The Doll, the Globe and the Boomerang - Chemical Risks in the Future, Introduced by a Chinese Doll Coming to Sweden

Ernst Hollander
Research Report Series

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Abstract

This research report concerns the role of chemical risk information in attempts to ‘detoxify’ global product chains. Under what conditions can such information make a difference and how can we combine interdisciplinarities in order to study this hitherto dark terrain?

Seven ‘images’ are painted in order to discuss these questions. The introductory image pictures a doll made in Southern China who ends up at a day care centre in Malmoe, Sweden. To describe the methodological problems which arise when studying this ‘doll chain’ I use the image of going into the dark. A set of three images describe much discussed futures for the ‘detox’ efforts, futures which might lead the Swedish public at large to complacency or despair. My dramatising names for the three futures are: "REACHing a less contaminated EU", "Race to the bottom", and "Submission".

My main aim is, however, to paint an image of global ‘detoxification from below’ and an image of ‘interdisciplinarities in dialogue’ in order to study the Herculean task of detoxification of global product chains. Those two images are simultaneously elaborated in chapter II and then summarised in chapter III.

My hope is that I – through this report – will help make global detoxification from below ‘possible to imagine’. At the methodological level, I argue for concepts and proto-concepts such as ‘interdisciplinarity’, ‘boundary spanning’, ‘multiple partisanship’ and ‘transformative pressure’.

I allow myself a completely unrealistic end (section III.4), in order not to be overwhelmed by the seriousness of the problems discussed in the rest of the report.

The report is my main contribution to the research project INFLOW which i.a. has studied the flow of chemical risk information in global product chains.

Keywords

Global product chain, Chemical risk information, Proto-concept, Interdisciplinarity, Boundary spanning, Multiple partisanship and Transformative pressure.
The Doll, the Globe and the Boomerang

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I) Introduction to a Semi-academic Study

The Swedish public at large is often confronted with the 'chemical aspects of our risk society' through images of kids being poisoned by toys or grown-ups losing their fertility when using dangerous textiles. The problematic products in this image come from 'the South'. With this report I want to open up for discussion about whether there are new ways for a concerned social scientist like myself to approach these phenomena. I call my approach 'semi-academic'.

My reasons for such a cautious wording is that I am of the opinion that the images of poisoned kids and child-less grown-ups have a basis in reality. But the problems are very complex involving many systems levels, time horizons, etc.

Methodology is, however, just one of my concerns here. I also want to explore if my way of trying to bring together a number of interdisciplinarities can convey images which might help 'civil society' find a middle way between two equal dangers. One of the dangers is a sanguine attitude of leaving the problems to government regulators and socially responsible corporations. The other danger which I have in mind is that people in the public at large despair at the overwhelming complexity of the problems faced in the global risk society and thus leave the problems to natural or social science experts.

I.1) A Sleeping Doll from the Pearl River Delta in Southern China

For five years I have been involved in a research project with the acronym INFLOW.¹ One aim of INFLOW is to shed light on how the risk information conveyed along product chains can help 'detoxify' the chains.² In order to illustrate the intricacies involved, some of us sketched a product chain from daily life:³

Consider the chain of events behind such a frequent, and familiar, action as the purchase of a sleeping doll by a staff member at the day-care centre 'Pixie' in Malmoe, Sweden. The doll was "made in" the PRD (the Pearl River Delta) in the southern part of the PRC (the Peoples Republic of China). She had travelled across the earth in a container onboard a ship, together with some other thousands of dolls assembled by a company that we call The Rising Sun Toy Factory.

The assembly of the doll was done by young low-wage workers using parts produced in the factory or by sub-suppliers to The Rising Sun. Some of the raw materials were – following the production line of plastic, pigments, plasticizers and so on - moulded into the plastic body of the doll. Her clothing was prepared through the long and complicated product chains that are part of all textile production.

¹ The acronym INFLOW stands for "Towards Improved Interactions in the Two-Way Flow of Risk-Related Chemical Information -- The Cases of Clothing, Toys, and Paint"
² Comments on the compromise concept ‘product chain’ are given at the end of portion I.5.1.
³ Comments on the phrase 'detoxify (product) chains' are given in note 6.

I use "I", "some of us" and in the ‘doll chain’ below "we". The background to this ambiguity is described below in I.4.3.
In order to dramatise this, we suggest that the cotton in the dress of our doll has its origin in Uzbekistan. If the employees at Pixie had heard about the forced child labour used for cotton harvests in Uzbekistan they might have thought twice before buying the doll. Not only because of the children in the harvest but also because of the biocides used when growing the cotton.\(^4\)

The complete product chain of the doll will most probably span at least 4 countries and twice as many companies. The coordination of the product chain is flexible and quick – the business contacts are functioning and the international business has seen large numbers of sleeping dolls “made in China” before. The “attractive price” paid in Sweden for the doll is made possible through a large difference in relative prices between Sweden on the one hand and developing countries, where the earlier stages of the production took place, on the other. These differences span everything from plastic granulates to administrative costs at the exports office in the harbour – not to forget the average wage of workers.

There is a lack of deeper knowledge of the chemical contents of the doll, or the practices of chemical handling along the product chains. An important aim of INFLOW has been to contribute to a better understanding of which role information on chemical risks – definitions, perceptions, etc, all along the chains – in short chemical risk information – can play in the efforts to reduce risks. The aims of those risk reductions are of course to protect human health and the environment.\(^5\)

For short I sometimes use the expression detox of product chains when I summarise the risk reductions aimed at through the better understanding described above.\(^6\)

However, trying to find out about the information flow related to the chemical substances used for the doll production until she arrives at the day-care centre and how the "detox of product chains", aimed at, can be achieved will inevitably be a big challenge. A scientific investigation of the events along the doll product chain opens up a huge Pandora’s box of methodological problems. The ordinary scientific approaches will not suffice to provide the understanding required for a cross-

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\(^4\) On the questions of forced child labour etc. in Uzbekistan – see a recent book on the global production, trade flows etc. of cotton by agricultural journalist Gunilla Ander. (Ander 2010). Also see Uzbek-German Forum for Human Right, <http://www.uzbekgermanforum.org/>.

\(^5\) This characterisation of the INFLOW focus is of course very condensed. A slightly longer version of the product chain aspect of the INFLOW aim is: "There is a lack of deeper knowledge of the chemical contents of the doll, or the practices of chemical handling along the product chains. A better understanding of how chemical risks and risk related information is defined, perceived and handled by different actors along the product chains referred to might help actors – including policy-makers – contribute to risk-reducing activities along the product chain, a risk reduction that may positively influence human health and the environment.” This way of describing the aim comes from my INFLOW colleague Sverker Mollander (see I.4.3). The original grant application which led to INFLOW is referenced here as Klintman M. et al. (2006). As to the 'doll chain' I am not referring to it as much as originally planned. But see III.4.

\(^6\) I here use the words detox, detoxification or detoxify in a more loose form than is the norm in a natural science discourse. Detox is here used both as a verb and as a noun. My aim is to capture something like the following: To detox is to reduce the potential toxicological risks which result from conceivable mishandling of the different forms in which the product appears as it proceeds along the chain. This temporary definition is one of the many examples in this report of the problem of having to adopt terms from one or the other discourses between which I want to create dialogues.
fertilisation among sciences or for actors outside academia such as policy-makers, NGOs, businesses, unions, etc.

The use of well-known discipline-specific methodology will easily become self-referential leading us to act as in the Swedish anecdote about a drunkard looking for his lost keys. He goes round and round circling a lamp-post. When asked why he doesn’t go look where he is more likely to have lost the keys he answers that it is so dark there.

But in order to get some new findings it is advisable to go into the dark. In the social science case, it might even be possible to shed some light on the darkness. So the venturing out in the dark has at least two central aims. Besides the methodological aim, I hope to sketch some foundations for an image of the future of the chemical risks. This image shall at the same time be an antidote to dystopias and a warning about the Herculean task that society faces if the suggested long run societal solutions to the risks shall have some realism.

Outline of the Report
Shortly I shall briefly stress that chemical risk information is not the only information flowing along the product chains concerned. (Section I.2) Given the minute resources commanded by the main providers and handlers of chemical risk information, relative to the resources commanded by other relevant information handlers, the chemical risk information will often be dwarfed by price signals in the short run. In the long run chemical risk information is likely to be dwarfed by information on such things as technological developments geared to factors other than risk reduction.

A starting point for me when working with this report has been that the emergence of optimistic public images, of social and technological change inspired by sustainability visions, are prerequisites for averting the dangers of "chemical risk blind" economic and technological developments. One reason for me to work with the 'antidote image' painted in this report and mentioned as an aim earlier is that I think it is necessary to give 'the benefit of the doubt' to the idea that that it – in the long run – is possible to form global actor alliances which might result in detoxification.

Before – step by step – building the 'antidote image' in chapter II it is, however necessary to – in section I.3 – indicate three images which I am sure are more common in the public mind – at least in Sweden. I call the images "REACHing a less contaminated EU" "Race to the bottom", and "Submission". After that I enter into my methodological and conceptual considerations in I.4 and I.5. respectively. Central concerns such as interdisciplinarity, boundary-spanning, etc. are discussed there. In the conceptual section I.5 my intentions with the second and third words of the title of this report – "globe" and "boomerang" – are also clarified.

My second chapter consists of five interdisciplinarities. They all relate to the interplay between the moving centre of gravity of world production and the detoxification of product chains. When presenting them I will try to simultaneously shed light on the actors along the chains, on the emerging "antidote image", and on methods that can be used when studying the dynamics of communication and the future of chemical risks associated with the chains.
My five interdisciplinarities are presented under the following headings:

- Swedish traditions and thought patterns related to chemitox and internationalisation (II.1)
- The year of the toy recall – 2007 (II.2)
- The Network Society and Flow Perspective of Manuel Castells (II.3)
- Democratic Governance as a Prerequisite for Detoxifying Product chains (II.4)
- Kareoke to catch sight of emerging patterns 'under the radar' (II.5)

I start with a background on reasons why problems discussed in this report resonate specially in a country like Sweden. I call this first section Swedish traditions and thought patterns related to chemitox and internationalisation. Next I highlight some important points in a toy recall case (Mattel’s) that figures prominently in a leading textbook on Global Strategic Management. After that I turn to the macro question of weakening public sector pressures as discussed in different works by Manuel Castells. Next I turn to the intersection between Occupational Health and Environmental Science with the help of O’Rourke and Brown. I reflect on that intersection under the heading Democratic Governance as a Prerequisite for Detoxifying Product chains. I end my discussion on how to study the new dynamics of the product chains by highlighting two books where You-Tien Hsing’s anthropologically inspired interdisciplinarities specially well serve my double purpose of discussing method and painting an 'antidote image'. The books are Making Capitalism in China and Reclaiming Chinese Society – the new social activism.

In the third chapter I summarise. If you as a reader first want to get an overview of my arguments it is a good idea to start by continuing in this first chapter until the end of section I.3. After that you can get an overview of the entire report by reading section III.1 to III.3. My headings for those sections are intended to capture some of my most important points: III.1 Detoxification from Below, III.2 Interdisciplinarities to study the detox of product chains and III.3 Public support for the multi-pronged movement. If you also want to understand my methods and how I arrived at my tentative conclusions you must, however, also read the rest of chapter one as well as chapter two.

I.2) Information Flows Along Product Chains

As mentioned the INFLOW project has focused on the role of chemical risk information. An important aspect is how the risk information conveyed along product chains can help detoxify the chains. Chemical risk information is, however, not the only information conveyed along the chains. Among other types of information which I also focus in this report are the ones captured by prices and information on what I for now call transformation potential.

There is also information that is auxiliary to, or part of, the price information but is measured in other quantities or formula. I am here referring to weights, volumes, quality grades, chemical composition etc. For brevities sake I will refer to this

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7 Peng, M. W., Global Strategic Management, U of Texas, South-Western, 2009.
9 See INFLOW notes above. Also see I.4.3 and III.2.3 below.
category of information as 'functional' information even if this is in a sense misleading.\textsuperscript{10}

This 'functional' information can also be made useful for chemical risk information. It contains essential information for those of us who want to construct quantified product chains where you can follow the global step-by-step assembly of goods. This information, or parts of it, is however, at best registered by authorities publishing public statistics, when the goods pass boarders. Most of it is kept as trade secrets within chain-spanning actors such as the toy producer Mattel to which I will return in II.2.1.

For the commercial actors the information captured by prices and 'function' is the defining information in the short run. Information on product chain transformation potential – is in the long run essential for most of the actors in whom we are interested here. In the expression 'product chain transformation potential' I include the potential for innovations in the ways in which consumer needs are fulfilled, in the design of products, in the technology and geography of production, in the risk-creating ways in which supplies are used, etc.\textsuperscript{11}

I.3) Three Dramatised Futures for the Detox Efforts

My reason to mention different kinds information flows when I introduce the report is that I want to relate to some public discourses on the risks associated with chemicals. The discourses all have relations to the possibility to detoxify product chains through better understanding and dissemination of information even though the chemical risk information is more or less dwarfed in the two 'dystopias'.

I present the three images partly in order to explain why I focus on methods for including the "emerging South" in the analysis. In the three images different important and much discussed phenomena are at the centre of attention. For fun I call them: 1) "REACHing a less contaminated EU"; 2) "Race to the bottom"; and 3) "Submission". One of the three images – the first one – can be said to be overly optimistic while the other two can be said to be overly pessimistic or even dystopias.

As indicated above I sketch the three images of the future in order to demonstrate the need to give the benefit of the doubt to a sixth image – 'the antidote image' – which I step by step call forth in chapter II. But my idea is also that the brief sketch of popular sentiments shall motivate my methodological and conceptual choices which are clarified in I.4 and I.5.

I.3.1) REACHing a Less Contaminated EU (Exaggerating the Value of REACH)

A simplistic way of judging the future of detoxification could start with a too optimistic view of the recently enacted EU chemical legislation – REACH. This can be exemplified with a quote from the Swedish EU commissioner Margot Wallström:

"REACH is a groundbreaking proposal. Once adopted, It will allow us to take advantage of the benefits of chemicals without exposing ourselves and the environment to risks. Thus it will create a win-win situation for industry, workers

\textsuperscript{10} The broad category 'functional' information can include indications of how well the semi-manufactured article will function (or perform) at later stages in the product chain.

\textsuperscript{11} See I.5.1 in the paragraphs on transformative pressure. Also see III.3.
and citizens, and our ecosystem. It will give Europe's citizens the high level of protection that they have the right to expect. The EU will have one of the most progressive chemicals management systems in the world.”

I am very doubtful whether Margot Wallström herself believed that 'Europe's citizens would get the high level of protection that they have the right to expect' once the legislation had passed the EU parliament. I rather believe that she said what was expected of her after the hard work of getting the REACH proposal to the point where it was ready for the parliament.

My interpretation of Margot Wallström's statement is based on my experience as a union researcher. I know that you – after tough negotiations – are expected to say that you are satisfied with the results. And that it is a good idea to claim that it is a win-win outcome. The mood of a conference to which I will return shortly did not correspond to the optimism in Margot Wallström's statement. The natural scientist who talked at the conference pointed to a severe lack of knowledge for instance about the combined effects of different substances.

A further argument for being cautious about REACH is that the relevant chemical flows are "hidden" in other products.

The early debates of toxic problems – in the 1960s and -70s – often concerned the chemical industry in a narrow sense. The problems of "low-dose-risk" in other industries moved to a more prominent place in the debate from the 1980s onward. An early example from the Swedish debate was a public inquiry on Products as Risks (Varor som faror). Since then there has been a growing awareness of the tox-risks of every-day products. It is, however still the case that the relevant chemical flows are "hidden" in other products. Textile flows into Europe are not classified according to their "chemical contents". Nor do they have a chemical contents declarations.

In the debate about REACH the problems associated with imported tox-risks of every-day products did not figure prominently. The general situation is still opaque though it is easy to quote many isolated examples of emerging economies neglect of chemical risks and media reporting on them.

During the prelude to REACH another aspect of imports from emerging economies figured more prominently. In the debate to which I refer, the subject matter was whether REACH would have negative consequences for developing countries. The alleged consequences for those countries were used by both sides to argue their cases for a stronger versus weaker REACH – see i.a. Ackerman's book Poisoned for Pennies: The Economics of Toxics and Precaution. I accept most of the arguments used by

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13 My criticism is thus not against Margot Wallström – on the contrary, I have a very high regard for her work. My criticism is directed at the image of REACH, which as stated in the main text, follows from Wallström’s role as an EU commissioner.
14 See II.5.4.
15 See I.3.3.
17 Ackerman (2008).
Ackerman to underpin his view that the Regulatory costs of REACH would be "unbearably light". I would, however, disagree if someone wanted to interpret his trade statistics as saying that flows of chemicals – as such or in finished consumer products – emanating from developing countries have such little impact on risk reduction policies that they can be ignored or given low priority.

I find Ackerman's book very useful and in no way want to imply that Ackerman harbours the simplistic way of judging of which I want to warn. Read out of context the book could, however, be misinterpreted in that way.

I.3.2) Race to the Bottom (Fearing the Emergence of the South)

An "opposite" way of arguing starts from the dramatic transformation of the geography of world production. According to this line of argument "we in the North" will not be able to stop the accelerating chemicalisation and the hazards entailed as long as a rising part of the every-day products we use come from countries where such sophisticated demands as those on the chemical environment remain very low on the agenda. I discuss this further in a portion below introduced by Beck's concept boomerang.

Also this line of argument can be stretched way out of reason but I find it important to explore it. This is why the "opening case" starts in the PRD (the Pearl River Delta).

The rationale behind the idea to let the doll product chain start in the PRD is the intensifying debate about China – and especially the PRD – as the new Workshop of the World. A large share of the world's production of textiles, toys, etc, emanates from this area. The ironic concept G2 – widely used in economic discourses lately – suggests the idea that the US and the PRC are the only sovereign actors on the international scene that really count today. This is a great exaggeration but serves the purpose to dramatise the vast economic transformations before and after the present financial crises.

In order to start exploring the emergence of a new Workshop of the World as it is manifested in textile product chains, I present a graph which my Inflow colleague Sverker Molander has made of the dramatic change of the composition of the textile imports to Sweden. Swedish clothing imports from the PRC and related countries has risen dramatically. (Fig. 1).

