

# On the Sublation, Inheritance and Innovation of Chinese Traditional Culture

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**Abstract:** The transformation and development of contemporary Chinese society needs the third ideological enlightenment. The theme of this ideological enlightenment should be to lay the ideological foundation for "starting a new journey of building a socialist modern country in an all-round way", for "realizing the 14th Five-Year Plan and the long-term goal of 2035"; and comprehensive re-understanding of China's national character insufficiency; re-educate all citizens; sublimate, inherit and innovate traditional culture; set up "Democracy and legal system", "Marketing Economy System". This paper specifically analyzes what content of traditional culture needs to be sublated, inherited and innovated. Discard the dross of national character, such as servility, deceive oneself and others, lack of seriousness in life and affairs, disrespect for contracts, disrespect for rules, like to ask for petty advantage, two-faced people, spectator mentality, pay attention to the collective but despise individual, do not pay attention to commerce, equalitarianism, good face, waste, etc.; inherit the excellent traditions of ancestors, such as "Virtue" and gentleman personality, benevolence, harmonious development between man and nature, unity of knowledge and practice, faithfulness and trustworthiness, pursuit of freedom, and studious, etc.; and more importantly, absorb the common excellent heritage of human civilization, reconstruct and innovate the national character in combination with China's reality, such as the spirit of respect for contracts and law, scientific spirit, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, the courage to express rationally, value and respect commerce, saving consciousness, and sense of cooperation, etc.

**Keywords:** Transitional Society, Ideological Enlightenment, Realization of the 14th Five-Year Plan, National Character, Sublation, Inheritance, Innovation

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## 1. Introduction

China has twice experienced ideological enlightenment in modern times. The May 4th Movement in 1919 was the first time, with the theme of science and democracy; and the great discussion that practice is the only criterion for testing truth in the 1980s was the second time.

The Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held in October 2020 pointed out that "China's development is still in an important period of strategic opportunities, but opportunities and challenges have new development and changes." [1] In today's China, the market economy has begun to play a decisive role in resource allocation, more than half of farmers have entered the city. The social structure has undergone a fundamental change. However, many ordinary people still don't know how to be a contract-conscious citizen in a market economy, and

government officials don't know how to provide public services. The society is in the throes of the critical period of deep-water reform and transformation.

The transformation and development of society needs people to implement. If we want to innovate the system, we must enlighten the corresponding people. Therefore, it is necessary to illuminate the dark side of reality and soul with the brightness of rationality, so as to guide the direction of transformation and development, institutional innovation and remodeling of national character. This is the Third Ideological Enlightenment. The theme of this ideological enlightenment should be to lay the ideological foundation for "starting a new journey of building a socialist modern country in an all-round way" [1]; and comprehensive re-understanding of China's national character insufficiency; re-educate all citizens; sublimate, inherit and innovate traditional culture; set up "Democracy and legal system", "Marketing Economy

System". This paper will specifically analyze what content of traditional culture needs to be sublated, inherited and innovated.

## 2. Sublate the Dross of Chinese Traditional Culture

Different times, different groups, different production and lifestyles will lead to different typical collective personalities, which are what we often call national character and nationality [2].

The core of Chinese traditional culture is the Confucian culture formed by the Chinese nation in the long-term agricultural labor mode, natural economy, and patriarchal society. During the course of wars and ethnic integration in the past thousands of years, Confucian culture has played a very important role in uniting the farming peoples in the Central Plains and surrounding areas, assimilating the surrounding nomadic peoples, and maintaining the big family of the Chinese nation. As a result, only the traditional culture of China is still being passed down to this day among ancient Babylon, ancient Egypt, ancient India and ancient China.

Anything that exists must have its rationality. So, is it OK for people today to accept all traditional Chinese culture? Not so. Because traditional culture not only embodies the essence of universal values of human society, but also has the dross to hamper China's social innovation, technological progress and the establishment of a socialist market economy. Otherwise, China would not have lagged far behind the West in modern times. For the excellent essence of traditional culture, "only on the basis of sublation can we have the basis of 'recovery and promotion', just as the precedents of Japan, Korea and Taiwan have shown." [3]

Now let us analyze in detail what dross in Chinese traditional culture should and must be discarded from the perspectives of adapting to the laws of human historical development and "China has turned to the stage of high-quality development" [1].

