

在“中国可持续消费研究学术研讨会”上的致辞

中国人民大学 洪大用

2014年11月16日

尊敬的 Arthur Mol 教授, Maurie Cohen 教授, 各位同仁,

大家早上好!

我很荣幸参加“中国可持续消费研究学术研讨会”。有四个理由使得我必须参加这次研讨会。首先是因为有一些认识的朋友,特别是远道而来的 Arthur Mol 等教授,我们已经有很长时间没有见面了;其次是因为这是一次与我的专业研究相关的会议,我最近一些年的主要研究都是在环境社会学领域,毫无疑问,可持续消费也是环境社会学研究的一个重要议题;第三是我所领导的中国社会学会环境社会学专业委员会,是这次会议的协办单位,张磊教授也是我经常联系的同事;第四是这次会议在中国人民大学召开,无论作为教授还是管理者,我都是这所大学的主人之一,理应尽地主之谊。无论如何,我衷心祝贺这次会议顺利召开,欢迎大家来到人民大学!

我所在的中国人民大学,是一所以人文社会科学为主的,兼有理工学科的综合重点大学。这所大学诞生于中国人民抗日战争时期的 1937 年,从她诞生之日起就肩负着民族解放和国家建设的重要使命。中华人民共和国成立后,1950 年,这所大学与其他大学合并,命名为中国人民大学。能够以“中国人民”命名,是这所大学的荣耀,标志着她要继续承担维护人民独立、促进人民自由、增进人民福祉、服务民族和国家振兴的重要学术使命。目前,在法学、经济学、社会学、政治学、管理学、传播学和统计学等学科,中国人民大学都居于全国领先地位。

我想,一所以人文社会科学为主的大学对于我们今天所要讨论的话题——可持续消费——具有特别重要的意义。按照一般的理解,可持续消费包括以经济、社会和环境可持续的方式满足后世后代对商品和服务的需求,其本质是一种社会系统的再造和人类行为模式的转变。实现可持续消费需要关注消费者的观念和行,需要关注消费者观念和行为的因素,需要有适当的政策工具来引导和改变消费者的观念和行,同时也需要研究经济主体、政治主体和其他社会主体的行动逻辑,以便推进适当的公共政策。由此,人文社会科学也许可以发挥更大的作用,提供更有价值的洞见。我们这样一所大学正好可以为消费行为的跨学科研究提供更为方便的条件。

说到可持续消费,我想确实是当前环境社会学需要关注和深入研究的一个重要议题。在当今时代的经济体系中,消费对于生产的驱动作用已经越来越大,所谓“没有买卖,就没有杀戮”的逻辑确实是存在的。对于中国而言,作为一个发展中国家,有着消费不足与消费过度同时并存的现象。但是,在整体上,中国居民的消费数量和结构在快速变化,居民消费增长率长期保持在两位数。有关预测表明,到 2030 年中国将成为世界最大消费国,城市中产阶级将超过 5 亿人。毫无疑问,这将创造新的,甚至是前所未有的巨大的资源能源需求,尤其是家庭能源需求的变化、交通方式的变化、以及食品消费的变化等等。考虑到中国所面临的日益严峻的环境压力,我们必须及早倡导具有实质性效果的可持续消费政策并努力付诸实践。

从社会学的角度看,可持续消费模式的建立首先要关注其社会的可持续性。当前中国消费分层现象已经日益明显,消费不平等正在成为日益突出的社会问题。

没有基本公平的消费，就谈不上消费的可持续性。消费的公平性也不仅仅局限在国内层次。在国际层次上，中国的人均消费水平在几个经济大国中是最低的，消费支出只占国内生产总值(GDP)的36%，相当于美国消费水平的一半，日本和欧盟消费水平的三分之二。没有国际层次消费公平，区域范围内的“可持续消费”实践，实际上也是不可持续的。

另外，关注社会成员的消费行为和消费内容，无疑是有利于建设环境友好型社会的，但是，并不能因此削弱对于社会生产行为及其逻辑的关注。事实上，资本，无论其以国家资本还是私人资本的形式出现，都有着扩大生产和赚取利润的冲动，并且通过各种方式制造着新的社会需求。没有对于资本的有效节制，没有对于少数人绑架多数人的有效规制，仅仅关注消费的可持续性，也是不现实的。我个人认为，一般而言，应当优先关注可持续生产，更加有效地促进有利于环境保护和社会团结的生产行为，更加注重满足人类基本生活需求的生产目标。

最终，无论是可持续消费还是可持续生产，都涉及到对于什么是美好生活、什么是美好社会的主观定义。我们要进一步关注文化和价值对于社会成员行为模式的影响，特别是关注一些环境不友好的价值观是如何被生产、再生产的，以及又是如何为社会体制和结构所强化的。从社会学的角度看，只有通过制度安排和结构优化，以及有效的环境宣传教育，引导并确立为大多数社会成员所遵循的、环境友好型的价值观，才能保证生产和消费的可持续性，或者说，才能使得可持续生产与消费的实践本身变成可持续的。

