

tween those whose ancestors came from Fukien and Kwangtung provinces—the Hokkien and Hakka peoples, respectively. There is no reason to believe that social class and rural-urban residence, which have proved to be such powerful predictors of child-training differences in the United States, would not also affect parent-child relationships in Taiwan. (My own research shows that they do.) It is less self-evident, but certainly possible, that differing child-rearing emphases would characterize mainlanders and Taiwanese (many Taiwanese I talked with believe this is the case), mainlanders from different provinces, and Hakka and Hokkien groups. Yet throughout Wilson's book, we are simply told how "Chinese parents" behave, and the way they behave is to use shaming and denial of love. For the vast majority of families on Taiwan, this, is, I believe, just plain wrong.

If the political attitudes of children on Taiwan are not to be explained by the type of discipline they have received or their feelings toward their fathers, how were these attitudes acquired? The answer is, I think, a simple one. The children say that Chiang is benevolent and brave, that they should trust their leaders, that the Communists are "bandits," and all the rest of it, for the same reason they say  $2 + 2 = 4$ —because that's what their teachers tell them. In a fascinating appendix, Wilson describes the centralized governmental control of curriculum, textbooks, and teaching methods, which is reinforced by periodic visits of inspection and classroom performance on centrally set exams. Because it is free of commentary, this is the most compelling part of the entire book, and it makes one realize what a fine contribution Wilson could have made had he chosen a slightly different goal. From his extensive knowledge of the Taiwanese educational system, he could have fashioned a very valuable monograph on the way in which a government which considers itself under attack attempts to consolidate its power by inculcating appropriate political attitudes in the young. In fact, a good deal of this material is available in various sections throughout the book. The reader who has the perseverance to ignore the national-character argument while searching for this more descriptive material could be rewarded with considerable insight into what political socialization in Taiwan is really all about.

*Social Character in a Mexican Village: A Sociopschoanalytic Study.* By Erich Fromm and Michael Maccoby. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970. Pp. xv+303. \$8.95.

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The aims of the authors of this innovative study are "to test a new method which permits the application of psychoanalytic theory to the study of social groups without psychoanalyzing the individual members of the group, . . . to test the theory of social character, . . . [and] to discover data which might be useful for prediction and planning of social



change in peasant society” (p. 226). The research, carried out in 1958–63 in a village of 800 near Cuernavaca (and, incidentally, near Tepoztlán), is the joint product of the authors, of Mexican medical doctors and psychiatrists, and of the anthropologists Theodore and Lola Schwartz; however, the theoretical framework and data analyses are the work of the authors alone. Most description and analysis are based on an “interpretative questionnaire” (reproduced with coding instructions in the appendix) administered to 95 percent of the adult population ( $N = 406$ ), plus sixty Rorschachs and sixty-six Thematic Apperception Tests administered to subjects drawn from the larger sample.

The behavior underlying “social character” is found to be strikingly similar to that of Mexican peasants described by anthropologists: people are reserved and withdrawn, reluctant to form deep friendships, distrustful, suspicious of the motives of others, fatalistic, fearful, and lacking in confidence in their ability and power. But this study goes beyond anthropological analyses by showing that not all villagers combine the same traits and that through social character analysis there emerges a typology of personalities which elucidates such problems as alcoholism and which points the way to prediction about change. Fromm’s construct of “social character” postulates that, through social processes, human energy not only is structured in terms of Freud’s dynamic character concept, but is structured in culturally patterned ways, so that most members of a society share a common structure which motivates them to attempt to fulfill their social-economic functions with an optimum of energy and a minimum of friction. Since social character, which develops as a syndrome of character traits, is an adaptation to the economic, social, and cultural conditions the group experiences, once the range and variety found in a group is known, its potential for response to changing conditions can be predicted with some degree of accuracy.

Fromm’s theory of character differs from that of Freud in that its base is seen not in various types of libido organization, but in terms of a person’s “relatedness” to the world. Relatedness is conceptualized via the ideal types of “productive” and “nonproductive” orientations, combined with “receptive,” “exploitative,” and “hoarding” tendencies, which combine to make four principal social characters: nonproductive-receptive (numerically most common), productive-hoarding (next most common), productive-exploitative (about fifteen cases), and unproductive-exploitative (numerically relatively unimportant). Nonproductive people view all good as lying outside themselves, beyond their creative powers; receptives await passively for whatever may come their way; while exploitatives take by guile or aggression. Productive people are creative, outgoing, active, capable of giving as well as receiving love—the exploitatives much more so than the hoarding types, who find security in conserving and withholding rather than aggressively producing more. Considering both dominant and secondary traits (for obviously, no one fully corresponds to any one type), 71 percent of the villagers are receptive, 55 percent hoarding, and 26 percent exploitative. The nonproductive-receptive peasant corresponds



roughly to the popular stereotype of the listless Mexican peasant, the productive-hoarding to the "anthropologists'" peasant, while the productive-exploitative peasant is the raw stuff from which an entrepreneurial class is formed.

Since, as is pointed out, social character is adaptive to the conditions of life, the presence of three basic types in a single village (presumably duplicated in many other Mexican villages) has important implications for contemporary Mexico. The nonproductive-exploitative people are primarily landless day laborers (from whom an urban factory and services population could be drawn?), the productive-hoarding people are free landowners (the political base of a sturdy yeoman class?), while the productive-exploitative group, because of its future orientation, is the key to social change based on what the authors call "social selection," a concept suggestive of the biologists' "gene pool." Thus, the first two types are best adapted to traditional rural Mexico, while the third type is deviant and ill-adapted to this life. But in developing socioeconomic situations, the previously deviant productive-exploitative group now proves best adapted to the new conditions, and its members become economically successful and the leaders.

Although for sociologists and anthropologists *Social Character* has shortcomings, especially the lack of detailed structural analysis of the community, it is a major theoretical and factual contribution to the knowledge of Mexican peasant society which cannot be ignored by those concerned with peasants, their character, and the implications of character type for socioeconomic development. It is a study which should be replicated in other classical peasant societies, such as those of Greece and India.

*Sweden: Prototype of Modern Society.* By Richard F. Tomasson. Studies in Modern Societies. Edited by Dennis H. Wrong. New York: Random House, 1970. Pp. xv+302. \$3.95 (paper).

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Remarkably, Swedish sociology up to the present has not produced any books on Sweden; there have been no broad, holistic attempts, in the vein of Robin M. Williams's *American Society* (New York, 1970), to deal with Swedish society as such, although there are a variety of books on various isolated aspects (e.g., the family, organizations, labor-management relations, and social mobility). Instead, scholars and journalists from abroad have provided the Swedish public with broad description and analysis of its social habitat. Some examples are Marquis Childs's *Sweden—the Middle Way* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1961), Dankwart A. Rustow's *The Politics of Compromise* (Princeton, N.J., Princeton

Foster, G. M., 1971: Review Fromm, E. and M. Maccoby: *Social Character in a Mexican Village. A Sociopschoanalytic Study* (1970b, English), In: *American Journal of Sociology*, Chicago Vol. 77 (1971-72), pp. 336-338.

