

Pilgrimage to the West: Modern Transformations of Chinese Intellectual Formation in Social Sciences

Rui Yang, Meng Xie & Wen Wen

Abstract

Since the mid-nineteenth century, Chinese intellectuals turned to the West for truth. China's modern education system has since been built upon Western experience, with little space for China's vast indigenous intellectual traditions. Meanwhile, Chinese traditions remain omnipresent and ubiquitous in the society. Due to many fundamental differences, Chinese and Western traditions are not compatible with each other. Constant tensions between them have led to Chinese people's loss of spiritual homeland. Universities are both part of the reason for and a result of such a historical development. The shift of knowledge system from traditional learning to Western intellectual formation symbolizes the establishment of modern disciplines in Chinese universities. A better understanding of how traditional Chinese intellectual traditions were driven out of their homeland as Western knowledge became institutionalized is much needed in the literature. This article intends to fill the gap by exploring how the Chinese mind was transformed through the lens of institutionalization of social sciences. It focuses on internationalization and indigenization of China's social sciences with particular attention to the interactions between Chinese and Western intellectual traditions.

Keywords China's intellectual traditions . Social sciences . Western knowledge . The university . Academic disciplines

Introduction

Thousands of years of thought have led to rich intellectual traditions in China, but the flood of Western knowledge into China in the 19th century put an end to these in institutional terms. China's modern education system has been based almost exclusively on Western learning. A Western-style higher education system has been established in China, from textbooks, teaching contents to the organization and operation of higher education institutions. The adoption was 'more a matter of survival than of choice' (Lu and Hayhoe 2004: 269), allowing little space for China's indigenous intellectual traditions. However, the highly institutionalized Western education system does not mean Chinese traditions have vanished completely. Instead, they remain omnipresent and ubiquitous in the society.

Chinese cultural values have remained consistent despite the changes of time and various external influences. The intellectual systems of the schools of thought, with their different ideals and attitudes to human life, constitute the basic pattern of traditional Chinese culture, while traditional intellectual values are the foundation for its development. Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism constitute their essence, with Confucius (551-479 BCE) regarded as the orthodox pillar (Tang 2015). Chinese cultural values have undergone dramatic changes, but a core set of unique features has been retained. However, in contemporary China much of the heritage has

been rejected, with differentiation across dimensions and layers and discrepancies between desirable and desired ones (Hofstede 2001).

Western culture refers to those of European origin. It applies to countries whose history is marked by European immigration or settlement including the Americas and Australasia. Generally defined as Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian culture, it includes the ideals of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. Concepts of what is *the West* arose out of legacies of the Western and Eastern Roman Empires. Later, ideas of the West were formed by the concepts of Christendom and the Holy Roman Empire. Western civilization was formed from three distinct traditions: (1) the classical culture of Greece; (2) the Christian religion, particularly Western Christianity; and (3) the Enlightenment of the modern era (Kurth 2004). Western culture is seen as a synthesis of all three traditions, although some emphasize the conflicts among these threads. It is neither homogenous nor unchanging, and has evolved and gradually changed over time.

Due to their fundamental differences, Chinese and Western value systems are not compatible with each other. Indeed, the constant tension between them has led to major division between formal curricula at all levels of Chinese education and in China's socio-cultural realities. Within the current knowledge system, Chinese students and scholars find it very difficult to incorporate traditional values into daily teaching and learning, and as the product of such a system their theoretical competence to do so is poor. Those who have gone through the modern higher education system have little knowledge of Chinese traditions, but Chinese society remains profoundly influenced by such values. Thus, although educated Chinese are keen to integrate Chinese and Western values, they are not well equipped to do so. Here, the disciplinary knowledge provided by Chinese universities is highly problematic.

These issues have resulted in China's modern universities which date back to 1895 being less effective than their Western counterparts. As foreign transplants modeled on European and North American experiences but operating in a Chinese socio-cultural context (Hayhoe 1996), they are even soulless and lacking their own identity. China's strikingly different cultural roots and heritages have led to continued conflict between the Chinese and Western ideas of a university. Although attempts to indigenize the Western concept have been on-going, little has been achieved. The Western idea has simply been adopted due to its practicality (Yang 2013). This is why China's achievements in science and technology are so much greater than those in the humanities and social sciences. The shift of knowledge system from traditional learning to Western intellectual formation, as part of China's modernization of higher education, symbolizes the establishment of modern disciplines in Chinese universities.

The Western-patterned system has not worked well for China. Western cultural values are deeply embedded in the intellectual environment of Chinese university life and are the basis of China's higher education institutions, but they are not sufficient to make Chinese people feel settled. The coexistence of the overwhelming superiority of Western learning and the powerful influence of Chinese traditions leads Chinese scholars and students to be bogged down in a quagmire of choice. Despite its great economic achievements, China still lacks a value system that can integrate traditions and civilizations and provide its people with a spiritual home. A better understanding is required of how Chinese intellectual traditions were driven out of their homeland as Western knowledge became institutionalized.

The shift from traditional Chinese learning to Western knowledge is both ideological and institutional. While the ideological aspect has been extensively documented (Zhu 1999), the institutional aspect has been largely neglected. Furthermore, the incompatibility between the two dimensions has rarely been addressed, particularly in the English literature. The aim of this article is to address the gap by exploring how the Chinese mind was transformed through the institutionalization of social sciences, which originated in Europe as a product of the modern world-system (Wallerstein 1997). It analyzes disciplinary development of social sciences in China's university system. It displays complex relations between various forces during different historical periods. The focus is on the internationalization and indigenization of China's social sciences, giving particular attention to the interactions between Chinese and Western intellectual traditions.

