

儒家倫理與華人教育觀：含攝易經智慧的自性修養之現代化開展

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摘要

本期的專刊共有五篇文章，主要是針對符碧真（2025a）儒家倫理與華人教育觀：哲學反思、理論建構與實徵研究所提出的論文，進行三篇打靶論文，最後符碧真（2025b）進行回應，整個主軸圍繞在如何用西方的「形構之理」，說清楚儒家智慧的「存在之理」。符教授長期從事「華人教育觀」研究，多年學習黃光國教授所提出的多重哲學典範的知識論策略來進行研究工作，深刻了解泛文化研究與文化系統研究的差別，從泛文化研究「知其然，但不知其所以然」，走向含攝文化系統研究「知其然，且知其所以然」。從儒家倫理建構「修養的角色義務理論」，指出個人應不斷自我修養，善盡五倫對偶關係中的角色義務，以滿足重要他人的期待。社會大眾以個人努力盡其角色義務的程度，做為評斷其道德修養的標準。角色義務蘊含道德修養境界的提升，又與社會期許的縱向成就目標相連，故努力追求與達成成就目標即是「倫理」與「道德」的顯現。第二篇提出符教授為採用反思性主位取向研究法，有存在「文化膠囊」的偏見，這指謂的是它僅持單一文化觀點而對其他社會文化現象及知識的忽視所建構的理念，容易導致習慣以刻板化的印象來取代真實世界。文中建議反身性客位取向研究法來構建本土理論，較可能幫助研究者達到同時兼顧文化和社會內個體間差異以及跨文化間差異現象的雙重目標。第三篇相當認同符教授闡述的研究取向和基本觀點。但接著文中提出重要的提問，不同文明的文化系統與價值觀常彼此交流衝擊，未來不同的文化系統是否可能逐漸融合？或繼續維持差異？未來是否可能朝向某種特定價值觀發展？或是融合成為整合式文化系統？第四篇更提出「含攝文化理論」之文化如何決定？近似真理的有效性及理論解釋力如何判定？最後一篇由符教授來回覆上述三篇的提問，也提出如若能採取「文化異質化」與「文化雜揉化」，建構出同時適用於全人類文化社會共用的理論，也能說明文化間差異的現象。本文接著建議還要釐清「文化形態學」與「文化衍生學」的研究，「文化形態」是「由曾經存在之知識菁英等的全集所構成的」，它可以讓我們看到「社會－文化的交互作用」也就是「文化衍生」，所以，「文化型態學」的研究應當先於「文化衍生學」。這道理其實也十分簡單：例如易經是儒與道的道德形上學基礎，因此如果我們對易經的「文化型態」沒有全盤的理解，我們如何可能知道「它」在某一特定時空中的「演

變歷程」？因此接續介紹易經及其衍生的儒家與老子智慧的「文化型態」內容。最後期待本期「儒」文與三位評論者之間的對話，能創造良性的學術對話，激盪出新的迴響，進一步開展含攝易經智慧的自性修養之社會科學研究。

關鍵詞： 儒家倫理、華人教育、含攝文化理論、易經、自性、修養心理學

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壹、如何用西方的「形構之理」，說清楚儒家智慧的「存在之理」

一、儒家倫理與華人教育觀系列研究：採用黃光國教授所提出的多重哲學典範

已故黃光國教授（文後簡稱黃氏）常在公開場合說符碧真教授最認真跟他學習科學哲學，上過超過十次課程，主要講授多重哲學典範的知識論策略來進行研究工作。符碧真（2025a）所提出儒家倫理與華人教育觀：哲學反思、理論建構與實徵研究一文中，說明她採取後實證主義（post positivism）觀點，研究者猜測背後本體，只能「近似真理」，因此沒有「絕對真理」，採取 top-down 的方法，不斷提出問題，用理性思考進行猜測，根據理論推論假設，進而收集資料驗證假設，科學研究像是探照燈。反觀 bottom-up 的方法，以為收集到足夠水（資料），理論會如水桶中的水自然溢出。她的研究團隊採取 top-down 的演繹法，根據上述理論架構，推論假設，再收集資料，驗證假設的妥適性。然而，要將儒家社會學的學習解釋給國際學術界了解，頗為不易，而華人教育觀系列的研究者致力於此方向，自 2014 年起陸續獲得國際期刊刊登相關研究。值得注意的是，她認為她們提出的研究結果只是近似真理，因此也歡迎其他學者提出不同的理論架構來彼此競爭，看看誰的解釋力大。

符教授團隊是採取「文化系統觀」研究取向，亦即深究最早將此文化系統提出來的人，理解其整套觀點和想法。例如儒家的文化系統，就要回到孔子存在的年代，思考當年他是怎麼對社會闡述其理念的。後來的人對這個文化系統所作的解釋，是在某一個特殊的社會文化條件之下，對原來的文化系統解釋。符教授團隊不是採取泛文化向度研究取向，以西方主流心理學理論為核心，而後發展工具，測量跨越許多文化群體而在量度上有相等的心理構念。

符教授團隊儒家倫理與華人教育觀現代化是承襲黃氏在過去三十多年所發展科學進路：文化系統觀的多重哲學典範（Hwang, 2019），是要將華人文化傳統建構成西方學術標準的客觀知識，用來建構華人自主的社會科學。我們認為此模式已是非常成熟、具

體且可運行的。所謂科學進路的「文化系統」的研究取向，包含了「多重哲學典範」(Hwang, 2019)：建構實在論、結構主義和批判實在論。其中建構實在論區分「科學微世界」和「生活世界」；心理學的「結構主義」討論「人」獲得「知識」的途徑；批判實在論則在討論如何建構「含攝文化之理論」。最重要的是，如要分析文化的知識論策略，應以「人」或「結構主義」做為中心。

符教授團隊建構的理論與相關研究有兩大優點：第一是能夠說明中華文化和西方文化這兩大系統的根本差異。第二是可避免產生片面式或單看某幾個變項式的研究。進行的策略，是符教授團隊先完整的分析文化系統的原貌，然後以此為依據來引導，進行文化如何影響個體的研究。

