

## **Between Theory and Governance: The Modern Formation of Chinese Psychology in the Early Twentieth Century (Post-Print)**

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**Date:** 2025-11-21T00:00:00+00:00

### **Abstract**

If theoretical logic regards psychology as a value-neutral “pure science,” emphasizing the perfection of internal disciplinary institutionalization and the growth of objective knowledge, then governance logic treats it as a modern apparatus capable of scientifically explaining, calculating, disciplining, and even appropriating the “power of the mind.” Governance logic establishes the underlying logic for new epistemic configurations in theoretical knowledge, while theoretical logic constitutes the reproduction of identity within a certain governance logic. Unlike the diachronic sequential relationship between theoretical logic and governance logic highlighted in Western psychological contexts, Chinese psychology scholars have relatively early recognized and utilized the synchronic internal-external relationship manifested between the two. Consequently, the modern formation of Chinese psychology has become deeply entangled in the agenda of reshaping and regulating national subjectivity. Discussing governance logic does not imply the existence of a separate domain of psychology independent of theoretical logic; rather, it aims to analyze how psychology grounded in theoretical logic (whether basic or applied) reconfigures the distribution of the sensible within the everyday experiential order of the nation. Only by comprehensively grasping the unique dialectical relationship between the two can the visible, merely superficial development of psychology be subsumed into internal real movements, thereby advancing the construction of an independent knowledge system of Chinese philosophy and social sciences at the essential level.

### **Full Text**

**Between Intellectual and Govern-mental: The Modern Formation of Chinese Psychology in the Early 20th Century**

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## Abstract

If intellectual logic treats psychology as a value-neutral “pure science” that emphasizes the perfection of disciplinary structures and the accumulation of objective knowledge, then govern-mental logic regards it as a modern apparatus capable of scientifically explaining, calculating, disciplining, and even appropriating “mental power.” The govern-mental dimension establishes the underlying logic of the new *épistémè* for the intellectual dimension, while the intellectual dimension represents the identity reproduction within a certain govern-mental logic. Unlike Western psychology, where intellectual and govern-mental logics exhibit a diachronic sequential relationship, Chinese psychologists recognized and exploited their synchronic dialectical relationship earlier. Consequently, the modern formation of Chinese psychology became deeply entangled in the agenda of remolding and regulating the subjectivity of the national citizenry. Discussing govern-mental logic does not mean positing an independent domain of psychology separate from intellectual logic; rather, it analyzes how intellectual psychology (whether basic or applied) redistributes the sensible order of citizens’ everyday experiences. Only by comprehensively grasping this unique dialectical relationship can we trace the visible, superficial development of psychology to its internal, substantive movement, thereby advancing the construction of an independent knowledge system for Chinese philosophy and social sciences at the essential level.

**Keywords:** Chinese psychology, intellectual logic, govern-mental logic, distribution of the sensible, independent knowledge system

Research on the developmental history of Chinese psychology has long remained at a superficial and externally-driven level, urgently needing to transcend general catalogues of figures, events, and theories to excavate the underlying logic of its knowledge production, theoretical construction, and practical application. The absence or ambiguity of this underlying logic leads to an external understanding of Chinese psychology’ s “original state,” thereby hindering effective guidance for its “future.”

We cannot focus solely on the accumulation and transformation of objective psychological knowledge. Through archaeological and decoding analysis of knowledge, we must clarify the real forces, cultural genes, and internal contradictions that shape Chinese psychology, addressing the core question of “why knowledge was produced in this way”: How were these knowledges selected, accepted, transformed, and even distorted on Chinese soil? What are the deep dynamic mechanisms behind them? Understanding these deep dynamics means comprehending the “historical-social-cultural” logic of Chinese psychology’ s modern formation, tracing its visible, superficial movements to internal, substantive movements, and revealing that its development is not a linear accumulation of “pure reason” but rather the result of polyphonic contestation within specific contexts. The key to these questions ultimately points to the subjectivity issue of Chinese psychology within the globalized knowledge system: Should it re-

main a “consumer” and “imitator” of Western knowledge, or become a “creator” and “contributor” based on its own underlying logic? Only by clarifying the real logic of past knowledge production can we establish our unique coordinates in the world psychology map, more consciously engage in knowledge creation according to local needs and social realities, and actively construct an independent Chinese knowledge system. This is the necessary path for Chinese psychology to achieve the historical leap from “psychology in China” to “psychology of China” and then to “Chinese psychology for the world.”

In the historical context of the early 20th century, where “Western learning spreading east” intertwined with “national salvation,” psychology was introduced to China as a Western discipline with high expectations. As Pan Shu viewed it, psychology was “a necessary subject for understanding humanity and society,” serving as “the only reliable foundation for sociology, economics, and political science, capable of demonstrating its prowess in all aspects of society.”

From the translation of Western psychological works to the establishment of psychology laboratories, and from the continuous improvement of disciplinary structures to the emergence of independent research findings, objective knowledge was constantly produced and accumulated and applied to production and life practices, representing the intellectual logic of Chinese psychology’s modern formation. On the other hand, in the era’s tide of “national salvation,” Chinese psychology was not merely pure knowledge construction but was endowed with distinct value commitments and orientations, namely “to infuse China with Western learning, enabling China to gradually move toward a civilized and prosperous realm.” From Tan Sitong’s call that “mental power is greatest, using the mind to avert calamity,” to Sun Yat-sen’s reliance on “psychological construction,” and to Li Dazhao’s emphasis that “our minds create,” for a long period, stimulating “mental power” that “even heaven and earth cannot compare to” was regarded as the fundamental path to healing the nation’s psyche. Consequently, psychology, specializing in the study of psychological and behavioral laws, naturally attracted widespread interest beyond the discipline. It was expected not only to “enhance and maintain a healthy mind,” “cultivate good habits,” “popularize literacy tools,” “promote productive labor,” and “train scientific thinking,” but also to “give play to the national spirit.” The purpose of psychological research was elevated to the govern-mental logic of cultivating “new citizens” and “rectifying people’s hearts,” with psychology thus being treated as a scientific tool for explaining, calculating, disciplining, and appropriating “mental power.” Although the degree to which this logic exerted actual causal efficacy can be debated, it is undeniable that it became deeply involved in the agenda of reshaping and regulating (nomos) the sensible order of citizens’ own experiences, eliciting active responses from psychologists. This subjectified distribution of the sensible demonstrates the govern-mental logic of Chinese psychology’s modern formation.

If intellectual logic constitutes the surface structure of Chinese psychology’s modern formation, then govern-mental logic forms its deep structure. The former belongs to the visible, 显性 part of the iceberg above water, while the latter

belongs to the more massive and fundamental 隐性支配力量 beneath. Governmental logic establishes the underlying logic of the new intellectual épistémè, shaping every specific aspect of intellectual logic, while intellectual logic manifests as the identity reproduction within a certain government logic. It is necessary here to clarify the distinction between government logic and the application of psychology: The application of psychology directly subordinates itself to intellectual logic and, in turn, to government logic, and technically reproduces people's production and life experiences according to its deep structure. This article first elaborates on the two sides of the same coin—intellectual logic and government logic—then compares them with the developmental characteristics of Western psychology, thereby revealing the unique dialectic between intellectual and government dimensions inherent in Chinese psychology's modern formation and its implications for constructing an independent knowledge system of Chinese psychology.

