

21. Paranoid Manifestations among Chinese Students
Studying Abroad: Some Preliminary Findings

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THE WORLD has witnessed a tremendous increase in cultural interchange since World War II, creating transcultural experience common to many people, especially students studying in foreign countries. The increase in Chinese students studying abroad in recent years has made them the third largest group of foreign students in the United States today, next only to Canadians and Indians. The problems arising from transcultural adjustment have become topics of great concern to psychiatrists, social scientists, and educators. To date, however, there have been no psychiatric studies or reports on the adjustment problems of Chinese students studying abroad.

During the past fifteen years I have treated, in the Department of Neurology and Psychiatry, National Taiwan University Hospital, 40 cases of Chinese students who had had psychotic breakdowns during their study in foreign countries. Paranoid manifestations were observed in a majority of these cases. Based on clinical experiences with these cases, including some intensive individual case analyses, this paper reports the predominant psychiatric findings in relation to sociocultural factors which were thought to be significant in development of paranoid symptoms in these students. An attempt is made to discuss briefly, on a hypothetical formulation, paranoid formation in these cases, in light of the contemporary social conditions, orientations in child-rearing, interpersonal relations, and systems of behavior

control among Chinese. Statistical data and detailed case reports are avoided; instead, an overall picture is presented. Further intensive studies in some specific areas are indicated in order to test the hypothesis formulated in this paper.

Findings

Out of 40 cases, 26 were males and 14 were females. Diagnostically, there were 29 cases of paranoid schizophrenia or paranoid psychoses, 7 cases of other types of schizophrenia out of which 5 cases manifested paranoid features, 3 cases of manic-depressive psychoses, and 1 postpartum psychosis. Twenty-nine were mainlanders, and the remaining 11 were Taiwanese.¹ There was no significant difference in the case-rate of paranoid manifestations between the two domicile and sex groups. Except for one case, who went to the United States early in 1949 from the China mainland and returned to Taiwan in 1956, the rest were seen in the Department of Neurology and Psychiatry at National Taiwan University during the past ten years. The increase of Chinese students studying abroad during this period accounts for the frequency and number of cases. Nearly all—37 out of 40—went to the United States to study, while the remaining three went to Canada, West Germany, and Japan.

CONTENTS OF DELUSIONS AND HALLUCINATIONS

A majority of the delusions and hallucinations manifested were predominantly persecutory in nature; they were verbalized as being investigated, being watched, being followed, being poisoned, and mind being read. Political coloration—such as being investigated by the F.B.I. in the United States or by Chinese government agents at home or being suspected by Americans as Communists—was common. These delusions were manifested predominantly among the male students. Similar findings have been observed in patients who had not been abroad. Among all paranoid outpatients at the Department of Psychiatry, National Taiwan University Hospital, mainland males have been found to have significantly more preoccupation with political affairs in the content of delusions (Rin et al., 1962; Rin et al., 1958). This may be explained on the basis of strict security control, prevailing social tensions, and the inhabitant's defensive attitude toward authority and political matters. Chinese students, under the circumstances, generally are not interested in talking about political matters, especially in an unfamiliar situation. Inhibited dissatisfaction toward reality or authority, thus, may be easily projected to the outside world and lead to persecutory delusions. One student, a former active Nationalist Party member at home, developed delusions of being investigated by Nationalist agents and F.B.I. agents a few months after his arrival in Canada. Just before his departure to Canada, his mother was fired during her sick leave by the new principal of the primary school where she had taught for ten years. Not only did she lose a job, but the whole family was forced

to move, because the house belonged to the school. The father's repeated petitions to various levels of authority were all in vain. The crisis instilled tremendous anger and hostility to authority in this young man. In response to this episode, he did not report to the consulate which he was obliged to do on arrival in Canada. He isolated himself from the Chinese students on the campus and from social activities of the local Chinese. Strong feelings of antagonism to fellow Chinese students gradually changed to anxiety and fear of being criticized as a foreign body by the other Chinese students who supposedly were also speaking ill of him. He later changed to persecutory delusions of being investigated by F.B.I. and Chinese government agents, especially following his open criticism of the Vietnam War. The nature of his delusions further changed, and he ultimately believed that Communists were also investigating him as a double agent. After his return to Taiwan, however, he responded well to treatment. Within two months time, all paranoid symptoms disappeared completely, and he had gained reasonable insight into his illness.