二、葉光輝教授提出兩個重要的建議性批評與解方

葉光輝教授是非常傑出的研究者，他已經提出三項原創理論－「孝道雙元」、「雙元自主性」及「親子衝突歷程」模型，對本土心理學有極為重大貢獻。因此他建議：當建構研究概念或理論時，若能夠先將其所要應用的情境脈絡因素考慮進去，將會大大縮減理論觀點與實務應用之間的鴻溝或落差（葉光輝，2025）。

此篇打靶論文中，他提出兩個重要的建議性批評，第一是符教授採用反思性主位取向研究法會被批評其存在「文化膠囊」的偏見，這指的是它僅持單一文化觀點而對其他社會文化現象及知識的忽視所建構的理念，容易導致習慣以刻板化的印象來取代真實世界。文中建議，以反身性客位取向研究法來構建本土理論，較可能幫助研究者達到同時兼顧文化和社會內個體間差異以及跨文化間差異現象的雙重目標。

第二是採用文化系統取向來建構本土心理學理論較易陷入二元對立的思維窠臼，例如會慣用以東、西方文化系統對立、發現與發明理論建構訴求對立、權利本位與義務本位兩者對立、縱向成就與非縱向成就目標二元對立等，來思考所探討的研究問題以及解讀所觀察到的現象。不過目前的學術研究都是要先定義，一旦定義就容易產生出二元對立（如定義性別，產生出男女），有定義才能進行操作與測量。

葉教授提出二元空性作為二元對立的解方，指的是世間事物的存有並不受到對錯、好壞、優劣、東西方等二元對立屬性的約束。如果一個事物反映出這些二元對立的評價，其實只是映射出評價者或研究者的視角和框架立場，而接收者或互動者是可以擁有自己不同或獨特的視角和評價立場。他認為二元對立的評價或分類基本上是「無常的」、「非恆定的」。因此，二元對立的評價或分類結果並不是客觀存在的事實，而是受當事人主觀因素影響的相對性評價或分類結果。

葉教授所提的空性，應是對佛法空性的借用，《六祖壇經》說「世人妙性本空，無有一法可得；自性真空，亦復如是」，此空性若為佛教所說自性真空之自性，即是指金

剛心如來藏、第八識阿賴耶識的真如體性；其性本空，其體真實而如如不動。自性本空，是一種「不依賴任何事物的本質」，佛法所說的空性本我，並不是一般我們所說以五蘊所代表的世間法的自我，而是指「自性」或是「真我」，是外於世間一切法、不依賴任何事物而獨立常存的一種本質。簡單來說，「自性」就是「不依他而有」，而「緣起」所生的世間事物就是「依他而有」（觀待對比），依於有真實而如如的法界實相如來藏所以才有諸世間事物等法相的「緣起」。

雖然在一般人的直觀上，「自我」當然是存在的，但那其實是透過「觀待對比」而存在；但依佛教的觀點，五蘊身心皆是緣生之法，無有自性，終歸壞滅，故云緣生性空；而要生起諸法，背後則須依於能令一切萬法藉緣出生、具緣起作用的實相法如來藏，因實相法如來藏含藏一切法的種子，故說世間一切法其自性皆歸於如來藏本妙真如性。因此「五蘊我」的「自性」是不存在的，因為「五蘊我」的出生、存在、運作，本身必須要透過「依他而有」，即如《解深密經》所言：「云何諸法依他起相？為一切法緣生自性」〈一切法相品〉「此由依他緣力故有，非自然有」〈無自性相品〉。意即「五蘊我」是藉因緣而生，是在五蘊：色、受、想、行、識運作下所顯示，「五蘊我」內容包羅萬象可以在比對諸多心理的關係中理解存在，卻是無常斷滅而無自性。葉教授認為二元對立的評價或分類基本上亦是「無常的」、「非恆定的」，是依於意識形態而會變動生滅的之「空相」，類似《心經》所說：「照見五蘊皆空」，五蘊有斷滅的「空相」而沒有「本空的自性」，這是佛法中所說的世俗諦。但是「自性本空」是勝義諦，是指絕對真實如如的第八識真如心體性，是指真我的「空性」。

而研究者若能修習佛法正義，體證真實本心「空性」的第八識如來藏—阿賴耶識，則能勝解具「空相」的「五蘊我」其實是從具「空性」的「金剛心如來藏」「真我」之所出生，並在此基礎上進一步勝解《心經》所說「色不異空，空不異色；色即是空，空即是色。受想行識，亦復如是。」而知五蘊「妄心的法相是無常的，終歸於空無，所以叫做『空相』。真心的法相也是『空』，但是祂的法相雖然是空，可是祂有真實體性，所以不叫『空相』，祂叫做『空性』…真心與妄心兩種心，都是『空』的法相，所以合在一起而說『是諸法「空相」』」《心經密意》（平實導師，2003，242 頁），而從此等「空」的法相中，照見中道的真實義，更能進一步體解「絕待」、「相待」等甚深道理。

本土心理學研究為了要能消解東、西方文化系統的對立，透過建構含攝文化理論的知識論策略（Epistemological strategy for constructing culture-inclusive theories）」（黃光國，2018；Hwang, 2019）與「本土社會科學創造詮釋學」（王智弘，2023；王智弘等，2024）而加以會通，確實不能執於一端。就像《金剛經》所說「凡所有相，皆是虛妄，若見諸相非相，即見如來」。佛法修行明心見性的殊勝與中道觀行的勝妙，如此可見一斑。研究者若能從中得到啟發，可望使本土社會科學更上一層樓。

三、華人教育觀的研究需要援引科學哲學的觀念嗎？不同文明的文化系統的問題

陳舜文副教授是中生代優秀的本土心理學者，他認識符教授接近二十年，同屬一個研究團隊有多次的合作。因此不意外的，他相當認同符教授闡述的研究取向和基本觀點。

他在文中提出重要的提問，西方社會與儒家社會具有不同的基本價值觀，是因根源於不同的文化思想傳統？若是如此，也許不需援引科學哲學的觀念，直接分析或比較東西文化系統基本價值觀之差異即可（陳舜文，2025）。不過符教授是為了這篇打靶論文援引科學哲學的觀念是說明她的知識論策略與她一系列研究的關係。

接著他也提出一些重要的問題：不同文明的文化系統與價值觀常彼此交流衝擊，未來不同的文化系統是否可能逐漸融合？或繼續維持差異？未來是否可能朝向某種特定價值觀發展？或是融合成為整合式文化系統？