Knowledge Organization in the Chinese Intellectual Tradition

Chinese intellectual traditions date back to early recorded history. The roots of China's formal system of education can be traced back as far as the Zhou dynasty (1046-256 BCE). Throughout this period education was the privilege of the elite, and for the most part existed for no other purpose than to produce government officials. Early curricula were centered on the 'Six Arts': Rites, Music, Archery, Chariot-Riding, Calligraphy and Mathematics. The content was heavily influenced by leading thinkers such as Laozi (604-531 BCE), Confucius, Mozi (470-391 BCE) and Mencius (372-289 BCE). Concerned with worldly affairs, humanism was the main attribute of traditional Chinese learning, centered on the role of people and their place in society. Pragmatic moral and political concerns were favored over metaphysical speculation. Characterized by harmony and hierarchy, the main focus was statecraft and ethics rather than logic, and resulted in a society dominated by secular elites recruited through merit-based imperial examinations. Under this system, the houses of the feudal rulers were the centers of education.

The basis of such traditions originated between 800 and 200 BCE, a time of deep political and social change and intellectual awakening in China, with the zenith occurring between 500 and 200 BCE. When the Zhou dynasty ended, the breakdown of the social order produced a diverse set of ideas as Chinese thinkers tried to address and respond to the challenges facing society. This scenario resulted in a long struggle between states competing for the control and unification of China. The mix of ideas was vast, and the period was one of the greatest eras of intellectual expansion in China's history, referred to as the Hundred Schools of Thought, and has had a tremendous effect ever since. During the following dynasties, the Chinese mind was modified many times. Fundamentally influenced by Confucianism, traditional Chinese curricula emphasized the principles of society and government. It was later deemed by the imperial examinations as the official method for recruiting bureaucrats from the Sui dynasty (581-618) until the Qing attempted at modernization in 1905. Candidates were tested on their knowledge of the Confucian classic texts, particularly the Four Books and the Five Classics.

The *shuyuan* originated during the Tang dynasty (618-907), and constituted an alternative to official institutions (Lee 2000). It developed to become a place for scholars to train students in

classical studies, interpret Confucian doctrines and collect, collate and publish books as a distinct and key part in the Chinese intellectual tradition (Ding 1996). The curriculum was much broader curriculum than that of the examination system. Its definitive forms were established in the Song dynasty (960-1279), and it reached its peak during the Southern Song period (1127-1279) due to popularization of the Neo-Confucianism movement (Yao 2003). The imperial bureaucracy co-opted Chinese traditional higher learning institutions into the service of the examination system. Knowledge organization was officially demonstrated by the *Complete Library in Four Sections*: classics, histories, masters and collections, in marked contrast to the Western academic discipline system based on scientific constructions of knowledge (Chiang 2001). The curriculum of ancient Chinese higher learning institutions was characterized by the Confucian approach to scholarship of serving the rulers. No institution could be defined as a university by the characteristics of academic freedom (Hayhoe 1996).

Until the 19th century, the Western invasion alerted China's open-minded thinkers to the great challenges faced by Chinese civilization (Friedman 1994). In line with societal changes during the turn of the century, a radical restructuring of Chinese education took place, with the emphasis on Western learning. A new educational system was built up to train the professional personnel required for nation-building. The educational aim of producing encyclopedic Confucian scholar-bureaucrats was abandoned. Education was designated to be accessible to the general public and its content related to ordinary people's social and economic lives. After realizing traditional statecraft was no longer useful for nation-building, the Chinese intellectuals turned to discipline-based Western statecraft, which was socially and economically practical. Modern categorization of knowledge disciplines became institutionalized in China's school curriculum initially after the first Opium War (1839-42) through the efforts of both Chinese Westernizers and foreign missionaries. This was greatly accelerated by China's defeat in the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), and was widely accepted by the early 20th century (Zuo 2004).

Shifting from Chinese to Western Learning

China's turn to Western knowledge was in line with the trend of the times. Along with the Western domination of the world economy, politics and culture, Western social sciences expanded and were introduced into China from the late Qing dynasty (Perraton 2016). China's modern academic discipline system began to be established. The late Qing affirmed eight subjects: Confucian classics, politics and law, literature, medicine, mathematics, agriculture, engineering and business (Zuo 2004: 670). The university regulations issued in 1913 by the Republican government required seven disciplines: arts, science, law, business, medicine, agriculture and engineering (Pan and Liu 2007: 381). The establishment of Western-style academic programmes was accelerated after the abolishment of the imperial examinations (Wang 1986). Two approaches were taken. One was to import new subjects such as natural sciences directly from the West. The other was to transform those in traditional Chinese learning including history, archaeology and philology into their Western formations.

China's learning from the West was full of twists and turns. The Self-Strengthening Movement (1860-95), for instance, was initiated by political figures in the Qing imperial court as an institutional reform to modernize China, particularly in the fields of industry and defense. The *ti-*

yong construct was an elaborate form of denial borne of Chinese intellectuals' driving need to believe that their civilization could never be conquered intellectually (Levenson 1968).¹ The majority of the ruling elite simply hoped to strengthen the nation by preserving Qing rule and maintaining traditional Confucian values, while embracing Western military and industrial practices. This could be achieved by establishing shipyards and arsenals, and hiring foreign advisers to train Chinese artisans to manufacture components in China. Most advocates of the Movement were uninterested in any social reform beyond the scope of economic and military modernization (Huang 2010). The intellectual essence of Western learning was not their focus.