For four months following his discharge from our department at National Taiwan University, he worked temporarily as a high school teacher. He then went back to Canada to continue graduate study for a Ph.D. and has been doing well. His return to the home country in this case not only provided him with an opportunity for psychiatric treatment but also for reality-testing and correction of his reality-distortion.

Suspicion of poison in tea or food as a method of persecution was manifested in ten cases. This may be rooted in the traditional Chinese belief in persecution by slow-acting poison. A case with this delusion recalled, after his recovery from psychosis, that his fantastic ideas about poisoning may have come from Chinese novels about ancient chivalry which he had read during his middle-school days.

Three female cases showed delusions of being cheated and mistreated by Americans following failures in obtaining jobs and schooling. They acquired strong feelings that Americans and school authorities were prejudiced against them, and they developed inferiority complexes. Manifestations of the idea that their minds were being read by telepathy were found in two cases.

Not infrequently the persecutors were fellow countrymen rather than the host-countrymen. Neurotic competition with fellow countrymen or frustrated dependency needs seemed to create anxiety and a sense of failure in the students, which in turn led to denial and the paranoid projection toward fellow countrymen. For example, student A., a major in physics, suddenly developed the idea that a slow-acting poison had been put into his soft drink after a ping-pong game with another Chinese student, B. He thought that the poison was put in by B. to dull his mind, disturb his memory, and paralyze him. A.'s persecution complex was supposedly initiated by another Chinese student, C., who hated A. Student C. had entered A.'s depart-

ment two years ahead of him as a teaching assistant, and he had once given A. a lower examination score than A. thought was fair for a fellow-countryman. A., in turn, put some provocative notes on the blackboard in C.'s laboratory. Just before this episode, C. had failed a subject in the Ph.D. qualification examination given by A.'s professor. Therefore, A. thought that C.'s action was a retaliation.

MARRIAGE AND SEX PROBLEMS

Among many factors that precipitate students' breakdowns, such as difficulties in academic achievement, finances, languages, and interpersonal relationships, marriage and sex problems deserve special mention.

Most of the Chinese students studying abroad, especially in the U.S., plan to stay a long time or not to return home at all because of better economic conditions and job opportunities. Finding an ideal partner for marriage is an important concern of these young people, especially the female students. With strong traditional prejudice against marriage to non-Chinese, the careful parents prefer to have their children engaged to the Chinese students who have already been or will be going abroad before their children's departure for overseas study. Those who go abroad alone have the freedom to choose their marriage partner, but it is not an easy task for them within the limited social circle in which Chinese students tend to confine themselves.

Not infrequently the psychotic breakdown was precipitated by failure in a love affair, real or imaginary, and by sexual frustration. A 26-year-old female student majoring in library science became acutely disturbed with crying spells and delusions of being poisoned, hearing voices accusing her of misconduct with boys and threatening to kill her, after receiving a threatening letter from another Chinese girlfriend of the Chinese doctor with whom she had been in love. An intelligent, highly sociable person and an active participant in various student activities (she had represented her school at an International Student Conference), she was a very popular campus figure in China. In spite of her extroverted, sociable, and forceful personality, she was kept at some distance by the Chinese students, especially those from Taiwan, in the local student community in the United States. After several unhappy episodes, with different Chinese students who left her and with an American student who was strongly disliked by her family, she became acquainted with a handsome Chinese doctor from Taiwan who was known to date many girls regardless of nationality. She recovered quickly from paranoid psychosis after she was sent back to Taiwan where she was treated for two months at our department. She continued to be well and taught English at a girls' high school in her hometown for nearly a year until her second psychotic breakdown which was precipitated by an unexpected telephone call from the same doctor who happened to be home for a short visit.