### 2.1. Lu Xun<sup>i</sup>'s Criticism of Servility, Deceiving Oneself and Others, and Carelessness in Doing Things [4]

Confucius<sup>ii</sup> once said: "A gentleman is Mr. Qu Boyu<sup>iii</sup>! If a country has normal state, he will become an official; if a country has un-normal state, he will be rolled up and cherished." There are still several similar examples of going forward when employed and staying out of sight when set aside, being wise and protecting oneself said in the Analects<sup>iv</sup>,

all of which were praised by Confucius. These idioms reflect the early Chinese scholar bureaucrat's attitude towards life, and ultimately affect the later generations of scholars' behavior strategy and style. Many intellectuals, including the author, once believed in the similar idea that "If you are successful, you will help the whole world; if you are poor, you will take care of yourself." From a positive point of view, a good person should observe and analyze the situation and conditions he or she is facing, and adopt a flexible strategy and a way of survival. When necessary, he or she needs to retreat and preserve his or her strength. However, from the perspective of negative effects, it also provides a reasonable excuse for intellectuals to retreat and enslave when they encounter a tyrant. Just as Mr. Hu Shi<sup>v</sup> said, a free country cannot be established by a group of slaves." [5] Is it possible for a country's political clarity and progress to fall from the sky by virtue of the gentleman's "Self-protection"? This kind of thought also fetters the development of Chinese society. Of course, later generations cannot blame Confucius for seeking perfection. He also said: "People with lofty ideals and benevolence do not seek survival to harm benevolence, but kill themselves' bodies to become benevolent." The key is to grasp the contingency and degree among them, which all depends on personal experience, it is difficult to be appropriate. Therefore, institutional innovation is still needed.

As for the Ah Q-style<sup>vi</sup> spiritual victory method, deceiving oneself and others, it is even more poisonous and harmful. Let's not talk about the distant example, there are many deceiving oneself and others in today's Confucius fever [6].

Regarding the lack of seriousness of Chinese people's behavior and doing affairs, not only Mr. Lu Xun, but also Mr. Chen Duxiu<sup>vii</sup>, Mr. Hu Shi, and even Mr. Gu Hongming<sup>viii</sup> who has always praised Chinese traditional culture [7], all have this view.

This vice continues to this day. Reflected in the university, it means that students are muddling along diplomas, teachers muddling along courses, and the university muddling along teaching quality. As for whether the students study seriously, how much had students learned? Everyone doesn't care about it seriously. In order to make it easier for everyone to get along with each other, some universities, despite the repeated orders of the Ministry of Education [8], the so-called "final clear

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re disciples to record the words and deeds of Confucius and his disciples. It embodies the political propositions, ethical thoughts, moral concepts and educational principles of Confucius and the Confucian School.

Since the SONG Dynasty (960-1279), The Analects has been listed as one of the "four books", becoming an official textbook in ancient schools and a must read book in imperial examinations.

<sup>v</sup> Hu Shi (December 17, 1891 -- February 24, 1962) was a modern Chinese thinker, writer and philosopher.

<sup>vi</sup> The protagonist of Mr. Lu Xun's novel "The True Story of Ah Q".

<sup>vii</sup> Chen Duxiu (October 9, 1879 -- May 27, 1942) was an advocate, initiator and main standard-bearer of the New Culture Movement, the "Commander-in-chief of the May Fourth Movement", one of the main founders of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and a key early leader of the Party.

<sup>viii</sup> Gu Hongming (July 18, 1857 -- April 30, 1928) was the first person in China who was proficient in Western science, languages and Orientalology during the QING Dynasty. He was proficient in 9 languages including English, French, German, Latin, Greek and Malaysian, and received 13 doctoral degrees.

<sup>i</sup> Lu Xun (September 25, 1881 -- October 19, 1936) was a famous writer, thinker, revolutionary, educator, democracy fighter, an important participant in the New Culture Movement, and one of the founders of modern Chinese literature.

<sup>ii</sup> Confucius (551 B.C. - April 11, 479 B.C.), a great thinker, politician, educator and founder of the Confucian School in ancient China.

<sup>iii</sup> The famous virtuous official of the State of Wei, served the Duke of Wei Xian, the Duke of Wei Shang and the Duke of Wei Ling all his life. He advocated the rule of virtue, and the ruler should use his exemplary behavior to influence, educate the people and show compassion for the people's livelihood.

<sup>iv</sup> The Analects is a collection of quotations compiled by Confucius' disciples and

examination"<sup>ix</sup> before graduation is still retained.

Reflected in society, many people are messing around, working on the principle of coping with superiors and passing inspections. There are many people who are not serious. Not only are there few serious people, but those serious people also become strange and weird, not easy to get along with in the eyes of muddling along people. This has led to the reverse elimination of serious and responsible people from the society, which has seriously affected the quality of Chinese manufacturing and Chinese construction [9] and the reputation in the world.

