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The captive mind in development studies

Some neglected problems and the
need for an autonomous social science
tradition in Asia

In *The Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Science*, November 1966, appeared an article entitled 'The Professor Abroad'. The author, Edward W. Weidner, himself a professor of political science, is an experienced and well-qualified person to speak about the effect and function of the American professors abroad. Some of his observations are of interest to us. Discussing the problems of exchange arrangements he noted the following: (a) the American professor prefers his own American teaching methods; (b) the American professor takes with him his own lecture, laboratory and seminar notes, relying on them without a great deal of modification; (c) many of the course contents of American universities are not relevant to developing areas; (d) propositions considered to have the force of universal laws are often not applicable to the host country's social system; (e) from the viewpoint of less developed countries, research by American and other foreign scholars has not been very satisfactory.

After reviewing the changes that have taken place in the last ten years, Weidner made the following observation.

There is much that is new in the less-developed countries that alters the conditions of American professors going abroad. The most important element of newness is that in terms of university educational elites, a number of countries in a number of disciplines and professions are no longer 'less developed' whatever the state of their economies. Adaption to this fact is an immediate imperative for professors and fund-providers from the United States.¹

Though Weidner's discussion was centred around American scholars, his observations apply to Asian scholars too. There is only a small minority among Asian social scientists who feel the need to develop an autonomous and creative social science tradition relevant to Asia as well as to the general development of the social sciences. The great majority of them are merely extending the use of the social sciences current in Europe and the United

1. E. W. Weidner, 'The Professor Abroad', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (Philadelphia), Vol. 368, November 1966, p. 70.

States without the necessary adaptation which the very scientific process itself, if present, would tend to call forth. There is here not only a cultural lag in the domain of intellectual consciousness, but also an indication that in the world of learning, Asian scholars are still under intellectual domination. The pattern and effects of this domination can be easily traced; an understanding of it is highly relevant to development planning, for in some instances it has serious political implications. Whole nations have been subjected to ill-conceived planning with serious consequences.¹

In discussing development goals and their attainment, it is necessary for us to discuss also from time to time the problem of the planners, both the experts and the government leaders. Here I would like to focus attention on the experts for there is not a single item in any development plan which is free from the influence of the expert. We need a sociology of social scientists in Asia. We have to subject their scientific thought and activity to an analysis of the kind developed by the sociology of knowledge. We may start here with the fact that the trend of thought amongst Asian social scientists can, in reality be interpreted in terms of what economists call the demonstration effect. Duesenberry, who first used the term with reference to consumer behaviour, understood it as the increase of expenditure at the expense of saving for what are believed to be high-quality goods, for the purpose of maintaining self-esteem independent of the objective utility of the goods acquired. The frequency and strength of the impulse to acquire superior goods depend on the frequency of contact with such goods. Each contact is a demonstration of the superiority of such goods, and a threat to the continuation of the current consumption pattern.²

The demonstration effect is actually part of a more general tendency called 'diffusion' by psychologists and social anthropologists. The demonstration effect constitutes a part of this process. While economists have been concerned with the tangible part of this process (the acquisition of goods), sociologists and social anthropologists have also been concerned with the acquisition of traits and attitudes. Furthermore, sociologists and social anthropologists have analysed the process at a more sophisticated level. Since the theme of this inquiry is the demonstration effect in the social science thinking of Asian scholars and planners, we shall substitute 'social science knowledge and technique' for the term 'goods'. The main drive in the assimilation of social science knowledge from the West is the belief in its utility and superiority. The assimilation of this knowledge and technique exhibits parallel traits to those of the demonstration effect. They are (a) frequency of contact; (b) weakening or breakdown of previous knowledge or habit; (c) prestige

1. As an instance, the application of the concept of capital-output ratio in planning the economic development of Malaysia, as suggested by many Western economists, has led to false conclusions and the neglect of certain regions, thereby increasing regional economic imbalance. See Azhari Zahri, *Aspect of Malaysia's Rural Development: The Planners' Approach Re-examined* (Research Paper, Department of Malay Studies, University of Singapore); and his *Indonesia: Public Control and Economic Planning*, Singapore, Malaysia Publishing House, 1969.
2. James S. Duesenberry, *Income, Saving and the Theory of Consumer Behaviour*, p. 26-7, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1949.

attaching to the new knowledge; and (d) that it is not necessarily rational and utilitarian.

There are many other parallel traits which can be fruitfully discussed. Suffice it to say that the spread of social science knowledge in Asian countries, because it takes the form of an uncritical demonstration effect, introduces many defects and shortcomings. This situation should be corrected as soon as possible. For methodological purposes I shall concentrate on the Western experts since it is they who are the source of the demonstration effect: it is what they sell that is being bought.

The literature on development planning in Asia and other developing areas by a great number of Western scholars and those subjected to their demonstration effect are often misleading because of the unreality of the basic assumptions, misplaced abstraction, ignorance or misinterpretation of data, and an erroneous conception of problems and their significance. Apart from an enormous amount of descriptive and statistical information and statements, many of which may be taken as platitudes, there is not sufficient depth and utility in the result as a whole. Some Asian and Western scholars have recognized the situation and stressed the need for an autonomous social science tradition in Asia and other developing regions.¹

The biggest problem at the moment is that more and more Asian scholars of the demonstration effect type are being produced and diffused. An American scholar discussing Myrdal's view offered the following observation.