China had a deep-seated ignorance of the West. Even after a series of defeats, and after China became enmeshed in the West-centered global historical process, the Chinese mind remained trapped in the all-encompassing sociopolitical tradition. China's humiliating defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War warned educated Chinese that Western superiority was not limited to the technical dimension, but was also played out in political power and social ideas. In 1898, enlightenment intellectuals launched the Hundred-Day Reform with a belief that merely depending upon industrial and military modernization would not save China, and what the dilapidated state needed most were political, social and institutional reforms. Chinese intellectuals looked to Western political theories, economic policies, and social administrations to understand the strength of European powers, and came to appreciate their secrets of success (Gransow 2003). The Qing government's call for learning from the West in 1901 marked the coexistence of Western knowledge with Confucianism.

Western learning was introduced into China mainly through two approaches. The first was by translating foreign works to disseminate Western ideology, cultures, and socio-political systems. Kang Youwei (1858-1927) and Liang Qichao (1873-1929), for example, borrowed Western social theories to justify their reform proposal for China. Yan Fu (1854-1921) was arguably the most prominent translator at the beginning of the 20th century, and had tremendous influence on the Chinese mind. He inspired young Chinese to learn more about Western social sciences. Social science works were mainly translated from English, French and German. Many were initially translated into Japanese and then into Chinese. They formed an important foundation for social science as a major component in China's modern discipline system. The second approach was to send students to study abroad, mainly in the US, Britain, France and Germany. Japan was also a favorable destination due to its rapid level of industrialization, its cultural similarities and geographical proximity. Returned students brought Western social sciences into China (Chiang 2001), and served as a catalyst for developing China's modern education, intellectual infrastructure and social sciences (Shu 1989).

By the 19th century, newly established institutes and universities provided modern disciplines with more institutional space for development. New polytechnic institutes were established to cultivate professional knowledge of foreign languages, engineering, military, and natural sciences (Peterson et al. 2001). Their curriculum focused initially on subjects such as foreign

¹ It was a scheme of Western learning borrowing, called the Ti (essence)/Yong (application) formula: maintaining Chinese culture as the essence, and applying Western learning to solving the practical problems of the world. The idea was expressed by Fong Guifeng (1809-74) in 1861, and accurately phrased by Shen Shoukang (1807-1907) in 1895. It was referenced later by Sun Jianai (1827-1909) in 1896 and Zhang Zhidong (1837-1909) in 1898 in their memorials to the Emperor.

languages, mathematics and science and later included social sciences such as international law and political economy (Hayhoe 1993). They 'laid the foundation for a modern Chinese university system based on the notion of adopting Western disciplines' (Sturniolo 2016: 12). China's first modern university, Beiyang Gongxue, was founded in 1895, followed by Nanyang Gongxue in 1896 and the Imperial University of Peking in 1898. Fundamentally different from the polytechnic institutes, they were built upon the Western idea of a university, with programmes centered on science and technology including arithmetic, geometry, algebra, military studies, navigation, medicine, physics, chemistry, and architecture. In contrast, the establishment of social science disciplines lagged far behind with only a handful of society-related courses.

The late Qing was an age of social change intellectually dominated by Sino-Western interactions. The decision to learn from the West led to vast changes in Chinese society, including the establishment of a modern education system and the introduction of Western science and technology. By 1904, a new higher education system was established (Hartnett 1998). The imperial examinations were abolished in 1905. Traditional Chinese knowledge lost its prestige in modern universities, which were open to new knowledge categories (Hayhoe 1989). Western learning and new disciplines were incorporated into modern higher education institutions. Social sciences formally established themselves in university disciplines, although they were extremely limited in both scale and intensity (Dirlik 2012). Culturally speaking, the shift from Chinese to Western learning was traumatic for the Chinese (de Bary 2013). Chinese students were immersed in a Western curriculum. Educated Chinese began to feel the gap between what they learned in school and what they experienced in reality.

Establishing Modern (Western) Disciplines on the Chinese Soil

The Republican period (1912-49) was characterized by 'unparalleled intellectual self-scrutiny and exploration' and was a time of Chinese experiments in modern disciplines and social sciences (Spence 1990: 269). Chinese intellectuals who had been trained in both traditional and Western learning made strenuous efforts to create an intellectual and institutional base for social sciences in the newly developing universities. During this period China's social sciences became highly institutionalized, professionalized and indigenized, and were heavily influenced by Western theories and methods, particularly those from the US (Zuo 2004).

Domestically, China lacked a strong central power after the Qing was overthrown in 1911. Internationally, World War I (1914-18) accentuated political instability and insecurity in China. The situations created a unique environment for Chinese intellectuals to explore new ideas for nation-building. It was a rare time in China's modern intellectual history, characterized by pluralism. The state imposed little ideological and political control over Chinese scholars, who enjoyed the freedom to gain knowledge from any sources and express their views about social and political affairs (Hartnett 1998). The atmosphere was conducive to intellectual exploration and inspiration, and reached a climax during the May Fourth Movement (Sturniolo 2016). Determined to rebuild the nation based on European experiences, they shook off Confucian dogma and wholeheartedly embraced Western political, cultural and educational values, as manifested by democracy and science (Hon 2014). This attitude shaped the intellectuals and their

social science works. A new cultural and intellectual climate was formed, which provided a basis for modern higher learning and social sciences (Ogden 1982).

This period witnessed a spectacular development in China’s modern system of disciplines, which by the 1930s had taken on an institutional form (Hayhoe 1989). Social sciences were part of this system. The University Order issued by the Ministry of Education in 1912 required university disciplines to be organized into seven categories, which was confirmed in 1913 with further classifications of subsidiary disciplines, as shown in Table 1. With the addition of liberal education, the structure was largely maintained when Cai Yuanpei became the minister for education. University faculties and departments were established with distinct disciplinary boundaries (Hayhoe 1987). After dominating Chinese higher education institutions for over two millennia, traditional learning, and particularly Confucian classics, gave way to Western disciplines. The University Organization Law in 1929 stipulated that university academic programmes should be categorized into eight disciplines: arts, science, law, education, commerce, medicine, agriculture, and engineering (Shu 1961). By the 1930s, a modern discipline system had been fully established. The structure was followed by the universities until 1949 when the communist People’s Republic of China (PRC) was founded.