For Chinese students studying abroad, especially females, marriage

or even steady dating with foreigners may create considerable anxiety and a sense of shame. The students may be disparaged by fellow countrymen and may even have to sacrifice their emotional ties with the other members of the group. Three female students developed delusions that their American professors were interested in them as prospective marriage partners. They became acutely disturbed when they were openly rejected. One of them had the delusion that the dean of the college, a man of German descent in his early fifties, was interested in her and was always watching her through a magic mirror. She believed that her blood was being exchanged with another's, two-thirds of her uterus was taken away, and also hallucinated that electrical charges were being made against her body by jealous male Chinese students. This young lady who was a shy, introverted, and modest person before going abroad became openly sexual in her behavior toward males and aggressive with female ward staff during her hospitalization. Another female student, following a courtship by an American whom she accepted, became ambivalent, depressed, and finally attempted suicide. Upon regaining consciousness from the head injury which she suffered in jumping from the second floor, she became acutely disturbed with delusions of being humiliated physically by Americans.

Two male students who had been preoccupied by sexual inadequacy at home developed the paranoia of being castrated by American girls when they were embarrassed by sexual impotence. A 33-year-old married Taiwanese male, the father of two children and a passive, dependent, submissive type of person, for a long time had suspected the infidelity of his active and domineering wife, whom he married through arrangements by his parents. He had, however, never expressed his suspicion at home. His going to the United States at the age of 32 against his wife's wishes was excusable on the grounds that further overseas study would result in better job opportunities in the future. Perhaps it was only the acting-out of his hostility toward his wife. In the United States, he became intimate with a female Chinese student, and when he received a letter from his wife accusing him of infidelity and desertion of the whole family, he became acutely disturbed and replied with a long letter full of anger and jealous delusions. Paranoid notions of being castrated followed this episode. Another male student, who had a strong attachment to his mother, became bothered by feelings that his penis was small in comparison to those of his American classmates at the student dormitory. He later developed ideas of being looked down upon and cheated by American students, and he became very hostile and antagonistic to them. Intensive study revealed, in nearly all of these cases, disturbed early parent-child relations and inadequate psychosexual development.

PERSONALITY PROBLEMS

AND ADJUSTMENT DIFFICULTIES AT HOME

Eight out of the 34 paranoid cases, 6 males and 2 females, had experienced paranoid breakdowns resulting in hospitalization before their

departure for study abroad. Nine other cases, 6 males and 3 females, had manifested a series of behavior problems that were suggestive of either paranoid disorders or personality pattern disturbances. Among those who had the first paranoid breakdown during study abroad, two groups of personality problems were noted. One group can be described as having been rigid, self-assertive, stubborn, aggressive, suspicious, aloof, introverted, and as having a tendency to isolate themselves from others. The other group can be described as having been emotionally immature and unstable. These characteristics were found to be predominant among the female students. They were reported to be sensitive to criticism, with strong inferiority complexes especially related to their physical and external appearance, and to be competitive, with low thresholds of frustration.

A rather high rate of previous breakdowns in these samples deserves our attention. Some explanations may be relevant to this finding. Paranoid symptoms are mental disturbances that usually show little personality disintegration or emotional deterioration. These cases may have been in their remission states at the time of departure, or their mental conditions may have been such that, unless disturbed, they were easily overlooked within the context of their surroundings. That the paranoid behavior pattern is easily overlooked in present Chinese society can be understood on the basis of traditional Chinese culture in terms of psychological orientation in interpersonal relations, psychological mechanisms in behavior control, present-day social conditions, and the prevailing attitudes of the Chinese toward this behavior. This will be discussed later. Although the cases are rather extreme, I have recently seen two Chinese students whose motivation for going abroad for study was to escape from a situation in which they believed they had been persecuted for years.

For those students with previous adjustment problems, though not necessarily psychotic, it was found that going abroad was motivated by neurotic competition with others or by the parents who attempted to satisfy their neurotic needs vicariously, regardless of their children's psychological readiness for overseas study. Occasionally, students just wanted to run away from the difficult situation at home, or they were making a blind effort to redeem failure at home by seeking better opportunities abroad. In any case, these students went abroad without insight into their own problems and without adequate preparation for the difficulties of study abroad. This is certainly a serious problem from the mental health and educational point of view.

From our experience with these cases, I am convinced that one or two psychiatric interviews with students before departure, including careful inquiry into their health history, ability to adjust, and their life experiences will not only serve to detect some easily overlooked psychiatric conditions but will also serve to predict the risk of future maladjustment or psychiatric disorders. More systematic studies in this area with international collaboration are needed for confirmation.