四、兩重要問題：如何決定與判定「含攝文化理論」與近似真理

馮丰儀教授是教育學背景的學者，提出兩個重要的問題（馮丰儀，2025）。第一個問題是「含攝文化理論」之文化如何決定？這問題中包含了為何選擇闡述華人教育觀時選擇從修養角色義務論，而非其他的儒家教育思想？儒家文化圈（如台、港、日、韓、新加坡、大陸）或東亞國家的華人？選擇儒家文化為基底的依據為何？研究概念切入視角如何選擇？

第二問題是近似真理的有效性及理論解釋力如何判別？這問題中包含了有無客觀的標準？另一種解釋？

五、採取「文化異質化」與「文化雜糅化」：科學的進步

符碧真（2025b）回應「含攝文化理論」之文化如何決定？因為選擇「修養的角色義務論」，則與儒家文化密切相關。回應兼顧理論普同性與文化特定性的可能走向為何？她提出「文化異質化」與「文化雜糅化」。「文化異質化」係指全球文化（西方文化）融入當地文化的過程。在地文化因為全球化之故，會經歷不斷地轉型與再發明。儘管在地文化很難不受全球化因素的影響，但是在地文化的核心概念仍保存完整無缺或不受影響，僅周邊表面受到直接影響。「文化異質化」指儒家傳統觀念與西方文化撞擊後，可能融合形成新的觀點。如建構果能夠採取「文化異質化」與「文化雜糅化」，建構出同時適用於全人類文化社會共用的理論，也能說明文化間差異的現象。她接著提出科學的

目的在於解決問題。在任何領域，前後相繼產生的兩個理論，僅有當後一個理論比前一個理論更能有效的解決問題，後一個理論取代前一個理論時，才能說是進步的。

華人本土「文化系統」取向，可以涵蓋以下四種涵蓋理論與應用的一系列「四部曲」研究（夏允中，2020）：1.先建儒釋道系列理論：形式性（**universal**）的（硬核）理論，以儒釋道思想做主體，並吸納西洋社會科學的菁華，「中學為體，西學為用」，重塑華人的學術傳統，將具有「普遍性」的儒釋道文化遺產建構成形式性的理論，適用全人類（普世性）的理論；2.以儒釋道修養觀（含自性神、天與鬼神與關係論）來建構實質性（**substantial**）的系列（硬核）理論；3.如此來引領各種片面性與分析式的實徵研究來支持理論的論點；4.發展並擴展應用層面與出版相關書籍。

我們認為符教授團隊幾乎完成上述四個步驟，實屬非常難得的學術成就；但目前只差出版相關書籍把其團隊的研究成果進行有系統的說明，如此定會對學術與實務有極大的貢獻。

六、分析二元論的「文化形態學」與文化系統觀的知識論策略

回應如何用西方的「形構之理」，說清楚儒家智慧的「存在之理」，本文建議還要特別注意 Archer（1988, 1995）所主張的「分析二元論」（**analytic dualism**）：從事文化分析的時候，必須要能區分「文化系統」（**cultural system**）和「社會－文化的交互作用」（**social-cultural interaction**）。前者是「由曾經存在之知識菁英的全集所構成的」，它可以讓我們看到「文化形態學」（**morphostasis**）；後者則是後來的學者在某些社會條件下對「文化系統」的詮釋，它只能說是「文化衍生學」（**morphogenesis**），Acher 的分析二元論堅持：「文化型態學」的研究應當先於「文化衍生學」，再因為如果「一個研究主題，各自表述」，其實只是在探討「此研究主題」的「文化衍生學」，所以會眾說紛紜，導致莫衷一是，這怎麼可能掌握「此一研究主題」的文化型態學呢？並落入向上熔接的謬誤（**fallacy of upwards conflation**）。反之當研究者過於重視文化系統之結構，而忽略社會－文化互動層面，漠視行動者的自主性，可能產生向下熔接的謬誤（**fallacy of downwards conflation**），所以他的研究進路係先分析文化系統層面的經典文本，再接續進行社會－文化互動的實徵研究。

黃氏（Hwang, 2019）以「文化形態學」為核心概念，提出文化系統觀的知識論策略，採用有普世性（**universal**）與形式性（**formal**）的自我理論來分析具有文化特殊性的傳統智慧，呈現「一種心智」下的「不同心態」（**one mind, many mentalities; universalism without uniformity**）（Shweder et al., 1998, p. 871），來建構「含攝文化的心理學理論」。其中，文化系統觀是指這個策略最主要可避免產生片面式或只單看某幾個變項式的研究，這個策略要先完整的分析各個文化系統的原貌，並以最原始的經典為主進行分析，是屬於文

化型態學，因為後續演變與延伸的文化根源都是以此為主，所以分析了主要的文化，就可以含攝後來的文化。後續的研究者可以此作為新的科學研究綱領（scientific research programmes）的理論硬核（hard core）（Lakatos, 1968），再建構衍生或修改理論，並進行下一步的實徵研究。例如可使用自我曼陀羅模型（Mandala Model of Self）（Hwang, 2011; Shiah, 2020）即是具有普遍性與形式性的自我理論，非常適合用來分析各種文化中的「自我」，並有後續實徵研究支持此模型的理論假設（Shiah & Hwang, 2019）。對於從「自我」到「自性」的發展，已經有學者提出種種延伸理論，例如夏允中與張峻嘉（2018）則基於自我曼陀羅模型分別分析儒釋道匯合傳統而提出了儒家三層次修養之自我曼陀羅模型、佛家三層次修養曼陀羅模型（夏允中等，2018）、英文版佛家修養曼陀羅模型：無我理論（Nonself Theory）（Shiah, 2016）、以《易經》為基礎的內在朝向式多層次立體自我曼陀羅模型（徐進等，2019）及英文版《易經》為基礎的君子修養模型（Jun-zi Self-cultivation Model）（Xu et al., 2022）。

貳、易經的「文化型態」內容：含攝易經智慧的自性修養之現代化開展

因易經是儒與道的道德形上學基礎，接著以下簡要介紹以「文化形態學」與文化系統觀所建構的易經及其衍生的儒家與老子智慧的「文化型態」（理論硬核）內容，可用來進行實徵研究，或產生衍生與修改理論，來開展一條含攝儒與道智慧的自性修養之社會科學的康莊大道。