## I. The Intellectual Logic of Chinese Psychology

Following the Western natural science tradition of seeking the essence and laws of entities, the intellectual logic of Chinese psychology's modern formation emphasizes norms and development within disciplinary structures, primarily pursuing “systematic true knowledge” and “methods that can teach people to obtain systematic true knowledge.” What constitutes the essence, development, and mechanism of the mind, what methods can grasp the essential aspects of human spiritual life (basic research), and how to apply its findings to production and life practices (applied research)—these are the core issues that modern psychology, born from Western philosophy, attempts to resolve, and also the central concerns of early Chinese psychology as an imported discipline. Its “anxiety of influence” simultaneously motivated Chinese scholars to explore the path of indigenous psychology. Based on their approaches to these questions, the intellectual logic of Chinese psychology mainly presents itself in three aspects.

### (i) The Dominant Position of Positivist Psychology

Western psychology in the early 20th century was not monolithic but encompassed numerous schools and methods, primarily including the dominant positivist tradition and the interpretive tradition as its counterpoint. The former treats psychological phenomena as natural objects operating according to their internal laws. It strives to imitate the natural science model, using experimental and quantitative methods to precisely manipulate research objects, “where the objects or events of psychology are decomposed into well-defined, specific questions for research,” thereby producing nomological knowledge of causal explanation. The latter treats psychological phenomena as expressions of inner experience (Erlebnis) and the temporal meaning of intersubjective understanding, advocating methods such as phenomenology and hermeneutics to comprehend the holistic historical effects of idiographic experiential horizons. Chinese psychology circles also noted the differences between these two research

approaches; for instance, Guo Yicen specifically distinguished the essential differences between objective and subjective psychology. Despite such distinctions and the rapid introduction of interpretive traditions like psychoanalysis, “truly experimental physiological psychology is certainly the basic starting point.”

Based on this starting point, the academic community at the time generally agreed that Chinese psychology had two “promising paths” : “One is to use ethological or experimental methods to document in detail the development of behavior from conception to death in humans or other animals…The other is to use physiological knowledge and methods to conduct experimental analysis of behavior…Both tasks are not empty speculation but use experimental observation to obtain knowledge that can be experimentally verified.” Accordingly, Chen Daqi regarded psychology as a science exploring the “structure of mental functions, activities, and developmental processes” ; 11 Guo Renyuan advocated its complete incorporation into the natural sciences as a branch of biological science; Pan Shu declared that psychology should adhere to the principle of objectivity, believing that “psychological methods are no different from other sciences” ; 12 Lu Yudao pointed out that as a component of mental science, it could become a science just like physics; based on his review of Western psychology’ s evolution, Gao Juefu defined psychology as a natural and experimental science. Overall, positivist research during this period exhibited two main characteristics. First, it imitated Western methods in basic research fields such as “animal psychology and physiological psychology” opened up by Western scholars: Chen Daqi used experimental methods to examine perceptual features in white rats; Wang Jingxi used Matthews oscilloscopes to record evoked potentials in the lateral geniculate body when cats moved their visual field; Xiao Xiaorong and Zheng Peiliu reported detailed data and experimental results on the accuracy of finger and arm movements; the Sun Yat-sen University Psychology Institute published English-language analyses on the correlation between skin galvanic response and emotion. Second, it transformed Western research methods or actively created new methods to explore Chinese issues, thereby gradually “entering an era of indigenous research” : 13 Guo Renyuan invented the “Kuo window” technique to dynamically depict the behavioral development of bird embryos; Zhang Yaoxiang, Shen Youqian (using eye-tracking technology), Du Zuozhou (using the tachistoscopic method), Chen Lijiang (using the cancellation method), Zhou Xiangeng and others deeply advanced Chinese-character psychology experiments on horizontal versus vertical reading; Chen Daqi demonstrated the efficiency advantages of horizontal eye movements, providing scientific basis for the typographical shift of Chinese books from vertical to horizontal layout; Ai Wei’ s achievements in Chinese-character psychology had significant impacts on improving Chinese-character learning efficiency, simplifying Chinese-character reforms, and promoting horizontal typesetting practices. 14

### (ii) Early Progress in Applied Psychology

Chinese psychologists not only emphasized basic research in positivist psychology but also strived to apply its findings to production and life practices, because “if psychology has no practical use, its scientific value is diminished.”<sup>15</sup> At the time, numerous figures in political, business, educational, and even military circles valued psychology, hoping it would function in all aspects of politics, economy, and education.

First, in political applications, Lu Zhiwei criticized the flaws of Confucian and Legalist political psychology, which abstractly discussed instincts on one hand and created astonishing political theories and educational systems based on abstract conclusions on the other. He advocated that psychological exploration of politics should descend to concrete social interaction processes formed through suggestion, sympathy, imitation, and other alternating stimulations between individuals, thereby actively transforming social material conditions and opening paths for new morality through this concrete applied science rather than old rituals based on abstract human nature (comparable to today’s “Confucian social scientification”).<sup>17</sup> Wei Xiqin used psychoanalysis to criticize education goals differentiated by gender, implementing political intentions to promote women’s rights and gender equality. He also argued that China’s mechanical imitation of foreign political models stemmed from a lack of understanding of the “national mind,” calling for in-depth exploration of indigenous political psychological structures.<sup>18</sup> Wu Zelin analyzed the psychological variations of the strong and the weak, revealing the psychological mechanisms of imperialist aggression against China. Chen Xiying claimed that individual impulses form the basis of politics, predicting that psychology “will soon have an impact on politics.”<sup>19</sup> Chen Jianxiao advocated using scientific methods to explore social and political attitudes, deepening psychology’s application in electoral practices and legal affairs. Yun Daiying emphasized that revolutionary possibilities should not be pinned on ideals but should scientifically harness the internal laws of mass psychology, “following the natural development of mass psychology…assisting it within our capacity.”<sup>20</sup>

Second, in economic applications, during the so-called “golden decade” (1927–1937) of relatively rapid socio-economic development, industrial psychology attracted significant attention. Chen Li explicitly stated: “The goal of industrial psychology is twofold: on one hand, to increase workers’ own happiness; on the other hand, to enhance production efficiency,”<sup>21</sup> later personally conducting research in machinery and textile factories on worker training and work environment improvement. Xiao Xiaorong promoted the development of industrial psychology: “The vast movement of human factors research is just beginning. Psychology’s status in schools, clinics, advertising agencies, factories, and vocational institutions is gradually rising”;<sup>22</sup> Sun Ke attempted to use psychology to promote the advertising industry, thereby strengthening capitalist commodity economy in China;<sup>23</sup> Xie Shihong advocated using advertising psychology to revitalize national industry and enhance national power;<sup>24</sup> Xie Juhui analyzed

the psychological mechanisms of financial crises from both bankers' and the public' s perspectives, believing that understanding these two types of psychology would help banking risk management; 25 Zhang Deciu traced the psychological roots of the widespread bankruptcy of China' s rural economy at the time. 26

Finally, in educational applications, along with the great development of the psychological testing movement and mental hygiene movement, Lu Zhiwei regarded education as the main work of applied psychology, concerned with “how to teach reading and writing skills to four hundred million compatriots in the simplest, most direct, most economical, and least time-consuming way.” 27 Regarding psychological testing, Chen Heqin, Ai Wei, Lu Zhiwei, Xiao Xiaorong and others actively revised foreign scales and created urgently needed standardized tests. These tests were widely applied in educational reform, personnel selection, and even military training, forming a spectacular psychological testing movement. McCall, a psychological and educational measurement expert as famous as Thorndike, once exclaimed: “Before I came to China, Chinese scholars had already begun the psychological testing movement...Among all countries' educational and psychological measurements I have examined, China should be ranked first.” 28 In autumn 1930, Dai Jitao, then president of the Nationalist Government' s Examination Yuan, recognized the important role of testing in cadre selection and mobilized psychologists to organize a testing society. Psychological testing “extended beyond educational applications to industry and the Kuomintang' s party and government departments at the time, emphasizing the application of character testing.” 29 Zhou Xiangeng, Xiao Xiaorong, and Dai Bingheng actively promoted military psychological measurement and practice, contributing to the victory in the War of Resistance. The mental hygiene movement initiated by Beers also spread to China, and as early as 1930, Chinese representatives traveled to Washington to attend the First International Mental Hygiene Conference. The Ministry of Education at the time had already incorporated “mental hygiene and its methods” into normal school curriculum standards. Wu Nanxuan, Zhang Yinian, Cheng Yulin, Ding Zan and others launched a Chinese version of the mental hygiene movement through writing, offering courses, establishing hospitals, and forming societies, producing profound social impacts.

