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TEACHING SOCIAL SCIENCE
IN THE EAST ASIAN CONTEXT

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Teaching Social Science in the East Asian Context

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The reason for the discussion on teaching social science in the East Asian context is obvious. It has to do in the way social science was developed as a scientific discipline. Concepts and paradigms in the social sciences were formulated exclusively from abstractions of European and North American social and political histories in the past two centuries. During the Age of Reason, Biology, Physics and Astronomy provided satisfaction to intellectual curiosities about the natural environment. Similarly, the advent of social sciences had altered the way in which people thought about their social environments. Social science was expected to follow the same canons of scientific enquiry to study a variety of topics on human societies ranging from the nature and structure of human social institutions; the impact of institutional values on the legitimacy of political authority, and fundamentals of human rights; to the study of norms about sexual legitimacy, incest taboo, and kin-obligations. Over the decades when social sciences were developed in Europe and North America, numerous efforts were made to find grand theories and universal laws of social and economic change. In the course of finding such theories, epistemological and methodological polemics were as important subject matters as some of the specific phenomena to be studied. Out of these efforts, an important question about specific social values in different societies had become a crucial supra-empirical question in the context of empirical research. The best known example was demonstrated by Max Weber, who related the historical development of capitalism with the abstract values of Protestant religion, particularly Calvinism, in northern Europe. At a time when philosophical positivism was considered necessary for separating social science from arm-chair philosophy, positivism that defined social science data are only those obtainable by

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1 A keynote paper delivered at the First International Conference on Teaching Social Sciences in the East Asian Context held in May, 1997 at the University of Macau, Macau.
sensual perceptions. Abstract values of Protestant Ethic were viewed with suspicion by social scientists who were committed to scientific positivism. It is clear that, against the historical context of the era, social science was, and perhaps still is, the science of Western societies. We coined such terms as modern, free capitalism, and post-modern, global, and the like, to provide historical benchmarks of changes that have taken place in Europe and North America and from the vantage point of viewpoint of Euro-Americans.

Consistent with the Eurocentric viewpoint in the social science, there is also the tendency for social scientists to take for granted that science and technology led the way in social change. From the invention of steam engines that propelled the locomotives that paved the way for the industrial and political revolutions of the last century; followed by a new technological revolution marked by Internet world communications in the present century, we witnessed the direct impact of science and technologies on the structure and changes in societies as well as relationships among nations. However, we have precisely few research to document how technologies, that began in Euro-American societies, had not had a parallel development in Asia, save perhaps the case of Japan. Was it because of resistance of traditional values as most of the Anthropologists of an earlier era had suggested? or was it because of colonial political economies of the last century, and/or the effect of cold war and the quest for a Western developed concept of regional balance that might have shaped the difficulties of technological transfer in the current century?

Theories and Realities

Inductive theories formulated on the basis of Euro-American historical facts may not work well in the East Asian context. Yet it is difficult to select concepts that seemed to work well until more rigorous research can prove otherwise. Precautions must be taken when lecture materials borrowed from texts that are used in the West

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2 Though papers on national industrial policies often reflected the impact of science and technological development. However, there are many other factors that are associated with industrial policies, including population dynamics, international political economy, and regional and area trade relations, etc.
for teaching social sciences in East Asia. Examples of the "mismatch" can easily be documented, and all of us who attempted to do so have had the experience of drawing students' attention on culturally inappropriate and simplistic explanations to complicated realities. An obvious example is the current sociological perspective on the decline of extended family and the rise of the nuclear family as a global trend. We know in abstract that family changes began at different points during the course of history in different societies. Goode argued that what seemed to be factors that buttressed change in one society, frequently became obstacles to change in another. Each society has had its unique experience in development, though often they might appear similar. Different configurations of similar discrete historical events can produce vastly different trajectories for further change, depending, among other things, specific sequence of these events. Building a system of explanations of changing functions and goals of social institutions is a painstaking task, for which no prior examples can be used exactly the way it was, nor will be. Here we have learned, perhaps painfully that (Herbert) Spencerian laws of the final cause is clearly not yet in the cards of the social sciences; an important reason why teaching social science in the Asian context must have a life of its own.