FAMILY BACKGROUND AND PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

Emotional deprivation or disturbed family relations were found in 21 out of 34 paranoid cases. This includes early death of one or both of the parents and separation of the parents or parents and children in childhood. In nearly all the cases where there was an early death of a parent, the father was the one who had died, and the mother became a neurotic, overprotective, controlling figure in the family with high expectations for the children's achievements. In the cases involving separation from parents, the Sino-Japanese War was the most frequent cause. Some cases were the result of disturbed marital relations between the parents, such as the father's living away from home with a concubine. During the Sino-Japanese War, many mainland students experienced childhood separation from their parents. It might be speculated, however, that the children were well taken care of by parent-substitutes under the extended family system, and thus emotional deprivation caused by this separation could have been diminished or avoided. In the present cases, this unfortunately was not the case. The existence of concubines living in or out of the family, without the legal separation or divorce of the parents, is not uncommon in the traditional Chinese family. In many instances, this situation is compensated for by increased maternal dominance over child-rearing and decision-making in the family. This type of family situation apparently has considerable impact on the child's personality development. Father-child relations of both sexes appeared to be more disturbed than those between mother and child. The fathers were usually described as authoritative, bossy, demanding, and egocentric with little concern or responsibility for family affairs. The other type of father was reported to be quiet, weak, and indecisive, with low status and little influence on the decision-making at home. In both instances, the children were distant from the father; they were afraid of him in the former instance and frustrated by him in the latter. In the families with weak fathers, the mothers were reported to be domineering, capable, and devoted, and the children were much closer to them.

A typical case was seen in a very intelligent student who became paranoid soon after obtaining a Ph.D. degree from Stanford University. During the long period of treatment in this department, he was overly hostile and antagonistic toward his father and, later, toward his mother. While he was living with the parents, he was always overtly disturbed with many persecutory delusions and regressed behavior. He finally had to leave home after several hospitalizations. Only after he lived away from home did his overt psychiatric disturbances gradually subside, and he was later able to teach at a small college on a part-time basis. His father is a distinguished figure in the nation and was once a minister. During early childhood, the father was away from home for many years, first for study abroad and later because of his official duties. During this period the children were under the care of their old-fashioned, self-educated, devoted mother. They lived with the

paternal grandfather who was an absolute authority figure in the family. As the eldest son, the patient was expected by his foreign-educated and Western-minded father to excel, but the father spent little time with the children because of his job and energetic social activities. The patient recalled strong feelings of inferiority, a sense of getting lost, uneasiness in the company of his father, and a tendency to avoid his father during high school days. The expectations of the highly successful, modern-minded father appeared to be a great psychological threat and burden to the patient who was raised in a traditional, old-fashioned family situation. Though he succeeded academically in the United States, he had a strong antagonism to the Western culture which his father so greatly admired.

OUTCOME OF TREATMENT

The prognosis of treatments was generally encouraging. Ten cases showed considerable improvement with fairly satisfactory social adjustments in their professions, which included college teaching, research, and government employment, while under psychotherapy and regular medication. In another 20 cases, mild to moderate improvement was obtained, though several cases relapsed later mainly because of inability to maintain treatment. Only 4 cases remained unchanged. Poor prognosis or relapse of the symptoms was significantly related to marked premorbid personality disorders and disturbed psychological relations in the family. In those cases with a favorable outcome after treatment, the return to the home country itself seemed to release psychological tension considerably, and in some cases, it served to provide an opportunity for reality-testing. With the therapist's assistance, these cases seemed to quickly strengthen ego-functions to correct their reality-distortion. It is my belief that psychotic students who break down abroad, especially paranoid cases, can be treated with much better prognosis in the home country than in foreign countries. Those persecutory delusions toward the school, immigration authorities, or the hospital staff causing the patients' compulsory hospitalization or the prospect of a forced return home generally disappeared quickly upon return to Taiwan. In one male case, delusions of being possessed by three American ghosts, including vivid somatic hallucinations of his limbs being shrunk and his blood being sucked, disappeared soon after his return to Taiwan. Sometimes the contents of delusions or hallucinations changed after the return home. A male case had visual hallucinations of being Buddha, instead of Jesus Christ as he had had in the United States, as soon as he arrived in Japan enroute to Taiwan. These changes may be understood in light of the psychodynamics in the development of delusions or hallucinations and the changes brought about by returning home.