### **(iii) Preliminary Exploration of Indigenous Chinese Psychology**

Traditional Chinese culture has accumulated rich psychological thought. The introduction of Western psychology not only brought modern knowledge and methods but also created opportunities to reflect on tradition through the mirror of the Other. This inspired scholars at the time to use the West as method and China as problem, seeking possibilities to absorb and transform traditional culture and construct indigenous Chinese psychology. For example: Liang Qichao interpreted Buddhist “dharma” as deep consciousness theory, facilitating internal integration between Buddhist thought and modern psychology; 30 Jing Changji believed that the argumentative structures and cognitive methods of

Mohist and School of Names had unique psychological value; 31 Wang Zhen categorized and counted *Chuanxilu* according to modern psychological categories, constructing a systematic and scientific interpretive system of classical Chinese psychology; 32 Liang Shuming distinguished psychology based on factual description from ethics based on value judgment, arguing that all ethics has its psychological foundation, therefore “to ask whether Confucius’ s advocated principles stand, one must first examine whether his psychological insights stand. So if you cannot first compare and verify Confucius’ s psychology with contemporary psychology, there is no need to discuss developing Confucius’ s principles.”

33 This intellectual orientation resonates with the faculty psychology of the Scottish Common Sense School led by Thomas Reid and inherited by Joseph Haven, both attempting to ground moral philosophy in philosophy of mind. Coincidentally, Haven’ s *Mental Philosophy* (Chinese translation) published in 1889 is often traced as the origin of Chinese psychology.

Overall, numerous scholars attempted to “illuminate domestic old materials,” “examine foreign new materials,” and “invent their own theories and experiments based on these two materials,” thereby integrating Western psychology as an imported discipline into the Chinese cultural context, making its “content as suitable as possible to national conditions and its form as sinicized as possible.”

34 Of course, some scholars took Chinese culture as the standard to examine Western psychology’ s limitations. For instance, Yu Jiaju questioned the defects of Western experimental methods targeting only universal groups, elaborating Xunzi and Zhuxi’ s psychological thoughts as remedies; 35 Xiong Shili, based on his insight of “non-duality of substance and function,” incisively criticized that Western “scientific psychology exclusively uses nervous system activity or brain function and reflection of the objective world to elucidate the mind. In other words, it directly explains the mind as physics. If this theory prevails, the virtue-nature of the mind will have no way to be understood.” 36 This judgment almost converges with Gilbert Ryle’ s revelation of the “category mistake” of misusing psychological concepts as physical concepts. It was precisely from the consciousness and confidence of excellent traditional Chinese culture that thinkers like Xiong Shili could transcend the one-dimensional intellectual logic predetermined by Western psychology.

With the advancement of intellectual logic in these three aspects, the community of Chinese psychologists and their academic paradigms gradually took shape. Professional organizations such as the Chinese Psychological Association (1921), Chinese Testing Society (1931), Chinese Mental Hygiene Association (1936), and Chinese Psychological Society (1937) were successively established. Academic journals including *Psychology* (Journal of the Chinese Psychological Association, 1922), *Testing* (Journal of the Chinese Testing Society, 1932), *Psychology Semi-Annual* (1934), *Special Issue on Psychological Education Experiments* (1934), *Psychology and Education* (1935), *Psychology Quarterly* (1936), *Psychology and Education Research* (1936), *Chinese Journal of Psychology* (1937), and *Educational Psychology Research* (1940) were launched one after another. Numerous domestic research institutions also established psychology departments, such as

Nanjing Higher Normal School (predecessor of Nanjing University, 1920), Fudan University (1923), Daxia University (1924), Peking University (1926), Tsinghua University (1926), Fu Jen Catholic University (1929), and the Institute of Psychology of Academia Sinica (1929). Thus, I have outlined the general contours of the intellectual logic in Chinese psychology' s modern formation. Centering on epistemological questions about the essence of mind, methods for studying psychological phenomena, and how to apply findings to production and life practices, it explores the ontology, methodology, and praxeology of psychology, presenting characteristics of positivist tradition dominance alongside diverse orientations in applied psychology and indigenous Chinese psychology.

## II. The Governmental Logic of Chinese Psychology

With the invasion of “European winds and American rains,” people gradually realized the importance of “rectifying people’ s hearts” for national salvation. “Many believe that to reform China, one must start with transforming society; to transform society, one must conduct thorough research; psychology is one of the necessary tools for such research.” 37 As a modern tool for exploring national psychological mechanisms, Western psychology quickly entered the vision of social reformers. In this regard, Sun Yat-sen actively called for the transformation and construction of national character: “To fundamentally rectify the source, to work from the foundation, is to improve character to save the nation,” 38 using new personality ideals as the psychological foundation for a modern, prosperous, and strong state. This meant that “to achieve fundamental innovation, one must first save the drowning of people’ s hearts” 39 because “today’ s commentators on politics, academia, and technology all know to adopt others’ strengths to compensate for our weaknesses; yet they do not realize that people’ s virtue, wisdom, and power are actually the great origins of politics, academia, and technology.” 40 Similarly, in Yan Fu’ s view, the purpose of developing “people’ s virtue, wisdom, and power” was to cultivate national virtue and aggregate national wisdom and power into collective strength to compete with foreign enemies. 41 Liang Qichao’ s *On the New Citizen* stated at the outset: “For a nation to stand in the world, it must have unique qualities of its nationals.” However, “China’ s old morality 恐怕不足以范围今后之人心也” ( “probably cannot encompass future people’ s hearts” ), and he “longed to invent a new morality to supplement it,” therefore “I now want to emphasize that the new citizen is an urgent priority,” because “with new citizens, why worry about lacking new institutions, new governments, or new nations?” 42 By 1918, when Mao Zedong and others initiated the “New Citizen Study Society,” which occupied an important position in Chinese revolutionary history, they also took “new citizen” as its name, with its original purpose being “to improve people’ s hearts and customs.” 43 Using the shaping of new citizens to transform China, turning subjects into new citizens, and thereby building a modern nation “accumulated from citizens” became the intellectual trend of the time. The transformation of the new citizen’ s “heart” inherently required a modern scientific apparatus capable of explaining, calculating, disciplining, and appropriating “mental power.” This

psycho-political economy dedicated to developing the new citizen' s “mental power” demonstrates the unique govern-mental logic of Chinese psychology.

### (i) The Theoretical Foundation of Psychology' s Govern-mental Logic

Governance does not merely refer to narrow political arrangements or state management. “More accurately, it designates the ways in which individuals' or groups' conduct might be directed—the governance of children, souls, communities, and patients. It concerns not only the legitimate forms of political or economic subordination but also modes of action that are more or less considered and calculated, that is, power that necessarily acts upon the possibilities of action of others. In this sense, governance is the control of the possible field of action of others.”<sup>44</sup> In short, governance means “the conduct of conduct,”<sup>45</sup> which English scholar N. Rose expanded as “government at a distance,” that is, a “subtle affair of extending control across time and space by utilizing micro-fields of power.”<sup>46</sup> In fact, this distant micro-power' s guidance of conduct represents a key historical evolution of governance forms from pre-modern to modern times, shifting from Kantian enlightenment' s call to escape “submission to others through control and dependence” to Foucault' s re-enlightenment critique of “self-discipline through internalizing norms and becoming oneself.”<sup>47</sup> In Deleuze' s sense, this is precisely the deterritorialization and reterritorialization of human psychology, pointing to the ways action might be guided to restructure the “field of individual action possibilities.”