**The Significance of Historical Context**

To become a student in a specific discipline, it is important for our students to know both the theory and methods that are applied to describe the way social, political and economic institutions work. Theory building is the ultimate goal of a scientific discipline. In the 19th century, after the works of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, non-Marxist economic theories remained sterile and stagnant. The choice was then between the formulation of a better theory, or a better description of the historical reality. To build a theory, one needs to depend on the process of logical deductive and inductive processes. Propositions that began with European experience that are used in the syllogism can lead to a logically valid but factually erroneous conclusion. There are at present many other limitations for social science to use formal methodologies to

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deal with socioeconomic changes. Experts are quite aware of these limitations in theory building in the social and behavioral sciences. At one extreme, Economics and Experimental Psychology tend to adopt codified models for achieving universal laws. Political Science and Cultural Anthropology are more inclined to provide detailed contextual information that may be analytical while being insightful. Sociology is probably positioned in the middle, vacillating between the use of formal models and a search for detailed descriptions. These are general observations, there are of course exceptions. The point is that in teaching social sciences, it is necessary to become aware of the demands for the principle of universality of rules of causation, or its relativity and uniqueness in the context of culture and history. For example, in studying behavioral disorders, the question is whether pathologies of a certain diagnostic label are the same all over the world, or unique relative to the culture in question. In medicine, the belief is its universalistic characters; whereas in medical anthropology, the emphasis on its uniqueness, pertaining to the cultural norms that regulate behavior.

It is then quite safe to assume that if we are interested in the teaching in the East Asian context, we are ipso facto committed to the notion that in teaching social sciences we must make use of historical materials, and that universalism based on concepts derived in Euro-American experience must give way to relativism. It also goes without saying that we would treat moral and cultural "values" as distinct social facts and should therefore be examined for their institutional and behavioral consequences.

The Cultural Context of Families

I shall make the above point more concrete by using a number of examples in the social sciences to give further explications. Allow me to use one example that is

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4 In the present case, relative to a particular culture and society, or relative to a specific period of historical times.

5 A term used by Emile Durkheim in the Division of Labour in Society, originally published in French in 1873, translated and published in English by the Free Press (N.Y.), in 1947.
closest to my own immediate environment in Hong Kong: families and people in Hong Kong. Most of the writings on the family of Hong Kong describe the prototype of Hong Kong’s family as the nuclear family. In the last two decennial censuses of Hong Kong, the Department of Census and Statistics reported that the majority of Hong Kong’s households contained nuclear families, based on an approximation of the composition of household members. For the record, these censuses showed that roughly 65% of all households belonged to this type, with little or no change between these census periods. It is commonly accepted that Hong Kong has achieved the status of a nuclear family-dominated society because it is Western (a British colony between 1842 and 1997), modern, and industrialized. My professional colleagues in the social sciences agreed⁶. Sociologists William F. Ogburn and M. F. Nimkoff, Talcott Parsons, and more recently, William J. Goode have given good reasons for the functional “fit” between industrialization and urbanization in Western societies and the change towards a norm of neo-local residence away from the family of orientation when young people becomes married⁷. So why is Hong Kong an exception that warrants further investigation?

The answer to this question lies in the fact that Hong Kong still is an Asian city. In spite of more of a century of the British colonial rule⁸, the Westernized Chinese segment of the society consists only of a small elite class of university educated bureaucrats, academicians and professional personnel, and executives of multi-national corporations. The great majority of Hong Kong’s Chinese population are either first or second generation immigrants from various parts of Guangdong.

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⁸ Probably a more appropriate characterization of Hong Kong is that it is a Chinese city ruled by the British laws, as the 28th (the last) Governor of Hong Kong said during his departure remarks in front of the Governors House on the last day (June 30, 1997) of British administration in Hong Kong.
Province; far from being "Westernized" in terms of cultural values, food habits, recreational patterns, and, in the context of this paper, concept of kin-obligations.

History describes chronological changes of a society in fairly similar ways as a biography describes the life course of a person. The colony of Hong Kong for the first one hundred years from the mid-18th century to the end of WWII was a place for people to trade, and not a place in which people think where the “family” is. Traders' families were on the mainland in those towns and villages where people had traditionally looked to Hong Kong and overseas Chinese communities for opportunities. From the nineteen fifties until the latter part of the sixties, there was little change in population growth through the excess of births over deaths in the colony, or through substantial increases of permanent settlers\(^9\). For traders who came from Guangdong, Hong Kong was seen merely as a market place and not a place where the home was. It was not the natal place at birth, nor the burial ground after death. Between Guangdong Province on the mainland and Hong Kong, movement back and forth was free from legal restrictions.