一、《易經》的「文化型態」內容

依據《易經》而提出的〈內在朝向式多層立體自我曼陀羅模型：天人合一理論〉（徐進等，2019），來說明個體如何從自我到天人合一我的修養歷程。其中，以《易經》為基礎的內在朝向式多層立體自我曼陀羅一共有四層次的概念模型，其道家修養的策略包含：「正視現實、居正持中、坦然接納、順其自然」等次第策略。由下往上，第一層：「自我的八種典型表現及其六十四種境遇」，意旨自我對於情境進行個人意義的解讀，顯示生命歷程的多種可能性；第二層：《易經》的自我曼陀羅模型為基礎，加以融入道家《易經》的思維來重新詮釋作為君子的個人修養之策略；第三層：提升至「統一對立的自我」，此時自我已不具實質存在，曼陀羅僅剩兩股相互拉鋸的拉力，象徵陰陽元素兩者之間的對立力量，是一種包容和消解外在環境衝突的狀態；第四層：至高到「天人合一我」，為模型的最核心內層，以一個點象徵著個體處於沒有分別心的融入體現，達到最高層次的圓滿和諧狀態，亦為道家文化智慧裡最終的生命意義展現。經由《易經》的文化智慧實踐與修煉，來克服自我的慾望，能夠坦然接納外在緊張的拉扯，將統一對

立的自我轉變為「天人合一我」的狀態。同樣地，人們藉由覺知到此狀態便不再受到欲望的牽引拉扯而感到擺盪不安，進而達到持續的身心和諧、圓滿的心理社會均衡狀態。

接著 Xu 等（2022）在黃光國教授的指導下以文化系統觀策略，提出英文版含攝易經智慧的 Jun-zi Self-Cultivation Model，可以用來解釋儒家文化下的社會行為、增進心理健康與用來發展含攝儒道文化的心理治療學派。

二、儒家的「文化型態」內容

儒家的文化智慧分析部分，以文化系統觀策略，依據儒家經典而提出的〈儒家三層次修養之自我曼陀羅模型〉（夏允中、張峻嘉，2017），定義出「自性修養」的三層次，由下到上的次序，分別稱之為庶人、士大夫以及聖王修養之曼陀羅模型。個體透過三層次的修煉，吸收「智勇」與「仁德」的文化智慧，格物而修身並能時時刻刻反求諸己，進而達到「至誠、至善、至聖」的博大深厚的境界，展現君子存於世上的整體生命意義觀。

三、老子的「文化型態」內容

夏允中等（2024）文化系統觀策略，分析老子經典並建構「老子之四層次自我曼陀羅模型之自然我理論」，此理論包含從「自我」到「自然我」德性修養歷程的四個層次：人法地，地法天，天法道，道法自然。自然我的定義包含有反思智慧、行動與體驗的三個構念：反思自然的道理，採取清靜寡欲無私的修養，達到本真無為的自我狀態。

參、結語

最後期待本期「儒」文與三位評論者之間的對話，能創造良性的學術對話，激盪出新的迴響，進一步開展含攝易經智慧的自性修養之社會科學研究。

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Confucian Ethics and Chinese Views on Education: The Modern Development of Self-Cultivation Incorporating the Wisdom of the I-Ching

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Abstract

This special issue comprises five articles, primarily centered around Professor Bih-Jen Fwu's work (Fwu, 2025a), *Confucian Ethics and Chinese Views on Education: Philosophical Reflection, Theoretical Construction, and Empirical Research*. Three of the articles serve as critical commentaries on Fwu's work, followed by a response from Fwu (2025b). The central theme revolves around how to articulate the Confucian wisdom of "the logic of being" using the Western framework of "the logic of construction." Professor Fwu has long engaged in research on the "Chinese conception of education," building on Professor Kwang-Kuo Hwang's epistemological strategy of multiple philosophical paradigms. She has deeply understood the distinction between pancultural and cultural system approaches in cross-cultural research—moving from pancultural studies that "know what is," but not "why it is so," to cultural system studies that both "know what is" and "understand why it is so." By constructing a "theory of role obligations in self-cultivation" based on Confucian ethics, Fu posits that individuals should constantly engage in self-cultivation and fulfill their role obligations in the five cardinal relationships to meet the expectations of significant others. The public evaluates one's moral cultivation based on the degree to which one fulfills these obligations. Role obligations are closely tied to moral development and are aligned with society's expectations for vertical achievement goals. Thus, the pursuit and realization of such goals becomes an embodiment of both "ethics" and "morality." The second article critiques Fu's use of a reflective emic approach, arguing that it may fall into the trap of "cultural encapsulation"—a bias that arises when a theory is constructed solely from a single cultural perspective, overlooking other sociocultural phenomena and forms of knowledge, which can lead to stereotyped interpretations of the real world. The author proposes a reflexive etic approach as more suitable for constructing indigenous theories, as it can better address both intra-cultural individual differences and cross-cultural variations. The third article strongly agrees with Fwu's research approach and

fundamental perspectives but raises critical questions: as different cultural systems and values from various civilizations continuously interact and clash, is it possible that these systems may eventually merge? Will cultural differences persist, or could they evolve toward a dominant set of values or an integrated cultural system? The fourth article raises further questions about the “Culture-Inclusive Theory,” such as: How is a culture determined? How is the validity of near-truth and the explanatory power of a theory assessed? The final article presents Professor Fu’s response to the previous three critiques. In addition, Fu suggests that adopting the notions of “cultural heterogenization” and “cultural hybridization” may help construct theories that are simultaneously applicable to shared human cultural and social experiences, while also explaining inter-cultural differences. She further recommends clarifying the research distinctions between “cultural morphostasis” and “cultural morphogenesis.” Cultural morphostasis refers to “the complete body of knowledge once held by intellectual elites,” which allows us to perceive the “interaction between society and culture,” i.e., cultural derivation. Therefore, research in “cultural morphostasis” should precede that in “cultural morphogenesis.” This principle is straightforward: for example, the I-Ching (Book of Changes) serves as a metaphysical moral foundation for both Confucianism and Daoism. If we do not fully understand the cultural morphology of the I-Ching, how can we comprehend its “evolutionary process” within specific historical and social contexts? Hence, the article proceeds to introduce the cultural morphostasis of the I-Ching and the derived wisdom traditions of Confucius and Lao Tzu. Ultimately, this issue aspires to foster a fruitful academic dialogue between Confucian thought and the three reviewers, sparking new intellectual resonance and paving the way for further development in social science research on self-cultivation that integrates the wisdom of the I-Ching.