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18 The title of Ch. 3 in Ackerman's book is "The Unbearable Lightness of Regulatory Costs".
19 The trade statistics that could be misinterpreted in that way are presented in Ch. 11 in Ackerman's book. Pp. 199.
20 See I.5.1.
21 See the list of abbreviations for acronyms such as the PRD.
22 In order to start finding references on China's emergence see my Chinese food for thoughts – a Guest Lectureship in Guangdong ... (Hollander 2010). Also note the words "present financial crises". I don't agree with those economists, who thought that the financial crises which broke out 2007/08 was a regular one. I rather think it will last at least as long as did the financial crises of the 1930s.
23 Note that a substantial part of the imports from Hong Kong originally come from the PRC. Also the imports from Denmark may originate in the same area. In 2009 China, Hong Kong and Denmark were the top three in Swedish textile imports.
Figure 1. Imports to Sweden of textiles CN chapter no. 61+62 years 1995-2009 (kSEK).
When I discussed REACH, I mentioned a paper that – if read out of context – could be misinterpreted in a simplistic way. When discussing "the race to the bottom" I will also quote a paper which I find very useful but which can also be misread. This time I give a first glimpse of two scholars who I will discuss at length below:

"Barrelling down the highway from Shenzhen to Guangzhou, through the heart of China's PRD, past hillsides turned into gravel quarries, rice fields transformed into cities, ... and factory after factory producing goods destined for the world's markets, it is hard to avoid feeling that this is one of the centers of economic globalization. And ..., that Southern China is where the world's new workplace labor standards are being determined." ...

For ... critics, China has emerged as a leading symbol of the global 'race to the bottom' ...

I.3.3) Submission

A third image of the public discourse on detoxification might be the one that best captures public sentiments in Northern Europe. As a header for this image I have used the title of a documentary aimed at alerting the concerned public, policy makers, etc, to the effects of the dramatic chemicalisation that has taken place around the globe since World War II.

Three decades ago the film maker Stefan Jarl made a film titled "Nature's Vengeance". In the recent film Submission - in Defence of the Unborn "... by actress Ewa Röse and 23 professors", Stefan Jarl gives the opportunity to prominent natural scientists, concerned about the chemicalisation, to argue their cases.

One far-reaching claim in the film is that the chemicalisation is a threat to humanity on par with climate change. Within a narrow quantitative discourse this claim is, as far as I know, not possible to substantiate – at least not at present. I say this from a reading of one of the most ambitious attempts as yet to determine "A safe operating space for humanity".25 The group of distinguished ecological sustainability scholars behind the article were not able to quantify the safe boundaries for Chemical Pollution. 7 out of the 9 major areas for which it was deemed necessary to establish boundaries could be quantified. Those include climate change, ocean acidification, stratospheric ozone depletion etc. Chemical pollution was one of the two areas where boundaries could as yet not be quantified.26

The reasons for not quantifying the boundaries are scary enough:

"Chemical Pollution

... A boundary focusing on effects of chemical pollution ... could be based on reduced or failed reproduction, neurobehavioral deficits, or compromised immune systems, which are linked to the combined exposure to many chemicals. ... An example of this approach has been reviewed based on the suggested increase in neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children. The widespread exposure to low concentrations of multiple chemicals with

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24 O'Rourke and Brown 2003 p. 378.
known or suspected neurotoxic effects may have created a silent pandemic of subtle neurodevelopmental disorders in children, possibly on a global scale (...). Of the 80,000 chemicals in commerce, 1,000 are known to be neurotoxic in experiments, 200 are known to be neurotoxic in humans, and five (methyl mercury, arsenic, lead, PCBs, toluene) are known to be toxic to human neurodevelopment. ...

Furthermore, a chemical pollution boundary interacts with the planetary boundary for ... In summary ... we conclude that it is not possible at this time to define these nor is it clear how to aggregate them into a comprehensive single planetary boundary."

Since so few members of the public will read an account such as the one in the quote, I think that the dramatisation of the risks of chemical pollution that is done in the film Submission is very useful and that it will have a large impact. An indication of this came at the 2010 annual conference of the Swedish Chemical Inspectorate (Kemi). The film was one of the main attractions. It was introduced by an interview with Stefan Jarl. He mentioned that the film will make a grand tour around the globe after winning high level acclaim. The most noteworthy fact was, however, that the aging film maker said he saw no hope for humanity escaping from "the chemical barrage" that Rachel Carson warned about almost half a century earlier.

Before entering into the five interdisciplinarities where I will build my antidote I will first argue for my approach in the two next sections.

### 1.4) Dangers of Single Stories – on the Rationale Behind the Methods Chosen

In July 2009 the Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Adichie introduced a TED Conversation. The name of her talk was The danger of a single story. Single stories can easily become patronising. They are not untrue but incomplete and when told about a "foreign" culture they tend to rob people of their dignity.

Adichie’s reflections are relevant for my report for several reasons: The content as well as the context of her talk relativises the concept ‘information’. This is important since detoxifying in the long run has very much to do with changing mind-sets. When discussing the role of information in detoxifying efforts a relativising and widening of the concept ‘information’ is important.

For a 'westerner' like me, it is important to be aware of the risks implied when writing about "foreign" cultures as exemplified here by Chinese culture.

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28 This yearly conference gathers leading Swedish actors interested in the reduction of chemical risks. Advanced corporations along product chains that are relevant for "Detoxification" as well as leading science researchers, important NGOs as well as the minister of the environment etc. are among the actors convened.
29 The source is my own notes from the conference. KemI also provides minutes from the conferences. They are, however, as yet only available in Swedish.
As a source for my report Adichie exemplifies one discourse at "a great distance" from those normally associated with detoxifying product chains. When novels are at their best they help us feel affinity with a vast array of very different actors. I will argue below that this is important in the context of this report.

Most important is, however, that the reflections of Adichie can introduce the methodological pluralism which is so important to me.

A central methodological choice in my report is that I build my arguments from interpretations of five interdisciplinarities. They are presented and reflected upon in sections II.1 through II.5. They are all more or less personalised.

My choice to work like this comes to an important degree out of frustration with a tenacious problem in how the social sciences have related to 'the environment'. What I have in mind is what I interpret as a lack of success in the attempts to make the studies interdisciplinary. In one of the – to my mind – most successful attempts to overcome this problem the authors introduce their book The Making of the New Environmental Consciousness – A Comparative Study of the Environmental Movements in Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands, and the importance of the theme, by saying:

"Environmental problems and conflicts transcend national and disciplinary boundaries. More than perhaps any other issue, the 'environment' calls upon the social sciences to develop internationally comparative and interdisciplinary approaches."  

Interdisciplinarity was a central concern of the new environmental movements – those that arose in the 1960's – which Jamison et al. analyse.  

In Sweden interdisciplinarity was also used to describe a central aim of the 'semi-academic' research which was initiated in the 1970s. The 'semi-academic' research to which I refer was set up to deal with long-run challenges such as 'the environment' and internationalisation.

In this report I will give some examples of what I consider successful attempts of being interdisciplinary rather than further specify in what way many environmental social science attempts to be interdisciplinary have failed. I will focus on some virtues of 'half-successes' rather than analyse what I consider to be failures.

In the methodological considerations in this section I will first mention some virtues that I find in the many personalised interdisciplinarities to be presented in chapter II and then go on to some 'semi-academic' traits of my own way of working in this report. I will also try to convey how these traits are related to the five interdisciplinarities of chapter II and in what ways they can be considered to be virtues in the context of the themes of this report.

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31 The word interdisciplinarities is an example of a proto-concept. Below you will find a section on proto-concepts (I.5). Those concepts are often personal, new and ambiguous. I, however, argue that they can be useful when trying to find new paths.

32 Jamison et al. (90) p. vii.

33 See below II.1.
I.4.1) Some Virtues of the Four 'Heroes' of Chapter II

All the four 'heroes' of sections II.2 to II.5 are – to my mind – erudite. Of the many meanings one can ascribe to this concept I stress that I want it to connote their ability to pursue independent / arms-length distanced / dialogues with the traditions in which they work.34

The most important virtue is, however, that all four use rather than suppress their 'boundary-spanning' qualities. To use a language inspired by one of the four – You-Tien Hsing – they have multiple affinities.35 My experience is that a high proportion of the really worthwhile interdisciplinary research has been conducted by people with such multiple affinities. This observation partly stems from my work with creativity in the context of enviro-innovation.36

A first important 'encounter' with an enviro-classic where this quality was stressed was in a portrait of Rachel Carson in a book by two Swedish enviro-historians.37 The fact that the biologist and 'poet' Rachel Carson could shed new light on our relation to nature was – in the book Countdown in Progress. How are environmental problems discovered? What happens then? – explained by her being a 'boundary-spanner' between the world of science and the world of public authorities.38

I will just give one example of a 'boundary-spanner' among the four heroes of sections II.2 to II.5 – M. Peng of sections II.2. Many of the cases in the text-book Global Strategic Management are set in a PRC context.39 With an ethnic Chinese background and a deep immersion in the subject of 'global strategic management' he has been able to span the border between the traditional global strategic management discourse, the new role of emerging economies, and the new 'workshop of the world'. Peng has taught relevant courses on the subjects for two decades and has – as far as I can judge – changed the discourse dramatically. I interpret the 'double affinity' of Peng to be an important explanation.

Above I have just mentioned two categories of virtues – erudition and boundary-spanning capacity. But more virtues which can be ascribed to one or more of the four heroes are to be found below where I discuss semi-academic traits.

I.4.2) Semi-academic Traits

"... the environmental consciousness that surrounds us today is something that requires its own kind of intellectual understanding: it needs to be formulated through an innovative theoretical practice. ... it is our contention that the theorist who seeks to

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34 By ability to pursue independent / arms-length distanced / dialogues I mean that you can engage the tradition without succumbing to it. Compare the comments on Burrawoy related to You-tien Hsing in II.5.2.
35 See section II.5.
37 Thelander and Lundgren (89 [81]) commenting on Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring (1962).
characterise the new environmental consciousness must be a partisan, identifying
with the movement while maintaining a distance from it.”

I use the word ‘semi-academic’ for several reasons. One is the need for ‘distanced
partisanship’ suggested by Jamison et al. My own wrestling with something similar
came when I tried to do research on finding a more proactive role for unions in their
use of the co-determination laws introduced in Sweden in the 1970s. Important
scenes for this proactive use related to unions as demand shapers for environmental
innovation. I, however, only agree partially with Jamison et. al. in that I want to
combine the quest for ‘distanced partisanship’ with the ideas mentioned above about
multiple affinities. I thus see the researcher’s ability to ‘commute into and out of’ the
logic of different actors along i.a. product chains as a major potential source of
insights into the kind of questions aimed at in this report.

Such partisanship of course carries big risks that the researcher loses the traditional
academic virtue of objectivity. As long as the researcher can reflect in meaningful
ways on such risks I, however, think that the risks of ‘distanced partisanship’
partial subjectivity are worth taking. Or even stronger as I said above: to have
multiple affinities is often necessary in order to pursue really worthwhile
interdisciplinary research.

The need for ‘distanced partisanship’ is, however, only one reason for using the word
‘semi-academic’ about the methods which I try to illustrate here. Another – quite
mundane one – is that I myself have been working in institutions that might be
termed ‘semi-academic’ – and that they have of course influenced me.

Among the means, by which I think that one can handle the risks of ‘distanced
partisanship’s, is transparency. Making it possible to follow the used ‘facts’, images,
models, etc, back to sources, and sources of sources, etc, is of course an essential part
of this. It includes that due credit is given. But a thoughtful use of ‘grey sources’
might be just as important (see below). Academically established ways of quoting
are, to my mind, not such a perfect solution to the problem of sources in the social
sciences as is often claimed. Tracing the influences which have found a way into my
text is harder than just applying a preset quoting standard. Judging and accepting
sources of a social science text inevitably presupposes trust.

The fact that I often quote at great length has to do with this. And I refrain from
trying to cover one or the other discourse fully. What you will find in the mid-
chapter are not overviews of the literature in five fields or disciplines. Instead I
presume that I have found erudite, boundary-spanning and creative researchers who
are bold interpreters of new combinations of bodies of literature. With ‘the explosion
of’ social science literature, relevant to the study of the doll who travels from China
to Sweden, I think that any study will have to make very hard delimitations. Too

40 Jamison et. al (1990) p. x (x=Roman 10).
41 See below in II.1 and II.5.4.
42 See Hollander (1995), (1998) and (2003) and also below in I.5 and II.5.3.
43 See II.1.3 and specially II.5.4.
44 A short example regarding a quote in the text above: When I use the reference Thelander and
Lundgren (89 [81]) with its double brackets it begs the question. My use of double brackets has to
do with a public authority which restrained publication. To go further into this would, however,
often they will be unconscious. Be that as it may with others – if there are qualities to my own musings they are surely in idea generation rather than in validity, reliability or minute overviews of all relevant discourses.

I.4.3) The INFLOW Context of my Report
As mentioned above, the present context of this report is the research project INFLOW. The report in fact started as a collaborative effort with my INFLOW colleague Sverker Molander from Chalmers U. of Technology. Since so many of the methodological considerations in this report are related to my personal history we however decided to postpone formulating those points that are more open to generalisations to a future joint article. As might be seen in some wordings of my report in its present form there are, however, still lots of influences from the first efforts. The report could not have been written without the input from and the dialogue with Sverker Molander.

Mikael Klintman – project coordinator of INFLOW has also helped me in numerous ways. Maybe the most important was that he made me realise that the five sections of chapter II represents interdisciplinarities. Jesper Sjöström – the fourth senior researcher of INFLOW helped me – before the INFLOW project started – realise that there is a renewed societal interest in critically discussing the dynamics of the demand side of sustainable innovation. This made me dare to renew my research interest in demand shaping. Our common interest in this topic led us to jointly start a Network for User-driven Greenchem Innovations. Doctoral candidates Emelie Stenborg and Kristin Fransson introduced me to a number of INFLOW-related academic discourses of which I was earlier unaware.

I partly make those comments on my INFLOW colleagues to express my deep gratitude. Just as important is, however, that what I say here is also supposed to serve as methodological comments.

I.4.4) 'Artisan ideal' and Grey Sources
I end my section on method – which might also serve as a reader’s guide – with another two personal traits which have moved my report into a ‘semi-academic middle ground: ‘Artisan ideal’ and ‘Attitude to grey sources’.

'Artisan ideal'
You have probably already stumbled over a number of concepts which are non-established and which you might find ambiguous. About some of those I have more to say below in the portion on proto-concepts (I.5.2). Here I will just suggest that I might defend myself with the image of an old-fashioned artisan. Many artisans developed their own tools as need arose. I view the multitude of proto-concepts that I present as a parallel to this. Many of the proto-concepts will probably prove not to be useful. But I hope that this inventing and later partially discarding can be a useful part of my quest to creatively grapple with the problem of lack of interdisciplinarity discussed above.

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45 See notes to I.1.
46 Full name: Environmental Systems Analysis, Energy & Environment – Chalmers University of Technology.
47 See I.5.2 on ’demand shaping’.
'Attitude to grey sources'
Sources can be called grey for a number of reasons. Very much of course hinges on the field of study where the sources are used. Since one heated debate on 'grey sources' related to a climate change report which mostly dealt with natural science questions I shall underline that my discussion here and below will only relate to the social sciences.

Only one example will be given here: The question of 'grey sources' has a lot to do with an almost omnipresent problem in the social sciences – that of access. When dealing with strong actors – such as TNCs – you might only get access on rather unsatisfactory terms. A negative branding of sources as grey because of the fact that the researcher / publisher has a 'non-objective' relation to the TNC studied might seriously delimit the meaningfulness of the research outcome.

Whether the 'non-objectiveness' stems from an adversarial or cooperative relation between the researching unit and the TNC is not the point here. The 'non-objective' relation – such as the relation of a trade union investigation unit to a TNC where it organises – might be a factor that makes the results of the study more interesting.

The method used by Fair Trade Center/Swedwatch for its 2011 report on the toy industry is a case in point:

"Representatives of Brio (and other Swedish toy firms) attended (a) meeting. ... The information in this follow-up report is primarily based on data acquired during ... meetings. All the companies involved have been afforded the opportunity of reading and correcting information prior to publication. Swedwatch has not had the opportunity to revisit the factories and check working conditions on site."  

Open disclosures of such procedures of course raises the quality of grey sources a lot. A question that, however, remains is to what extent most researchers in this area will have to phrase the conclusions in "win-win terms" or talk of progress being made. The lure to phrase conclusions in such terms is great when you want strong actors – who can choose whom to give access – to continue a cooperation that has been initiated.

On a personal level, the question of grey sources might actually be key to my decision to work 'semi-academically'. Not to be able to report about and reflect on illuminating episodes, for instance during company visits etc, can be very frustrating when you want to interpret and convey a perplexing reality. I believe this is a general problem for practioneers turned academics. I will return to this subject in section II.1 and especially in portion II.5.4.

Finally – in this section on method – I will bring up yet another question of frustration as a driving force for some of my methodological choices. But this time frustration does not have to do with inner academic questions such as lacking success in the quest for interdisciplinarity or problems for the practioneer turned academic. I will rather return to the initial reference to Chimamanda Adichie's TED talk. Having worked for some decades with academic or semi-academic questions related to product chains, globalisation and chemitox, it is easy to once in a while be

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envious of friends who have tried other forms of dialogue with the public at large and other information conveying activities than texts pure and simple.

Inspiration for this report has also come from a literary circle where I have read inter alia Chimamanda Adichie together with friends. Some of those friends work with other forms of dialogue such as exhibitions. Many of the other forms of dialogue seem to be able to change people's mind sets more than academic texts. The example of Stefan Jarl quoted above is also a case in point.

My hope is thus that some of the methodological choices of this report will contribute to bridging of gaps also between different media thereby further helping the actors along the chains to start understanding one another in other ways than simply economic.

I.5) Concepts, Proto-concepts and other Terms – My Reasons for Playing with them

1.5.1) The Boomerang, the Globe and Concepts lost in Translation

I will start my discussion on the conceptual jungle with 'an environmental classic':

Boomerang – an intuitively clear concept?

"Risks display a social boomerang effect in their diffusion: even the rich and powerful are not safe from them. The formerly 'latent side effects' strike back even at the centers of their production. The agents of modernization themselves are emphatically caught in the maelstrom of hazards that they unleash and profit from."

Just like many concepts in Beck's seminal work Risk Society a thoughtful interpretation depends on familiarity with the many traditions which inspires him. And definitions are often woven into many parts of the text rather than given as one distinct part of the weft. On the other hand, you could say that the meaning of the metaphor boomerang is intuitively clear. I use it in the header of this report both as an homage to Beck and to stress the intensified interdependencies between the emerging "South" and "us".