Theoretical reconstruction pre-supposes a combination of competence and lack of conventionality which are difficult to come by for students of economics from underdeveloped countries, who earn their Ph.Ds. at one of the graduate schools in a developed country. By the time he returns to his own country he has usually completely accepted the prevailing conventional wisdom which he proceeds to transmit to succeeding generations of students. Like most social processes the transmission of ideas and theories is subject to a kind of inertia or cumulative causation which tends to make the process of teaching and learning move in the same direction as the original impulse. The inevitable gap between theoretical structure and the world of experience may thus be widened until the stage is set for the intellectual discovery that traditional concepts and theories have lost their relevance. To some extent the current disenchantment with the rate of economic development in many countries is the result of the inadequacy of theoretical frameworks to diagnose the nature of the problem and to prescribe appropriate course of action.²

An uncritical imitation pervades almost the whole of scientific intellectual activity. All its major constituents such as problem-setting, analysis, abstraction, generalization, conceptualization, description, explanation and interpretation,

1. See, among others: Gunnar Myrdal, *Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions*, p. 98-104, London, Duckworth, 1959; C. Furtado, *Development and Underdevelopment*, p. v, Berkeley, Calif., University of California Press, 1967; and Ralph Pieris, 'The Implantation of Sociology in Asia', *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. XXI, No. 3, 1969. Other articles in this issue are also relevant.
2. K. William Kapp, 'Economic Development in A New Perspective: Existential Minima and Substantive Rationality', *Kyklos*, Vol. 18, 1965, p. 49.

have been affected by this process. A habit pattern has been formed: to break it, it is urgent that we expose the weaknesses of the thought pattern which is being imitated. The next step should be to expose the conditions that lead to uncritical imitation and the perpetuation of the resultant habit pattern. The corpus of social science, scientific knowledge and intellectual activity concerning developing areas may be grouped, for our present purpose, under the following headings: abstraction, generalization, conceptualization, problem-setting, explanation and the understanding and mastery of data. We may exclude methodology and descriptive analysis for the problems in this area are more easily resolved. It does not require an intellectual exertion of the kind we are proposing here in order to expose, for instance, the shortcomings of a sampling method in a census exercise. Once this is established it can be readily admitted. It is easier for an economist to recognize that his data is incomplete than that his economic thinking is uncritically imitative.

To my mind the most prevalent defect is the habit of discoursing in general and abstract propositions which are either misleading or redundant because they are already known. These propositions are used to argue or refute, a theory, model or a plan. As an example of such a redundant general proposition, take Tinbergen's suggestion:

Meanwhile if the differences between developed and underdeveloped countries are to be properly understood, it is well worth bearing in mind that the phenomenon of development requires more explanation than that of underdevelopment. Both in nature and in human history, an existence on the borderline between life and death is more normal than a prosperous existence of the type commonly met with to-day in the developed countries of the world. Although the great prosperity of these countries is directly due to their possessing both knowledge and a great quantity of capital goods, these are in turn the result of other factors which broadly speaking can be divided into those which determine the environment in which man is actively employed, and purely human factors. It is, of course, obvious that certain human qualities are needed if a modern developed society is to function properly. Now societies of this kind are distinguished by processes of production using durable capital goods and employing large numbers of people together. For this reason, among the qualities that are required of quite a high proportion of the population of a developed society are an interest in material well-being, an interest in techniques and in innovation, an ability to look ahead and a willingness to take risks, perseverance, and an ability to collaborate with other people and to observe certain rules.¹

The first question that arises here is the nature of the audience. For whom did Tinbergen write his book? If the book is directed to scholars, passages such as the one quoted are redundant. If the book is directed to students, it would be best to say so. The big problem is that the bulk of scholarly literature on the subject of underdevelopment and planning, apart from essential descriptive and statistical accounts, is of redundant nature. The interest in

1. Jan Tinbergen, *Development Planning*, p. 26, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1967.

material well-being, in techniques and innovation, the ability to look ahead, the willingness to take risks, to show perseverance, the ability to collaborate with other people and to observe certain rules, have long been known and recognized as prerequisites to development. To submit such propositions to scholars is a redundant effort. Furthermore the generality of the statements and the level of abstraction are such that they do not constitute a meaningful basis for concrete analysis. It is like discussing the known principles of health at a time when what is needed is concrete empirical case studies in all their complexity.

Perhaps we may select a better example of such an approach, this time furnishing us with more of the various shortcomings in many of the areas we mention: problem-setting, conceptualization, explanation and interpretation. In his comparative study of the growth patterns of developed and developing countries, Kuznets suggests the following points.

The present levels of *per capita* product in the developing countries are much lower than were those in the developed countries in their pre-industrial phase.

The supply of agricultural land *per capita* is much lower in most developing countries today than in most developed countries now, let alone in their pre-industrial phase. Comparison of the supply of agricultural land per agricultural worker would yield similar findings.