Keywords: Confucian ethics, Chinese views on education, I-Ching, Culture inclusive theory, Self nature, Psychology of Self-Cultivation,

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This special issue comprises five articles, primarily focused on Bih-Jen Fwu's work (Fwu, 2025a), *Confucian Ethics and the Chinese Conception of Education: Philosophical Reflections, Theoretical Construction, and Empirical Research*. Three of the articles serve as critical commentaries, followed by Bih-Jen Fwu's response (Fwu, 2025b). The central theme explores how to articulate the Confucian wisdom of the "logic of being" through the Western "logic of construction." This issue also proposes the need to clarify the distinction between "cultural morphostasis" and "cultural morphogenesis." A "cultural system" is understood as the total body of knowledge historically held by intellectual elites, which allows us to observe the dynamic interplay between society and culture—namely, "cultural derivation." Given that the I-Ching (Book of Changes) serves as the metaphysical moral foundation of both Confucianism and Daoism, the issue proceeds to introduce the cultural morphostasis of the I-Ching and the derived wisdom traditions of Confucius and Lao Tzu. This lays the groundwork for developing a social science approach to self-cultivation that integrates the inclusive wisdom of Confucian and Daoist traditions.

I. Explaining the Confucian "Logic of Being" through the Western "Logic of Construction"

1. The Series on Confucian Ethics and the Chinese Conception of Education: Adopting Professor Kwang-Kuo Hwang's Multiparadigmatic Approach

The late Professor Kwang-Kuo Hwang (hereafter referred to as Hwang) often remarked in public that Professor Bih-Jen Fwu was the most diligent among his students in studying the philosophy of science. She attended more than ten of his courses, which primarily focused on applying his epistemological strategy of multiple philosophical paradigms to research. In her 2025 article (Fwu, 2025a), *Confucian Ethics and the Chinese Conception of Education: Philosophical Reflections, Theoretical Construction, and Empirical Research*, Fwu explains that she adopts a post-positivist perspective, which holds that researchers can only approximate the underlying reality—there is no "absolute truth." This perspective emphasizes a top-down approach: researchers generate questions, use rational thinking to make conjectures, deduce hypotheses from theoretical frameworks, and then collect empirical data to test these hypotheses. Scientific research, in this view, is akin to a searchlight that probes the unknown. In contrast, the bottom-up approach assumes that gathering sufficient data will naturally lead to theory formation, like water overflowing from a full bucket. Fwu's research team adopts the

top-down deductive method: based on the theoretical framework, they derive hypotheses and then collect data to test their validity. However, explaining Confucian sociological concepts to the international academic community remains a considerable challenge. Nonetheless, researchers involved in the “Chinese conception of education” series have been committed to this endeavor, and since 2014, their related studies have gradually been published in international journals. Notably, Fwu emphasizes that the research findings should be understood as approximations of truth. As such, she welcomes alternative theoretical frameworks from other scholars to engage in scholarly competition—so that the explanatory power of different models can be compared.

Professor Fwu’s research team adopts a cultural system perspective, which involves a deep investigation into the original thinkers who established a given cultural system, aiming to fully understand their worldview and conceptual foundations. For instance, to study the Confucian cultural system, one must return to the historical context of Confucius himself and consider how he articulated his ideas within the society of his time. Interpretations of the Confucian system made by later generations are seen as reinterpretations shaped by specific socio-cultural conditions, rather than direct representations of the original system. In contrast to pancultural research approaches, which typically center on mainstream Western psychological theories and then develop instruments intended to measure psychologically equivalent constructs across diverse cultural groups, Fwu’s team does not take such a path. Instead, they prioritize grounding their theoretical development in the indigenous cultural context, allowing the internal logic of that system to guide their framework and analysis.

Professor Fwu’s team approaches the modernization of Confucian ethics and the Chinese conception of education by building upon the scientific pathway developed over the past three decades by Hwang (2019), specifically his cultural system theory grounded in multiple philosophical paradigms. The aim is to transform the Chinese cultural tradition into objective knowledge that meets Western academic standards, thereby contributing to the construction of an autonomous Chinese social science. In our view, this model is already mature, concrete, and operationalizable. This scientific approach, known as the cultural system perspective, incorporates multiple philosophical paradigms (Hwang, 2019): namely, constructive realism, structuralism, and critical realism. Constructive realism distinguishes between the scientific microworld and the lifeworld, acknowledging the interpretive nature of scientific theorizing. Structuralism, within the context of psychology, examines the ways in which individuals acquire knowledge. Critical realism addresses how inclusive, culturally grounded theories can

be constructed. Most importantly, when analyzing the epistemological strategies of a culture, it is essential to place either the person or structuralism at the center of inquiry.

The theoretical framework and related research developed by Professor Fwu's team offer two major advantages. First, it effectively explains the fundamental differences between Chinese and Western cultural systems. Second, it avoids the limitations of reductionist approaches or research that focuses only on a few isolated variables. Their research strategy begins with a comprehensive analysis of the original structure of the cultural system, which then serves as the foundation for guiding investigations into how culture influences individuals. This culturally grounded approach ensures both depth and contextual relevance in psychological and educational research.

2. Professor Kuang-Hui Yeh's Two Key Constructive Critiques and Suggestions

Professor Kuang-Hui Yeh is an outstanding scholar who has made significant contributions to indigenous psychology through the development of three original theories: The Dual Filial Piety Model, the Dual Autonomy Model, and the Parent–Child Conflict Process Model. In his commentary, Professor Yeh offers an important suggestion: when constructing research concepts or theoretical frameworks, researchers should first consider the contextual factors of the intended application setting. Doing so can greatly reduce the gap between theoretical perspectives and practical implementation (Yeh, 2025).