Globalisation and other 'essentially contested concepts'

The term 'essentially contested concepts' I have adopted from the mathematician and mezzo-economist Jan Odhnoff. He applied it primarily to the rationalities of work life. In the origins of the usage it was applied to words such as 'Democracy' or 'Freedom'. After having followed the 'internationalisation' / 'globalisation' debate

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50 Other relevant examples for the present report are Edward Burtynsky's exhibition Oil (2009) and Erika Magnusson's Logistics. Burtynsky's images are meant as metaphors to the dilemma of our modern existence; they search for a dialogue between attraction and repulsion, seduction and fear. We are drawn by desire - a chance at good living, yet we are consciously or unconsciously aware that the world is suffering for our success. See <http://www.edwardburtynsky.com/>.
In Erika Magnusson's Logistics a pedometer is traced back to its origin in Guandong province. See <http://logisticsartproject.com/> (as yet only in Swedish).
for almost half a century I, however, feel secure in the assertion that ‘globalisation’ is an ‘essentially contested concept’.\textsuperscript{54}

**Concepts lost in Translation Between Disciplines – my use of Transformative Pressure**

"... what is natural in one place can seem unnatural in another, and some concepts travel rather poorly, if at all."\textsuperscript{55}

A novelist such as Moshin Hamid can just observe that concepts travel poorly. It is worse to do only that in a report trying to get interdisciplinarities to enter into dialogues with one another. I have to settle for some terms that at least signify that different disciplines or discourses have gone into the making of the term. In order to illustrate I will use the term *transformative pressure* which signals an analytical frame which has inspired me in my work. The thought pattern associated with this term was crucial for the Swedish vanguard position in *ecological modernisation*.\textsuperscript{56}

At least two disciplines have gone in to my use of the term transformative pressure:

My suggested doll product chain is part of a wider system of international division of labour, trade and governing institutions. From the perspective of *systems analysis* you can see this context serving as a slowly changing “*selection pressure*” on the different actors (and via them institutions, technologies etc) along product chains. The rules and arrangements surrounding the daily operations of producing companies in international product chains are shaping the way in which the companies, and their staff, take their decisions, run the operations and manage life on the shop floor.

A similar – but far from identical – concept with *mesoeconomic* roots has been used to capture policies pursued by the Swedish ‘developmental coalition’ during the first decades after World War II. This Swedish Model or Rehn-Meidner model has been described in terms of *transformation pressure*.\textsuperscript{57} The aim was to combine relatively equal pay across different industrial sectors with a macroeconomic policy framework where a small economy such as the Swedish could be competitive in world markets.\textsuperscript{58} In the 1970s the international conditions – which made this model possible – started to fade. This occurred at the same time as the transformations of world production which are in focus here first could be discerned. The thought figures related to *transformation pressure*, however, continued to inspire Swedish debates – especially in the environmental field.“\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{54} See II.1 below.


\textsuperscript{56} See II.1.

\textsuperscript{57} Erixon, L., (1998).

\textsuperscript{58} Under the Rehn-Meidner plan, a significant part of the post-war ‘Swedish model’, the LO (blue-collar workers federation) together with the Social Democratic government pursued a strategy that aimed to equalize wages, reduce inflation, and improve productivity. The union’s ‘solidarity wage’ policy initiated industrial restructuring towards higher-value added economic sectors. See Hedborg & Meidner (1984), Martin (1984), and Milner & Wadensjö 2001. In order to show how I have used that thought figure earlier I refer to Haley, B. and Hollander, E (2006).

\textsuperscript{59} See i.a. Jamison et al. (90).
Another Compromise Concept – Product Chain

The term 'product chain' is also a kind of compromise. As noted above, the term product chain is used in this report since I want to go beyond or complement the discourses implied in concepts such as supply chain, production chain or life cycle assessment. When the concept supply chain is used the sometimes hidden starting point is that of a "resource-rich Northern" corporation sourcing from weaker firms – maybe in emerging economies. When the concept production chain is used a hidden presumption might be that the chain ends when a product reaches the "final consumer". The concept can carry remnants from a linear view of human handling of matter – a view that I hope is about to be superseded.

1.5.2) Proto-concepts

I mentioned above my artisan ideal of working when I explore a new terrain where a semi-academic approach is needed. One expression of this is my use of what I refer to as proto-concepts. I might also have referred to them as heuristics or even toys. A toy can be used to help the imagination and can thus help me try out things that I want to explore. By using proto-concepts I stress that I am in the early stages of the concept-invention needed in order to study the interdisciplinary terrain into which I must enter in order to study the dynamics of the information flows discussed here.

Below I will mention some examples of proto-concepts which have been important for me as I conceived this report. Quite a few concepts that you will find in the report and which need further clarification if they are to become more than proto are, however, not discussed. Hopefully some of them are made meaningful by the context in which they appear.

Demand Shaping for Sustainability

The need for proto-concepts became clear to me as I struggled with my thesis on The Enigmatic Time Pattern of Environmental Innovation. A central proto-concept in the thesis was Demand Shaping. One of the fears that led to my interest for the possibly weakening transformative pressure as a consequence of globalisation was that the room for creative demand shaping would be less when weak actors in the North could be further weakened by the transformations implied. I will not develop this thought model here since it would lead too far. Since the thought models and proto-concept families have been so important as a driving force behind this report I must, however, mention them briefly. In order to bring forward one important aspect of the model I quote from myself:

"Sustainable innovation processes often involve creative demand shaping since they presuppose dialogues that bridge huge ‘distances of rationalities’. Cases in point are when new or old social movements interact with planners of infrastructure or R&D departments of TNCs in order to find (part) solutions for their sustainability demands. The complexity of the bridge building becomes even greater since the creative path breakers on both sides of the innovative user<->producer relation live..."

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60 In this vast literature the "resource-rich Northern" corporation to which I refer in the main text is often called "the focal company". See Seuring and Müller (2008) pp. 1699-1710.
61 Bertelman et.al (1980) and Hollander (1977) (the latter only in Swedish).
62 The term proto-concept is inspired by reasoning in Hollander (1995), ch. 19 where the "play-word" demand shaping and other proto-concepts such as proto-market are discussed. A short version of that reasoning can be found in Hollander (2003).
very precarious lives in their respective organisations. Creativity is seen as threatening by the establishments of the organisations since new patterns of thought often devalue traditional competencies, networks etc.\textsuperscript{63}

**A Postponed Proto-concept – Pentagulation**

In order to describe the attempts to bring interdisciplinarities into dialogues with one another I first used the word *pentagulation*. It was first used as a joke intended to highlight the complexity mentioned several times above. Triangulation is a meta-method often recommended in handbooks of methodology. Pentagulation was meant to stress the need to go 'beyond Triangulation'. I hope to return to this proto-concept in a later article.\textsuperscript{64}

**I.5.3) Inextricably Intertwined**

One conclusion of this excursion into contextually defined concepts, 'essentially contested concepts', 'proto-concepts' etc. is that models, foci, concepts, etc. are inextricably intertwined in the definitions. Chances are great that we end up in discussions among the deaf or in infinite regress.

So rather than continue the introduction to different conceptual families relevant for 'environmental studies' I will below start to introduce the interdisciplinarities which are of central concern in this report.

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\textsuperscript{63} Hollander (2003) p.3.

\textsuperscript{64} See above about the roots in a cooperation with Sverker Molander.
II) Detoxifying Global Product Chains – Five Useful Interdisciplinary Approaches

II.1) Swedish Traditions and Thought Patterns Related to Chemitox and Internationalisation

Four of the five interdisciplinary approaches presented in this main chapter of my report I – in the first portion of the respective sections – tie to a boundary-spanning individual who represents the approach. This has to do with the methodological ideas presented above. In this first section I, however, mainly tie the approach to my own country and some of its traditions and thought patterns in the chemitox and internationalisation area.

The section on Swedish traditions, however, refers to two remarkable boundary-spanners and is filtered through what I experienced as a kind of ‘partisan observer’ from the 1960s to today. So boundary-spanners play important roles here too.65

My contention in this section is that a vantage point in the Swedish traditions of the last half century can be a privileged vantage point for the kind of reflections I want to tie to the sleeping doll.

Especially in the 1960s and 1970s Sweden played a disproportionately large role in the emerging international environmental discourse. This can be symbolised by the fact that the first global environmental conference was held 1972 in Stockholm.66 Sweden at that time had been politically led by reformist Social Democracy for four decades. It was uniquely positioned to tie together what we today call the social and ecological dimensions of sustainability. Sweden also had a tradition of endorsing international economic transformation with a policy of flexible adjustment rather than protectionism.67

A final argument about a privileged vantage point to be mentioned initially in this section is that Sweden had an exceptionally fertile soil for what later was to be called ecological modernisation.68

Above I have given my arguments in brief for a privileged vantage point. I will, however, also try to substantiate my claim by personalising.

65 See the methodological section I.4 above where I quote the arguments of Jamison et al. on “being a partisan observer”. Concerning the self-congratulatory inclusion of myself among the boundary-spanners I will not apologise here. I will, however, comment further on the topics in Ch. III.


68 For an explanation of the concept ecological modernisation and further references see Haley, Brendan and Hollander, E (2006): “Advanced Sustainability Demands from Labour – Re-embedding for Democracy and Ecology”.

II.1.1) Hans Palmstierna – a Boundary-spanner who Brought Swedish Labour into the Struggle to Save the Environment

In this and the following portion I will present two boundary-spanners who can help us understand Sweden’s leading role in global ‘ecological modernisation’.

"From a biological perspective, the world is one, a little ball which we must live on and cannot escape from. This is in sharp contrast to the way of thinking of economists and the big corporations. ... People must be convinced that the world is a unity where all the parts are intimately interconnected and interdependent. We must therefore in solidarity seek to reduce the differences in standard of living among peoples.” (Hans Palmstierna in Plunder, starvation and poisoning [1967]).

Hans Palmstierna was a biochemist and an active social democrat. One of the boundaries that he spanned was the one between the Swedish science community and social democracy. With a background in the Swedish lower nobility it was especially noteworthy that he was able to have a strong influence on the labour wing of the Swedish social democracy.

There is strong evidence that he – on the personal level – was a major factor when saving the environment became a top priority at the highest political level in Sweden. His arguments convinced the then prime minister Tage Erlander. The questions regarding workplace environment – or inner environment as it was then called – had an almost higher priority in Swedish public policy than questions regarding the outer environment. Questions regarding chemical hazards – as illustrated i.a. by the mercury debate – of course lent themselves especially well to illustrate the interconnectedness of the ‘outer environment’ and ‘inner environment’.

Two clashes can illustrate what a controversial figure a boundary-spanner such as Hans Palmstierna was:

When Palmstierna left his first enthusiastic embrace of nuclear power for a more critical attitude he was forced to resign from his influential position as secretary general of the Swedish Environmental Advisory Council – the body which counselled the prime minister Erlander on environmental matters. My interpretation of this event is that his new anti-nuclear-power stance was an unacceptable threat to the dominating axis in Sweden of those times. The dominating axis which I refer to was the multi-faceted strong cooperation between internationalised Swedish TNCs on the one hand and a socially innovative social democracy on the other. One of the foundations of the cooperation was a strong technology optimism. A change in the policy towards nuclear power could threaten the cooperation.

The other clash that I associate with Hans Palmstierna took place when he and the mathematician Jan Odhnoff were hired by a Swedish blue-collar union –

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70 Personal communications from Jan Odhnoff and Siv Ericsdotter/Näslund. See also Åström (2003).
71 Hollander (95) ch’s 6 and 16.
72 My personal interpretation of this clash is influenced by references given elsewhere in this report but also by ‘affinities’ with the milieus involved.
SFWU (The Swedish Factory Worker’s Union). SFWU organised workers in i.a. chemicals, plastics and building materials. The union faced tough challenges when the new environmental consciousness emerged and the international economic transformative pressures intensified in the late 1960s. Instead of hiding its head in the sand the union then took the bold step to hire two acclaimed experts – one in the environmental field – Palmstierna – and the other – Odhnoff – in the field of global economic transformation. SFWU was one of the member unions of LO – the Swedish blue-collar workers federation (Landsorganisationen). LO had seen the hiring of experts of that stature as a prerogative of its own. The reactions at LO when SFWU hired the two experts were accordingly very harsh.73

**II.1.2) Rudolf Meidner – a Boundary-spanner who Helped Labour Endorse Global Transformation**

Rudolf Meidner came to Sweden as a refugee from Nazi Germany in the spring of 1933. In Germany of the early 1930s he faced grave risks both as a socialist and as a Jew.74 It is hardly necessary to argue a lot for the contention that an individual is boundary-spanning who was born in Breslau in 1914 into a middle class family and then became the head of LO’s (see above) economic investigation department at the end of world war II. It was of course also a manifestation of openness and self-confidence from the LO leadership of the early post-war period to hire the two very independent and sophisticated economists who were later deemed to be the fathers of the Swedish Model – Gösta Rehn and Rudolf Meidner.

My main reason to bring Rudolf Meidner into my story in this report is that an understanding of Swedish Model thinking is a good foundation for understanding the exceptionally fertile soil in Sweden for what is today called ecological modernisation (see also above).

The thought model which I refer to was first given wide distribution in the LO report on 'The Trade Union Movement and Full Employment' (1952).75 The report had nothing to do with the natural environment. The concerns of the two authors was rather ... (as Meidner put it in an article about Rehn’s thoughts 26 years later)

"... to find answers to the question whether full employment in a democratic society is compatible with a stable currency and a system of wage development that results from negotiations between organizations free from state control."76

The model that was further developed in the decade after 1952 is arguably one of the most important Swedish contributions to macroeconomics.77 In the context of this

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73 Personal communication from Enar Ågren – the president of the SFWU who hired the two experts. See also my more detailed account in Hollander (1998): TCO 92/95 SPHERE+ Report. p. 32. Also see below in II.5.4.


report it is more important that it led to a whole complex of policies and that it formed a frame of mind. The Rehn-Meidner policy complex includes "macro ... bargaining". For almost two decades it was possible to simultaneously equalize wages, reduce inflation, and improve productivity. The union’s ‘solidarity wage’ policy initiated industrial restructuring towards higher-value added economic sectors. Here we can find important roots for the tradition of endorsing international economic transformation and the state policy of flexible adjustment.

The first aspect which I want to stress in my interpretation here is that an advanced social demand such as that for more just wages could drive industrial restructuring towards the ‘economic sectors of the future’. A second equally important aspect here is that the mindset created opened not only for technologically driven but also for ecologically driven international structural transformation.

It is thus the feature of the model which implies a recognition of the value of a potentially transforming new category of ‘demand’ that I think prepared the soil for the early Swedish embrace of ecological modernisation.

My rationale for bringing Meidner and the Swedish model into the story is also that the terms on which the present global transformation has taken place so far has made it much harder even for countries such as Sweden to adapt constructively to the changes needed for global ecologic and social sustainability. Present patterns might endanger continued openness.

II.1.3) Some Contradictions in Swedish Approaches to Chemitox and Internationalisation

"Perhaps more than in any other industrialised country, the Swedish environmental movement has had difficulty finding its own identity. An environmentalist consciousness has certainly emerged in Sweden and, in many respects, environmentalism has been a more significant political force in Sweden than it has been in many other countries. But almost from its inception it has been subjected to a range of incorporation pressures."80

The contradiction mentioned by Jamison et al. will be used below for some further observations on Swedish experiences after the Stockholm conference in 1972 – UNCE.

The incorporation pressures to which Jamison et al. refer included the creation of a Secretariat for Future Studies. During its first years the Secretariat was in many ways close to the centre of the Swedish ruling elite. The first four projects dealt with the future of work, the Swedish role on the international scene, energy and society and finally resources and raw materials.81 As mentioned above I am partisan since I worked with the project resources and raw materials.

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81 Wittrock (1980).
What I will stress here is three traits that the projects had in common: Far-reaching interdisciplinary ambitions, the quest for bridge-building between sectors, and the expectation to educate and dialogue with Swedish popular movements and the public at large. Those traits were of course consequences of the directions given by the Secretariat centrally and the instructions they in turn had received. These instructions can obviously be further traced backwards – for instance to the characteristics of Sweden mentioned in the intro to section II.1. So those traits were good indicators of the spirit of those times. In relation to my present report it is also worth mentioning that concepts akin to what I here call product chains were important in the work of the project in which I took part.

Jamison et al. use a rather strict definition of the concept environmental movement. This is illustrated towards the end of Jamison’s own analysis of Sweden where he says:

"The environmental movement in the late 1980s thus represents something of a paradox. On the one hand it is omnipresent, as the national political culture is ever more infiltrated by the concerns of environmentalists. In that sense, society in general has become an environmental 'movement': large segments of the population pay membership dues, ... and the national media propagates the environmentalist message. The paradox, however, is that the 'movement's identity has all but disappeared."

Whether or not one accepts the strict definition used by Jamison et al. for the concept environmental movement their observations go a long way in explaining some traits of Swedish society in its relation to chemitox and internationalisation. According to my interpretation some important traits of Swedish society at that time were:

Civil society transmitted large resources for international cooperation in the environment field; Environmental concerns were integrated into mainstream academia, Swedish industry developed an ambitious environmental work. There was also a strong interest in environmental innovations of a non-radical type.

The last-mentioned trait led to a number of noteworthy environmental innovations. This led me personally to my main research interest from 1985 to 2005. That, however, is a theme that I will only touch upon in passing in this report. One reason for this is that it is now overdue to give further examples of 'interdisciplinarities'.

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82 Jamison et al. p. 60.
83 As to the strong interest in environmental innovations of a non-radical type etc. see my paper The noble art of demand shaping - how the tenacity of sustainable innovation can be explained by it being radical in a new sense (Hollander 2003). An event that testified to the continued high ambitions of Swedish industry RaD when it comes to environmental considerations was a conference organised by Linköping University and KTH jointly in June 2011. The yearly international R&D Management Conference was for the first time in its history held in Sweden – in Norrköping. Also for the first time the theme included sustainability as the main priority. The turn-out from leading Swedish TNCs was impressive. See <www.iei.liu.se/rnd2011/intro-r-d-management-conference-2011>.
II.2) The Year of the Toy Recall – 2007

II.2.1) A Business Textbook Case of Toy Recalls Because of Lead

Many isolated examples of high-tox-products emanating from emerging economies can be quoted. The case "Mattel and the Toy Recalls" is of special relevance here. A first reason for this – besides that it deals with Chinese production in the PRD, toxicity (lead) and toys – is that the case appears prominently in a widely used textbook in Global Strategic Management. The business strategy discourse is widely separated from the one where concepts such as "global race to the bottom" would normally be discussed. The global business strategy discourse is also situated at a far distance from the (political) economics discourse where macro-concepts such as transformative pressure are discussed. The textbook Global Strategic Management – the main author of which is Mike W. Peng – is directed at practitioners who need to understand different perspectives on outsourcing, product chains and globalisation in general. Therefore it is interesting to see which concepts are brought in from different discourses. Peng’s book is also interesting as a sign of the change of the centre of gravity of the world economy. In the context of this report it is also noteworthy that there are no clear distinctions made in Peng’s book between the actor views and the views of academic disciplines.