During the course of treatment, it was observed in some cases that subsidence of paranoid psychosis was followed by depression as patients became aware of the psychological difficulties that were significant in causing their psychotic breakdown. Depressions usually diminished as patients be-

came able to cope with their emotional difficulties through the therapist's support. Depression occurred occasionally, however, when they were faced with some problems or difficulties with job, marriage, schooling, or going abroad again, with which they were unable to cope and which had provoked the previous psychological difficulties. A male who was sent home for treatment from the United States because of a series of delusions and hallucinations of a predominantly persecutory nature committed suicide by taking a large dose of barbiturates soon after his discharge from the hospital where he had shown marked improvement after two months of hospitalization. It was found that the depression was precipitated by his receiving a letter from his American girlfriend who wished to visit him in Taiwan and who suggested the possibility of marrying him. They had once considered marriage while he was studying in the United States. He thought he did not deserve to marry her. Furthermore, marriage and subsequent departure to the United States would entail his leaving his aging mother alone in Taiwan which he felt he should not do. Also, his future in the United States would have been quite uncertain. During the long course of psychotherapy afterwards, he became depressed from time to time when he took on a new job or when he was assigned to a new project which required independent responsibility. He was overwhelmed by feelings of insecurity and getting lost. Uncertainty about his ego identity and strong ambivalent feelings of hostility and guilt toward his mother (the only member of the family who lived with him and for whom he felt responsibility) were expressed during psychotherapy. The father had died in his early childhood, and as the youngest of his siblings, he had been brought up by his illiterate, old-fashioned mother with the financial assistance of the two older brothers who lived in Japan and Malaysia. He was the **only** one in the family who received a college education, and the two older brothers had high expectations for his studies in the United States. While a student in Taiwan he had never had time to examine himself, his ability to study abroad, his professional career, and his future life in general. It was during graduate study in the United States that he underwent the emotional turmoil of identity crisis which resulted in a loss of confidence and in his feeling of getting lost.

Paranoia and depression are the two mental disorders which tend to be dichotomized on the basis of the entirely different psychological mechanisms in operation. Intensive family study by a psychiatrist and an anthropologist in Boston showed some significantly different patterns of intrafamily communication between parents and children and different mechanisms of ego development and control. In the families of depressed patients, the children were forced to try by themselves to attain patterns of behavior through positive "ought" channels and were taught to be responsible for their own actions and to anticipate the needs of others. In the families of paranoids, children were forced into acceptable patterns of behavior through negative "ought not" blocking procedures and were trained to be the pas-

sive recipients of action by people in authority (Hitson and Funkenstein, 1959-60). This study also found that Burmese family culture was very similar to the paranoid family culture in Boston, and the high homicide rates in Burma were interpreted on this basis. My clinical experience in Taiwan supports Yap's findings (Yap, 1967) in Hong Kong that depressive disorders among Chinese are by no means as rare as Westerners think and that the Western nosological category is also valid in the symptomatology of depression. It can be further speculated from this study that these two disorders may occur in the same person at different stages, depending on the changes of psychological mechanisms in different social environments. Denial and projection mechanisms are more frequently used as defenses against anxiety in a foreign culture where the subject is psychologically isolated and where the outside world is regarded as potentially dangerous. In the home culture, where the outside world is no longer dangerous, these mechanisms are no longer as necessary and may be replaced by another mechanism which leads to depression. Case analyses in the present study indicate that depression and other psychiatric conditions, such as psychosomatic disorders, occur in the same person along with paranoid symptoms at different stages in a long process of adjustment difficulties. The patient's uncertainty about himself and his relation with others in a strange cultural environment is responsible for the feelings of general helplessness. He may try to find an absolute solution, either through an obsessive preoccupation with self which leads to psychosomatic symptoms or through a preoccupation with the outside world which leads to paranoid patterns of behavior. The preoccupation with self also leads to intense self-awareness which includes the inferiority feelings and self-condemnation which may fluctuate with a paranoid projection.

