“The experience of an American economics visiting faculty member in China”

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THE EXPERIENCE OF AN AMERICAN ECONOMICS VISITING FACULTY MEMBER IN CHINA

Abstract

Some American economists have contemplated taking a visiting academic post at a Chinese University. This article is to help inform an American economist what some facets of the experience may be like. There is a literature review, which includes the work of Gregory Chow who was one of the most influential economists, who ascertained the economic education needs of China, once Deng Xiaoping wished to implement a much less Maoist economic model. The experience of an American economist who was a visiting faculty member in China for almost twelve years serves as the basis of this story. The results of this article several cities in China have produced an outlook of what contemplating American faculty to be mindful of. One can learn a lot through assignments in China. Knowing how to convey a respectful attitude towards Chinese will usually increase the respect the Chinese show visiting American economics faculty.

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INTRODUCTION

In the early 1970s, U.S. President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger worked towards establishing relations with the People's Republic of China. In 1972, I was in eighth grade. Our teacher told us that "China is an important ally of America against the Soviet Union". Prime Minister Zhao En Lai especially and also President and Party Chair Mao Zedong were receptive of this. In 1979, formal diplomatic relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China occurred (Chow, 1989). The two nations had been strong allies in World War II, though the relationship had gone awry after 1949, when the Chinese Communist Party defeated the Nationalist Party. The ascension of Deng Xiaoping to the top leadership post in 1978 heralded the economic reforms in China, which had a more market oriented framework. The current relationship between China and the United States has had many successes and some challenges, coupled often with a lack of mutual understanding. One purpose of this article is to encourage dialogue between people in these two nations.

I was teaching and researching in China for most of the time from September 1999 to May 2012. In Fall semester, 1999, a thoughtful Chinese student told me that she wished all the people of America and China could visit each others' countries. In that way, all of the people in those two countries could get along better. Although a fanciful wish, the student's words certainly showed she had her heart in the right place.

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This article examines what other visiting economists have written about higher education and economics in China and cultural norms concerning human interaction that the Chinese believe in. The American economists should at least be aware of these Chinese norms. My own experience will be examined. Some information about several other country traits concerning China will also be provided.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE START OF THE NEED FOR ECONOMIC EDUCATION

Chow (1989) wrote a seminal article on the subject of economic education in China. He rightly points out that the education of young people in China can have an effect on the policies pursued when the young people graduate and move up through the ranks of influential leaders. The type of economic institutions that China will have in the future depends on both the economic education in China and the economic reforms. In the early 1980s, Chinese agencies, including the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Economics, realized that a modern "analytical" and "empirically" based economics based curriculum would be in order. Herschede (1985) and Chow (1989, 2000) concur that the Chinese Revolution, which ended in 1949, resulted in heavy Soviet influence and some type of Marxist economics being taught in university class rooms in China. This had greatly changed by 1982, Chow visited six major universities in China: Zhongshan University in Guangzhou, Huazhong Institute of Technology and Wuhan University both in Wuhan, Peking University and People's University (Remnin University) in Beijing, Nankai University in Tianjin. I taught and researched at Peking University and Remnin University. Other comparable places I taught and researched at were University of International Business and Economics and City University of Hong Kong. Chow wrote an important textbook, which explained modern economics, with China as the institutional background. This book filled a void, since no such textbook existed and, of course, it did not have a Marxist perspective. The book was entitled "The Chinese Economy", published by Harper and Row in 1985. Chow was instrumental in setting up workshops on economics from 1984 till 1986. The fields of macroeconomics, microeconomics and econometrics were explained and discussed (Chow, 1989). In addition, Chow (1989) advocated graduate school for Chinese economic students in the USA, Canada and other places. Chinese educators agree with this idea (Chow, 1989, 2000). Chinese universities welcomed many economic scholars from the West.

As economic reforms took place in China, this included some degree of change from public ownership to private ownership. Making such a change proved easier to do with farms, compared to large industrial firms. A basic component to economic reform meant that price setting had to cease in order to have input and output markets work in the proper way, where accurate information on opportunity costs is conveyed openly (Chow, 1989). Boards of directors for the state enterprises may consist of workers, managers, and people from independent government agencies. The state enterprises should be allowed to act like profit maximizing firms, and the private sector has been allowed to expand. The monetary policy of the People's Bank of China should help create a favorable macroeconomic environment. Though allowing for some private citizen decision making, there is also some government effort towards the general economic welfare of the nation (Chow, 1989). Of course, this is true to varying degrees in any nation.