## 2.2. *Disrespect the Contract, Disrespect the Rules, and Like to Ask for Petty Advantage*

From Confucius saying: "A gentleman will stick to the right way, but not stick to small credit", to Mencius<sup>x</sup> saying: "Great man, words do not need to be believed, actions do not have to be fruitful, only righteousness"<sup>[10]</sup>, and then Liu Bang, the first Emperor of the HAN Dynasty<sup>xi</sup>, intentionally broke the peace treaty after he already signed the treaty with Xiang Yu, the overlord of CHU, and then to Emperor Xianfeng of the QING Dynasty<sup>xii</sup> signed the Treaty of Tianjin<sup>xiii</sup> during the Second Opium War<sup>xiv</sup>, he even openly declared: "The important covenant cannot be trusted since ancient times, and it is inherently expedient" [11], you can see that the upper class of China have lacked the necessary respect for contracts since ancient times, typical a matter of expediency, utilitarianism. The so-called winner is the king; the loser is the thief.

But on the other hand, Confucius also fully understood the importance of credit. For example, when Zi Gong<sup>xv</sup> asked him about politics, he said that "the people cannot stand without trust." When talking about the three beneficial friends, he said, "friends are direct, friends are creditable, and friends are well-informed." His attitude towards this issue is actually contradictory. As for when to keep the promise? What matter should be "sticked to the right way, but not stuck to small credit"? There is no external principle, but the "Holy Dharma Heart Transmission" [12]. That is explained by those who have the right of discourse from a perspective that benefits

themselves, with a certain vagueness and randomness.

The upper class of the society may not abide by the contract, and explain why they don't abide by the contract according to their own strength and preference rather than external laws, which also leads to the common people's disrespect for the rules and like to ask for petty advantage.

In the past, under the mode of agricultural production, people have settled in a place for generations, forming a society of acquaintances among people. Due to the constraints of conventional rural rules and regulations, this kind of psychology of disrespect for rules and like to ask for petty advantage will not cause great harm to social development. But under the condition of market economy, the migration of people is much more than that of farming society, and the mutual restriction between acquaintance societies no longer exists. In the case of all strangers around, this kind of psychology of disrespect for rules and like to ask for petty advantage is easy to cause people to do something beyond the moral bottom line, causing great harm to the society. For examples, "Blue Qianjiang Nanny Arson Case" [13] and other malignant cases were written into the supreme law report.

## 2.3. *Two-Faced People*

A two-faced person is a person who has a dual personality, "two skins" in life, and a pretender in life.

Two-faced people have a long history in Chinese society. It was also hated by Confucianism and the people. Confucius once said: "The hypocrite, the thieves of virtue." That is to say, someone who is flattering and has no principles, but pretends to be a moral hypocrite who actually is a moral destroyer. Mr. Tan Sitong<sup>xvi</sup> said that China's old politics were fooled by the thieves and the hypocrite [14].

In political circles, this kind of two-faced person advocates clean government on the stage and makes money under the stage. In 2018, "two-faced people" was selected as one of the top ten anti-corruption hot words of the year [15].

In academia, it appears that "The common problem of many intellectuals is the separation of saying and doing, and the two sides of personality, even to the point of unconsciousness. An impassioned critic of the shortcomings of the system, his act not for the purpose of reforming the system, but for turning around and participating in it to get a share, without even the slightest guilt." [14]

This deep-rooted "two-faced people" habit comes from the close symbiosis between people in the acquaintance society, the reverse elimination of the outspoken, everyone needs to disguise, and individuals do not form a real sense of self. "There is a saying among today's so called 'smart people': 'Don't tell any lies, don't tell all truth. Keep silence if you are helpless'." [16]

At present, China's society has developed to a stage where all elements of productivity (including people) need to be optimized allocation according to the market economy. The society is no longer an acquaintance society, and has the

<sup>ix</sup> Final clear examination: Before graduation, the university specially arranges the final examination for students who fail to pass the course.

<sup>x</sup> Mencius (about 372 BC - 289 BC), a philosopher, thinker and educator in the Warring States Period, is a representative figure of the Confucian school after Confucius.

<sup>xi</sup> The HAN Dynasty (202 B.C. - 220 A. D.) was second imperial dynasty in Chinese history.

<sup>xii</sup> The QING Dynasty (1636-1912) was the last imperial dynasty in Chinese history.