The two accounts of the Mattel recalls that are provided by Peng lends themselves well to be viewed through the lens of product chains. Perspectives of actors along the chain are brought to our attention. First Mattel’s own perspective is presented. It is illustrated through some excerpts from a short press conference by Mattel’s CEO on the day of the recall announcement. (Aug. 14, 2007). The central message from the CEO was that Mattel wants to assure the safety of the children playing with toys from Mattel. The blame for the "impermissible levels of lead" in the ...

"toy from the Cars die cast vehicle line, manufactured between May 2007 and July 2007"

... is placed on a subcontractor to Mattel’s Chinese contract manufacturer.

"... the painting subcontractor (to the 2nd tier subcontractor) was required to utilize certified paint supplied directly from Early Light (the 1st tier subcontractor), ...


85 As mentioned in the main text the case on Mattel is important in the book Global Strategic Management. And Mattel is an important player in the global toy industry. Among the licensors of brands to Mattel are Disney and Sesame Workshop. (Peng 2009 p. 141). Other information on the case can be found on <http://www.casestudyinc.com/mattel-turnaround-product-recall>.

86 Compare the quote from O'Rourke an Brown above in I.3.2.

87 Peng’s book in general and the case written by Bapuji & Beamish in particular – are to my judgement – more open to discussions of global industrial transformations than most books in this genre. A case in point is "exhibit 3" of Bapuji & Beamish’s case which documents the industrial transformation towards electronic equipment in China 1990-2006 (Peng 2009 p. 147).

88 I mentioned the two accounts in a note above. From that note you can see that one of the accounts was written by Bapuji, H. & Beamish, P. and the other by Chen, Hao.
instead violated Mattel standards and utilized paint from a non-authorized third party supplier.\textsuperscript{89}

The recall also included a number of dolls and other toys produced from 2002 to 2007 where magnets could come loose. For those hazards it was, however, not made clear whom to blame.

In Bapuji & Beamish’s reflections on the Mattel case, an important perspective has to do with the cooperation with and actions of the US and EU consumer safety authorities. Their declining resources and unclear legal powers are discussed at relative length. The interactions between the media, Mattel and the public bodies are also central in the story. It was the media coverage that made other actors in the end of the product chain nervous. In the concept other actors in the end of the product chain I include licensors of brands to Mattel such as Disney and Sesame Workshop as well the large toy retailer Toys ’R’ Us. The perspectives of some actors in the early stages of the product chain are, however, also given weight in Bapuji & Beamish’s account of the case.\textsuperscript{90}

The central transmitting mechanisms – the costs – are highlighted.\textsuperscript{91} It is thus stressed that ...

... suppliers in China faced pressures from large toy companies, who in turn faced pressures from large retailers, to cut down costs. Additionally, the economic growth enjoyed by China resulted in rising wages, ...\textsuperscript{92}

Among Chinese stakeholders that are mentioned are also:

– \textit{The workers}: Employees at some subcontractors’ became jobless and ...

"Some observers wondered what the effect of lead was on the employees who painted lead on the toys, and thus ingested it every day of the week.

– \textit{Chinese operations managers}: An operations manager at the subcontractor Lee Der committed suicide when recalls were announced. He was operations manager of factories in Foshan (Guandong province) and was considered to be kind to the workers because of the relatively good working conditions in the factories that he managed.

– \textit{Hong Kong firms} that are (part) owners of companies such as Lee Der.

\textit{China at large} can also be considered to be a stakeholder in the early stages of the product chain. Bapuji & Beamish mention that

"... (the) recalls began to severely erode 'Brand China’ and the Chinese government quickly set up a task force under the leadership of Chinese Vice Premier Wu Yi to ensure product safety."\textsuperscript{93}

A final perspective which Bapuji & Beamish draw attention to should be mentioned here. It is of special importance in my report since it brings up the question of the

\textsuperscript{89} Peng 2009 p. 139-140.

\textsuperscript{90} And even greater weight in Hao Chen’s account. Hao Chen’s contribution to Peng (2009) is called "How Chinese Toymakers Respond to Recalls". See references.

\textsuperscript{91} The concept central transmitting mechanism is mine and I use it in order to connect to my theme of transformative pressure.

\textsuperscript{92} Peng 2009 p. 142.

\textsuperscript{93} Peng 2009 p. 142.
responsibility in the product chains. It is the perspective of the product design. According to a study quoted by Bapují & Beamish a vast majority of US toy recalls over a two decade period were due to design flaws. Exactly what is a design flaw is of course open to debate. In the context of my report on (info-) mechanisms for detoxification it is, however, relevant to discuss which "chemical designs" are robust enough to be "risklessly" transmitted in long product chains.

II.2.2) Other Reflections on the Big Toy Recall

II.2.2.1) The Toy Recall and Transformative Pressures

In conjunction with a guest lectureship in the PRD I had the opportunity to discuss the "hardships of the Chinese toy industry" with a PRD manager – Brandon Luo. Since the reflections from that encounter provide some complementary perspectives to the ones given in the Mattel case I quote some of them:

An article on toys, during the autumn 2008, in a Swedish daily, ... intrigued me. In the article it was mentioned that half of the Chinese toy industry had closed down during the short span of the last year. From afar (with my “glasses” of the autumn 2008) a number of possible reasons could be identified as to why such huge a proportion of the toy industry had closed:

– Negative media coverage initiated by Human Rights and environmental INGOs. (INGOs = International NGOs – see list of abbreviations)
– General drop in demand during the financial crises
– Revaluation of the Yuan

Since the potential explanations were very speculative I wanted to test them in the PRD – the centre of the world’s toy production. Wage levels are as low as 1,100 Yuan/month but this must be considered in conjunction with the appreciating Yuan. ... This has just been one reason why toy manufacturing is a very good candidate for Chinese potential entrepreneurs who want to start their own business. So the entry into the industry has been rapid during the last decades. Exits have, however, also soared among Cantonese SMEs. The average lifetime of a new business has dropped from over six years in the 1990s to just over two years recently.

As an outsider to Asian Development Economics I was surprised to learn that part of the Guandong toy industry is moving to locations such as Viet Nam and Bangladesh. Vietnamese wages at clearly under 100 US dollars / month seem to give some locations in Viet Nam clear advantages over locations in Guandong.

II.2.2.2) The Toy Industry and NGOs after the Year of the Big Recall

"Since 2009, ICTI (= International Council of Toy Industries ) ... has introduced a new policy ... (This) allows factories to, for an interim period, run more overtime than is stated in legislation [which is 66 hours a week] ..."

The discussion of more overtime in the toy industry than accepted by PRC law comes from a second review of Santa’s Workshop. Among the reasons why it is of interest is

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94 See Hollander 2010 pp. 30-31 and in appendices for quotes and references.  
95 Fair Trade Center (FTC) & Swedwatch (2011) p. 5.  
ICTI CARE is a toy industry’s business initiative intended to check that there are reasonable working conditions in toy factories in for instance China.
the actors involved: There are the Swedish organisations behind the report – among them Fair Trade Center (FTC) & Swedwatch. There are Swedish toy companies with high profiles on human rights questions. They source a lot of their production from Guandong. An important actor is also ICTI which was mentioned in the quote. An important Chinese actor is SACOM (Students & Scholars Against Corporate Misbehavior). The header "Santa’s Workshop" comes from a film and a report on Chinese toy manufacturing from 2004.

In the second review – from 2011 – Swedwatch continues on the excessive overtime issue:

"Doing as ICTI CARE has done, not complying with Chinese working hour legislation and allowing working hours in excess of 66 hours a week until June 2012, is not a reasonable measure. Especially considering the fact that ICTI CARE has not included employee representatives in its decision-making bodies. In other words it is the employers who have unilaterally stated a policy that it is OK for employees to work far longer than permitted by law. It may be so that widespread cheating with double records of working hours etc. is a major problem, but this can never be used as an argument for diluting the law".98

I bring up the Swedwatch reports in my discussion of the big recall of 2007 also because they can give a glimpse of the interplay between, on the one hand, corporate actors which are sensitive to public opinion and on the other hand civil society as represented by NGOs.

A key question is whether a very publicised event, such as the recall described by Peng, can contribute to detoxification through an empowered and more vigilant workforce in the toy factories. If so, and to what extent, one such factor in a complex weave can make a difference is of course impossible to say. I, however, think that it is worthwhile to reflect on.

In 2009 Fair Trade Center published the report *Strategies for strengthening human rights in the Chinese Workplace – for Companies, Trade unions and NGOs*. In that report examples are given on multi-stakeholder projects involving TNCs sourcing in the PRC. The reason for the report is given in the intro:

"For over ten years Fair Trade Center (FTC) has worked to promote sustainable trade. FTC is a Swedish ... NGO that reviews how Swedish companies that trade with, or operate in, low-wage countries, take responsibility ... (M)uch has happened. In 1996 no Swedish company had a policy or code of conduct that took responsibility for the working conditions in its supply chain in any thorough way. By 2009 it is, in principle, the custom for companies to have an ethical policy for conditions in their supply chain. The question is no longer whether ... but

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96 In December 2009, Swedwatch released a report entitled “Reviewing Santa’s workshop” ... One of the most important demands ... concerning toys in 2009 was that the toy business must make sure that employees in the toy factories in China become aware of their rights and have the opportunity to complain if these are violated. The 2011 follow-up has been conducted through a round table meeting, ... (Fair Trade Center (FTC) & Swedwatch (2011) p. 3.

97 Fair Trade Center (FTC) & Swedwatch are Swedish NGOs focusing on Human Rights and different aspects of globalisation.

98 Fair Trade Center (FTC) & Swedwatch (2011) p. 5.
how. At the same time a long series of studies and analyses indicate that very little has changed ... as regards issues such as union freedom, discrimination, empowerment and pay."

The problems are especially great when it comes to "companies who operate in - or who buy from suppliers that operate in - China or Vietnam, where free unions are forbidden."

However, when reading the second revision of Santa’s Workshop it isn’t farfetched to interpret it as if the pace of change has increased:
"Several (of the companies discussed in the two revisions) have strengthened the competence of the people auditing their social requirements and have expanded their presence on the Chinese market. ... ICA has introduced new routines aimed at checking previously unknown sub-contractors ..."

But the developments are indeed ambiguous:
"The demand for democratically elected labour representatives at factory level ... Guangdong Province has issued information that employees will be allowed to participate in negotiations on agreements concerning salaries and other working conditions from February 2011. ... The background to this initiative is the increasing number of open labour market conflicts and the argument from the politicians is that a more ordered form of negotiations between employees and employers is necessary. Employers in Guangdong are, however, openly critical of this proposal and they warn that in the end Guangdong will no longer be able to compete with lower salaries and they fear that this will cause factory closures in the ... region".

In order to further interpret these ambiguous developments it is necessary to bring in some further interdisciplinarities. First I turn to a macro perspective which sheds light on the new kind of interplay between TNCs, the media and civil society which was alluded to above.

II.3) The Network Society and Flow Perspective of Manuel Castells

When I try to discuss the new forces at work in transforming the world production and the global detox scene a set of extremely illuminating perspectives are provided by Manuel Castells. He started off as an urban sociologist but earned the title "the Karl Marx of the late 20th Century" through his trilogy The information age: Economy, Society and Culture from the end of the 'second millennium'.

For my purposes in this report I will focus on his analysis of the weakening State in one section of Vol. II. But it is worth mentioning that this middle volume in the trilogy has the thought provoking name The Power of Identity. A name like this is provoking to the main streams of both 'political economy' and 'environmental science'. It thus opens up some themes that I want to draw attention to here.

99 Fair Trade Center (FTC) 2009 p. 4.
101 Fair Trade Center (FTC) & Swedwatch (2011) p. 4. ICA is a Swedish retail chain.
103 Castells, Manuel (1996/2000). I use the notion 'second millennium' since the title of Volume III in the trilogy is End of Millenium.
The Doll, the Globe and the Boomerang

The section of Vol. II that I will focus on is the one named "A Powerless State?". But I will also refer briefly to his present work through his recent Communication Power. I get the impression that he is slightly more optimistic about the room for agency in the information age in the latter book.

II.3.1) Interpreting Weakening State Regulations

Castells intersperses the 3 volumes of The Information Age with remarks on method but it is not possible to summarise his views on methodology or to place him in a disciplinary box. His ability to integrate most of the social science perspectives is well captured by Chris Freeman – the grand-old-man of the 'economics of innovation':

"Not since Weber has there been such a determined and largely successful effort to bring to bear the results and analytical perspectives of all the social sciences on the evolution of society. It is to be hoped that this book will be read by social scientists of all kinds, but especially by economists since they, ... need to be reminded that Max Weber was a professor of economics." (Chris Freeman in New Political Economy)

Rather than summarising Castells on method I will highlight some insights of his which must be taken into account when I try to understand the emerging global risk landscape.

One theme of Castells which is central here is that of declining state power to regulate. Hopes for and doubts about state regulation can be seen both in my preceding and in my following section (II.2 and II.4).

With the aid of Castells I can enter the macro-question of 'state regulatory power' as a tool for i.a. reshaping global product chains.

"State control over space and time is increasingly bypassed by global flows of capital, goods, services technology, communication and information.

... while global capitalism thrives, and nationalist ideologies explode all over the world, the nation-state, as historically created in the Modern Age seems to be loosing its power ...

In the introductory parts of A Powerless State? Castells summarises why he thinks that the power of most states of the world is decreasing drastically by referring to uncontrollable financial flows, erosion of state finances and dismantling of former welfare states, breakdown of state media power and the globalisation of crime.

107 Castells, Manuel (1997/2000) Vol. II: (The Power of Identity). P. 243. Castells stresses that the state is loosing its power but not its influence. This exemplifies that it is very hard to summarise a text that gives so many 'pros and cons'.
There is of course an unmanageable amount of scholarly work about all the fundamental trends mentioned. In order to give a glimpse of Castells way of arguing the only area to be quoted here is the environment:

"Nation-states also confront the limits of their legitimacy and thus ultimately their power regarding the global management of the environment. ... individual nation-states are powerless, on their own, to act on issues such as global warming, the ozone layer, the deforestation ... and the like."¹⁰⁹

When *The Information Age* was written, the PRC was still looked upon by many as an exception to the tendency of reduced state power. Castells, however, partly through the influence from his students, noted a weakening state control even there:

"China is experiencing a ... fundamental transformation, with Shanghai and Guandong controlling the main avenues of access to the global economy, and many cities and provinces around the country organizing their own linkages to the new market system. While Beijing seems to be keeping political control with an iron hand, in fact the power of the Chinese Communist party relies on a delicate balance of power-sharing and wealth distribution between national, provincial and local elites."¹¹⁰

Also in other areas than state power I find it reasonable to assert that Castells was ahead of most of us when it came to predicting trends in the PRC. In another context I have quoted Castells' forecast about the dangers of the US trade deficit with China.¹¹¹ More pertinent to the main argument of this report is, however, another analysis of a Chinese development:

“China continues to send students and professionals abroad, as the most effective means of building its technological potential. But, ..., most of these bright young Chinese scientists and engineers are not truly welcome back home, suffocated by a bureaucratic system of science, ... and a generally oppressive cultural atmosphere. Thus, after the training, they bureaucratize themselves, or ..., just stay in the West or .... I will not go so far as to say that without democracy China cannot truly gain access to the information technology paradigm, so vital for its grand design: Political process cannot be reduced to simple statements. But, without some form of open society, it probably cannot, ....”¹¹²

The kind of opening that O'Rourke and Brown (see below) think is necessary for detoxifying the product chains might thus be supported by more general Chinese needs in the ICT Network era.

II.3.2) Communication, Counter-power and the Environment

When I say that PRC needs in the ICT Network era might support detoxification I can be accused of wishful thinking. But I believe that I am in good company – again that of

Manuel Castells. A quote from a decade later – albeit before the Copenhagen disaster in the climate negotiations – illustrates a certain optimism as well as his view of Communication ... and Counter-power in the Network Society.113

"Thus a multi-pronged movement made up of activists, scientists, and celebrities, acting on the media and networking via the Internet, has transformed the way we think about nature and about our place on the planet. The change is three-dimensional: it concerns our notion of space, our notion of time, and the very notion of the boundaries of society ...

... we are acting on global warming now, or starting to do so. But to be able to act we had to change the way we used to think. We had to reprogram the networks of our minds by reprogramming the networks of our communication environment."114

II.4) Democratic Governance as a Prerequisite for Detoxifying Product chains

II.4.1) – O’Rourke and Brown’s Perspectives from Outside

In my interdisciplinary journey to find new approaches to the study of potentially toxic product chains, I make my next stop at an article by O’Rourke and Brown.115 I quoted that article from 2003 above and stop at it here for a number of reasons:

The first reason I tried to capture through the quote in the image of 'the race to the bottom' (I.3.2). When this race is discussed it is often suggested that the hundreds of millions of new entrants into the capitalist labour market not only create a downward pressure on wages but that industrial working conditions generally are arrived at through entirely new mechanisms after the tidal changes of the 1980s.

The working conditions that are in focus here are those that concern chemically related hazards. Those concern me since I want to explore the idea that the product chains ending at "our day care centre" will not be chemically safe until "chemical conditions" are safe from the source and all along the chain.

O’Rourke and Brown discuss the forces that tend to lower standards in a multi-faceted way. The economic transformations unleashed by the growth-motivated opening of China, are central. The authoritarian heritage, however, make the new economic logic especially "toxic".116

At the turn of the millennium the dismantling of the state sector was very intensive. The phenomenal growth took place in township businesses and of course in the coastal zones where the (often foreign) investors found a docile workforce in the seemingly


115 O’Rourke, D. and Brown, G. (2003), "Experiments in Transforming the Global Workplace: Incentives and Impediments to Improving Workplace Conditions in China".

unlimited pool of migrant labourers without even elementary rights. The "grow now – regulate later" attitude was most obvious in the implementation of the safety policies.

"Both national and local labor inspectorates attempting to regulate workplaces find themselves underfunded, overworked and too weak to enforce laws on politically-connected firms."  

"Even in the Pearl River delta, an industrial hotbed, there is only one government inspector for every 20,000 workers, compared with one per 4,000 workers in Hong Kong."

And with the wide-spread corruption the value of those inspectors can of course be doubted. The "most glaring disincentive" to regulate and to implement the weak regulations was, however, the contradiction at the local level between safety on the one hand and the need to attract businesses on the other.

The quality of O'Rourke and Brown's article that makes it of special interest here is, however, the emphasis that O'Rourke and Brown places on remedies connected to what I can call emancipatory strategies.

Those emancipatory strategies ultimately rest on the assumption that the best guarantee, for a movement towards better safety, is empowered work-forces backed by lively civil societies. O'Rourke and Brown summarise their arguments under the three headings Transparency, Verification and Worker Participation. How far we still are from the third step – Worker Participation – can be illustrated by what is achieved and not achieved concerning the first step – Transparency.