Having enough qualified educators is a major factor for success in Chinese universities being able to offer the modern economics curriculum, which Chow and his colleagues presented. Making this transformation in China takes time and effort and the quality is improving (Chow, 2000). Within China, "economics is a popular subject" (Chow, 2000). College graduates in this subject can get jobs in banking and finance, institutions, state and non-state enterprises, foreign corporations and joint ventures. Graduate study in economics in the USA often consists of fifteen hours per semester, as compared to twenty hours in China. Research and academic posts could be the outcome for some successful people in economics graduate studies. Within China, many universities are looking for

American and some other foreign Ph.D.'s, as well as Chinese Ph.D.'s who have been educated both domestically and by foreign universities. The universities are improving, with some Mainland ones and many Hong Kong ones attaining top world status (Chow, 2000). "Economics is a good profession in China", with many economists being well respected (Chow, 2000). What an American or other foreign economist who is contemplating going to China should know is that he or she will be respected for their economic knowledge, if they can clearly explain well differing views. Chinese students want to be able to respect you. I only saw one case where a foreign economist was not respected by the Chinese and he was not respected by the other foreigners either. He had been disrespectful of the Chinese students, also.

2. SECURING A VISITING ECONOMICS FACULTY POST IN CHINA

If you are thinking about teaching and researching in China, the biggest question you first need to ask yourself is this one: do you love Chinese culture and the Chinese people in America? If the answer is yes, then it may work out. If you do not, then do not go, except maybe for a short tourist trip to China. The Chinese are not desperate for economics faculty. The Chinese can very quickly ascertain if you respect them or not and I have seen Americans get deported and have their visas altered so they have to leave. Once it is decided, it is done with speed. I have seen American faculty of different discipline deported for theft, disrespecting students, disrespecting American faculty who are doing a good job, breaking rules and Chinese ethics in regard to students. It is not America and China is most certainly not a place where all American faculty should be, even for a short time. Of course the vast majority of American faculty are not deported, and instead do a professional job and gain a lot of knowledge and experience. If you respect Chinese, you may wish to go. I never thought all people of any nation are inherently better than the people in other nations. In searching for a job, contact the Chinese universities directly. Never use job agents for economics faculty posts. Good positions are handled by colleges and universities directly. Until you get a contract from a Chinese university, you do not have a job offer. Monetary compensation varies widely and you need to keep in mind that the cost of living, even in large Chinese cities, is substantially less than the cost of living in the average American large urban community. Most often, accommodations for you and a spouse are part of the offer. And you cannot just fly over there and look for a job. The Chinese require a Z visa in order for you to work there for any length of time. To get a Z visa, you have to get a complete physical in America at a place the Chinese recognize. You will also get a second physical in China. After you get the physical in America, you pay fees and send the physical report, application for a work visa and letter of invitation (from the employing Chinese university), recommendation letters from faculty in the USA, your vitae and anything else that the Chinese visa authority requires from you. You send all of these documents to the Chinese Embassy in America or to one of the Chinese Consulates in America, if you wish. You cannot get a Z visa by starting the process in China. Also, do not be tempted to take a short cut and teach with something less that a Z visa. Sometimes you will hear about a foreigner who taught with a tourist or business person's visa. Unless a foreign teacher has a Z visa, they can be deported and the American Embassy and Consulates ask that you obey the laws of the country you are working in.

You must start the process in America. Pay the extra fees necessary to have someone walk through the process at the Chinese Embassy or Consulate. I first went to China in 1999 and the requirements for getting the visa process done have only increased. Chinese have told me that some of this is in response to additional requirements America has put on the Chinese in regard to obtaining American visas. Any reputable travel agency knows about this. If you are put off by this, then absolutely do not go to China for a teaching post, because there are more laws and rules you must obey once you get there. Work visas last at most a year and if you stay in China, one can get a new one and do most of the steps again, but one does not have to fly back and forth, involving ones home country. Yet, you cannot ever wait until your current work visa has run out. I have noticed that intelligent Americans are used to obeying rules and they

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and they conduct their interactions with Chinese in a respectful and productive way. You can also go as a tourist and just see the sites. However, you will be deported immediately if you try to work in China with a tourist visa. The American state department in China absolutely requires that you obey Chinese laws. I always did really well with the U.S. state department in China and there was a strong mutual respect. Yet, there are illegal aliens working in the USA. The Chinese have four and a half times as many people as America. They are not desperate for more people and they do not tolerate having foreigners working illegally.

The Chinese do like people who respect them and people who wish to learn from the Chinese. If all cultures should be the same, it would be a boring world. Even Chinese outside of Mainland China tend to be polite. Also the Japanese, Koreans and some others observe Confucianism, which stresses politeness is why. Though he tried, Mao was not able to get rid of Confucianism. Mao died in 1976.