<sup>xiii</sup> The Treaty of Tianjin was an unequal treaty that Britain, France, Russia and the United States forced the QING government to sign in Tianjin during the Second Opium War in 1858.

<sup>xiv</sup> Britain and France in 1856-1860 jointly launched the war of aggression against China, is the continuation and expansion of the first Opium War, so it is called the second Opium War.

<sup>xv</sup> Zi Gong (520-456 B.C.), Confucius' favorite disciple and outstanding representative of Confucianism, is good at eloquence, capable of doing and helping, and is the founder of Confucian merchants. He is the richest man among Confucius' disciples.

<sup>xvi</sup> Tan Sitong (March 10, 1865 to September 28, 1898) was a famous politician, thinker and reformer in modern China.

external conditions to get rid of the bad habits of two-faced people. But to really get rid of this bad habit, everyone needs to start with oneself. Ideological enlightenment requires the understanding, tolerance and joint efforts of the whole society.

#### 2.4. *A Spectator Mentality*

"Everyone sweeps the snow in front of his own door, and never cares about others' tile frost"; "be wise and protect yourself, just for not any bad thing happening"; "it's none of your business, hang it up high"; "trees that show up in the woods, and the wind will destroy them first"; "tall trees catch much wind"; "the gun shot the bird which stands out"; "the rafters that stand out rot first"; "resign oneself to adversity"; "compromise out of consideration for the general interest"; "he who knows the current affairs is a hero"; "muddling along", and so on. These widely used idioms in China reflect the situation that the whole society does not encourage expression and innovation. This has led to the fact that Chinese people are more spectators and adapters and Westerners are more participants and innovators [17].

#### 2.5. *To Value the Collective over the Individual*

"The Chinese culture with Confucianism as the mainstream is a collectivist orientation, emphasizing groups, and finally taking the personality of the leaders in the group as the group commonness, to a certain extent, it ignores, suppresses and even stifles the individuality of each individual who constitutes the group." [18] For example, the Chinese style family education is characterized by children's obedience to their parents, which leads to the morbid symbiosis and giant infants between parents and adult children. This is essentially the product of the absence of self-consciousness and mutual disrespect for personal boundaries [19].

Marx said in the "Communist Manifesto" about the relationship between individuals and groups in a socialist society: "The replacement of the old bourgeois society where there are classes and class antagonisms will be such a union, where, the free development of everyone is the condition for the free development of all people." In principle, the Confucian culture's handling of the relationship between individuals and groups is only suitable for the primitive natural economy, the backward small-scale peasant economy, and the centralized political system. It is not suitable for the commodity economy, democratic politics and socialist society that need equal consultation, and even more, is not conducive to China's "entering the forefront of innovative countries" in 2035 [1].

#### 2.6. *Not Paying Attention to Commerce*

In traditional Chinese society, farming civilization occupied the mainstream of the society, which led to the natural economic policies of "emphasizing agriculture and restraining commerce" and "strengthening the foundation (agriculture) and restraining the last (commerce)". Up to the QING Dynasty, this policy was still carried out.

The natural economic policy of "emphasizing agriculture and restraining commerce" carried out by all dynasties in

China not only hindered the transfer of wealth to industrial and commercial capital, but also affected the progress of science and technology [20]. What's worse, it directly hindered the establishment of industrial and commercial civilization with unlimited expansibility and driving force in China [21]. It makes the whole Chinese society stagnate in the stage of agricultural civilization, which leads to the super stable structure and stagnant development of Chinese society.

#### 2.7. *Equalitarianism*

The Chinese people have deep-rooted equalitarianism ideological roots, "Inequality rather than scarcity is the cause of trouble". It has been the case since Confucius (The Analects of Confucius, Ji's Article, Ji's Chapter). But people's genetic and family conditions are not the same. From the perspective of social sustainable development, we should pursue the equality of opportunity, not the average of results.

#### 2.8. *Be Concerned About Good Face, Waste*

Chinese traditional acquaintance society has made people to be very concerned about face-saving between acquaintances. No matter how difficult family conditions are, weddings or funerals should be handled with great care. Every treat, there must be leftover food, otherwise it is disrespectful to the guests, "the relevant parties estimate that the value of wasted food at the table every year is up to 200 billion RMB." [22]