The lower *per capita* (and per worker) income in the developing countries—relative to that in the pre-industrial phase of the developed countries at present—is probably due largely to the lower productivity of the agricultural sector.

Inequality in the distribution of gross income in the developing countries today is as wide as, if not wider than, it was in the now developed countries in the pre-industrial phase.

Social and political concomitants of the low-income structure of the developing countries today appear to constitute more formidable obstacles to economic growth than they did in the pre-industrial phase of the now developed countries.

Most developing countries have attained political independence only recently, after decades of colonial status or political submission to the advanced countries. This was not true of the currently developed countries in their pre-industrial phase; industrialization followed a long period of political independence.

The populations in developing countries today are inheritors of civilizations quite distinct from and independent of European civilization. Yet it is European civilization which, over centuries of geographical, political and intellectual expansion, has provided the matrix of modern economic growth. All developed countries at present, with the exception of Japan, are either old members of European civilization, its offshoots overseas, or its territorial extensions toward the East.¹

1. S. Kuznets, *Economic Growth and Structure*, p. 177-83, London, Heinemann, 1966.

To begin with, the first five propositions are highly speculative in the sense that they have not been empirically verified in a reliable manner and belong to a level of generality useless for a meaningful analysis. Unlike the comparative study attempted by Gerschenkron, based on definite historical cases, utilizing numerous historical data, and offering conclusions derived directly from these data, Kuznets' comparative study is not very helpful. It does not reveal the interplay of variables in the process of development. The general summary conclusions are useful only to the uninitiated. At the present level of knowledge concerning the process of development a discussion such as the one presented by Kuznets, if directed to scholars, seems elementary.¹ We are here not judging Kuznets' scholarly and useful contributions as a whole but merely making use of this particular one as an illustration. The problem is, there are too many discussions of this kind that influence planners and students of underdevelopment. The general propositions contained in such discussions float around in increasing quantity. They do not add to knowledge and they are too broad to be useful. In many instances they are just summarized statements of known data and observations.² In yet other cases we are offered general suggestions of what should be done. However, in the study of Western society, the picture is entirely different. Social science discourse is not alarmingly invaded by general statements without concrete and analytic content, originating from foreign scholarship, whether at a micro or a macro level, general statements are cut down to the minimum. A broad subject such as the origin of capitalism was not discussed without reference to concrete data. The entire discussion of modernization, the Industrial Revolution and economic development of the West has been conducted at a high level of sophistication with continuous reference to concrete historical and sociological data.³

Another issue is how far findings and conclusions on developing areas are influenced by cultural and methodological factors intruding upon the author's judgement. The best example is Everett E. Hagen's view on the introduction of modern technology to developing areas. He stresses the generally known principle that certain cultural elements cannot be assimilated in isolation. What interests us is his example.

In Burma and India, and no doubt elsewhere in South East Asia and probably in most of Africa, the digging spade is almost unknown. Digging is done with a broad-

1. His discussion was directed to an American audience at a conference of the University of Texas in 1958. There was an earlier attempt at comparison by Kuznets, reprinted in A. N. Agarwala and S. P. Singh (eds.), *The Economics of Underdevelopment*, Bombay, Oxford University Press, 1961.
2. Kuznets' earlier work cited in footnote 1, page 13, is an interesting analysis. Though the area covered is wide, the level of analysis is not such that we are left only with general statements. His theme is a comparison between the pre-industrial phases of developed and developing countries.
3. The over-all treatment of Asian development using broad general concepts with little data reference constitutes only one type of work on the region. There is also the descriptive and informative type, useful for many reasons. We are not embarking upon a survey of such literature. The reference to it is only in connexion with the present theme.

bladed hoe. Though it is done with dexterity, it remains an awkward process in many circumstances. Surely, it would seem, the simple substitution of the spade would greatly increase productivity. But the ordinary digging spade cannot be used with sandals or bare feet, and it turns out that if the spade is constructed with a broad strip across the top, upon which the bare feet can press, then dirt sticks to this strip and the spade will not release its load. In Turkey and Iran, and perhaps elsewhere in the Middle East, though not in Arabia, the problem has been solved by a real act of creativity; a rod an inch or more in diameter, on which the bare feet can press with comfort, is thrust through the spade handle several inches above the blade, or a transverse strip which serves the same purpose is fastened on either side of the handle. The device is not new; the innovation was an ancient one. Even this arrangement must be something awkward in some circumstances. Barring some further act of creativity, even so simple a tool as a spade cannot be imported in a low-income society with full efficiency until the level of living has risen sufficiently that it includes the wearing of shoes.¹

This reveals a rather elementary blunder. Hagen did not understand the function of the South-East Asian hoe in its context. Here the *changkol* (hoe in Malay) is a much more efficient tool than the spade. In the terrace cultivation of rice on mountain slopes, where one must sometimes scrape the descending banks of a terrace downwards, the *changkol* and not the spade is the efficient tool. The manipulative potential of the *changkol* is much higher than that of the spade. With it one can dig a hole and at the same time scrape the sides with much greater ease. It is efficient for digging as well as trimming. It is suitable for the delicate construction required in *padi* cultivation. Furthermore it can dig much faster than a spade. Thus Hagen had ignored the anthropological principle that the function of a tool is to be judged by reference to its context. There are innumerable other instances of erroneous judgement on Asian matters born from an ignorance or inadequate familiarity with concrete data. We are not here questioning the scientific ethics of the observer but only his inadequate preparation, of which he may not be aware. I shall furnish another instance, this time from a well-known cultural anthropologist, Melville J. Herskovits, arising out of a flaw in methodology probably coupled with insufficient data.

