

## Chinese People and The Expression of Love

### 华人和爱的表现

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One of the criticisms leveled by Westerners and, far more vehemently, by Westernized Chinese at Chinese people in general is that they don't "show love". In fact, this theme is enlarged upon in a very unflattering manner in more than one novel written by Chinese-Americans about Chinese-Americans. The gist of the criticism is that traditional Chinese culture doesn't value love and that therefore Chinese people are cold and incapable of feeling love.

西方人对华人的批评之一，就是华人“不表示爱”，而西化的华人对一般华人这批评更尤为激烈。事实上，美籍华人写的、关于美籍华人的小说，非常不赞扬地提及华人怎样不表示爱的，不只一本。批评的中心是，华人传统文化不重视爱，所以华人冷酷，没有能力感觉爱。

Sigh! That is not so! Traditional Chinese culture does value love, and Chinese people are capable of feeling love! It's just that first, traditional Chinese culture considers obligations, which are objective and are defined by the objectively existing relationship, to come before love, a subjective feeling, and second, because of the foregoing, Chinese people don't need to express love in the very demonstrative ways that Westerners express it. Traditional Chinese culture makes Chinese people secure in that should one day the subjective feeling of love towards them not be felt by the other party in the relationship, that doesn't mean the relationship will come crashing to an end. The relationship continues as long as one continues to fulfill one's relationship-defined obligations. Thus one expresses love by fulfilling one's obligations with all one's heart and soul. In traditional Chinese culture, in the novels, plays, and stories, what is sung in praise to is the behavior of fulfilling one's obligations with all one's heart and soul regardless of difficulty or sacrifice, while the subjective feeling of love is included in and expressed by the objective behavior. Traditional Chinese culture puts objective behavior first and subjective feeling second.

唉！并非如此！华人传统文化确实重视爱，华人也有能力感觉爱！只不过是：第一，华人传统文化认为客观的、由客观存在的关系而规定的义务为先，爱这个主观的感觉为后，第二，正因如此，华人不需要像西方人那样，用很富于表达性的方法来表示爱。华人传统文化让华

人们很放心，如果跟他们有关系的对方，有一天对他们不感觉爱，关系并不会因此就突然完蛋。只要坚持完成自己由关系所规定的义务，关系就会延持下去。因此，爱是用尽心尽力完成自己的义务来表示的。华人传统文化里，小说、戏剧、故事等歌颂的就是这种不管困难或牺牲多大都用尽心尽力来完成义务的行为，而爱这主观的感觉，是包含和表现于行为之中的。华人传统文化把客观的行为放在前，把主观的感觉放在后。

Therefore, Chinese don't need to always say "I love you", to always kiss and embrace in front of others, like Westerners do. On the contrary, Chinese feel that such things are creepy, like they are phony, part of an act. Chinese people fulfill their obligations and duties every day with whole heart and soul, with an attitude that's both reverent and joyful, and such is their expression of love.

因此，华人不需要好像西方人那样，常说着“我爱你”，常在人家面前接吻、拥抱。相反地，华人觉得这些东西肉麻，好像是假的、演戏般的。华人们带着恭谨喜悦的心情，聚尽尽心尽力来完成每天的义务、责任，这就是他们爱的表示。

So, yes, in traditional Chinese culture love is important, indeed very important; it's just that love is not supreme, not important above all else, the way Western culture has it. Traditional Chinese culture puts love in its proper place.

所以，爱在华人传统文化里的确重要，而且很重要，只不过，爱不是至上的，不是好像西方文化那样，比任何事情都更为重要的。传统的华人文化把爱放在适当的地位。

It's not just traditional Chinese culture that's like this; traditional Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese cultures are also like this, in a word, all the Asian cultures that have revered Confucius are like this.

不仅华人的传统文化如此，韩国、日本、越南的传统文化也如此，总之，亚洲文化凡是曾敬奉过孔子的都如此。