Editorial

HOS

History of Science
2015, Vol. 53(1) 4–8

DOI: 10.1177/0073275314567431
hos.sagepub.com
SAGE

Ordering the social: History of the human sciences in modern China

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In *The Order of Things* (1966 [1970]), Michel Foucault unearths the discursive redistribution of the *episteme* underlying the process 'when man constituted him-self in Western culture as both that which must be conceived of and that which is to be known'.[1] His investigation into the historical epistemology of what he called *sciences humaines* (a term that dates back at least to the 17th-century) has prompted historians of western science to dig deep in a growing body of literature on the history of the related disciplinary subjects.[2] Two landmark volumes that have encapsulated the evolving historiography of the human sciences are *Modernist Impulses in the Human Sciences, 1870–1930* edited by Dorothy Ross (1994) and *The Cambridge History of Science Volume 7: The Modern Social Sciences* coedited by Theodore Porter and Dorothy Ross (2003).[3] With the notable exception of one chapter in the latter volume, historical research on the sciences of social organization and human experience in China, unlike its western counterpart, has only begun to mature in recent years.[4] This special issue pushes the field in new directions by highlighting the latest research of an international company of early career researchers. Whereas Foucault's later work on sexuality and power has invited many scholars to wrestle with its Eurocentric burdens, the omission of a parallel mode of historical inquiry for his work on the human sciences denotes precisely what this special issue aims to recalibrate.[5] To achieve that goal, the following essays share an attention to the mutually generative relationship of politics and scientific inquiry in 20th-century China.

John Feng's opening essay probes the science–politics nexus by focusing on the rise of a discipline in the scientific study of the state in early republican China. Building on the life of Lu Zhengxiang (1871–1949), China's Ambassador Extraordinary to The Hague Peace Conference, it reconstructs the early years of the Chinese Social and Political Science Association (CSPSA), a replica of the American Political Science

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Association, and analyzes the heated discussions of state-building in its official publication (in English), the *Chinese Social and Political Science Review*. Already in the final years of the Qing, Lu had submitted a memorial to Empress Dowager Cixi urging China to become more attuned to the new international order of law and constitutionalism. Lu's effort to modernize China through legal and constitutional reform culminated in his collaboration with Paul Reinsch to found the CSPSA in December 1915. The meanings of democracy, state sovereignty, international relations, law, politics, and other key terms in legal science carried significant weight in the visions of CSPSA members, most of whom were cultural elites educated in the west and thus fluent in English. Feng's essay captures an important episode in early 20th-century China during which science, culture, and politics intersected in the envisioning of a new social order that paved the way for the May Fourth Movement.

Hsiao-pei Yen's meticulously researched essay extends the investigation of the role of international politics, especially in terms of the antonymous friction between imperialism and nationalism, in the development of republican-era Chinese science. Specifically, it traces the historical transformation of what Yen calls 'from paleoanthropology in China to Chinese paleoanthropology', or simply the Chinese indigenization of the internationally oriented scientific study of ancient human fossils. Yen provides a detailed account of the different archaeological expeditions conducted by scientists of various national origins in central Asia. Between the May Fourth Movement and the Japanese occupation periods, these international scientists acquainted themselves with one another and other like-minded Chinese scientists (who were, again, often fluent in European languages) in cosmopolitan Beijing. However, after their research agenda came to public attention, the foreign scientists were drawn into joint expeditions with Chinese scientists, such as the Sino–Swedish scientific expedition to northwestern China, in order to assure the Chinese that locally excavated materials were not exported out of China to serve the hegemonic ambition of European imperialism. The climax of this narrative came with the discovery of the Peking Man in Zhoukoudian in the 1920s, signalling the demise of the Swedish influence and the growing prominence of the American model in paleoanthropological research in China. The Peking Man provided subsequent Chinese intellectuals a kind of 'hard evidence' for making claims of monogenism and evolutionary Asia-centrism (more specifically, Sinocentrism) that supported a politicized vision of Chinese history as deep and continuous across time.

Zhipeng Gao's essay deepens our understanding of the ways in which politics casts an uneven shadow on the fate of scientific disciplines. It uses the reception of Pavlovianism as a case study to disentangle the ways political ideology differentiated scientific transformations across physiology, medicine, and psychology in the Maoist period. The central question that Gao seeks to answer is this: why was Pavlovianism considered the political–academic orthodoxy in physiology and medical science but criticized as capitalistic and bourgeois in psychology in the late 1950s? In many ways, Gao's analysis extends ongoing scholarly debates about how to best position the work of Russian/communist scientists (especially Lysenko and Pavlov) within the larger narrative of modern science.[6] Due to the Sino–Soviet alliance, the early Cold War era presented a unique window into reconsidering these debates in the new light of the Chinese human sciences. According to Gao, besides the deeper impact Pavlovianism had on psychology (than on

the physiological and medical sciences), the different fate of Pavlovianism in scientific disciplines must be explained by the performative negotiations of scientists working under severe ideological pressure, reaching a crescendo around the time of the 1958 anti-rightist movement.