Herskovits' interest in the relation between the time concept of industrial and non-industrial societies is expressed in the following terms.

The difference between industrial and non-industrial societies has been phrased as a difference between groups who use 'clock' time and those who live by 'natural' or astrological time. It has also been expressed as the difference between time conceived as falling into carefully measured units, often of very small dimensions—seconds, minutes and hours, as well as days, weeks, and years—and of seasonal time, where the limits of the units are blurred and imprecise, as they follow the uneven round dictated, for example, by the responses of agricultural peoples to the time of planting, cultivating, reaping and then the period when one awaits the turn of the year to begin the cycle again. The tendency to exactitude in measuring time may thus be regarded

1. E. E. Hagen, *On the Theory of Social Change*, p. 31-2, Homewood, Ill., Dorsey Press, 1962.

as an integral part of the technological complex. It derives its importance from the fact that the activities laid down in accordance with it, whether these be mechanical or behavioural, have made it essential that there be specific schedules maintained in all phases of life—a meeting with a friend, a church service, as well as a production line—if the daily round is to move smoothly.¹

That punctuality is an integral part of the technological complex is a generally accepted proposition. Herskovits also suggested the following.

. . . technological change is to be thought of as a process of adjustment between two time systems, one exact and demanding, the other imprecise and relaxed. . . There are few field workers among indigenous African peoples enculturated to the Euro-american time complex, who have not fumed as they waited for an informant or an interpreter to come at an agreed time. One soon learns to expect a ceremony not to begin at the hour named. More often than not, there will be a wait of long duration until everything has been made ready, or on occasions, the rite will be well under way at the time appointed for its commencements. Eventually the rite does begin, but experience teaches that it is best to come prepared to sit pleasantly chatting until this happens, profiting from whatever opportunities there may be to observe preliminaries. The student in the field also learns that his devotion to accuracy in timing is as incomprehensible to the people with whom he is working, and as irritating, as their disregard of his conventions are to him.²

He further suggested that attitudes and behaviour rooted in the indigenous tradition should be understood as part of the entire setting. So far there is no disagreement. However, there are significant shortcomings in his appraisal. He discussed the entire indigenous traditions of Africa as though they were one single tradition, ignoring important differentiating elements. Furthermore he does not have adequate mastery of data. It is not generally true that indigenous traditions are altogether devoid of the modern time concept. Taking the Sudanese, whom Herskovits cited as an instance of not being punctual in keeping appointments, we can discover that in other aspects of his life he is scrupulously punctual. He will be punctual to the minute when breaking his fast, when performing the Friday prayer, the daily prayer at dawn and at sunset. He is not entirely devoid of the sense of punctuality.

His religion, Islam, appreciates the value of time. The Koran contains a chapter heading, 'The Time'.³ The value of time measurement was acknowledged long before the clock was used. Amongst the Moslems there is a branch of knowledge called *Ilmul hisab*, the science of counting and measurement. The appreciation of time measurement linked with religion is not a special

1. M. J. Herskovits, 'Economic Change and Cultural Dynamics', in: R. Braibanti and J. J. Spengler (eds.), *Tradition, Values and Socio-economic Development*, p. 128, Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1961.
2. *op. cit.*, p. 128-9.
3. Muhammad Ali, 'Al-Asr (The Time)', *The Holy Qūran*, Chap. 103, p. 1206, Lahore, 1963 (English translation with Arabic text): 'By the time! Surely man is at a loss, except those who believe and do good, and exhort one another to Truth, and exhort one another to patience.'

attribute of Moslems. All over the world from the immemorial past people have appreciated time measurement and punctuality.¹ What has changed is the locus of punctuality.² Owing to the highly increased density of events in the modern world requiring punctuality, a change of habit is required for those who have not been used to it. This should not be confused with a change in values, or a change in the conception of time. We should also not generalize for all non-industrial societies.