In his critique, Professor Yeh presents two key constructive criticisms. First, he notes that Professor Fwu's use of a reflexive emic (insider) approach may invite criticism for embodying what is referred to as a “cultural capsule” bias—that is, the tendency to adopt a single cultural perspective while overlooking other sociocultural phenomena and systems of knowledge. This may lead to replacing complex realities with stereotypical representations of culture. As a solution, Professor Yeh suggests employing a reflexive etic (outsider) approach, which is more likely to help researchers simultaneously address intra-cultural individual differences and cross-cultural variation, thereby achieving a more balanced and integrative understanding.

Second, he points out that the cultural system approach, while valuable for constructing indigenous psychological theories, may easily fall into the trap of binary thinking. For example, it may rely too heavily on dichotomies such as Eastern vs. Western cultural systems, discovery vs. invention in theory construction, rights-based vs. duty-based perspectives, or vertical vs. non-vertical achievement goals. Such binary frameworks can limit the interpretation of research questions and findings. However, Yeh acknowledges that academic research necessarily begins

with definition, and definitions often inherently produce binary categories (e.g., defining gender typically results in a male/female binary). Clear definitions remain essential for conceptual operationalization and measurement in empirical research.

Professor Yeh proposes the concept of binary emptiness as a solution, arguing that the existence of phenomena in the world should not be constrained by binary oppositions, such as right versus wrong, good versus bad, superior versus inferior, or East versus West. When a phenomenon is interpreted through such binary evaluations, it reflects the evaluator's or researcher's perspective and framework, rather than any inherent quality of the phenomenon itself. The recipient or interacting subject may possess their own distinct or unique viewpoint and evaluative stance. Yeh emphasizes that binary judgments or classifications are fundamentally impermanent and non-fixed. Therefore, the resulting evaluations or classifications based on binary thinking do not represent objective facts, but rather relative outcomes shaped by the subjective perspectives of those involved.

The emptiness mentioned by Professor Yeh should be borrowed from the emptiness of Buddhism. The *"Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch"* says, "The wonderful nature of the world is originally empty, and there is nothing to be obtained; the self-nature is empty, and it is also like this." If this emptiness is the self-nature of "self-nature is empty" in Buddhism, it refers to the true nature of the *Vajra Heart Tathāgata-garbha* or the eighth consciousness *Ālī yé shí (ālayavijñāna)*; its nature is originally empty, its body is real and be unmovable like the absolute truth. The self-nature is empty, which is a kind of "essence that does not depend on anything." The emptiness of the self mentioned in Buddhism is not the self defined by worldly law symbolized by the five aggregates, but refers to the "self-nature" or "true self," which is an essence that is independent of all worldly laws and does not rely on anything. In simple terms, "self-nature" means "not depending on others," and worldly things born from "dependent origination" are "dependent on others" (observation and comparison). The "dependent origination" of worldly things and other dharmas is based on the real and unchanging Dharma Realm *Tathāgata-garbha*.

Although in the intuition of ordinary people, the "self" certainly exists, it actually exists through "observation and comparison"; but from the Buddhist point of view, the five aggregates of the physical body are dependently originated and empty, without self-nature, and will eventually perish. Only when they return to the Tathagata storehouse will they have their self-nature. Therefore, the "self" of the five aggregates does not exist because the existence of the "self" itself must be through "dependence on others," just as the *"Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra"* said: "How do all dharmas depend on others? Because all dharmas have self-nature due to causes

and conditions" ("All dharmas" chapter) "This exists because of the power of dependence on others, not naturally" ("No self-nature" chapter). This means that the "self" is born from causes and conditions and emerges under the operation of the *pañca-skandha* (five aggregates): *rūpa*(form), *vedanā*(feeling), *saṃjñā* (preception), *saṃskāra*(volition, mental formations), and *viññāna*(consciousness). The five aggregates of "self" are all-encompassing and exist in relation to many psychological interactions. Professor Yeh believes that binary oppositional evaluations or classifications are also fundamentally "impermanent" and "non-constant", and are "empty aspects" that change and disappear depending on ideology, similar to what is said in the Heart Sutra: "Seeing that the five aggregates are empty." The five aggregates have the "empty characteristics" of extinction but no "self-nature of emptiness," which is the conventional truth in Buddhism. However, "self-nature is empty" is the ultimate truth, which refers to the absolutely real and unchanging nature of the eighth consciousness, and refers to the "emptiness" of the true self.

If researchers practice the righteousness of Buddhism and realize the true original mind and the eighth consciousness, *Vajra Heart Tathāgata-garbha—Ālī yé shí (ālayaviññāna)*, they can understand that the "empty" "five aggregates" self is actually the product of the "empty" "*Vajra Heart Tathāgata-garbha*"—"true self." On this basis, they can further understand the *Heart Sūtras*: "Form is not different from emptiness, emptiness is not different from form; form is emptiness, emptiness is form; the same is true of feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness." Understanding the five aggregates, "the dharma of the false mind is impermanent and ultimately returns to nothingness, so it is called 'empty appearance'. The dharma of the true mind is also 'empty', but although its dharma is empty, it has a real reality, so it is not called 'empty characteristics'. It is called 'emptiness'... The true mind and the false mind are both dharma-natures of 'emptiness', so together they are said to be 'all dharmas are 'empty characteristics'" (*The Secret Meanings of the Heart Sūtras*, Venerable Xiao Pingshi, 2003, p. 242). From these dharmas of emptiness, the true meaning of the Middle Way is revealed, and can further understand the profound principles of "absoluteness" (no comparison or opposition) and "relativity" (comparison or opposition is possible).

Indigenous psychology research aims to dissolve the opposition between Eastern and Western cultural systems through the epistemological strategy for constructing culture-inclusive theories. (Hwang, 2018, 2019) and the creative hermeneutics of indigenous social sciences (Wang, 2023; Wang et al., 2024). It is truly not feasible to favor one side. As the *Diamond Sūtras* states, "All characteristics are false. If you see all characteristics as non-characteristics, you will see the Tathagata." This offers a glimpse into the extraordinary benefits

of Buddhist practice for enlightening the mind, perceiving the nature, and embracing the middle way. If researchers draw inspiration from this, indigenous social sciences could potentially reach a higher level.

3. Is It Necessary to Invoke Philosophy of Science in Research on Chinese Educational Views? Issues Concerning Cultural Systems of Different Civilizations

Associate Professor Shun-Wen Chen, a prominent mid-career scholar in indigenous psychology, has known Professor Fwu for nearly two decades and has collaborated with her extensively within the same research team. Unsurprisingly, he strongly affirms the research orientation and foundational perspectives articulated by Professor Fwu.