It was not until the beginning of the 1950s that some of the Hong Kong residents began to think of Hong Kong, instead of the mainland, as their “home”. Two major factors accounted for the change. First was the sudden expansion of Hong Kong's population after 1949 and 1962. The Socialist Revolution of 1949 had literally dumped in Hong Kong thousands of mainland refugees\(^{10}\) from across the border, and refugees had became a major concern of the government for social as well as political reasons. Aside from obvious political reasons, a sudden increase of population meant a much greater demand for resources in housing, employment, transportation, education, welfare, and public security. The second large influx of refugees from the

\(^9\) The first time permanent settlers came to reside in Hong Kong was in the beginning of the colony as a result of the Taiping Rebellion that drove refugees from Guangdong Province to Hong Kong. The net effect of that refugee movement has not been fully assessed nor considered significant.

\(^{10}\) Actually, these are refugees who fled to Hong Kong first in 1949 that extended to several years after the Chinese Communist Party established a new regime in Beijing, and in the Spring and Summer of 1961 following a major famine. However, the British colonial government refused to recognize the newcomers from across the mainland as refugees for political reasons, they were all called “immigrants”.

mainland came in the spring and summer of 1962 because of the well known but little publicized famine. A sudden overflow of immigrants was a sufficient reason for the Colonial Office in Hong Kong to institute a controlled immigration policy for the first time in the history of Hong Kong.

The close of the Hong Kong border had a very profound impact on those who were in Hong Kong without their close kins. The old sense of kinship between them and folks at home across the border shifted dramatically. As time went by, a sense of “we” in Hong Kong and “they” in Guangdong was developed. For the first time, people in Guangdong were seen as “different” from the people in Hong Kong, a self-defined distinction of themselves as Hong Kong-Chinese, a hyphenated Chinese was created.

A second factor, brought about in 1967, was not entirely independent from the on-set of the two major influxes of immigrants. This was the “riot of Hong Kong’s labour unions and sympathizers”. The Colonial Government had always considered Hong Kong as a city of tranquillity where people came to make money, not political waves. The labour protest movement caught the government by surprise. Many suspected that rioters were pro-Beijing infiltrators. Even though nothing more dramatic happened afterwards in the form of mass protest, the after-shock of the 1968 event further convinced bureaucrats in the colonial government that a tighter control at the border was needed. In Guangdong, political events that later reached the peak of the Great Cultural Revolution further cut off kin-folks on both sides of the border from even occasional contacts.

Historical sequence of events shaped the way Hong Kong residents regarded as to who were, and who were not, members of the family. The concept of family membership was, and still is, the basic source of confusion. In the period between 1842 and 1945, Hong Kong’s population consisted largely of merchants, shopkeepers, transients and unskilled labourers who regarded themselves temporarily detached from their family of orientation, as sons, daughters, husbands and fathers of members of their families back home. Whatever the family was in Hong Kong in those
days, the Hong Kong family discharged a far more restricted range of functions than did the natal family in Guangdong villages.

In addition, family historical records allowed materials bearing on the family of orientation back in Guangdong to show kin-relations over a much longer period of several generations. Records on Hong Kong families, on the other hand, were limited to a slice of time, often through statistical tables of the census, or cross-sectional surveys that bear no temporal dimension of how the institution has become from what it was.

Because family data in Hong Kong has different temporal profiles from the historical and genealogical data found in mainland China, it is particularly difficult to compare the trend of family change in contemporary Hong Kong. The historical fact naturally leads us to the conclusion that there is a genealogical amnesia among offspring of early Hong Kong immigrants, the majority of whom never had the opportunity to know their grandparents. In due course, teenagers became adults, married and took on the added responsibilities of being parents to their own children. During the long absence from kin-relatives in their home villages, these young men and their newly established families had no opportunities to visit their truncated families, not by desire of having neonatal residence, but by forces of circumstances. These newly established conjugal families, without the presence of an older generation, had therefore become the high profile of Hong Kong's nuclear families beginning in the 1971 decennial census, and the trend of family-nuclearization had become more pronounced in the following two censuses because of the artifacts of Hong Kong's basic blueprint of public housing that defines the unit of the family both in concept and in size in the pattern of the typical British urban family. An unexpected factor was that the first Family class taught in Sociology at the two tertiary institutions (HKU, and CUHK) came also during the late sixties. The first post-WWII census, conducted in 1961, was probably the first census of modern-day Hong Kong. The two consecutive post-war census data on Hong Kong's households were sufficient to seduce many sociologists in those days into supposing somewhat hastily of the inevitability of the
nuclearization of Hong Kong's family. Incomplete and truncated households subsequently were created because highway constructions and urban renewal had reshaped the physical environment throughout the territory that also added to the growing proportion of small conjugal families, split from formerly kin-clustered domiciles, particularly those who lived in the rural New Territories, to fit the standard government version blueprints large enough only for primary members of the family. Taken together, these seemingly unrelated immigration restrictions, methods of enumerating population statistics, the massive effort to build an infrastructure, all had given the unmistakable impression that the emergence of an industrialized and urbanized community was in fact the cause of the high profile of nuclear families in Hong Kong's new social scene. These statistics also helped to "confirm" the prevailing theory of social and family change in Sociology based on studies in North America and Europe.