The problems of malanalysis based on general propositions without proper linkage with concrete data, of faulty generalization, of inadequate mastery of data, of selecting the wrong issues, of redundant repetition of accepted propositions, can be considered within a wider context: the bigger problem of acculturation between the developing area and the Western world. Economists and sociologists have noted the phenomenon of derived industrialization and derived development. The characteristic feature of derived development is that the innovations supporting the process are produced elsewhere.³ It is oriented towards consumption of commodities produced elsewhere or imitated locally. Through the operation of the demonstration effect on the intellectual plane amongst both scholars and planners we also have a form of derived development: the consumption-oriented process based on innovations from abroad. Ideas on planning and development are derived from abroad. The demonstration effect results in an intense frequency of exposure to novel goods which tends to diminish inhibition. Soon a demand is created. The massive bombardment of developing regions by an ever-growing volume of imported literature on development constitutes a major problem owing to the absence of critical and selective assimilation. The need to be selective and critical had been suggested by some scholars but is in practice hardly noticeable. Fallacies and shortcomings have been recognized in theory but hardly carried over into practice.⁴

This state of affairs is brought about by one aspect of the demonstration effect long recognized by sociologists. As John Bates Clark wrote in 1886:

Wants, when developed, admit of three distinct conditions, according to the possibility of gratifying them. The desire for what is decidedly beyond the possibility of attainment is not, in a healthy nature, either constant or active. The peasant passes

1. China offers very interesting examples. The *Hsiang-yin* or incense seal is an ingenious device to measure time. The various objects used for time measurement indicate the value of measurement upheld by Chinese society. See: Silvio A. Bendini, 'The Scent to Time', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series, Vol. 53, Part 5, 1963; and J. T. Shotwell, 'Time and Historical Perspective', *Time and its Mysteries*, Series III, New York, N.Y., New York University Press, 1949.
2. Punctuality is held as a religious value amongst Moslems though not always observed. The adjustment required is the extension of its application rather than to punctuality as such. There are many references to punctuality which go back to the Prophet Mohammad.
3. See Henry C. Wallich, 'Some Notes Towards a Theory of Derived Development', in: A. N. Agarwala and S. P. Singh (eds.), *op. cit.*
4. For an interesting treatment of this problem see Douglas Rimmer, 'The Abstraction from Politics: Critique of Economic Theory and Design with Reference to West Africa', *The Journal of Development Studies* (London), Vol. 5, No. 3, April 1969.

the palace with indifference, and experiences, at most, a desultory transient wish to be its occupant. Such a wish is a day-dream; it stimulates to no effort, and its non-fulfilment occasions little discontent. In passing a dwelling slightly better than his own the laborer may experience a desire of a different and more effective character. The desire for that which is attainable by effort is active, and stimulates to exertion in pursuit of the object. Failure in such a quest occasions lively disappointment. When the object has been attained, the want of it ceases, and the active desires extend themselves to a remoter object.¹

For the imitation to be effective the desired object must be considered as being within reach. Only then will it stimulate effort. In terms of the demonstration effect on the intellectual plane, this means that the object of imitation be what can readily be imitated. It will not be the impressive intellectual palace but the hut around the corner. The nature of the object imitated as well as the imitator condition the outcome. Hence in terms of development ideas and planning we have the persistent trend to imitate what is readily available in increasing quantity. As long as the imitated object remains inadequate in scope and quality, so will the imitation.

Paul Streeten suggests certain sources of the social determination of thought: (a) Western economics has a high prestige value; (b) employment prospects for economists depend upon their rating by standards created by Western economics; (c) the legitimate separation of attitudes and institutions by Western economics has been uncritically transferred to the developing area; (d) it is easier to utilize facts which are accessible to investigation and quantification; (e) economic quantities are believed to be more objective than non-economic parameters; and (f) the intellectual escape mechanism finds strong support from the moral and political ones.² We may extend the list further to include the lack of motivation amongst governments in developing areas to promote social science creativity, the absence of a strong group of intellectual critics, and the relatively lower status given to scholarship as compared to the developed countries.

Streeten, Myrdal and a number of other scholars, both Western and Asian, have perceived the seriousness of the problem. What I should like to discuss here is the effect it has on development. One serious distortion is the direction of thinking away from pertinent problems. I shall furnish here a concrete instance from Singapore and Malaysia also applicable to many other countries. Western bath tubs are increasingly used in modern flats and houses. Of the possible alternatives the bath tub is the least efficient and the most wasteful for bathing except for a few who have the leisure and money to use the tub, Western style. In Europe, the bulk of the population do not take a bath every day. Owing to the cold or temperate climate, the need for taking

1. John Bates Clark, *The Philosophy of Wealth*, p. 49, Boston, Mass., Ginn, 1887 (reprinted A. M. Kelley Publishers, New York, 1967).
2. P. Streeten, *The Use and Abuse of Models in Development Planning*, in: K. Martin and J. Knapp (eds.), *The Teaching of Development Economics*, p. 65-8, London, Frank Cass, 1967. The six points raised have often been discussed in private circles by some scholars I know. It is important to focus attention on them publicly.

a daily bath is not pressing. A daily wash is sufficient. The tub is an appropriate means for a weekly bath of half an hour or more. In Amsterdam, for instance, a lot of people still use the public baths; most modern flats (middle- and lower-class dwellings) have only showers. Hence, even in Europe itself, the bath tub is not considered most economic or practical for daily bathing or even for a weekly wash for the amount of water and heating required are not as economical as for the shower.

This phenomenon has a distinct significance for our society. It is a displacement of our system of home bathing. Those without bathrooms at home use the river, the pool, or the public tap. In the West, however, the modern bath tub is an outgrowth of a tradition. In South-East Asia, we wash by pouring water over our bodies with a small bucket or bowl. In some houses the bath tub is used as a pond instead of an immersion tub. In other houses it is used as a floor for the shower. Thus the bath tub has not been functionally integrated in an efficient manner. There is, however, another alternative which has been obscured by the spread of the bath tub. This is a round or rectangular tub made from the same material, fitted in the same way, raised from the ground a few feet, with a radius of one to two feet, and a similar depth.

