of time. The fact that Confucius was described as a "timely sage" suggests that adjustment is a factor to be watched. Thus the Doctrine is not out of date as it appears to be.

One may feel then that our objective is to search for the golden mean for all of us today. Yes, that is an important task for behavioral scientists, but it cannot be accomplished overnight. The first important step is to make our people, particularly the younger generation, understand the basic concepts of the Doctrine and see its applicability in their daily life. People need to be assured that there is an alternative besides an unconditional surrender to the gigantic torrent of modernization or a complete regression toward the old way of life. Realizing that he is not forced to make all or none decision, an individual will be relieved, at least partly, from the anxiety of keeping pace with others around him lest he would lose his identity. He can then allow himself to take a close look of himself and the world or to seek some guidance to do it if necessary. He will be able to see more possible routes in front of him, to see the possibility of maintaining his individuality, while at the same time, keeping a harmonic relationship with his family and his society.

This is not at all an easy job; behavioral scientists in this country will have to work hard on it. We will need from time to time help, assistance, and advice from our colleagues from all over the world.

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# 近年中國人人格心理研究之評述

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## 摘 要

本研究係就近年來對於中國人人格之研究，作一綜合性之檢視與評述，發現各篇研究之結論雖不完全一致，但所指出中國人格之重要特徵乃有三端，即：(1)從眾性與自我約束，(2)謙遜，(3)整體性知覺，作者在結論特別指出在進行中國人格研究時，不特宜注意其與西方人人格之差異，也應重視其間相同之處；同時應努力在東方西方文化之間，尋求中庸之道，以爲健全人格發展之基準。