Thus, this modern form of governance can rule without relying on coercive bureaucratic institutions backed by traditional legal authority or coercion authorized by religion, but rather through constructing a field of possibilities for self-governance. Psychological disciplines and their professional knowledge play important roles in the operation of this new governance form. They do not merely objectively describe human psychology and behavior but become involved in the reshaping of power relations as the deep structure of intellectual logic: “There are no power relations without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute power relations.”<sup>48</sup> Psychology not only provides, at the surface level, a comprehensive knowledge system and field of action possibilities for guiding conduct through distant micro-power—“the disappearance of traditional habits and trust in psychological technology make people no longer believe in their own intuitions about happiness, fulfillment, and how to raise their children”<sup>49</sup>—but also constructs, at the deep level, a new distribution of the sensible order and corresponding subjectivity that makes the aforementioned power and its discipline possible.

Foucault' s compatriot Rancière expanded governance into a more foundational principle of distribution of the sensible in a broader sense, that is, the distributive order concerning what is visible, sayable, and doable: politics and aesthetics are homogeneous because they both organize a common world composed of self-evident facts perceived by the senses and shape corresponding new subjec-

tivities. Rancière reveals: “What truly deserves the name politics is the series of ideas and practices that shape this common world. Politics is first a way of constructing a specific field of experience within sensory data. It is the partition of the perceptible, visible, and sayable. This partition allows (or disallows) certain specific data to appear; allows or disallows certain specific subjects to name and discuss them. It is a specific intertwining of modes of being, acting, and speaking.”<sup>50</sup> Therefore, if intellectual logic is the epistemological pursuit of nomothetic knowledge at the epistemological level, then the distribution of the sensible reminds us that, because it sets the conditions of possibility for subjects’ existence, action, and speech, govern-mental logic determines the premises and boundaries of intellectual logic at the ontological level. The modern distribution of the sensible order is dedicated to privileging the psyche through the paradigm of individual autonomy, meaning that modern discourse, on one hand, pushes the abstract subjectivity of the individual to an unprecedented height, while on the other hand, “separates his psychological characteristics from his entire personality, objectifying them in opposition to this personality,”<sup>51</sup> thereby causing psychological characteristics to be regarded as a “class” essence with inherent properties existing purely independently of us—the “inner, silent universality that naturally connects many individuals” that modern psychology eagerly pursues.<sup>52</sup> This privilege is precisely the speculative effect of modern psychology that opposes speculation, unknowingly reflecting the fetishistic illusion constructed by the distribution of the sensible order that dominates the psychological empire opposite to it, and maintaining the production and reproduction of this distribution of the sensible.

The mode of production establishes the given distribution of sensible things and determines the framework of possibility for the psyche’s emergence and the plausibility structure of psychological research. The subjectified distribution of the sensible is the process of extracting a distinct self-figure from the opaque gestalt of the mode of production. People’s consciousness of life is not directly identical with the essence of life; the mode of production, as the essential determination of life, does not directly present its essential attributes to people’s consciousness. Lefebvre made a precise revelation: “People do not understand their own lives: they view and live their lives through ideological themes and ethical values...Not understanding that their own life is precisely their life, not understanding that their own life is precisely their life consciousness.”<sup>53</sup> Sun Yat-sen also deeply experienced this in his tortuous revolutionary journey, summarizing it as the epistemology of “difficult knowledge, easy action” and “knowing necessarily leads to action” in “psychological construction,” to “break the great enemy of psychological confusion” : “Regarding internal dietary matters, everyone practices them but never understands their principles; regarding external economic issues, everyone is familiar with them, yet the whole nation does not understand their rationale” ;<sup>54</sup> “Citizens! Citizens! What kind of heart do you have? Incapable? Inactive? Or unknowing? I know it is not incapability or inaction; nor is it inaction, but unknowing. If one can know, then construction is but a simple task.”<sup>55</sup> “Revolution must first revolutionize the heart.” To maximize

the mobilization of national revolutionary agency and minimize dependence on external things under material scarcity, psychology, as “the simplest and most urgent method,” 56 was elevated by Sun Yat-sen to the foundation of all material construction. He dedicated himself to using the “universal light” of the bourgeois distribution of the sensible to image the opaque totality of the mode of production onto the national psyche’s “retina,” making it a credible structure for perceiving self and society. This is the epistemological logic of “difficult knowledge, easy action,” using psychological methodology to extract the insensible transformation of the mode of production from the background, turning it into a sensible figure of subjective consciousness, thereby “infusing” bourgeois ideology into national self-identity and daily practice.

Chinese psychology’s government-mental logic is embedded in this historical transformation of the explicit credible structure, translating the opaque mode of production into transparent modern experiences that individuals can “feel” and practice. Under the guise of science, it implicitly distributes nationals’ “sensible things,” controls the possible field of their conduct, actively cultivates “self-conscious, self-strengthening, automatic, and self-governing” psychology, 57 and achieves subjectified self-discipline.

## (ii) Manifestations of Psychology’s Government-mental Logic

The essence of government-mental logic is the subjectified distribution of the sensible, which determines how specific experiences are constructed from individual sensory data. In the ethical-based tradition of self-cultivation, family management, state governance, and world peace, the connection between individual and state is direct and unmediated—“near is family, far is the world” 58—making state governance a projection of family life. No clear boundary exists between public and private domains; the latter often becomes the object of power’s gaze. This special governance structure leads to dual distributions of the sensible at both macro and micro levels in China. Within the “family-state continuum,” there exists both top-down direct governance of individual experience and bottom-up responses to this governance. The interweaving and convergence of macro and micro power realize subjectified distribution of the sensible, which precisely constitutes the unique government-mental situation faced by Chinese psychology’s modern formation, distinguishing it from Western micro self-governance of individuals through psychology in civil society.

**1. Macro-level Distribution of the Sensible** Macro-power intentionally uses psychological methods to cultivate its desired national character, thereby promoting the construction of a modern state, forming a top-down macro-level distribution of the sensible. This is manifested in the coherent lineage of psychological construction, the New Life Movement, and national spirit mobilization.

First is the manifestation of macro-level distribution of the sensible in psychological construction. In *The International Development of China: Psychological Construction*, Sun Yat-sen elevated the human mind to the foundation of

state-building, with his teachings including four major constructions: “psychological,” “material,” “social,” and “political,” with psychological construction placed first. “A nation is the accumulation of people. People are vessels of the mind. National politics is a phenomenon of group psychology. Therefore, the foundation of nation-building should begin with psychology,” and “must use deeds most conforming to mass psychology to disseminate ideas of nation and ethnicity.” 59 The “Lizhi Society” founded by Chiang Kai-shek took “revolutionizing the heart” as its purpose. He believed Sun Yat-sen’s philosophy “could be named ‘spiritual construction,’ ” and further “integrated and comprehended Sun Yat-sen’s ‘spiritual education for soldiers’ and his teachings on character cultivation for party members and nationals,” “as a solid foundation for psychology and spirit, to inspire people’s hearts and advance revolution.” 60 Huang Renlin, the society’s general director, declared that “the Lizhi Society’s work is to seek psychological construction,” proposing ten creeds including “sacrifice” and “diligence” to cultivate body and mind, “develop the most perfect personality,” and “create talents for nation-building.” 61 Psychological construction as “organic construction of people…must fundamentally dissect and thoroughly analyze people’s ideology and life patterns to obtain a teachable and moldable type as the route and cornerstone of psychological construction.” 62 The “teachable and moldable type” precisely points to meta-action and guidance of conduct, elevating it to meta-construction as “construction of construction.” Psychological construction requires the popularization and education of modern science, with “action” as its driving force, “dao” as its content, and “teaching” as its method. Centering on “establishing a new moral system” and “transforming national spirit,” it treats the human mind as a machine for promoting the “dao” of new morality, “practicing new morality and transforming inferior roots.” 63 In essence, psychological construction emphasizes that the key to saving the nation’s fate lies not only in learning Western external institutions but also in the epistemological transformation of nationals’ internal psychological organization, that is, using modern psychology’s credible structure to redistribute and organize nationals’ individual experiences to “cultivate independent, self-respecting, free, equal, industrious, courageous, meticulous, and lively nationals.” 64