Embodied in the foreign relationship, for example, Zheng He made seven voyages to the Western Ocean from 1405 to 1433, the fleet under his leadership has more than 200 ships and more than 27,000 people. He once reached Africa, even 87 years earlier than the great geographical discovery of Western navigators. While Columbus crossed the Atlantic for the first time in 1492 with only three ships and a crew of 90; Da Gama, a Portuguese who arrived in Guri, India 62 years later than Zheng He, had only four ships and 140 sailors. However, the purpose of Zheng He's voyages was mainly to promote the prestige of the MING Dynasty<sup>xvii</sup>, expand the tributary trade, and seek the missing Emperor Jianwen, welcomes Buddha Tooth and strengthens ties with overseas countries. The so-called tributary trade is the official tribute and return relationship between China and overseas countries. The imperial court generally has quite generous rewards to countries that come to pay tribute. This kind of economic relationship is actually not equivalent, and it is not economically sustainable. The reason why the imperial court knows that it is losing money and is not tired of it is because of the traditional Chinese thoughts of good face [23]. These kinds of thinking and related policies even continue to today.

### 3. *Inheritance of Excellent Chinese Traditional Culture*

During the period from the destruction of the Six Kingdoms by QIN Dynasty<sup>xviii</sup> to the Revolution of 1911, China was in a

<sup>xvii</sup> MING Dynasty (1368-1644), the imperial dynasty in Chinese history.

<sup>xviii</sup> The QIN Dynasty (221-207 B. C.) was the first unified imperial dynasty in

centralized monarchy power era [24]. The society lacked a political foundation that could restrict imperial power, which led to the unlimited expansion and unrestricted imperial power. Most people did not have the right to participate in politics. They are just the passive obedience of the current system, that is, subjects, obedient, grassroots, or even slaves of a feudal ruler. The people's thinking is also under the repressive rule of the empire, it is a collective that is demanded, educated, and even suppressed. Therefore, the personality change history of the Chinese nation from ancient times to present is a history of declining heroism and growing flattery [17]. But "this world definitely needs Gentleman with High Ideals" [25]. An ancient civilization that has lasted for 5,000 years must have its excellent part to be inherited.

### 3.1. "Virtue" and Gentleman Personality

The concept of "Virtue" first appeared in the SHANG Dynasty<sup>xix</sup>. The meaning of "Virtue" in SHANG Dynasty was not quite the same as that in later generations. It was not an objective code of conduct, but a specific meaning of "giving benefits". It was not until ZHOU Dynasty<sup>xx</sup> destroyed SHANG Dynasty that the Duke Zhou<sup>xxi</sup> redefined "Virtue" as the objective moral law for all people to live in the world, such as filial piety for the elderly and fraternal duty for the young, fairness and deference, generosity and gentleness. God will only bless those who have "Virtue" and will also replace those Kings or dynasties without "Virtue" with those who have [26].

"Virtue" needs someone to execute it. The "Gentleman" advocated by Confucius is the idealized personality of practicing "Virtue", is the highest standard of one's own moral requirements to oneself. Later, it evolved into the collective ideal personality of Chinese people. In the Analects of Confucius, "gentleman" appeared 107 times. "If we sort out the excerpts from the descriptions about gentlemen, it is basically a list of gentlemen's behavioral norms: pursuing benevolence and righteousness, paying attention to the golden mean of the Confucian school, doing what they say, behaving gentle, shouldering morality, being brave and acting, self-reflection..." [27], the gentleman asks himself, has both moral integrity and ability, and is able to develop and expand the road, not relying on external God, relying on self-help. These codes of conduct are not out of date.

In the process of building the Chinese collective ideal personality, we should pay special attention to rebuild the sense of shame.

The ancient Chinese gentleman "tries to be blameless in one's

private life", so a gentleman has to examine oneself three times every day. When one is alone in the dead of night, one should be able to bear the examination of conscience. But now a lot of Chinese people are not the same, very likely to ask for petty advantage, in order to get some small gain, they could disgrace their scholarly dignity, even unscrupulous. The author has personally experienced an international convention and exhibition, and the organizers kindly offered free lunch. As a result, a group of elderly people came down from the sky with big and small bags in their hands and scrambled for food without any shame. The delivery waiter's plates were crushed to the ground during the looting. As a Chinese at the scene, the author felt very embarrassed. There are also ornamental fruits in author's residential areas and campuses, which are all grabbed before they are fully mature with nothing left; private buildings in villa areas are built in disorder, and fruits and vegetables from neighbors' yards are stolen. It is far from the most basic "courtesy".

### 3.2. Benevolence

"Benevolence" is the communicative rationality of interpersonal relationship. In the Analects of Confucius, there are 109 discussions about "benevolence". What is "benevolence" in the end? "The benevolent person loves others" is the most concise definition of benevolence. This includes the golden mean, the empathy of "Do not do to others what you do not want others to do to you" (the Analects of Confucius Yan Yuan, the Analects of Confucius Wei Linggong). Starting from "Do not do to others what you do not want others to do to you", all other norms for people to get along with each other can be derived from this rule [28].