最后，我衷心祝愿此次会议取得圆满成功！也期望在 SCORAI 的支持下，能够完善中国可持续消费的研究者网络，并通过加强国际联系和合作，进一步凝智聚力，深化中国可持续消费的跨学科研究，改进相关的政策设计，由此对中国政府正在推进的生态文明建设实践作出有价值的贡献，同时也为丰富中国环境社会学研究领域，加强中国环境社会学学科建设作出重要贡献！

再次谢谢大家的积极参与！

Address on the “Workshop on Sustainable Consumption Research in China”
Dayong Hong, Vice president, Renmin University of China
November 16, 2014

Distinguished guests from home and abroad, dear colleagues, good morning!

It is my honor to address this “Workshop on Sustainable Consumption Research in China”. I feel obligated to attend this workshop for four reasons. First, it is exciting to meet old friend like professor Arthur Mol. It has been a long time since our last meeting. It is also great to make new friends. Second, the theme of this workshop is very interesting and relevant to me. I have been doing researches in the field of environmental sociology for many years and now sustainable consumption is emerging as a new important field of inquiry. Third, the Chinese Environmental Sociology Committee of the Chinese Sociological Association I have been leading is the supporting institute of this workshop; I would love to support the work by dr. Lei Zhang. Finally, as a leader of this university and a professor in this field, I like to do the honors of the host. So, welcome to Renmin University and I wish this workshop a great success!

Renmin University is a comprehensive university featured with strong social sciences and well focused natural science and engineering programs. This university was created in 1937 when China was in the anti-Japanese war. Thus it carried a mission to contribute to the national liberation and development. It was named as “People’s university” in 1950, shortly after the New China was founded. Literally, “Renmin” means “people of China”. It is our honor and mission to be an academic institution to serve our people and our country for its well-being and prosperity. I am pleased to see today Renmin University is the leading one in many fields like laws, economics, sociology, politics, management science, mass communication, statistics, and so on.

I believe this is the right place to discuss sustainable consumption. Sustainable consumption is commonly understood as a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable way to meet needs for goods and services of the current and future generations. It requires reinventions of our social systems and transformations of human behaviors. To this end, we need understand not only on consumer awareness and behavior, but also the constraints and incentives, policy tools, logics of economic, political and social actors. Social sciences have a great role in generating knowledge and insights in this field. Renmin University provides good soil for the development of trans-disciplinary researches on sustainable consumption.

Indeed, sustainable consumption deserves more attention and deeper research. Its driving power in today’s economic systems is increasing. The logic of “no business, no killing” is valid. As a developing country, insufficient consumption and over consumption co-exist in China. In general, both the quantity and structure of consumption have been rapidly changing in China, and two-digit annual growth rates of consumption remain for many years. It was predicted that China will become

the biggest consumption country by 2030, with more than 500 million middle class in cities. This will also mean huge demands for energy and resources, also changes in household consumption of energy, transportation and food, etc. Given the already grimy environmental situation, effective transformations to sustainable consumption policies and practices are in urgent need.

From a sociological perspective, sustainable consumption will not take place in an unsustainable society. In China, stratification of consumers has been increasingly an issue of equity. Consumption cannot be sustainable without meeting basics of equity and justice, which may go beyond national borders. In terms of consumption per capita, China is the lowest among the major economies, only 36% of her GDP, or half of that of U.S.A., two thirds of that of Japan and EU countries. Without addressing these issues at a global level, consumption at local levels can hardly be sustainable.

In addition, while emphasizing the importance of individual consuming behaviors in the development of an environmentally friendly society, the importance of social production and its rationalities should not be undermined. We all have learned the power of capitals in creating new social demands. It is not realistic to achieve sustainable consumption without constraining capitals and the powerful groups. Personally, I believe it is essential to transform the current production systems to be more environmentally friendly while meeting basic needs of human being.

Eventually, we will have to solve the question of “what is happy life and what is a prosperous society”. We need to understand how different values and cultures have shaped individual behaviors, especially how those environmentally unfriendly values and behaviors have been produced, reproduced and enhanced with social institutions. From a sociological perspective, environmentally friendly values must be fostered and adopted by the majority of the social members through institutional arrangement and restructuring, education and publicity. Production and consumption will not be sustainable without right values.

Finally, I wish you all a very fruitful workshop! With the support of SCORAI, I hope this workshop will serve as a good start of researchers’ network in China. Let’s work together to develop trans-disciplinary researches on sustainable consumption and contribute to policy improvement and the ongoing ecological civilization movement. I believe this cooperation will enrich the researches and education programs in the field of environmental sociology in China!

I appreciate very much your active involvement!