Second is the manifestation of macro-level distribution of the sensible in the fifteen-year New Life Movement (1934–1949). Originating from Chiang Kai-shek’s psychological attribution of foreign invasion to the inferiority of nationals’ spiritual quality— “The physique and spirit of our compatriots are all inferior to foreigners. Since their spirit and power surpass ours, they can invade and oppress us at any time” 65—the New Life Movement focused on subtle, all-encompassing spiritual education in daily life, treating psychological transformation as the fundamental path to transforming life and strengthening the nation through proper education. Through the biopolitical practice of psychological governance, it reconstructed the logic of people’s survival security, livelihood development, and life reproduction, aiming to integrate individual consciousness into the national governance track of militarized, productive, and artistic life. Psychologists at the time actively responded, proving that “psychology

is the root, life is the branch; treating both root and branch is the goal of the New Life Movement and the foundation of psychological construction.” 66 It “hoped nationals would act automatically without forced implementation …it was persuasive, not coercive…consistent with Sun Yat-sen’ s teachings of ‘psychological construction’ and ‘revolution must first revolutionize the heart,’ ” 67 being “a psychological construction movement without division of time, space, or human affairs,” aiming to “use the simplest and most urgent method to wash away our habits unsuitable for the times and environment, making them tend toward life suitable for modern survival.” 68 Its core content manifested as “improving nationals’ life habits and establishing nationals’ psychological preparation…demonstrating the cultivation of propriety, righteousness, integrity, and shame in food, clothing, housing, and transportation—using proper attitudes toward people, clear discernment, and genuine self-awareness for self-discipline.” 69 In essence, the New Life Movement dedicated itself to “spiritual (rational) management and control of the body (desires), thinking and seeking order and hygiene in the overall environment,” “advocating that everyone continuously uses spiritual power to manage and control their body, in other words, treating the body as a passive object and spirit as an active subject, with spirit constantly protecting and regulating the body. Therefore, the standards for this management, control, protection, and regulation are not naturally generated desires from within one’ s own body but artificial orders prescribed by others’ gaze and regulated by spirit, namely body aesthetics.” 70 This precisely accords with Rancière’ s fundamental identification of “politics as aesthetics” : nationals actively relativize their own subjectivity to submit to the distribution order of their sensible experience by the power’ s gaze.

Third is the manifestation of macro-level distribution of the sensible in national spirit mobilization. Based on the practical needs of the War of Resistance and national salvation, Chiang Kai-shek initiated spiritual mobilization. In his *Outline for National Spirit Mobilization*, he reviewed the struggle experience since the war: “Although material conditions’ deficiency is quite obvious, the lack of spiritual conditions is overwhelmingly primary…The so-called national spirit mobilization means concentrating all consciousness, thought, wisdom, and spiritual power in one direction and elevating them. It is not only to repel the violent enemy’ s aggression but especially to establish a permanent foundation for post-war nation-building through the effort of resisting the enemy.” 71 National spirit mobilization included three common goals vital to national survival: “Nation above all, ethnicity above all; military first, victory first; will concentrated, power concentrated.” 72 As the psychological community’ s response, Xiao Xiaorong confirmed that “the scientific foundation of spirit mobilization is of course psychology first; a main goal of psychology is to study how spirit emerges, develops, and changes. Thus, applying psychology is necessary to advance this work.” 73 Even hypnotism 顺应精神总动员风潮, “promoted ‘spiritual training’ for military and police education to Kuomintang members.” 74 Xiao Xiaorong defined spirit as the synthesis of sentiment, belief, and behavioral disposition. From a psychological science perspective, the first goal of spirit

mobilization is to cultivate “sentiment” toward the nation and ethnicity—that is, emotional attitudes of reverence, love, and belief; the second goal is to foster “belief” in military affairs and victory—that is, making people firmly believe in the transcendence of military work and the inevitability of final victory; the third goal is to cultivate personality “disposition,” which makes people inevitably concentrate will and power on the work of nation and ethnicity. For example, targeting the goal of “military first, victory first,” Xiao Xiaorong conducted detailed military psychology research, 主张军事教育之核心因素即为“自我教育,” which means mobilizing “self-power” and “spiritual power” to integrate various personality dispositions for systematic optimization. “Self-power” refers to the narrow sense of individual self-regulating willpower, while “spiritual power” means that in self-education, “spiritual power” can overcome the possibilities of self-willpower—that is, ideas and values can dominate the intensity of willpower.<sup>75</sup> This dominant position of “spiritual power” over “self-power” precisely reflects the state’s re-appropriation and redistribution of individual willpower through ideas and values.

**2. Micro-level Distribution of the Sensible** Early 20th-century Chinese psychology had already provided people with a relatively high-level knowledge system for guiding conduct and its field of action possibilities, manifested in the knowledge accumulation and political, economic, and educational applications discussed in intellectual logic. When these originally value-neutral basic or applied studies in intellectual logic were used, as responses to the macro distribution of the sensible order, to reconstruct the everyday experience order of the time, they formed a bottom-up micro-level distribution of the sensible.

First, in politics, psychologists attempted to psychologize urgent macro political and economic problems into sensible “human affairs psychology” within nationals’ responsibility range, such as self-cultivation and patriotism. For this purpose, Xiao Xiaorong explicitly pointed out: “Throughout history and across cultures, the way of governing the state and cultivating oneself always takes psychological construction as the foundation,” and “in the modern environment, we must rely on psychology to promote psychological construction, modernize old society, specialize the problems included in psychological construction, and specialize the knowledge and technology used to solve these problems...Therefore, modern psychological construction work requires specialized psychological knowledge and technology to produce the most rapid, profound, and universal effects.”<sup>76</sup> Consequently, psychologists began “from the activities of the central and autonomic nervous systems” to “explain revolutionary philosophy with various scientific common senses”<sup>77</sup> to psychologize political and economic problems. For instance, Xiao Xiaorong believed that Sun Yat-sen’s “accumulating people to form a nation” “accumulation” was Wundt’s “creative synthesis” (schöpferische synthese), Krueger’s “whole” (ganz), Ehrenfels’s “gestalt quality” (gestaltqualitäten), or Köhler’s “gestalt,” all revealing the emergent property that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Therefore, “a nation is not the mechanical ‘sum’ of people but the ‘accumulation’ that multiplies and

amplifies; people must become the phenomenon of ‘accumulation’ to produce a nation…A nation’s people must all have national consciousness for the nation to exist.”<sup>78</sup> Since national affairs are “phenomena of group psychology,” governance lies in how to mobilize and amplify nationals’ “human affairs psychology.” Therefore, measures in military, political, educational, industrial, and medical fields should all be based on “human affairs psychology” principles, launching specific work accordingly.

