

The Cultural Traits and Scientific Significance of the TCM Psychology

Hongzhong Qiu¹

(1) University of Guangzhou Chinese Medicine

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With the increasingly advanced western psychology today, why should we still endeavor to study Chinese traditional medicinal psychology? That is because clinical psychology is a serving undertaking, whose effect depends on how much the psychological theories and methods stay in line with the consultative object's cultural background. Yet currently the clinical mental consultation in our country is basically copying and imitating the western psychological theories and methods. In fact, the western psychology was deeply rooted in the western history and culture, penetrated with westerners' philosophy, believes, value and life experience. Western psychology takes physics as its mode, purporting demonstration and attempting to construct it as a precise and objective natural science. Although scholars have accumulated a great amount of demonstrative data, they consider all the consciousness experiences, philosophical psychology as well as all the traditional, indigenous, experienced and daily psychology as pre- or non-science, which disables western psychology from exploring the rich human inner worlds and the really existing experience in daily life, which has greatly narrowed down the vast realm of the studies on human mental states, and which lacks the nourishing of the abundant, great and historical mental culture.

Under this background, it plays an extremely important role in both scientific research and practicality to coordinate and excavate the ideology and technology of traditional medicinal psychology. Chinese traditional medicinal psychology boasts not only age-old history and unique theory, but also abundant clinical skills and proved recipes, and can completely match in excellence with western clinical psychology.

1. The cultural characteristics of Chinese traditional medicinal psychology

Compared with western clinical psychology, the Chinese traditional medicinal psychology has own special cultural characteristics, from the angle of post-modernism; this kind of difference probably means the existence of another possible science pattern.

1.1. Chinese medicine particularly emphasizes the interaction between physique and spirit – the theory of the five internal organs originates from Taoist, which has its explanation of physiologic psychology and nerve psychology. According to the Chinese medicine, people's mental activities base upon their physiology. But different from western psychology, Chinese medicine does not believe a person's emotion is related only to the structure and function of the brain, but insists on "the theory of external cause of diseases" of one's emotion, which says "Man has five viscera, which may bring on five moods (visceral-qi) to produce joy, angry, grief, melancholy and fear". Anger impairs the liver, joy impairs the heart, anxiety impairs the spleen, melancholy impairs the lung, and fear impairs the kidney."

"The theory of external cause of diseases" of the Chinese medicine constituted a kind of compatible disjunctive logic with "the central pivot theory" of western psychology. The point of five internal organs holding spirits in Chinese medicine urges us to reconsider the relation between our body and emotion and disease mechanism: Would the condition of internal organs influence our mood? Or would radical emotion affect the internal organs? Can we adjust our mood by means of taking medicine so as to regulate neurotransmitter level and hormone metabolism?

1.2. Chinese medicine emphasizes the uttermost importance of mental adjustment in health care and medical treatment, which derived from the ego consciousness of Taoist theory, in line with

psychoanalysis and personality rebuilding treatment. From the point of Chinese medicine, a person's ego consciousness has very important influence on the conditions and processes of his internal organs. The heart controls mental and emotional activities, and is regarded as the dominant one among the internal organs, and the motion of heart may cause the moving of other organs. "Stay quiet may hold the spirit, while rashness can lead to perishing." If one "remain nonchalant and void, then genuine qi will flow; keep a sound mind, how can diseases come on?" On the contrary, if one has "decline spirits and mental confusion, his disease cannot be healed."

Both the Taoist Zen and Chinese medicine think people can acquire a good and balanced health condition by means of active ego activity (such as keeping a sound mind). This is different in approach but equally good with the effect of modern creature feedback technology. The most typical methods of remain nonchalant and void is to practice the inner elixir exercise. Before the psychoanalysis school divided consciousness into two parts and started carrying out analysis on psychology, Zen Taoist had already separated the structure of "mind" in two, namely spirit and soul.

The so-called "spirit" is the life, character and vigor inherited from parents and surmounting space-time. And "soul" refers to the acquired characters, relying on the external world, fluid, subjected to environmental influence easily and leading to happiness, anger, grief, joy, lust for flesh and wealth, as well as contending for power and forfeit.

The Inner elixir exercise can be defined as a psychological therapeutic method that originates from Confucianism, Taoism and Zen, by means of cognition, attitude, mood and behavior change, taking satori as the chance, with a target of personality reconstruction.