Table 1: Discipline System in Chinese Universities in 1913

Disciplines	Subsidiary Disciplines
Arts	Philosophy, Literature, History, Geography
Science	Mathematics, Astronomy, Theoretical Physics, Experimental Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany, Geology, Mineralogy
Law	Law, Political Science, Economics
Commerce	Banking, Insurance, International Trade, Management, Taxation, Traffic Transportation
Medicine	Medicine, Pharmacy
Agriculture	Agronomy, Agronomic Chemistry, Forestry, Veterinary Science
Engineering	Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Marine Science, Naval Architecture, Military Building Science, Electrical Engineering, Architecture, Applied Chemistry, Gunpowder Science, Mining Science, Metallurgy

Source University Regulations issued by the Ministry of Education of Chinese government (Shu 1961)

After a short-lived interest in the Japanese experience,² American and European academic systems and university development models exerted significant influence on the growth of social science disciplines until the first half of the 20th century (Sturniolo 2016). Western discipline-based knowledge continued to be institutionalized in China in a broader context, through the

² The space to fully explain the intellectual influences of various Western countries on the Chinese mind is limited. The West is often seen as a synthesis of its divisions, as shown by the translated authors from various countries within it. However, different countries did have more impact on Chinese scholars, institutions and academic fields at different periods of time. Some general shifts have occurred: British, American, German and French influences during the Self-Strengthening Movement; Japanese influence after the First Sino-Japanese War; European and American influences during the Republican era; and Soviet influence in the 1950s. Japan’s case is interesting, as it was significant in China’s early learning from the West. By 1911, most Chinese textbooks at all levels were directly translated from Japanese. Many Chinese intellectuals first acquired Western knowledge via Japan. Major thinkers such as Zhang Taiyan (1869-1936) and Liang Qichao studied there after 1995. Therefore, some key terms in China’s social sciences were absorbed from Japan. However, the process was quickly disrupted by the fast-growing threat of Japanese imperialism (Hayhoe 1989).

growing number of higher education institutions and translated volumes of Western social science works. Western theories and methods in social sciences became the bases for university curricula, including in the studies of Chinese classics. According to Fu Sinian (1896-1950), by the 1930s most Chinese literature scholars agreed that a thorough knowledge of both Chinese and Western literature was necessary to achieve innovation in literary research. ‘If you are to research Chinese literature, yet never understand foreign literature, or if you are to document the history of Chinese literature yet have never read any of the history of foreign literature, you will never ever grasp the truth’ (Fu 2003: 1492).

As Western knowledge became orthodox in the Chinese academic system for most social science subjects, Chinese scholars began to use social science knowledge to study China’s social problems (Tao 2008). A great many social surveys were conducted. Their research had strong affinities with American and European social science theories and methodologies. Such research activities contributed significantly to the dissemination of Western social science knowledge in China. Social sciences were further institutionalized and professionalized in Chinese universities through mimicking Western experiences. Scholarly works in social sciences were overwhelmingly in the hand of returnees, mainly from North America and Western Europe, who gained leadership positions in academia on their return to China. Most simply copied what they had learned abroad, and thus enhanced the Western influence in China.

Returnees who graduated from American universities were particularly influential in the formation and organization of China’s social sciences (Dirlik 2012). With financial support from the Boxer Indemnity Scholarship Program and the Rockefeller Foundation, the Chinese government sent Chinese youths to various elite American universities to pursue studies in social sciences. From 1909 to 1929, 23.84% of the Chinese students in American universities studied social sciences, with 2.77% studying law, 9.15% political science, 10.38% economics, 1.54% sociology, 5.04% education, and 11.25% business (Chiang 2001). In terms of student numbers, social sciences as a whole were second only to engineering, as shown in Table 2. After returning to China, many of the students strongly influenced the establishment of social science departments and disciplines. Some made extraordinary contributions, such as Sun Benwen (Columbia), Pan Guangdan (Columbia), and Wu Jingchao (Chicago).

Table 2: Disciplinary Fields of Chinese Students in American Universities during 1909-1929

Disciplinary fields	Engineering	Science	Medicine	Agriculture	Military Science	Humanities	Music	Social Sciences
Proportion	32.33%	10.99%	5.19%	3.63%	1.94%	5.54%	0.25%	23.84%

Source (Chiang 2001)

Another source of influence was the American missionaries and scholars in Christian universities in China. While government universities typically focused on political science, law, economics and education, missionary colleges and universities favored sociology and community studies (Hayhoe 1993). Until the mid-1920s, China’s sociology departments were dominated by American missionary universities, whose staff members were primarily US scholars and missionary sociologists (Dirlik 2012). The distribution shifted in the following decade, with more courses and programmes offered in Chinese universities, but the influence of missionary scholars remained dominant. Most focused on transmitting social science knowledge in the context of Western social forms and in particular Christian norms. Scholars such as C.G. Dittmer

of Tsinghua University, J.S. Burgess of Yanjing University and his follower S.D. Gamble attempted to utilize empirical research methods to train Chinese students about social problems in China. The earliest field studies were organized by foreign missionary scholars who generated survey reports and literature in English.