In his commentary, Chen raises a critical question: Do the differing fundamental values between Western societies and Confucian societies stem from distinct cultural and intellectual traditions? If so, it may not be necessary to invoke concepts from the philosophy of science. Rather, a direct analysis or comparison of the basic value differences between Eastern and Western cultural systems may suffice (Chen, 2025). However, Professor Fwu's invocation of concepts from the philosophy of science in her target article serves a specific purpose: to explicate her epistemological strategy and to clarify how this strategy connects with her broader series of studies.

He then raised some important questions: The cultural systems and values of different civilizations often interact and influence each other. Will various cultural systems gradually merge in the future? Or will they continue to maintain their differences? Will they develop toward a common set of values? Or will they merge into an integrated cultural system?

4. Two Critical Questions: How to Determine "Culturally Inclusive Theories" and Approximate Truth

Professor Feng-Yi Feng, a scholar with a background in education, raises two important questions (Feng, 2025). The first question concerns: How is the "culture" embedded in a Culture-Inclusive Theory determined? This question involves several layers, such as: Why was the cultivation-based role-obligation framework chosen to elaborate the Chinese view of education, instead of other streams of Confucian educational thought? Which groups are included in the so-called Confucian cultural sphere—Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Mainland China, or other East Asian Chinese communities? On what basis is

Confucian culture adopted as the theoretical foundation? How are the research concepts and perspectives of analysis selected?

The second question addresses: How can we assess the validity of "approximate truth" and the explanatory power of a theory? This includes concerns such as: Is there any objective standard for evaluation? Are there alternative interpretations?

5. Adopting "Cultural Heterogenization" and "Cultural Hybridization": The Advancement of Science

In her response, Fwu (2025b) addresses the question of how to determine the “culture” embedded in a culturally inclusive theory. She explains that the choice of the cultivation-based role-obligation framework is deeply tied to Confucian cultural traditions. As for how to simultaneously account for both theoretical universality and cultural specificity, she proposes the concepts of “cultural heterogenization” and “cultural hybridization.” Cultural heterogenization refers to the process through which global culture (predominantly Western culture) becomes integrated with local cultures. As a result of globalization, local cultures continuously transform and reinvent themselves. Although it is difficult for local cultures to remain unaffected by globalization, their core concepts can still be preserved intact, with only superficial elements being directly influenced. Cultural heterogenization also implies that when traditional Confucian ideas encounter Western cultural forces, the resulting interaction can give rise to new synthesized perspectives. If theory construction can adopt both cultural heterogenization and cultural hybridization, it may be possible to build theories that are both universally applicable across human societies and capable of explaining cross-cultural differences. Fwu further states that the aim of science is to solve problems. In any given field, one theory can be considered a scientific advancement over another only if it offers more effective solutions to problems. Thus, the replacement of an earlier theory by a later one signifies scientific progress only when the latter demonstrates superior problem-solving capacity.

The indigenous Chinese “cultural system” approach can encompass a four-part research trajectory integrating both theory and application, as proposed by Shiah (2020a). This “research tetralogy” includes: First, constructing a series of formal (universal) theories based on Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism. These are “hard-core” theoretical frameworks that take traditional Chinese thought as their foundation while integrating the strengths of Western social sciences—“Chinese learning as essence, Western learning as application.” This step aims to

reshape the Chinese scholarly tradition by transforming the universally valuable heritage of Confucian-Buddhist-Daoist culture into formal theories applicable to all humanity. Second, using the moral cultivation views found in Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism—including notions of self-natured divinity, Heaven/ghost/gods, and social relations—to construct substantial (contextualized) “hard-core” theories. Third, guiding empirical studies, especially those of an analytic or partial nature, to support and validate the core theoretical claims proposed in the previous steps. Fourth, developing and expanding the applied dimensions of these theories, including the publication of relevant books to disseminate research findings and theoretical frameworks.

We believe that Professor Fwu’s research team has nearly completed all four stages of this model—a truly rare and commendable academic achievement. What remains is the systematic publication of books to present the team’s body of work in an integrated manner. Doing so would no doubt make a significant contribution to both academic scholarship and practical applications.

6. Analyzing Analytic Dualism and the Epistemological Strategy of the Cultural System Perspective

In response to the question of how to articulate the “logic of existence” in Confucian wisdom using the Western “logic of formation”, this article suggests that particular attention should be paid to Margaret Archer’s (1988, 1995) concept of analytic dualism. When conducting cultural analysis, it is essential to distinguish between the “cultural system” and “social-cultural interaction.” The cultural system refers to “the totality of ideas articulated by historically existing intellectual elites.” It enables us to identify and analyze what Archer calls “morphostasis”, the structural continuity of cultural forms. In contrast, social-cultural interaction refers to subsequent interpretations or adaptations of this system under specific socio-historical conditions—what Archer terms “morphogenesis.” Archer insists that the study of cultural morphostasis must precede investigations of morphogenesis. If a research topic is explored solely through multiple personal interpretations (i.e., each scholar articulates it differently), the inquiry remains within the realm of morphogenesis, resulting in fragmented and often contradictory understandings. This approach risks falling into the fallacy of upwards conflation, where cultural phenomena are explained purely through individual or social processes without grounding in the structured cultural system itself. Conversely, if researchers focus too much on the structure of the cultural system while ignoring the agency of actors and

social-cultural interaction, they risk the fallacy of downwards conflation, which suppresses individual agency in favor of deterministic structures. Thus, Archer advocates for a methodological strategy that first analyzes the cultural system, particularly through canonical texts and classical thought, and only then proceeds to examine social-cultural interaction through empirical research. This dual-layered approach helps maintain epistemological clarity and avoids conflation errors in cultural analysis.