"Firms operating in China should disclose the names, locations and conditions of their factories and subcontractors' factories. This is a simple principle. If MNCs want to source in China (which many, many do), and don’t want to be associated with poor working conditions, then they must prove that their factories are not sweatshops."

The quote is, as mentioned, from 2003 and the principle is indeed simple. In spite of this it was broken by one of the world’s largest and most consumer-reputation-sensitive companies in 2007 (See Mattel-case above in II.2.1). And even in a country such as Sweden – with its strong tradition of openness – most MNCs are secretive about their product chains. It was only after criticism from the London-based INGO Environmental Justice Foundation that the deservedly well-respected Swedish company H&M acknowledged the principle that it has responsibility back to the very first links in its

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119 Compare with what Ching Kwan Lee says about the same phenomenon in II.5.3.
120 In this short summary of some of of O’Rourke and Brown’s arguments I intersperse my own value judgments. I also build on my union experience. See also my and Sven Nyberg’s articles in Hildebrandt, E. et al. eds.(2001). See also Hollander (2010) and Haley, B. and Hollander, E (2006).
121 For the sake of the argument I interpret the three headings as steps where the first – "Transparency" – is easiest to achieve. This is not the only interpretation possible but from the perspective of the international civil society influencing international corporations it stands to reason to expect that Transparency is the easiest step to achieve. Also see above in II.2.2.2.
There are increasing signs (that) the era of cheap labour in China might be coming to an end. Honda Motor workers have secured a 24 per cent pay rise after a week of sometimes violent strike action which closed all four of Honda’s plants in China. And production workers at the Foxconn factory where there have been ten suicides this year are to receive a 30 per cent pay boost. The second generation of Chinese factory workers could be better acquainted with their rights than their parents may have been."^{124}

O'Rourke and Brown warns that outsider advisors should be aware of the limited influence they can exert on Chinese government policies. Strategies of "shaming and blaming" also haven't worked. O’Rourke and Brown therefore argue for a long term multi-stakeholder policy."^{125}

The biggest optimist – or rather the person with the most convincing combination or realism and optimism – who I have encountered in my looking for signs of real change, seems to be Han Dong Fang – founder of Hong Kong-based China Labour Bulletin (CLB). In a Swedish film from 2001 – on the move of cell-phone production to China – Han Dong Fang stated that there might emerge genuine trade unions in China in ten years' time."^{126} To the optimist, the events of June 2010 can be seen as a sign that Han Dong Fang was more realistic than most observers in academia or diplomacy.

II.5) Kaeoke to Catch Sight of Emerging Patterns 'Under the Radar'

II.5.1) – the Humble Methodological Paradigm of You-Tien Hsing

You-Tien Hsing has, as far as I know, given one of the best accounts of key concepts for anyone who wants to understand China's (re)integration into the global economy. I refer i.a. to concepts such as *guangxi* and *tong-xiang* as exemplified in Castells’ reference to her work:

"Chinese investors from Hong Kong and Taiwan used the opening to decentralize their production, particularly in the Pearl River Delta, ... To minimize risks, they used

\[^{123}\] Concerning the criticism from "Environmental Justice Foundation" – see Ander (2010). This criticism concerned the possibly Uzbeki cotton-supplier of H&M's Bangladeshi garment supplier. Concerning the impression that H&M is deservedly well-respected see Wingborg (2006).


\[^{125}\] Compare with FTC (2009) and (2011). Quoted above in II.2.2.2.

\[^{126}\] See the TV-documentary: "Made in China" by Pär Fjällström. Fjällström (cirka 2001).
their Guanxi (relationship) networks, particularly looking for people who were from the same place of origin (tong-xiang), their relatives or friends, ...127

In her book from the late 1990s – Making Capitalism in China ... – she also helps us understand many other conditions on the macro as well as the micro level. On the macro level she helps us understand one of the new patterns of FDI (foreign direct investment) that reshaped the economic globalisation scene when the centrality of Western TNCs in global FDI pattern started to fade in the late 20th century. She helps us understand in what ways it has become more difficult to shape "tox-risk-flows" by direct regulation on a state or super state level. She does this i.a. by showing that the particular new pattern of FDI under scrutiny in her book rests on a

"... local-global coalition ... (that) ... bypasses the control of the (PRC) central government."128

From an 'economistic' point of view Hsing's "macro-case" can be said to be a study of how Chinese production came to dominate the international shoe business. But it is much more than that which has to do with the unique combining of the macro and micro levels.

On the micro level Hsing studies a number of phenomena which – as mentioned above – are central for the understanding of China today. A case in point is the day-to-day functioning of corruption:

"In an interview with a Taiwanese investor in China, when I asked about the effect of the policy of three year tax holidays ... the owner told me that these policies are 'made for fools'. The more generous investment conditions were to be tailor-made through individual negotiation with local officials.129 These include simplified application procedures for project approval; more favorable tax breaks; cheaper land, ... (t)he policy of 'opening one eye with the other closed' when inspecting import materials and export products ... half-hearted implementation of environmental and labor regulations; ...").130

My main reason for calling attention to Hsing’s early work in this report is, however, that I want to call attention to her short appendix on methodology.131

Before going in to this I want to make my methodological praise easier to grasp by mentioning three further concrete examples of how the FDIs were 'smoothened' by "the

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127 Castells (2000) p. 315-316. Castells explicitly expresses his esteem for You-Tien Hsing’s work and refer to her when discussing those key concepts.


129 Here Hsing refers to her interview L6 which was made with a "general manager of a Taiwanese electronics firm investing in Shenzhen". This is one out of altogether 223 interviews which are mentioned in her "List of interviews".

130 Hsing (1998) p. 130. My emphasis on " ... half-hearted implementation ... ".

use of" cultural, historical, and linguistic affinities between the Taiwanese investors, the entrepreneurial local officials and the PRC workforce.\textsuperscript{132}

First an example of linguistic affinities:  
"During my fieldwork in the PRD, the language I choose to use – Mandarin or Hokkian – produced totally different levels of trust by the Taiwanese investors and managers.\textsuperscript{133} The moment I started speaking Hokkian, the wall between me and the interviewees was dismantled by the minute."\textsuperscript{134}

A second example relates to a common authoritarian heritage, a historical affinity here manifested in a military 'metaphor' for managing day-to-day shop-floor discipline:

"One goal of discipline training was to have workers comply with commands without hesitance or question, 'just like soldiers ...'. A woman worker told me that their manager's famous line was: 'You do what you are told to do ...'

An even more revealing line from the same manager:
'‘a reasonable command is good for training; an unreasonable command is good for character building’ ”\textsuperscript{135}

The third example and quote on the subject of affinities was actually anticipated above.\textsuperscript{136} Hsing emphasizes the complexities:

"Gift Exchange and Guanxi Building  
Developing Guanxi networks may corrupt local officials. ... However, a rigid moral judgment may be misleading ... and a sweeping categorization that a practice is corrupt may distort our understanding of a more subtle cultural phenomenon. \textsuperscript{137}

One way of understanding the corruption of local officials is to view it through the prism of power struggles between central and local levels:

"(There is) ... a trend of superficial compliance of top-down policies and (a) tension between the high- and low-level authorities ... whatever the policies from the top may be, there is always a way to implement them to the benefit of the localities. ... Taiwanese investors obtained favorable investment conditions from local officials on the basis of their understanding of such flexibility ...“\textsuperscript{138}  

\textsuperscript{132} The concept entrepreneurial local official might need an explanation already here. The easiest way of doing this is by quoting: "The energy of ... (this kind of official) ... impressed me greatly. Their enthusiasm was very different from a stereotypical impression that the term "socialist bureaucrats" may have produced. In fact, in postreform China, local bureaucrats have been the most active entrepreneurs in the newly opened economy." Hsing (1998) p. 6. 
\textsuperscript{133} Mandarin Chinese has been systematically promoted over the past hundred years to be the official, unifying language of the Chinese. Hokkian (a "Chinese dialect) is spoken on Taiwan and in the neighbouring mainland coastal areas. (My note/EH).  
\textsuperscript{134} Hsing (1998) p. 105. (Italics by me).  
\textsuperscript{135} Hsing (1998) p. 103.  
\textsuperscript{136} It was anticipated in the quote on the day-to-day functioning of corruption.  
\textsuperscript{137} Hsing (1998) p. 132.  
\textsuperscript{138} Hsing (1998) p. 133.  

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II.5.2) Trying to Understand You-Tien Hsing’s Method

Below I will try to summarise You-Tien Hsing’s methodological ideas through excerpts even though it is difficult to do so.

**Impressing Field Work**

In her short “Notes on Methodology” You-Tien Hsing just show us the ‘top of the methodological iceberg’.\(^{139}\) She spent 15 months in field work between 1991 and 1995. The field work was conducted at strategic locations including 5 areas in mainland China as well as in Taiwan, Hong Kong Singapore and Vancouver (Canada). For my report the fact that her field work in mainland China had a strong focus on the ‘heart of the workshop’ – the PRD – of course makes it especially interesting.

“I conducted interviews with 80 local Chinese officials, including interviews at tax and land bureaus, local banks, city/town planning departments, committees for foreign economic relations and trade, labor departments and collective enterprises ... In addition, I used the method of participant observation by attending banquets and site tours with local officials and investors; and I stayed in two Taiwanese-funded factories in the PRD ...”\(^{140}\)

Only the list of interviews covers 10 pages in her book.\(^{141}\) The interviews appear under 17 headings such as: (A) Company A (July 1991; March - April, June 1992) [13 interviews]; ... (N) Hong Kong and Other Foreign Investors in China) [7 interviews]; ... (P) City Planners and Other Professionals in China (...1992) [16 interviews]; ...

By mentioning some of the headings I i.a. want to underline that the interviews were done at many different levels. In spite of the huge number of interviews they were in-depth interviews. (Most of them lasted 1 - 3 hours).

Of the techniques used by Hsing I specially want to stress that

”... it was more useful to maintain the interview as a dialogue than as a question-and-answer type of exchange. The interviewee often felt more willing to spend the time and be more engaged in an interview if he or she found that he or she could also obtain some information ... For example, workers were usually very interested in knowing what it was like working in other factories, ...; investors were eager to know my analysis of the prospects of their investment. (I) could provide the interviewee with a bigger picture of where she or he stood.”\(^{142}\)

The idea of interviews as dialogues gives a hint of one very special feature of Hsing’s methods. It is anathema to many social science methodological textbooks.\(^{143}\)

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\(^{139}\) The "Notes on Methodology" appear as Appendix A on pp. 161 - 164.


\(^{141}\) Appendix B on pp. 165 - 174.


\(^{143}\) See below on influences from Burrawoy.
Strategic choice of industry to analyse
The move of the Taiwanese Shoe Industry to Southern China is a good study object if one wants to understand the new pattern of FDI, the industry structure transformation etc. that has moved the centre of gravity of the world economy. Hsing does not claim that she is studying the genesis of the move of the centre of gravity. This is something that I read in to her book. But the title of her book – Making Capitalism in China – reveals that she thinks that her study sheds light on this larger question.

Hsing’s arguments for her focus on the Taiwanese shoe industry are, however, important as they stand:

"The (Taiwanese) shoe industry is mainly composed of small- and medium-sized firms and it has established an extensive production and marketing network. ... Such small business-based networks of production and marketing can be found in other major Taiwanese export-manufacturing industries such as garments, bicycles, umbrellas, toys, ... (But) the fashion shoe industry is distinctive in its greater sensitivity to the rapidly changing fashion trends ... Therefore there is higher demand for an effectively coordinated network that can respond to such changes ..."

... the shoe industry has an urgent need to cultivate local human resources in Southern China. Therefore their restructuring process in Southern China represent the investment strategies that small producers adopt ...

I think that one of the reasons why most Western scholars were so slow in seeing or understanding the economic emergence of China has to do with a traditional focus on large TNCs. This is also among the reasons for the need to re-examine methodological choices. The SME-dominance of FDIs to the PRC might have been broken since the early 1990s but we can certainly learn a lot from methods that worked well during ‘the formative years’.

Logic of (and inspiration for Hsing’s) Research Strategies
Looking at Hsing’s short (< half a page) passage on the Logic of Research Strategies is a good starting point when I want to look at the ‘underwater-parts’ of her methodological iceberg.

"This research attempts to bridge the gap between macro- and micro-analysis of regional development and international capital flow."145

Hsing’s 'methodological dialogue’ with Castells was mentioned above. Here I will focus on another US West Coast inspiration – Michael Burrawoy.

Although case studies have often been criticized as not able to be generalized, I agree with what Michael Burrawoy (1991) has suggested, that micro case studies do not necessarily exclude macro analysis ...

A short digression to Michael Burrawoy is thus in order. The book referred to above wants to contribute to "the methodology of social science" by "unchaining

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145 Hsing, Loc. Cit.
146 Ibid., p. 163.
ethnography".\textsuperscript{147} This is to be done through demonstrating that participant observation "best exemplifies what is distinctive about the practice of all social sciences". The wording is strong:

"In our eyes participant observation is the paradigmatic way of studying the social world, and from this point of view anthropology becomes the paradigmatic social science."\textsuperscript{148}

The idea is that it is possible to avoid both the positivist reduction and the hermeneutic reduction. A central feature of the positivist reduction is that it leads to viewing the interaction of participant and observer as a source of 'bias'. The hermeneutic or rather postmodern reduction suppresses the scientific dimension – the dialogue between theory and data. An important research strategy for the group around Michael Burrawoy is what they call "the extended case method".

Hsing agrees with Michael Burrawoy that it is "... possible to connect micro- and macro analysis by investigating 'the institutional context that shapes and distorts what happens in the life world'"\textsuperscript{149}

"My in-depth interviews with Taiwanese investors and factory owners, managers, local workers, and local officials and participant observation of their interaction and work constituted the major sources of information for ..., the relationship between overseas investors and local workers and the relationship between local governments and overseas investors."\textsuperscript{150}

\textbf{Written Sources}

"the semi underground characteristic of the capital flow from Taiwan to China have made it difficult to gather official data. Yet the very same characteristic has made it one of the hottest stories in Taiwan and China's newspapers. Although press reports do not necessarily follow the rules of academic writing, they are one of the best written sources to grasp the dynamism of the activities. Furthermore, the newly developed investment rush in China has generated a wave of publication of guidebooks for investing in China, many of these are written by business consultants ..."\textsuperscript{151}

In many academic settings the use of 'grey sources' is very dangerous for the reputation of the researcher. The fact that Hsing in her book demonstrates that 'grey sources' can help open so many 'black boxes' thus underlines the dilemmas surrounding such sources.

\textbf{Participant Observation and Situational Analysis}

"I also had daily meals with factory managers in their lounges, went to visit their partner firms with them, and sang along with groups of shoe business people in local karaoke bars ..."\textsuperscript{152}

\textsuperscript{148} Ibid., p.3.
\textsuperscript{149} Hsing, (1998) p. 163.
\textsuperscript{150} Hsing, Loc. Cit.
\textsuperscript{151} Hsing, Loc. Cit.
"The awareness of the position of the interviewee is especially important in a society in which hierarchy has been a dominant organizational principle. On the occasion when there was more than one person present, their relative position would affect what they would and would not say in front of others."

"The Situational Analysis was also applied to the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. Gender and cultural and social backgrounds of the interviewer and the interviewee would influence the dynamics ... of the interview. ... I found it helpful to admit the difference and be open about such differences."153

Of course Hsing was in an exceptionally good position to do participant observation. The quote above where she mentions the effect of speaking Hokkian (local Taiwanese dialect) is a case in point. The effect of her gender, however, is hardly explained at all. It wasn’t until I 'googled' at her later work that I – as a westerner unfamiliar with Chinese name customs – did realize that she is female.154

II.5.3) You-Tien Hsing, Ching Kwan Lee and Risk Reduction from Below

Lots of the arguments, for commending You-Tien Hsing in the context of detoxification of product chains, have been hinted at above. In this third portion related to You-Tien Hsing I try to clarify the reasons further by using a book from 2009. I mainly refer to the contributions by her and her co-editor of Reclaiming Chinese Society – the new social activism.155 I will add some reasons based on my own experience of studying 'globalisation from below' in the last portion of II.5.

In the book about reclaiming Chinese society I find deepened/more sophisticated arguments for a view, on the detox of product chains, that has emerged step by step in the earlier sections of chapter II. Briefly stated the view is that 'we' shall look less to the state or superstate laws, CSR from TNCs etc. and more to an emancipated civil society when seeking long-run solutions to the Herculean task of global detoxification. The two first forces are of course extremely important but without popular pressure I don't think it will work.

In the final chapter of her book from 1998 You-Tien Hsing gives us a hint about how she wants to continue her research. The title of the chapter tells a lot: "Global Networks and Local Development".156 The truly long run perspective is illustrated by a portion on "China and Transnational Networks of Chinese Entrepreneurs".157 There she discusses the roots of the "Chinese ethnicity-based transnational trade net-works in Asia". (they ... "... can be traced back to the late 14th century. The networks flourished in the nineteenth century, coinciding with several waves of mass migration from southern coastal China to Southeast Asia and the establishment of overseas Chinese communities throughout the region."158

153 Hsing, Loc. Cit.
154 I think this is more than an anecdote since it illustrates that even such trained boundary-spanner of cultural landscapes as Hsing forgets to mention this.
We as readers of You-Tien Hsing’s book can get a first vague notion of how the 55 million overseas Chinese at the turn of the millennium could be instrumental in bringing many of their more than one billion Chinese ‘siblings’ in mainland China into the world market.159

Hsing – in that portion on the networks of Chinese entrepreneurs – gives a balanced account of great value of the specificities and non-uniqueness of the Chinese version of reciprocity – guangxi – as it is manifested in those networks.160

You-Tien Hsing ends her 1998 book and her chapter on "Global Networks and Local Development" with a question about new social forces:

"As the overseas Chinese entrepreneurs continue their role in China as the middlemen between the local economy and the rest of the world and the networks of overseas Chinese entrepreneurs continue to strengthen the local state in China and to be strengthened by such alliances, I look for alternative social forces that will emerge in such process of reconfiguration and diversification." 161

Quite a few of those new social forces are studied in Reclaiming Chinese Society. The book is co-edited with Ching Kwan Lee. Six out of ten contributors bears names indicating that they are ethnic Chinese.