As previously stated, do not go to China as a faculty member unless you have always admired the culture of the Chinese. Otherwise you will be fighting it every day. I have seen it in some American economists before. Some people seem to find it harder than other Americans to live in China are unable to handle the lack of familiar surroundings. I have seen them very anxious to leave after the end of a semester, a mini-term or even after one day. Using a PPP (Purchasing Power Parity) standard is different from foreign exchange rate comparisons. Exchange rates can be altered by government actions. PPP values cannot be so easily manipulated (Mishkin, 2006; Gordon, 2011).

Figure 1 shows how China has surpassed the USA in terms of total PPP measurements of their respective economies. China pulls ahead in 2014. However, in per capita terms America is way ahead of China.

3. MY CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

Your teaching load will vary depending on where you teach and good economics departments will of course expect you to also publish. If you are in China for a while, you will probably get an opportunity to co-author with Chinese economists, as did I. For example, I coauthored a commissioned work for the United Nations, on a study, regarding the electronic industry and China. Naturally, the Chinese students expect you to respect them and then of course the students respect you. I knew a young economist, fresh out of school, who came from America. He tried to lord over the Chinese students and even extracted gifts from his students that he sold to other people. Of course, he was greatly compensating for his poor knowledge of economics, aside from what he had memorized. He did not last a complete semester at that Chinese university, as the

Source: Socio-Economic History Blog (2015).

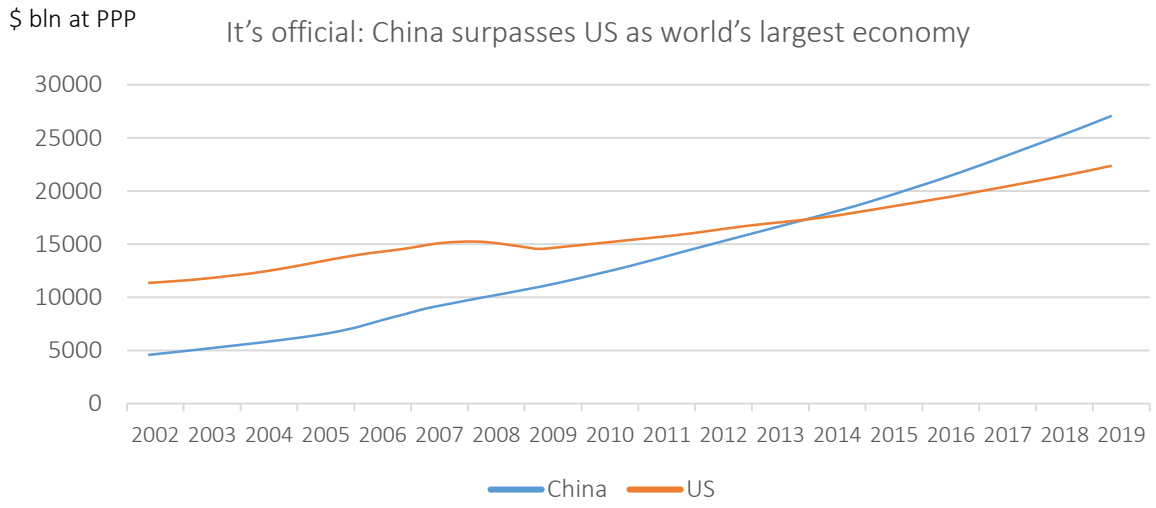

Figure 1. In PPP terms, the economy of China has surpassed the economy of the USA

American and Chinese administrators ran him out. In sum, if you wish to have intelligent, hard working students, China is a good place to teach at. They are polite and respectful, especially to those Americans who display the same traits. I also especially respect that American professors who taught courses that were almost entirely verbal, such as an anthropology. As economists, we can rely more on a verbal or a math approach to the subject we are teaching or a combination therefore. So when in China, I used more of a math approach, compared to how I taught in America. When you teach in China at a top university, be prepared to let economics students come to the board and mathematically explain their own creative arguments. Every time I teach any economics course in any country, I have the healthy attitude that I myself am going to learn something new. That makes the experience more fun.

I remember in my doctoral program I would study with Chinese classmates. We would complement each other a great deal. My Chinese classmates patiently explained the math to me. Once a Chinese classmate wrote twenty-four pages to solve four math problems. Her math work was clear and did not skip math steps. I told her: "You should be a math teacher". She of course replied that she had been one in China. In turn, I helped my Chinese classmates with verbal matters. Sometimes graduate students miss the closeness we had in the past, as we especially needed each other during our years as graduate students.