The cross-cultural comparative research reveals that inner elixir exercise contains myriad elements of mental therapy such as western psychoanalysis, reasoning-emotion treatment, behavior psychological treatment, Gestalt psychology treatment, satori, existentialism, etc. C.G. Jung eventually found that the inner elixir exercise identifies with his mental treatment.

1.3 Chinese "Yin Yang five states" corporeity-personality theory believes the integration of body and mind, and coincides with modern gene biology and clinical dialectical therapy. The principal feature of Chinese traditional personality theory is its comprehensiveness, showing its obvious clinical functions, which means that various characters correspond with certain figures, and with certain physiologic, pathologic characteristics and certain treatment principles.

2. The realistic meaning of inheriting and developing Chinese medicine psychology

2.1 It helps us to hold and develop thoroughly the humanism in traditional Chinese medicine. Chinese medicine is based on humanism: it is aware that human being is natural create and he must hold to the natural rules, while on the other hand, it admits human mental activities and his social attribute, and even regard his ego consciousness as the ultimate feature which distinguishes him from other animals. "A patient with vitality is apt to recover from the illness, while there is a poor prognosis for a patient without vitality." The humanism of traditional Chinese medicine is also adequately demonstrated by the basic treating rule of meeting patients' mental needs. If we only take creature substantial evidence as the same as the modernization of traditional Chinese medicine, and if we believe scientific research contains the all of Chinese medicine research, we may deviate from the scientific humanism of Chinese medicine.

2.2 It helps us to understand the characteristics of epistemology and the methodology in Chinese medicine. Chinese medicines always described and defined the objects from the relation of the principal part and its object. And its theories always concerning about the understanding relation in "I- you" to comprehend the body organ, physiology phenomenon and disease phenomenon. For

example, “the visceral manifestation theory” reflects how TCM gathers its knowledge and the basic characteristics of things.

In the past, many modern Chinese medicine researchers failed to explain the theory of “visceral manifestation” with demonstration because they didn’t know the psychology meaning in the Chinese medicine theories.

The way we observed and experienced the object in sense of recognition and psychology does not equal to matter itself, because this object had been concluded into the structure of the activity realistically brought by the subject, and referred to those objects subjectively. This is to say, many principal concepts in Chinese medicine have something to do with the thinking enactment of corpus, consciousness of direction and particular mental activity (such as four physical examinations).

2.3 It helps to prevent the medical science realm false science. It was a terrible lapsus to mistaking the mental experience as physiological one, and study the concepts as concrete substance, Researchers paid no attention to the research of the medical culture and Chinese medicine psychology, ignored the connection between science and humanities, which was led by cognition mistake. The "False Qi Gong" phenomenon was an inspiring social activity in our 20 century. "Inner elixir exercise" has a very history in China, which interjects Taoist theory of Zen, advocate people to cultivate one's heart. In 20th century, the exercises once again become a very popular body exercise for mass population to enhance their health after several decades' evolvement. But to our disappointment, just because the misunderstanding of the culture and explanation of "inner elixir exercise" resulted in so many modern "mental tragedies". It was proved again and again, only to explain the original meaning and the psychology essence of "inner elixir exercise" in a right reasonable way, then can prevent from "false science" to its exploitation. C.G. Jung is the first westerner who explains the original, mental mechanism and medical treatment of "inner elixir exercise" with the modern psychology. His epistemology and methodology inspired us to see clearly of the essence of "inner elixir exercise" and to expose the "false Qi Gong".

Conclusion

Chinese people, Chinese heart, we need to analyze and settle our own knots in Chinese way. The American cross-cultural psychologist Triandis C·H says "Before I got everything I need from China, it is impossible for psychology to become a widespread and valid science. Because China has a very large proportion on population; and as to the cross-cultural psychology, China has to examine all the results of psychology from a new background. While they are doing like this, the Chinese psychologists should tell the western psychologists, which concepts, measurement, cultural and historic factors can revise the psychology result of past.

Prospecting future, the development of psychology in the natural science and humanities, science psychology and native psychology will be a new and inevitable trend. From the past unitized science psychology, the psychology of contemporary has already headed for a multi-, complex, prosperous psychological cultural development. Therefore, the studies and researches of Chinese clinical psychology will certainly do a lot of contribution.