General Discussion

A question may arise as to whether paranoid manifestations are more prevalent among Chinese students studying abroad than among other foreign students. There are no studies yet available to answer this question. Considerably more depressive symptoms and suicidal attempts among Japanese students who broke down during study in the United States have been reported (Shimazaki and Takahashi, 1967). However, when the case histories, though few in number, were carefully read, it was noted that paranoid features were so apparent that paranoid psychoses might have been the diagnosis. The psychiatric diagnosis in these cases appeared to be entirely the subjective judgment of the investigators, depending on their orientation in evaluation of symptoms. Intensive epidemiological study of the mental disorders in communities and the hospital statistics in Taiwan seem to indicate that paranoid symptoms are not more prevalent than other mental disorders among the Chinese in general, but they appear to be related to the factors of migration (Lin et al., 1969). Without going too far in regard

to the prevalence rates of paranoid manifestations in Chinese students studying abroad, this discussion intends to highlight some social, cultural, and environmental factors which are thought to be relevant to explanations of their paranoid symptoms.

MIGRATION FACTORS

Psychiatric disorders have been found to be prevalent among migrating or displaced populations, and paranoid manifestations have been reported to be common symptoms (Pedersen, 1949; Tyhurst, 1957, 1951). The stress of culture shift and changes in social environment result in a confusion of value orientations, difficulty in communication, psychological isolation, and increased uncertainty concerning the self and its relation to others. These are considered to be the main psychological problems which lead to excessive denial and projection in the migrant patients. These psychological mechanisms may be partly applicable in explanation of paranoid formation among the Chinese students studying abroad.

The native country of a migrant and the country to which he migrates seem to be more important than the simple fact of his migration. The shift in culture and the relative degree of technological development ought to be considered here, among other factors. It can be assumed that the migration to a country with a basically similar culture, for example, from England to the United States, is easier than the move into a greatly different culture, from Asia to Europe or the United States, for instance. The greater the culture distance, the greater are the difficulties in adaptation and psychological adjustment. The relative degree of technological development seems to affect the psychological adjustment. Migration from technologically less developed, or so-called underdeveloped, countries to a developed country may render psychological adjustment more difficult than migration in the opposite direction. The migrants from non-Western developing countries to a highly developed Western country may be regarded as deprived, while the migrants who move in the opposite direction may be regarded as privileged. In the former case, migrants are more subject to conformity to the new culture, while in the latter case, the culture of the host countries may be, more or less, aspiring to conform to the migrants' culture. The psychological hazards in these two groups of migrants also differ. It is my contention that paranoid disorders are relatively common psychiatric disturbances among the foreign students from non-Western technologically less developed or developing countries who migrate to study in developed Western countries although the contents of delusions, precipitating factors, and the accessory symptoms may differ according to the migrants' original culture. Strong paranoid elements among psychotic foreign students from non-Western developing countries have been reported (Zunin and Rubin, 1967) which seems to support this speculation. Studies of the mental health problems of the privileged group of migrants will be significant in testing this theory.

CULTURAL FACTORS IN CHINESE BEHAVIOR

Besides the factors cited above, other characteristics of the Chinese culture appear to be relevant in the explanation of paranoid symptoms in Chinese students studying abroad. In child-rearing and in interpersonal relations, the Chinese traditionally have been situation oriented, as Hsu (1963) points out, instead of individual oriented. Filial piety and respect for elders and their beliefs are the central code of discipline in the family. Keeping harmony within the environment is also emphasized. The psychological foundation of Chinese society focuses on mutual interdependence among the members of the family and extended family group. Thus, psychological security rests largely with the family and primary kinship group. These characteristics of the Chinese may result in the following behavior patterns which appear to be relevant in an explanation of development of paranoid symptoms in our students.

1) Chinese tend to feel basically insecure outside of the family or primary kinship group, especially in foreign countries, and this may explain the strong tendency of cohesiveness among the Chinese students in the United States. Lack of emotional communication and intimacy with American and other foreign students, psychological isolation from them, and a strong tendency to maintain their own subculture in spite of their relatively successful academic adjustment are characteristics of Chinese students at a large American university reported by Alexander et al. (1969).

2) The world outside of the family or clan group is regarded as being potentially undependable and even dangerous. This is naturally more exaggerated in a different sociocultural environment.