Second, in education, the selection of educational content, methods, and purposes reflects the distribution of the sensible order, constructing learners’ perceptual frameworks by distributing roles, defining abilities, and regulating behavior. Educational salvation was a very popular trend at the time, and its purpose, as Dewey had long reminded, was that for Chinese people to transform themselves, the most important thing was psychological transformation.<sup>79</sup> Precisely because of the emphasis on education’s social transformation function and the response to the practical concern of reshaping national spirit, Dewey’s pragmatism produced tremendous influence in China at the time. “The most fundamental problem in education is the psychological problem; any difficulty encountered in education, whether concerning methods, teaching materials, or children’s physical and mental development, must seek solutions from psychology.”<sup>80</sup> For example, Zhang Yi advocated promoting psychological testing at the Anhui Provincial Education Bureau Directors’ Conference (1929) to promote scientific and standardized education—that is, precisely labeling individual identities, calibrating cognitive filters for understanding self and world, and optimizing efficient allocation of human resources, time, and money.<sup>81</sup> Psychology was also considered helpful in achieving the nationalist educational goal of “being a person, being a Chinese person, being a modern Chinese person.”<sup>82</sup> Cheng Shucui directly used psychological approaches to awaken people’s national consciousness, measuring the national identity of middle school students in southern Manchuria to expose the impact and distortion of enslavement education on Chinese national identity by invaders.<sup>83</sup> Xiao Xiaorong and others widely used scale tools to clarify the developmental level of nationals’ psychological abilities, emphasizing that “there is no reliable difference in intelligence test scores between these two nations (China and the United States),”<sup>84</sup> using scientific psychological evidence to boost national confidence.

Finally, in mental hygiene, it not only distributes the experiential order defining normal or abnormal psychological states but also elevates nationals’ mental health level to a height concerning national survival. “Those who diagnose China’s illness all point to the disease of insensitivity and numbness…Therefore, to cure China today…one must first cure its brain.”<sup>85</sup> The anxiety that Chinese cannot protect their brains and the whole nation becomes sickly men targeted the social mentality of the time, leading businessman Huang Chuji to develop the phenomenal “Ai Luo Brain Tonic.” He understood the 20th century as “an era of brain power competition…Today’s China…to survive in the 20th century, stand independently among great powers, and leap above the continent, anyone with a head who does not betray the reputation of China’s millennia-

old civilization must imprint the words ‘survival of the fittest’ in their brain network...The concern is that our compatriots...have weak brain power. In this fiercely competitive arena, if we do not urgently seek remedies, what can the future hold?...This is why Ai Luo Brain Tonic is imported to China. With the medicine’s arrival comes infinite happiness for our 400 million people.” He claimed that “henceforth, Chinese who drink this tonic: in government, may clarify righteousness and profit to make righteous choices; in the military, may clarify success and failure to produce courageous strength; in reformers, may clarify affairs to make beneficial actions; in students abroad, may clarify matters to advance academic studies rapidly.”<sup>86</sup> Huang Chuji transformed the macro problem of racial superiority into the micro problem of intelligence level, interrogating nationals to convert the grand narrative of “strengthening the race to save the nation” into the sensible experience of “strengthening the body and supplementing the brain” within their capacity, thereby “endowing commodities and their consumption with the meaning of bearing racial and national survival,”<sup>87</sup> achieving great moral and economic success.

More noteworthy is the unprecedented “Chinese Mental Hygiene Movement” that emerged in the 1930s. One of its advocates, Wu Nanxuan, passionately called: “Our country today faces severe national crisis...If we sincerely want to realize psychological construction to revive the ethnicity and relieve the national crisis, we must promote mental hygiene research.”<sup>88</sup> The mental hygiene condition of the people not only affects individual happiness and social service capacity but is also closely related to the entire national spirit, national consciousness, and national morality.<sup>89</sup> Wu Nanxuan especially emphasized the roles of academic groups, charitable organizations, and religious institutions in the mental hygiene movement, unconsciously promoting bottom-up participation of micro-power in the deployment of govern-mental logic. Mental health issues, often individualized and technically treated in Western psychology, were elevated to a height concerning national survival and shaping new citizens. Only in this context can we understand why Xiao Xiaorong seemingly counter-intuitively defined mental hygiene as the application of psychology in modern personality cultivation.<sup>90</sup> Zhang Yinian even advocated starting from childhood, using mental hygiene knowledge to regulate children’s experiential order to create sound national personalities.<sup>91</sup>

Through the two-way interweaving and convergence of macro and micro power, nationals’ psychological life is appropriated as calculable and developable psychological capital. Ethical attributes such as national morality, national spirit, patriotic sentiment, or group-cohesion quality, redefined by psychology, become key elements for resisting humiliation, reviving the nation, and social construction. “The rational logic of placing subjects into the overall consideration of state and society. Not only physical and intellectual power but also ethical mental power and virtue power are respectively defined as elements in the value system and incorporated into benefit-effectiveness calculations and production modes. The entire life orientation of the individual—including the subject’s most fundamental ethical position—thus becomes visible material calculated and man-

aged by the state.”<sup>92</sup> Psychologists at the time were no longer satisfied with being mere knowledge transporters but became agents embedded in specific historical conditions and power structures: they actively endowed psychology with the spirit of the times, transforming it from a pure knowledge system into a spiritual apparatus for shaping the modern subjectivity of Chinese people as “new citizens,” attempting to use it to promote the socio-economic revolution of “saving the nation from extinction.” This precisely characterizes the psycho-political-economic logic in Chinese psychology’s modern formation.

### III. The Collision Between Intellectual and Governmental Logics

It should be noted that the interactive relationship between the two variables of intellectual and governmental logics does not project onto the developmental trajectories of Chinese and Western psychology in fixed patterns. If Western psychology’s governmental logic preceded its intellectual logic, creating a new individual-based intellectual order according to its own image and granting people a spatially visible and sensible individualized governance form that becomes individuals’ active self-governance through intellectual logic’s penetration into civil society daily life, then Chinese psychology’s modern formation synchronized with the process of individuals disembedding from community. Its governmental and intellectual logics exhibit characteristics of synchronic dialectical relationship. Under certain conditions, the intentional utilization of this feature could even become a comparative advantage for Chinese psychology research relative to Western psychology.

#### (i) The Diachronic Interaction Between Western Psychology’s Governmental and Intellectual Logics

Western psychology’s governmental and intellectual logics prominently exhibit a diachronic sequential relationship. With the establishment of capitalist production relations, subjects originally attached to feudal communities (*gemeinschaft*) gradually “disembedded” into modern citizen-subjects. When Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence in 1776, changing “subject” (臣民) in the context of feudal personal dependency relations to “citizen” (公民) in the context of bourgeois free polity, this was a significant marker of this process. Hegel explained this “disembedding” process as “the liberating moment contained in labor” : “individual labor” as the “source of possession” is the first moment of civil society, “only in property does man exist as reason,”<sup>93</sup> “property is the first embodiment of freedom, it is an essential end in itself,” and individuals in civil society obtain recognition and realize their personality through property acquired by their labor.<sup>94</sup> This is Hegel’s trilogy of “labor-property rights-realization of personality.” It transcends Kantian personality’s pure subjectivity as transcendental apperception unity and transcendental freedom, generating empirical personality types based on private property rights, thereby paving the way for psychology to grasp personality empirically. As the

abstract mechanism of market exchange began to override community, its real manifestation became only the wage laborer as a commodity of labor power—the individualized personality “disembedded” from traditional community, like a baby detached from its mother, historically exposed for the first time to the sandstorm of capitalist socio-economic power. Therefore, before the birth of modern psychology’s disciplinary structure, its individualist govern-mental logic had already been pre-established in Western ideas and reality. This logic first cultivated a new personality type in civil society soil that met its governance needs—a govern-mental subject presumed to be independent, self-reflective, and capable of self-exploitation. This “ideal type” is merely the theoretical expression of social relations of production, yet it became the “model organism” that psychology later delighted in observing, manipulating, and “curing.” Thus, psychology’s seemingly neutral intellectual logic actually transposes personality experiences pre-shaped by social life into inherent, natural “human nature laws,” and through its knowledge production and clinical practice, prompts individuals to actively adapt to and serve the reproduction of the entire governance system, thereby implicitly and continuously confirming and consolidating this specific individualist ideology and forming deep complicity with broader power structures.