Re-Conceptualization in the Chinese Context

What I have described here is perhaps a common problem for teachers -- and researchers alike -- in teaching social sciences in the Chinese context. To be a social scientist, to be sure, we are all trained in the West, some among the world's finest research institutions. Even those who received Ph.Ds from indigenous tertiary institutions in East Asia, their teachers more likely were trained in the West. Most of our text-materials dealt with concepts and methodologies established and validated in community studies of Western societies. We use translated or in original language readings in our classes. It is not entirely our fault that we use these concepts and micro-theoretical propositions in our work as teachers and researchers in the same way we were trained; and the way we wrote our research papers. The bottom line is that our thinking followed our readings over the years. It is difficult for us to shift our paradigms unless we became aware of the need to do it as a real challenge.

11 See ff. 7.
In spite of our habits, however, there is no excuse to teach social sciences that is **ahistorical**. Here in Hong Kong and Macau, we see little evidence in textbooks and research proposals that employed rich and unique historical experience of the Chinese society, even textbooks written in Chinese for the sole purpose of teaching Chinese students. There is no reason to believe that it is different in other East Asian societies. The widely used texts on the Chinese society were written from the perspectives of the West, based on existing, and in rare occasions, irrelevant paradigms. Weber’s interest in the value system of China and India came about not because of the intrinsic motivation to develop a set of theoretically relevant concepts that suits the societies in Asia. Instead, his interest came from his persistent curiosity about the **value** of Protestant Ethic in the development of Western style capitalism in Europe. Given the fact that Weber was not a student of Chinese and Indian Studies, he had exhibited a remarkable insight into the religions of China and India. It is more reasonable that we ask ourselves why so little is done to use the Chinese value context in the teaching of economic and political institutions\(^\text{12}\). History and culture can help us to explain the nexus between social organization of the **ethnie** and variations of economic institutions. These concepts are particularly helpful when it comes to teaching social sciences in the East Asian context.

**Cultural Bond Concept: Does it Help or Hinder**

Much of our current problem in teaching and doing research in the East Asian context, in my opinion, lies in the lack of conceptually appropriate tools to deal with phenomena which may be differentially shaped by Asia’s cultural histories. The family

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\(^{12}\) For example, in Economics, intergenerational transfer of property has been regarded as the societal accumulation of capital, with little or no concern over the degree to which transfer of wealth may have control function. This is the case because studies conducted in the West had not considered the importance of cohesion of the clan. In traditional China and in Chinese overseas communities, including Hong Kong, on the other hand, the manifest function of inheritance was, and still is, the cohesion of clan organization and as a control function in the Chinese context. Similarly, the ingenious development of **hwe-kuan** that served some functions of the Western style bank in Chinese communities in North America and in southeast Asia, which reflected functions of obligatory social relations among fellow villagers, members of the clan and lineage that were central in the economic organizations among Chinese business enterprises all over the world in the 19th and early 20th centuries. See Light, Ivan, *Ethnic Enterprises*, Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1976.
is one such example. The difference between a census operational tool of a nuclear household on one hand, and a social science analytical (and classificatory) concept of the nuclear family on the other hand, can easily escape the attention of social scientists in the classroom. In a society that valued individualism and neolocal residence, the ideal norm is to have a separate domicile for the younger couple after marriage. In such cases the nuclear household and nuclear family can be treated as overlapping and even synonymous. In many Asian societies where it is not uncommon that several nuclear units are in fact parts of one split-household\textsuperscript{13}. Family living pattern can be and are known to have been shaped by physical limitations and zoning laws. This was true, for example, for Vietnamese refugees to be located in several dwellings in Chicago because no affordable space could possibly be found to house a large extended family of sixteen members who were admitted to the United States as a family group. Furthermore, aside from architectural design of modern urban houses, physical forms of family structure can also be the artifacts of the family life cycle, and the extended family includes young adult children co-residing with their parents and other adult children at the early and later cycles of the family. Adult children and their own families of procreation are separated from the parental family during their reproductive years and there is a greater demand for living space. The adult children return to share parents’ home when parents have become old and are in need of care, a quite common adaptation to the age cycle and value of extended familism described by Gore in his study of the urban family in New Delhi\textsuperscript{14}. To be sure, household change cannot adequately indicate the change of family forms. Instead, household only describes forms of co-residence; whereas family is defined by obligatory kin-relationships among its members.