3) Emphasis on keeping harmonious interpersonal relations makes the individual always conscious of others and sensitive to them. The generalized restraints on thought or behavior are rooted in the external social context in which the individual finds himself. The primary sources of regulating behavior in the new society appear to be the real or fantasied presence of others who have the power to shame the student. In the social environment where the outside world is regarded as potentially dangerous, the individual may tend to project his anxiety to his outside world.

4) Face-value has been known to be much emphasized, and suppression is thought to be the dominant psychological mechanism in controlling one's behavior in Chinese culture (Hsu, 1949, Hu, 1949). In a shame culture, one may tend to project his fault to others when the experienced shame is too great to be tolerated and face is lost. The phrase "long term shame turned into fury" is frequently used by newspapers in explanation of violence or homicidal acts; it seems to express this psychological mechanism.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Taiwan, because of the political situation, is under strict security control. One must be extremely cautious about his behavior as well as that

of others so that one will not be cheated by enemies. This attitude may account for the prevailing defensive and distrustful behavior among Taiwanese. This is reflected in the many strict regulations and formalities in government, banks, and other public organizations. Stated in the extreme, one may need to be more or less paranoid about others and one's surroundings in present-day Taiwan; this was illustrated in the results of a questionnaire study of a large group of students at a major urban university in Taiwan. More than half of the students, 54.8 percent, responded positively to the question, "Do you feel that the outside world is full of traps so you must be very cautious to be free from plots that somebody may have against you?"; 21 percent agreed with the statement, "Somebody was deliberately making trouble for you so you hate them very much"; and nearly one-fifth of the students felt that people were often criticizing them. Unless patterns of paranoid behavior are sharply deviant, they are not regarded as unusual, and may even be considered common, in present-day Chinese society. This attitude may account for lower prevalence rates of paranoid patients at home than one would expect.

PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF GOING ABROAD FOR STUDY

To study abroad for academic degrees or advanced training, especially in developed Western countries, has, for the past few decades, been the curse pursued by young Chinese intellectuals. Successful study abroad means not only obtaining knowledge or a degree, but also improved opportunities for financial security and a better life.

In a society where filial piety and conformity to elders are much emphasized, the parents' needs or wishes may play an important part in the decision-making of students. There is, consequently, some possibility that the motivation for going abroad to study is the neurotic compensation of the students themselves or of the parents or both and that the students' ability and psychological readiness have not been taken into account. The psychological pressure on these students is great. Failure in study not only means losing face for the student but for the parents and the family name as well. Therefore, the students must study hard, since they are responsible for themselves, their parents, and the family name. Chinese students seldom feel compelled to write to their parents, even during times of emotional or mental stress in the foreign country. They may even exaggerate their achievements and enjoyment of life a bit in order to reassure their parents who expect so much of them. The fear of failure in academic achievement and in losing face is so great that even the threat of failure, real or imaginary, may lead to mental breakdown.

Summary

Paranoid manifestations appeared to be prevalent among the psychotic symptoms of Chinese students who broke down during their life

abroad. A variety of factors, such as marriage and sex problems, personality problems, family background, and parent-child relations were shown to be significant in causing paranoid breakdowns in these students. The migration situation as well as certain characteristics of traditional Chinese culture and behavior were also relevant not to mention the contemporary situation.

The high rates of previous psychotic breakdowns and personality problems in this series of samples deserve our particular attention. Since studying abroad has become increasingly popular among Chinese students, more systematic studies on the adjustments and maladjustments of these students in foreign countries, preferably with international collaboration, are urgently needed. Psychiatric interviews, even one, with students going abroad before their departure will not only reliably detect any previous mental problems but also fairly well predict the risk of future mental problems. This kind of effort would also enable the students to obtain more insight into their own behavior and sensitivities, and it would prevent needless hardship and suffering.

NOTE

1. Mainlanders refers to those persons who migrated to Taiwan after World War II or whose fathers came after that date. Taiwanese refers to those persons who were born or settled in Taiwan before World War II or whose fathers were residents before that date. These two groups of Chinese, though ethnically the same, seem to differ in way of life, value orientation, and attitude toward their children's study abroad.

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