Whereas the previous three essays concentrate on the reciprocal influence of politics and human scientific disciplines, Yubin Shen's essay adopts a topical approach by examining the historical origins of *zaolian* (early love) as a social problem in shifting political contexts of 20th-century China. In this regard, Shen's framing exemplifies a Foucauldian genealogical method deciphering when and how a problem becomes a problem. Shen periodizes the history of *zaolian* in terms of three stages: from 1900 to 1950, institutional changes in law and education created a discourse of anti-early marriage; between 1950 and the early 1980s, the discourse of anti-early marriage gradually folded into the new concept of 'early love' to form a discourse against 'early love and early marriage' (*zaolian zaohun*); and finally, since the 1980s, the Second Marriage Law of 1980 joined the one-child policy (first introduced in 1979) to reorient the conceptualization of *zaolian* under the aegis of the new phrase 'early marriage and early childbirth' (*zaohun zaoyu*). The history of *zaolian* reveals the complex interactions of the legal regime, the education system, medical science, eugenics, and family planning public policies in the transitions from republican to communist to post-reform China.

Howard Chiang's essay makes a radical departure from the other papers by advancing a theoretical interpretation of the category of 'China' in contextualizing mental health science in relation to, rather than outside of, global geopolitics. Specifically, it adopts a critical postcolonial approach to explore the postwar development of transcultural psychiatry through the genealogy of a clinical diagnosis known as 'koro', or *suoyang* in Chinese. By examining the competing understandings of koro in the 1960s, Chiang shows how psychiatrists based outside of continental China—namely, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore—appropriated ideas from traditional Chinese culture and synthesized them with western biomedical models to consolidate the clinical diagnosis of koro as a culture-bound disorder. This new global meaning of koro was made possible by a cohort of medical experts who encountered the phenomenon in Sinophone (Sinitic-language) communities, but placed their contributions within the broader contours of the universal reach of Anglophone psychiatric science. When American psychiatrists came to view koro as a paradigm for the study of culture-bound syndromes, the history of the circulation of ideas about bodily disease and psychic disturbance highlights the broader need to historicize the shifting meanings of 'Chinese' and 'culture' across the Pacific.

The rise of American hegemony in 20th-century science demands a critical rethinking of the history of scientific developments in China that accounts for the global configurations of politics.[7] Whether our analytical frame is rooted in the contours and concerns of internationalism, imperialism, nationalism, the Cold War, communism, or (post) colonialism, the essays collected in this special issue provide ample evidence for exceeding both a strictly 'internalist' or a staunch 'externalist' analysis of scientific progress. The heterogeneous terrains of the human sciences in modern China cast a new historical light on the empirical figuring of things human and the scientific ordering of things social.

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank the journal editor, Iwan Rhys Morus, for his support and encouragement to pursue this special issue.

Funding

We thank the British Arts and Humanities Research Council for a research networking grant under the project title, 'China and the human sciences: 1600 to the present' (ref: AH/L01579X/1), which funded our presentation of this research at the 2015 Association for Asian Studies annual meeting.

Notes

1. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 344–345.
2. For the dating of the French term *sciences humaines*, see Theodore M. Porter and Dorothy Ross, 'Introduction: Writing the History of Social Sciences', in Theodore M. Porter and Dorothy Ross (eds.) *The Cambridge History of Science Volume 7: The Modern Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 1–10. In the area of statistical and probability history, for example, see Ian Hacking, *The Emergence of Probability: A Philosophical Study of Early Ideas about Probability, Induction and Statistical Inference* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Theodore M. Porter, *The Rise of Statistical Thinking, 1820–1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Lorraine Daston, *Classical Probability in the Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Ian Hacking, *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
3. Dorothy Ross (ed.), *Modernist Impulses in the Human Sciences, 1870–1930* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994); Theodore M. Porter and Dorothy Ross (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Science Volume 7: The Modern Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). See also Roger G. Smith, *The Norton History of the Human Sciences* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997).
4. Bettina Gransow, 'The Social Sciences in China', Theodore M. Porter and Dorothy Ross (eds.) *The Cambridge History of Science Volume 7: The Modern Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 498–514. See, for example, Yung-chen Chiang, *Social Engineering and the Social Sciences in China, 1919-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Wendy Larson, *From Ah Q to Lei Feng: Freud and Revolutionary Spirit in 20th Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Sigrid Schmalzer, *The People's Peking Man: Popular Science and Human Identity in Twentieth-century China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Thomas Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Tong Lam, *A Passion for Facts: Social Surveys and the Construction of the Chinese Nation-State, 1900–1949* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Howard Chiang (ed.), *Psychiatry and Chinese History* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014).
5. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. into English by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990); Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's* History of Sexuality *and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); Gregory Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male–Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Siobhan B. Somerville, *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000); Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and*

Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Howard Chiang, 'Epistemic Modernity and the Emergence of Homosexuality in China', *Gender and History*, 22(3), 2010, pp. 629–657; Leon Antonio Rocha, 'Scientia Sexualis Versus Ars Erotica: Foucault, van Gulik, Needham', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, 42, 2011, pp. 328–343.

6. See, for example, David Joravsky, *The Lysenko Affair* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); Loren R. Graham, *Science, Philosophy, and Human Behavior in the Soviet Union* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); Valery N. Soyfer, *Lysenko and the Tragedy of Soviet Science* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994); Slava Gerovitch, '"Mathematical Machines" of the Cold War: Soviet Computing, American Cybernetics and Ideological Disputes in the Early 1950s', *Social Studies of Science* 31(2), 2001, pp. 253–287; Loren Graham, *Science and the Soviet Social Order* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); Daniel P. Todes, *Pavlov's Physiology Factory: Experiment, Interpretation, Laboratory Enterprise* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Ethan Pollock, *Stalin and the Soviet Science Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).
7. Fa-ti Fan, 'Redrawing the Map: Science in Twentieth-Century China', *Isis* 98(3), 2007, pp. 524–538.