Abstract

This thesis intends to explore some plausible routes and possibilities pertaining to the reconstruction of Chinese culture.

For the past twenty years, much reflection has been done on analyzing the factors behind the formation of the totalistic iconoclastic mentality that led to a total denial of culture and traditional values. Totalistic iconoclastic mentality is actually a misconception which assumes that traditional Eastern values and modern Western values are mutually exclusive; therefore, the only way for China to modernize is to put all traditional values to condemnation. Such extremity and irrationality in thought is what modern Chinese intellectuals strive to avoid when working towards the reconstruction of a healthy culture.

Due to the vast context that the term ‘culture’ implies, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss each and every aspect of Chinese culture. However, in order to maintain a variety of thoughts and different points of view, this thesis has introduced three different models which are created specially for the topic of discussion. They are "Creative Transformation" (创造性转化) by Professor Lin Yu-Sheng (林毓生), a scholar of intellectual history; "A model of The Ten Values of Life" (生命的大层面及其价值取向模型) by Professor Fu Weixun (傅伟勋), a scholar of religious study, and "Synthesis and Creation" (文化的综合与创新) by Professor Zhang Dainian (张岱年), a mainland Chinese philosopher. The trio differ not only in their cultural perspectives and scholarly background, their cultural standpoints are also representative of America, Taiwan and China respectively.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to predict the future developments of Chinese culture. Although none of the viewpoints presented by the above scholars can be a definite answer to the question of how Chinese culture can be reconstructed, the discussion, analysis and comparison of these viewpoints can at least provide some indication on the direction to which Chinese culture may develop. This can then serve as a basis for further research and discussion.