The purpose is to provide a small pond made of bath tub material, easy to drain and to clean, at the same time allowing for the traditional system of washing by pouring water over the body. This kind of tub will certainly find a ready market. If Singapore or Malaysia were to develop its manufacture, the export potential is great. Why has this not been seized upon? Because of public unawareness of the utility and need for such a tub to replace the bath tub. Were we to introduce the use of this tub we may call this modernization, though the idea and design is traditional, while the material and improvements are rational and scientific. It is superior to the traditional cement pond attached to the wall because it prevents soaking the walls, is easier to clean, can also be used for washing clothes, and the drainage is more efficient. It does not require us to adopt the Western system of bathing by immersing oneself in the tub.

The fact that manufacturing and demand for the modernized version of such a traditional tub fitted to the wall is not exploited, we shall call the potential-elimination effect. It is a consequence of the demonstration effect. The potential-elimination effect operates for a wide range of goods. There may be a thousand and one industries in Asia which have not come into being because of it. Its intensity is partly influenced by the innovating capacity of Asian *entrepreneurs*. The potential-elimination effect is amenable to quantitative analysis, both micro and macro. It is a phenomenon which can best be studied in an interdisciplinary manner combining economics, sociology, anthropology, social psychology and history. Economists of underdevelopment and planning experts should insist on having such data before they draw up a blueprint. They should promote the realization of what has been eliminated by the demonstration effect. We may call this process the potential-realization effect.

This is a sufficient illustration of the need and feasibility of raising relevant new problems in the economics of underdevelopment and planning for development. The reason why many such problems have not been brought to the

surface is the hold of the demonstration effect over an influential segment of the Asian academic community, which has exerted the resultant potential-elimination effect. In the areas of problem selection, problem solving and problem analysis, the demonstration effect exerts a strong influence. The best example is the attention given to the demonstration effect itself, which has been studied in isolation from the two accompanying effects, whereas they all form a meaningful, functional whole. When Duesenberry directed attention to the demonstration effect, he had in mind its operation in a Western capitalist society, where the success and ascendancy of certain goods does not lead to a situation of dependence on an external politico-economic region, does not lead to unfavourable terms of trade, does not bring 'enclave' or 'show-window' industrialization, and does not accentuate the need for foreign investment. The context of analysis was entirely different. In our context, however, we should take note of the demonstration effect without isolating it from the two other effects significant for developing areas.

What is needed for the study of developing areas is not merely to point out the inadequacies of current models and analyses uncritically derived from Western scholars and social science. What we need are alternative models, methodologies and concepts to modify, supplement, or substitute those already available. This could and should be done by Asian scholars for strictly scientific reasons. I must apologize here for frequently using the terms 'Western' and 'Asian'. I am not using them in any prejudiced ethnic sense, but purely in a nominal sense, to identify each group because there is a need to make the distinction. Neither am I suggesting the greater objectivity or profundity of one as against the other in the study of Asian problems. The reason why I assign to Asian scholars the task of reconstructing social science thinking in Asia is because they are in the best position to fulfil the essential scientific requirements. Given adequate academic training and intellectual background, since Asian scholars live in the region and are able to grow with their subjects in symbiosis, they are in the best position to develop a specialization which requires immediate and continuous contact with local data. Foreign scholarship cannot substitute for resident scholarship. Without a base in resident scholarship foreign scholarship is unable to contribute fruitfully. It is the absence of a dominant resident scholarship free of the intellectual demonstration effect that has partly contributed to the irrelevant and redundant findings of foreign scholarship.

The relation of these problems to the goals and execution of planning is clear. To prevent the goals and models of planning from being merely the result of the demonstration effect at a sophisticated level, we should reorientate our thinking to planning based on a 'planning revolution'. Successfully to accomplish the planning revolution Asian scholars should embark upon the following programmes:

To eliminate or restrict the intellectual demonstration effect so that it does not constitute a serious impediment.

To divert the demonstration effect into a process of selective and independent assimilation.

- To attain a higher standard of scientific and intellectual consciousness by measuring Asian attainments with comparable disciplines in developed countries.
 - To sustain interest in comparative studies as part of the individual scholar's preparation.¹
 - To interest government and public leaders in the development of a genuine and autonomous social science tradition in Asia.
 - To enlist the support of sympathetic foreign scholars.
 - To mount a fierce public attack of fallacious planning and the abuses of social science thought and methodology by selecting concrete local targets.
 - To awaken the consciousness of the social scientists in Asia to their own intellectual servitude.
 - To discuss all these matters on campuses and in professional journals.
- Limitation of space prevents me from discussing further aspects of the problem. The demonstration effect on the mind of the scholar induces him to imitate even the idea of narrow specialization and mutual exclusion of interdisciplinary findings. Often insights and valuable criticisms are not given attention because they do not come from scholars in the same field. A work like S. Andreotti's, *Parasitism and Subversion*, extremely relevant to the study of developing societies, is often ignored by economists. So is Raymond Aaron's, *The Industrial Society*.² His study of development theory is a useful supplement to the economics of underdevelopment. His stress on the qualitative nature of the concept of underdevelopment, his warning against using undifferentiated concepts of development and underdevelopment and his insistence that the ultimate cause of development is the application of the scientific mentality to production, are welcome pointers to further areas of inquiry. The well-known and indisputable quantitative characteristics of both development and underdevelopment should be considered as being the results of causes which are basic in the explanation of the phenomena. The different types of development and underdevelopment should be classified into genus and species.