Western psychology’s govern-mental logic preceded its intellectual logic, making the former hidden and further vanishing in Western psychology’s promotion of value-neutral universal knowledge. Western science originated from the Western metaphysical tradition of pursuing entities with minimal intension and maximal extension, with the purpose “to seek science for the sake of knowledge, not for any practical purpose.”<sup>95</sup> Weber explicitly stated that researchers’ value judgments would terminate adequate understanding of facts: “determining facts, logical and mathematical relations, or the internal structure of cultural values is one thing; answering questions about cultural values and how to act regarding their individual content in cultural and political communities is another.”<sup>96</sup> Under the influence of the value-neutral tradition, modern psychology mainly focused on intellectual logic at the epistemological level, 轻视对社会历史的价值承诺。Titchener explicitly defended: “Science seeks pure knowledge, and psychology is a science.”<sup>97</sup> Examining mainstream psychology’s historical evolution, from mechanistic structuralism and behaviorism to organic functionalism, cognitive psychology, and evolutionary psychology, all exhibit method- and technology-driven pursuits of pure universal knowledge.

The scientific cloak of value-neutral intellectual logic long concealed the fundamental govern-mental effects of govern-mental logic, which only re-emerged prominently in Western psychologists’ focus with the rise of critical and radical psychology movements in the 1960s. Critical psychology was dissatisfied with traditional psychology’s exclusive focus on technical relevance in intellectual logic—that is, limiting the validity of psychological research to purely technical fields such as experimental design, hypothesis testing, or variance analysis. It thematically addressed govern-mental logic, directly pointing to psychology’s production, calculation, and reshaping of subjectivity through clinical diagnosis, testing technology, and self-help books, exposing the entire set of subtle empow-

erment technologies for governing citizens, such as self-esteem, autonomy, and self-actualization, and instead attempted to plan emancipating relevance with both scientific foundation and value commitment, reconsidering the legitimacy and new possibilities of psychological research at the total socio-political level. The radical psychology movement, combining intellectual critique and political practice, identified the implicit role of traditional knowledge production in identifying with and maintaining the status quo, and challenged conventional psychological science by emphasizing “lay” perspectives in science and (mental) medicine, public participation in scientific research, alternative “psychological problem” care, and citizen-science alliances, thereby promoting powerful coexistence between scholarship (belonging to intellectual logic) and activism (belonging to govern-mental logic).

### **(ii) The Synchronic Entanglement of Chinese Psychology’ s Govern-mental and Intellectual Logics**

Western philosophy since Descartes manifests as an epistemological tradition based on subject-object/mind-matter dualism pursuing universal knowledge, whereas Chinese philosophy represented by Confucianism manifests as a nature-destiny (xingming) tradition transcending intellect. “Harmonizing with dao and virtue and ordering through righteousness, exhausting principles and fulfilling nature to reach destiny” (*Zhouyi · Shuogua Zhuan*) demonstrates the basic connotation of Daoist nature-destiny learning. “What heaven decrees is nature; following nature is dao; cultivating dao is teaching” (*Zhongyong*) reveals the classic interpretation of Confucian nature-destiny learning. Both elevate concrete, living ethical order to the height of “nature-destiny learning,” meaning that the purpose of knowledge-seeking is self-cultivation, requiring the realization of various universal ethical principles as concrete life experiences in the lifeworld through personal practice, with life concern, realm transcendence, and ideal personality as ultimate value goals. Thus, the essence of traditional Chinese knowledge types unfolds as personalistic concrete universality: “Learning and being a person should progress together, and even more should integrate and unify.”<sup>100</sup> This knowledge type does not lack the universality required by Western knowledge types, but its universality is always combined with concrete human actions and relationships. In the ethical-based differential mode of association, “all universal standards do not function; one must first clarify who the object is and what relationship they have with oneself before deciding what standard to apply.”<sup>101</sup> The personalistic knowledge type aimed at concrete universality fundamentally differs from Western “investigation of things” pursuit of abstract universal knowledge about objects opposed to subjects. By transforming knowledge into action events, propositional knowledge of universality can ground its legitimacy in the “verb” of sensuous practice, thereby retrieving the essential connection between subject and things and opening up the meaningful world in which people truly act.<sup>102</sup>

The “nature-destiny learning” epistemological tradition faced great chal-

lenges in modern times. After the May Fourth Movement, three ideologies prevailed in Chinese intellectual circles: social Darwinism, scientism, and anti-traditionalism, 103 attempting to create a modernized China through new Western concepts. The “Science versus Metaphysics” debate in the 1920s was an important confrontation between “nature-destiny learning” rooted in Chinese tradition and “investigation of things” as the Western modernity model. The traditionalist camp represented by Zhang Junmai viewed Chinese culture as “spiritual civilization” superior to Western “material civilization,” arguing that “no matter how developed science becomes, the solution to life-view problems can never be achieved by science but only depends on humanity itself.” 104 The science camp represented by Ding Wenjiang 针锋相对地指斥其人生观学说为“玄学” (“metaphysics”). Standing on radical scientism, they attempted to use “experimental” and “scientific” psychological methods to reorganize and transform traditional life-view problems. “According to scientists’ new psychology, the so-called human mind is merely a kind of material motion phenomenon…attributing all internal and external life to the ‘necessary laws’ of material motion…They treat mind and spirit as one thing, based on experimental psychology, insisting that human spirit is also merely a kind of material, equally governed by ‘necessary laws.’ ” 105 Based on this, “what distinction exists between spiritual science and material science? How can we say that purely psychological phenomena are not subject to scientific methods?” 106 The causal laws of psychological phenomena, though more complex than those of material phenomena, still obey deterministic causality. “All psychological phenomena have causes. The credibility of this statement equals that of the statement ‘all material phenomena have causes.’ ” 107 In short, the science camp declared that on a solid physicalist foundation, psychology’ s advanced experimental methods could fully recognize psychological causal laws, solve life-view problems bound by metaphysics and thus subjective and abstract, and through scientific psychological innovation of life-views, enable the entire ethnicity to escape mental ignorance and foreign enslavement, achieving social and psychological modern transformation.