The importance of the book, when a 'race to the bottom' is discussed, can be gauged by the introduction to Ching Kwan Lee’s own contribution:

"One astute student of labor movements worldwide predicts the emergence of a world-historic labor movement in China, ... Others have emphasized how diabolical sweatshop conditions in the workplace have combined with staunch state repression ... to produce a seemingly unlimited supply of docile and cheap labor. ... (I) offer an alternative answer ... My basic argument is that despite formidable institutional odds, Chinese workers do resist ... the commodification of labor power. But they have not built a national class movement. Instead the ... 'decentralised legal authoritarianism' has generated patterns of labor activism that are localized, legalistic and cellular."162

Of course 'the jury is still out' concerning those questions. When forming an opinion on whether new Chinese social forces will be important in a long-run, more far-reaching 'globalisation from below' the book Reclaiming Chinese Society can not be omitted.163

160 It is of immense importance to give balanced accounts of reciprocity phenomena today. Why this is so leads beyond this report. In the context of this report I restrict myself to pointing again to the Castells quote above (in the intro to II.5.1), to my own points about reciprocity in a co-authored article on taking sustainability into account (Hermele/Hollander in VHU 2008 pp. 227 - 228) and most importantly to Polanyi, Karl The Great Transformation (1944) and Trade and market in the early empires (1957).
162 Hsing and Lee (ed’s) (2009) p. 42. To readers with a special interest in the topics discussed in the quote from Ching Kwan Lee it should be stressed that the references that she in her turn points to are very useful.
163 The concept 'globalisation from below' is discussed by the two editors of the book on p. 2. They use it to discuss i.a. values and resources provided by transnational civil society. One of their references is to Peter Evans (2005).
I share with the authors of *Reclaiming Chinese Society* the premise that ... 
"... collective social action is a prime mover of change."\(^{164}\)

Though I almost find it inappropriate for a Westerner like myself to give my own interpretation of the findings of the book, I will do that towards the end of II.5.3. At first I will, however, sketch some tools used, and results arrived at, by the two editors. In the introduction they attempt an "initial typology of activism distinguishing among the politics of redistribution, recognition and representation".

The three areas of politics are given a section each of the book. Except for introducing and editing the book the editors contribute in their own capacity to part I (Roman 1) on the politics of (re-)distribution. You-Tien Hsing's piece is on "Urban housing mobilizations" and Ching Kwan Lee's on "Workers and the quest for citizenship". Part II of the book on the politics of recognition includes inter alia pieces on "Feminist networks" and "Civic environmentalism". Part III of the book on the politics of representation include pieces on film and media.

By dividing the spectrum of politics in the manner described the editors arrive at one of the most important conclusions of the book - on "the uneven influence of globalization on Chinese society". While ...
"... transnational organizations, networks, ideas and resources have significant impacts on various domains of recognition and representation struggles (they) are conspicuously absent in redistributive politics."\(^{165}\)

**Chinese Civic Environmentalism**
Before I turn to one of the redistributive struggles – which will be my main focus in these comments – it is meaningful to note some global links of Chinese Civic Environmentalism. It is worth stressing the link concept because Chinese environmentalists use concepts with foreign antecedents only after a process resembling cultural translation. In this process a prerequisite is that the translators are embedded in both the cultures concerned.

Chinese environmentalists "identify themselves with a global cultural form – NGOs:

"(In spite of) constraining regulations of the state and the absence of a non-governmental political culture ... (there were) 200 environmental NGOs a decade after the first was founded in 1994" \(^{166}\)

Features which are shared with global environmentalism are the emphasis on public participation and the rejection of instrumental 'developmentalism'.

"(Another) feature is a new repertoire of action, common in global environmental movements, which I will call 'collective civic action'. Largely deliberative and non-

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\(^{164}\) Hsing and Lee (ed's) (2009) p. 2. See II.5.4 on why and how this premise resonates with my own studies and experiences.


confrontational, this repertoire consists of media campaigns, public lectures, workshops and conferences, salon discussions, online discussions, ..."167

In spite of the resources which Chinese environmentalists gain through the links to global civic environmentalism the author of the piece on Chinese civic environmentalism – Guobin Yang – concludes: "both as a source of solidarity and of social power, environmentalism remains weak. This is not only because it is relatively young, but also because it faces tremendous odds in a culture of materialism and economic development, and because of the limits of its social basis."168

Workers and the Quest for Citizenship
Chinese environmentalists thus have an uphill struggle even without taking on the formidable task of starting to detoxify global product chains. In order to get a first image of the preconditions for detoxification from below in the early links of the production chains I now turn to the aforementioned piece on "Workers and the quest for citizenship".169

Just as was mentioned in section II.4 meaningful monitoring of the hazards at Chinese workplaces is still very remote. When analysing such things as the "logic and limitations of (worker) activism" Ching Kwan Lee also gives clues to this. An important part of her explanation of the "endemic violations of labor rights and entitlements" hinges on the contradictions created by what she calls 'decentralised legal authoritarianism'. On the one hand

"decentralisation makes local government responsible for developing a pro-business local political economy ..

And on the other

"... the same local government agents are called on to implement labor laws promulgated by the central government eager to resolve labor conflicts and to maintain social stability."170

One aspect of the contradictions is that "fiscal decentralisation has generated enormous vested interests among provincial officials to promote and sustain the reform drive". Many of the studies of the rapid growth have been celebratory and have neglected the rise of the 'predatory state' in China:

"Only recently, with rising social unrest, have a few scholars attended to the dark side of economic reform, or the rise of the 'predatory state' in China."

One of the four factors identified as accounting for the decentralisation of 'state predation' is "declining monitoring capability."171 Ching Kwan Lee further notes on the toothless judiciary and labour bureaus:

"Central government law and regulation may provide a wide range of rights and entitlements for workers, but when these are in conflict with local government’s pro-capital interests, the judiciary often succumbs to administrative interference." ...
"Labour bureaus, responsible for enforcing the Labour Law, are marginalized and play second fiddle to economic and commerce bureaus in the local bureaucracies."

Ching Kwan Lee mentions a number of contradictions which are hard to give justice to in a short summary. Here I will end my specific comments on the piece about "Workers and the quest for citizenship" by quoting one of the contradictions:

"It is questionable how long such a bifurcated popular view of a legitimate center presiding over a hierarchy of local venality can be sustained without being replaced by a more integrated view of systematic corruption and illegitimacy." 172

The Legal and Non-global Framing of Workplace Struggles

Ching Kwan Lee ends her piece with a portion under the heading "'Against the law': citizenship as lawful rights". As a pre-introduction to this she says:

Over time, we may expect Chinese workers to develop greater capacity for activism and solidarity than what they have so far demonstrated. (This) may pivot around the law and the practice of rights protection, by citizens ...

It is when I reinterpret Ching Kwan Lee on this point, and also on what she and You-Tien Hsing say jointly in the introduction to the whole book Reclaiming Chinese Society, that I might be accused of misrepresentation.

Anyhow, when I read about the way in which worker's struggles have been framed in legal terms and that "workers seeking legal protection are often disillusioned by the uneven implementation of law" (Hsing and Lee p. 10) it reminds me of my experiences of the labour struggles in apartheid South Africa. 174 Also there the struggles were to a surprising degree framed in legal terms. Differences of South Africa of the late 1970s and the PRC 40 years later are of course enormous. With my comment, I am only saying that tidal and sudden refractions of labour struggles have taken place before.

Another remark from me has to do with the until now lacking global links of the redistributive struggles. When discussing differentiated strategies for engaging the state the two editors note that:

"... many social groups engaging in struggles over recognition and representation appeal, with palpable results, to global norms of sustainable development, gender equity and empowerment, religious freedom ... (This) suggests that the Chinese state does not and cannot remain impervious to international standards ... Yet this ... spells problems for certain kinds of social activism in China. While China is often targeted for its violation of environmental, gender and religious rights, the sway of global neoliberalism leads to little criticism against rising inequality and redistributive injustice in China." 175

To this I might remark that the sway of global neo-liberalism might have been weakened after the financial crises.

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Also, some of the reported strategies of hexan-hurt workers in Guandong, iPhone-supplying firms during the spring of 2011, suggests that reference to international standards might have become more 'possible to imagine' at least at the intersection of redistributive (worker) politics and recognition (enviro) politics.

**II.5.4) Personal Reasons for Commending You-Tien Hsing**

I am biased in favour of the approaches of You-Tien Hsing. The biases have their roots both in my family background and in experiences gained during my time as a union researcher/investigator. They also have roots in my 'semi-academic' studies of the auto industry and especially the chemitox related industries in the late 80s and early 90s. The most important purpose of explaining the biases mentioned is to highlight some of my methodological points.

**Family background 1862 - 1995**

For four generations my family on the paternal side worked in the hide business. After the second world war, the business interests spread both industrially and geographically. From my youth onwards this heritage gave good insights into crucial traits of the global hide, leather and shoe businesses. Family networks were very important and the boundaries between business relations, social relations and ethnic relations were far from distinct.

Familiarity with the trade (secrets) was spread i.a. via production visits and interchange at different social occasions. The logic of the business was very far from the logic of the business system depicted at the SSE (Stockholm School of Economics) which I attended from 1967 to 1971. This was even more remarkable since the SSE had been established in order to cater to the needs of the emerging Swedish business community in the early 20th century. Standard economics and business education that I met later seemed even further removed from the impressions gained through the familiarity mentioned.

You-Tien Hsing, on the other hand, captures patterns that I think are very important for anyone who wants to understand the dynamic of the developments that led to the establishment of the PRC generally and the PRD in particular as the workshop of the world. Networked relationship patterns have come more into focus in the business literature during the last decades but You-Tien Hsing is less 'shy' in describing i.a. the affinities which can some times blur the distinctions between such things as network building and corruption.

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176 See Berggren et al. (1991): *Are they unbeatable? - Report from a field trip to study transplants, the Japanese owned auto plants in North America*. As said above I use the term 'semi-academic' in a non-derogatory sense. The report with Berggren and Björkman has a distinctly different audience from most academic reports. I extensively used the network gained during my union time. As to my 'semi-academic' studies of chemi-tox related industries they have not been reported in English but are extensively used in my dissertation (Hollander 1995). Also see below in the latter part of this portion.

177 The 'source' for this statement on Jewish family networks in the global hide and leather businesses are a number of undocumented 'interviews' with my parents – Camilla and Fritz Hollander – and the networks concerned.

178 A guess as to why You-Tien Hsing is less 'shy' is that it has to do with her ethnicity. In a sense she is 'critizising from within', which has the consequence that she doesn't fear being accused of giving air to ethnical stereotypes.
Participatory observation is of course a standard method in anthropology but the information seeking through mutually beneficial information exchange which You-Tien Hsing describes normally create huge problems for academics – even in quite a few social sciences.

You-Tien Hsing’s choice of an industry mainly composed of SMEs is also crucial. My understanding of why the 1990s moves of the centre of gravity, and the underlying new FDI-patterns, were underestimated to such an extent until the financial crises, has a lot to do with the prominence of SMEs in the new pattern. The North American and European views of internationalisation very much had large TNCs in focus. Many of the business moves to China ‘came under the radar’.

**Trade Union Research**

My preparation for a deep appreciation of You-Tien Hsing’s work were complemented during my time (1978 - 1987) at the small research department of SFWU – a 100,000 member strong chemical and allied products’ trade union which was part of the Swedish blue-collar federation LO.\(^{179}\) The fact that a Swedish blue-collar union for chemicals and allied products used resources for independent investigations was a consequence of the sophistication of the Swedish union movement and the very tough challenges which the union faced from the late 1960s onwards. Two of the main challenges can be summarised in the words *chemicalisation* and *globalisation*.

My focus here is on the approaches we as union researchers used for our investigations. One aim was to understand if workplaces of the members had a chance to survive and under what conditions.\(^ {180}\)

A number of factors made meaningful investigations possible and also extremely rewarding.\(^ {181}\) A general trait of Sweden at that time was that it was legitimate for a blue-collar union to investigate and think about the broader viability of the workplaces. The familiarities of the researchers were also important. In many communities local officials shared (social democratic) values with union representatives. But the local union representatives also shared local perspectives with the workplace management. The familiarities which I had gained through my family background and through the initiation provided by Sweden’s elite business university – SSE – were also very helpful.

All the kind of sources mentioned by You-Tien Hsing – except Kareoke participation – were also used by us in the research department of SFWU. The ‘standard plant investigation visit’ was prepared by studying those kinds of written sources, by talking to such people as industry wage negotiators and public authorities dealing with the industries, by visits to corporate head quarters, etc. At the plant we would interview the

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\(^{179}\) On the acronyms LO and SFWU – see list of abbreviations and also II.1.1.

\(^{180}\) Conditions which might influence survival included industrial policies, environmental policies of the state, but also strategies of Swedish TNCs. Our work has been extensively reported in LO and SFWU documents. They are, however, all in Swedish.

\(^{181}\) In my comments in the main text I can only give a brief account of why the investigations were so rewarding. In order to connect to the context of the crises since 2007, I could say that we were practicing parts of the kind of research agenda, which Susan George recommends in George (2010).
local unions and management – but separately. We were also insistent on walking through the plants. In this way we gained a 'multiple perspective': Managerial views both local and central, multi-level union views, (business) media, public authorities at different levels, academia etc.

There were of course constraints on what we could report publicly. But regarding such a question as 'grey sources' I think that quite clear conclusions can be drawn with relevance for academic and 'semi-academic' research. Our work would have been almost meaningless if we hadn't used 'grey sources'. The way in which we 'validated' our reports was partly through sending draft reports to important informants and asking for comments.

A force that disciplined us in our report-making was that mistakes in the published parts of the reports would delegitimise us. But dangerous as it was to make mistakes it was just as dangerous to avoid mentioning real problems. Academics in a blue-collar union research department are in very exposed positions.

What resonates most strongly in You-Tien Hsing's account is, however, what she has to say about relative positions. I repeat the quote:

"... relative position would affect what they would and would not say in front of others."

For us in the blue-collar union research department it was essential to always keep this in mind on the many occasions when it wasn't possible to interview local unions and management separately. This was even more important in developing countries' settings.182

**Semi-academic studies in the late 80s and early 90s**
The clashes which I experienced between different knowledge creating styles was deepened when I had the opportunity to conduct 'semi-academic' studies in the late 80s and early 90s.

The term 'semi-academic' is specially relevant when describing the now closed Center for Working Life. This institute was established in the 1970s in order that it should be a research support facility for the reforms, enacted by Swedish social democracy, aiming at democratising workplaces. The board had heavy representation from the major central actors on the Swedish labour market. This made for privileged access to certain actors, needs for many special considerations and savage critique from parts of the traditional academic community. To borrow a term coined by labour researcher Richards Edwards, the Center for Working Life had entered "contested terrain" albeit from above.183 The Center (broadened and under a slightly changed name) was closed a short time after the election in 2006 of a 'right-wing-alliance' which broke what was perceived as a social democratic hegemony in labour market, and economic policy thinking. 184

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182 Since international solidarity meant that we as representatives of rich unions in the North were expected to look into abuses perpetrated by Swedish TNCs in developing countries' settings were not uncommon.

183 It was Richard Edwards who coined the term "contested terrain" in this context. Edwards (1979).

184 Personal communications from researchers at the Center when it was closed.
The privileged access that you get when you come from KTH – the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm – is of another kind. Many CEOs of Swedish TNCs have received their education from KTH or HHS. A common educational background used to create strong affinities in Sweden.

In my case, another factor made for sensitivity for questions of access. Depending on the position of the potential interviewee, I could receive very generous interview time or the opposite. This is normal for a researcher. The questions which I studied were extremely sensitive at the time. The questions concerned firm strategies relating to the growing popular scepticism against 'risk society'.

The companies which I approached were – due to the industries to which they belonged – some of the most affected by the growing scepticism. At the same time I was giving the strategists and R&D managers of those firms 'the benefit of the doubt'. This I did by asking them in which respects they tried to turn the challenges into new products or business concepts. They could be proactive in this way for example by learning to listen to the sophisticated critics and building competencies to conduct 'enviro-progressive' research. Some interviewees were thus given a chance to talk about what they considered had been some of the most meaningful and rewarding projects of their professional careers.

The last point exemplifies another of You-Tien Hsing's arguments: The need for reciprocity that is highlighted by her in her comments on the usefulness of maintaining the interview as a dialogue should be much more discussed by academics in the social sciences.

**Getting rid of strait-jackets**

Reading and reflecting on You-Tien Hsing's work has to me resulted in something like getting rid of a strait-jacket. My hope is that the merging of – or rather the establishing of dialogues between – her tradition and those represented by others mentioned in this report might give a small contribution to making the social science studies of sustainability and globalisation more useful for those concerned. This will be an important theme in the short chapter III and in the further research that I hope to initiate.

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**III) A Multi-pronged Movement for Global Detoxification**

In the first chapter of this report I called forth five images. The purpose was to introduce problems faced when you want to follow and analyse a global product chain from the viewpoint of chemical risks and information transmission. The 'doll product chain' was very concrete and was meant to illustrate that even a seemingly very simple product can be difficult to follow and analyse. Then there was the very vague image of 'going into the dark'. This image was meant to suggest that you, as a social scientist, are entering unchartered waters when trying to make a problem-indicating description of a global chain that will be meaningful to actors along a chain which starts in Uzbekistan or China and ends at a day-care centre in Sweden.

After the methodological images came *images of three futures related to detoxification of product chains*. One was optimistic and the other two were pessimistic – fearing that there would be no such detoxification.

The aim of the second chapter was to provide ingredients for *another two images* – one concerning risk futures and the other concerning how to study them. The one on the risk future is one where there is room for a guarded optimism about the chances for 'detoxification from below'. The other image that I wanted to call forth in chapter two was of a future where 'interdisciplinarity, boundary-spanning, semi-academic pursuits, transparent multiple partisanship etc. has found more room in the social sciences than today in order that creative dialogues about detoxification, will be more likely.

In this final chapter of my report I will, in an even more personal way than above, summarise findings under four headings: 'Detoxification from below' (III.1), 'Interdisciplinarities to study the detox of product chains' (III.2), 'Public support for the multi-pronged movement' (III.3), and finally 'Back to the doll chain and the day-care centre Pixie' (III.4). III.1 is thus related to a hoped for future where forces from below have an important role in risk reduction and III.2 concerns how to study the chains without loosing sight of possibly more hopeful developments.

**III.1) Detoxification from Below**

When I now summarise I will allow myself to focus single-mindedly on aspects of the interdisciplinarities of chapter II which provide ingredients for an image which can give the benefit of the doubt to the idea of detoxification from below.

My personal interpretation of the combined heritages of the two boundary-spanners of section II.1 – Hans Palmstierna and Rudolf Meidner – is that it was conceivable – in the early 1970s – to start moving the important actors in Swedish society in the direction of ecologically more benign production and consumption patterns. In the benign patterns, I include detoxification. At that time there seemed to be more space for a country like Sweden to depart from general international trends. My summary of the traits of Swedish society – presented at the end of section II.1 – indicated that in the 1970s it was easier to believe that a small country – immersed in environmentalism – could make a difference.
Of course the visions of Hans Palmstierna – such as the hope that people can be convinced to 'reduce the differences in standard of living among peoples' – can be said to be naïve.\textsuperscript{187} This hope, however, also pointed forward to a time when globalisation – as today – has gone even deeper than at that time and when it is thus even harder to conceive of a country – or even a continent such as Europe – to run counter to global trends. To my mind Hans Palmstierna presaged the idea of 'global detoxification from below'.