1. Economists and planners in particular countries tend on the whole to ignore the experiences of other regions. For instance it would be quite useful for those interested in Malaysia to have some comparative interest in Italy, with reference to the difference in development between the north and the south. In Malaysia the difference lies between the west and east coast of Malaya. Structural and sociological factors found on the Italian scene are relevant comparative data. See S. B. Clough and Carlo Livi, 'Economic Growth in Italy: An Analysis of the Uneven Development of North and South', in: B. E. Supple (ed.), *The Experience of Economic Growth*, New York, N.Y., Random House, 1963.
Similarly a great many interesting Dutch works on Indonesia have been ignored though some are available in English. Questions regarding the validity of Western economic concepts have been raised since 1910, by J. H. Boeke, and the debate around the subject has continued for a long time: see *Indonesian Economics*, The Hague, van Hoeve, 1961, under the editorial chairmanship of W. F. Wertheim. Dutch scholars had anticipated many of the current problems around the transfer of economic analysis to developing areas. Their approach combines the factorgenic and actorgenic orientations. For an explanation of these two concepts see below.
2. Raymond Aaron, *The Industrial Society*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1967.

Simultaneously we should seriously devote increasing attention to the roles of *entrepreneurs* and political groups in developing societies. All analyses of human behaviour and achievements can be grouped into two broad categories, the factorgenic and the actorgenic. By factorgenic I mean all those matters which are the results of human action, external to man and able to survive longer than an individual or a group. By actorgenic I mean all those matters which are found within the individual or the group. Though in real life there is a strong interaction and interdependence between factorgenic and actorgenic phenomena, at an initial level of comprehension it is fruitful to make a conceptual distinction. Mozart's special talent to compose, his deep interest in music, his dedication to it, his ability to organize his life with the central purpose of inventing music, are actorgenic data. They disappear with his death. His music, its performances, the demand for it, the multiplied effects of his production, the social and economic settings of his time, no matter how long their projection, can be considered as factorgenic data. They are external to Mozart and do not disappear with his death.

The concepts actorgenic and factorgenic should not be confused with human and non-human or individual and social. Population growth, for instance, is a human phenomenon, together with its effects. Demographers study it as an anonymous process. On the other hand a study of the motivations of concrete groups acting and influencing the process, is actorgenic. The term actorgenic refers only to a definite aspect of human action where the nature of the group, its motivation, its attitudes, its expectation are brought into focus. It is not based on anonymity. Definite groups such as the Italian merchants during the Renaissance, the Latin American ruling class, the English *entrepreneurs*, are sociologically identified, as is the nature of their economic activity. Actorgenic groups are definite historical and identified groups. Tinbergen, whose interest is inclined to be factorgenic, seems to feel the need for actorgenic analysis. He points to the considerable gaps in our knowledge of human characteristics required for development.¹ A book which is predominantly factorgenic is Ragnar Nurske's *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries*. The same can be said of *The Economics of Underdeveloped Countries*, by P. T. Bauer and B. S. Yamey. We shall not here explore the reasons why such a trend has developed. Suffice it to say that an exaggerated emphasis on factorgenic data cannot offer profound explanations. It is one sided and not very helpful for planning. An example of a factorgenic proposition is the following (written by Nurske in 1952).

The use of public finance for capital formation in underdeveloped countries is not an academic and unrealistic notion. There exist important examples of it. Once more, look at Japan. In the initial period of development, especially in the 1870s and 1880s, the state dominated the scene in providing capital for public works and industrial expansion.²

1. See Jan Tinbergen, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

2. Ragnar Nurske, *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries*, p. 148, Oxford, Blackwell, 1962.

In Asia there were by then attempts by the State to use some public finance for capital formation. In some instances it bred corruption and capital loss. How can one suggest the policy without linking it with the type of people who will implement it?

Economists of underdevelopment and development planners have been, on the whole, factorgenic in orientation. When they discuss problems the picture which emerges is that of anonymous forces bringing about or obstructing certain changes. They discuss the absence or presence of natural resources, the size of the market, the terms of trade, institutional impediments, labour productivity *per capita* income, and a host of other data relevant to descriptive and introductory explanations. Here and there we have occasional references to actorgenic data. The prevailing and dominant trend is, however, factorgenic. In addition it is mainly contemporary and ahistorical. The kind of studies produced by Weber, Sombart and Schmoller, which include concrete empirical discussions of socio-economic groups centred around actorgenic data, are extremely scarce as far as developing areas concerned.