Western influence also took other routes. For example, the visits by renowned scholars such as John Dewey (1859-1952), Robert Park (1864-1944), Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), and Alfred Radcliffe Brown (1881-1955) considerably influenced the formation of the Chinese mind, especially in terms of the spread of empirical knowledge and scientific reasoning. Organizations also left their marks on the progress of Chinese social sciences. The Rockefeller Foundation was an influential supporter of Chinese students studying in US universities and a financial provider for Chinese social science institutes including the Nankai Institute of Economics and the Peking Institute for Social Research. Western scientific methods and Dewey's pragmatism became popular in Chinese academic circles. Thereafter, Chinese social scientists adopted empirical methods to study social reality. European- and American-inspired models combined to shape social science disciplines (Chiang 2001). As Chinese social scientists saw their work as a tool for engineering modernization in China (Hartnett 1998), American patterns were often preferred. Indigenizing the social sciences commenced in the late 1920s, prompted by the need for domesticating foreign social sciences for China. Realizing the risk of blindly copying the West and uncritically relying on foreign theories and methods, Chinese social scientists agreed to conduct their own work to serve China's needs, in spite of divergent academic viewpoints and schools. The dramatic social changes provided them with a rich base, enabling them to apply their expertise to understanding social problems. Their participation in nation-building contributed directly to making social sciences Chinese (Liu 1936), shifting the focus from pure introduction to Western theories to empirical studies, thus linking social sciences more closely to China's urgent needs. The notion of Sinicized social sciences was first developed from the Dingxian Experiment, a reconstruction and mass education project in a village in Hebei Province in the 1930s, led by Yan Yangchu (1893-1990) and Liang Shuming (1893-1988) (Gransow 2003). Schools with diverse perspectives and approaches all aimed at indigenization.

The rapid development of Chinese social sciences was disrupted by the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) the following Civil War (1945-1948). Many university campuses were severely damaged by Japanese forces and a number of them temporarily moved from the metropolises to the hinterlands of China. From 1938 to 1946, Tsinghua University merged with Peking University and Nankai University to form the broadly based and far-reaching National Southwest Associated University in Kunming (Israel 1999). Extreme hardship did not suppress the pursuit of Chinese academics for intellectual advancement and social commitment. Scholars such as Pan Guangdan and Fei Xiaotong developed indigenous approaches and theories for Chinese social sciences.

The thirty-eight years of the Republic witnessed great transformations of the Chinese mind with the establishment of modern social science disciplines. Some view it as a golden age in social science research (Hayhoe 1996), and in Chinese higher education more generally (Tao 2008). China's sociological studies in the 1930s were even seen as 'a third flourishing center' (Gransow 2003: 498), along with North America and Western Europe. During this period, social sciences were further institutionalized and professionalized in China through well-developed teaching,

research and degree programmes (Hayhoe 1987). As a recipient of modern social sciences, China's traditional values differ strikingly from the Western, making it extremely hard for the Chinese to integrate both traditions. Considering the limited space allowed, especially as a weak member in the global system, China's achievement was truly remarkable.

The period was characterized by intense debates over the relationship between Chinese and Western values. On one side those such as Hu Shi and Chen Xujing proposed total Westernization as the only strategy for modernizing China. On the other, many defended Chinese culture in the context of great Western influence. Intending to create concepts for social sciences disciplines that would fully embody and reflect China's own intellectual traditions, Ma Xiangbo (1840-1939) proposed a Chinese National Academy (*Hanxia Kaowenyuan*) modelled on the Académie Française (Hayhoe and Lu 2004). This was a major event in China's institutionalization of academic research. His failure was unfortunate for the nation. His legacy continued through the Academia Sinica established in 1928. Chinese intellectuals failed to build their original theories based solidly on traditional culture. Nationwide, the lack of a strong central state also presented challenges. Social science study in China was scattered and fragmented without sufficient national coordination. Keen to learn from the West, Chinese thinkers imported social sciences of different types from various sources, feeling that they had found a cure for their nation (Hartnett 1998). They were reliant on Western knowledge, while neglecting China's history, culture and social realities.

Politicizing the Mind during Mao's Era

After the PRC was founded in late 1949, Chinese higher education development followed the Soviet model. The restructuring of higher education in 1952 was concentrated around polytechnics and engineering (Fairbank and Goldman 2006). During the following three decades, social sciences were not able to develop and university admissions were dramatically reduced. Of the total university enrolment of 441,181 in 1957, 36.9% were in engineering, 26% in teacher training, 11% in medicine and pharmacy, 9% in agriculture and forestry, 6.4% in sciences, 4.4% in arts, 2.7% in finance and economics, and 1.8% in political science and law (Hayhoe 1987; Ogden 1982). The percentages of enrolments in the humanities and social sciences were 34.9% in 1957, compared with 72.6% in 1928 and 49% in 1938 (Hayhoe 1993). Social sciences became highly politicized and restricted to the principles of state-sponsored Marxist-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought to serve the proletarian revolution and socialist construction, and thus suffered a huge setback (Dirlik 2012).

In recognition of the nation's urgent political and economic needs, higher education was designated to train graduates with specialist knowledge for industrialization and to provide political indoctrination. From the early 1950s, Soviet patterns were adopted in almost every aspect of educational and academic realms. Chinese universities resembled large laboratories for testing Soviet education policies and theories (Hayhoe 1989). For China, the model was as much a Western model as had been the American and European patterns previously introduced (Hartnett 1998: 197). Higher education was tightly controlled by the central government. Universities did not have autonomy to make policies for themselves. Research was not a major focus for universities. The government established specific institutes to conduct research, such as

the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. With little public intellectual space, social science subjects were particularly censored by the state. Studies in the social sciences became problematic and affiliated institutions were closed under the tight grip of the government.