In section II.2 it was time to move from the lofty visions nurtured by Sweden of the 1970s to a practical aid for those business executives in the making who are trained to be the future coordinators of global product chains. The future coordinators are expected to realise in what ways dysfunctional information-handling, in very early links of a global chain, can put the brand of the company, which you are responsible for, at risk. Since you might also jeopardise multi-billion dollar brands of the licensors of brands to you (in this case the brands of i.a. Disney and Sesame), a thorough understanding of the early links becomes crucial.

As a future coordinator of chains you also need to understand the interplay between different actors who influence the design of your 'final products'.\textsuperscript{188} I claimed – at the end of portion II.2.1 – that it is 'relevant to discuss which "chemical designs" are robust enough to be "risklessly" transmitted in long product chains'. For a future 'chain coordinator' this might imply that she will manage the compromises between – at one end of the chain kids' desire for doll shoes with strong lustre – and in the other end concerns for the third-tier supplier of paints. When I mention the interplay between different actors who influence the design, I do not only refer to the interplay between company insiders such as designers, production planners and logistics staff. I also refer to the inputs from outsiders such as regulators and chemitox experts.

'The year of the recall' – discussed in section II.2 – also brought to the fore the declining resources and unclear legal powers of US and EU consumer safety authorities. I see this as an illustration of a general trend in the US and EU towards weakening regulatory powers. The textbook presentation of the Mattel case could give the impression that the Chinese counterparts of the US and EU authorities were strengthened. Those are themes to which I will return below when commenting on my own sections II.3 and II.5.

What I, however, especially want to stress in my final comments on the case is the extreme importance given to the media by a central "chain-spanning" actor such as the globally leading toy producer Mattel. This can serve as an illustration of what Castells calls 'communication power'.

After presenting the Mattel case, I reflected on the big toy recall in terms of what it meant to the geography of toy production and civil society influence on the early links of product chains. I noted a – to me surprising – question mark to China as a

\textsuperscript{187} See the introductory quote in II.1.1.

\textsuperscript{188} The fact that I place 'final products' between semi-quotations marks has to do with considerations mentioned in a paragraph on product chains etc. towards the end of portion I.5.1.
leading symbol of the global 'race to the bottom'.\(^{189}\) Quite a few toy makers are 'moving on' to countries such as Viet Nam. Even serious Chinese employers also seem to be threatening to close factories in the Guangdong region if regulations are tightened.\(^{190}\)

In spite of the further moves to the bottom the 'year of the recall' seem to have opened an era of more rapid increase in the civil society influence on the early links of the chain. At least this is my impression.

Manuel Castells has helped me in interpreting many of the trends, which surfaced in the year of the recall. To me Castells gives a frame for thinking that the ICT revolution might strengthen economistic, *uni-dimensional* forces of global control, in the short run. With equal absurd brevity I can, however, interpret his trilogy on the information age and the sequel on communication power as saying that, in the long run, a more *multi-dimensional* governance of our globe might emerge.

In my comments in section II.3 – under the heading The Network Society and Flow Perspective of Manuel Castells – I, however, concentrate on what he has to say about the decline of sovereign states as regulators. A phenomenon, which Castells noted earlier than most of the economic and social sciences, was that the trend, towards de facto weakening state regulations, also included China. This he noted through the influence of students such as You-Tien Hsing.\(^{191}\)

I later – in II.3.2 – gave a glimpse of what I interpret as a bit more optimism from Castells. In his more recent book he changed the key word of the title from *information* to *communication*. In *Communication Power* he lets us imagine that there might be a growing counter-power associated with the ICT revolution. This counter-power might help us start to act on global warming. And might I add – on the risks associated with toxic global product chains.

With the help of O'Rourke and Brown's article on 'improving workplace conditions in China', I returned to the new workshop of the world. In my quotes from O'Rourke and Brown's article I underline how they stress the weak position of the workers 'in the coastal zones. There the (often foreign) investors found a docile workforce in the seemingly unlimited pool of migrant labourers without even elementary rights'.

The function of section II.4 in my report is that the image, of a possible *detox from below*, becomes slightly more concrete there. I interpret O'Rourke and Brown as saying that better safety can in the long run only be attained through *emancipatory strategies*. The assumption is that the best guarantee, for a movement towards that better safety, is an empowered work-forces backed by lively civil societies. A movement towards better safety I assume will include the detoxification of product chains from the early links.

\(^{189}\) Compare I.3.2.

\(^{190}\) See II.2.2.2.

\(^{191}\) See II.5.1 and below.
Another of my interpretations of O'Rourke and Brown is that the strongest way in which we 'as westerners' can act to start reversing the trend towards more unhealthy work environments is to push 'our' TNCs to accept the quest for empowered work-forces backed by lively civil societies. The TNCs could become part of the solution rather than of the problem by accepting three steps: Transparency, Verification and Worker Participation.

O'Rourke and Brown also strengthens my belief that the legal reforms in China will only be of value when combined with emerging social forces. Without such a combination the possibilities to act from outside will be limited.

In II.5 You-Tien Hsing and Ching Kwan Lee helped me get a better understanding of those emerging social forces and before that to understand 'the making of capitalism in China'. Among the phenomena which You-Tien Hsing helped me understand are Chinese versions of 'corruption', 'entrepreneurial local officials', 'de facto neglect of environmental rules', etc.

You-Tien Hsing also helps me understand broader phenomena such as new patterns of FDI and China's fast road to becoming the workshop of the world. The importance of these phenomena in the context of this report is that the arguments related to them underpins my contention that the detoxification in the Chinese end of the product chains can not be imposed from outside. It will be ensured only when it is in the 'possible-to-act-on' interest of those Chinese who are affected in their 'inner and outer environment'.

In the introduction to their joint book on Reclaiming Chinese Society, You-Tien Hsing and Ching Kwan Lee note the lack of criticism from outside against rising inequality and redistributive injustice in China. I interpret the latest developments inside and outside China as providing space for a new dynamic between 'China' and 'us westerners' also when it comes to environmental questions in the broader sense – environmental questions which can interact strongly with redistributive concerns. Cases in point are of course workplace environment and detoxification.

The task of detoxification from below is obviously Herculean. But I hope to have shown that an image of this is at least 'possible to imagine'.

A final note on You-Tien Hsing concludes this section III.1: The role of section II.5 was not only to point to phenomena 'under the radar'. It was also to explore how such phenomena can be studied. In this exploration, You-Tien Hsing also helped. I now turn to the methodological lessons from her and the other boundary-spanners presented in chapter II.

III.2) Interdisciplinarities to Study the Detox of Product Chains

I claimed in the introduction to this concluding chapter III that the central chapter II had resulted in two new images. The substantive one – recalled and summarised in section III.1 – suggested that 'detoxification from below' is 'possible to imagine'. The methodological new image suggests a method frame where there is more room than is normal today for 'interdisciplinarity, boundary-spanning, semi-academic pursuits,
transient multiple partisanship etc.' This method image is recalled and further commented on here in section III.2.

My aim is to make space for alternative knowledge-creating styles. The need arises when I try to bring together sustainability studies, development studies and innovation studies in the context of product chains. In the introduction to the report I suggested that such a bringing together represents a venture into the dark. The kind of studies mentioned – on sustainability, development and innovation – call for interdisciplinarity when attempted one at a time. When you try to combine all of them the need becomes even stronger.

Recalling the method image (‘interdisciplinarity, etc. to be given more room in the social sciences) which aims at suggesting new ways of shedding light on the dark, I will focus on what I believe are the novelties which I have found. I will, however, only be able to partly say how new they are or how they relate to the current discourses on interdisciplinarity. This caveat stems from the fact that my affinity with the interdisciplinarity debates mainly come from the 1970s and 1980s. My impression after some searching is, however, that my methodological reflections – spread out mainly in I.4, I.5, II.1.3 and II.5 will add some light. I organise the summary of my image into three portions: III.2.1 on how interdisciplinarity presupposes multiple affinities, III.2.2 on advantages of semi-academic traits and III.2.3 where I repeat the warning against single stories by pointing to some inspiring alternatives to my own methods. In the last portion I thus mention some entirely different way of attacking the tricky problems related to the detox of global product chains.

III.2.1) Interdisciplinarity, Boundary-spanning and Multiple Affinities

As discussed in relation to Andrew Jamison in section I.4 interdisciplinarity has been an ideal of the academic wing of the environmental movement ever since the dawn of the new environmental consciousness. I also claim in I.4 that there has – for many decades – been a conspicuous lack of success in the pursuit of that ideal. One reason for the lack of success might be that central concepts differ even between disciplines which are quite close. Fearing that immersion in these conceptual problems will delay projects, can make research teams reluctant to devote the time needed for ‘translating’.

My most important point on the pursuit of interdisciplinarity has, however, to do with boundary-spanning individuals. When I turned my attention away from what I perceive as failures and instead focus on relative successes I found a great number of boundary-spanners.

In the report I mention a figure-head of modern environmentalism – Rachel Carson. When trying to understand Sweden’s prominent role in ecological modernisation I point to two boundary-spanners – Hans Palmstierna and Rudolf Meidner. I also place the global business strategist Mike Peng in this category. When I – inspired by Guobin Yang – briefly discussed Chinese environmentalism, I stressed how Chinese
environmentalists use concepts with foreign antecedents only after a process resembling cultural translation.\textsuperscript{192}

My most thorough wrestling with boundary-spanning in this report is, however, related to You-Tien Hsing. The word boundary-spanning isn't hers but she gives a lot of food for thought on that proto-concept in her texts and seems to use her own boundary-spanning capabilities for a number of observations which I quoted above in section II.5. An important example is her observations in relation to her ability to switch between languages. Her choice of a certain Chinese dialect – Hokkian – when interviewing opened for observations of the role of affinities and the establishing of trust.

Another set of her observations which I think presuppose multiple affinities are those concerning the power struggles between central and local levels in China. She is able to disentangle the superficial compliance of top-down policies and the tension between the high- and low-level authorities.

From the point of view of making her observations understandable to, and possible to use by, a western academic such as myself, it is of course also crucial that You-Tien Hsing at the same time has multiple affinities in the US West Coast intellectual milieu. I discuss her wrestling with intellectual traditions tied to the names of Castells and Burawoy in portion II.5.2.

\textbf{III.2.2) Semi-academic Traits Nurturing Interdisciplinarity}

The texts of You-Tien Hsing are also important inspirations for me when I argue that some methods which run the risk of being branded as non-scientific by academics of certain disciplines are essential to many worthwhile social science studies of information transmission. The kinds of information transmission which I have in mind are those where power relations, and influence over information designing resources, are important elements.

My recollections from a union research department corroborates You-Tien Hsing's observations about the need to always keep the relative positions of those being interviewed in mind.\textsuperscript{193} She mentions the need to think about relative positions under the heading of 'situational analysis'. Her points on this might be viewed as detailed questions on interviewing methods. Those methods, however, have defining influence on the much broader questions on your role as 'objective' researcher and the pros and cons of affinities.

Researchers in disciplines such as anthropology are trained to be aware of the importance of 'situational analysis'. A transparent and sensitive handling of related matters is encouraged by their training. I believe, however, that other disciplines which need to be engaged in dialogues for the study of global product chains can

\textsuperscript{192} Guobin Yang in Hsing and Lee (ed's) (2009) p. 119.
\textsuperscript{193} See II.5.4 on my recollections from a union research department.
learn a lot from anthropologically inspired insights such as those of You-Tien Hsing.194

The 'situational analysis' per se might not imply a danger that the researcher using it is seen as unscientific. When reciprocity relations are aimed at – for instance in order that the researcher shall gain better access – it might, however, be controversial. In II.5.4 there is a summary of some lessons I drew from my own 'semi-academic experiences. I put those experiences in the light of You-Tien Hsing’s analysis of the methods she used when doing the research for Making Capitalism in China. From the summary I already mentioned how her discussion of the importance of relative positions resonated with my own union experience.

I also reflected on different types of privileged access in II.5.4. My reflections on those were undertaken in relation to two institutions. I mentioned that I worked first for the Center for Working Life – which was close to the unions – and then for KTH, the Royal Institute of Technology which was close to the employers.

My comparison of the different kinds of privileged access is also my basis for thoughts on 'practitioners turned academics'. Such hybrids – as I also consider myself to be – have experiences which are often more easy to integrate into 'academic knowledge' on i.a. product chains if academia becomes more open to the kinds of methods and sources discussed by You-Tien Hsing and myself in section II.5.

Maybe my way of using a claim by Andrew Jamison – quoted in the introduction to I.4.2 – is even more controversial in many academic settings. Jamison’s claim is that a theorist of the field he studies – environmental movements – must be a 'partisan' identifying with the movement while maintaining a distance. For my purposes I changed this to 'multiple partisances' thus stretching the need for both boundary spanning and reciprocity with the interviewee even further. I am adamant that the 'multiple partisances' must be distanced – as stressed by Jamison et al. – and also transparent. Transparency is needed since the reader of the research must be able to judge for herself if the interpretations are meaningful.

The value of 'multiple partisances' when studying global product chains is central to my message in this report. So if you as reader bear with me I will evoke and subjectively interpret yet another boundary spanner – Amartya Sen – on the related question of multiple identities. In his Identity and Violence he says:

"There are a great variety of categories to which we simultaneously belong. I can be at the same time an Asian, an Indian citizen, a Bengali with Bangladeshi ancestry, an American or British resident, an economist, a dabbler in philosophy, an author, a Sankritist, a strong believer in secularism and democracy, a man, a feminist ..."195

194 See II.5.2 and II.5.4.
Sen goes on to warn against two equally problematic reductionisms in relation to identity. On the one hand there is the economicist 'identity disregard' which I here interpret as a parallel to the suppressing of affinities altogether. On the other hand:

... there is a different kind of reductionism which we may call 'singular affiliation', which takes the form of assuming that any person preeminently belongs, for all practical purposes, to one collectivity only – no more and no less.  

I here use the 'singular affiliation reductionism' as pointing to two dangers in the context of my report. One is the danger that you identify too strongly with a few actors at one end of the chain – the other that you believe that your only affinity is with 'the objective truth' as produced in academia.

Being – as I advocated above – transparent about your 'multiple partisanship', is of course not easy. The first task – prepared hopefully by your education to become a researcher – is to become aware of your 'multiple partisanship'.

One way of being transparent – also discussed in chapters I and II but as yet not mentioned in this summary – is to devote some extra time to your concepts and proto-concepts. In the discussion on concepts in section I.5 two examples of 'compromise concepts' were given: 'Transformative pressure' and 'product chain'. The terms were chosen in order that their double or multiple roots – in different discourses – should be made clear. I also argued for proto-concepts.  

They are meant to be used in the early stages of the concept-invention when you risk hurting creativity or bridge-building by giving a concept too definite a form.

But is the endeavour to open up for multi-dimensional dialogues between actors, and researchers of actors, along such stretched out global chains, really meaningful and realistic? Are not the 'rationalities' of the far ends of the chains too far apart? This is not for me to judge at this point but I must still mention one optimistic observation that has until now been implicit in the way the methodological reflections are organised in this report. The central chapter II starts and ends with reports on quite visionary, but at the same time down to earth, endeavours to be academic aids to reclaiming of societies. I refer to the endeavours of the Secretariat for Future Studies in the Sweden of the 1970s – mentioned in section II.1 – and the endeavours of the group of scholars around You-Tien Hsing and Ching Kwan Lee mentioned in portion II.5.3. I have found methodological inspirations in both of them. I thus have high hopes that at least certain kinds of interdisciplinarities can be fruitful in both extremes of the product chains which I want to shed light on.

### III.2.3) No to Single Stories about the Detox of Global Product Chains

Some important caveats are due here: I am not saying that all voices on the study of detox of global product chains shall have interdisciplinarity as such a central concern as I have had in this report. Nor do I hope that all academics or 'semi-academics' who write on the topic shall use their own experiences to the extent that I have done here. In order to give some contours of my views on other approaches, which should be

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197 I introduced proto-concepts in I.5.2.
encouraged, I will, here in portion III.2.3 mention some good examples that I have come across.

As hinted at in the original grant application for the INFLOW project there seems to be a dearth of academic studies, of the risk transmission along global product chains, which start from the very first links in emerging economies. When it comes to studies of chains which are more easily scrutinised in a regional European context, and which have more of a focus on 'core chemitox areas', some were pointed to in the original grant application mentioned.\textsuperscript{198}

Having said this, I will below make a quick run-through, not of the whole terrain, but only to some spots worth pausing at. The run-through is impressionistic and will start with two examples of 'chemitox information systems' which seem to have achieved important results in spite of great challenges. Then I will mention types of studies which have been made but which need to be further analysed, updated and complemented with backward linkages. Third, I will mention some ways tried by other INFLOW members. Finally I will point to an earlier study I did myself.

When writing my dissertation I came across a 'chemitox information system' which I found inspiring. It was called YSAM after the tri-partisan initiators of the system.\textsuperscript{199} It classified paints according to how threatening they were to workers' health. The system started to be applied already in the 1950s.\textsuperscript{200} What intrigued me about the system was that it drove innovation in the paint industry since the manufacturers of paints wanted their products to descend from more to less 'risky' steps on the classification hazard ladder. Paints at more 'risky' steps could be used only if more elaborate hazard prevention was used. To me the effects of the YSAM system demonstrated that chemitox information can be drivers of innovation if embedded in an environment of reciprocity.

Other good examples of chemitox information systems come from current Swedish conferences such as the one organised by the Swedish chemical inspectorate and mentioned above in portion I.3.3. My work in the INFLOW project has given me the opportunity to visit a number of conferences related to the topic of this report. I have been impressed by the chemitox information systems which Swedish TNCs have presented on such occasions. Many times the systems have been put in place during the last decade. In relation to my present report I specially want to mention the system of Electrolux – a company that sources extensively from China.\textsuperscript{201}

A system such as that of Electrolux is not geared to the possible risks in my 'doll product chain'. I, however, think that it is important to note such efforts since the mentioning of them might make the risks of 'guilt by association' (that is a suspected

\textsuperscript{198} Klintman et al. (2006).

\textsuperscript{199} The meaning of the Swedish acronym YSAM could be translated to: "The cooperation on work hygiene" (in the painting industry).

\textsuperscript{200} see Hollander (1995) chapters 6 and 16.

\textsuperscript{201} Krischer, Bernd: Ppt presentation of the Electrolux chemitox information system. Combined with personal communication.
guilt for every company sourcing in China) smaller. When good examples such as this are mentioned they help to balance the picture.