My point is best made by reading their works. In his study of the historical development of the enterprise, Schmoller includes the persons and groups that play a role in it. Of the four major categories of causes one is the following:

The spirit of an age and of a people determines how a society will use material circumstances; healthy or unhealthy forms of organization can be the outcome of similar material conditions. Everything depends upon the moral and mental energies available. Only great and energetic periods and persons create epochal achievements. Newly created forms reflect the degree and orientation of egoism and of community spirit; they are also dependent on the feelings of groups and individuals and on dominant conceptions and ideas.¹

A lot of the significant actorgenic data such as the personality traits of the Roman aristocrats, the groups that became their slaves, and much other information is utilized to explain the birth of large-scale enterprise.

The actorgenic orientation is significant because our major problems are to my mind best understood in terms of actorgenic analysis. If we desire to break the chain of circular explanation involving the continuous repetition of known data and problems, we have to enter a wider area of discourse. To my mind the root problems of the developing areas are the *entrepreneurs* and the power holders. No matter what problem we start with, the chain of causal analysis will end with them. In the hierarchy and variety of causes these two groups constitute the most basic. They decisively condition a country's reaction to all its major problems. If they are corrupt, the entire economy is affected. The decisions they make can affect the entire economy. If the country has not enough capital despite its natural wealth it is they who do not make accumulation possible. If institutional impediments become serious it is they who do

1. Gustav Schmoller, 'The Historical Development of Enterprise', in: F. C. Lane and J. C. Riemersma (eds.), *Enterprise and Secular Change*, p. 7, Homewood, Ill., R. D. Irwin, 1953.

not fight them or are too weak to resist. Current economic analysis that cites the lack of capital and goes no further, restricts itself by excluding other highly relevant causes. When Schumpeter discussed the role of *entrepreneurs* he had in mind those with a positive contribution to make. In Asia there are entrepreneurs who inhibited themselves or align themselves up with inefficient and corrupt governments. Many of them are not in the least concerned about the over-all development of the country. The most urgent task now is to study the nature and function of Asian *entrepreneurs* and governments, together with other economic groups. Citing factorgenic data repeatedly will not help us solve basic problems. It is not enough to explain how and why development plans fail but who makes them fail and how actorgenic factors operate in the group which causes the plan to fail.

Andreski discussed actorgenic problems, one being the parasitism of the ruling class. Numerous interesting features are cited, including the influence of cold-climate dress on health and efficiency. Disdain for certain types of labour is also connected with the analysis of underdevelopment. It partly explains the paucity of contributions to science and philosophy. Andreski's book helps us to understand Asian development problems better than hundreds of factorgenic works. I see the Asian situation reflected in every paragraph. He questions the validity of many current explanations of underdevelopment by showing the reverse aspects of many suggested solutions. Unproductive use of existing funds is as great a handicap as poor resources. An important actorgenic factor influencing unfavourable terms of trade is that money falls into the hands of people who are likely to spend it abroad. It is such concrete and detailed analysis which is nevertheless contextual and global that makes his book highly instructive.¹

In conclusion we may stress here that though the significance of factorgenic data and explanations is beyond doubt, they must be supplemented and linked with actorgenic data and explanations. Myrdal's *Asian Drama* offers a combination of the two approaches. We are here not concerned with normal errors in a research work but with errors of approach. His inclusion of actorgenic data corrects the bias of approach. In discussing the effects of the plantation system on the South-East Asian economy, he includes the attitudes of the European planters.

A further aspect of the plantation system that strongly bolstered the enclave structure but that has not been given adequate recognition in the literature was the fact of segregation and discrimination. Had the European owners, managers, or skilled workers of the large estates come in close contact with the natives, a diffusion of skills would almost surely have taken place and a much larger group of indigenous personnel would have acquired the requisite abilities. More and more of the demands for higher skills could then have been satisfied locally. But the fact of European ownership and control in primitive regions meant a wide separation between the European upper caste and the masses of unskilled workers that the plantations came to utilize. This was less a matter of 'race' or even racial prejudice, at least at the

1. See S. Andreski, *Parasitism and Subversion*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1966.

start, than a very real difference in modes and levels of living, and more generally, cultural characteristics. Given the lack of rapport and limited direct contact, even on the job, the raising of native 'industrial' capabilities faced a major social obstacle.¹

We should reconsider the validity of the kind of abstraction and generalization current among development economists and planners. They should revise their approach and concentrate more on empirical case studies using a set of variables different from those currently in vogue. Discussions on the goals and prospect of development planning would then become more fruitful and respectable.² It will help us to make planning more meaningful and desirable. The social sciences are valid and vital means of planning but they have to be freed from the relatively ethnocentric offshoots which have grown around them. They have to be disentangled from the distorting influence of the cultural groups involved in scholarship so that a more profound and objective result can be attained.

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¹Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama*, Vol. 1, p. 450, Pelican Books.

²A recent article by M. June Flanders, 'Agriculture versus Industry in Development Policy: The Planners' Dilemma Re-examined', *The Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 3, April 1969, assumes an extreme factorgenic position. It is deductive, a-historical, abstract and unrelated to concrete groups of actors.