The Chinese students most often have an understanding of math and I could show them another application for them. Of course, most economics courses already have some math in them. Yet, one course I taught focused on the mathematical techniques more so. The book we used was written by Alpha Chiang and we used this same title in the first term of my own M.S. program in graduate school. One method I used was to give students a midterm and final and move around the classroom when the exam was given. I saw students who appeared stuck and then gave individual hints written on individual student's papers. For some of the problems I gave a student ten percent less on a particular problem, compared to what the student would have received without a hint. So counting the discount for a hint, a correct ten point answer would get nine points. I found this better than just having the student sit there and do little or nothing on an answer. The Chinese students had no problem with the math, but applying economic analysis sometimes required a hint. A professor named Francois Mêlées used this method, when I was a graduate student and so I used the same method.

Economics also has a verbal side, at least as valuable as the quantitative side. No matter how clearly and slowly you talk, much of what you expect American students in America to understand, some of the Chinese will not be able to understand. In China, I mostly used typed notes. Even if Chinese students are getting typed class notes from a teacher, they still come to class. They like to hear you speak about economics, using what they term as "Native Speaker" English. They try to imitate your spoken words. The Chinese administrators know this and will verify what I am stating on this matter. I spoke some Mandarin, especially when praising and encouraging my students.

In regard to economics textbooks, the volume known as *"History of Economic Theory and Method"*, authored by Ekelund and H'ebert (2007), is an interesting one. One year I was visiting faculty at a joint American and Chinese program. I taught the course "History of Economic Thought". At that place, I used the English version, hardback edition of the book, which was re-used in different terms, for different students. Later, at Peking University, I saw the same book in paperback edition, written in Mandarin Chinese and at a comparatively low price. Both editions were issued under American publisher McGraw-Hill. As for other textbooks, that varies and sometimes I just typed notes and handed them out. I was initially told to do this and it worked out well, allowing students to hear your spoken English and allowing them to try their skills at it. If you are looking for a classroom experience like that of the USA, I advise one to stay in the USA and teach there. Prior to coming to China, I had taught my own classes part-time in the USA for most of the time during a fifteen year period, while I worked in public and private management posts. I enjoy teaching anywhere.

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Since I was young, I always knew I wished to travel. I was in China in the capacity of my being university faculty in the area of economics, finance, and to a lesser extent, other business courses or American and British literature to English majors. Most of my students by far were economics majors and to a lesser extent business majors. The places I was in are these: Beijing; Dalian, Liaoning province; Hong Kong, Jiangsu province; Xi'an, Shaanxi province; Jinzhong, Shanxi province and Guangzhou, Guangdong province, from late summer 1999 to spring 2012. There is the tension between state governments and the federal government in the USA and to some degree that goes on between the provinces and the national government in China. For an economist contemplating a trip to China, it should be remembered that there are some differences between provinces in regard to banking services and other attributes. Both the USA and China have relatively large land areas and both nations are composed of many different types of geographies and cultures. If you look at a map, you can see that Xi'an is the furthest West of any of the cities I was in. Indeed, Xi'an has been referred to as a gateway to the Western part of China. I never went further into the Western than that.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES, CONFUCIANISM, GOVERNMENT, MANDARIN

Before I went to China, I had been exercising very heavily and consistently in America. In my first morning in Beijing, I naively went out for a run around the track at the university. I could tell that if I kept running, this would cause unpleasant health results due to the unclean air. China has several of the most air-polluted cities and India has a few itself. Sometimes on Chinese television, there would be a warning for people to try to limit the amount of time that they are outside for that day or group of days. Though China is making efforts towards pollution control, the amount of necessary progress is immense. The terrible air pollution partially comes from the manufacturing of goods in China, with some manufactured for export to America. There is abundant mass transit in China, which hopefully reduces the amount of air pollution, compared to if that mass transit was not available. However, we should always remember that China has between four and five times as many people as the USA. Population is a factor in pollution. Yet, the greater is the amount of pollution created per capita, the more industrialized a country is. But it can be mitigated through anti-pollution measures (Man, 2013). Experiencing the air pollution in China can made every American, whom I knew in China, appreciative of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The most important matter I learned about Chinese culture is the idea of Confucianism. The name of this philosopher in Chinese is Confucius. When Mao Zedong was the leader of China, he tried sometimes to get rid of Confucianism. Neither Mao nor other misguided leaders of China were successful in negating Confucianism. Most Chinese are happy today that no person has a statue representation in Tiananmen Square, except for Confucius. During my first week in China, a student brought me to a book store and told me to buy a copy of *The Analects*, which is an important book for explaining Confucian thought. The student told me that I needed to understand Confucius if I was going to do well in China. The ethos of a society or culture refers to the central values and morals of a culture. After a lot of observation both in China and in the USA, I concluded that what may work in one country may not work in another. In America, individuals and different groups have a varying influence on one's personal ethos, depending on which group and depending on the individual. In China, there is a common ethos, the guidelines of Confucianism. In America, many different groups with their own cultural norms and ethos often have conflict with each other. Every follower of Christ that I met in China was also a Confucian, just as anyone who can understand Chinese etiquette is Confucian. One Chinese economics graduate student classmate, I knew well in America. while going to school together said: "Clergy do not know more about God than we do. They do not". Exactly, since a belief in spirituality is separate from a belief in organized religion. China has Christian churches – Protestant and Catholic. They also have Jewish temples and Muslim mosques. Of course, Eastern religions are greatly represented. Most importantly, any igno-