The development of world history has proved that both conservatives who resist change and radicals who propose change all have important value [2]. It is conducive to the development of the country and society if we do not take extreme measures such as violent revolution [29]. However, China with the tradition of centralized rule did not establish the "benevolent" interpersonal relationship rationality and historical evolution mechanism of "Neutralization", which was expected by Confucianism. On the contrary, Britain, which has the tradition of deliberative democracy and autonomy of maritime countries, has established such a mechanism. This shows that in order to truly establish the interpersonal relationship rationality of "benevolence", in addition to inheriting "benevolence" in concept, there must also be corresponding cultural and institutional innovation. This will be discussed in the fourth part of this paper.

### 3.3. Harmony Between Human Beings and Nature

Ancient Chinese philosophy emphasizes that "laws of nature govern all things" and that "man must seek harmony with nature". This is conducive to environmental protection and sustainable development. Today, the environment has been destroyed rapidly, so it is also necessary for modern people to inherit and carry forward this principle.

Chinese history.

<sup>xix</sup> The SHANG Dynasty (about 1600 B.C. - about 1046 B.C.) was the first dynasty in China with direct written records of the same period.

<sup>xx</sup> The ZHOU Dynasty (1046 B.C. -- 256 B.C.) was the third slave state in Chinese history after the SHANG Dynasty.

<sup>xxi</sup> One of the founding fathers of the ZHOU Dynasty, he was an outstanding statesman, strategist, thinker, educator, a pioneer of Confucianism, the fourth son of King Wen Ji Chang of ZHOU and the younger brother of King Wu Ji Fa of ZHOU.

### 3.4. Unity of Knowledge and Practice

The author himself has done social public welfare volunteer work for two years in the community where he lives. He experienced that one of the cultural characteristics of China now is that there are more spectators, more critics and less people who do the real work. We should carry forward the fine tradition of unity of knowledge and practice advocated by Wang Yangming<sup>xxii</sup> since 1525.

### 3.5. Faithfulness and Trustworthiness

The Analects of Confucius Yan Yuan Article, Zi Gong's Political Inquiry Chapter said: "the people do not stand without faith." It has been still established so far.

### 3.6. The Primitive Confucianism Advocated the Pursuit of Freedom

For example, in the Analects of Confucius Taber Article, Hidden Chapter, it is said that "the dangerous state does not enter; the disordered state does not live". But since MING Dynasty, the rulers established neighbourhood administrative system and household registration system for the convenience of ruling, which restricted the flow of population, the most important factor of production. This barrier has not yet been completely broken until now. Today's people should break down the obstacles hindering the flow of production factors and restore this fine tradition of primitive Confucianism.

### 3.7. Be Eager to Learn

Chinese people have a tradition of being eager to learn since ancient times. At the beginning of the Analects of Confucius, it is said that "Isn't it a pleasure to learn and practice from time to time?" However, in today's environment of exam oriented education, being eager to learn has evolved into learning well [30]. Today's people should reform the education paradigm and use growth thinking to evaluate and encourage students' growth. Not only school's curriculum, teaching design, pedagogy, organization, management system, education paradigm and ways to interact with society must establish a mechanism to encourage students' growth, but also teachers, principals, parents and industrial partners all need to grow in the growth thinking paradigm [31].

## 4. Innovation of Chinese Traditional Culture

Above we have discussed the sublation and inheritance of traditional Chinese culture. But carrying forward the excellent part of tradition is not equal to the ideal society. There are also

some genes lacking in Chinese culture that are conducive to innovation. We must absorb the missing parts of the Chinese nation in the common values of the community of common destiny for all mankind, and innovate and reshape Chinese culture.

There is logic of convergent evolution in human society [32]. Compared with the development of other nations in the world, the author suggests the following innovation and remodeling of Chinese culture.

### 4.1. Respect the Spirit of the Contract and Law

Respect the rules and the law. We should establish a system to stimulate human positive instinct and restrain negative instinct [3], such as the system of concentration and redistribution of wealth, and transform the typical collective character of the people mentioned in second part of this paper. This should be the focus of the third ideological enlightenment in China.

The primitive Confucianists had a clear understanding of the good and evil of human nature. In the Analects, Confucius said twice in Zi Han Article and Wei Linggong Article: "I have never met a man who is as fond of morality as of beauty." The Lucifer effect shows that there is only a thin red line between good and evil, and good people may become demons under the influence of social situation [33]. This shows that the expansion of evil in human nature must be restrained by the rule of law environment.