As antidotes to those two good examples I will mention two collections of studies of information handling related to chemical risks which are both very scary. They both recall numbers of examples of chemical risks that were known but that were not acted upon. One of the collections is already more than 20 years old and relates to the US whereas the other is a decade younger and is published by an EU agency. The titles of the two volumes are telling: Dying for Work – Workers’ Safety and Health in Twentieth-Century America and Late lessons from early warnings: the precautionary principle 1896-2000, respectively.\textsuperscript{202}

The inability of knowledge to result in action in the cases described in those volumes should be thoroughly analysed. My present report is obviously not the place to do this. I mention the two reports also because they represent numbers of valuable interdisciplinary approaches of other kinds than the ones discussed in my report.

As mentioned in 1.4.3 my colleagues in the INFLOW project have been an important inspiration for the writing of this report. They have of course researched the information flow questions before, within and without the INFLOW project. I can not cover that work here but will again give some impressionistic examples in order also to illustrate how wide the field is.

A project with which Sverker Molander is deeply engaged is especially relevant as a methodological contrast to my present report. In the Chemitecs project, Sverker Molander is one of the coordinators of detailed work with the extant Swedish trade and production statistics relevant also to INFLOW questions.\textsuperscript{203}

Jesper Sjöström has, within INFLOW, done studies of how to broaden the education for 'chemistry teachers' to include more societal concerns. He has also studied chemical risk perceptions among Swedish day care centre staffs.\textsuperscript{204}

In the rich production of Mikael Klintman I here single out one of his publications on environmental labelling.\textsuperscript{205} One conclusion of the book Eco-standards, Product Labelling and Green Consumerism, is that new approaches of labellers can make 'ordinary consumers' more active partners in the labelling. In this way the reframings discussed by Boström and Klintman might be important to what I – in this report – have called 'detox from below'.

\textsuperscript{202} Rosner and Markowitz (89[87]), and European environmental agency (2001).

\textsuperscript{203} The Chemitecs project is still ongoing but to present some of the interests of Molander I might mention Molander and Wallin (1994), "Education in Environmental Science at the U. of Göteborg and CTH in Sweden" and Ekvall et al. (2005), "Normative ethics and methodology for life cycle assessment".

\textsuperscript{204} Among Sjöström's articles studying how to broaden education see Sjöström (2011), “Towards Bildung-oriented Chemistry Education”. Among Sjöström’s articles on risk perceptions see Sjöström (20xx), “To choose tomato ketchup – using SETHS knowledge for benefit-risk assessments in everyday life”.

\textsuperscript{205} Boström and Klintman (2008).
Doctoral candidates Emelie Stenborg and Kristin Fransson are still in the process of writing their most important contributions even if some of their results have been published. I hope to be able to report on the commonalities or contrasts between our approaches in future reports.

As to my own earlier work with relation to this report the most important aspect has already been mentioned in the paragraph on demand shaping in I.5.2. I had hoped to – already at this point in time – look at how my proto-concept 'demand shaping' can be applied in a situation where more and more of the product chains start in countries like China. This will, I am sorry to say, have to wait until later.

My caveat in III.2.3 ends here. The aim of this portion has been to stress that the approaches, which I have been arguing for in the main body of this report, should only inspire part of the choir. But of course I think that studies, such as the ones I have argued for, have an important place. Studies that is, where you go way back in the chains, methodologically 'enter into the dark', and have time to let different interdisciplinarities wrestle in creative ways.

### III.3) Public Support for the Multi-pronged Movement

Can policy conclusions be drawn from this research report? My cryptic answer could be: 'no but...'. 'No', because I want the report to be seen as presenting a kind of basic social science research where there is room for such things as playing with proto-concepts which might or might not become 'more than proto'.

'But', because I would of course be very satisfied if some of the vague ideas which could be distilled from this report could be pondered in workshops and maybe at a later stage result in public policies.

My first suggestion might come as a surprise for those readers who have until now thought that I am only interested in qualitative studies or new research paths. The first suggestion here concerns the need for a major national or European effort to construct quantified product chains which start in emerging economies. Such efforts have for decades been made by UN organisations such as UNCTAD but in such matters as product chains those are starved for resources.206

My own experience, in the 1970s, of producing product chains relates i.a. to metals.207 Those experiences as well as present efforts by colleagues such as Sverker Molander have convinced me that the resources needed are great. In a study on 'accounting for sustainability' Kenneth Hermele and I argued that the efforts needed should be on a scale comparable to those of the efforts in the early post World War II when national accounts for GDP measurement were built.208

My first suggested series of workshops thus aims at suggesting how such major efforts of constructing descriptions of global product chains could be launched.

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206 UNCTAD is short for United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
After this first suggestion I will turn to policies which would involve civil society more. First, however, yet another caveat: It of course entails dangers to suggest state or superstate support to NGOs or other societal institutions which need arms-length-distance to 'the powers that are'. The non-state-bodies receiving support might become less prone to forward thorough-going criticism if too much of their funding comes from the state. I, however, think that the kind of transparency-enhancing measures discussed above might help against such dangers. In this section III.3 the problem of 'NGO dependence' will be disregarded for the sake of the arguments. Given this disregard I can – in order to illustrate – point to some ideas. I will mention some areas where I would like to see workshops:

– The International Panel on Chemical Pollution (IPCP) is an attempt to create something similar in the chemicals field as IPCC is in the global warming field.\(^{209}\) Disregarding the (lack of) success so far, questions of how EU could support a network such as IPCP, how the social sciences should be involved etc, are worth more than one workshop.

– The three-steps-model Transparency, Verification and Worker Participation suggested by O'Rourke and Brown was described briefly in II.4. The forms for national Swedish and EU support for the model ought to be discussed. It is easy to imagine that there would be strong reluctance against the creation of a resourceful European body working for such a model but ...

– ... maybe it could be combined with a 'fair sourcing label'. This has not been discussed in my report. Therefore I will not develop the argument here.

– Coming back to possible implications of my report, I think it would be useful to discuss how social science – maybe cultural and anthropological – competencies of public authorities can be strengthened. The kind of expertise commanded by bodies such as the Swedish Chemical Inspectorate is today biased in favour of the natural sciences and possibly the economic sciences.

– In the world of education I believe that it should be discussed how the boundary spanning abilities represented by researchers, teachers and students from outside Europe could be better used in areas such as those discussed in my report.

This short list – compiled for illustrative purposes – ends here. As stressed initially in this short section III.3, the aim of my report has not been to produce such concrete proposals.

III.4) Back to the Doll Chain and the Day-care Centre Pixie

Finally let’s imagine that we meet a staff-member of the day-care centre 'Pixie' in Malmö, which was mentioned in the introduction to this report.\(^{210}\) His name is Sven and he confesses that he has – in a low-price supermarket – bought a doll, made in China, for the day-care centre where he works. He had not really considered the risks.

\(^{209}\) See <http://www.ipcp.ch/>.

\(^{210}\) See I.1 – A Sleeping Doll from the Pearl River Delta in Southern China.
Since his purchase of the doll has been questioned by others in the staff he turns to me with second thoughts: ‘What if a kid at the centre tears the dress of the doll into pieces and then chews at both those pieces and the shiny plastic shoes of the doll?’ I am not myself a toxicologist or an expert at chemically analysing the doll so I can not myself answer him but might of course refer him to such experts.

On the ethical question, about our responsibility towards the Uzbeki kids who have picked the cotton that went into the doll’s dress, there is, however, no such unambiguous expertise as in the chemitox field.

The doll can, however, not be given back to the supermarket so Sven and I get the chance to suggest what to do. But – since I am so exhausted from thinking about how huge the tasks are for chemitox policies – I get too excited:

– Let us turn the doll problem into an educational opportunity. The doll will be placed on a shelf and the kids will visit a museum where dolls from different cultures are exhibited. Then the kids will design their own dolls based on the designs they saw at the museum. They receive guidance in buying fair-trade materials in order to then assemble the dolls and exhibit them.

In cooperation with a nearby school the kids will explore where the different designs originated. In order to learn more about the cultures they met through the dolls they invite students from nearby Malmoe University. Some of the students invited have backgrounds in developing countries such as China, some are studying to become teachers in chemistry and some have both those qualities.

Meanwhile the staff at the day-care centre has formed a read-and-travel study circle where they start to understand the cultures of potential doll-supplying countries. Among the things they want to know is how a visit from a western country might be perceived in a developing country. So they read authors such as Chimamanda Adichie. In the novel *The Thing Around Your Neck* Adichie addresses how a visit from a western country might be perceived:

"He (a white middle-class American) said he really wanted to see Nigeria and he could pay for you both to go.
(The story is set in Connecticut. The ‘you’ of the story is the protagonist of the novel. She is an Igbo woman who has ‘won in the US visa-lottery’).
You did not want him to pay for you to visit home. You did not want him to go to Nigeria, to add to the list of countries where he went to gawk at the lives of poor people who could never gawk back at his life. You told him this on a sunny day, when he took you to see Long Island Sound, and the two of you argued, your voices raised as you walked along the calm water. He said you were wrong to call him self-righteous. You said he was wrong to call only the poor Indians in Bombay the real Indians. Did it mean he wasn’t a real American, since he was not like the poor fat people you and he had seen in Hartford?"^{211}

Finally the staff at the day-care centre makes contact with a seamstress at The Rising Sun Toy Factory in order to visit it and see for themselves whether the

outer and inner environment at the factory is as bad as some academics in Sweden claim.

They also start a fund-raising drive in support of the work of the Uzbek-German Forum for Human Rights.

And all this the Pixie staff can finance and are allowed to do since this is a fairy-tale without budget constraints or prohibitions of passing boarders between your different duties.

At this point Sven stops me. But I can not resist finally suggesting that we try to apply for funds to finance a multi-media project on tracing the doll-steps back to The Rising Sun Toy Factory. This 'Doll-chain in Reverse' Project is to be inspired by the spirit of Stefan Jarl's film with its impressing group of experts, the Logistics Project, where a pedometer is traced back to its origin in Guandong province and Edward Burtynsky's exhibition *Oil* from 2009 as well as Gunilla Ander's book *Cotton*. And of course, to a certain extent by the present report. The project is to include as participants some of the staff at Pixie visiting the Rising Sun, some people who can document this and some of those inspiring the project. In this last group I include Sven and some INFLOW members.

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212 I wrote in I.3.3 about Stefan Jarl's film *Submission - in defence of the unborn* 'by actress Ewa Röse and 23 professors'. In a note to portion I.4.4 I wrote about my urge to find other forms of communicating than the traditional academic forms. I mentioned *Logistics* and *Oil*. In Erika Magnusson's *Logistics* a pedometer is traced back to its origin in Guandong province. In Edward Burtynsky's exhibition *Oil* we get to see images, meant as metaphors to the dilemma of our modern existence. We are drawn by desire - a chance at good living, yet we are consciously or unconsciously aware that the world is suffering for our success. Gunilla Ander, finally, has made me aware of the use of forced child labour in the cotton harvests of Uzbekistan.
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Chen, Hao “How Chinese Toymakers Respond to Recalls” Case 1.4. in Peng, M. W., 2009 (Case 1.4. is on pp. 149 -152 in Peng 2009).


Ds 1992:58 Varor som faror (Ds = abbreviation of the Swedish term Departementsstencil meaning something like Ministry mimeographed Report), [Main author: Siv Ericsdotter / Näslund]. Also see under Ericsdotter (formerly Näslund), Siv.


Fair Trade Center – see FTC.

Fjällström (circa 2001). TV-documentary: "Made in China" by Fjällström, Pår: "Dokument Inifrån (SVT cirka 2001). I (EH) have written more about this film on the "outsourcing receiving corporation" Flextronics in a grant application for the educational module “Three times Taylor” – see for instance Hollander (2010).


Hao Chen see Chen, Hao


Hollander (2003) Hollander, Ernst *The noble art of demand shaping - how the tenacity of sustainable innovation can be explained by it being radical in a new sense,* Contribution to 11th international GIN conference in San Fransico (GIN = Greening of Industry Network), University of Gävle, Sweden 2003.


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ICTI CARE Foundation: Creating Continuous Improvement in the Workplace 2009 (On the acronym ICTI CARE – see list of abbreviations).


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Åström, Sverker (2003), Ögonblick : från ett halvsekel i UD-tjänst Lind och Co. (Only in Swedish – in an English translation the tile might have been: Instances – from half a century of service in the Swedish foreign office).

Web-sites Organised after the Names of Persons, Organisations or Events Refered to when the Web-sites are Mentioned in the Main Text of the Report


TED = “TED is a nonprofits devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading. It started out (in 1984) as a conference bringing together people from three worlds: Technology, Entertainment, Design”. Quoted from TED website <http://www.ted.com/pages/about/>. (See section I.4).


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IPCP = The International Panel on Chemical Pollution An attempt to create something similar in the Chemicals field to IPCC is in the global warming field. See <http://www.ipcp.ch/>.


Rockström, Johan et.al on Planetary Boundaries: <www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/>. 

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**Personal Communications**

Here I mention a few of the many persons who have orally given important information which I have used for the report:

Ericsdotter (formerly Näslund), Siv – former administrative secretary general of the Swedish Environmental Advisory Council.

Hollander, Camilla and Fritz – my parents with whom I made ‘interviews’ which form a background to my introduction to portion II.5.4. ‘Interviews’ with their networks in the hide/shoe businesses are also part of the background.

Krischer, Bernd – Head of chemitox information system at Electrolux.

Odhnoff, Jan – former head of the investigation dep’t of the SFWU.

Ågren, Enar (II.1) – former president of the SFWU.
Abbreviations, some Heterodox Signals and Thanks

Abbreviations and some Chinese Concepts
Canton = a European name for the capital of Guandong province. The pinyin name is Guanzhou. (For explanations of concepts such as 'pinyin' pls see Hollander (2010)).
Ch. = chapter.
CLB = China Labour Bulletin.
CSR = Corporate Social Responsibility.
CTH = Chalmers University of Technology
EH = Ernst Hollander
FDI = Foreign Direct Investment
FPI = Research Policy Institute (of Lund University). (The abbreviation comes from the Swedish name Forskningspolitiska Institutet).
FTC = Fair Trade Center. FTC is a Swedish NGO focusing on Human Rights and different aspects of globalisation.
GIN = Greening of Industry Network.
Guanxi = Chinese term for a version of bonding social capital. For interpretations used here see portion II.5.1.
HIG = University of Gävle. The abbreviation comes from the Swedish name Högskolan I Gävle.
ICA = a Swedish retail chain.
ICT = Information and Communication Technology.
ICTI = International Council of Toy Industries.
ICTI CARE is a toy industry’s business initiative intended to check that there are reasonable working conditions in toy factories in for instance China.
INFLOW is an abbreviation/ acronym for the research project Towards Improved Interactions in the Two-Way Flow of Risk-Related Chemical Information -- The Cases of Clothing, Toys, and Paint.
INGO = International Non-governmental Organisation.
IPCP = The International Panel on Chemical Pollution An attempt to create something similar in the Chemicals field to what IPCC (The International Panel on Climate Change) is in the global warming field. See <http://www.ipcp.ch/>.
KemI = Accronym for the Swedish Chemical Inspectorate
KTH = Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. The abbreviation/ acronym comes from the Swedish name Kungliga Tekniska högskolan.
LO - the Swedish federation of blue-collar trade unions (LO is an accronym of Landsorganisationen). See i.a. II.5.4.
NGO = Non-governmental Organisation.
p. = page.
pp. = pages.
Ppt = Power point
PRC = the People’s Republic of China.
PRD = (the) Pearl River Delta.
R&D = Research and Development.
SACOM = Students & Scholars Against Corporate Misbehavior - a Chinese actor in the HR (Human Rights) field.
SME = Small or Medium-sized Enterprise.
SFWU = The Swedish Factory Worker’s Union. See II.1.1 on Hans Palmstierna and II.5.4 on personal reasons for commending You-Tien Hsing.
SSE = Stockholm School of Economics.
Swedwatch = a Swedish NGO focusing on Human Rights and different aspects of globalisation.
SVT = Swedish Television
TCO = The Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees. From the Swedish Tjänstemännens Centralorganisation
TCO 92, 95 etc. = Environmental labels initiated by TCO.
TNC = Transnational Corporation.
UML = University of Massachusetts at Lowell.
YSAM = The meaning of the Swedish acronym YSAM could be translated to: "The cooperation on work hygiene (in the painting industry).

Some of my Heterodox Graphic Signals, Connotations and ways of Referencing

Chapter (II) section (II.1), portion (II.2.1). I use those words and figures to convey the structure of my report. II.2.1 thus denotes the first portion of the second section of the second chapter. The name of the portion (II.2.1) is "A business textbook case of toy recalls because of lead". The name of section (II.2) where this portion appears is "The year of the toy recall – 2007". The name of the chapter (II) where the portion appears is "Detoxifying global product chains – Five useful interdisciplinary approaches".

Double years in ref's such as (1989 [1981]) An example from the list of references: When I use the reference Thelander and Lundgren (89 [81]) with its double brackets it begs the question. My use of double brackets here has to do with a public authority which restrained publication from 1981 to 1989. See my discussion of this in the list of references above. In Swedish I discussed this on p. 341 of Hollander (1995).

Forever forthcoming In one of my ref’s – Haley, Brendan and Hollander, E (2006) – I claim that the joint article is forthcoming in a reader. I now doubt that this is the case. I think that the reason for the probable cancelling is that the responsible institutions – The Labor Extension Program and the Committee on Industrial Theory and Assessment of UML – are fragile ones dependent on few souls of fire.
I, however, continue to call the article ‘forthcoming’, in order not to succumb to established academic hierarchies, who discourage working with non-established academic actors.

My way of referencing: For reasons briefly discussed in portion I.4.2 (Semi-academic traits), I do not strictly follow any established way of referencing. Important inspirations are, however, the Oxford and Harvard ways of referencing.

Thanks

This report could not have been written without the help of many people. Quite a few of those who helped me are mentioned in the text or in references. My Inflow colleagues I’ve already mentioned in I.4.3 and III.2.3. Here I will mainly mention a few who are not visible enough in the text or in references.
Some friends went out of their way to give me comments on the text both in terms of language and contents: Special thanks are thus due to Brian Faitt, Brendan Haley, Olov Dahlin, Kaj Frick, and Agneta Sundström. Those who know me are well aware that I am too stubborn to accept all suggestions even if they are well founded. So the many remaining mistakes are mine.
At a late stage in the process I received valuable support from Tommy Gerdemark and Monica Langerth Zetterman at HIG. That was very warming!
Due credit shall also be given to my Chinese students at University of Gaevle. Some of them are mentioned with names in Hollander (2010).