rant clown who says most Chinese are amoral materialists, with no belief in a spiritual world, is perpetuating a myth. Liberal, conservative, whatever, most Americans who travel to China, have positive feelings towards the Chinese people, though most often they do not have those same type feelings towards the Chinese government.

The Chinese government states that Marxism is followed but as present day Chinese economists told me: "Marxist economics can be rejected, based on scientific evidence". Deng Xiaoping really changed the Chinese economy by rejecting Maoist Marxist economics. I have only met one person who said they believe in Maoism and Marxism at this time, an American who complained about high American gasoline prices. In a Maoist society, his ownership of a car would have a very slight chance. Deng Xiaoping took over in 1978. The freer market atmosphere and resurgence of open respect for Confucianism showed that acceptance of Maoist policies had lessened and faith in him, that decline thankfully continues. Though the party still calls itself communist, the party would be unrecognizable to Karl Marx. Being from Prussia, Marx was a Westerner. Yet, even Lenin did not always follow Marx. Officially, countries most often call themselves democratic, even though there are many perceptions of what exactly is manifested in different countries and in different time periods. Therefore, take any labels, such as Marxist, with the critical mind of a scholar seeing the truth. Though the Chinese economy is less controlled than it was under Mao, the government is still controlled by one political party. Economists know the difference but many lay people do not.

Both America and China have large degrees of electronic surveillance by the government and one can debate about the varying amounts, but what a visiting foreign faculty member needs to remember is that this a trait of the age we live in. China and the United States both have people who read the emails of private individuals. The difference is the Chinese government often made that possibility known. While the United States government did not bring much attention to the fact that any private emails can be looked at by the government, the free press and Edward Snowden helped to make more citizens aware of this. I support some matters in China and do not support some other matters in China . Yet lack of sufficient freedom of the press is a big freedom that is not present in China and the one I missed the most. Freedom of speech was not as present in China, as it is in America; however, less efforts seem to be made to curtail that, compared to curtailing freedom of the press. For the American faculty member visiting China, the warning I give is to not personally name Chinese leaders one does not like and never bring up political parties. However, I never ran into problems in telling Chinese that Prime Minister Zhou En Lai is much more respected by Americans than how they viewed Mao. I also openly said I greatly disagreed with Mao's economic policies and some other policies. Kissinger (2012) states that Zhou En Lai is one of the best diplomats he has ever encountered. An American can calmly suggest problems any nation faces that students should consider.

Since I first heard Mandarin in Beijing, my vowel tones and dialect is Putonghua, the Chinese word for Beijing Mandarin. I do know some Putonghua, Mandarin Chinese, but my vocabulary is limited. I spoke Mandarin in taxis, in restaurants, social situations, and I spoke Mandarin in order to praise my students. They all deserved it.

5. FIVE MAJOR RULES FOR GETTING ALONG WITH CHINESE

These rules are stated by Clissold (2014). Yet, most of the examples come from my personal experience.

1. Never get angry in public (Clissold, 2014). In all the years I was in China, I only saw one incident when Chinese were angry. Two taxi drivers beat one taxi driver in some private dispute. I have no sure idea what the dispute was about; however, it may have had to do with competition for fares. It happened in August 2004. I think the offending taxi driver got the message and no one was seriously hurt. A Chinese friend and I observed the matter from about forty yards away. It is very

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easy to get a taxi in Beijing, as the competition for fares is great. Almost always, what I saw in China, was that when someone got angry in public, they were ignored. Once the upset person could calmly state his or her grievance, they were at least listened to.

2. Making a Chinese person lose face is the worst thing you can do (Clissold, 2014). In a public setting, you should never correct anyone. Even in a private setting of just you and one other person, that Chinese person will correct you carefully and politely. Chinese expect you to correct them carefully and politely. In fact, Chinese prefer to call a mistake, whether it is their fault or yours or someone else's fault, a "misunderstanding". The misunderstanding may be 60% your fault or 60% their fault, but it does not matter. Unfortunately, some Westerners like to put the blame for a regrettable matter completely all on one person. They will say some mistake is the complete fault of X or whomever, when actually between colleagues, friends, and family members, the idea that one person should take all the blame is seldom the truth.