Against this background, Chinese psychologists were not satisfied with defining psychology merely as value-neutral “pure science” at the epistemological level like their Western counterparts, but dedicated themselves to integrating “nature-destiny learning” into “investigation of things for practical use,” 投身于救亡图存的历史使命。Fu Ssu-nien, who studied experimental psychology, advocated replacing superficial enlightenment modernity with deep “psychological transformation,” because “beyond thought, there is feeling; beyond thought revolution, there is feeling development” 108—reorienting affective stimuli and physical practice can facilitate holistic transformation of personality and culture. Zhang Yaoliang vowed when studying in the United States, “This body originally promised to cure people’s diseases, I swear to carefully study the heart’s book,” and conducted empirical research on Chinese superstitious thoughts to explore old society’s psychological characteristics, providing academic basis for social reform. 109 Tao Deyi systematically analyzed Chinese linguistic materials on good and evil in

*Kangxi Dictionary* using the lexical paradigm, hoping to find psychological paths to improve Chinese morality. 110 The reason Chinese psychologists possessed patriotism transcending their Western counterparts was that in Chinese epistemological tradition, knowledge production and accumulation about nature that cannot be effectively applied to enhancing personal cultivation (self-cultivation and family management) and advancing social education (state governance and world peace) occupies an inferior position epistemologically and axiologically. Under the profound shaping of Confucian worldly philosophy and the imperial examination system, traditional Chinese intellectuals 兼任学理性与治理性的双重功能:既需要对文化进行阐释与传播(传道、授业、解惑的学理角色),也要经由官僚体系或乡里教化实践其社会理想(修齐治平的治理角色)。Precisely at this point, Weber declared Western intellectuals' epistemological stance that is vastly different and even opposite: taking scholarship as a calling is a "value-neutral" pure specialization process, even requiring research and teaching of unfavorable facts contrary to one's own beliefs. A strict boundary also exists between scholarly and government roles: "A person's values do not depend on whether he possesses leadership qualities. In any case, the qualities that make a person an excellent scholar or academic advisor are quite different from those that make him a leader to guide life or specifically political activities. If a teacher also possesses the latter qualities, it is merely accidental coincidence." 111

Due to the traditional cultural context early Chinese psychologists inhabited and their unique era tasks, they recognized and experienced psychology's "governmental" function earlier and more genuinely than their Western counterparts, actively using this function to redistribute and organize nationals' sensible experience order, causing Chinese psychology's formation to become deeply involved in the modern transformation of Chinese subjectivity, thus always synchronously intertwining dual logics of intellectual and government dimensions. Such intellectuals deeply immersed in both "intellectual heart" and "governmental heart," when facing a precarious national situation, naturally and intentionally or unintentionally reintegrated the externally separated intellectual and government logics in Western tradition. Zheng Peiliu mentioned that around the 1930s, a popular view in Chinese intellectual circles held that "psychology does not seem to have given us much help in transforming society." 112 This led to "now psychology not only fails to attract attention; moreover, most people have developed antipathy, thinking that psychology as a discipline is at least not what we currently need." 113 This shows that the standard for evaluating psychology at the time was closely combined with expectations for its value in transforming society. No matter how normative and scientific psychology's internal intellectual logic was, if it failed to meet this expectation of the spirit of the times, its development would face numerous doubts. Facing the relatively slow trend of psychological development, some soon reflected that attention should be paid to its dual effects of intellectual and government dimensions. While emphasizing intellectual logic, they more actively incorporated government logic into psychological research vision. Zhang Yaoxiang analyzed that previous psychology had too many "revolutionary," "cancellation," and "overthrow" slo-

gans, 114 deviating from the “nature-destiny learning” epistemological tradition. Zhou Xiangeng advocated that what China most needed was not physiological or animal psychology, nor behaviorism or gestalt psychology 等”纯粹心理学,” but vigorously developing “psychological technology” beneficial to national economy, people’s livelihood, and human affairs transformation: “So-called psychological technology construction means introducing and trying out modern (especially post-WWI) experimental applied psychology from Europe and America, conducting scientific research and contributions on human affairs in all aspects of national economy, people’s livelihood, and daily life, to seek construction of various national undertakings.” 115 Pan Shu pointed out that psychology is a product of culture and society; promoting science without considering social background would certainly be futile, so psychology must be rooted in social soil to truly apply to China. 116 After this reflection, Chinese psychology became more concrete and pragmatic, increasingly highlighting its applied value for social practice and governance. Research that balanced the scientific foundation of intellectual logic and the value commitment of govern-mental logic gradually became the mainstream trend at the time.

The tension between Chinese psychology’s govern-mental and intellectual logics actually contains three relationships: the dialectical relationship between Western theoretical hegemony and the loss of indigenous wisdom voice, where the former as an 显性 paradigm leads to Chinese experience becoming nearly invisible 暗流; the 本末关系 between knowledge accumulation 表象 and historical-social dynamics, manifested as emphasizing knowledge data while 轻视社会脉络; and the 体用关系 between disciplinary instrumentalization and subjectivity consolidation, where when intellectual logic (用) becomes a monological single structure, its cultural subject (体) cannot be established. Resolving these three dilemmas requires breaking the surface to establish the foundation, tracing the origin to open new paths, and clarifying the substance to reach application—that is, using knowledge archaeology to penetrate the universal illusion of Western centrism, perceiving the transformation of modes of production and evolution of power relations behind knowledge production, allowing disciplinary roots to deeply penetrate Chinese soil, and clarifying the value logic chain of who the discipline serves (value subject) and what fundamental problems it solves (value goal).

Beyond pure cognitive interest in intellectual logic, Chinese psychology’s modern formation became deeply involved in the historical tide of national salvation. The impact from the West caused Chinese psychologists to suffer a “devalorization” fission from traditional govern-mental logic’s moral practitioners to intellectual logic’s modern knowledge producers. If Western enlightenment mentality’s “mental habitus” 催生 ed individualism requiring “going outward” to pursue knowledge and transform the world according to the value origin of the inner self, then traditional Chinese culture 推崇镶嵌在自然 (天道) 与族群 (伦常) 中的人” 向内走” 修己安人, 实现内在均衡和超越。Western psychology matured only after individuals fully disembedded from nature and community through long-term socio-historical processes. Chinese psychology’s modern formation,

however, included not only disciplinary institutionalization at the intellectual level but also synchronized with the governance process of modernizing Chinese psychology—that is, the process of individuals being nearly forced to 剥离 from nature and community under urgent circumstances and becoming “psychological persons” (homo psychologicus) who can be psychologically explained, calculated, disciplined, and appropriated. Domestic psychology often lacks reflection on the govern-mental logic that generates “psychological persons,” being one-dimensionally captured by Western psychology’s intellectual logic, resulting in being lost in mosaic collages of heterogeneous concepts and becoming rootless discourse montage lacking intellectual-historical coordinates.

Intellectual-logic psychology often upholds methodological centralism, 标榜价值中立, 却对自身在何种程度上服务于居统治地位的治理价值和规范无思。In the liberal tradition, research on conformity implicitly warns of its dangers, and research on obedience itself is a critique of obedience. When interpreting experimental data constructs marginalized groups as inferiors, limiting their opportunities, and making adverse recommendations, intellectual psychology commits epistemological violence. 117 Additionally, concepts like psychological resilience, originally embedded in Western unique (neoliberal) govern-mental logic, are often stripped as pure intellectual terms and uncritically applied to the Chinese context. If we shape ourselves according to such concepts veiled under value-neutral intellectual cloaks and perform them in daily life, they may truly become part of Chinese identity and transform into an “objective” social reality that can be described, predicted, and controlled. In short, unlike pure natural science, psychology’s research object is not a transparent, “ready-to-hand” (vorhandenheit) silent object, not an intuitive “thing” (Ding) with some quantitative value, but the social relations between people and their process of thought abstraction as real abstractions. 118 Therefore, traditional psychologists often fall into the illusion: “What they just determined to be things suddenly appears as social relations (gesellschaftliches Verhältnis), and what they just determined to be social relations appears as things to mock them.” 119 The cyclical trick between concepts and reality that turns govern-ment into intellectual logic and intellectual logic into govern-ment not only hinders the healthy development of an independent Chinese psychology knowledge system but also obscures the important functions psychology has played and continues to play in shaping Chinese modern subjectivity. Without fully grasping the unique dialectic between intellectual and govern-mental dimensions, we cannot 破解两者复杂的循环戏法, resulting in both losing govern-mental logic within intellectual logic and losing intellectual logic within govern-mental logic in understanding and researching Chinese psychology.

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