### 4.2. Scientific Spirit

There is a lack of empirical and logical reasoning in Chinese cultural tradition [30]. However, the scientific spirit of Western society can be traced back all along to Aristotle in Ancient Greece. But this ideological category is not of interest to Confucius and other Confucian scholars [34]. This also led to the backwardness of science and technology in China since the 17th century [20].

The pioneers of the May 4th Movement realized this and makes great efforts to advocate the spirit of science. "The spirit of science is actually the spirit of reason, including the spirit of doubt and the spirit of logic." [3] It has four basic norms: universality, public owned, cooperation and reasonable doubt [35]. It includes the awe of nature, scientific research ethics and engineering ethics.

But even today, the scientific spirit of Chinese society is far from enough. This is reflected in the ubiquitous following superiors rather than following the actual situation. The discussion of problems is not based on facts and rationality, but first requires political standing (standing in the same team, following the same leader), politicizing scientific problems and problems that need to be dealt with in daily work to the height of the struggle between the two lines, and labeling those who do not belong to their own ranks with the wrong line and ruthlessly attacking them.

### 4.3. Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

The reason why human beings have been able to make

<sup>xxii</sup> Wang Yangming (October 31, 1472 to January 9, 1529) was an outstanding thinker, writer, strategist and educator in the MING Dynasty. He advocated the theory of "unity of knowledge and practice", and later focusing on the theory of "to conscience", believed that "conscience" was "heaven's truth", and emphasized understanding heaven's truth from the heart. Wang Yangming's Yangming School of Mind was later introduced into Japan, Korea and other countries. Its disciples are extremely numerous, and it is known as the "Yaojiang School".

continuous progress in science and technology and develop to today is that there is a continuous drive of human spirit. This human spirit can be summed up as curiosity and discontent, disobedience and disobey the fate [36], encourage trial and error and give full play to one's strengths, rather than pursuing perfect people and sages. This has been proved by the Silicon Valley model [37]. However, the Chinese cultural tradition since QIN and HAN Dynasties emphasizes obedience to authority and respect for teachers and elders, which is easy to inhibit independent thinking [30].

The fundamental phenomenon of economy is development rather than equilibrium. The root of development is innovation. Innovation is realized through new combination activities of various elements that can improve the efficiency of resource allocation and usage [38]. While those who undertake these new combination of elements are entrepreneurs. Chinese traditional culture does not encourage trial and error [17], and does not tolerate failure, which is not conducive to the breeding of entrepreneurs.

#### 4.4. Have the Courage to Express Rationally

Chinese people are unwilling to express their needs and desires directly, but are accustomed to expressing or speculating in indirect ways [39]. The typical example is a story told in For Weijun Chapter of Narrating Article, the Analects of Confucius. Zi Gong did not directly ask Confucius whether he would like to help the newly enthroned Duke Wei Chu to contest the throne with his father. Instead, he asked Confucius what he thought of the choice of Boyi and Shuqi<sup>xxiii</sup>. Confucius replied, "If you ask for benevolence and get benevolence, why do you complain?" Zi Gong inferred from this that Confucius would not work for Duke Wei Chu.

For another famous example, Confucius did not think that Zi Lu was modest when Zi Lu spoke, but he did not speak it directly, instead, he smiled. Only when Zeng Xi<sup>xxiv</sup> asked him, he explained it thoroughly (Sitting Together Chapter, Advanced Article of the Analects of Confucius).

This kind of approach may be applicable in the society of acquaintances, but in the society of strangers brought about by the market economy, in international exchanges, it may cause unnecessary misunderstandings.

Japan, which also belongs to the East Asian cultural circle, once had a similar situation that "Made in Japan" was demonized by American media. In this regard, Morita Akio has the courage to express his own position and opinions, publicize the Made in Japan on behalf of the Japanese industry, and has made great contributions to promoting the Western

understanding of Japan and Japanese enterprises [40]. This practice is worth Chinese to learn.

#### 4.5. Value and Respect Commerce

The SHANG Dynasty in China's early history also had a relatively developed commercial civilization. It was the era of oracle bone inscriptions. Because the SHANG Dynasty had a cruel habit of sacrificing ghosts and gods with living people, the ZHOU Dynasty purposefully destroyed the capital and tombs of the SHANG Dynasty after the elimination of the SHANG Dynasty [26], which is one of the reasons why the commercial civilization of the SHANG Dynasty did not have a voice in Chinese society.