Hwang (2019), centering on the concept of “cultural morphostasis”, proposed an epistemological strategy grounded in a cultural system perspective. This strategy employs the universal and formal self theory to analyze the culturally specific dimensions of traditional wisdom. It reflects the idea of “one mind, many mentalities”, or “universalism without uniformity” (Shweder et al., 1998, p. 871), aiming to construct inclusive cultural psychological theories. The cultural system perspective emphasizes that such a strategy can effectively avoid fragmented or reductionist research that focuses solely on isolated variables. The approach begins with a comprehensive analysis of the original form of each cultural system, using classical texts as the primary foundation. This process aligns with the notion of cultural morphostasis, as subsequent cultural developments and derivations are rooted in these original traditions. Hence, by analyzing the core culture, one can inclusively encompass later cultural forms. Researchers may adopt this approach as the “hard core” of a scientific research program (Lakatos, 1968), upon which derivative or modified theories can be developed and further empirical studies conducted. For example, the Mandala Model of Self (Hwang, 2011; Shiah, 2020), which possesses both universality and formality, serves as a suitable framework for analyzing the concept of “self” across various cultural contexts. Subsequent empirical studies (Shiah & Hwang, 2019) have supported the theoretical assumptions of this model. Building on the evolution from “self” to “true self” (or “self-nature”), scholars have proposed several extended theories: Shiah and Chang (2018) applied the Mandala Model of Self to Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist traditions, proposing: the Three-level Mandala Model of Confucian Self-cultivation, the Three-level Buddhist Mandala Model, and Shiah (2016) proposed the Nonsself Theory as the English version of the Buddhist self-cultivation model. Xu et al. (2019) developed the Internally-Oriented Multilevel Stereoscopic Mandala Model of Self based on the I Ching. Xu et al. (2022) further proposed the Jun-zi Self-cultivation Model (also based on the I-Ching) in its English version. These developments collectively illustrate a growing body of theoretical and empirical research rooted in an inclusive and culturally grounded scientific strategy.

II. The “Cultural Pattern” of the Yijing: A Modern Development of Self-Cultivation Integrating Yijing Wisdom

As the I-Ching serves as the metaphysical and moral foundation for both Confucianism and Daoism, the following section introduces the “cultural pattern” (theoretical hard core) of the I-Ching, and the derived Confucian and Daoist wisdom through the lens of cultural morphostasis and the cultural system framework. This theoretical construct can serve as a foundation for empirical research, as well as for generating and modifying theories, thereby paving a new social scientific path of self-cultivation that incorporates Confucian and Daoist insights.

1. The Cultural Pattern of the I-Ching

Drawing from the Yijing, Xu et al. (2019) proposed the Inward-Oriented Multilayered Stereoscopic Self Mandala Model: The Theory of Unity Between Heaven and Humanity, which illustrates the process of self-cultivation from the ego-self toward the ultimate realization of harmony between heaven and humanity. Based on the I-Ching, this multilayered mandala model consists of four conceptual levels, embodying Daoist self-cultivation strategies such as “facing reality squarely,” “maintaining balance and centrality,” “accepting with equanimity,” and “following the natural course.” From bottom to top, the four levels are: The Eight Typical Expressions of the Self and Sixty-Four Situational Encounters – This level describes how the self interprets situational meanings and reflects the myriad possibilities of one’s life path. Self-Cultivation Strategies of the Junzi (Exemplary Person) – This level integrates the Yijing-based mandala with Daoist perspectives to reinterpret strategies of personal cultivation characteristic of the Confucian Jun-zi. The Unified and Oppositional Self – At this stage, the self no longer holds a fixed identity. The mandala is now sustained by opposing tensions that symbolize the dynamic interaction of yin and yang, representing a state in which internal and external conflicts are reconciled. The Heaven-Humanity Integrated Self – The model’s innermost core symbolizes the ultimate state of undifferentiated unity, in which the individual fully embodies the Dao, attaining the highest harmony and wholeness. This level reflects the Daoist vision of life’s ultimate purpose. Through the cultivation and practice of I-Ching wisdom, individuals can transcend egoistic desires, calmly endure external tensions, and transform the oppositional self into the Heaven-Humanity Integrated Self. Attaining awareness of this state frees

individuals from the fluctuations caused by desire, fostering sustained inner harmony and psychosocial equilibrium.

Following this, Xu et al. (2022), under the guidance of Professor Kwang-Kuo Hwang, developed the Jun-zi Self-Cultivation Model, an English-language theoretical framework rooted in the I-Ching and Confucian wisdom, using the cultural system approach. This model can be applied to explain social behaviors in Confucian cultural contexts, enhance psychological well-being, and serve as a foundation for the development of psychotherapy schools that integrate Confucian and Daoist traditions.

2. The “Cultural Pattern” of Confucianism

The Confucian cultural pattern is analyzed using the cultural system framework, drawing on classical Confucian texts. Based on this, Hsia Yung-Chung and Chang Chun-Chia (2017) proposed the Three-Level Confucian Self-Cultivation Mandala Model, which defines three progressive stages of self-cultivation from bottom to top: the commoner (shùrén), the scholar-official (shidàfū), and the sage-king (shèngwáng).

Through cultivation at these three levels, individuals absorb the cultural wisdom of wisdom and courage (zhì-yǒng) and benevolence and virtue (rén-dé). This process involves the investigation of things, cultivation of the self, and constant introspection. Ultimately, the individual aspires to the profound realms of utmost sincerity (zhìchéng), utmost goodness (zhìshàn), and supreme sageliness (zhìshèng), thereby realizing the Confucian junzi’s vision of a meaningful and integrated life in the world.

3. The “Cultural Pattern” of Laozi

Applying the cultural system framework, Shiah et al. (2024) analyzed the classical text of Lao Tzu and proposed the Four-Level Mandala Model of the Natural Self: A Theory of Daoist Self-Cultivation. This model outlines four progressive stages in the moral and spiritual cultivation from the ego-self to the “natural self”: Humans follow the Earth, The Earth follows Heaven, Heaven follows the Dao, and The Dao follows Nature, The “natural self” is conceptualized through three core dimensions: Reflective wisdom – understanding and contemplating the principles of nature and the Dao; Action and experience – practicing self-cultivation through simplicity, reduced desire, and selflessness; Authentic non-action (無為) –

attaining a state of true being that is uncontrived and aligned with nature. This model articulates a Daoist path of ethical transformation toward an unforced, harmonious, and authentic existence.

III. Conclusion

We hope that this issue's contribution on Confucian wisdom and the dialogue among the three commentators will stimulate a productive academic exchange, sparking new insights and paving the way for further development of *social scientific research on self-cultivation grounded in Yijing and broader Chinese wisdom traditions.

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