Once in Xi'an, I inadvertently made a Chinese person feel like he had lost face (Xi'an is pronounced as Shi an) Xi'an is in Central China, where the English level of even many graduate students was low, compared to major cities in Eastern China. In fact, out of a class of around fifty, I had one student, a girl student who could speak English pretty well and carry on complex conversations. In a similar situation at one of the top universities in Beijing, almost all the students would speak at that level. In my story of that university in Xi'an, as the course progressed, I asked the girl with the high English level to be an assistant class monitor. Yet, there was a misunderstanding. Though I did not replace the first class monitor in Central China, he initially thought I had done so. Eventually the matter was cleared up and I explained the misunderstanding. Even if a person smiles, they may not have truly understood you and so you have to make sure. The main class monitor is selected by the students in elections. Class monitors take roll, help pass out papers, and other helpful tasks. A class usually stays together for all their subjects. For example, twenty-four of the people majoring in MIS (Management Information Systems) may take an international trade and finance class with me and then move on to other classes. I have taught a large class of about 200 students, composed of 8 classes of 24 students each. I appointed a super class monitor to arrange meetings of all eight class monitors with me at the same time. Eventually I broke that down into two groups, each with four eight class sections, meeting at two different times. A class of about one hundred, as opposed to almost two hundred, makes it easier for students to see power point presentations and ask questions.

3. The third Chinese rule is that "Chinese methods for dealing with conflict and competition are indirect". The traditional Chinese method is to bide their time "until external factors are favorable…" (Clissold, 2014). On average, attorneys are among those that make the most money in America. There is little in the way of natural, shared mediation methods, since so many cultures are present. I met a lawyer in China and he consistently spent time with me just as a friend, who received little or no compensation for his work and his lessons to me about Confucianism. I came to understand that the avoidance of conflict can be achieved through people's remembering Confucian principles that are useful mediation techniques. Confucianism has an influence also over China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam and some other places. There are certainly conflicts between people in China. This is human nature. In many cases, the Chinese culture an easier time of dealing with these conflicts, at least on the surface.

One never knows how important saving face for the Chinese is, until one realizes that they are also equally concerned that you do not lose face. And they often suggest that you learn how not to lose face. For example, when something does not work out right amongst friends, family or work colleagues, then the matter is simply "a misunderstanding". In other words, most problems are no one's sole, explicit fault. Initially, I did not understand this. I used to ask in my mind why are Chinese different than Americans. The Chinese respect a person's intellect to know that people understand the situation enough to make people change their behavior. So the unpleasant behavior

is recognized by the group. This is not a communist trait. This is a Chinese Confucian trait, present amongst Chinese anywhere: Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and in non-Chinese places, such as Japan. This can be thought of as part of the philosophy of Confucius. China will never be as much like America as some Americans want. Confucianism rules China and has for most of 2,500 years. Mao tried to destroy it like all Chinese tyrants have. He could not do it. Yet, Confucius was a teacher. Basically Confucianism is all about obligations people have to one another. I taught in China for a long time and good students have to work with poor students to make sure all pass. They often have to study at night in the same classroom. They take all their courses with the same group of students. If someone does badly, the whole group gets in trouble.

Juxtapose this with some of Mao's philosophies in which people were, especially during the Cultural Revolution, to engage in humiliating, public self-criticism. Like some other former Chinese leaders, Mao thought his importance and philosophy could be the most important ways in China. However, neither Mao nor others have been successful in supplanting the wisdom of Confucius. Interestingly, I have had the Chinese telling me that maybe the American way works, how we get mad with each other, but then say it is all over. I have told them, no, the American method may be a way of letting off steam quickly and after it is over, people say let's forget the mean stuff we have said to each other. However, the mean comments are in our human memories to some extent and they are not good words to have heard, especially when another disagreement comes up between the same people involved when the hurtful comments were made.

In America, in recent decades, there has too often been a tendency for people to want to be heard above others, even to the point of rudeness. Some Americans are so competitive that they will too often neglect to give others a chance to talk. The widespread use of hyperbole is to the point that one automatically assumes others are exaggerating not just when talking about politics, but also in some other circumstances. In China, people tend to be matter of fact when they speak to you in English, unless there is a specific need to avoid confrontation. They may get more excited when they speak in Mandarin or Cantonese. If one has lived in China for a long time, and comes back to America, that person must adjust back to some American English, with all the characteristic hyperbole often used.