After the ZHOU Dynasty destroyed the SHANG Dynasty, on the one hand, the remaining ministers of the SHANG Dynasty were moved to the state of ZHENG<sup>xxv</sup> for the sake of political security. On the other hand, the farming civilization of ZHOU Dynasty was very developed, and its mainstream culture excluded the business talents of the SHANG people, which made it difficult for the SHANG people and commercial civilization to dominate the agricultural society dominated by natural economy. The idea of belittling business has always influenced hundreds of schools of thought in the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period<sup>xxvi</sup>, especially Legalists<sup>xxvii</sup>, and continued to the QING Dynasty [20, 21].

Today, China has entered an era in which market economy plays a decisive role in the allocation of resources [41]. However, traditional sayings such as "suffer losses is a blessing" and "suffer unexpected financial losses but forestall calamity" link blessing with suffer losses, and financial loss with disaster mitigation. In fact, this is indirectly saying that wealth is disaster and fortune is loss. We should encourage fair competition, pay attention to efficiency, and seek to get rich rightfully.

#### 4.6. Saving Consciousness

As mentioned in the first part of this paper, the traditional Chinese idea of good face has caused a great waste of social resources. It should be sublated. General Secretary Xi also gave instructions on this issue [42], calling for strict economy and opposing waste. "China's grain supply and demand is in a tight balance. Every year, China imports more than 50 billion kilograms of grain and soybeans, however, losses and wastes

<sup>xxiii</sup> Boyi and Shuqi were the two princes of Guzhu Jun at the end of SHANG Dynasty. It is said that Guzhu Jun ordered his third son, Shuqi, to be the king. After Guzhu Jun died, Shuqi gave way to his elder brother, Boyi, who would not accept it; Shuqi respected the ethics of heaven and did not want to disturb the social rules, and did not succeed to the throne. The two went abroad to investigate the State of ZHOU. King Wu of ZHOU attacked King Zhou of SHANG, and the two men held the horse to dissuade him. After King Wu exterminated the SHANG Dynasty, they were ashamed to eat ZHOU millet, and ate wild flowers. They starved to death in Shouyang Mountain.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Zilu, one of the "Confucius Ten Philosophers"; Zeng Xi, one of the "seventy-two sages of Confucius".

<sup>xxv</sup> State of ZHENG (806 BC to 375 BC), a vassal state of the ZHOU Dynasty with the surname Ji

<sup>xxvi</sup> Spring and Autumn Period: 770 -- 476 BC; The Warring States Period was a period of great change in Chinese history after the Spring and Autumn Period, which ended in 221 BC when the First Emperor of QIN unified the six States. The Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States period were the golden age of China's agriculture, textile industry, ideology, science and technology, military and political development. In the fierce competition, the vassal states that wanted to survive carried out many world-famous reforms, and emerged a large number of idioms and allusions to be read by later generations.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Legalists, one of the hundred schools of thought, is an important school in Chinese history that advocates the rule of law as the core idea, and takes enriching the country and strengthening the army as its own responsibility.

more than 50 billion kilograms of grain every year." [22] The whole society needs to fully understand the importance of this issue and improve it together.

#### 4.7. Sense of Cooperation

There are three principles for the evolution of all species on the earth: mutation, natural selection and cooperation [32, 43]. The essence of cooperation is complementarity. Therefore, each individual of the Chinese nation should discard the spectator mentality described in the second part of this paper, and choose to participate actively and cooperate.

## 5. Conclusion

To sum up, the Chinese nation should discard the dross of national character, such as servility, deceive oneself and others, lack of seriousness in life and affairs, disrespect for contracts, disrespect for rules, like to ask for petty advantage, two-faced people, spectator mentality, pay attention to the collective but despise individual, do not pay attention to commerce, equalitarianism, good face, waste, etc.; inherit the excellent traditions of ancestors, such as "Virtue" and gentleman personality, benevolence, harmonious development between man and nature, unity of knowledge and practice, faithfulness and trustworthiness, pursuit of freedom, and studious, etc.; and more importantly, absorb the common excellent heritage of human civilization, reconstruct and innovate the national character in combination with China's reality, such as the spirit of respect for contracts and law, scientific spirit, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, the courage to express rationally, value and respect commerce, saving consciousness, and sense of cooperation, etc. In this way, we can really lay the ideological foundation for "realizing the '14th Five-Year Plan' and the long-term goal of 2035" [1], and turn it into practical action, which is conducive to the realization of the planning objectives.

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