In reforming the social sciences, the Chinese government was motivated more by political and ideological concerns than by academic strategies. The strong central power implemented ideological indoctrination and controlled the thoughts and behaviors of the Chinese people (Fairbank and Goldman 2006). Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought dominated the ideology and most social sciences disciplines such as sociology and anthropology were officially banned after 1952. According to the government, these disciplines originated in Western capitalist societies and were bourgeois pseudoscience with class character. They should be replaced by historical materialism. China's new socialist system was viewed as superior and thus did not need such social sciences, which focus on social problems and transformations. Instead, China had its own social sciences, including political economy, law and finance. They were fundamentally transformed through the ideology of Marxist-Leninism, while other capitalist and Western ideologies were excluded and abandoned in these disciplines (Hayhoe 1987). The ruling disciplines converged in a number of specialty institutions. In 1953, there were six finance and economics institutions and four political science and law institutions, while by 1965, twenty-one finance and economics institutions and one political science and law institution existed. These institutions were led by Renmin University of China, a newly established university under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. The university retained the social scientists seen as loyal to the communist leadership, and invited a number of Soviet experts to develop social science knowledge and build socialist ideology, by integrating Soviet-developed Marxist Leninism with Chinese characteristics. The alumni of Renmin University had the potential to engage in the communist bureaucracy to guard the political order (Ogden 1982). The teaching of the ruling social sciences was required to impart communist values to students and make them socialist conformists, with the aim of rationalizing the Party line and inculcating political values (Hayhoe 1993). These disciplines failed to gain recognition in the international academic arena (Li 1966).

The years between 1957 and 1977 were known as 'twenty lost years' (Fairbank and Goldman 2006: 404) as political chaos disturbed the evolution of China's higher education and social sciences. Chinese social science development was interrupted by a series of political campaigns including the Great Leap Forward (1958-60) and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-76). China's academic system was almost completely isolated from the international community. Chinese universities sloughed off all foreign influences during the Cultural Revolution. While political turmoil correctly has its critics, few have noticed Mao's attempts to build up a value system that suited Chinese society (Hayhoe 1989), although these attempts understandably ended in failure. Severance from foreign influence and associations proved to be unworkable for the sustainable development of Chinese higher learning. During the political campaigns, research and teaching in social sciences stagnated. Scholars were deprived of opportunities for academic work. A great number of them were harshly treated and attacked. China's higher learning and social sciences thus suffered heavy losses (Huang 2010).

Reorientation to the Global West

China reoriented itself to the Western-led world after 1978, with unprecedented changes in higher education (Guo and Guo 2016). Chinese universities now use their international counterparts as frames of reference (Marginson 2006). Social sciences were resurrected in the late 1970s when Deng Xiaoping (1904-97) called for science and education to ensure economic ascendancy and elevate China's global status (Ogden 1982). In 'science', Deng (1994) included social sciences. The National Plan for Developing the Social Sciences in 1978 charted the rehabilitation of the disciplines (Hayhoe 1989). Social science disciplines then developed steadily with faculties and departments rebuilt in universities, together with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and various academic societies and journals. However, striking divides between natural, technological and social sciences remain, in terms of achievements in and approaches to internationalization. While natural and technological sciences are on the rise (Altbach and Wang 2012; Yang 2015), social sciences struggle with low global visibility (Hayhoe 1993; Yang 2013). The dilemmas and challenges encountered include how to integrate indigenous knowledge and Western learning in a context of an unequal global system (Keim 2011; Wallerstein 1997).

The reconstruction process was never easy, with heated debates over Marxism and Western social sciences, particularly during the late 1970s and the 1980s. The 'cultural fever' at that time prompted Chinese intellectuals to reflect deeply on cultural and educational realms. While Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought continued to be the official ideology, reform-minded Chinese thinkers 'engaged with great eagerness in searching for an alternative intellectual framework, derived from modern Western theories in social sciences and humanities, to replace the official ideology' (Gu 1999: 389). Although they were required to follow the official ideology, they reflected on Chinese traditional culture while strongly desiring to learn alternative thinking from the West, hoping to achieve a combination of approaches. With a shift from political campaigns to economic modernization, different ways of thinking and multiple values were tolerated. A public intellectual space was visible and Chinese intellectuals launched extensive discussions and debates on a variety of topics, including democracy, multi-party system, market-oriented economy, modern capitalism, world systems, and global communications.

The period witnessed a renewed institutional space for the reconstruction and development of social sciences. Chinese universities rebuilt social science disciplines with the help of the older generation such as Ma Yinchu and Fei Xiaotong. Departments and research institutes were set up to supply courses, degree programmes, and research projects in the 1980s and further efforts were made to institutionalize and professionalize social sciences, with a growing number of academic journals published. Many social scientists actively participated in research projects commissioned by the government with clear effects on social policy-making (Ogden 1982). Social science disciplines were further developed in the new millennium as Chinese universities aimed for world-class status. Increasingly more government officials and university leaders realize the significance of social sciences in their bid for global influence. After four decades of hard work, a comprehensive knowledge system in social sciences has been well established, but China's social sciences began to face new issues of low popularity, internationalization, and indigenization (Deng 2010; Dirlik 2012; Hayhoe 1993; Yang 2013).

The reorganization of Chinese social sciences was embedded in an internationalization process (Deng 2010). Centered mainly on introducing Western theories and methodologies, China's social sciences were in transition in the 1980s. Characterized by one-way knowledge flow from the West into China, the 1990s saw further comprehensive embracing of Western social sciences through various channels. Chinese scholars and policy-makers followed Western-led international trends to develop social science disciplines. The main approaches taken to internationalize social sciences included curricular adaptations, book translations, studying abroad, and research collaborations with foreign scholars. In the 21st century, engagement with the international community has become a strategic priority for Chinese universities (Mohrman 2008; Yang 2014). Urged to use international benchmarks in teaching and research and bring China to the world, Chinese social sciences are integrated with those in the West more than ever before (Dirlik 2012). China's internationalization is viewed in terms of outside influences coming in, rather than inside factors flowing out. Although returned scholars have become the backbone of China's social sciences, with degrees from major Western universities, their weak training in traditional learning is inadequate for combining Chinese and Western intellectual traditions.