In China, an American does well to shift down an octave in both listening and speaking. Hyperbole gets you attention in the USA. It destroys your credibility in China. Some other places and China tend to stress politeness, but nothing is 100 percent. Most often in China, people are indirect when they correct you. Within a university, there are many committee meetings. In this way, individuals come and make their views known. Eventually a consensus is sought. After it happens, Chinese present a united front in voicing whatever policy choices have been made. This aspect of Chinese culture can be hard for some Americans to understand. Basically Chinese do not like disunity in public.

4. Fourth rule: One of the traits that other Americans and I strongly sense is the absence of ideology, in China, compared to the pragmatic waysof the Chinese who use methods that actually work (Clissold, 2014).

In 1978, two years after Mao passed on, China adopted a market economy, with much more competition. Like the USA and so many countries, truly China is neither socialist nor capitalist. It has a mixed economy and that mix can change over time. One can contrast this with the political system of China, where there are not strong, competitive parties. In 1986, Vietnam also adopted a more competitive market economy. Yet, like China, Vietnam is limited in regard to political parties (Clissold, 2014; Lindsay, 2015; Leshkowich, 2017).

An example of pragmatism in China is that in China, contracts are purposely brief. How can the parties in such a contract plan for contingencies? Some American management textbooks, such as Daft et al. (2011), state that the Chinese, Japanese, Koreans and Vietnamese rely more on friendships in making business arrangements, compared to some countries where the trust level is lower between business partners. I found that to be true. In China, business partners are friends and if it takes

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a year or more to get to know and trust each other before a brief contract is signed, then that is what it takes. Many shared meals and other social activities cultivate the friendships. Explicit, lengthy contracts in those countries that have a heavy reliance on potential legal confrontation substitute for strong friendships between business partners (Daft, 2011). And of course in such countries, lawyers are at the top of the food chain. They benefit from the distrust between business partners.

5. The fifth Chinese rule is to know yourself and the opposition. This will allow you to carry on for a long time (Clissold, 2014). If one is in business, politics, or even academia, one has to know his or her capabilities. In addition, potential partners or rivals have to be thoroughly understood. Individual people from both the USA and China fall somewhere on the continuum of directness and indirectness. I learned from the Chinese and learned from foreigners in China.

I was aware that my knowledge of Mandarin could get me through an ordinary day. Plus in the large cities of Eastern China, it was not hard to find someone who knew some English for more complex conversation. However, when complex communication was needed between a Chinese person and myself, I would often have to rely on someone younger than both of us. This is because the English level in China is greater now in Chinese schools. This is not always true, as some Chinese people had lived in an English speaking country for some length of time. Yet, I wish to look at the role of non-confrontation in the area of translation. A Chinese friend of mine who was also a translator explained it to me. She was translating foreigner's English into Chinese for a Chinese dean. Then, she would get the dean's message in Chinese and translate it into English. Each time the dean or a foreigner spoke to the translator, the translator had to hear the words and then translate it to a polite phrase in Chinese or English that had the same meaning as the original phrase spoken by the dean or myself. Thus, we all came to an agreement, along with the amicable atmosphere that all desired. My friend told me the task of translator could be exhausting just after a thirty minute conversation.

6. LIMITED COMMENTARY ON CREATIVITY, CYBER WARFARE AND TRADE

Space considerations greatly limits the ability to convey enough information for a thorough analysis of the topics discussed in this section.

During Mao's Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), there was the greatest amount of effective restriction on spoken communications, not just with the news media. Both the freedoms of China and the United States are not in a static state. During the Cultural Revolution, China was in a worse situation concerning human freedom. The varying concepts of freedom is a large topic and worth the time of anyone to study. Coppens (2018) states that yes, Chinese are creative, when given the opportunities to freely express it. If we take the Cultural Revolution as being the harshest period in post World War II Chinese history, in terms of a lack of economic growth, we can see that when it was really Maoist, China was at its worse. The Cultural Revolution encouraged people to be suspicious of each other. There was very little economic growth and at times none. Innovation may be curtailed if a society becomes too controlling. Indeed, another Maoist era, the Great Leap Forward, saw more millions dying of starvation. Natural disasters were said to make that more severe. So creativity is severely lessened when the Maoist days were the most fanatical. Saying that a huge group of people, an entire race or an entire ethnic group has no creativity is a prejudicial statement. The development of literature, science, math, social science, art, architecture and other fields takes innovation and creativity. I am an economist and very much enenjoy working with the East Asians and South Asians (Indians and Nepalese). They know econometrics better than some Americans and because of that, they know the limitations of it. They are not impressed, just because they can work out a math problem. Rather they feel happiest in knowing both the pluses and minuses of any math and econometric model. They are grateful and encouraging for economists with high English and economic theory ability who work with them.

