

## Introduction: In Memory of Professor Duan Lin

This special issue is in commemoration of Professor Duan Lin and of his contribution to Weberian and East Asian sociology. Professor Lin died unexpectedly and suddenly on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2013; he was in his 55<sup>th</sup> year. At the time of his death Duan Lin was a Professor in the Department of Sociology at the National Taiwan University and Associate Dean of the College of Social Sciences. Professor Lin enjoyed a reputation in Taiwan for his scholarly and civic contributions, a regard that is shared in the research communities of Hong Kong and mainland China. He was joint editor, with Professor Xie Lizhong, a leading sociologist at Peking University, of the *Journal of Social Theory*, published in Hong Kong. Professor Lin was a Research Fellow in the Law and Society Center at Shanghai Jiao Tong University. His research and extensive publications concerning Weberian theory, Chinese traditional law and the complexion and development of Confucian theory will ensure a lasting regard for Duan Lin not only among Chinese sociologists everywhere but with all sociologists irrespective of nation or cultural background who have an interest in careful, thoughtful and innovative research and writing.

Professor Lin's passing at the beginning of this year occurred just four days before a major event he and I had been planning since May 2011. This event was the Max Weber and Chinese Culture: *The Religion of China* Centennial International Conference, held at the National Taiwan University over the two days of the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of January, 2013. I had first contacted Professor Lin by email in mid-April 2011 as I planned to visit Taipei later that year and wanted to meet him to discuss Chinese responses to Max Weber's sociology of China. He wrote back almost immediately in what I quickly realized was his characteristic style; warm, intellectually engaging and personally welcoming. Duan suggested that we together organize a conference on Max Weber's celebrated book *The*

*Religion of China*. It was the first of what we expected to be a continuing series of cooperative activities. During my visit to Taipei in July-August 2011 Duan and I continued to discuss the Weber conference, among other things. We originally had planned a modest workshop in which selected British, American, European and Taiwanese scholars would present papers that were to be worked up into chapters of a collected volume, the publication of which would coincide with the centennial anniversary of the first publication of *The Religion of China* in 2015.

Our idea of a "modest workshop" was soon transformed into a more ambitious and splendid project through the most generous support of Professor Chun-chieh Huang, Dean of the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences at the National Taiwan University. Professor Huang, a distinguished historian in his own right and careful reader of Max Weber, made the resources of the Institute available for the organization and realization of the Max Weber and Chinese Culture: *The Religion of China* Centennial International Conference. The Conference, held on the lovely campus of the National Taiwan University over its two-day course, had 14 presentations delivered by 16 scholars; 1 from England, 1 from Germany, 2 from the US, 3 from Hong Kong and 9 from Taiwan. The opening proceedings were profoundly affected by notification that a voice we had all expected to hear was now silenced, and it was quickly agreed to dedicate the Conference to the memory of Professor Duan Lin.

Three papers presented at the conference are included in this special issue of the *Journal*. Any one of the papers that were heard over the two days of the Conference could have been published here but those that follow have a particular significance that warrants their inclusion in this special issue. The first of these is the last that Professor Lin wrote, "Max Weber's Traditional Chinese Law Revisited: A Poly-Contextuality in the Sociology of Law," co-authored with Professor Po-fang Tsai, a student of and later co-researcher with Duan Lin. Next is a paper, "On the Place of the Study on Confucianism in Max Weber's Work," by Professor Wolfgang Schluchter of Heidelberg University in

Germany. Duan Lin wrote his PhD thesis, published as *Konfuzianische und Legitimation der Herrschaft im alten China: Eine Auseinandersetzung mit der vergleichenden Soziologie Max Webers* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot Press, 1997), at Heidelberg University under the supervision of Wolfgang Schluchter, one of the most eminent Weber scholars alive today. The third paper taken from the Conference and included below, "Commercial Institutions and Practices in Imperial China as Seen by Weber and in terms of More Recent Research," offers the type of interplay between classic sources and current research that Duan Lin himself practiced so astutely and engagingly. The author, Professor David Faure, is an eminent historian from the Chinese University of Hong Kong who practices historical enquiry through field research, a manner of scholarly engagement that Duan Lin not only approved of but participated in.

This special issue of the *Taiwan Journal of East Asian Studies* is not only a fitting memorial to the memory of Professor Duan Lin but a testament to his scholarship.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jack Barbalet', written in a cursive style.

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