Western models and norms have been the building blocks in constructing China's social sciences. Chinese social scientists look to their Western counterparts, particularly those in the US and Europe for criteria for their disciplinary development. Although the demand for indigenizing social sciences has always been central (Dirlik 2012), Chinese scholars find it extremely difficult to strike a balance between local relevance and global impact, between national and international agendas and discourses, and between learning from the world (the West) and bringing China to the world. With growing awareness of the over-dependence on Western theories and methods (Deng 2010), efforts have been made to indigenize social sciences in China. In the early 1980s Fei Xiaotong stressed the indigenous characteristic of Chinese sociology. He proposed to absorb both Chinese traditions and Western social sciences and integrate them with China's social reality and modernization. The indigenization movement has recently become increasingly significant. Indigenization is widely recognized to afford Chinese social sciences more international prominence; no one knows exactly what to do or how to achieve it. Worse, it is becoming increasingly politicized and racialized.

Concluding Comments

The ideological and institutional dimensions could be viewed respectively as the mind and body of China's shift from traditional learning to Western knowledge. While the Chinese mind could and should never be entirely transformed according to Western experiences, China's modern social science discipline system has been gradually and fundamentally institutionalized based on Western practices. Problems have occurred between the already-transformed body and the under-transformed mind. The intellectual shift has been part of China's profound social transformation since the late Qing from a millennia-long autocratic monarchy to a democratic republic. China's modern academic system was a Western transplant after its traditional system became ossified and abandoned. For most Chinese intellectuals, their educational purpose shifted from becoming Confucian scholar-officials to seeking truth and knowledge. The real force behind such transformations was the growing concern for the wellbeing of the Chinese nation (Zuo 2008).

Intellectual transformation in modern Chinese history was much more than paradigm shifts and change of approaches. It was fundamental, comprehensive and multiple in both layer and dimension.

While a modern knowledge system based almost entirely on Western experience has now been well established, China is still greatly influenced by its traditional values that have been little reflected in the institutionalized system. Thus, China's legitimated knowledge often does not match its socio-economic realities. This has been the reason for China's ideological confusion that has been in the making ever since China's early encounters with the West in the 19th century. The confusion is particularly evident among the educated elites. Despite that much has been tried to indigenize Western knowledge and values, little has been achieved. This has significant implications for China's future development of culture and scholarship. Although itself a victim of such a mismatch, higher education plays a special role here to bring together aspects of Chinese and Western philosophical heritages (Yang 2017), especially in the current context of a revived intellectual consciousness (Jia 2015). Their cultural mission is to figure out how to wed the 'standard' norms of Western higher education with traditional values. Only when this is achieved can the Chinese people find their spiritual homeland to feel settled.

References

- Altbach, P.G., & Wang, Q. (2012). Can China keep rising? World-class status for research excellence comes with a new set of challenges. *Scientific American*, 307(4), 46-47.
- Chiang, Y. (2001). *Social engineering and the social sciences in China, 1898-1949*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- de Bary, T. (2013). China's contribution to global education. In Q. Zha (Ed.), *Education in China: Educational history, models, and initiatives* (pp. 411-416). Gt Barrington, MA: Berkshire Publishing.
- Deng, X. (1994). *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan [Selected works of Deng Xiaoping]*. Beijing: People's Publishing House.
- Deng, Z. (2010). Westernization of the Chinese social sciences: The case of legal science (1978-2008). In UNESCO (Ed.), *World social science report 2010* (pp. 182-185). Paris: UNESCO Publishing.
- Ding, G. (1996). The shuyuan and the development of Chinese universities in the early twentieth century. In R. Hayhoe & J. Pan (Eds.), *East-West dialogue in knowledge and higher education* (218-244). Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe.
- Dirlik, A. (2012). Zhongguohua: Worlding China the case of sociology and anthropology in 20th century China. In A. Dirlik, G. Li, & H. Yen (Eds.), *Sociology and anthropology in twentieth-century China: Between universalism and indigenism* (pp. 1-39). Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.
- Fairbank, J.K., & Goldman, M. (2006). *China: A new history*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Fu, S. (2003). Review of Wang Guowei's Song-Yuan xiqu shi. In Z.S. Ouyang (Ed.), *Fu Sinian quanji [Collections of Fu Sinian]* (pp. 1492-1494). Changsha: Hunan Education Publishing House.
- Friedman, E. (1994). Reconstructing China's national identity: A southern alternative to Mao-era anti-imperialist nationalism. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 51(1), 67-91.