The Chinese are more attuned to saying that something is grey and has varying degrees of grayness,

rather than black and white. Their desire for accuracy also fits in with their tendency to want a numerical value on something, when appropriate. In China, there are answer books in primary and secondary education that teachers use in evaluating students' answers. How Chinese teach college varies. Sometimes, especially pre-college, if a student adds a little that is not necessary, even if it is correct, that student will lose points. I used a different method of grading and gave students extra points for being creative. Yet, the biggest delight to Chinese students was that they got to read or write on the board the extra, creative stuff they added. They let the whole class know and all benefitted. Although China is still a somewhat controlled society, it is certainly better than when Mao ruled. He passed on in 1976. The bottom line is that all people are creative in different ways. The key is whether that creativity is encouraged or not. No one who does not see that all humans are creative should be a teacher, a parent, or in other nurturing types of roles. Chinese students and faculty have taught me a lot, just like Americans have also. Every time I rewarded students for creativity they loved it. There is nothingracial about this. They loved addressing the class. A few times I had some students do a little part of the lecture using my class notes. with my sitting by them. Classes were composed of most often 100-250 students. Graduate classes were smaller, from 3 to 30 students. "You are different. You do not discriminate". That was my favorite complement I received, from Chinese students. Newcomers from America would often say: Chinese are like this or like that. No culture is ever that completely simple. Even Americans living in America realize as they go through life that America is very complex. Likewise, the more time an American spends in China, the more complexities are revealed to that American. The term "Greater China" means Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. In all these places, Confucius has the most important influence on how all people interact. Political systems are secondary. I was a faculty member in several provinces, including Hong Kong, so that I could increase my learning.

The many art, literary works, architecture, the printing press, and some other discoveries were made in China prior to being made in Europe. The Chinese have invented and create phenomena throughout its history, sometimes at a greater rate than at other times.

The problem with intellectual theft and computer hacking is not unique to the Chinese. The USA is far ahead of China in warfare acumen and capability, in terms of both conventional and cyber means (Hiortdal, 2011; Soilen, 2016, Bing, 2017). These just mentioned authors do not use the term comparative advantage. Yet, as economists, we see that China has a comparative advantage in cyber warfare capabilities compared to China's conventional mean. Economic theory tells us that China will thus rely more on cyber warfare. Hiortdal (2011), Lindsay (2015) and Soilen (2016) state this is true. Starting with the AD period, China had the largest economy for the first 18 centuries. Now, China's economy is coming back. By far, most people in both China and the USA rather sell and buy goods than have an all out war. The USA's biggest buyer of agricultural products is China. American farmers are especially grateful for the export trade to China and India. China has been able to produce some USA trademark manufactured goods production by supplying efficient labor. If one travels to China, they will see the familiar names of American companies on signs for factories. Also, the Chinese hold more U.S. treasury bonds than any foreign country. America itself holds most of the treasury bonds (Gentle et al., 2013). America and China have not and hopefully will not get into armed conflict, with fatalities, concerning the South China Sea. It is best not to drop bombs on your customers, suppliers, or financial correspondents. As Kissinger (2012) has pointed out, the Chinese have a great ability to achieve things in a patient matter. China, as the oldest country in the world, has a patient attitude in accomplishing goals (Kissinger, 2012). The preceding discussion on different issues, concerning China, is a small sample of what can be said. Many other major issues concerning China have not been touched on at all in this article, due to space considerations. It is hoped that you do much more research on these and other issues and come to your own personal conclusions.

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CONCLUSION

Almost every economics faculty member will enjoy their experience overall, especially in looking back at it. An, intelligent Japanese undergraduate in America told me before I went: "you will learn a lot about other people and a lot about yourself" people and a lot about yourself." As an American who has lived-in different parts of the Unite States, I gained personal knowledge of those areas. It is the same with living and working in different countries of the World. Ones personal knowledge of the World increases and more travel augments ones knowledge further. And knowledge about the different people in different geographic areas makes life more exciting.

Endnote: I was told I was the first to have a contract with Peking University's School of Economics. However, there are at least two other places at Peking University that have economists and they have had American economists. These other two are the department of Applied Economics in the School of Business and the Chinese Center of Economic Research. American economists with others talents have made contributions there.. I was blessed to have been in China 3 years by then. I taught doctoral, masters and undergrad students there. I taught undergrads and masters students as at University of International Business and Economics and undergrads at Remnin University and City University of Hong Kong. I taught at some other universities and gained much knowledge at each place and was always treated respectfully and I respect all of them.

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