It may be convenient to use the term inuclear family to classify patterns of co-residence and relationships among its members within the same household, but when it is used in the Chinese context, it could be sociologically misleading as abstract


representation of empirical facts of the Chinese kinship system in its affective and obligatory attributes among members. Members of the same nuclear family can very well reside in physically distinct households. The achievement of what may be called split-household nuclear family can come about in two different ways, both of which are extremely common in China and Hong Kong. First, the chain-like migration of members of a nuclear unit from Hong Kong to places in Australia, Canada or the United States is the typical split-household family described by Peter Li. In physical form, such families resemble in structure to the Western type of nuclear family. But a good many of this type of chain-like migration of a single nuclear unit eventually become reunited in two generations of a single family. A second source of split-household family is caused by housing and zoning statutes of the host society, rather than by the norm of neolocal residence. This is an important point first raised by a mainland Chinese sociologist, who, after having studied family relations in Tianjin in the eighties, found that the standard nomenclature could not properly describe the nature of family relationships delineated in the family literature. In the West where neolocal residence is preferred and expected, the boundary of an nuclear family is clearly drawn in terms of sleeping arrangements, cooking, taking meals together, and in terms of financial responsibilities among members, in contrast to those who are merely cousins, aunts and uncles. Pan reported that boundaries of relationship between members of the nuclear family and kin-relatives outside the nuclear unit were frequently ambiguous in Tianjin, in spite of separate domiciles for nuclear units within the kinship dictated by the present housing policy. In the absence of a more appropriate nomenclature, Pan coined the concept "network of nuclear units" to denote modern urban families in China. "The network of nuclear units", or NONU, is neither a nuclear family found in the West, using relationship as a yardstick, nor an extended "grand" family found in traditional China, using physical structure of the household as an indicator. It is not what most sociologists called the modified extended family, a term which was used first by Eugene Litwak in his studies of the

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middle class Detroit families\textsuperscript{17}. Instead, it has its own classificatory properties that are conceptually distinct from either the nuclear, or the extended, families. The term, "network of nuclear units", used by Pan to describe this type of constellation of a domestic unit is highly innovative and indeed a theoretically relevant concept that can be used as a conceptual tool in the Sociology of the Family. Similarly, the use of dyadic-attributes, a concept to differentiate Chinese family structure and functions from those in the West by Francis L. K. Hsu in his quite original publication of \textit{Kinship and Culture}, is excitingly innovative, contextually appropriate, and theoretically powerful\textsuperscript{18}.

\textbf{The Historical and Cultural Contexts}

An obvious question at this juncture is what is the Asian context in general, and Chinese context in particular? Using either or both concepts may have several shades of meaning, from \textit{ethnicity} to \textit{peoplehood}, or a geographic area. It denotes at its worst, as did by some, a separate and hyphenated branch of the social sciences, like Chinese-social science or Asian-social science. This is self defeating and serving no useful function. There is no such thing as Chinese-social science any more than there is a Chinese chemistry or Chinese physics.

By Chinese context here I mean that all descriptive and analytical representation of social facts must be done to include their historical and cultural dimensions, a point which is easy to agree with but difficult to carry out in view of the fact that our social sciences are both \textit{ahistorical and Eurocentric}.