- Gransow, B. (2003). The social sciences in China. In T.M. Porter & D. Ross (Eds.), *The Cambridge history of science* (pp. 498-514). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gu, E.X. (1999). Cultural intellectuals and the politics of the cultural public space in communist China (1979-1989): A case study of three intellectual groups. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 58(2), 389-431.
- Guo, S, & Guo, Y. (2016). *Spotlight on China: Changes in education under China's market economy*. Calgary: Sense Publishers.
- Hartnett, R.A. (1998). *The saga of Chinese higher education from the Tongzhi restoration to Tiananmen square: revolution and reform*. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- Hayhoe, R. (1987). China's higher curricular reform in historical perspective. *The China Quarterly*, 110, 196-230.
- Hayhoe, R. (1989). China's universities and Western academic models. *Higher Education*, 18(1), 49-85.
- Hayhoe, R. (1993). Chinese universities and the social sciences. *Minerva*, 31(4), 478-503.
- Hayhoe, R. (1996). *China's universities 1895-1995: A century of cultural conflicts*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Hon, T. (2014). The Chinese path to modernisation: Discussions of culture and morality in republican China. *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity*, 2(3), 211-228.
- Huang, H. (2010). China's historical encounter with Western sciences and humanities. In M. Kuhn & D. Weidemann (Eds.), *Internationalization of the social sciences* (pp. 21-43). Bielefeld: Transaction Publishers.
- Israel, J. (1999). *Lianda: A Chinese university in war and revolution*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Jia, X. (2015). Xueshure zhong de zhongguo jindai xueshu sixiangshi yanjiu [research on history of Chinese modern academic thought in cultural fever]. *Lanzhou Academic Journal*, 5, 16-31.
- Keim, W. (2011). Counter hegemonic currents and internationalization of sociology: Theoretical reflections and one empirical example. *International Sociology*, 26 (1), 123-145.
- Kurth, J. (2004). Western civilization, our tradition. *The Intercollegiate Review*, Fall 2003/Spring 2004, 5-13.
- Levenson, J.R. (1968). *Confucian China and its modern fate: A trilogy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Li, S.K. (1966). Social sciences in Communist China. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 9(8), 3-7.
- Liu, Y. (1936). Zhongguo shehui diaocha yundong [the Chinese social survey movement]. Master's thesis, Yanjing University.
- Lu, Y.L. & Hayhoe, R. (2004). Chinese higher learning: The transition process from classical knowledge patterns to modern disciplines 1860-1910. In C. Charle, J. Schriewer & P. Wagner (Eds.), *Transnational intellectual networks: Forms of academic knowledge and the search for cultural identities* (pp. 269-306). Frankfurt: Campus Verlag.
- Marginson, S. (2006). Dynamics of national and global competition in higher education. *Higher Education*, 52(1), 1-39.
- Mohrman, K. (2008). The emerging global model with Chinese characteristics. *Higher Education Policy*, 21(1), 29-48.

- Ogden, S. (1982). China's social sciences: prospects for teaching and research in the 1980s. *Asian Survey*, 22(7), 581-608.
- Pan, M., & Liu, H. (2007). *Zhongguo jindai jiaoyushi ziliao huibian: Gaodeng jiaoyu [compilation of Chinese modern educational history: higher education]*. Shanghai: Shanghai Educational Publishing House.
- Perraton, H. (2016). A history of higher education exchange: China and America. *History of Education*, 45(6), 859-861.
- Peterson, G., Hayhoe, R., & Lu, Y. (2001). *Education, culture, and identity in twentieth-century China*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Shu, X.C. (1989). *Jindai zhongguo liuxue shi [history of the study abroad movement in modern China]*. Shanghai: Shanghai Culture Press.
- Shu, X.C. (1961). *Zhongguo jindai jiaoyushi ziliao [data of Chinese modern educational history]*. Beijing: People's Education Press.
- Spence, J.D. (1990). *The search for modern China*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Sturniolo, A.C. (2016). Influences of Western philosophy and educational thought in China and their effects on the New Culture Movement. Master's thesis, State University of New York.
- Tang, Y.J. (2015). *Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, Christianity and Chinese culture*. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Tao, Y. (2008). *Minguo jiaoyu xueshu shi lunji [collections of educational research in Republic of China]*. Taipei Shi: Showwe Information Co., Ltd.
- Wallerstein, I. (1997). Eurocentrism and its avatars: The dilemmas of social science. *Sociological Bulletin*, 46(1), 600-621.
- Wang, D. (1986). Qingmo jindai xuetang he xuesheng shuliang [number of modern universities and students in late Qing dynasty]. *Journal of Historical Science*, 2, 107-110.
- Weidemann, D. (2013). Three decades of Chinese indigenous psychology: a contribution to overcoming the hegemonic structures of international science? In M. Kuhn & S. Yazawa (Eds.), *Theories about and strategies against hegemonic social sciences* (pp.105-118). Tokyo: ibidem Press.
- Yang, R. (2013). Indigenised while internationalised? Tensions and dilemmas in China's modern transformation of social sciences in an age of globalisation. In M. Kuhn & K. Okamoto (Eds.), *Spatial social thought: Local knowledge in global science encounters*. Stuttgart: ibidem Press.
- Yang, R. (2014). China's strategy for the internationalization of higher education: An overview. *Frontiers of Education in China*, 9(2), 151-162.
- Yang, R. (2015). Reassessing China's higher education development: A focus on academic culture. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 16(4), 527-535.
- Yang, R. (2017). The cultural mission of China's elite universities: Examples from Peking and Tsinghua. *Studies in Higher Education*, 42(10), 1825-1838.
- Yao, X. (2003). *The encyclopedia of Confucianism*. London: Routledge.
- Zhu, H. (1999). Chuangjian xin fanshi: Wusi shiqi xueshu zhuanxing de tezheng ji yi [inventing new paradigms: Characteristics and implications of intellectual transformations during the May Fourth Movement]. *Journal of Beijing Normal University*, 152 (2), 50-57.
- Zuo, Y. (2004). *Cong sibu zhi xue dao qike zhi xue [from four schools to seven subjects]*. Shanghai: Shanghai Bookstore Publishing House.

Zuo, Y. (2008). *Zhongguo jindai xueshu tizhi zhi chuangjian [the establishment of Chinese modern academic system]*. Sichuan: Sichuan People's Publishing House.