At the risk of being presumptuous, I would like to offer a suggestion or two as to how one might do a better job as a teacher of social sciences in the East Asian context. Here let me use the Chinese context to make my point. The answer is a


simple one. We must understand the Chinese historiography and the essence of Chinese social values. Too many of us, myself included, had a superficial understanding of Chinese history, philosophy and Chinese religions values, and how such values had been synthesized; as well as general and specific conditions under which value mutations had taken place. This is like saying the obvious. But teachers of social sciences in the West have a good command of knowledge of socio-political and economic institutional histories in Europe. Why not teachers of social science in the Chinese context at least check the history and values of the Chinese society? Imagine what would have happened in the teaching of social sciences subjects had we not been familiar with the impact of Christianity in the development of European societies; the role of land-ownership in the Medieval Times if we wish to understand modern concepts of property rights, including intellectual property rights; or knowledge of the French Revolution on the transformation of both political structure and social stratification; the role of Islam in the formation and change of Arabic and Muslim societies; the African slavery in the economic development of the American south; and the frontier movement of the American west on the rugged individualism of the American character; the nature of minority and ethnic relationships in Europe without at least a working knowledge of the history of annexations and conquests after the Fall of the Roman Empire; the development of inner city in North America without the knowledge of migration of freed slavery and the industrial development after the 1920s; or the formation of Chinatowns in American communities without the knowledge of the building of the railroad in the vast American continent in the middle of the Nineteenth Century; and the most abnormal demographic composition of early Chinese communities in the West Coast without the knowledge of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882? How would we teach gender courses without knowing the Feminist Movement in the 19th Century, and the social and political context of the anti-war and anti-establishment era in the late 60s and the early 70s? How can we teach political science of American Presidency or Political Parties without knowing specific issues of American Civil War or American history in general? How can we, in short, study the dynamics of social change apart from the course of historical development?
All these seem to be rather obvious. Yet we are, myself included, habitual offenders of ahistoricism when it comes to discussing various concepts. How can we discuss the development of capitalism in China or the absence of it against a Chinese historical context? or the elements of a modern Chinese society that is not managed monetarily and legally? It is, as it seems now, that without knowing Chinese history from the late Ming through Qing Dynasties, some two hundred plus years in duration, our “theorizing” about the lack of economic development in China was and is, at best, a reexamination of Euro-American social and economic change in a different geography.

We have been so tempted to examine the impact of industrial development as the origin of economic development because, non-Marxian economic theorists failed to articulate a more sophisticated economic theory. Even here we have a glimpse of the lack of historical understanding of European societies as a possible source of the stagnation of theory development. The complex and intricate reciprocal relations between economic institutions and sociopolitical institutions have not been carefully described before an analytical model is built. In the West, civil liberties developed from the matrix of municipal franchise, the monied strength of the burghers, the impact of foreign trade, the establishment of banking and credit systems, the force of mercantile interests accompanied by the legal code to regulate the handling of money transfer, the impersonal management style, insurance and accounting systems, all of which required trust and institutionalized guarantees, and only an integrated structure of all these was able to convert some of the landed interests and compel the operation according to contract principles for the common good. This is the kind of a commercial infrastructure that had not taken place in China during the comparable period in Ming and Qing. Under these circumstances, and without a money-dominated social structure of trust, what else can be used to build a mercantile civilization had it not been the trust based on kinship structure and blood relations? Tell me, what else was there?

19 I am indebted to Ray Huang in his discussion on the mercantile culture in his volume, A Macro History of China, New York: 1990.
Was it because the Chinese did not have the knowledge about the fiscal requisites of economic development, and the deprivation of technological transfer from the West and from Japan? Was it, as Marion Levy\textsuperscript{20} said, that it was because of the crumbling of the clan system and the rise of the nuclear family \textit{by default} that had destroyed chances of economic development in China? History told us that the answer to both questions is negative: we know, for example, that Wang Anshi's reforms as early as the 11th Century were aimed at overhauling the fiscal system in his time by commercializing its operations. Evidence in historical records showed that both motivation and necessary knowledge were there. But social conditions were not ripe at that time, his programmes did not receive mercantile participation and civic support. Market structure and regional development were far from being ready. Wang Anshi's reforms were limited to empty debates within the bureaucracy and good ideas died there\textsuperscript{21}.

But when the pieces are put together, the simplistic relationships for which we can mathematically build a model to explain the dynamics of relationship in the modern economic and political systems cannot possibly help the next generation of social science students to understand the dynamics of the Chinese society. The borrowing of concepts and models from the West may not be sufficient to explain rather complex developmental stages. Even microtheories need to be placed under certain conditions to be applicable. We know that teaching social science in the Chinese context is a difficult one, and in Asian context is even more difficult.

\textsuperscript{20} Marion Levy, "Contrasting Factors in the Modernization of China and Japan", Economic Development and Cultural Change, 2, 161-197.

\textsuperscript{21} See Ray Huang, \textit{Op. Cit.}